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JUSTIFICATION IN LUKAN THEOLOGY

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To Ashley, my love,
“Many women have done excellently,
but you surpass them all.”

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PREFACE

This project concludes a long season of study that would not have been possible were it not for several significant folks whom the Lord graciously put in my path. Each of them has held up my arms (cf. Exod 17:12) at various times in many different ways.

My church family at Ninth & O Baptist Church has been a blessing to me and my family. They have loved us consistently and showed us the Lord's kindness in so many tangible ways. Dr. Bill Cook has been a tremendous encouragement over the course of my program, having been both my doctoral supervisor and my pastor. He has shown great concern for the development both of my mind and my heart during this season; I am truly grateful for his impact on and care for me and my family.

The influence of Dr. Mark Seifrid has been substantial in refining not only my understanding of justification in particular but also my understanding of how one is to even approach the text. "Jesus Christ crucified and risen!" is the testimony of Scripture. All other themes and emphases find their end in him. This truth, consistently reinforced by Dr. Seifrid, has shaped my thinking. I hope this dissertation reflects positively the impact he has had on me.

The help of several close friends has been a great source of encouragement as well. Dr. Blake Ring, a doctoral student for much of the same time, has been a great friend during this season. He was able to give encouragement that only one who has walked this road would be able to give. His friendship is a great gift to me. Freddy T. Wyatt has been a close friend for years, but his faithful service in Metro NYC has fanned

the flames of my passion for the training of church planters. His example has encouraged and challenged me to do theology for the love of Jesus and His church.

Besides my wife and children, my brother, Patrick Barrett, and my parents, Scotty and Joyce Barrett, are the greatest grace the Lord has given me. Patrick has been both friend and brother to me. This dissertation would not have been completed without his prayers and encouragement. My parents have been a great support for me during the course of my program but especially over the last two years of completing the dissertation. I am deeply grateful for their encouragement, love, and sacrifice.

Our children, Emma, Jane, Nathan, and Luke, are the joy of my life. They were a welcome “distraction” from my responsibilities at school and work. The best part of closing this chapter in our lives is the reality that I can be Daddy without having to be “distracted” by school. My prayer is that Jesus would be their great treasure and that he would spend each of them for the glory of God and the good of people.

My wife, Ashley, has served our family tirelessly while I spent long hours working and writing. She has demonstrated again and again during my doctoral program that it is in fact better to give than to receive. This dissertation is due as much to her sacrifice and determination as mine. She truly is the “excellent wife” who “laughs at the things to come” (Prov 31:25) knowing that the Lord is her strength and portion.

Finally, I am grateful to the Lord Jesus for his continual sustaining grace and provision. Both academically and professionally, this is the most difficult task I have ventured into. It has been a joyful burden but a burden nonetheless. The sacrifice of my family has been immense but the joy of knowing that Jesus will use our sacrifice for his own fame makes it wholly worthwhile.

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December 2012

CHAPTER 1

JUSTIFICATION IN LUKAN THEOLOGY

Introduction

Luke-Acts¹ has garnered much scholarly attention in light of the amount of space the two volume work takes up in the New Testament. But there has been a noticeable increase of interest in Luke's particular theological concerns over the past several decades of New Testament research. This is especially true with respect to Luke's soteriology.² Yet despite this trend, relatively little scholarly attention has been devoted to the Lukan understanding of justification. There are several possible reasons for this phenomenon. First, until recently historical concerns have dominated Lukan studies.³ An appreciation for Luke-as-theologian in his own right has only recently opened the door for significant discussions about Luke's unique theological emphases.

¹I will not argue for common authorship of Luke and Acts but will be assuming that Luke is the author of both works. For good arguments in favor of common authorship, see D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 113-15, 185-90; Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 4th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 113-25; Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 6-21.

²Many scholars consider salvation to be the central theme and purpose of Luke's gospel. See Joel B. Green, "The Message of Salvation in Luke-Acts," *Ex Auditu* 5 (1989): 21; Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 3a (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 29; I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1978), 35-36.

³In his important article, van Unnik writes, "Broadly speaking it may be said that in the period before 1950 Luke was almost exclusively viewed as a historian." See W.C. van Unnik, "Luke-Acts, a

The rise of literary criticism has also been significant since it brought a new perspective to the way in which one understands narrative texts. Scholars now tend to value Luke's didactic and theological intent, not despite its historiographical, narrational form, but precisely because of that form.⁴ This is a significant shift since, up until the middle of the 20th century, Luke's work was considered mainly on its historical merits.

Perhaps most important are the interpretive issues raised by the relationship between Lukan and Pauline thought. The assumption has been that Paul writes theology while Luke writes history.⁵ This assumption leads to a (not so) subtle tendency to criticize and undervalue Luke because he does not appear to write with Paul's theological sophistication.⁶ Beyond this, new insights into Second Temple Judaism – which have

Storm Center in Contemporary Scholarship,” in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 19.

⁴Robert Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1986), 1-9; Green, *Luke*, 6-10; N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 380. There are exceptions. Wilson writes, “Scholars differ in their assessment of which particular theme dominates Luke's theology, but they all agree that he is a theologian. However, our studies have led us to precisely the opposite conclusion. We have found that the one thing Luke is not, is a theologian. Insofar as he writes about God, Luke can properly be called a theologian. But this is probably better expressed by saying that Luke's writings are theocentric, rather than by calling him a theologian. For in comparison with the profound, logical and complex theology of Paul, Luke cannot be said to have produced a theology at all. His main interests were historical and practical.” Stephen G. Wilson, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, vol. 23 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 255.

⁵Tannehill writes, “In our more careless moments we tend to contrast Paul with Luke in terms of the ‘theologian’ and the ‘historian’. While Paul is concerned with interpreting the significance of Jesus for faith, Luke, we think, is primarily concerned with recording the tradition which he has received.” Robert Tannehill, “A Study in the Theology of Luke-Acts,” *Anglican Theological Review* 43 (1961): 195.

⁶Fitzmyer writes, “Paul may be a Christian theologian superior to Luke, and his writings may represent an earlier stage of Christian thinking and teaching. His mode of presenting the Christian message is more engaging and profound than Luke's. But the comparison of Lukan theology with that of Paul invariably involves unfairness The comparison is unfair because it implies that Pauline theology is a norm for what Luke writes, a criterion by which Lukan teaching is to be judged. The comparison is not only extrinsic to the study of Lukan theology in itself; it is also born of a later systematic concern with a ‘canon within the canon.’” Joseph Fitzmyer, *Luke I-IX*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 28a (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), 27.

resulted in a shift in how the Law, the Pharisees, and Jewish religion in general are understood – have not only affected Pauline studies, but have also opened up new avenues of inquiry in Lukan studies.

Thesis

My thesis is that in his gospel, Luke has a conscious and detectable theology of justification which is explicit in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax-collector, yet subtly permeates the entirety of Luke's work and can be traced out in connection with Luke's understanding of righteousness, eschatological reversal/exaltation, and the kingdom of God.⁷ Justification in Luke is thoroughly eschatological in that the declaration is a verdict made by God which is rooted in his end-times exaltation of the humble, as well as thoroughly soteriological in that God's declaration regarding the sinner effects or causes – not simply describes – a change in the status of the justified. Luke's understanding of justification is rooted in the Old Testament expectation that the righteous would be vindicated by God.

Background

The choice of this particular topic is the result of several different strands of

⁷Although he references Paul and not Luke, David Wenham's line of thought seems promising. Wenham writes, "Paul's use of 'righteousness/justification' language in connection with salvation may have a basis in Jesus' teaching (Mt. 5:20; 6:33; Lk. 18:14). Though it may at first sight seem quite different from Jesus' 'kingdom' language, especially if 'justification' is narrowly understood in terms of individual salvation, when Paul speaks in Romans 1:16, 17 of 'God's righteousness being revealed,' he quite probably has in mind the Old Testament hope of God's people being saved and a new and righteous world order being revealed (cf., e.g., Isa. 6:11: 'the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations'). *In other words, for Paul the righteousness/justification that has come through Jesus is corporate and even cosmic, not just individual. The thought turns out to be extremely close to Jesus' kingdom concept.*" Emphasis added. David Wenham, "Appendix: Unity and Diversity in the New

study. My initial interest in Luke-Acts began while teaching through the Gospel of Luke in the College Bible Fellowship Group at Ninth & O Baptist Church. The numerous apparent thematic parallels between Luke's gospel and Paul's letters piqued my interest.⁸ During my second semester in the PhD program (Fall 2006) I took Dr. Bill Cook's seminar on the resurrection of Jesus. One of my papers was an exegetical look at Luke's resurrection narrative. In this study, I observed that Luke is especially concerned to demonstrate that God is vindicating Jesus from the implicit charges brought by the religious leaders (Luke 23:35), the soldiers (Luke 23:36), and the crucified criminal (Luke 23:39) by raising him – the *δικαίος* (Luke 23:47) – from the dead.⁹ One semester later I enrolled in Dr. John Polhill's language seminar in which we translated Luke's gospel. What struck me while working through the Greek text was the frequency of Luke's usage of the *δικη* word group and its derivatives, especially his use of the verbal form *δικαίω*¹⁰ and the centurion's reference to Jesus as *δικαίος* in the passion

Testament," in G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed., ed. Donald A. Hagner (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1993), 706.

⁸Both have Adam-Christ comparisons (Luke 3:38; Romans 5:12-21). Both give prominent attention to outsiders. For instance, Luke gives much space to women (Luke 1:26-56; 7:36-50; 8:1-3; 10:38-42; 18:1-8), Samaritans (Luke 10:35-37; 17:11-19), and tax collectors (Luke 5:27; 15:1; 18:9-14; 19:1-10) while many of Paul's letters deal with the issue of Gentile inclusion (Romans 1-5; Galatians 2:15-21; Ephesians 2:11-22). Both also emphasize the plan of God (Luke 9:22; Luke 16:16; Acts 2:23; Romans 9-11; Galatians 3:23-29).

⁹It is interesting to note within the Trial/Passion narrative the repeated declarations of Jesus' innocence (23:4; 23:14-15; 23:22; 23:41; 23:47) as well as the repeated questioning of Jesus' character, whether he is the Christ, King of the Jews, etc. (22:67; 22:70; 23:3; 23:35; 23:37; 23:39). It seems that Luke's point is that the resurrection vindicates Jesus from all the charges brought against him.

¹⁰Luke 7:29; 7:35; 10:29; 16:15; 18:14. Besides the 7 occurrences of the verb *δικαίω* in Luke-Acts, it occurs 2 times in Matthew (7:35 paralleled in Luke), and never in Mark or John. *Δικαίω* occurs 1 other time in Matthew 12:37.

narrative.¹¹ During my last semester of course work (Spring 2009) I wrote an exegetical paper on Paul's sermon at Pisidian Antioch¹² for Dr. Mark Seifrid's NT Theology seminar. This paper was helpful as I considered both Luke's portrayal of the Apostle Paul as well as how Luke understood justification. The final strand was a statement by Richard Gaffin on the topic of justification in Luke-Acts. Gaffin writes, "In fact, even with the advent of redaction criticism, monographs and articles on the theme of justification in Luke-Acts are few indeed."¹³ This was confirmed in my own research but Gaffin's comment was important in the initial choice to take up this particular topic.

A History of Modern Research

A substantial monograph dealing with the specific question of Luke's understanding of justification does not appear to exist.¹⁴ Thus, this history of modern research will focus on what individual scholars have said regarding specific texts and themes related to justification in Luke's gospel. Much of the discussion regarding

¹¹Luke 23:47.

¹²Acts 13:13-41.

¹³Richard B. Gaffin, "Justification in Luke-Acts," in *Right with God*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1992), 108. In an endnote, he continues, "Strictly speaking, unless I have overlooked something, there is none There are numerous relevant materials in various commentaries, New Testament theologies, and monographs and articles on Lucan theology, but they are not substantial." *Ibid.*, 271.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 108. Gaffin writes, "In fact, even with the advent of redaction criticism, monographs and articles on the theme of justification in Luke-Acts are few indeed." In an endnote, he continues, "Strictly speaking, unless I have overlooked something, there is none There are numerous relevant materials in various commentaries, New Testament theologies, and monographs and articles on Lucan theology, but they are not substantial." *Ibid.*, 271. Although Gaffin's article is dated, his conclusion still holds regarding the prevalence of material related to justification in Luke as this history of research will attempt to demonstrate.

justification in Luke-Acts centers around two passages – Luke 18:9-14¹⁵ and Acts 13:38-39¹⁶ – because of the occurrence of the verb δικαιόω, which appears in both texts, as well as the immediate context of each text in which acceptance with God is in view.

H. Conzelmann

Conzelmann made significant contributions to NT scholarship during the 20th Century. Of these, his work on the theology of Luke is perhaps the most important. Conzelmann's goal in the work was to “. . . elucidate Luke's work in its present form, not to enquire into possible sources or into the historical facts which provide the material”.¹⁷ This was an important shift in Gospel studies, and Lukan studies in particular, as scholars began to deal with Luke-as-theologian.¹⁸

Conzelmann's main interest is Luke's understanding of history, and in particular, *Heilsgeschichte*. His discussion of salvation in Luke's theology is framed in terms of salvation history. For Conzelmann it is the Church which is central to God's saving activity in Luke's soteriology.¹⁹ Luke's discussion of where the individual

¹⁵λέγω ὑμῖν, κατέβη οὗτος δεδικαιωμένος εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ παρ' ἐκεῖνον·

¹⁶γνωστὸν οὖν ἔστω ὑμῖν, ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, ὅτι διὰ τούτου ὑμῖν ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν καταγγέλλεται[, καὶ] ἀπὸ πάντων ἀπὸ πάντων ὧν οὐκ ἠδυνήθητε ἐν νόμῳ Μωϋσέως δικαιωθῆναι, ἐν τούτῳ πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων δικαιούται.

¹⁷Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, trans. by Geoffrey Buswell (London: Faber & Faber, 1960), 9.

¹⁸Marshall writes, “The main impetus to contemporary studies is generally recognized as having been provided by H. Conzelmann in his important work, *Die Mitte der Zeit*. This work set the direction for much recent study, for it was both pioneering in its application of new methods of study to Luke and at the same time representative of the use of such new methods in wider areas of biblical study.” I. H. Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian*, 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 13.

¹⁹Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, 209. Conzelmann writes, “Luke does not directly define the position of the individual in the course of redemptive history. Instead his position is defined as a

belongs in God's saving activity has more to do with discipleship than about conversion, about how to live life while waiting on the return of Christ.²⁰ Thus, the corporate aspect of salvation is central for Conzelmann.

Given Conzelmann's emphasis on the corporate element of salvation over against the individual, and discipleship over against conversion, it is no surprise that he would deny a Lukan presentation of justification and deny the cross any positive soteriological significance. Repentance and discipleship – following the “way” – are the conditions of salvation for Conzelmann. Referring to Luke's soteriology, Conzelmann writes,

No special theory of redemption is evolved. Cf. the use of ἀπολύτρωσις. Luke xxi, 28 speaks of deliverance from the eschatological ordeal. Where the ‘blood’ is mentioned, as in Acts xx, 28, a traditional phrase is being employed, from which no theological conclusions are drawn. The use of Isaiah liii in Luke is not connected with the idea of substitution and does not prove, but disproves, the presence of any theory of atonement. The decisive thing is that Luke says nothing about the redemptive significance of the Cross, and that he does not link forgiveness with the death of Jesus.

Neither does the isolated passage Acts xiii, 38 f., which shows traces of Pauline terminology, provide evidence of a Lukan doctrine of justification. . . . Cf. also the use of δικαιοῦν in Luke vii, 29; x, 29; xvi, 15, and xviii, 14. The verb σῶζειν

mediated one, for he stands with the Church, and thereby in a definite phase of the story. The Church transmits the message of salvation, in the first place the historical facts to which the eye-witness testify, and which are then handed on by the Church after the witnesses have gone. This transmission by the Church makes it possible for the individual's remoteness in time from the saving events of past and future, from the time of Jesus and from the time of the Parousia, to be no hindrance to him. Instead of the nearness of these events there is the Church with its permanent function. *In the Church we stand in a mediated relationship to the saving events—mediated by the whole course of redemptive history—and at the same time in an immediate relationship to them, created by the Spirit, in whom we can invoke God and the name of Christ; in other words, the Spirit dwells in the Church, and is imparted through its means of grace and its office-bearers.*” Emphasis added.

²⁰Ibid., 227. Conzelmann writes, “With the decline of the expectation of an imminent Parousia, the theme of the message is no longer the coming of the Kingdom, from the which the call to repentance arises of its own accord, but now, in the time of waiting, the important thing is the ‘way’ of salvation, the ‘way’ into the Kingdom”.

*is not connected with any doctrine of justification either.*²¹

E. Haenchen

Haenchen's commentary on the book of Acts is one of the most important 20th century works on Acts.²² On Acts 13:38-39, Haenchen writes, "Through the risen Lord remission of sins and 'justification' – scarcely to be distinguished here – are conferred on those who believe in him. . . . The words *καὶ ἀπὸ πάντων κτλ* are evidently intended to reproduce Pauline theology."²³ Haenchen here equates "justification" with "forgiveness of sins" and implies a distance between Paul's doctrine of justification and Luke's presentation of Paul's doctrine. Luke's portrayal of Paul's preaching in Acts 13 appears as an example of second generation Christian hero worship.²⁴

W. C. van Unnik

Van Unnik summarizes the general tenor of mid-Twentieth-century Lukan scholarship when he writes,

Luke is a theologian of the second generation which was confronted with totally

²¹Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, 230 n 1. Emphasis added.

²²Tyson writes, "Many scholars today point to the work of Ernst Haenchen and Hans Conzelmann on Luke-Acts as constituting a formidable consensus of interpretation." See Joseph B. Tyson, *Luke, Judaism, and the Scholars: Critical Approaches to Luke-Acts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), 66. Tyson continues, "The importance of Haenchen's commentary cannot be too heavily stressed. In both German and English it has dominated scholarship for decades. No meaningful study of Acts can afford to overlook it." *Ibid.*, 69.

²³Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), 412. See also Johannes Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 31 (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 123. Munck writes, "This was not, as has so often been assumed, Pauline theology but already Jewish-Christian dogma, as can be seen from Acts xv 10-11; Gal ii 15-16."

²⁴Haenchen writes, "When Luke paints so different a portrait of him, it is not the alchemy of remembrance which is at work, but the presumption, so tempting for the later generation, that Paul the great missionary must also have been Paul the great orator." Haenchen, *Acts*, 114.

different problems from those of its predecessors. Therefore, it is said, his theology is so distinct from that of Paul. He admires Paul and devotes half of Acts to this great apostle. But though he shares with him the conception of the gospel for all men, without the Jewish law, he does not understand him, and he neglects Paul's bitter fight for that freedom.²⁵

Van Unnik continues, "Luke has no understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith as the center of Pauline thought. . . . His speeches are similar to those of Peter and therefore are not Pauline but Lucan."²⁶ Van Unnik makes explicit what seems to underlie much of what many scholars have said regarding the relationship between Luke and Paul – either Luke does not understand Paul or the concerns of his own day push Luke to intentionally recast Paul's theology.

P. Vielhauer

Vielhauer wrote an important article in which he seeks to draw out potential theological agreements and differences between the author of Acts and the apostle Paul.²⁷ His discussion of the Law in Acts is most pertinent for our purposes. Speaking of Paul's

²⁵Van Unnik, "Storm Center," 26. Similarly, Georg Strecker, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 412. Strecker writes, "He [Luke] is unaware of the real problematic of the law – despite his portraying the contrast between Pharisee and publican (Luke 18:9-14). That the Law does not lead to life but to death is a Pauline idea that was never grasped by Luke."

²⁶Van Unnik, "Storm Center," 26. Contra van Unnik, Menoud argues, "Luke knows that it is the unique mark of Pauline theology to find justification by faith within the works of the Law. This is proved in that he did not insert Pauline expressions into either of Peter's speeches. . . . It would be an exaggeration to say that Luke was unaware of differences in theology and terminology when he was reporting the different missionary speeches." See Philippe Menoud, "Justification by Faith According to the Book of Acts," in *Jesus Christ and the Faith: A Collection of Studies* (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1978), 214.

²⁷Philippe Vielhauer, "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 33. Vielhauer writes, "The following discussion poses the question whether and to what extent the author of Acts took over and passed on the theological ideas of Paul, whether and to what extent he modified them. . . . The way in which the author presents Paul's theology will not only disclose his own understanding of Paul, but will also indicate whether or not he and Paul belong together theologically."

sermon at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13), Vielhauer writes, “Clearly Acts [13:38] intends to let Paul speak in his own terms; one must however point out striking differences from the statements of the letters of Paul. First of all, justification is equated with the forgiveness of sins and thus is conceived entirely negatively, which Paul never does. . . . Finally, it is here a question only [of] a partial justification, one which is not by faith alone, but *also* by faith.”²⁸ In other words, Luke understands Paul to be teaching that for the Jew, justification comes partly by law-keeping and is supplemented and completed by means of justification by faith in Jesus Christ with the result that Luke teaches a form of “salvation by works.”²⁹

Vielhauer also draws a sharp distinction between the theology of Paul and Luke’s understanding of Paul’s theology. He holds that Luke missed the crucial place of justification by faith alone in Paul’s thought:

Luke did know that Paul proclaimed justification by faith, but he did not know its central significance and absolute importance; he thought it was valid primarily for the Gentiles. . . . As a Greek and Gentile Christian Luke had never experienced the law as a way to salvation and therefore did not understand the Pauline antithesis law–Christ. Paul’s question regarding the law as a way of salvation, regarding good works as the condition of salvation, – the whole problem of the law – was entirely foreign to Luke.³⁰

²⁸ Vielhauer, “On the ‘Paulinism’ of Acts,” 41-42.

²⁹ Contra Vielhauer, Marshall writes, “The Pauline position [on the soteriological significance of the law] is surely not essentially different from that of Luke. Both affirm the value of the law, both deny that it is the way of salvation, both speak of faith in Christ as the only way of salvation, both agree that law was inadequate to save men. One cannot deny that the deeper and more theological exposition is that of Paul, but this is only to be expected. It may well be, as Vielhauer argues, that Luke had never experienced the personal problem of the law as the way of salvation, and therefore he did not feel the need to go into it as deeply as Paul. But his solution should not be dismissed as unpauline or even superficial because he has not wrestled with it at the same level as Paul. Both Luke and Paul agree on the central point: salvation is not by keeping the law but by the free grace of God.” Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian*, 192.

³⁰ Vielhauer, “On the ‘Paulinism’ of Acts,” 42.

He concludes that the author of Luke-Acts “presents no specifically Pauline idea. His ‘Paulinism’ consists in his zeal for the worldwide Gentile mission and in his veneration for the greatest missionary to the Gentiles.”³¹

J. Fitzmyer

Fitzmyer has made several significant contributions to Lukan studies and addresses the topic of justification in Luke-Acts in several places.³² In Luke’s gospel account of the Pharisee and the tax-collector (Luke 18:9-14), Fitzmyer notes that Luke’s statement regarding justification demonstrates that the New Testament doctrine of justification finds its roots in the teaching of Jesus.³³ However, Fitzmyer cautions against reading “justification *by grace through faith*” into Luke’s gospel.³⁴

In his article “Pauline Justification as Presented by Luke in Acts 13,” Fitzmyer argues that Luke has recast Pauline justification in terms of the “forgiveness of sins,” a

³¹ Vielhauer, “On the ‘Paulinism’ of Acts,” 48.

³² Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 28a (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Publishing, 1981); idem, *The Gospel of Luke X-XXIV*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 28b (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Publishing, 1981); idem, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 31 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1998); idem, *Luke the Theologian: Aspects of His Teaching* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989); idem, “Pauline Justification as Presented by Luke in Acts 13,” in *Transcending Boundaries: Contemporary Readings of the New Testament: Essays in Honour of Francis J. Moloney*, ed. Rekha M. Chennattu and Mary L. Coloe (Rome: LAS Publications, 2005).

³³ Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1184-85.

³⁴ Ibid., 1185. He writes, “But those roots, however, are generic. In the pre-Lukan tradition used here Jesus’ teaching on justification is recorded, but it is still a far cry from justification by grace through faith.” He goes on, “Moreover, the notion of justification does not transcend that of the OT; it is rooted in the spirit of justification which pervades such psalms as 51 or 24:3-5 or 2 *Esdr.* 12:7. In other words, one should beware of reading this parable with all the connotations of Pauline justification or of thinking that it has a ‘Pauline ring’ to it, *pace* E. E. Ellis, *Gospel of Luke*, 214.” Ibid.

phrase which Luke favors, but Paul never uses in his uncontested writings.³⁵ Fitzmyer holds that Luke understands justification to have soteriological value but it is equated with “forgiveness of sins,” a phrase which is not typical of Paul.³⁶

For Fitzmyer, Paul’s sermon in Antioch Pisidia is the only place in Luke’s writings where *δικαιοῦν* can be understood in terms of Paul’s typical usage:³⁷ “In Luke 18:14 it comes closest to the Pauline sense, but even there it is not exactly the same, because it is part of the story of the Pharisee and the Publican.”³⁸ Fitzmyer undervalues Luke’s theological understanding of justification because he appears hesitant to affirm the theological value of Luke’s parables.³⁹

In Fitzmyer’s estimation, the main reason Luke recasts Pauline justification in

³⁵Fitzmyer notes first of all that Luke never states that believers are justified by Christ. He writes, “Moreover, Luke himself never affirms that Christ Jesus ‘justified’ us, even though he does put that effect on the lips of Paul on one occasion.” Fitzmyer, “Pauline Justification,” 250. Referring to Acts 13:38, Fitzmyer states, “One sees the precise Lucan reformulation of Pauline justification in his subsuming of this notion under ‘forgiveness of sin.’ Indeed, Luke even makes *αφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν* take precedence over *δικαιωθῆναι*. . . . What Luke is making Paul do in these verses is to proclaim an effect of the Christ-event that Luke favors but that Paul never uses in any of his seven uncontested letters.” Ibid., 257.

³⁶Fitzmyer, “Pauline Justification,” 258. He writes, “. . . this reformulation of justification in terms of ‘pardon, forgiveness, remission’ also brings it about that Luke makes Paul speak of people being ‘justified from’: *ἀπὸ πάντων ὧν οὐκ ἠδθνήθητε ἐν νόμῳ Μωϋσέως δικαιωθῆναι*, ‘from everything from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses’ (Acts 13:39). The reason why Luke makes Paul so speak is that *ἀφεσις*, ‘release,’ dominates his [Luke’s] way of speaking about justification.”

³⁷Ibid., 256.

³⁸Ibid., 256 n. 18.

³⁹This will be important in regard to method since there are significant hermeneutical issues related to gleaning theological insight from parables. Gathercole writes, “As in Pauline studies, there has been a (partly understandable) reaction against the traditional portrait of Judaism that takes the parables as a starting point. . . . It is of course necessary to exercise even more caution than usual in trying to reconstruct what theological position is being opposed from a parable. However, the Parables can embody in a *character* what theological discourse can only do with difficulty: that is, to capture the spirit of what Jesus perceived himself to be ‘up against’.” Simon J. Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting: Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul’s Response in Romans 1-5* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing

terms of ‘forgiveness of sin’ is that Luke was not adequately acquainted with Paul’s theology:

Since there is no real evidence that the author of Acts ever read any of the Pauline letters, it would follow that he was not very well informed about Pauline theology, even on such a capital matter as justification by grace through faith. *Paul was for Luke a prominent example of an earlier generation of Christian missionaries; that is why he made him the hero of the second half of the Book of Acts, but that does not mean that Luke would have been fully informed about every facet of Pauline teaching.* Luke surely knew that Paul preached about justification, but he depicts Paul doing so only on one occasion, in the sermon to Jews in Pisidian Antioch. *For Luke ‘justification’ has become merely a slogan associated with Paul,* but Luke understands it as ‘forgiveness of sins,’ a phrase that he also puts on the lips of Peter (Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43).⁴⁰

F. F. Bruce

Bruce grounds Paul’s understanding of the doctrine of justification in the Jesus tradition, especially as it is presented in Luke 18.⁴¹ He writes, “The first principle of

Company, 2002), 119-20. See also E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1985), 277-278; Frank Stagg, “Luke’s Theological Use of Parables,” *Review and Expositor* 94 (1997): 215-29.

⁴⁰Fitzmyer, “Pauline Justification,” 261-62. Emphasis added. Fitzmyer also speculates that Luke recast Pauline justification in terms of forgiveness of sins in order to avoid confusion. He writes, “Because such Pauline teaching about justification was not without its complication, that may be part of the reason why Luke reformulates it in terms of his more usual and more easily understood teaching about ‘forgiveness of sins.’” *Ibid.*, 262. Reumann also concludes that Luke more than likely does not fully understand Paul’s doctrine of justification and includes the references to justification in his writings because it was a widely held view that one is justified by faith. See J. H. P. Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament: Justification in the United States Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 140-42. Menoud agrees that Luke is not entirely clear on Paul’s theology, yet he concludes that Luke faithfully represents the gospel Paul preached. Menoud, “Justification by Faith,” 223.

However, it does appear that there may have been some development in Fitzmyer’s position on Luke’s presentation of Paul in Acts. He writes, “The image behind ‘justification’ is drawn from a judicial setting, in which sinful human beings find themselves standing before the tribunal of the divine Judge. Paul thus proclaims here what he advocated in Gal 2:16 and Rom 3:28.” Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 518.

⁴¹See also Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 156; Scot McKnight, *A New Vision for Israel: The Teachings of Jesus in National Context* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 205; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 472; Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 380; Robert Stein, *The Gospel of Luke* (Nashville: Broadman &

justification, that it is sola gratia, could not be more plainly taught. And here it is, in Luke's report of our Lord's teaching. There is no reason to suspect Pauline influence here. But here in a nutshell is the doctrine elaborated by Paul."⁴² Although "faith" is not explicitly mentioned, Bruce notes that Jesus commends the tax-collector's humility which results in the tax collector's going home justified.⁴³

Commenting on Paul's sermon at Antioch (Acts 13:38-39), Bruce states, "It is true that, in expounding justification by faith, Paul in his letters does not speak of it as being justified *from* anything. But that does not make the general sense of the present words un-Pauline."⁴⁴

I. H. Marshall

Marshall holds that the portrait of justification Luke presents in Luke 18 and Acts 13 is not fundamentally different from that which one finds in Paul's letters.⁴⁵ Both

Holman Publishers, 1992), 451; E. E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 214; Ladd, *Theology of the New Testament*, 78.

⁴²F. F. Bruce, "Justification by Faith in the Non-Pauline Writings of the New Testament," *Evangelical Quarterly* 24 (1952): 67-68.

⁴³Bruce writes, "For where is justifying faith more evident than in the trustful and repentant attitude of mind which, completely divested of self-satisfaction and self-reliance, eagerly seeks and gratefully accepts that pardoning mercy which is the free gift of God's grace? That was the tax-collector's attitude; that was what distinguished him from the Pharisee as they both stood in the temple court." *Ibid.*, 68. See also Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian*, 143; Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 549.

⁴⁴F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, rev. ed., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 263. Bruce writes elsewhere, "The language of Acts 13:39 need not be construed to mean that faith in Christ takes over responsibility for a man's salvation when Moses' law has done all that it can and can do no more – a most un-Pauline sentiment, to be sure, but probably a non-Lukan one too." F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*, paperback ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 165-66.

⁴⁵Marshall writes, "Justification is very much a Pauline motif, and it is found on Paul's lips in Acts 13:38-39 (cf. Luke 18:14)." See I. H. Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One*

Luke and Paul were responding to pride in accomplishments with respect to the law.⁴⁶

Both also recognize the need of atonement for sins.⁴⁷ For Marshall, Luke and Paul share these theological points of contact since both are pulling from the Jesus' tradition which has its roots in the Old Testament.⁴⁸

Marshall also notes that justification is a universal need and is not limited to either Jews or Gentiles since both stand in need of forgiveness and the re-establishment of right relations with God. Marshall writes, "...this offer [to 'everyone who believes'] is implicitly for Gentiles as well as Jews. Since this is God's universal way of salvation, Paul warns his hearers of the danger of despising God's offer."⁴⁹ Justification is a universal issue since both the need for and offer of justification is universal. So then, the

Gospel (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 477. Marshall's comments in the introduction to his Acts commentary regarding Luke's portrait of Paul deal mainly with questions of historicity but he does affirm Luke correctly portrays Paul both historically and theologically. He writes, "The differences between Luke's portrait of Paul and the picture we get from Paul's own writings are basically due to the different interests of the two writers. Luke is principally concerned with the evangelistic mission of Paul and with his relations to the Jewish Christians, while Paul's letters reflect his concern for problems within the new churches and for the freedom of the Gentiles from Judaistic and syncretistic perversions of the gospel." See I. H. Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980; reprint 1998), 43 n. 4.

⁴⁶Marshall, *Luke*, 680. Marshall writes, "The prayer as a whole is not a caricature but is fairly true to life. . . . Jesus is attacking the Pharisaic religion as it was, not an exaggeration of it; the Pharisee's prayer is disqualified because of its pride and contempt the other men." See also Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 150; Fred B. Craddock, *Luke*, Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990), 210.

⁴⁷Marshall, *Luke*, 680. Marshall writes, "The word's of the man's prayer express his longing for forgiveness. *ἰλάσκομαι* is 'to be propitiated'. . . . The petition appears to be that God will show mercy to the sinner (cf. Ps. 51:1) by forgiving his sin, and Hill suggests that a trace of the idea of propitiation lies in the background." See also Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 154.

⁴⁸Marshall, *Luke*, 680. Marshall writes, "This is the only occurrence in the Gospels of this characteristically Pauline use (for *ἰλάσκομαι* and *δικαιόω* cf. especially Rom. 3:24f.), but the language is not based on Paul (cf. Ps. 51:19; 1QSb 4:22; 4 Ez. 12:7. . .)." Marshall is making a similar statement to Bruce about the origins of this parable and its content. Luke here has not created a story in order to explain Paul's doctrine of justification. Rather, Luke and Paul both pull from the Jesus tradition which is rooted in the Old Testament.

⁴⁹Marshall, *Acts*, 228.

doctrine applies to both Jews and Gentiles since both groups stand in need of salvation.

E. P. Sanders

The conclusions of E. P. Sanders cast a broad shadow over recent New Testament scholarship. Although not a Lukan scholar in particular, Sanders' work in First Century Judaism impacts our current study.⁵⁰ In Sanders' estimation the traditional interpretation of Luke 18:9-14 is a bad misreading of the Jesus tradition because it reads back in to First Century Judaism a legalism which other sources do not substantiate. He writes,

The Christian gospel is defined as renouncing achievement, it is assumed that Jesus *must* have proclaimed that gospel, and so theology provides historical information: Jesus attacked legalism. It is then a short and all-too-familiar step to equating Judaism, or at least Pharisaism, with legalism.⁵¹

In other words theology becomes the content of history. Sanders continues, "Though theology provides most of this sort of 'information' about Jesus, scholars naturally tend to justify this way of thinking by appealing to passages. They will fasten on to such passages as Luke 18:9-14 and make it determinative for the issue 'Jesus and Judaism.'"⁵² Sanders' point is that Reformation theology, built upon passages such as Luke 18:9-14,⁵³ has led scholars to construct a history which understands the tension between Jesus and the Jews – the Pharisees in particular – as having been caused by the legalism of the Jews

⁵⁰See E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977). See also E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1985).

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 278.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 278-79.

⁵³It should be noted that Sanders holds that Luke 18:9-14 is not an authentic parable of Jesus and is probably a Lukan polemic against the Pharisees. *Ibid.*, 180, 281.

and Jesus' prophetic rebuke of it.⁵⁴

N. T. Wright

Although most of his discussions of justification have to do with Paul's letters, Wright's conclusions impact our current study as well. Leaning on the findings of E. P. Sanders' work *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, Wright begins by asserting first-century Judaism was more or less a gracious religion and has been wrongly caricatured as fundamentally legalistic by Protestant theologians since the Reformation.⁵⁵ This shift in thought regarding the nature of first-century Judaism undergirds Wright's redefinition of justification which he understands to be "God's eschatological definition, both future and present, of who was, in fact, a member of his people."⁵⁶ He continues, "In standard Christian theological language, it wasn't so much about *soteriology* as about

⁵⁴Sanders continues, "Did Jesus oppose self-righteousness at all? I think that he had his mind on other things that the interior religious attitudes of the righteous. The parables are about God, who seeks and saves sinners, not primarily about elder sons, who resent them. His message in general was about God and the kingdom, and it was not a critique of problems which develop within a religious community, such as self-righteousness. . . I am content to say that Jesus did not focus on the interior attitudes of the righteous and that the opposition to him did not spring from his criticism of self-righteousness. Those who need texts on which to base criticism of religious hypocrisy and self-righteousness still have them. Matt. 6.1-8, 16-18; 23; Luke 15.2; 15.25-32; 18.9-14; 16.14f. are still in the canon. They do not, however, serve to explain Jesus' conflict with Judaism." Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 281.

⁵⁵He writes, "His [Sanders'] major point, to which all else is subservient, can be quite simply stated. Judaism in Paul's day was not, as has regularly been supposed, a religion of legalistic works-righteousness. If we imagine it was, and that Paul was attacking it as if it was, we will do great violence to it and to him." N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 18-19. Wright continues, "Until a major refutation of his central thesis is produced, honesty compels one to do business with him. I do not myself believe such a refutation can or will be offered; serious modifications are required, but *I regard his basic point as established.*" *Ibid.*, 20. Emphasis added.

⁵⁶Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 119.

ecclesiology; not so much about salvation as about the church.”⁵⁷ In other words, justification is used as a descriptor for those who *are* in the people of God, rather than describing *how* they got in.

Courtroom imagery is central to Wright’s understanding of justification. To Wright justification is God’s declaration in favor of one of the parties in a lawsuit. To be ‘declared righteous’ (i.e., justified) is to have the judge (in this case, God) rule in one’s favor.⁵⁸ The declaration of ‘righteous’ then is “. . . *the status they have when the court finds in their favor*. Nothing more, nothing less.”⁵⁹

Another significant aspect of Wright’s understanding of justification is the context of Gentile inclusion. He writes, “From Paul, it is clear that the doctrine of justification was a vital issue which the early church had to hammer out in relation to the admission of Gentiles to the church. The only mentions of the admission of the Gentiles in the synoptic tradition do not speak of justification, and the only mention of justification has nothing to do with Gentiles.”⁶⁰ In other words, Gentile inclusion was an issue during the later apostolic mission, not during the earthly ministry of Jesus, therefore we should not be surprised that the Jesus tradition is largely silent on the issue of

⁵⁷Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 119 (emphasis added). He states later, “Justification is not how someone *becomes* a Christian. It is the declaration that they *have become* a Christian.” Ibid., 125.

⁵⁸Ibid., 98.

⁵⁹Ibid. Emphasis original.

⁶⁰Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 421-22. He points to Matt 8:5-13 as an instance of Gentile admission without reference to justification and Luke 18:9-14 as a mention of justification without reference to Gentiles. Ibid., 422 n. 8.

justification.⁶¹ And where it does appear, it should not be understood in soteriological terms.

According to Wright the use of *δικαίω* in Luke 18 should be distinguished from Paul's understanding, and the traditional Protestant understanding of Paul. He states:

But this is hardly, as it stands, a statement of the mainstream Protestant doctrine of justification or of the rather different Pauline one. It is a straightforward Jewish statement, corresponding for instance to Judah's statement about Tamar, after his immorality and hypocrisy have been exposed ('she is in the right, rather than me'): one is in the right, the other is in the wrong. There is an implicit court case going on, and the verdict is going in favour of one person rather than the other.⁶²

Recent Commentaries and Theologies

Most commentaries and theologies give little to no attention to the concept of justification as it is presented in Luke-Acts. Where it is discussed very little in the way of substance is produced in order to explain or describe what Luke means by the concept of

⁶¹He writes, "This question [who God's true people were] was central to much Judaism of the time, with different groups defining themselves this way and that, in particular by various interpretations of Torah. We can already see the roots of this redefinition of God's people in Jesus' ministry, not simply when the language of justification is fleetingly used as in Luke 18, but at many other moments like Mark 3:31-35 (the redefinition of family) and Luke 15:1-2 (why does Jesus eat with tax-collectors and sinners?). But Jesus never faced, for the reasons already given, the question of how one would know that Gentiles were to be full members of God's people. . . . *The questions which were so pressing for Paul are simply not on the agenda.*" N. T. Wright, *Paul in Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 159. Emphasis added.

⁶²Ibid., 158-59. Wright's statement here appears to conflict with statements elsewhere. He writes, "These two parables [Luke 18:1-8; 9-14] together make a powerful statement about what, in Paul's language, is called 'justification by faith'. The wider context is the final lawcourt, in which God's chosen people will be vindicated after their life of suffering, holiness and service. Though enemies outside and inside may denounce and attack them, God will act and show that they truly are his people. But this doesn't mean that one can tell in the present who God's elect are, simply by the outward badges of virtue, and in particular the observance of the minutiae of the Jewish law. If you want to see where this final vindication is anticipated in the present, look for where there is genuine penitence, genuine casting of oneself on the mercies of God." N. T. Wright, *Luke for Everyone* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 214.

justification.⁶³ Several recent works do however acknowledge the presence of the typically Pauline *δικαιόω* and are worthy of mention.

James Dunn. Dunn agrees with previous scholars who note the Pauline language in Acts 13 yet doubt Luke fully grasped the Apostle's thought. He writes, "It is difficult to avoid the impression that a Pauline sentiment has been only half grasped and used here, and in consequence it is less than clear what the 'everything' is from which the law does not provide freedom."⁶⁴

Richard Pervo. In his commentary, Pervo holds that Acts 13:38-39 is a presentation of "the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith," but it is a modified version.⁶⁵ Similar to previous scholars, Luke has recast Paul's understanding of justification in terms of forgiveness of sins. He writes, "The equation of justification

⁶³The following scholars either make no comment or give very little space to explaining the typically Pauline concept/language of justification in Luke-Acts: Alfred A. Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Luke* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901), 419; Green, *Luke*, 649; Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 452-53; John M. Creed, *The Gospel According to St. Luke*, reprint (London: MacMillan and Co., 1953), 224-25; David Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 394; Mikael C. Parsons, *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 212; John B. Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary, vol. 26 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 304-05; Johannes Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 123; G. B. Caird, *New Testament Theology*, ed. L. D. Hurst (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); Frank Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005); 319 n. 45; Udo Schnelle, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. by M. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007); Rudolf K. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951); Georg Strecker, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000); Leon Morris, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1986).

⁶⁴James D. G. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids: Willam B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 428 n. 65.

⁶⁵Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 340.

with forgiveness of sins shows that his understanding is Deutero-Pauline.”⁶⁶ Luke is aware of the significance of justification in Paul’s thought but in Acts 13:38-39 has “attempted to blunt its edges.”⁶⁷ Luke is presenting “a somewhat etiolated reflection of Paul’s arguments with ‘Judaizing’ Christians.”⁶⁸

John Nolland. Nolland posits that Luke does not portray the Pharisees as seeking justification before God, rather they are concerned about their appearance before others. Commenting on Luke 16:14-15, Nolland writes, “The problem is not self-justification (as in Paul) but a concern that stops short by only being interested in the impression created upon other people (cf. 11:43).”⁶⁹ Nolland also denies any basis in the Jesus tradition for Paul’s doctrine of justification, saying, “There is no real basis for seeing this [Luke 18:9-14] through Pauline eyes and finding pronounced here, through the mouth of Jesus, God’s eschatological verdict in favor of sinners.”⁷⁰ Nolland writes,

On the lips of Jesus, this story addressed to the pious gently puts in question the exclusivity of their claim upon the favor of God and subtly suggests that this very pattern of exclusivity is a strike against them in the eyes of God. The story is of a piece with Jesus’ inclusive approach and his ministry to the outcasts. The story is not exactly an example story, since both its chief figures are morally ambiguous, but it is a story about how God values things.⁷¹

⁶⁶Pervo, *Acts*, 340.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 340 n. 87.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 340.

⁶⁹John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35b (Dallas: Word Books, 1993), 810.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 878.

⁷¹Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 875.

Darrell Bock. For Bock the language is Pauline but lacks the soteriological context which characterized Paul's use of *δικαιόω*. Commenting on Luke 18:14, Bock writes,

The term *δικαιόω* is not here a technical term for final salvation, since there are no soteriological issues raised other than a generalized request for mercy in the context of prayer. The tax collector's prayer was accepted or 'found favor' in contrast to the Pharisee's prayer. *Δικαιόω* is forensic but not in the decisive sense. As such, it is like Paul's usage, but less comprehensive in scope.⁷²

Bock, in his commentary, argues that Paul's point in Acts 13:38-39 is that freedom from sin comes completely through and only because of Jesus' death and is in no way gained by means of Law-keeping.⁷³ Bock also holds that the usage of *δικαιόω* is intentional, since the context is Paul's sermon at Antioch, and could be a "Lukan telescoping of Paul's view."⁷⁴

Thomas Schreiner. Schreiner understands Luke's portrayal of justification in Luke 18:9-14 to be Pauline⁷⁵ and notes that Luke rightly portrays justification in Paul's

⁷²Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 3b (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 1465. Bock describes the usage as "nontechnical." Idem, *A Theology of Luke and Acts: God's Promised Program, Realized for All Nations*, Biblical Theology of the New Testament Series, ed. Andreas Kostenberger (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 272. By "nontechnical" Bock explains, "This is not yet 'Christian' justification as a result of Jesus' work. This use merely means God has accepted the plea for mercy of the tax collector in the parable." Ibid., 272 n. 78.

⁷³Bock, *Acts*, 458. He writes, "The law might be able, in the view of Jews, to deal with some sin through sacrifice, but it could not bring complete forgiveness and thus is for Paul completely inadequate."

⁷⁴Ibid., 459. See also Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts*, 272 n. 78. He writes, "A more technical sense of justify appears in Acts 13. That text looks to being declared righteous in light of Christ's work and contrasts with what the law cannot do. Here faith does accomplish being justified (Acts 13:38-39)."

⁷⁵Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 550. Regarding Luke 18:14, Schreiner states, "Further, the Pauline teaching on justification is anticipated in this text, for Luke clearly implies that the tax collector is right with God because of his faith in God." He states elsewhere, "Jesus here clearly criticizes the

sermon at Pisidian Antioch as well.⁷⁶ The parable of the Pharisee and the tax-collector is Pauline in the sense that justification occurs not by law keeping but by faith alone.⁷⁷ In Acts 13:38-39, Luke highlights the gracious activity of God in salvation since the law was unable to save.⁷⁸ So then, just as with Luke 18:9-14, justification is by faith alone in Acts 13.

Two Recent Articles

Although there are no significant monographs on the topic of justification in Luke, two recent articles touch on the subject.

Richard Gaffin. Gaffin's article appears to be the only work which directly addresses the subject of justification in Luke's theology.⁷⁹ Gaffin's conclusions are not

legalistic mind-set of the Pharisee . . . and as Fitzmyer notes, we have the roots here of Paul's teaching on justification." Ibid., 514 n. 15.

⁷⁶Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 352. Schreiner writes, "It should also be noted that the distinctive Pauline teaching on justification is included in his missionary preaching according to Acts 13:38-39." He comments later, "I do not follow [those] who think that here Luke did not represent accurately Pauline theology." Ibid., 635 n. 68.

⁷⁷Schreiner writes, "The Pharisee clearly thinks that he is 'justified' (Luke 18:14) before God because of his devotion to righteousness, for he refrains from theft and sexual sin and lives justly. Moreover, he goes beyond the call of duty by fasting and paying tithes on items that are not even required by the law. The tax collector, on the other hand, puts his trust in God for forgiveness, imploring for mercy from God." Ibid., 550.

⁷⁸Commenting on Acts 15, Schreiner also says, "Peter did not merely indict other people for sin; he admitted that Israel itself had been unable to keep the law. Acts 13:38-39 should be interpreted along similar lines. Instead of freeing people from sin, the Mosaic law exposes the sins that people have committed, showing that all fall short of God's favor." Ibid., 520. He writes elsewhere, "Paul's words in Acts 13:38-39 are quite similar [to Acts 15:7-11]. Justification comes not through the law of Moses but rather by believing in Jesus Christ." Ibid., 635.

⁷⁹Richard B. Gaffin, "Justification in Luke-Acts," in *Right with God*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1992), 106-25. Scaer has done something similar but limits his focus to Acts. Peter J. Scaer, "Resurrection as Justification in the Book of Acts," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 70 (2006): 219-31. Scaer asks the question, "In what way, if any, can the writing of Luke, through his presentation of Jesus, help us to understand the doctrine of justification?" Ibid., 220.

very different from what this dissertation will argue, especially as it relates to the eschatological and soteriological nature of justification. He writes, “But especially, justification is eschatological. . . .Justification is present deliverance from the eschatological wrath of God, a verdict, already rendered, of acquittal and right standing at the final judgment.”⁸⁰ Gaffin concludes his article, saying,

Paul’s teaching on the righteousness of God has its roots in Jesus’ proclamation of the kingdom of God. The gospel of justification by faith advocated by Paul is the fruition, the doctrinally more explicit and developed delineation, of the good news of repentance for the forgiveness of sins which was announced by Jesus, and which, more importantly, was actualized in his death, resurrection, ascension, and baptism with the Holy Spirit.⁸¹

So then, Gaffin’s conclusions are not that different from other scholars who understand justification in Luke theologically. It is Gaffin’s approach to the topic which is of most interest for the purposes of this dissertation. Gaffin writes,

There are two basic approaches to our topic. We may begin with an exegetical survey of the relatively few passages where justification/righteousness terminology occurs, move on to consider others with alternative language or closely related ideas, and then see what general conclusions may be drawn. Alternatively, we may take a more holistic approach, by identifying central, controlling themes in Luke-Acts, considering whether these themes involve elements that bear on the idea of justification, and then examining the justification/righteousness references and related passages in the light of this perspective. I will follow the latter approach as the more fruitful.⁸²

Although Gaffin’s approach is certainly viable, the exegesis of individual texts still must be done. In fact, starting with specific occurrences – especially Luke 18:9-14 – is more fruitful than Gaffin recognizes since it roots Luke’s understanding of justification in the

⁸⁰Gaffin, “Justification,” 124.

⁸¹Ibid., 125.

⁸²Ibid., 108.

overall narrative flow of the Gospel instead of distilled themes.⁸³ So then, Gaffin's "former" approach will be that which is followed in the present work since it more closely ties our conclusions to the text thus lessening the potential for abstraction.

J. D. Hays. Hays has recently written an article in which he argues that "the theme of 'justice,' as described and emphasized repeatedly throughout the Old Testament Prophets, is the central theme and connecting motif for the interrelated pericopes in Luke 18:1-19:10."⁸⁴ The significance of the article is two-fold. First, Hays sees a fundamental thematic unity in Luke 18:1-19:10.⁸⁵ This is significant since there is much variance regarding the structure and cohesiveness of the passage. Second, Hays understands Luke's use of the OT in terms of influence and not simply quotation.⁸⁶ In other words, Luke is so influenced by the OT that its themes impact his narrative beyond just sporadic proof-texts. In many ways, the OT sets Luke's theological agenda.

⁸³This is not to say that it is unnecessary to consider thematic congruence or unprofitable to begin with themes and work towards texts. Obviously themes derive from texts. But, it is easy to force conclusions on a text because of a commitment to a certain theme or to discard a text because it does not fit within a certain theme.

⁸⁴J. Daniel Hays, "'Sell Everything You Have and Give to the Poor': The Old Testament Prophetic Theme of Justice as the Connecting Motif of Luke 18:1-19:10," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 55 (2012): 43.

⁸⁵Hays writes, "While there is near consensus on the larger unit (the journey to Jerusalem; 9:51-19:27), there is no consensus regarding the smaller units. In light of the way that Luke often interconnects his pericopes (sometimes with subtlety!), it is probably preferable to be cautious regarding sub-unit boundaries. That is, as interpreters try to note the structure of Luke it is also possible that he has connections that cross the breaks in their outlines. While acknowledging that Luke 18:1-8 (and even the text that follows) has connections to the preceding material, this paper will see to point out the numerous connections that exist when 18:1-19:10 is taken together against the OT prophetic background." Hays, "Sell Everything," 50-51.

⁸⁶Hays writes, "From an OT perspective, the connections and allusions to the OT Prophets are evident everywhere throughout this unit. Justice, righteousness, widows, the poor, humility, rulers who don't obey, hostile Jerusalem, healing the blind, the coming Kingdom – these themes of Luke 18:1-19:10

Conclusion

Much of the discussion regarding Luke's understanding of justification has focused on the theological relationship between Luke and Paul. There is a lack of scholarly opinion on the topic primarily because the discussion becomes wrapped up in questions regarding Luke's dependency on or misunderstanding of Paul. Furthermore, even when an opinion is stated regarding the plausibility of a Lukan theology of justification, very little in the way of argumentation, whether for or against, is offered up in defense of a respective position.⁸⁷ The assumption is that Luke is either Pauline or non-Pauline which by default rules out a uniquely Lukan understanding since Paul then becomes the reference point. This is not to say that these issues are hermeneutically insignificant. However, it is to say that in order to take seriously Luke's unique theological emphases, one must adequately deal with Luke on his own terms, allowing his work to set the agenda. So then, a Lukan understanding of justification is the goal of the present work.

are also repeated themes found throughout the pages of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve." Hays, "Sell Everything," 61.

⁸⁷This is perhaps the most compelling reason for the project. Much has been written in the way of sporadic comment but what is needed is a sustained study. The need for the work is significant since there is not an exegetically driven approach to understanding justification in Luke's theology. Scaer has done a brief thematic look at resurrection as justification in the book of Acts. Scaer, "Resurrection as Justification in the Book of Acts," 219-31. Gaffin has done a brief thematic look at justification in Luke-Acts. Gaffin, "Justification in Luke-Acts," 106-25. But it appears that no one has done thorough exegesis in order to substantiate a Lukan theology of justification.

CHAPTER 2

JUSTIFICATION PRESENTED IN LUKE 18:9-14

Introduction

The idea that Luke would even have a distinct theology of justification is – for many scholars – to import a Pauline framework onto Luke.¹ Justification is an exclusively Pauline concept and thus is foreign to the gospel. To enquire about a Lukan theology of justification is to ask questions of Luke’s narrative which he did not intend to answer. That being said, the Third gospel does appear to give its readers warrant to ask the question, “How does Luke understand justification?”

Regardless of whether or not the author of Luke-Acts was in fact a travelling companion of Paul’s, or had firsthand knowledge of any of Paul’s writings, several key narrative features beg explanation, chief of which is Luke’s parable about the Pharisee and the tax-collector (Luke 18:9-14). It is the proverbial “elephant in the room” and as such must be dealt with first. Through a fresh reading of the parable this chapter will seek to establish a Lukan understanding of justification which is eschatological and soteriological – eschatological in that it is connected to the in-breaking activity of God in

¹This is even the case for those who think Luke does in fact have a theological understanding of justification. For instance, Richard Gaffin writes, “To pose the question of justification elsewhere in the New Testament is, in effect, to raise the issue of its unity, and to do so in a fundamental way. To explore the theme of this chapter [justification in Luke-Acts], then, is, – at least implicitly – to measure Luke-Acts by Paul.” Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., “Justification in Luke-Acts,” in *Right with God: Justification in the Bible and the World*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 106. Even Gaffin assumes that justification is an exclusively Pauline category.

the ministry of Jesus; soteriological in that salvation, specifically salvation by faith in God's promise to atone for sin, is at the core of Lukan justification. So then the goal of this chapter is to demonstrate that a Lukan theology of justification is exegetically plausible.

Justification Presented in Luke 18:9-14

The parable of the Pharisee and the tax-collector includes an explanation of the parable's purpose (Luke 18:9), a comparison between the Pharisee's prayer and that of the tax-collector (Luke 18:10-13), and Jesus' explanation of the parable's significance (Luke 18:14).²

Luke 18:9

As with Luke 18:1-8, the parable is introduced with a narrative aside which informs the reader of who Jesus' intended audience is, describing them in two ways. The first description Jesus uses of his intended audience is that they are convinced of their own righteousness.³ They have a confidence before God which is rooted in their understanding of themselves as righteous.⁴ The basis of this understanding is what the

²Efforts to read the parable apart from Luke's introduction to the parable should be avoided. Contra Michael Farris, "A Tale of Two Taxations (Luke 18:10-14b)," in *Jesus and His Parables: Interpreting the Parables of Jesus Today*, ed. V. George Shillington (Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark Ltd, 1997), 23 n.1.

³πέποιθα here should be understood in the sense of "persuaded" or "convinced." To render it with the sense of "trust" or "rely" unnecessarily imports an overt legalism which I suggest does not fit the context of this passage. The kind of self-righteousness on display is much more subtle. Contra Green who understands πέποιθα as "trusted in." Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 646.

⁴Although ὅτι can be rendered "because", the better translation seems to be "that." Robert Stein, *The Gospel of Luke* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 449; Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 3b (Grand Rapids: Baker

Pharisees' prayer will flesh out though the reader should expect a negative appraisal of the Pharisees' status as "righteous" (cf. Luke 5:32; 18:13) based on Luke's framing of the parable.⁵

Jesus' description of the "righteous" certainly includes the Pharisees but is not limited to them.⁶ Jesus' singles out an attitude, not a specific group, thus his intention is broader than the Pharisees.⁷ Yet the occurrence of *δίκαιοι* in Luke 18:9 should also be understood as a polemic against the Pharisees in particular, not just self-righteousness in general.⁸

But, Jesus' description does not characterize every individual Pharisee. Joseph of Arimathea (Luke 23:50-54; cf. Matt 27:57; Mark 15:43; John 19:38-42) is portrayed positively in Luke's gospel as is Nicodemus in John's gospel (John 19:39-40).⁹ The

Academic, 1996), 1460; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 28b (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Publishing, 1981), 1185; contra Green, *Luke*, 644.

⁵Green, *Luke*, 647.

⁶The indefinite pronoun *τινας* widens the scope of Jesus' description. See also Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1461; Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, reprint 1999), 289; Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1185.

⁷Hendrickx writes, "Luke does not mention them [the Pharisees] here explicitly, possibly because he wants to address it to the 'Pharisees' of all times." Herman Hendrickx, *The Parables of Jesus*, in *Studies in the Synoptic Gospels* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986 revised edition), 235. See also Green, who writes, "Luke's intention is not to condemn a particular group but to warn against a particular way of comporting oneself in light of the present and impending reign of God." Green, *Luke*, 646.

⁸The phrase *πρός τινος* could be interpreted as "against" which certainly fits with the polemical nuance Luke gives *δίκαιοις*. "To" is most likely though since it is more typical of Lukan style. See Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1461 n. 2; Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1185. Regardless, the polemical edge of the parable should not be dulled.

⁹Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1461. Though not explicitly stated, Joseph is likely a Pharisee since he is described as a member of the council (Luke 23:50) and as awaiting the kingdom of God (Luke 23:51), something a Sadducee would not have been doing.

ending of Jesus' parable of the father and his two sons (Luke 15:11-32) leaves the reader with a call to Pharisees, pictured in the elder brother's character, to come in to the eschatological feast (Luke 15:28). Luke also describes a group of Pharisees warning Jesus about Herod's plot to kill him (Luke 13:31) so Luke's attitude towards the Pharisees is not monolithic.¹⁰

The second description Jesus uses of his audience is that they treat others with contempt or disdain.¹¹ Luke uses ἐξουθενέω in Jesus' trial before Herod (Luke 23:11) and in Peter's speech before the Jewish Council (Acts 4:11), both times to describe the mistreatment Jesus endured. The idea appears to be that the δίκαιοι Jesus has in mind do not merely passively avoid or shun the unrighteous, but openly insult them as well.

Luke 18:10

In this parable, which is set in the temple, Jesus introduces two characters – a Pharisee and a tax-collector (Luke 18:10). Although parables generally have a story-like quality to them (Luke 12:16-21; 15:1-32; 16:19-31), this particular parable is rooted in everyday life, taking place in the temple as worshipers gather to pray and make

¹⁰Zeisler writes, "The uniformly hostile attitudes in Matthew, Mark, and also John, suggest that their communities knew traditions of Pharisees only as opponents. Luke, however removed he and his Church may be from actual contact with Pharisees, and indeed however little he may understand about them and their teaching, finds it possible to depict them favourably at least in part, and this suggests a community somewhere along the line where the Pharisees were not, or were not uniformly, enemies. His tendency may be his creation, but it is unlikely to be *ex nihilo*." J. A. Zeisler, "Luke and the Pharisees," *New Testament Studies* 25 (1979): 156-57. Although his conclusions about Luke's ability to understand the Pharisees is suspect, Zeisler is right in so far as he recognizes that the portrait Luke paints of the Pharisees is not entirely negative.

¹¹ Walter Bauer, "ἐξουθενέω," in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 352.

offerings.¹² Hamm argues that the setting of the parable is during one of the two daily sacrifices, thus the two worshipers are offering prayers in the same setting when sacrifices are being offered, thus placing the parable in a cultic context which implies a request for propitiation.¹³

It should come as no surprise who the two main characters are. Up to this point both Pharisees and tax-collectors have played significant roles in the narrative. The increasing tension between Jesus and the Pharisees caused by Jesus' acceptance of "tax-collectors and sinners" is a significant part of the development of Luke's narrative (Luke 5:28-32; 7:36-50; 15:1-32; 19:1-10).¹⁴

¹²Marshall writes, "The story is unusual in being a real story and not a 'comparison' such as is usually found in the parables." I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 677. He continues, "The general content of the story is typical of Palestinian religious life." *Ibid.*, 678. See also Friedrichsen who argues convincingly for the basic historicity of the parable as part of the Jesus' tradition. Timothy A. Friedrichsen, "The Temple, a Pharisee, a Tax Collector, and the Kingdom of God: Rereading a Jesus Parable (Luke 18:10-14A)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124 (2005): 91-95. Contra Holmgren, who writes, "In Jesus' parable in Luke, the same contrast of extremes occurs, namely, the comparison between the very religious Pharisee and the very sinful tax collector. We are dealing here with hyperbole. Luke uses broad, exaggerated word-strokes to make the story unambiguously clear: Proud performance of one's religious obligations, combined with contempt for others, is no way to be righteous before God. In God's eyes, persons are considered righteous when they recognize their sinfulness and repent of it. Further, Jesus' parable exhibits a strong polemical element: The addressees are 'some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt' (18:9). The hyperbolic, polemical nature of Jesus' parable makes us aware that we are not to take the story literally. Neither the tax collector nor the Pharisee is to be viewed as a normal everyday figure. They are caricatures of two ways in which people respond to God." Frederick C. Holmgren, "The Pharisee and the Tax-Collector: Luke 18:9-14 and Deuteronomy 26:1-15," *Interpretation* 48 (1994): 253.

¹³Hamm writes, "The implied author expects the reader to assume that the setting within the parable is that most common occasion of Temple prayer, the afternoon Tamid service. Indeed, that setting gives body and sharpness to what is otherwise a contrast in a vacuum." Dennis Hamm, "The Tamid Service in Luke-Acts: The Cultic Background behind Luke's Theology of Worship (Luke 1:5-25; 18:9-14; 24:50-53; Acts 3:1; 10:3, 30)," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 25 (2003): 223. See also Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary Cultural Approach to the Parables of Luke* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 145.

¹⁴Luke mentions tax-collectors 11 times: "tax-collectors" (6x: Luke 3:12; 5:27, 29; 7:29; 18:10, 11), "tax-collectors and sinners" (3x: Luke 5:30; 7:34; 15:1), "tax-collectors" and "sinners" in the same immediate context (2x: Luke 18:13; 19:2, 7).

Tracing the Conflict: Jesus and the Pharisees. The portrait Luke gives of the Pharisees is the most varied of the Synoptic gospels.¹⁵ The Pharisees stand out as Jesus' chief antagonists (Luke 5:17-26, 29-32, 33-39; 6:1-11; 7:36-40; 11:37-44; 53-54; 12:1; 14:1-6; 15:1-2; 16:14-15; 19:39) yet he is found eating with them on numerous occasions (Luke 7:36-40; 11:37-44; 14:1-6). Jesus' condemns the Pharisees' because of their desire for prestige (Luke 11:43; 14:7) and wealth (Luke 16:14-15) yet some are willing to warn Jesus about Herod's threats (Luke 13:31).

The conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees in Luke's gospel begins early in the narrative. In the first set of encounters Luke records (Luke 5:17-6:11), the Pharisees question Jesus about forgiveness (Luke 5:21), fasting (Luke 5:33), and the Sabbath (Luke 6:2). Though the Pharisees are clearly not pleased with Jesus actions (Luke 6:11), there is not open hostility at this point.¹⁶ The Pharisees recognize that something is different about Jesus' ministry (cf. Luke 5:26)¹⁷ but they do not understand fully what it is. The Pharisees' lack of understanding leads them to "fury," but as yet there is no open

¹⁵Westerholm writes, "Luke's Pharisees present a more complex picture [than Matthew and Mark]. . . . The negative depiction which had become established in the tradition is preserved. Indeed, Pharisees serve Luke's purposes in providing a foil for Jesus' attitude toward sinners (cf. particularly the parable of the prodigal son, peculiar to Luke). Still, the negative note is tempered somewhat by Luke's desire to show continuity between the Christian movement and its Jewish heritage (Lk 24:25-27; Acts 23:6; 25:14-15; 26:6-7, 22-23; 28:20)." Stephen Westerholm, "Pharisees," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green and Scot McKnight (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 614. See also Amy-Jill Levine, "Luke's Pharisees," in *In Quest of the Historical Pharisees*, ed. Jacob Neusner and Bruce D. Chilton (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 113-30.

¹⁶John T. Carroll, "Luke's Portrayal of the Pharisees," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 50 (1988): 612. Commenting on Jesus' first encounters with the Pharisees, Carroll notes that the Pharisees' "disapproval of Jesus has not yet crystallized."

¹⁷The presence of the verb *δοξάζω* in Luke's gospel is used in other places where people are left amazed by a mighty working of God (Luke 2:20; 4:15; 5:25-26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 18:43; 23:47). Of the nine occurrences of *δοξάζω* in Luke's gospel, five are in material unique to Luke. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1863 n. 33. See also Marshall, *Luke*, 876; Green, *Luke*, 243.

hostility.¹⁸ It is also worth noting Jesus' declaration that he did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance (Luke 5:32). This occurrence of *δικαίος* sets the tone for the conflict to follow in the remainder of the narrative.

Another significant instance of conflict in the narrative comes when Jesus, dining with Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-50), is approached by a woman whom Luke describes as a *ἁμαρτωλός* (Luke 7:37). As Jesus is eating, the woman approaches Jesus and begins to weep, then wipes her tears from Jesus' feet with her hair (Luke 7:37-38). That Jesus would allow the woman to touch him, let alone be near him, puzzles the Pharisee who questions Jesus' prophetic credentials (Luke 7:39a). If Jesus were a prophet he would know the woman was a sinner and would disassociate himself from her (Luke 7:39b).¹⁹ Knowing Simon's thoughts, Jesus then responds by telling the parable of the two debtors which is intended to highlight the love of the woman for Jesus as well as the lack of love Simon had for Jesus (Luke 7:40-47).

At the heart of the contrast between the woman and Simon is the recognition of one's sin. The woman knew herself to be a sinner in need of forgiveness, while Simon, a Pharisee, understood himself to be righteous and not in need of forgiveness. Jesus' encounter with Simon is intended to flesh out the rejection of God's purposes by the

¹⁸The section ends with the Pharisees being "filled with fury" (*ἐπλήσθησαν ἀνοίας*). The sense of *ἀνοία* (*α + νοῦς*) is anger or frustration caused by ignorance or a lack of understanding. Behm translates *ἀνοίας* as "madness." J. Behm, "νοῦς," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 4, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 963.

¹⁹Marshall notes that the Pharisees' assumption is that prophets maintain ritual purity and have the supernatural ability to know the thoughts of people. Marshall, *Luke*, 309; cf. G. Friedrich, "προφήτης," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 6, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 844.

Pharisees (Luke 7:30). The tax-collectors, and by extension sinners, accepted God's purposes – "justified God" (Luke 7:29) – by partaking in John's baptism while the Pharisees rejected God's purposes in that they rejected John's baptism of repentance (cf. Luke 3:3).²⁰ The woman's love for Jesus demonstrates her acceptance of God's purposes (i.e., her repentance) while Simon's lack of love highlights his rejection of God's purposes.²¹

The conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees comes to a head in the travel narrative.²² Jesus' critique of the Pharisees becomes much more stringent (Luke 11:37-44; 14:7-11; 16:15) while the hostility of the Pharisees and other religious leaders towards Jesus increases as well (Luke 10:25; 11:53-54; 14:1; 16:14).

The next scene in the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees occurs when the Pharisees and scribes again grumble about Jesus' relationship to sinners (Luke 15:1-32). The parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost sons are placed in the context of the Pharisees' grumbling (διεγόγγυζον) over Jesus' eating with "tax-collectors and sinners" (Luke 15:1-2).²³ Jesus' parables are a rebuke of the Pharisees' attitude since

²⁰Kingsbury writes, "Looking back upon the ministry of John, Luke declares with an eye to the Pharisees and the scribes (lawyers) that because they refused to submit to John's baptism, they 'rejected the purpose of God for themselves.' By refusing John's baptism, the religious authorities affirmed in effect that they had no need of repentance and forgiveness." Jack D. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Luke: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 23.

²¹But it should be noted that Jesus' dining with Simon, a Pharisee, as well as explaining the significance of the woman's actions demonstrates that Jesus welcomes the repentant whether they are "sinners" or "righteous". See Robert C. Tannehill, *Luke*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 135.

²²John T. Carroll, "Luke's Portrayal of the Pharisees," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 50 (1988): 611.

²³Luke's usage of γογγύζω and διαγογγύζω has OT parallels (Exod 15:24; 16:7-8; Num 14:2, 26-35; 16:11; 17:6, 20) and occurs in contexts where Jesus' relationship to outsiders is being criticized.

they do not value what God values – namely the repentance of sinners (Luke 15:7, 10; cf. Luke 15:28a) – nor do they recognize their own need for repentance (Luke 15:28-30; cf. Luke 15:7).²⁴ The “tax-collectors and sinners” had “ears to hear” (Luke 14:35; cf. Luke 15:1), a quality lacking in the Pharisees.

The travel narrative concludes with the crowds grumbling (διεγόγγυζον) that Jesus was eating with Zacchaeus, a chief tax-collector (Luke 19:1-10).²⁵ Though the Pharisees in Luke are typified by a grumbling spirit, the crowds’ response to Jesus’ eating with Zacchaeus shows the pervasiveness of the attitude. Ultimately, the grumbling of the crowds demonstrates that just like their forefathers, Israel still remains in unbelief and stands at the precipice of judgment (Luke 19:27; cf. Numbers 14:2, 26-38; 1 Corinthians 10:10).

Luke’s portrayal of the Pharisees is varied yet marked by conflict especially in regard to Jesus’ relationship to “sinners.” Luke’s theme of contention is foreshadowed in the opening chapters of the gospel (Luke 1:51-53; 2:34-35; cf. Luke 4:13). From the beginning of Jesus’ ministry all the way up to the crucifixion, Luke describes the contentious relationship Jesus shared with the Pharisees which centered on Jesus’ apparent status as a prophet yet one who maintained table fellowship with “tax-collectors

Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 3a (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 496.

²⁴See chap. 4 of the present work for a more thorough interpretation of Luke 15:1-32.

²⁵Though the Pharisees are not explicitly mentioned, the combination of “grumbling” and the complaint that Jesus is eating with a “sinner” is characteristic of the Pharisees in Luke (Luke 19:7; cf. Luke 5:30; 15:2).

and sinners.’²⁶

Jesus and the “Tax-Collectors and Sinners.” If Jesus’ relationship with the Pharisees was marked by contention in Luke, then his relationship with tax-collectors is generally positive being marked by fellowship and acceptance. Early in the narrative tax-collectors respond to the preaching of John the Baptist by coming to be baptized (Luke 3:12-13). One of Jesus’ first disciples is Levi, a tax-collector who leaves everything to follow (Luke 5:27-28; cf. Matt 9:9; Mark 2:14). Levi puts on a large banquet and invites other tax-collectors which raises the ire of the Pharisees (Luke 5:29). Jesus responds with a statement about the purpose of his ministry, namely to call “sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:30-32; cf. Luke 3:12) thus placing tax-collectors near the center of his mission.²⁷ Luke describes the tax-collectors as those who accepted God’s purpose by being baptized by John (Luke 7:29). On the other hand the Pharisees are contrasted with the tax-collectors since they reject John’s baptism (Luke 7:30). Jesus’ parable highlights this

²⁶Contra Sanders who questions the Synoptic portrayal of the Pharisees as overtly polemical and thus sub-historical. He writes, “Not surprisingly, polemical statements composed by redactors are taken as factual: it is really true that the parable of Luke 18.10-14 was told against ‘some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others’ (18.9), and thus we learn what Pharisees were like (Pharisees: 18.10). Similarly many would have us believe that scribes and Pharisees really did grumble against Jesus for receiving sinners (Luke 15.1f). . . . *None of these examples of polemic can be taken as descriptive.*” E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 338-39 (emphasis added). See also Wright, who states, “When we come to the New Testament, it is clear that we are faced with a *more acute form of the same problem* [The polemical treatment of Shammai by the Hillelites]. If Shammai never appears in rabbinic traditions without being denigrated, the same almost always seems to be true of the Pharisees in general in Paul and the gospels. There are exceptions. . . . Yet in no case is there any question of the Pharisee’s position being affirmed or supported. The Pharisees are seen as enemies of the gospel – not the only ones, but enemies none the less. The stories in the synoptic tradition were similarly handed on in a context (whichever that may have been) which highlighted this emphasis. Such a perspective, like the rabbinic view of Shammai, makes it very difficult to use the New Testament as basic material in our reconstruction of the Pharisees.” The exceptions Wright notes are from Luke. N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 184 (emphasis added). Thus, for Sanders and Wright, polemical means less than historically reliable.

rejection in that the Pharisees, like children in the market, were dissatisfied not only with John's asceticism but also with Jesus' welcoming of "tax-collectors and sinners" (Luke 7:34).

Jesus' pattern throughout his ministry was one of table fellowship with "tax collectors and sinners" (Luke 15:1-2).²⁸ In each of the parables Jesus tells in Luke 15, that which is lost pictures the "tax-collectors and sinners."²⁹ That the "tax-collectors and sinners" have repented is cause for great joy (Luke 15:7, 10, 24). Jesus defines his own ministry in terms of the lost whom he came to seek and save (Luke 19:10). Luke presents Zacchaeus as an example of the success of Jesus' mission to "sinners" (Luke 19:1-10). Although it is difficult for the rich to be saved (Luke 18:24), Jesus' acceptance of Zacchaeus reaffirms that nothing is impossible with God, even the salvation of a rich tax-collector (Luke 18:27).

The synoptic tradition connects "tax-collectors" and "sinners" in several places but Luke has a special emphasis on the larger category of "sinners" of which tax-

²⁷Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 179. He writes, "Jesus saw his mission as being to 'the lost' and the 'sinners': that is, to the wicked."

²⁸The imperfect of ἐγγιζῶ implies that the tax-collectors and sinners were constantly coming to Jesus.

²⁹Even Sanders, who questions the authenticity of each of the parables, writes, "The wicked (more precisely, the lost) [those who stand outside the covenant because of their willful sin] appear prominently in three consecutive parables in Luke, and these parables, if authentic, indicate Jesus' view of them. . . . I do not wish to allegorize the parables, but it is hard not to see the Lost Coin and the Lost Sheep as corresponding to the tax collectors and sinners that Jesus associated with. If we can make this equation, then we can note that they are called 'the lost' (Luke 15.4, 6, 9, 32), and the prodigal son characterizes himself as one who has 'sinned' (Luke 15.18). Luke's setting in 15.1f. (tax collectors and sinners were near Jesus, and the Pharisees and scribes said that Jesus eats with sinners) is of course his own contribution, as are the concluding summaries to the first two parables. . . . But Luke seems to have been on the right track. Jesus was concerned with 'the lost'." E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 179.

collectors are the most recognizable.³⁰ From a literary perspective, the “sinners” in Luke are an ideological category which Luke uses to highlight the distinctiveness of Jesus’ mission.³¹ In portraying Jesus in conflict with the Pharisees over table fellowship with the “sinners,” Luke demonstrates that in Jesus, God is welcoming sinners who were formerly treated as those who stood outside the reach of God’s mercy.³² The “sinners” as a literary tool need not mean Luke lacks a historical referent.³³ The “sinners” in Luke are those who stand against the purposes of God which encompasses everyone in the

³⁰Our discussion of tax-collectors will include discussion of the broader group “sinners” since the two groups are mentioned together in Luke in several places (Luke 5:30; 7:34; 15:1; cf. Matt 9:10, 11; 11:19; Mark 2:15, 16). *ἁμαρτωλός* appears 29 times in the Synoptic gospels: Matthew (5x), Mark (6x), and Luke (18x). Our discussion of tax-collectors will include discussion of the broader group “sinners” since the two groups are mentioned together in Luke in several places (Luke 5:30; 7:34; 15:1; cf. Matt 9:10, 11; 11:19; Mark 2:15, 16).

³¹David A. Neale, *None but the Sinners: Religious Categories in the Gospel of Luke*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series, vol. 58 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 15-16. Neale writes, “At the level of story, Jesus is the main character, the prophet sent from God. The ‘sinners’ provide the ideal issue to highlight the radical nature of his mission and the scope of his call and are the issue around which conflict develops with those presented as the representatives of official Judaism, the Pharisees. These Pharisees, in turn, serve the purpose of setting Jesus’ conduct in contrast to that purportedly dominant form of Judaism and showing Jesus’ superiority to it.”

³²Ibid., 94-95. Neale writes, “The role of the ‘sinner’, beginning with the *Prayer* [of Manasseh] and continuing into the traditions of the later Pseudopigraphic literature, changes, quite remarkably, from a symbol for the utterly condemned to one to whom it is appropriate and desirable to show mercy. The literature of the Christian community stands at the crux of this semantic shift. Whether the Gospel traditions were the cause of the shift is uncertain; but it seems clear that much of the later Pseudopigraphic material was influenced by this new role for the ‘sinner’. The evidence of the *Prayer of Manasseh* would suggest that the view of the ‘sinner’ as a penitent was not unknown before the time of Jesus. Nevertheless, Jesus’ call expressly to ‘sinners’ appears to be a considerable departure from the habit of his time. My conclusion is that the call to repentance was not new, but the call to repentance of the ‘sinner’ was.”

³³Ibid., 97. From a literary perspective Neale’s work is immensely helpful in correctly framing the nature of the conflict Jesus’ encountered with the Pharisees. That being said, he unnecessarily skirts the historical question. After walking through the various options for identifying the “sinners” historically, Neale concludes that the “sinners” in Luke are symbolic. Neale writes, “In a sense, it makes absolutely no difference who the historical referent of a Psalm was because the ‘sinners’ are, after all, exactly who the psalmist, or reader, *believes* them to be. They are the mental product of his world view. The category contains only people who are assigned to it by the judgment of others. For this reason it is best to speak of the ‘sinners’ not in terms of socially identifiable referents, but as a religious ‘category.’”

narrative who stands opposed to Jesus.

Historically speaking, tax-collectors were among some of the most despised members of society in the Roman Empire and its territories.³⁴ The profession was open to much abuse because of the many layers of bureaucracy involved in the process of collecting taxes, each layer collecting above its quota in order to cover expenses as well as turn a profit.³⁵ Besides the many layers of tax-collectors, there were also various taxing regions which made travel expensive for traders as they went from region to region.³⁶ Although tax rates were regulated by statute, the average tax payer was ignorant of the tax rate owed which opened them up to abuse at the hands of tax-

³⁴Hillyer writes, “A Jew entering the customs service cut himself off from decent society. He was disqualified from being a judge or even a witness in court, and excommunicated from the synagogue. The members of his family were considered to be equally tarnished (Sanhedrin 25b). Because of their exactions and extortions, customs officials were in the same legal category as murderers and robbers (Baba Kamma 113a), thieves (Tohoroth 7:6), the robbers and money-changers . . .), and counted among the *‘am hā-āres*, the common herd (Bekhoroth 30b). Money handled by tax collectors was tainted and could not be used, even for charity (Baba Kamma 10:1), for to touch the wealth of a man who obtains it unlawfully is to share his guilt.” Norman Hillyer, “τελώνιον,” in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 756.

³⁵There were at least three levels involved in the collection of taxes in the Roman empire just prior to NT times. Those involved at the first level of the process, the *publicani*, bid on collection rights. The winning bidder would pay the taxes for that region for the entire year to the government and then would collect the tax throughout the year. The *publicani* would turn a profit by collecting more than what had been spent on the bid. Those involved at the second level, the *magistri*, collected the taxes on behalf of the *publicani* who were typically foreigners. The *magistri* were indigenous to the region and would be less susceptible to fraud since they knew local customs. The *magistri* also marked up what was due so as to turn a profit. Those involved at the third level, the *portitores*, were the ones actually responsible for collecting the taxes. The *magistri* were hired out by the *portitores* and added their own mark up to the tax. The τελώνης are the NT equivalent of the *portitores*. The system had been abused to such an extent that Caesar Augustus drastically restructured the way in which taxes were collected around 30 BC. *Ibid.*, 755-56.

³⁶Michel writes, “The Roman empire not only raised tolls at the frontiers but was also subdivided into a series of individual custom areas, and even within these areas there might be customs houses at some points where traders had to pay yet again, though less than at the borders.” Otto Michel, “τελώνης,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 8, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972), 99.

collectors.³⁷

The collection of taxes had political implications as well since those who collected taxes were often considered traitors because of their work on behalf of Rome.³⁸ This was no less true in first-century Israel. As a result of the changes to the tax farming system by Caesar Augustus, the collection of taxes fell to Herod the Great during his reign but was later brought back under Roman control after Herod's son, Archelaus, was removed from power.³⁹ After Archelaus' rule the Romans set up prefects to govern Judea during which time the Sanhedrin appears to have been responsible for the collection of Judean taxes.⁴⁰ To the north in Galilee Herod Antipas was installed as tetrarch after the death of Herod the Great during which time he used the traditional Roman tax farming system to collect taxes.⁴¹

The tax structures of the Roman prefects in Judea and Antipas in Galilee were in place during the time of Jesus' ministry which created political tension. In Judea the situation would have been especially tense since the tax-collectors worked directly for the

³⁷ Michel, "τελώνης," 99-100. Michel writes, "The rates of taxation and sometimes the manner of collection were regulated by law, but the statutes were not always known to provincials. It was possible to inspect the contracts which the state made with publicans. . . . But in practice the tax-collectors were often the only ones with precise knowledge of the relevant statutes."

³⁸Perrin makes this argument. Norman Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 93-102. See also Thomas E. Schmidt, "Taxes," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green and Scot McKnight (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 806; E. P. Sanders, "Jesus and the Sinners," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 19 (1983): 9. Sanders writes, "We can readily understand why 'tax collectors' and 'sinners' go together in several passages in the Gospels: they were all traitors. Tax collectors, more precisely, were quislings, collaborating with Rome. The wicked [i.e., "sinners"] equally betrayed the God who redeemed Israel and gave them his law. There was no neat distinction between 'religious' and 'political' betrayal in first-century Judaism."

³⁹Michel, "τελώνης," 97.

⁴⁰Ibid.

Romans.⁴² In Galilee the tax-collectors worked on behalf of Antipas who was a Jewish client king, a fact which may not have lessened the animus towards them as traitors since Herod's ability to rule was dependent on Roman authority.⁴³ Adding to the tension would have been the competition created between the Roman tax system and the tithe required by Torah.⁴⁴

The necessary activities of the typical tax-collector would have created cultic barriers for the group as well. Tax-collectors were stigmatized as traitors in Jewish society since they worked for the Gentiles and were despised because of their propensity toward dishonesty in the fulfillment of their duties. These two realities – contact with Gentiles and sinful behavior – would have branded all tax-collectors as especially unclean.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Michel, “τελώνης,” 97.

⁴²John R. Donahue, “Tax Collector,” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David N. Freedman (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 6:338. Schmidt writes, “This hatred [for tax-collectors] was particularly intense in Judea, which was under direct Roman control. A visiting Galilean with a reputation for association with tax collectors (Lk 7:34; 19:1-10) might well have been suspected of disloyalty.” Schmidt, “Tax-collectors,” 806.

⁴³Donahue argues elsewhere that Jews in Galilee would not have considered taxes to Antipas as treasonous since he was a Jew and sometimes “very zealous for the rights of Jews.” John R. Donahue, “Tax Collectors and Sinners: An Attempt at Identification,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 33 (1971): 45-46.

⁴⁴Farris writes, “His [the toll-collectors] vocation operated in direct competition to the Temple taxation system. He collected funds on behalf of another powerful institution, the Roman imperial system.” Farris, “A Tale of Two Taxations,” 25.

⁴⁵Rightly Michel, “τελώνης,” 101; Green, *Luke*, 247. Contra Sanders who denies there were “purity” issues at play in Jesus’ table fellowship with tax-collectors. Sanders writes, “To reiterate: the purity laws which governed everybody did not affect ‘table-fellowship’, but principally access to the temple.” Sanders argues that to make the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees one involving purity misses the point since “Jesus was accused of associating with, and offering the kingdom to those who *by the normal standards of Judaism* were wicked. There were doubtless impure, but it was not impurity as such which made them wicked, nor can Jesus’ inclusion of them be construed as defiance primarily of the laws of ritual purity.” Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 186-87 (emphasis original). Sanders’ point is correct in

Summary. Conflict is significant to the narrative flow of Luke's gospel.

Though mainly portrayed as being between Jesus and the religious leaders, the context of the conflict is broader since the Pharisees rejection of Jesus is in fact opposition to God's purposes (Luke 7:30; cf. Luke 2:34-35). Thus there is a cosmic element to the conflict since Satan's opposition is never far from the surface of the narrative (Luke 4:1-13, 33-34; 8:26-39; 9:37-43; 11:14-16; 13:10-17; 22:3-6, 53; 23:35-39).⁴⁶

Luke 18:11-13

With the Pharisee and the tax-collector introduced, Jesus then describes the posture and prayer of each, a juxtaposition which is important to note.⁴⁷

Luke 18:11-12. As is common in Jewish prayer, the Pharisee is pictured as standing to pray.⁴⁸ He is most likely positioned in the inner court of the temple, having gone in as far as a non-priestly Israelite would have been permitted.⁴⁹ Standing off to himself (*πρὸς ἑαυτὸν*), the Pharisee prays quietly (cf. 1 Sam 1:13).⁵⁰

that Jesus' conflict with the Pharisees is not merely over ritual purity but Luke certainly appears to present purity as one of the issues involved in the conflict (Luke 5:12-32).

⁴⁶The mocking of the rulers, the soldiers, and the criminal appear to be another temptation scene (Luke 23:35-39; cf. Luke 4:1-13).

⁴⁷Green, *Luke*, 645; Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 142-44.

⁴⁸1 Sam 1:26; 1 Kgs 8:14, 22. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1462. See also Marshall, *Luke*, 679.

⁴⁹Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1462; Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1186. Green is less certain about where the two would have been standing in the temple. He writes, "It is not possible to be more specific about the whereabouts of the location of these two men within the walls of the temple." Green, *Luke*, 646 n. 111.

⁵⁰Commentators are split on how to render the phrase *πρὸς ἑαυτὸν*. Some understand the phrase as introducing the content of the prayer ("prayed thus about himself"). Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1186; John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35b (Dallas: Word Books, 1993),

The Pharisee's prayer begins much like several psalms with a declaration of thanksgiving to God.⁵¹ A focus on the gracious activity of God on behalf of his people is typical of a thanksgiving psalm (cf. Luke 10:21). In this particular situation, the Pharisee's gratitude is because of what he does not do as well as what he does do in the way of religious activity. The prayer then has a negative and a positive element to it both of which are governed by the verb εὐχαριστῶ. The vocative ὁ θεός as well as πρὸς ἑαυτὸν, which modifies σταθεῖς, demonstrate that the prayer is directed at God and not himself.⁵² Luke intends his reader to view the Pharisee standing off, away from the other worshipers, praying quietly yet aloud but not in a such a way as to attract attention.

The Pharisee first thanks God that he is not like other men (οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων) who, compared to himself, lack diligence in their obedience (Luke 18:11).⁵³ Οἱ λοιποὶ are characterized as thieves (ἄρπαξ), unrighteous (ἄδικος), and sexually immoral (μοιχός). The first and last designations are clear infractions of the Decalogue.⁵⁴ The use

876. Marshall translates the phrase as an Aramaic ethic dative which emphasizes the verb σταθεῖς ("The Pharisee, taking his stand, prayed"). Marshall, *Luke*, 679. Bock sees the phrases modifying προσεύξασθαι thus the Pharisee is praying quietly to himself as with Hannah. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1462. The phrase should be understood as modifying σταθεῖς and not προσεύξασθαι, thus the Pharisee is pictured as standing by himself. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 147-48; Friedrichsen, "The Temple, a Pharisee, a Tax Collector, and the Kingdom of God," 97. See also Green who notes the parallelism Luke intends between the position of the Pharisee and the tax-collector who stood "far off". Green, *Luke*, 648 n. 122.

⁵¹Pss 30; 92; 118; 136; 138. Green, *Luke*, 648. See also Friedrichsen, "The Temple," 93.

⁵²The phrase πρὸς ἑαυτὸν should not be understood in such a way as to picture the Pharisee praying to himself, rather than to God. The phrase ὁ θεός, εὐχαριστῶ σοι shows that the Pharisee's prayer is directed at God. Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 876.

⁵³Nolland writes, "'All other people' is likely to mean all who do not share the strict religious commitments of the Pharisees. He seems to see them all as robbers, evildoers, adulterers, or the like." Ibid. See also Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1187; Green, *Luke*, 648.

⁵⁴Exod 20:14-15. See Stein, *Luke*, 449; Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1187.

of ἄδικος here functions as a general term⁵⁵ for “sinners” and should be understood in contrast to the “righteous” in Luke 18:9 as well as in the rest of the narrative (Luke 1:6; 2:25; cf. Luke 23:50). The Pharisee stands in sharp contrast to those in his vice list.

The Pharisee’s negative comparison ends with the tax-collector as the chief example of how distinct he really is from οἱ λοιποὶ. The tax-collector – a thief, unclean, and a Roman collaborator – stands as the epitome of what it means to be counted among the “sinners.”⁵⁶ The pronoun οὗτος in reference to the tax-collector heightens the comparison and should be understood pejoratively.⁵⁷ The Pharisee’s intention is to highlight what he has not done and with whom he has not associated.⁵⁸ Though the Pharisee is certainly drawing a negative comparison between himself and the rest, especially the tax-collector, it must be emphasized that he credits God’s activity for his avoidance of sin.⁵⁹

It should also be noted that the disdain the Pharisee has towards the tax-collector is not entirely undeserved given the kind of disobedience typical of tax-

⁵⁵David W. Pao and Eckhard J. Schnabel, “Luke,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 349.

⁵⁶The negative use of οὗτος draws a sharp conclusion to the Pharisee’s comparison. Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1187; Marshall, *Luke*, 679; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1462-63; William F. Arndt, *Luke*, Concordia Classic Commentary Series (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), 379. Contra Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 876 who sees no distinction between the tax-collector and the others listed; Contra Farris, who writes, “The puzzling phrase ἢ καὶ ὡς (‘or even as this toll collector’) seems to distance the toll collector from the list of sins rather than to connect him.” Farris, “A Tale of Two Taxations,” 27 n. 11.

⁵⁷Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1462-63; Marshall, *Luke*, 679.

⁵⁸Fitzmyer writes, “Implied in this remark of the Pharisee is that, though he has committed none of the aforementioned crimes, he has not associated with ‘sinners’ either.” Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1187.

collectors. The Pharisee's attitude would have been typical and understandable in the historical setting.⁶⁰ Given their desire to see Israel restored and freed from foreign bondage, it is no surprise that they would withdraw and not associate with those they considered unrighteous since the behavior of the unrighteous jeopardized God's restoration project.⁶¹ However, literarily there is an ironic nuance to the Pharisee's withdrawal at this point in the narrative. By removing himself from "sinners" the Pharisee puts distance between himself and restoration since "sinners" stand at the center of Jesus' mission (cf. Luke 19:10).

The second half of the prayer focuses on the positive religious activity of the Pharisee. His commitment to Torah and thus to God (i.e., his righteousness) is most clearly seen in his pattern of fasting and tithing (Luke 18:12). Fasting was common practice in the Old Testament especially in contexts where there is recognition of sin or the need for prayer (Judg 20:26; 1 Sam 7:6; 31:13; 2 Sam 12:16-23; 1 Kgs 21:27; 2 Chr 20:3-4; Ezra 8:21-23; 9:1-5; Neh 1:4; 9:1-2; Dan 6:16-18; Jonah 3:5). Though fasting was a common Old Testament practice, it is only commanded in the Law on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29-31). Thus, the Pharisee's habit of fasting twice each week goes above and beyond the demands of both the Law and common Jewish practice.

⁵⁹ ὁ θεός, εὐχαριστῶ σοι should be understood as genuine thanksgiving to God. This makes the most sense of the dramatic reversal which occurs with Jesus' declaration in Luke 18:14.

⁶⁰Green writes, "Of course, drawing distinctions – whether as 'separatists' or as those who 'specify' the correct interpretation of Torah – is endemic to Pharisaic identity historically. So it is neither surprising nor necessarily a negative thing to see this Pharisee separate himself from persons who do not take Torah seriously." Green, *Luke*, 648.

⁶¹Wright states, "The majority of Pharisees . . . had as their aim that which purity symbolized: the political struggle to maintain Jewish identity and to realize the dream of national liberation." N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 378-79.

Given the Old Testament context in which fasting is performed in response to sin and given Israel's current status as Roman territory, it is likely that the Pharisee's fasting is done on behalf of the nation in recognition of their situation.⁶²

As with the Pharisee's pattern of fasting, his tithing goes above and beyond what the Law commanded. The focus of the tithe laws is on that which is produced so the Pharisee's tithing goes beyond them in that he tithes on all he himself produced in addition to what he gets through trade or purchase.⁶³ This additional act is done in order to ensure the ritual purity of that which was tithed in the event that the item had not already been tithed previously which would have rendered it unclean.⁶⁴

Although personal obedience is certainly in view, the Pharisee's actions also entail group identity – association with the “righteous” and distance from the rest.⁶⁵ The Pharisee in Luke's parable is typical of Pharisaic piety.

Summary. The portrait of the Pharisee presented in this parable certainly reinforces the general characterization of the Pharisees up to this point in the narrative.

⁶²Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, rev. ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), 140; Farris, “A Tale of Two Taxations,” 28.

⁶³Deut 14:22-23 calls for a tithe on seed, grain, wine, and oil as well as on the firstborn of one's herds and flocks. The tithes were then offered once each year at the harvest festival. Marshall, *Luke*, 679-80.

⁶⁴Farris, “A Tale of Two Taxations,” 28. Farris writes, “These tithes [enumerated in Deuteronomy 14:22-23] were to be paid by the producer but often were not. Such untithed produce was therefore unclean and those who ate it became impure. To make sure of personal purity, the Pharisee tithed everything he owned, even that which presumably he had not himself produced.” See also Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1188; Green, *Luke*, 647 n. 118.

⁶⁵Nolland writes, “The practice of the Pharisee of the parable reflected the disciplined piety practice of his group, and not some individual accomplishment.” Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 876. Green comments, “It is crucial to remember that such ardent behavior as this would have served as an important boundary marker, signifying conformity not only to Torah but also to the forms of Torah-interpretation

In this parable there is a heightened concern over purity and Torah observance especially regarding food and tithing. Although until this point in the narrative conflict has marked Jesus' relationship with the Pharisees, as previously noted, the relationship is not monolithic. Thus, Luke's Pharisee in Luke 18 need not necessarily be understood as an entirely negative character. His commitment and devotion to Torah are exemplary. He would have been highly respected by his contemporaries because of his devotion. Although Jesus critiques the Pharisee's piety later in the parable, to read the Pharisee as a villain lessens the massive irony involved in Jesus' conclusion to the parable (Luke 18:14).⁶⁶

Luke 18:13. When compared to the Pharisee's prayer, the tax-collector's prayer is striking for several reasons. While the Pharisee stands off to himself, likely inside the inner court of the temple precinct, the tax-collector stands far off (*μακρόθεν ἑστῶς*) from the inner court where the Pharisee is located.⁶⁷ Spatially then, there is a

specific to this Pharisee's community. This helps to set him apart from those 'other people' named in his prayer." Green, *Luke*, 647-48.

⁶⁶Contra Bock, who writes, "In effect his [the Pharisee's] prayer is, 'I thank you, God, that I am such a great guy!' Pride permeates the intercession." Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1463. Rightly Nolland, who states, "To read our parable well requires a positive starting image for Pharisee and a negative starting image for tax collector." Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 879. It should also be noted that Jesus' critique is directed at a much more subtle self-righteousness than what is typically understood. This helps to make sense of Luke's introduction to the parable which is directed at "some" (Luke 18:9). If Jesus wanted to criticize the self-righteousness of the Pharisees in particular, he certainly could have directed the parable explicitly to them (cf. Luke 16:14-15). The broader scope of the parable demonstrates that the same kind of confidence in one's works which marked the Pharisees is no less possible in Jesus' followers.

⁶⁷Green rightly sees a contrast between the positions of each worshipper inside the temple. Green, *Luke*, 648 n. 122. Though speculative, it is possible that the tax-collector, certainly a Jew, is not even in the inner court but on the outer edge of the court of the Gentiles. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1464; Marshall, *Luke*, 680. Fitzmyer locates the tax-collector on the outer edge of the court of Israel. Thus the tax-collector is in the same general area as the Pharisee though further removed from the center of the temple. Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1188.

distinction between the Pharisee and the tax-collector.

The tax-collector is described in two ways, both of which are marks of deep anguish. Raising one's eyes to heaven is not uncommon in prayer (Mark 6:41; cf. Luke 9:16).⁶⁸ But Jesus states that the tax-collector was unwilling to lift his eyes to heaven. Ezra takes a similar posture (Ezra 9:5-6) after learning that the post-exilic Israelites, including the priests and Levites, had intermarried with the Gentiles inhabiting the land (Ezra 9:1-2).⁶⁹

The tax-collector is also pictured beating his chest in extreme anguish (cf. Luke 23:48).⁷⁰ Though somewhat anachronistic, Bailey notes the exceptional nature of the tax-collector's behavior by comparing it to that of modern Middle Eastern men. He writes,

“The remarkable feature of this particular gesture [beating the chest in anguish] is the fact that it is characteristic of women, *not men*. After twenty years of observation I have found only one occasion in which Middle Eastern *men* are accustomed to beat on their chests. . . . Women customarily beat on their chests at funerals, but men do not. For men it is a gesture of *extreme* sorrow and anguish and it is almost never used.”⁷¹

That the tax-collector beats his chest is significant since the heart is the seat of the emotions and will in Jewish thought out of which comes sin and evil (Gen 6:5; Ps 14:1;

⁶⁸Regarding looking up to pray, Stein notes Mark 6:41; 7:34; John 11:41; 17:1; Ps 123:1. Stein, *Luke*, 450.

⁶⁹Ezra 9:5-6 (NASB) states, “But at the evening offering I arose from my humiliation, even with my garment and my robe torn, and I fell on my knees and stretched out my hands to the LORD my God; and I said, ‘O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads and our guilt has grown even to the heavens.’”

⁷⁰Luke uses the same verb (*τύπτω*) to describe the crowds beating on their chests as they depart the crucifixion of Jesus (Luke 23:48; cf. Luke 18:13).

⁷¹Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 153 (emphasis original).

95:10; Isa 32:6; Mark 7:21-23; cf. Luke 6:45).⁷²

Clearly in great anguish, the tax-collector's prayer elucidates the reason for his distress and matches his posture as he prays.⁷³ The verb *ἰλάσκομαι*⁷⁴ is translated in a variety of ways by commentators ("be merciful,"⁷⁵ "make an atonement,"⁷⁶ "have pity,"⁷⁷ "be propitiated")⁷⁸ but carries the general idea of God's being merciful to the tax-collector by forgiving his sins. The cultic nuance of *ἰλάσκομαι* and the parable's setting in the Temple are crucial for a proper understanding of the tax-collector's petition.⁷⁹ The tax-collector's cry for mercy implies a request for atonement, possibly even that the sacrifices being offered at that hour be effectual for him, a "sinner."⁸⁰ The tax-collector,

⁷²Marshall, *Luke*, 680; Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 153; Jeremias, *Parables*, 141.

⁷³Nolland writes, "Both the location and the posture speak of the tax collector's intense sense of unworthiness." Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 877. Green notes, "Averting his eyes, beating his breasts – these are demonstrations for humility and shame that are consistent with his request for divine favor." Green, *Luke*, 649.

⁷⁴*ἰλάσκομαι* is found in the New Testament twice (Luke 18:13; Heb 2:17). The noun form *ἰλαστήριον* also occurs only twice in the New Testament (Rom 3:25; Heb 9:5).

⁷⁵Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 873; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1460; Green, *Luke*, 644; Arndt, *Luke*, 378; Robert C. Tannehill, *Luke*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 267; Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 450.

⁷⁶Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 140; Farris, "A Tale of Two Taxations," 30.

⁷⁷Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1183.

⁷⁸Marshall writes, "The words of the man's prayer express his longing for forgiveness. *ἰλάσκομαι* is 'to be propitiated'. . . . The petition appears to be that God will show mercy to the sinner (cf. Ps. 51:1) by forgiving his sin." Marshall, *Luke*, 680. See also Morris, *Luke*, 290.

⁷⁹Hamm, "The Tamid Service in Luke-Acts," 224. Hamm writes, "This terminology suggests that Luke would have the reader understand that the toll collector's prayer has its focus precisely on the Tamid service as a communal liturgy in an attitude of conversion or *metanoia*."

⁸⁰Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 154. Bailey writes, "There in the temple this humble man, aware of his own sin and unworthiness, with no merit of his own to commend him, longs that the great dramatic atonement sacrifice might apply to him."

recognizing his own inability, asks God to remove all barriers which separate him from God, above all his status as “sinner.”

Luke 18:14a

Jesus’ verdict on both men is simple and straightforward yet profoundly unexpected – the tax-collector, and not the Pharisee (οὗτος. . . παρ’ ἐκεῖνον)⁸¹, goes home justified by God (δεδικαιωμένος).⁸² Before discussing what is meant by Luke’s use of δικαίω, we must first explore why the Pharisee was rejected and the tax-collector accepted. Regardless of how one understands δικαίω, there is a massive distinction between the prayers of the two men which brings about Jesus’ verdict.

Comparing the prayers. In determining just what Jesus finds lacking in the Pharisee’s prayer and commendable in the tax-collector’s prayer, it is important to reiterate the social location of Pharisees and tax-collectors in first-century Palestine. The Pharisees were pious, respected, and influential. Tax-collectors were despised, distrusted, and considered outside the reach of God’s mercy.⁸³ Having heard the two

⁸¹The comparative phrase οὗτος. . . παρ’ ἐκεῖνον should be understood as a sharp contrast and translated as “this one rather than the other” instead of as “more than” (cf. Luke 13:1-5). Rightly Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 878; Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1188; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1465. See also Walter Bauer, “παρά,” in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 758. Contra David E. Garland, *Luke*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary Series on the New Testament, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 720.

⁸²The perfect participle δεδικαιωμένος should be understood as a divine passive. Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1188.

⁸³Taking his starting point from the Greek Psalms and the Psalms of Solomon, Neale has argued that the “sinners” in the synoptic tradition are best understood as a category of people rather than a specific group. Commenting on the “sinners” in the Greek Psalms, Neale writes, “A person in a position to perform penance is in a very different situation from the ‘sinner’ for whom no such avenue is open; it

prayers, it would not be difficult for the original hearers of the parable to conclude the exact opposite of Jesus and declare the Pharisee righteous and the tax-collector not. The Pharisee, whose prayer is marked by a God-ward focus (ὁ θεός, εὐχαριστῶ σοι), is faithful to Torah, going above and beyond its demands, and is thereby acceptable to God. But the tax-collector, whose sins were done with a “high hand” (Numbers 15:30-31), is a traitor to his nation and is cut off regardless of any amount of contrition (cf. Hebrews 12:17).

How then can one make sense of Jesus’ declaration? What distinguishes the tax-collector’s prayer from that of the Pharisee? The tax-collector’s recognition of both his sin and his inability to atone for that sin distinguishes his prayer from the Pharisee’s and finds favor with God. The Pharisee does not see his own sin nor recognize his inability to deal fully and finally with his sin which leaves him going home un-justified. Two texts are illustrative at this point: Luke 13:1-5 and Isaiah 58:1-7.

In Luke 13:1-5 Jesus is speaking to a crowd when some from the crowd tell Jesus about the death of several Galileans in the temple whose blood was mingled with that of the sacrifices. Those who reported the offense to Jesus likely expected some type of condemnation of Pilate’s actions.⁸⁴ Instead, Jesus issues a call to repentance. The “sinners” from Galilee, who died, presumably at the hands of Pilate, were no worse than any other Galilean because they suffered in that way (Luke 13:2). But the judgment

marks the divide between inclusion and exclusion from the people of God. It is without question, however, that the ‘sinner’ of the Greek Psalms was completely beyond the pale of such restoration. . . . There is no hint of leniency nor reclamation for those who have been assigned to this category and God is never seen to forgive the ‘sinner’ in the Greek Psalms.” Neale, *None but the Sinners*, 86.

⁸⁴Nolland writes, “Those who brought the matter to Jesus’ attention should perhaps be understood to have been looking for a political statement.” Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 718.

typified in the death of the Galileans will come upon all who do not repent (Luke 13:3).⁸⁵ Jesus repeats the need for repentance this time using an example from Jerusalem in which a tower fell, killing eighteen people (Luke 13:4). Jesus' conclusion is the same – all who do not repent are left to face judgment (Luke 13:5).⁸⁶ Jesus' pronouncement highlights the universality of sin since the judgment on those in Galilee and those in Jerusalem is the same.⁸⁷

Luke 13:1-5 demonstrates that Luke views the entirety of humanity under condemnation for sin. But, how is this condemnation expressed in the Pharisee? Of what sin is the Pharisee in Luke 18:9-14 guilty? Isaiah's critique of Israel's fasts in his day may shed some light on Jesus' implied critique of the Pharisee's fasting (Luke 18:12; cf. Isa 58:1-7).

⁸⁵Although not a "natural calamity," Marshall's comments on Luke 13:3 are still correct. He writes, "The point is then that natural calamities afford no proof that those who suffer in them are any worse sinners than anybody else; far more important is the fact that all sinners face the judgment of God unless they repent." Marshall, *Luke*, 554.

⁸⁶Nolland notes the juxtaposition of Jerusalem (Judea) with Galilee. Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 718.

⁸⁷It is this very point which is missed on those scholars who understand Luke's contrast between the "righteous" and "sinners" in primarily social terms rather than in terms of actual sin. Take for example Dunn, who writes, "Even if at this point [Mark 2:17; cf. Luke 5:31-32] 'righteous' is as much a factional term as 'sinner', it is not the self-assertion of righteousness which Jesus here questions, only the use of the pejorative 'sinner'. Nor does Jesus deny that the epithet is often justified: 'sinners' are equivalent to the 'sick'; he himself called for repentance . . . ; in the parable of the Pharisee and the toll-collector, the latter confesses that he is 'the sinner' (Luke 18.13). The point of Mark 2.17 [and by extension Luke 5:32-32] is rather the implicit rejection of the use of 'sinner' by the self-perceived 'righteous' as a term of dismissal. Jesus' protest was evidently directed against a factionalism which drew too narrow boundaries round what could be regarded as Torah-legitimate behaviour and which judged those outside the boundaries to be 'sinners', law-breakers, disowned by God. He protested against a righteousness which could not recognize covenant loyalty unless it accorded with its own terms and definitions." James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 531-32 (emphasis original). Dunn understands Luke's point as one in which Jesus welcomes those who have been excluded from society (i.e., the "sinners") back into the community of Israel, a pattern which the Pharisees (i.e., the "righteous") should follow. But Luke's point is more than just that the social dimension of Israel is damaged. Sin infects even the "righteous" – those in Jerusalem (cf. Luke 13:4) – who stand closer to the "sinners" than they realize.

In Isaiah 58, God tasks Isaiah with announcing Israel's sin to them, especially regarding their fasts. Although Israel seeks after God (Isa 58:2) and humbles themselves to fast (Isa 58:3a), Isaiah's judgment is that they fundamentally misunderstand the type of fast which God desires (Isa 58:6-7; cf. Luke 4:18).⁸⁸ Luke makes a similar critique of the Pharisees and their tithing (Luke 11:42). Jesus' criticism is that the Pharisees, in their desire to follow the Law on tithing, actually fall short of the Law when it comes to justice (*τὴν κρίσιν*) and the love of God.

Jesus' implicit condemnation of the Pharisee's prayer is rooted in the Pharisee's inability to recognize his own sin despite his exemplary obedience. He has exalted himself by his obedience but fails to recognize his own sin. All, including the Pharisee, stand in danger of judgment without repentance (Luke 13:1-5). The specific nature of the Pharisee's sin is his lack of devotion to the "weightier" (cf. Matt 23:23) things of the law (Luke 11:42). Thus, the Pharisee misses the point that he is in fact one of the *οἱ λοιποὶ* whom he despises (Luke 18:11; cf. Luke 18:9).⁸⁹

The sense of *δικαιόω*. As previously seen, Luke's use of *δικαιόω* has been understood in a variety of ways by scholars. Many, especially among those who hold to the traditional understanding of justification, view the term as basically Pauline (i.e.,

⁸⁸Isa 58:6-7 (NASB) states, "Is this not the fast which I choose, to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free and break every yoke? Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; When you see the naked, to cover him; And not to hide yourself from your own flesh?" Hays writes, "Recall that Jesus quotes from Isaiah 58 at the opening of his public ministry in Luke 4. Isaiah 58 is a scathing prophetic critique of hypocritical fasting." J. Daniel Hays, "'Sell Everything You Have and Give to the Poor': The Old Testament Prophetic Theme of Justice as the Connecting Motif of Luke 18:1-19:10," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 55 (2012): 53.

soteriological in nature) but give little space to explain how it is so.⁹⁰ Others suggest it is not Pauline at all but rather a simple declaration of the tax-collector's acceptance before God.⁹¹

Luke's usage of *δικαίω* runs parallel to Paul's usage but not in the sense that Luke is dependent upon Paul or is recasting justification in order to parrot Pauline theology.⁹² If Luke was one of Paul's traveling companions, the influence of Paul on Luke is understandable.⁹³ But Luke is also an able theologian in his own right.⁹⁴ Both Luke and Paul – though writing in different ways, in different contexts, to different audiences – share access to the resurrected Christ (Luke by way of sources, Paul by means of personal appearance) as well as a rich understanding of the Old Testament⁹⁵

⁸⁹Green writes, "We must not overlook the reality that in Luke's narration even Pharisees must count themselves among the 'others' from whom this Pharisee distances himself!" Green, *Luke*, 648-49.

⁹⁰Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 550; Stein, *Luke*, 451; Marshall, *Luke*, 680; E. E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 215; Jeremias, *Parables*, 141.

⁹¹Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 878; Garland, *Luke*, 720; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1465; Green, *Luke*, 649.

⁹²Luke's writings establish him as an early theologian of the first order. It is unfair to criticize Luke because he is not Paul. See Fitzmyer, *Luke I-IX*, 27.

⁹³There is a general consensus that Luke was a travelling companion of Paul's. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Luke the Theologian: Aspects of His Teaching* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 1-26; Green, *Luke*, 21; Garland, *Luke*, 21-24; Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 4-7.

⁹⁴Luke's theological skill is especially clear in his passion narrative where he weaves the synoptic tradition he received with Isaiah's Suffering Servant to give a clear picture of Jesus as the "Righteous One" who will "justify the many" (Luke 23:47; cf. Isa 53:11). This line of argumentation will be explored in chap. 4 of the present work.

⁹⁵Fitzmyer writes, "Moreover, the notion of justification does not transcend that of the OT; it is rooted in the spirit of justification which pervades such psalms as 51 or 24:3-5 or 2 *Esdr.* 12:7. In other words, one should beware of reading this parable with all the connotations of Pauline justification." Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1185 (emphasis added). To criticize Luke's understanding of justification as no further advanced than that of the Old Testament is slippery since Paul's understanding apparently was not either! See Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification*, New Studies in

which enables both to produce theologically substantial writings, especially as each of them communicates the nature of justification.

Three aspects of the parable highlight the sense of justification in Luke's thought. First, justification is granted to the ungodly. Though the tax-collector is a sympathetic character in the flow of Luke's narrative, he is not in any sense "good" nor does Luke portray him as "good." Tax-collectors are rightly characterized as "sinners" throughout the gospel. Thus, Jesus' declaration of "righteous" is announced to the wicked, not the righteous (Ezek 33:12-13; Prov 17:15; cf. Rom 5:6).

Second, Luke understands justification to be fundamentally tied to atonement. Some critique Luke's portrait of justification because it lacks any reference to the cross.⁹⁶ But, as previously argued, this conclusion misses the setting of the parable in the temple⁹⁷ as well as the tax-collector's plea for propitiation (*ιλάσκομαι*), both of which link justification in Luke to atonement (Luke 18:10, 13; cf. Rom 3:24-25).

Third, Luke understands justification to be by faith. Jesus' declaration goes out in response to the tax-collector's request for mercy as opposed to the Pharisee's gratitude over his own righteousness. In other words, justification as presented in Luke

Biblical Theology, vol. 9, ed. D. A. Carson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 38-45. Though brief, Marshall too is correct to note the Old Testament background to *δικαιόω* which Luke and Paul held in common. He writes, "This is the only occurrence in the Gospels of this characteristically Pauline use . . . , but the language is not based on Paul (cf. Ps. 51:19; 1QSb 4:22; 4 Ez. 12:7; . . .)." Marshall, *Luke*, 680.

⁹⁶Gottlob Schrenk, "δικαιος," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 215. Fitzmyer writes, "In the pre-Lucan tradition used here Jesus' teaching on justification is recorded, but it is still a far cry from justification by grace through faith; there is as yet 'no reference to the saving act of the cross' (G. Schrenk, TDNT 2. 215)." Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1185.

⁹⁷Even if the setting in the temple is not during the afternoon sacrifices that the two men are in the temple imports a cultic element into the parable.

18 occurs in response to faith which is explicitly mentioned in the previous parable (Luke 18:8), and imaged throughout the context of the parable, a point to be pressed in the following chapter. Thus, Luke's tax-collector is put forward as an example of the kind of faith which the Son of Man is seeking (Luke 18:8; cf. Luke 18:13), a faith which results in justification.

Luke 18:14b

Finally, we see that Luke understands justification in terms of eschatological exaltation, a theme which appears in the wider context of the parable (Luke 18:1-8) and also reaches back to the beginning of the narrative (Luke 1:51-55; 2:34-35). This is the sense of Luke 18:14b which best explains *δικαιόω*. Jesus' declaration is more than a "straightforward Jewish statement" about who is right or wrong in a court case.⁹⁸ It is a judicial declaration of "righteous" by God to the "unrighteous," the result of which is a new status. The two men go up to the temple to pray (Luke 18:10), but the tax-collector is said to go home "having been justified" (Luke 18:14a). On account of the tax-collector's prayer in the temple, God affected a new reality, a new status for the tax-collector, a status of "righteous." Jesus' declaration trumps the Pharisee's conclusion regarding the tax-collector.

The rationale underlying Jesus' declaration regarding the tax-collector (Luke 18:14a) is elucidated by the *ὅτι* clause which follows (Luke 18:14b). The proud are

⁹⁸Wright states, "But this [*δικαιόω* in Luke 18:14] is hardly, as it stands, a statement of the mainstream Protestant doctrine of justification or of the rather different Pauline one. It is a straightforward Jewish statement, corresponding for instance to Judah's statement about Tamar, after his immorality and hypocrisy have been exposed ('she is in the right, rather than me'): one is in the right, the other is in the

brought low by God, while the humble receive an exalted status (cf. Luke 1:51-53; 14:11; Matt 18:4; 23:12; 1 Pet 5:6).⁹⁹ Thus, reversal – a theme which Luke threads throughout his narrative – is at the core of how Luke understands justification.¹⁰⁰ The parallel Jesus draws between the two main characters clearly encapsulates this theme. The tax-collector is exalted (i.e., justified) on account of the humility demonstrated in his prayer while the Pharisee is brought low (i.e., not justified) on account of the pride inherent in his prayer. Again one must be careful not to impute to the Pharisee a mindset of conscious self-reliance. From the Pharisee’s perspective he is expressing gratitude to God, but from God’s perspective the Pharisee is in fact relying on himself which marks him as one who will be brought low.

Jesus’ statement at the end of the parable (Luke 18:14b) parallels the previous parable which ends with Jesus asking whether or not faith will be found at the coming of the Son of Man (Luke 18:8). The faith which the Son of Man seeks is fundamentally expressed in the humility seen in the prayer of the tax-collector. Faith is the turning away from self and turning to God, especially in humble expectation of finding mercy. In this way faith is linked to repentance though they are conceptually distinct.¹⁰¹

wrong. There is an implicit court case going on, and the verdict is going in favour of one person rather than the other.” N.T. Wright, *Paul in Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 159

⁹⁹The passive verbs (*ταπεινωθήσεται* and *ύψωθήσεται*) should be understood as divine passives since God is the one who will perform both actions. The theme of exaltation/humiliation is rooted in the early chapters of Luke (Luke 1:51-53).

¹⁰⁰Nolland writes, “The addition of v 14b aligns the parable with the motif of reversal that has earlier been brought into prominence (see 1:45, 48, 52), and also bridges to the following unit (18:15-17), which emphasizes receiving the kingdom like a child.” Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 878. See also Stein, *Luke*, 452; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1465.

Conclusion

Several features of the parable are key in order to understand justification as Luke presents it in Luke 18:9-14. First, the climax of the parable (Luke 18:14b) actually informs the whole, giving it an eschatological trajectory which shapes Luke's understanding of justification.¹⁰² The Day of the Lord (Luke 17:22), the coming of the Son of Man (Luke 18:8), each of these ideas inform the eschatological exaltation (Luke 18:14b) which grounds Luke's understanding of justification.

Second, beyond just the context, the balanced structure of the parable with its contrastive figures draws out the intended contrast between the Pharisee and the tax-collector. Typical of Lukan style,¹⁰³ this juxtaposition adds a layer of meaning to the parable and prepares the reader for later intentional pairings.

Third, the two main characters of the parable play significant roles in the whole of Luke's narrative. Both Pharisees and tax-collectors, the latter of whom are often linked with "sinners," appear at critical junctures in the narrative. Since these characters are significant in previous places in the narrative, the parable functions as somewhat of a climax to the narrative in so far as the Pharisees and tax-collectors are

¹⁰¹It is interesting to note how Luke 18:1-14 pairs the widow (image of faith) and the tax-collector (image of repentance) as does Luke 18:35-19:10 with the pairing of the blind beggar (image of faith) and Zacchaeus (image of repentance). Though distinct from one another, the two images are mutually interpretive and linked in Luke's mind.

¹⁰²An eschatological current actually runs throughout the parable as well as its wider context (Luke 17:20-18:8; 18:15-19:10), a point which will be explored in the following chapter.

¹⁰³Zechariah (Luke 1:18-23, 67-79) and Mary (Luke 1:34-38, 46-56); Simeon (Luke 2:25-35) and Anna (Luke 2:36-38); the widow of Zarephath (Luke 4:26) and Naaman the Syrian (Luke 4:27); the centurion and his servant (Luke 7:1-10) and the widow and her son (Luke 7:11-17); the woman with the issue of blood (Luke 8:43-48) and Jairus (Luke 8:41-42, 49-56); the un-neighborly lawyer (Luke 10:25, 29) and the hospitable sisters (Luke 10:38-42); the shepherd with the lost sheep (Luke 15:4) and the woman

concerned.

with the lost coin (Luke 15:8); the widow (Luke 18:2-5) and the unjust judge (Luke 18:2-5); the widow (Luke 18:2-5) and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14); the rich (Luke 21:1) and the poor widow (Luke 21:2).

CHAPTER 3

NARRATIVE CONGRUENCE: LUKE 18:9-14 IN ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

Introduction

Having attempted in the previous chapter to establish that Luke understands justification as fundamentally eschatological and soteriological, it is now necessary to discover whether or not this understanding fits with the rest of Luke's theological program. There are two parts to this quest, the second of which will be explored in the following chapter. The first part will be discussed in what follows in this chapter, namely, does an eschatological/soteriological understanding of justification expressed in Luke 18:9-14 make exegetical sense in the narrative surrounding the parable? In other words, does this interpretation of Luke 18:9-14 fit within the flow of Luke's narrative in the context immediately preceding and following Luke 18:9-14? Looking at Luke 17:20-18:8 and Luke 18:15-19:10, we will argue that an eschatological/soteriological reading of Luke 18:9-14 makes the most sense for this section of Luke's narrative.

Luke 17:20-18:8

Eschatological endurance runs throughout the preceding context of Luke 18:9-14. In Luke 17, the Pharisees questioned Jesus as to when God's kingdom would arrive (Luke 17:20-21). Immediately after this Jesus instructs his disciples about what to expect when God's kingdom arrives by describing it in terms of the Son of Man's coming (Luke

17:22). Jesus' point is that the disciples need not worry about missing the Son of Man's coming since it will be clear to all. The Son of Man's coming will not be something hidden, but will be with great power and force, as with a bolt of lightning (Luke 17:24; cf. Daniel 7:13-14). But one must not miss the juxtaposition – the Son of Man's coming in power is preceded by suffering and rejection (Luke 17:25). Before dominion can be granted to the Son of Man, he must endure an eschatological ordeal figured in two OT events – the Flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.¹

In both these instances there is an implicit call to endurance. Noah is saved through the flood because he endured the temptation to seek comfort and ease and embraced the building of the ark (cf. Heb 11:7). Likewise, Lot is saved from the fiery sulfur because he resisted the temptation to look back towards the city, unlike his wife who acted in unbelief like the generation who wandered in the wilderness (Gen 19:26; cf. Num 14:2-4). Jesus, having warned his disciples about the trials to come and the need to endure, introduces a persistent widow to them in order to reinforce his point.

The parable consists of three sections: an interpretive insertion (Luke 18:1), the parable proper (Luke 18:2-5), and Jesus' application of the parable (Luke 18:6-8). Luke 18:1 is a narrative intrusion in which Luke gives his readers the parable's purpose prior to Jesus telling the parable (cf. Luke 18:9).² The introduction of a new pericope is more of a transitional statement than a sharp break in the flow of the narrative since the theme of

¹Green rightly notes the structure of this passage. Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 634.

²For a helpful work on narrative asides in Luke's gospel, see Steven M. Sheeley, *Narrative Asides in Luke-Acts*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplemental Series, vol. 72 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd, 1992).

endurance is carried through into the parable and as well as into Jesus' interpretation of the parable. Luke 18:2-5 forms the parable proper.³ The parable is structured around two main characters, a widow and a judge. As is common in Luke's gospel, a male and female character are juxtaposed with each other.⁴ The parable concludes with Jesus' explanation of the parable (Luke 18:6-8).

Luke 18:1

Luke 18 opens with the parable about the widow and the unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8) which is immediately followed by the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14). Jesus tells the first parable as an encouragement to his disciples to pray (Luke 18:1), a necessity which they cannot afford to neglect.⁵ In fact it is by their prayers that the disciples are strengthened and enabled to remain steadfast, to not lose heart.⁶ Jesus is preparing the disciples for that time when he will no longer be with them as well as future suffering that will come as a result of their following him.

³A similar story appears in Sirach 35:18-19 though the connections between the two texts should not be pressed. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1445.

⁴Zechariah (Luke 1:18-23, 67-79) and Mary (Luke 1:34-38, 46-56); Simeon (Luke 2:25-35) and Anna (Luke 2:36-38); the widow of Zarephath (Luke 4:26) and Naaman the Syrian (Luke 4:27); the centurion and his servant (Luke 7:1-10) and the widow and her son (Luke 7:11-17); the woman with the issue of blood (Luke 8:43-48) and Jairus (Luke 8:41-42, 49-56); the un-neighborly lawyer (Luke 10:25, 29) and the hospitable sisters (Luke 10:38-42); the shepherd with the lost sheep (Luke 15:4) and the woman with the lost coin (Luke 15:8); the widow (Luke 18:2-5) and the unjust judge (Luke 18:2-5); the widow (Luke 18:2-5) and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14); the rich (Luke 21:1) and the poor widow (Luke 21:2). See also Jerome Kodell, "Luke and the Children: The Beginning and End of the Great Interpolation (Luke 9:46-56; 18:9-23)," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 49 (1987): 417.

⁵Note Luke's infinitival use of δεῖ. This verb appears 40 times in Luke-Acts. In most occurrences in Luke, it carries the idea of a divine necessity. See Charles H. Cosgrove, "The Divine ΔΕΙ in Luke-Acts: Investigations into the Lukan Understanding of God's Providence," *Novum Testamentum* 26 (1984): 168-90. Here, the verb governs both the need for the disciples "to pray" and "to not lose heart." It appears that the point is prayer is the God-ordained means by which the disciples will not lose heart but will endure the suffering which will certainly find them.

Luke 18:2-5

The parable is spoken to the same crowd⁷ that Jesus has been speaking to and centers on two main characters – a widow⁸ who has been defrauded in some way and a judge who is compelled by convenience more than by justice. The nature of her case is never made explicit but one can assume it is financial⁹ since widows were typically poor and easily taken advantage of in first century Palestine.¹⁰ Also, the widow appears to have no family or anyone else who may advocate for her with regard to her court case since she goes by herself to plead before the judge.¹¹ Luke uses the word ἀντιδίκος to

⁶In the NT, ἐγκακέω appears several times in Paul's letters in conjunction with hardship or suffering (2 Thess 3:13; Gal 6:9; 2 Cor 4:1, 16; Eph 3:13).

⁷Since there is no narrative indicator pointing to a change in location or setting, αὐτοῖς (Luke 18:1) should be understood as a reference to the same crowd from Luke 17:20ff.

⁸That the main character in the parable is a widow should not come as a surprise since Luke gives much attention to outcasts and those on the fringes of society.

⁹Jeremias interprets the offense to be financial. He writes, "Since the widow brings her case to a single judge, and not before a tribunal, it would appear to be a money-matter: a debt, a pledge, or a portion of an inheritance, is being withheld from her." See Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, rev. ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), 153.

¹⁰Snodgrass writes, "Widows were often left with no means of support. If her husband left an estate, she did not inherit it, although provision for her upkeep would be made. If she remained in her husband's family, she had an inferior almost servile, position. If she returned to her family, the money exchanged at the wedding had to be given back. Widows were so victimized that they were often sold as slaves for debt." See Klyne Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 453. See also I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1978), 672. There are of course exceptions to this picture of widows. The prophetess Anna appears to have been well taken care of in order that she is free to serve in the temple (Luke 2:36-38).

¹¹This is a significant factor since it was not merely a widow's poverty which affected her but also her powerlessness to do very much about it. Gowan writes, "Poverty was a plight which might occur to anyone, but there were certain groups of people who were powerless for reasons in addition to poverty. In a society which depended so heavily on human muscle power for subsistence, a family without one adult male, composed of a widow and her children, would find it difficult to survive. Theirs was an entirely involuntary predicament, the result of a death; and it was such a wide-spread problem in the ancient Near East that the plight of the widow and orphan is mentioned in the literature of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Ugarit, as well as in the Old Testament. In each of these cultures the god of justice and the king were

describe the widow's legal adversary.¹²

Luke's use of ἐκδικέω should be understood more in terms of restitution than vengeance both of which fall legitimately within the semantic range.¹³ The widow does not want her opponent punished so much as she wants to regain that of which she has been defrauded. This assumes that her case is financial in nature.

The widow has exhausted all legal recourse and is left to a judge who is not obligated to Torah (cf. Deut 27:19; Ps 68:5; Mal 3:5).¹⁴ The widow has no advocate and no other legal means and stands in a desperate situation as she seeks justice. The widow's plight is similar to that of the psalmist in several instances as she struggles for relief and vindication.¹⁵ Despite her circumstances, the widow is determined to have

expected to look out for them because the structures of society left them extremely vulnerable." Donald E. Gowan, "Wealth and Poverty in the Old Testament: The Case of the Widow, the Orphan, and the Sojourner," *Interpretation* 41 (1987): 343.

¹² ἀντίδικος is used elsewhere to describe a legal opponent who is bringing a debtor to a judge (Luke 12:58; cf. Matt 5:25). Peter also uses it to describe Satan (1 Pet 5:8) as he prowls like a lion.

¹³See Walter Bauer, "ἐκδικέω," in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 300-01.

¹⁴It is unclear if the judge is an Israelite or a Gentile. The judge does not fear God (τὸν θεὸν μὴ φοβούμενος) nor respect men (ἄνθρωπον μὴ ἐντρέπόμενος) which could be understood as a reference to him being a Gentile. See Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark Limited, 1975), 411. Derrett also notes that though it was frowned upon, it was not uncommon for Jews to seek verdicts in Gentile courts. He writes, "It is obvious to everyone that Jews, including the pious, did not boycott gentile courts." J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Law in the New Testament: The Parable of the Unjust Judge," *New Testament Studies* 18 (1972): 185. Even if the judge is not a Gentile, he is described as an unfaithful Israelite at best. Bailey points to evidence of the reprehensible behavior of some judges during New Testament times. See Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary Cultural Approach to the Parables of Luke* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 131. Bock also notes that it is likely the judge is a Jew since Rome allowed the Jews to handle most of their own legal affairs. See Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 3b (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996), 1447.

¹⁵See Pss 10:18; 54:1-2; 82:3; 140:12; cf. Psalm 34:15-22. See also John Mark Hicks, "Parable of the Persistent Widow (Luke 18:1-8)," *Restoration Quarterly* 33 (1991): 218.

things made right by the judge, continually coming to him seeking a favorable decision. But, the judge is equally determined not to give her a favorable decision.¹⁶ It is only as she comes over and over again that she finally wears the judge down.¹⁷

The judge is not moved by compassion for the widow nor does he have a change of heart towards her. In fact, he describes himself as one who does not fear God nor respect men (Luke 18:4) so clearly a change in attitude is not motivating his decision. The judge grants the widow's request based on principles of sheer self-preservation alone. He fears that if he does not give the widow justice she will wear him down (ὕπωπιάζῃ) completely (εἰς τέλος) by her constant badgering (Luke 18:5).¹⁸ The judge is not threatened by the widow rather she is a nuisance to him.

Luke 18:6-8

Jesus, after telling the parable, presses the point with his disciples by drawing

¹⁶Notice the two imperfect verbs – ἤρχετο (18:3) and ἤθελεν (18:4). Plummer writes, “He [the judge] continued refusing, just as she continued coming.” See Plummer, *Luke*, 412.

¹⁷μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα refers back to the widow's coming as well as the judge's refusal.

¹⁸The verb ὑπωπιάζω is a boxing term which means “to give a black eye.” See Walter Bauer, “ὕπωπιάζω,” in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1043. The context is an odd one in which to find ὑπωπιάζω which presents difficulty in rendering it correctly. Derrett understands the judge's decision as one of social convenience. The judge does not want to lose face with the community and thus gives the widow a favorable decision. See Derrett, “Law in the New Testament,” 189-91. This understanding of ὑπωπιάζω does not fit with what we know about the judge though. The judge does not fear God nor respect men so he is not going to be moved to grant the widow justice because he could lose face with his community. See Green, *Luke*, 641; Robert Stein, *The Gospel of Luke* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 445. Others understand it in hyperbolic terms and translate ὑπωπιάζω as “to beat down,” or “to do violence” thus the judge rules in her favor out of astonishment at her behavior. If she continues she may assault the judge as well. See Green, *Luke*, 641. This interpretation highlights the physicality of ὑπωπιάζω but misses the sense of Jesus' explanation of the parable. Stein writes, “Ultimately, however, the exact reason for the judge's yielding to the widow's request has no corresponding reality. What the parable seeks to teach is not *why* God will bring justice for his people (18:8) but *that* he will.” Stein, *Luke*, 445 (italics original).

their attention to the judge's response.¹⁹ One should not find it troubling that Luke would use an unjust judge to highlight something about God's character.²⁰ It is characteristic of Luke to use unexpected characters to make his point. Luke has already told a parable about a Samaritan who fulfills the law of neighbor love (Luke 10:25-37) as well as encouraged his readers to act shrewdly like the unjust manager (Luke 16:1-13). It is the younger, wayward brother who is welcomed into the father's family while the older, "righteous" brother stands outside (Luke 15:11-32). Beyond the parables, Luke also records Jesus' synagogue sermon and the crowd's response to him when he brought up God's care for two Gentiles, the widow of Zarephath and Naaman the Syrian (Luke 4:25-27).

Jesus frames his application in the form of a two-part rhetorical question which turns on the willingness of the judge to grant justice to the widow compared to the willingness of God to show concern for his people (Luke 18:7). Jesus' point in asking the first question (18:7a) is that the disciples should be encouraged to persist in prayer to God because he loves them as his elect people (cf. Deuteronomy 6:6-8). If an unrighteous judge is willing to grant the request of a powerless widow for whom he cares nothing, how much more will God answer the prayers of his elect to whom he has

¹⁹Some have argued that the point of Jesus' application focuses more on one character than the other. For the judge, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 28a (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Publishing, 1981); 1180. For the widow, see Barbara E. Reid, "A Godly Widow Persistently Pursuing Justice: Luke 18:1-8," *Biblical Research* 45 (2000): 25. Both the widow and the judge are highlighted in Jesus' application. See Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1450.

²⁰Rightly Fitzmyer, who writes, "To concentrate on this aspect of the parable and its applications is to miss the real point of the parable." Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1178. That being said, God does appear to be behaving like an unjust judge. But, Jesus' conclusion that God will act quickly on behalf of his elect whom he loves, demonstrates that God is in fact not unjust despite appearances.

committed himself in covenant?²¹

Luke's lone use of *ἐκλεκτός* here highlights the eschatological nature of the vindication Jesus has in mind. Those whom God loves and who persevere in prayer will one day fully experience the vindication they seek.²² The widow's constant appeal to the judge is the model Jesus' disciples are to follow. Both "day and night" the elect are to cry (*βοάω*)²³ out to God much like the widow who would not stop pleading with the judge for vindication.²⁴

Jesus directs another rhetorical question at his disciples which is made difficult to interpret because of Luke's limited use of *μακροθυμέω* and Jesus' statement in Luke 18:8 that God will act "quickly" (*ἐν τάχει*) to vindicate his elect.²⁵ That God will grant justice to his elect as they cry out to him in the same manner as the widow is certain (Luke 18:7a). But, the speed with which this is done is called into question in

²¹The "lesser-to-greater" argument is hard to miss in this passage. See Green, *Luke*, 642; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1450; Marshall, *Luke*, 674; Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1988), 280; Stein, *Luke*, 445.

²²Marshall writes, "The use of the term [*ἐκλεκτός*] implies that eschatological vindication is in view, and not a purely this-worldly answer to prayer." Marshall, *Luke*, 674. See also Green, *Luke*, 641.

²³*βοάω* occurs several times in Luke's gospel (Luke 1:42; 3:4; 9:38; 18:38) and tends to be used in very evocative, emotional contexts. Elizabeth "cries" out a blessing on Mary when she hears about the coming birth of Jesus (Luke 1:42). John the Baptist is said to be one "crying" in the wilderness in preparation for Messiah (Luke 3:4; cf. LXX Isa 40:3). A man whose son was possessed by a demon "cries" out for Jesus to heal the boy (Luke 9:38). A blind beggar "cried" out to Jesus as he walked by asking to be healed (Luke 18:38). This evocative use of *βοάω* has roots in the Old Testament, the Psalms and Isaiah in particular (Pss 9:7-12; 22:12; 27:7; 34:15-18; Isa 40:3; 54:1; 65:19). Brown notes, "But in many contexts in both Testaments it is expressive of the extremities of man's needs and joys." Colin Brown, "*βοάω*," *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 410.

²⁴This is an echo of Luke's portrayal of the prophetess Anna who was in the temple "night and day" worshipping and serving the Lord (Luke 2:37). See Green, *Luke*, 642; Marshall, *Luke*, 674.

²⁵Bock notes 12 different interpretations of *μακροθυμέω*. See Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1451-54.

μακροθυμέω (Luke 18:7b).²⁶ The best way to translate Jesus' second question seems to be "Will he [God] endure patiently during their [coming to him]." The point of the response is to highlight the content of the parable. Just as the judge was unable to endure the widow's persistence, God will not behave like the judge who endured the widow for a season (Luke 18:4a), rather he will act to vindicate his people quickly since he loves his elect. Their cries will be answered by God quickly and gladly. Though it seems God is delaying, his elect will soon experience vindication. This interpretation allows μακροθυμέω to carry its typical sense and it heightens the parallels Jesus draws between the widow and God's elect as well as the judge and God.²⁷

The Son of Man's search for faith (Luke 18:8) alludes to the OT narratives surrounding Noah and Lot (cf. Luke 17:26-32). The Flood is precipitated by a second fall in which mankind went its own way and became wholly corrupt (Gen 6:9-13). Noah and his family were the only ones who acted in faith upon God's promise and were spared (Gen 6:22; cf. Luke 17:27). Likewise, the deliverance of Lot is highlighted against the back drop of the pervasive unrighteousness in Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 13:13). That the cities were destroyed despite Abraham's request that God spare judgment if the righteous could be found in them demonstrates the complete lack of faith present in the cities (Gen 19:22-33; cf. Luke 17:29). Jesus' concluding question brings the discussion full circle: will the Son of Man find faith on the earth when he comes or

²⁶ὁ θεός οὐ μὴ ποιήσῃ τὴν ἐκδίκησιν τῶν ἐκλικτῶν αὐτοῦ τῶν βοώντων αὐτῶ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός καὶ μακροθυμεῖ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς;

²⁷The NIV's rendering – "Will he keep putting them off?" – seems closest to Luke's intention. See Stein, *Luke*, 446.

will it be as in the days of Noah and Lot?²⁸

Summary

Several key features of Luke 17:20-18:8 lead into and setup Luke's parable in Luke 18:9-14. First, the eschatological current does not recede at Luke 18:8 but flows directly into and floods the parable of the Pharisee and the tax-collector, a feature which is especially clear in Jesus' conclusion (Luke 18:14b).²⁹ The exaltation of the humble as well as the humiliation of the self-exalting are themes which pepper the narrative (Luke 1:51-52; 9:46-48; 10:15, 21; 11:43; 12:42-44; 16:15). Even when the language of exaltation/humiliation is not present, the concept is, especially in regards to the many table scenes in Luke (Luke 13:30; 14:7-11, 12-14; 16:19-31).

Besides the eschatological link between the two texts, the concentration of righteousness language in Luke 18:1-14 is significant. Six times in Luke 18:1-8 some form of the $\delta\iota\kappa$ root occurs.³⁰ Prayer also is fundamental to both parables. The persistence of the widow exemplifies the requisite persistence in prayer expected by the Son of Man (Luke 18:1) while the contrasting prayers of the Pharisee and the tax-

²⁸Stein, *Luke*, 444.

²⁹Contra Nolland who draws an unnecessarily sharp distinction between the two parables. Nolland writes, "The prayer language common to vv 1 and 9 could support a link between 18:1-8 and 18:9-14, but the future orientation, the role of the Son of Man, and the concern with the timing of his coming, all distinguish 18:1-8 from 18:9-14 and provide links with what precedes; 18:9-14 has its strongest links with the following pericopes." John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35b (Dallas: Word Books, 1993), 865. Bock appears to draw a false distinction as well. He writes, "Luke 18:9-14 presents a second consecutive parable about prayer, but the theme has changed. . . . The attention here is not on eschatology but on anthropology and soteriology." Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1458. Garland too sees a break between Luke 18:1-8 and 18:9ff. David E. Garland, *Luke*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary Series on the New Testament, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 716. So too Green, *Luke*, 643.

³⁰Luke 18:3 (2x), 18:5, 18:6, 18:7, and 18:8. If one extends out to Luke 18:9-14, there are a total of 9 occurrences in these two parables.

collector highlight the posture which God deems acceptable (Luke 18:11-13).

The characterization in each parable also draws the two into a significant parallel. The motif of contest between the “righteous” and “sinners” is significant in each. The judge (Luke 18:2) becomes an additional *ἀντίδικος* (cf. Luke 18:3) for the widow, who although not a “sinner,” stands as an outcast among the weak of society similar to the “sinners.” This dynamic can also be observed in the Pharisee’s contempt for the tax-collector, a self-described “sinner” (Luke 18:9, 11; cf. Luke 18:13). Faith too is pictured in both the widow’s persistence (Luke 18:4-5, 8) and the tax-collector’s humble cry for mercy (Luke 18:13). The result of each character’s faith is their justification – the widow, who cried out to the judge, is finally granted justice from the judge (Luke 18:5) while the tax-collector, who cries out for mercy to God, goes home have been justified by God (Luke 18:14a).³¹

These features of Luke 17:20-18:8 substantiate a reading of Luke 18:9-14 which understands justification in Luke as fundamentally eschatological and soteriological.

Luke 18:15-19:10

Clearly the parable of the Pharisee and the tax-collector is important in determining what, if anything, there is to say about a Lukan theology of justification. That being said, the parable itself stands in a significant interpretive relationship to the remaining material in Luke’s travel narrative (Luke 18:15-19:10). Key themes and

³¹Though the language of faith is not used in Luke 18:9-14, as we stated previously, Luke brings together the two concepts of “faith” and “repentance” in such a way that they are two sides of the same coin. This reality can also be seen in Peter’s speech in Solomon’s portico (Acts 3:16, 19).

figures in Luke 18:15-19:10 also bolster the conclusions regarding the nature of Luke's understanding of justification from the previous chapter – namely, that it is both eschatological and soteriological.

Luke 18:15-17

As Jesus continues his journey to Jerusalem, small children are brought to him in order that he might touch them (Luke 18:15a; cf. Mark 10:13a; Matt 19:13a).³² The disciples rebuke those bringing children to Jesus (Luke 18:15b; cf. Mark 10:13b; Matt 19:13b) to which Jesus responds with a rebuke of his own (Luke 18:16; cf. Mark 10:14; Matt 19:14).³³

Several elements of the pericope tightly link it to the previous parable and help to inform Jesus' declaration of the tax-collector as "righteous" (Luke 18:13). First, there is a clear connection between the humble who will be exalted (Luke 18:14) and the children who will receive the kingdom (Luke 18:16-17). The type of exaltation Luke has in mind is an eschatological exaltation which, in this passage, he describes in terms of receiving the kingdom. So then the children, functioning as an example of the humble who will be exalted, conceptually embody justification in that their admittance into God's kingdom parallels Jesus' declaration that the tax-collector went home having been granted right relations with God on account of his humble turning away from self and

³²Given Luke's other uses (Luke 1:41, 1:44, 2:12, 2:16; Acts 7:19), *βρεφός* should be understood as a small child or infant. This is important as we discuss the characteristic Jesus commends in the children in Luke 18:17.

³³Jesus' rebuke as Luke records it is less stringent than it appears in Mark's narrative (Mark 10:13-16) which describes Jesus as "indignant" (Mark 10:14), a description which Luke lacks. Luke appears to soften the critique, although it certainly is still meant to be understood as a rebuke.

turning to God's mercy.³⁴

Second, Luke threads the theme of humility throughout the travel narrative thus Jesus' receiving the children in Luke 18:15-17 is intricately connected to the whole of the broader context. Just prior to the beginning of the travel narrative, the disciples argue amongst themselves regarding who among them is the greatest (Luke 9:46-48). Jesus frames "greatness" in terms of humbly receiving children (i.e., "the least of these"). The one who is the greatest is in fact the one who associates with and thereby becomes one of the least (Luke 9:48).

Jesus sends out seventy-two disciples to the cities which were on the way of his intended journey (Luke 10:1-24). After they return to Jesus rejoicing about their success in casting out demons (Luke 10:17),³⁵ Jesus encourages the disciples to rejoice in their position before God not in their dominion over demons (Luke 10:20). In other words, an exalted status does not come from authority over demons, rather it is found in a right relationship to God. Jesus presses this point further in his prayer (Luke 10:21-22) when he speaks of "these things" being hidden from the "wise and understanding" and revealed to "little children" (Luke 10:21). The antecedent of ταῦτα is most likely having one's name written in heaven (Luke 10:20) but is conceptually linked with what follows Jesus' statement, namely to whom the Father reveals the Son (Luke 10:21-22). Jesus' point then is that the revelation of the Son only happens for those whom God deems humble. The learned of this age are shut out while the least – the "little children" (cf.

³⁴It is not uncommon for Luke to use examples in order to characterize a larger group. For example, tax-collectors in Luke are typical of the "sinners," Pharisees are typical of the "righteous" understood in its ironic sense, and Simeon/Anna are typical of the "righteous" in its positive sense.

Luke 12:32) – are welcomed. Jesus’ private comments to the disciples also advance the theme of humility (Luke 10:23-24) since kings and prophets – the esteemed of society – did not see that to which the disciples had been made privy. In his description of Jesus’ pronouncements against the Pharisees, Luke negatively highlights the pride characteristic of the Pharisees who clamor for the best seats in the synagogue and seek after laudatory greetings in the marketplace (Luke 11:43).

Jesus’ parable about the return of a master from a wedding feast (Luke 12:35-40) includes an ironic twist as the faithful servants are in fact served by the master since they were ready for his return (Luke 12:38). The same imagery, that of the exaltation of a servant, appears in Jesus’ response to Peter’s enquiry into the parable (Luke 12:41-48).³⁶ The servant will be exalted over all the master’s possessions, having been elevated from δούλος to οἰκονόμος (Luke 12:42-44). Thus, in these two instances, the humble – in both cases, the servants – are exalted.

Luke 13:22-30 features Jesus’ response in parable to a question about the number of people who will be saved. Eschatological salvation is clearly in view given the apocalyptic imagery Jesus employs.³⁷ Though many stand at the door and knock, the

³⁵Contrast the disciples’ success with their experience after the transfiguration when they could not even cast out one demon from a small boy (Luke 9:37-43).

³⁶Nolland writes, “The master will be so impressed [by the readiness of the servants] (and even more so if he should come really late) that, far from making use of their services, he will for the occasion become their servant and mount a celebration for them.” Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 705.

³⁷Pao and Schnabel write, “The ‘gnashing of teeth’ . . . appears in the LXX as an expression of hatred (Job 16:9; Ps. 34:16; 36:12; 112:10; Lam. 2:16), with 13:29 resembling Ps. 112:10 (111:10 LXX) more closely: ‘The wicked see it and are angry; they gnash their teeth and melt away; the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.’ Since both of these texts depict the judgment of sinners, since both use a future tense, and since the gnashing of teeth is linked in both texts with the sinners seeing the good fortune of the righteous, 13:29 most probably should be regarded as an allusion to Ps. 112:10, although it is possible that the motif of ‘gnashing of teeth’ is merely an eschatological topos.” David W. Pao and Eckhard J.

master will shut them out to “that place” which is marked by “weeping and gnashing of teeth” as well as separation from the patriarchs outside the kingdom of God (Luke 13:28).³⁸ The end-times in-gathering is also in view in the table imagery of Luke 13:29 (cf. Isaiah 25:6; 65:13-25) as all kinds of people come together to eat at God’s table.³⁹ Jesus concludes with a statement regarding the exaltation of the humble – some of the last will be first, and some of the first last (Luke 13:30). Those who stand outside the house, unable to recline at the table are the first-made-last while those who came from near and far, who are sitting at table are the last-made-first. The latter group are those who enter into God’s presence while the former group is shut out.

A similar conclusion may be drawn from the table scene in Luke 14:7-11. After healing a man on the Sabbath (Luke 14:1-6), Jesus tells another parable which highlights the theme of humiliation/exaltation. Having noticed the clamoring of the guests to sit in the places of honor, Jesus turns the clamoring on its head since it is better

Schnabel, “Luke,” in *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 335

³⁸Nolland writes, “In v28 Luke continues the story but moves beyond the imagery of his parable: the narrow door has been that of access into the eschatological kingdom of God, where these great ones of Israel’s history will be found. . .; those outside are in the position of disappointed and anguished exclusion from that climax of God’s purposes for his People.” Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 735.

³⁹Luke likely is highlighting Israel at this point but clearly the Gentiles are foreshadowed as well given their prominence in Acts. Green writes, “The [kingdom of God as a great feast] is well rooted in the literature of the OT and Second Temple Judaism. Most resonant in its reverberations, though, is the Isaianic vision, with its capacity to embrace both the notion of the eschatological banquet and the universal embrace of God’s salvation (esp. Isa 25:6-8). Luke’s earlier emphasis on salvation to the Gentiles (2:30-32; cf. 12:18-21) appears again on the horizon, with the four winds representing the four corners of the earth, including the scattered remnant of faithful Israel wherever they by be found and, with them, the faithful of the world (Isa 11:11-16; 43:5-6; 60).” Green, *Luke*, 532. See also Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1239; Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 735. Bird also argues for the inclusion of a reference to the Gentiles in Luke 13:28-29. Bird cites several OT and Second Temple texts (Jer 3:17-18; Isa 66:20-21; Zech 8:7-8, 20-23; Tob 13:5, 11; 14:5-7; *T. Benj.* 9:2; 1 Enoch 90:33; Pss Sol 17:26, 31) then concludes, “These texts indicate that the motifs of the return of the Diaspora and of the pilgrimage of the gentiles were umbilically linked in

to be moved into a more honored seat by the host (Luke 14:10) than to be humiliated by being asked to move to a less honorable seat (Luke 14:9). Jesus concludes that it is the humble who will be exalted but the self-exalting will be humbled, a conclusion he also made in Luke 18:14.

Given these occurrences in the travel narrative, Luke understands exaltation (and conversely, humiliation) in eschatological terms. So then the great mark of the travel narrative is that the least are in fact the greatest since the humble are exalted while the proud and important are brought low.⁴⁰

A third element linking Luke 18:15-17 with the previous pericope is Luke's juxtaposition of two despised characters – the tax-collector (Luke 18:9-11) and the children (Luke 18:15).⁴¹ Luke frames the parable of the Pharisee and the tax-collector in terms of the righteous' contempt for the non-righteous (Luke 18:9). Though not necessarily as overt or as sharp as it could be, the disparagement of the tax-collector by the Pharisee clearly places the tax-collector in the role of despised outcast. Likewise the children whom the disciples seek to turn away fit the category of outcast as well. They are not welcome near Jesus and those who bring them to Jesus are sharply rebuked. So then, both the tax-collector and the children – the others (cf. Luke 18:9) – are rejected by

Israel's sacred traditions and second-temple literature." Michael F. Bird, "Who Comes from the East and the West? Luke 13.28-29/Matt 8.11-12 and the Historical Jesus," *New Testament Studies* 52 (2006): 453.

⁴⁰Jerome Kodell, "Luke and the Children: The Beginning and End of the Great Interpolation (Luke 9:46-56; 18:9-23)," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 49 (1987): 428.

⁴¹Nolland writes, "It may be that the folk-religion aspect of this [parents bringing babies to be blessed] contributed to the annoyance of the disciples, though perhaps more likely it is their own sense of self-importance, based upon their privileged proximity to Jesus, that is offended by the approach." Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 881. See also Kodell, "Luke and the Children," 415 who finds the same link between despised characters. On the other hand, Marshall notes the connection between the two pericopes

the “righteous” but accepted by God.⁴²

Finally, significant structural elements mark Luke 18:15-17 as important in Luke’s narrative. Luke 9:51-19:10 contains a significant amount of material which is unique to Luke (Luke 9:51-55; 61-62; 10:1, 17-20; 10:29-37; 10:38-42; 11:5-8; 11:27-28; 12:13-21; 12:47-48; 12:49-50; 12:54-56; 13:1-9; 13:10-17; 13:31-33; 14:1-6; 14:7-14; 14:28-35; 15:1-10; 15:11-32; 16:1-15; 16:19-31; 17:7-10; 17:11-19; 17:20-21; 18:1-8; 18:9-14; 19:1-10).⁴³ The parable of the Pharisee and the tax-collector concludes the bulk of the Lukan material and is paired with Markan material with the introduction of Luke 18:15-17 and the rejection of the children.⁴⁴ So then Luke 18:15-17 is Luke’s entry point back into the narrative outline established by Mark’s gospel.

Jesus’ response to the disciples introduces another Lukan image, that of the kingdom of God (Luke 18:16-17).⁴⁵ The rebuke Jesus gives to the disciples has a positive and negative aspect (Luke 18:16). Positively, children are to be allowed access to Jesus. Negatively, children should not be deterred from coming to Jesus. The rebuke the disciples receive is rooted in the fact that the kingdom of God belongs to those whom

but locates the linkage in the “common idea” of humility, not in the self-righteousness of those who consider themselves to be righteous. Marshall, *Luke*, 681.

⁴²Although a Pharisee is one of the main characters in the parable, recall that Luke does not specify the Pharisees in particular as the target of the parable. The parable is addressed generally to those who consider themselves to be righteous. This general sense then applies to the attitude of the disciples as well since they reject the children brought to Jesus.

⁴³Darrell L. Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts: God’s Promised Program, Realized for All Nations*, Biblical Theology of the New Testament Series, ed. Andreas Kostenberger (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 435.

⁴⁴Kodell, “Luke and the Children,” 419.

⁴⁵Chapter 4 will contain additional discussion of the significance of the Kingdom of God in Luke’s narrative.

they are turning away.⁴⁶

Jesus then draws out a further implication from his rebuke of the disciples by using the children as a sort of metaphor⁴⁷ – since the kingdom belongs to these, one must become like them in order to enter the kingdom (Luke 18:17). To reject the children (and those like them) is to reject the kingdom of God. Although it is not entirely clear the characteristic Jesus is pointing to as that which qualifies the children for the kingdom, the broader context of Luke 18:5-19:10 seems to warrant the children's lack of self-reliance as that which Jesus commends.⁴⁸ The parallels between the children and the tax-collector as well as the disciples and the Pharisee which were discussed above make this conclusion most likely.

Summary. Jesus' encounter with the children (Luke 18:15-17) is the first of several real life examples of the very themes Luke presents in Luke 18:1-14. To rebuke children (i.e., the humble) is to find oneself outside the kingdom of God. In other words, in order to enter the kingdom one must humbly embrace the posture of both the tax-collector and the children.

⁴⁶The γὰρ in Luke 18:16b should be understood in terms of cause explaining the reason why the children should not be turned away from Jesus.

⁴⁷In using the term metaphor I mean that Luke's intention is not to portray Jesus as accepting children merely because they are children. Neither is Luke's intention to say that all children enter the kingdom. Luke's point is that there is some quality in the disposition of children which Jesus finds commendable to those who seek to enter the kingdom. The possessive genitive τῶν τοιοῦτων (Luke 18:17a) as well as the ὡς clause (Luke 18:17b) highlight the attitude which those who desire to enter the kingdom must possess.

⁴⁸Scholarly opinion ranges from humility to their being ostracized and outcast. Although a lack of self-reliance best explains Jesus' words, Nolland rightly emphasizes the ambiguity. Nolland writes, "What is the quality in children which warrants such a statement? . . . Is it openness, willingness to trust, freedom from hypocrisy or pretension, conscious weakness and readiness for dependence, or some other

Luke 18:18-30

Recorded in each of the Synoptic Gospels (Luke 18:18-30; cf. Mark 10:17-31; Matt 19:16-30), Jesus' interaction with the rich young ruler brings together the concepts of eternal life and kingdom, both of which link back to Luke's presentation of justification in Luke 18:9-14.⁴⁹ The episode focuses on Jesus' interaction with the ruler (Luke 18:18-23) yet Luke also highlights the response of the crowd (Luke 18:24-27) and the disciples (Luke 18:28-30).

Luke 18:18-23. Jesus' interaction with the ruler falls in the same setting as the previous material (Luke 17:11f; esp. Luke 18:9ff.)⁵⁰ yet unlike the previous material has

quality? Perhaps the metaphoric force of the challenge of these words is only preserved by keeping the options open, within a general framework set by other Gospel challenges." Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 882.

⁴⁹For Nolland, Luke 18:9-30 "brings together a series of units that illustrate entry into the kingdom of God from a position of deficiency." Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 878. He rightly links the three pericopes in Luke 18:9-30 but finds their commonality exclusively in how one enters the kingdom, not in a common eschatological link. Entry into the kingdom is certainly a significant linking theme but does not exhaust the cohesiveness of Luke 18:9-30. Nolland states that Jesus' declaration (Luke 18:14) is not the "eschatological verdict" but it is still linked to Luke's theme of reversal. Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 878. Nolland, commenting on Luke 18:17, writes, "In this verse the line between the present manifestation of the kingdom of God and its future consummation becomes very fine indeed: the first half verse is concerned with present reception; the second must embrace both the present and ultimate manifestations of the kingdom of God." Nolland, 882. So then the kingdom is an eschatological reality, but justification is not an eschatological verdict. One can appreciate Nolland's desire to avoid a Pauline reading of Luke 18:14 but it seems plausible and appropriate to understand justification in Luke in eschatological terms. In his push to let Luke be Luke, Nolland over corrects what he perceives to be a Pauline reading of Luke.

Green also sees strong thematic links between the material in Luke 18:9-19:27 and the preceding material (Luke 17:20-18:8) but writes, "Indeed, Luke provides no textual markers to suggest the narrative has taken a significant turn with 18:9. However, 18:8 forms an inclusion with 17:20; the whole of 17:20-18:8 is set off from surrounding material by its eschatological focus (to which Jesus will return in 19:11-27)." Green, *Luke*, 643. Contra both Nolland and Green, Hays rightly sees the previous discussion about the kingdom spilling over into Luke 18 and understands Luke 17:11ff as fundamentally eschatological. Hays writes, "The preceding passage in Luke 17 deals with the coming of the Kingdom of God, and the context set by this discussion (i.e. the coming Kingdom of God) no doubt carries over into 18:1-19:10." J. Daniel Hays, "'Sell Everything You Have and Give to the Poor': The Old Testament Prophetic Theme of Justice as the Connecting Motif of Luke 18:1-19:10," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 55 (2012): 51.

⁵⁰Green notes the connection between Luke 18:18-30 and the previous material, especially Luke 18:15-17. He writes, "Luke narrates Jesus' interchange with the wealthy ruler immediately adjacent

a clear soteriological thrust.⁵¹ This can be seen in that the ruler explicitly asks Jesus about the way in which he might receive eternal life (Luke 18:18; cf. Luke 10:25; 16:9; 18:30).⁵² The ruler's address to Jesus as *Διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ* (Luke 18:18) does not appear to be intended to flatter or disarm Jesus (cf. Luke 10:25), but some have argued this way.⁵³ Bock understands the ruler to be a "respected layperson" but it is Luke's description of him as *ἄρχων* which makes him a negative character.⁵⁴ The ruler Luke describes is not necessarily a Pharisee but given that Luke uses the word *ἄρχων* in describing him, Bock wants to understand him negatively although this seems unlikely

to the incident with the children, providing no textual markers to suggest a shift in scene. Though this contributes to the episodic feel of this larger section of the Lukan Gospel, we would be mistaken to think that the location of this narrative unit lacked purpose or significance. As we noted earlier, the juxtaposition of 'little children' and a wealthy ruler ties these two incidents (vv 15-17, 18-30) together as an apt illustration of the principle of status transposition Jesus articulates in v 14 (cf. 1:51-53; 2:34; 6:20-26; et al.)." Green, *Luke*, 653. For Bock, "dependent faith" (or a lack of it) in the main characters is what makes Luke 18 a cohesive unit. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1473.

⁵¹By "soteriological" I mean only that Luke is speaking directly to issues related to salvation. This is not intended to drive a wedge between soteriology and eschatology. In fact, the argument put forward is that Luke views salvation in fundamentally eschatological terms.

⁵²Eternal life is a significant theme in the Fourth gospel (John 3:15-16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2) as well as several of the Pauline writings (Rom 2:7; 5:21; 6:22-23; Gal 6:8; 1 Tim 1:16; 6:12; Titus 1:2; 3:7) but receives scant attention in the Synoptic tradition. The Synoptic gospels share two references to eternal life in Jesus' interaction with the ruler (Matt 19:16-30; Mark 10:17-31; Luke 18:18-30). Matthew and Mark also make reference to eternal judgment (Matt 18:8; 25:41, 46; Mark 3:29) while Luke includes two additional references to eternal life (Luke 10:25; 16:9). Luke certainly speaks of the eternity of judgment (Luke 6:46-49; 12:5, 41-48; 13:28; 16:19-31; 17:32; 19:26-27) however his use of eternal life appears to be a strictly positive concept.

⁵³Given the way in which Jesus responds to the ruler's keeping of the law (Luke 18:22) as well as the sadness in the ruler's departure (Luke 18:23), it seems more likely that the ruler's question is rooted in legitimate motivations. Certainly the ruler could very well have been attempting to justify his riches but it is not until Jesus focuses on his riches that the ruler becomes sad. It appears then that Jesus' words to the ruler are meant to highlight a deadly blind spot, not overt self-righteousness as with the Pharisees (cf. Luke 10:29-37; 16:15; 18:9). The ruler's is an honest question, just as Jesus answer is an honest response.

⁵⁴Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1476.

for at least two reasons.⁵⁵

First, Luke describes the lawyer as “testing” (ἐκπειράζων) Jesus in Luke 10:25 whereas there does not seem to be the same approach by the ruler in Luke 18:18. Also, in calling Jesus “good” the ruler is not necessarily seeking to flatter Jesus since it was a common enough greeting.⁵⁶ There certainly are comparisons between the lawyer in Luke 10 and the ruler in Luke 18 because of the common question they ask of Jesus. But, the νομικός (Luke 10:25-37) clearly had ulterior motives which seem to be lacking in Luke 18:18-30.⁵⁷

Second, it seems odd that the ruler would depart the way in which he did if he was self-righteous or seeking to flatter Jesus. Luke describes the ruler as “sad” (περίλυπος) as he leaves Jesus because he was very wealthy (Luke 18:23; cf. Mark 14:34). The image one should have of the ruler’s departure is that of extreme grief knowing the decision Jesus has called him to make. The ruler’s emotional response only makes sense if he is in fact approaching Jesus genuinely in order to determine what he must do to inherit eternal life.

The question is straightforward enough: under what terms can one gain eternal life. The ruler frames his question in terms of action on his part as well as inheritance.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Bock writes, “Luke’s use of ἄρχων is important, for he often uses this term to describe the rulers of the Pharisees, a group he sees negatively.” Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1476.

⁵⁶ Marshall notes the following uses: Prov 12:2; 14:14; Eccl 9:2; Luke 6:45; T. Simeon 4:4; T. Dan 1:4; T. Asher 4:1. See Marshall, *Luke*, 684.

⁵⁷ In addition, Jesus relationship to the Pharisees/religious leaders in Luke is not always hostile (Luke 7:36; 13:31; 23:50-51).

⁵⁸ A similar framing – inheritance and eternal/everlasting life – can be found in 1 Enoch 40:9 in which the author describes Phanuel as the one “in charge of the repentance to hope of those who inherit

The concept of inheritance is deeply rooted in the Old Testament especially in view of the land promises made by God to Israel (cf. Gen 12:1-7; Exod 33:1-3; Deut 1:1-8).⁵⁹

The concept essentially points to “the receiving of God’s promises and gifts.”⁶⁰

Jesus’ initial response sets straight for the ruler the concept of goodness – only God is good (Luke 18:19)⁶¹ – but Jesus then moves immediately to the issue of obedience to the Law, especially the second half of the Decalogue. The ruler, like others implicitly and explicitly do in Luke’s gospel (Luke 5:30-32; 10:25-37; 11:37-44, 45-52; 20:19-25), affirms his careful obedience to the Law, in the ruler’s case, from his youth (Luke 18:21).

At first glance, Jesus’ response appears to affirm a kind of salvation by means of law-keeping but this is not the case for at least three reasons. First, Jesus allowed the ruler to set the terms for their discussion. The ruler asks what he can do to inherit eternal life, a question which occurs in various ways several times in Luke’s narrative (Luke

everlasting life.” See George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch Chapters 37-82*, ed. Klaus Balzer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 130.

⁵⁹Beasley-Murray writes, “The language [inheritance/eternal life] reflects two images: first, the inheritance of the promised land of Canaan, a symbol of entry into the kingdom of God promised to the Fathers (second exodus typology); and second, admission into the kingdom of God as admission into ‘eternal life,’ so called because one receives the new life through resurrection and the new age is eternal.” George R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 176.

⁶⁰Werner Foerster, “κληρονόμος,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966), 781.

⁶¹Jesus’ response has been understood in a multitude of ways. Bock lists four options: (1) Jesus denies being sinless since only God is good; (2) Jesus is pressing the ruler to understand that he is in fact God. The logic is that God is good, Jesus is also good, therefore Jesus is God; (3) Jesus’ intention is to rebuke the flattery of the ruler; (4) Jesus’ intention is to jar the ruler and prepare him to respond positively to Jesus. Bock writes, “The point is to shock the ruler. He has attempted to honor Jesus, but he needs to recognize that ‘good’ is a relative term except when applied to God. If the teacher is good, then one should follow the teacher’s instruction.” Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1477-78.

10:25; 18:18; cf. Luke 3:10, 12, 14; Acts 16:30; See also John 6:28).⁶² Jesus is not necessarily affirming the ruler's approach but he certainly is responding on the ruler's terms.

Second, in engaging the discussion on the ruler's terms Jesus' intended purpose is to undermine the ruler's understanding of how one gains eternal life. Jesus' intention can be seen in the omission of the prohibition against coveting (Luke 18:20; cf. Exod 20:12-17; Deut 5:16-21).⁶³ Although the ruler, in his own estimation, has kept the commandments Jesus lists, he has failed at keeping the last of the commandments in the Decalogue – the prohibition of covetousness – which is ultimately a failure to love God with one's whole heart. Each of the other commandments Jesus lists has to do with human relationships outlined in the Decalogue but the commandment against covetousness is lacking. By instructing the ruler to sell everything (Luke 18:22), Jesus is directly addressing the issue of covetousness in the heart of the ruler. It is a question of allegiance for the ruler – to God or to money (cf. Luke 16:13) – which issues forth in how the ruler treats the poor.⁶⁴ The greater context bears this out as well in that Luke

⁶²The frequency of the question means that the context of each occurrence should determine whether the question is legitimately motivated or not. The question in itself does not necessarily belie a "salvation-by-law-keeping" approach.

⁶³While both Matthew and Luke omit the reference, Mark includes a reference to defrauding which many scholars understand as a reference to the prohibition against covetousness (Mark 10:19; cf. Matthew 19:18-19; Luke 18:20). See Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 886; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1479; Marshall, *Luke*, 685. I take the omission as significant in that Jesus uses the ruler's affirmation of the other commandments to point out his lack when it comes to covetousness (cf. Luke 18:22).

⁶⁴Contra Green who grounds the significance of Jesus' command to sell everything and benefit the poor (Luke 18:22) in the Decalogue's prohibition against stealing (cf. Luke 18:20). Speaking of the five commandments Jesus lists, Green writes, "The middle of the five concerns material possessions, but even it, when understood within the context of the experience of Exodus and formation of Israel as the people of God, must be understood as a signifier of human relationships, for within its historical and scriptural context, the admonition against stealing is essentially an affirmation of the priority of the

contrasts the rich and poor throughout Luke 17:20-19:10.

Third, law-keeping in Luke is connected to Luke's understanding of discipleship so it is no surprise then that Jesus would here correct a misunderstanding of the Law and its role in gaining eternal life.⁶⁵ Luke's use of the descriptor *δίκαιος* – both positive and negative – demonstrates this point. Those described as *δίκαιος* who truly obey the Law are portrayed as looking forward to or following after Jesus.⁶⁶ Likewise, Luke uses *δίκαιος* to describe those who appear to obey the Law and yet they refuse to follow Jesus.⁶⁷ Jesus' response highlights the twofold nature of discipleship in the Gospel's narrative (Luke 18:22). For Luke discipleship is not merely moral/ethical behavior but allegiance to Jesus seen most clearly in following Jesus (Luke 5:11, 27-28;

community of God's people: Do not take for yourself what Yahweh has provided for the whole people of God." In other words, based on Jesus' command to sell all and give to the poor, Green argues that the ruler is guilty of stealing. He continues, "This provides the point from which Jesus can launch his own interpretation of obedience to the will of God, so that his charge concerning the disposition of material goods on behalf of the poor must be understood (1) as an interpretive expansion of the Ten Commandments that (2) serves as a behavioral definition of the community of Jesus' followers. Jesus' use of the table of commandments from Deut 5:16-20 (cf. Exod 20:12-16), then, is apologetic; it defines the community of those who will 'inherit eternal life.'" Green, *Luke*, 655-56. Although I agree with his conclusion, the ground of Jesus' command in Luke 18:22 is best understood as the prohibition against covetousness, not stealing. Stealing, in effect, is the result of the covetousness.

⁶⁵Blomberg writes, "Those who keep the Law throughout Luke's gospel do so rightly, from a salvation-historical perspective; the new covenant is not inaugurated until the complex of events stretching from the crucifixion to Pentecost. Those who continue these customs in the book of Acts do so because the implications of the new covenant dawned on them only over time." Craig L. Blomberg, "The Law in Luke-Acts," *The Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 22 (1984): 70. In other words, the binding nature of the Law changed over time as the Church worked out the implications of the new covenant. Therefore, understood positively, law-keeping in Luke is the response of a disciple in obedience to God based on their relationship to Jesus.

⁶⁶Luke uses *δίκαιος* positively in reference to Zechariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:6), Simeon (Luke 2:25), and Joseph of Arimathea (23:50) all of whom should be considered positive examples of discipleship. Each of them is characterized positively for their obedience as well as for their faith, their looking forward to the fulfillment of God's promises.

9:23-27, 57-62). In other words, discipleship is obedience to a moral norm but this kind of obedience is demonstrated primarily as Jesus' disciples follow after him, even into suffering. So then, as Luke weaves his narrative he is calling his readers to follow just as in this case Jesus calls the ruler to follow.⁶⁸

From a moral/ethical perspective, in his response to the ruler one sees that Jesus' expectation of his disciples is that they have a certain attitudinal and economic disposition towards the poor – sell everything and give it to the poor – which is rooted in an eschatological vision of the rewards which follow obedience in the kingdom of God (Luke 18:22).⁶⁹ In other words, the motivation to sell all and follow is rooted in the reward of heavenly treasure. Yet Luke's point in Jesus' response is that the moral/ethical behavior of a disciple is intimately connected to following after Jesus.⁷⁰

⁶⁷Luke also uses *δίκαιος* in a sarcastic tone referring to the presence of supposed righteousness, especially among the Pharisees (Luke 5:32; 10:29; 15:1-7; 16:14-15; cf. Luke 18:9). We will have much more to say on the issue of Luke's use of righteousness language in the following chapter.

⁶⁸Martin writes, "At all points Luke *is not composing his work as a detached narrator; he is seeking to elicit a response in the present by his recital of past events.*" Ralph P. Martin, "Salvation and Discipleship in Luke's Gospel," *Interpretation* 30 (1976): 378 (emphasis original).

⁶⁹Green writes, "Luke draws together several soteriological images in vv 18-30: 'eternal life' (vv 18, 31 – which, then, serve as an *inclusio* for this narrative unit), 'treasure in heaven' (v 22), '[entering] the kingdom of God' (vv 24 [2x], 29), and 'being saved' (v 26). In the current scene, the movement from one metaphor to the next is significant for the way it shapes what is essentially a concern with future salvation on the part of the ruler (v 18) into a message about the presence of salvation and its demands (cf. 17:20-21), together with the future implications of present commitments and practices. In this way, 'inheriting eternal life' is correlated with 'entering the kingdom,' the immediate concern of Jesus' interaction with the disciples concerning the status of children in this world and the next (vv 15-17)." Green, *Luke*, 653.

⁷⁰Luke begins his travel narrative with three different pictures of what allegiance to Jesus means (Luke 9:57-62), each of which calls on the would-be disciple to renounce one allegiance for the sake of allegiance to Jesus. So then Luke centers obedience primarily in allegiance to Jesus. It is this same call which goes to the ruler as well (Luke 18:22). Although O'Toole's comments are in reference to Luke 9:57-62 specifically, they apply to Luke's description of discipleship as it is portrayed in Luke 18:18-30 as well. O'Toole writes, "As soon as Jesus has begun his journey, Luke expands on 'Q's' description of following Jesus, which surpasses every other sacred duty. He stresses the disciples' mission, makes following Jesus

The summons to follow Jesus in selling his possession is, at that moment, too much to bear (Luke 18:23). The ruler departs very upset (*περίλυπος*; cf. Matt 26:38; Mark 6:26; 14:34) on account of his great wealth.⁷¹ Luke, and likewise Matthew, omits a reference made by Mark that the ruler was *στυγνάσας ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ* (Mark 10:22) and instead only mentions the reason for the ruler's departure – namely, his wealth – an emphasis which is common to each of the pericopes but is particularly significant in Luke's narrative.⁷²

Luke 18:24-27. As the ruler departs, Jesus, turning his attention to the crowds,⁷³ makes a hyperbolic statement about the difficulty inherent with the wealthy and their attempts to enter the kingdom of God (Luke 18:24-25). The difficulty arises because of the allegiance wealth demands which is in direct competition with the allegiance Jesus demands (cf. Luke 18:22).⁷⁴ Jesus, intending to paint a ridiculous

equal to entry into the kingdom of God, and definitely discourages any mediocrity.” Robert F. O’Toole, “Highlights of Luke’s Theology,” *Currents in Theology and Mission* 12 (1985): 359.

⁷¹Matthew and Mark note that the ruler's departure is on account of his great possessions (*κτήματα*; Matt 19:22; Mark 10:22).

⁷²Luke emphasizes wealth and possessions throughout his narrative. See especially Luke 1:53; 3:10-14; 4:18; 6:20; 8:1-3; 9:57-62; 11:37-44; 12:13-21, 32-34; 16:1-13, 14, 19-31; 18:9-14, 18-30, 35-43; 19:1-10; 21:1-4. See Christopher M. Hays, *Luke's Wealth Ethics: A Study in Their Coherence and Character*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe, vol. 275 (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 70-188; David P. Seccombe, *Possessions and the Poor in Luke-Acts*, Studien zum Neuen Testament and seiner Umwelt (Linz: Studien zum Neuen Testament and seiner Umwelt, 1982).

⁷³Contra Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1485; Green, *Luke*, 659; Stein, *Luke*, 458, who picture the ruler still standing before Jesus as he makes his statement about the difficulty of the rich entering the kingdom. It seems better to understand the ruler as walking away dejected as Jesus turns to the crowds in order to teach a lesson on wealth as a hindrance to salvation. Mark (and Matthew as well) makes the departure explicit so then it would seem that despite his editing of the Markan material, Luke is assuming the ruler's departure as well.

⁷⁴Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1484; Stein, *Luke*, 460. Green's position is nuanced in that the difficulty is one of allegiance but it is not just an allegiance to wealth but also to the power and status which

picture of the difficulty he has in mind, describes a camel passing through the eye of a needle.⁷⁵ In the past there have been attempts – both textual and historical – to soften the imagery but the general consensus is that the language is intended to be hyperbolic.⁷⁶

Besides the textual and historical evidence, the response of the crowd also confirms the hyperbolic nature of Jesus' statement (Luke 18:26). They understood the logic of Jesus' statement. If those with wealth – those who appear to be pious and possess the blessing of God⁷⁷ – are denied access to the kingdom of God, who then can be saved? Bailey, describing the crowds' mindset, writes:

Rich men are able to build synagogues, endow orphanages, offer alms to the poor, refurbish temples, and fund many other worthwhile efforts. If anyone is saved, surely it is they. Jesus says that such people cannot enter the kingdom by such noble efforts. We commoners do not have the wealth to carry out such noble deeds. Who then can be saved?⁷⁸

In other words, Jesus' statement about the difficulty of the rich entering the kingdom

comes with wealth. Green states that the theology undergirding the ruler's sadness "posits a causal relationship between divine blessing and the possession of power, privilege, and material possessions." Green, *Luke*, 657.

⁷⁵The two occurrences of εἰσελθεῖν (Luke 18:25) draw a sharp parallel between the difficulty of a camel entering through the eye of a needle and the difficulty of the rich entering the kingdom of God. Green, *Luke*, 657.

⁷⁶There is manuscript evidence which points to a softening of the imagery by changing "camel" to "rope." Metzger writes, "In an attempt to soften the rigor of the statement, the word κάμιλον ('a rope' or 'a ship's hawser') was substituted for κάμηλον in several of the later witnesses (S 13 59 124 130 437 472 543 arm geo). The change was facilitated by the circumstance that ι and η came to be pronounced alike in later Greek (both words were pronounced kah' mee-lon)." Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 3rd ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1975), 169. Beyond the textual issue, the imagery has also been softened to refer to a door within a gate through which a camel could only barely fit. That there is nothing substantial to support this background is almost universally agreed upon. See Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1485; Stein, *Luke*, 458; Green, *Luke*, 657 n. 152; Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 166; Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 890; Alan P. Stanley, "The Rich Young Ruler and Salvation," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 163 (2006): 49 n. 20.

⁷⁷Green, *Luke*, 657.

⁷⁸Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 167.

does not necessarily imply an overt demand of acceptance made by the rich. They are not necessarily trying to buy their way into God's presence. That one has wealth does not necessarily mean he or she is making an explicit demand of God to be accepted on account of their wealth. The difficulty raised by wealth is much more subtle since the expectation of acceptance can also be placed on God because of the good things one does with wealth (cf. Luke 7:4; 13:26-28).

The link between entering the kingdom and finding salvation is clear yet the significance of the pairing is debated. Green explains Luke's use of $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\zeta\omega$ (Luke 18:26) as an intentional pointer to the crowd's misunderstanding of Jesus' statement about entering the kingdom. Green writes,

Entering the kingdom of God" stands as a synonym to "being saved" in this exchange only in an ironic way, since these two expressions, used by different persons, also derive from different worldviews. "Entering the kingdom," we have just learned, has to do with humbling oneself to the point of showing deference to the lowest in society, children – this, at least, is how Jesus uses the phrase (vv 14, 17). When "those who heard" use the term "to be saved," they indicate their failure to understand this interpretation of salvation in terms of status reversal. They have not escaped the grips of the rule of mammon. Nor can they, according to Jesus, apart from divine assistance.⁷⁹

Green's interpretation seems to press Luke's use of $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\zeta\omega$ past plausibility. Several things may be said. First, Green's interpretation assumes that the crowd misunderstands Jesus' statement about the kingdom although the text does not explicitly state this. Second, even if the crowd does in fact misunderstand Jesus' statement regarding the kingdom, this conclusion does not necessarily follow from Luke's use of $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\zeta\omega$. Rather, it appears that Green's conclusion has to be read in broadly from Luke's understanding of status

⁷⁹Green, *Luke*, 658.

reversal.

Third, it seems more likely that Luke intends his reader to understand the concepts of entering the kingdom and salvation interchangeably especially in light of other occurrences in the narrative (cf. Luke 13:22-30).⁸⁰ Fourth, if $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\zeta\omega$ indicates a misunderstanding on the part of the crowd, are we to assume that ruler and Jesus are referring to different realities in their respective uses of eternal life (cf. Luke 18:18, 30)? Fifth, Green places the focus on the images Luke uses (eternal life and salvation) when throughout the pericope the focus falls on the difficulty/impossibility of acceptance before God – however it is envisioned – and not on the imagery itself. Given these factors it seems best to understand each phrase as referring to the same reality.⁸¹

The difficulty of inheriting eternal life, of entering the kingdom of God, of being saved is in fact an impossibility when the task is left to human ability. Jesus' response to the crowd's question confirms the difficulty but also holds out hope for a solution (Luke 18:27). Attaining to these realities is impossible for mankind, but this is not so for God. Just as God can bring about life from a dead womb (Luke 1:37; cf. Gen 18:14), he can also bring about eternal life for the rich and poor.

Luke 18:28-30. The focus of the pericope now shifts to Jesus' interaction with the disciples. Speaking on behalf of the twelve, Peter tells Jesus the sacrifice they have

⁸⁰In Luke 13:22-30, Jesus responds to a question about who will be saved with imagery about spared the fate of those outside the kingdom of God where there is weeping and teeth-gnashing. Here, as with Luke 18:18-30, the concepts appear to be synonymous.

⁸¹See Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1486 n. 14; Stein, *Luke*, 458-59; Marshall, *Luke*, 687-88; Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 892.

made to follow him (Luke 18:28).⁸² Given the gravity of Jesus' previous statement about the impossibility of salvation (Luke 18:25, 27), the statement appears to be motivated by a genuine concern for the disciples to know their standing. They appear to have done what the ruler was unwilling to do – forsaken possessions and given their allegiance to Jesus. Jesus emphatically affirms Peter's statement yet applies it to all who would do as the disciples have done (Luke 18:29-30).⁸³ Jesus guarantees both present and future blessing (Luke 18:30) to those who have left all for the sake of the kingdom (Luke 18:29).⁸⁴

Luke parallels the disciples who have left behind earthly allegiances for the sake of the kingdom (Luke 18:29) to the rich ruler who was unwilling to sell his possessions in order to enter the kingdom (Luke 18:24-25). The conceptual link then has to do with one's allegiance but it is expressed in whether or not one is willing to follow Jesus. The disciples' forsaking of τὰ ἴδια is not an aesthetic ideal rather it is an act of allegiance to Jesus which results in both present and future blessings. The ruler's unwillingness to sell everything is ultimately a commitment to his possessions instead of Jesus. The ruler missed the reality that forsaking all to follow Jesus is to gain in both the

⁸²Peter's use of the particle ἰδοὺ as well as his generalizing use of τὰ ἴδια should be understood as a direct contrast with the ruler. Jesus sees (ἰδὼν) that the ruler is sad and unwilling to sell all his possessions (πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις). Peter tells Jesus to see (ἰδοὺ) that they have left everything (τὰ ἴδια) to follow Jesus. Green notes in particular the contrast between the neuter references to possession. Green, *Luke*, 658.

⁸³Note Jesus' use of the ἀμὴν construction (Luke 18:29) as well as the οὐχὶ μὴ construction in order to heighten the tone of his statement.

⁸⁴Jesus' use of ἀφέντες should not be understood as condoning absolute abandonment of one's earthly obligations to family or other duties. Peter was no less married after following Jesus so the point of the statement has to be something other than abandonment. Certainly singleness (i.e., never married and

here and now as well as in the eschaton. Luke frames Jesus' response in terms of reward for following Jesus. For those who leave all for the sake of the kingdom – those who have entered the kingdom – there are relational blessings to be experienced in this age as well as the blessing of eternal life in the age to come.⁸⁵ Returning to the theme of eternal life, Luke has brought the episode full circle.

Summary. Luke's account of Jesus' interaction with the rich ruler is intricately linked both to what precedes and what follows.⁸⁶ Luke weaves together the themes of humility, justification, exaltation, kingdom, salvation, and eternal life throughout Luke 18:9-18:30. It is the humble who experience justification in the present (Luke 18:13) but they will also experience eschatological exaltation (Luke 18:14). The humble are those who will enter the kingdom of God (Luke 18:15-17). The blessing of eternal life is granted to those who have forsaken all and granted ultimate allegiance to Jesus and thereby entered the kingdom (Luke 18:18-30). To experience eternal life is to experience God's salvation (Luke 18:26).

Luke 18:31-34

Luke includes a third passion announcement, as do Mark and Matthew, yet Luke emphasizes the disciples' lack of understanding regarding Jesus' statement. Jesus' conversation with the disciples flows right out of his dealings with the rich ruler and

remaining single) for the sake of the kingdom could be in view. See Stein, *Luke*, 459. But it seems best to understand Jesus' statement as referring to ultimate allegiances.

⁸⁵Here Luke understands eternal life as a result of having entered into the kingdom. Those who enter the kingdom will experience the blessing of eternal life in the age to come.

⁸⁶More will be said on Luke 18:18-30 and its connections to Luke 18:31-19:10.

should be understood in light of Jesus' call to follow made to the rich ruler (Luke 18:22).⁸⁷

Luke 18:31-33. Again Jesus prepares the disciples for what awaits him in Jerusalem, specifically his death and resurrection which will happen according to the Scriptures (Luke 18:31-33; cf. Luke 9:22, 44-45),⁸⁸ a point which is uniquely Lukan in the passion predictions (Luke 18:31; cf. Mark 10:33; Matt 20:18). Given the other Synoptic writers lack a reference to the scriptural backdrop of Jesus' passion (cf. Mark 10:32-34; Matt 20:17-19), Luke is particularly concerned with demonstrating the divine coherence of Jesus' death and resurrection. It is not an accident of history but a course put in place by God himself and described throughout Israel's scriptures. Although one can certainly speculate on the particular texts which Jesus may have had in mind when describing what awaited him in Jerusalem (Luke 18:32-33)⁸⁹, Luke's purpose is to highlight the harmony of Jesus' death and resurrection with the general tenor of the

⁸⁷Nolland holds that there is a change in setting given the change in whom Jesus addresses in Luke 18:31-34. He also distinguishes it from Luke 18:35ff though this is clear from Luke's statement about Jesus' approach to Jericho (Luke 18:35). Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 894. A change in audience does not necessarily change the setting and a stronger transition would be expected if a sharp change of setting was intended (cf. Luke 18:35). In fact, Luke 18:31-34 follows naturally from Jesus' discussion of eternal life to Peter's speaking on behalf of the disciples to Jesus' particular focus on teaching the disciples about what it means to follow after Jesus (cf. Luke 18:22, 28-29).

⁸⁸Luke includes significantly more material between his passion predictions thus they are significant in that they focus on Jerusalem as Jesus' destination whereas in Mark and Matthew the passion predictions are in close proximity to one another and serve to frame the respective narratives. Commenting on Luke 18:31-34, Marshall notes, "In Mk. this is the third of the formal series of predictions of the passion, and it forms the prelude to the request of James and John for places in the kingdom. Luke will omit this section, and he does not preserve the three-fold announcement of the passion as a basic item in the pattern of the Gospel. . . . For Luke the prediction is much more part of the 'travel'-motif which brings Jesus nearer to Jerusalem." Marshall, *Luke*, 689.

⁸⁹Nolland highlights Dan 7:13. Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 896. The resurrection appearances certainly affirm that both specific texts as well as the whole of the Scriptures testify to Jesus' passion and resurrection (cf. Luke 24:27, 45).

“prophets.”⁹⁰

Luke 18:34. As with other statements about Jesus’ death and resurrection (Luke 9:44-45; 24:6-7, 25-26, 44-46), the disciples do not understand (*οὐκ ἐγίνωσκον*) Jesus’ words. It is not an inability to understand the meaning of Jesus’ statement but rather an inability to grasp the significance of the statement. Even more pointedly, it is an inability to grasp the significance of Jesus as a suffering Son of Man which ran counter to their understanding of Jesus’ kingship.

Recall that the disciples were just rebuked for preventing children from gathering to Jesus (Luke 18:15-17). The rebuke is grounded in the fact that children are the true inhabitants of the kingdom whom Jesus will always accept. The travel narrative itself opens with a rebuke as well when James and John offer to call down fire on a Samaritan village which refuses to receive Jesus (Luke 9:51-56). In this case Jesus’ rebuke comes because the disciples are prepared to misuse their authority because they have misunderstood Jesus’ authority. Despite the reality that judgment will fall on those who reject Jesus, his kingly mission is to the sick (Luke 5:32) and the lost (Luke 19:10), not to immediately execute God’s judgment.

A third example of the disciples’ misunderstanding of Jesus’ kingship occurs with Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-44). With Zechariah 9:9 and Psalm 118:26 in the background, Luke depicts Jesus as the king entering the city in order to restore

⁹⁰In using *διὰ τῶν προφητῶν*, Luke is not limiting himself to the prophetic literature in particular although there certainly are very specific texts which fit Jesus’ statement (cf. Dan 7:13-14; Isa 52:13-53:12). Green rightly states, “This [reference to the prophets] serves less to pinpoint particular texts requiring or finding fulfillment in Jesus’ passion, and more to characterize the Scriptures of Israel as giving witness to the purpose of God brought to culmination in the career of Jesus.” Green, *Luke*, 660.

Jerusalem and vanquish God's enemies.⁹¹ The disciples place Jesus on the colt (Luke 19:35; cf. Zech 9:9) and spread their garments on the path signifying the entrance of royalty, especially anointed royalty (cf. 2 Kgs 9:13).⁹² Immediately after his entry into Jerusalem, Jesus weeps over the city, a curious action for a king (Luke 19:41-44). The disciples appear to understand Jesus' entry as one of preparation for the immediate establishment of Jesus' kingdom thus overthrowing the Romans (Luke 19:38; cf. Luke 19:11; Ps 118:10ff.).⁹³ But, Jesus' entry should be read against his tears which follow in Luke 19:41-44. God's enemies will certainly be vanquished yet that group is recast as those who oppose Jesus.⁹⁴ So then, Jesus will in fact repel God's enemies but one must be careful not to be found in the wrong camp.⁹⁵

Ultimately clarity on the character of Jesus' kingship comes only as the disciples have their minds opened in order to understand the Scriptures. The fog of contemporary portraits only lifts through God's enabling (Luke 24:27, 45). Despite

⁹¹Despite the importance of questions regarding historicity, our concern is primarily with Luke's theological presentation of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem. See Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1548-50; John Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35c (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1993), 922-23.

⁹²Bock notes David's command to the soldiers to place Solomon on a mule as a sign of David's affirmation of the king-to-be (1 Kgs 1:33; cf. Luke 19:35). Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1556.

⁹³Although only Psalm 118:26 is quoted in Luke 19:38, it seems likely that Luke's readers would have read into the quotation the broader text of Psalm 118 which describes the entrance of the Lord's anointed into Jerusalem in order to drive out the Gentile invaders. Green writes, "As will become evident, the whole process from obtaining a colt to the crowds' proclaiming Jesus king is wrapped in the interpretive cloth of eschatological expectation and scriptural allusion (esp. Psalm 118 and Zech 9:9)." Green, *Luke*, 683.

⁹⁴The phrase τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην seems best explained as a reference to Jesus as the one who brings peace (Luke 19:42; cf. Luke 1:79). In other words, that which makes for peace is following in obedience to Jesus who leads in the path of peace.

⁹⁵Gamaliel's warning to the council in Acts 5:33-39 strikes a similar tone. By opposing the disciples' preaching of the gospel, the council risks being found opposed to God.

Jesus' explicit statements about approaching events, the expectations the disciples had of an immediate establishment of Jesus' kingdom are reversed only after the resurrection, which is in itself a reversal.⁹⁶

Summary. Although Jesus' private instruction to the Twelve is an aside of sorts, thematically it does link to the previous material and does setup Jesus' approach to Jericho (Luke 18:35; 19:1) and subsequently Jerusalem (Luke 19:11). If one is to follow Jesus as the disciples have been (Luke 18:28) and the rich ruler was summoned to (Luke 18:22), then one must expect suffering and rejection (Luke 18:29-30; cf. Luke 18:32-33). In order for one to enter the kingdom or experience eschatological exaltation, one must be prepared to willingly choose humiliation. Even for Jesus, suffering is the pathway to exaltation.

Luke 18:35-43

Despite a new setting, Luke's record of Jesus' interaction with the beggar near Jericho (cf. Mark 10:46-52; Matt 20:29-34) has significant thematic and verbal links with the previous material (Luke 17:11ff.) and should be read in that light. Luke's intention is to highlight another social outcast whom Jesus welcomes both immediately and eternally. Thus Luke again emphasizes that those who will experience the saving reign of God in some sense image the concept of justification despite the lack of explicit reference to

⁹⁶The reversal of expectations is a significant theme throughout Luke especially Luke 18:9-30. One expects the Pharisee to be justified, yet it is the tax-collector who goes home justified (Luke 18:9-14). One expects the learned and wise to have access to the kingdom, yet it is those who are "as children" who enter (Luke 18:15-17). One expects the rich who are capable of great acts of devotion to God to be those who find salvation, who inherit eternal life, who enter the kingdom; yet it is those who sell all and follow Jesus who will enter the kingdom (Luke 18:18-30). One can even see this in the Passion Narrative since it

justification.

Luke 18:35-39. Continuing on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus ministers near Jericho where he encounters a beggar (Luke 18:35).⁹⁷ Hearing the commotion, the beggar enquires about its cause to which the crowd responds that Jesus of Nazareth is passing by (Luke 18:36-37). Upon hearing that Jesus was near, the beggar cried out for Jesus to be merciful to him (ἐλεέω; Luke 18:38).⁹⁸ Jesus grants the request the result of which is amazement on the part of the crowd (Luke 18:43; cf. Luke 5:26; 7:16; 13:13, 17; 17:15-16).

One must first note the contrasting way in which Jesus is described by the crowd and the beggar. The crowd refers to Jesus as being from Nazareth. On the other hand, the beggar refers to Jesus as the Son of David. The first descriptor, though not necessarily pejorative, is most likely a jab at Jesus' origins.⁹⁹ It also lacks the positive Christological affirmation of the beggar's statement which is loaded with clear messianic

is expected that the religious leaders will affirm Jesus' identity but in fact it is a Roman centurion who recognizes the significance of Jesus' death (cf. Luke 23:32-43, 47).

⁹⁷Porter argues that ἐγγίζω should be understood as a verb describing Jesus' location, not his movement. In other words, Luke is describing Jesus as near Jericho, not approaching Jericho. This softens the tension between Luke's description of Jesus' ministry around Jericho and that of Matthew and Mark both of whom describe the healing as occurring as Jesus is leaving Jericho. Stanley Porter, "In the Vicinity of Jericho': Luke 18:35 in the Light of its Synoptic Parallels," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 2 (1992): 91-104.

⁹⁸Although often translated the same, the beggar's cry for mercy (ἐλέησον; Luke 18:38) differs from the tax-collector's request for mercy (ἰλάσθητί; Luke 18:13) in that the beggar's cry seeks relief from a physical deficiency while the tax-collector's request seeks relief from the guilt of sin. Yet both have soteriological significance in the wider context.

⁹⁹Rengstorf writes, "At all events, for all the witnesses, Jesus' origins in Nazareth are a sign of his lowliness." Karl H. Rengstorf, "Nazarene," in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 334.

overtones (Luke 18:38; cf. Luke 1:32, 69).¹⁰⁰ The οἱ προάγοντες, those in front, who had access to Jesus, understand him in terms of Jesus' earthly origins instead of his divine origins. The descriptors should both be understood in fundamentally Christological terms. The blind beggar sees the significance of Jesus which is lost on most in the crowd.¹⁰¹

Similar to Jesus' previous encounter with the children (Luke 18:15-17), Luke records the rebuke (ἐπιτιμάω; cf. Luke 18:15) of another social outcast¹⁰² by those with access to Jesus, those who were "leading" or "in the front" of the crowd (Luke 18:36-39).¹⁰³ The reason for the rebuke is not entirely clear and depends somewhat on the identity of the οἱ προάγοντες. If those in front are disciples perhaps they are trying to keep the beggar from bothering Jesus thus the scene is similar to their rebuke of the children (Luke 18:15-17).¹⁰⁴ This interpretation certainly works but it seems more likely

¹⁰⁰Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 900; Marshall, *Luke*, 693; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1507; Green, *Luke*, 663.

¹⁰¹Bock rightly notes the contrast between the blind beggar and the rich ruler but seems to overplay the contrast. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1512. The stronger parallel seems to be between the blind beggar and the defrauded widow (cf. Luke 18:1-8). So also Hays, "Sell All Your Possessions," 55-56. More will be said on the parallels between the beggar and the widow in what follows.

¹⁰²Beggars would have depended exclusively upon the charity of those with whom they came in contact. This is especially true for Luke's beggar because of his blindness. Both his poverty and his blindness leave the beggar on the edge of the crowd as well as the fringe of society as a whole.

¹⁰³Some argue that Luke intends some of Jesus' disciples to be understood as those in front (οἱ προάγοντες; Luke 18:39). See Alan Culpepper, "Seeing the Kingdom of God: The Metaphor of Sight in the Gospel of Luke," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 21 (1994): 437-38; Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 900. Regardless of whether or not the phrase refers to the disciples, the group clearly represents those who misunderstand Jesus and his kingdom based on their rejection of the beggar. Green writes, "Whether these persons are disciples (cf. 9:52; 18:15) or not is unclear. What is transparent is the 'those in front' regard this blind beggar as outside the parameters of Jesus' ministry, marginal to human society as normally configured, and so outside the boundaries of God's grace." Green, *Luke*, 664.

that the οἱ προάγοντες are in fact the Pharisees. First, the disciples are not the only group Luke records giving a rebuke to others – the Pharisees sharply rebuke the crowds for their praising of Jesus as he enters Jerusalem (ἐπιτιμάω; Luke 19:39), the impetus of which was the messianic significance of the crowds’ actions.¹⁰⁵

Second, that the beggar describes Jesus as “Son of David” (Luke 18:38) is significant since the Pharisees would have likely considered the title blasphemous, or at least an unwise sentiment given the occupation of the Romans.¹⁰⁶ Although the disciples’ rebuke of the children falls closer contextually to Jesus’ encounter with the beggar, the

¹⁰⁴Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1509; Nolland holds that the group best mirrors the disciples in Luke 18:15-17 but does allow for a parallel with the Pharisees in Luke 19:39. Despite this, Nolland does not explain the purpose of the rebuke. Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 900.

¹⁰⁵Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1559. Marshall is less committal regarding the motivation for the rebuke. He writes, “It is possible that they [the Pharisees] are to be regarded as friendly to Jesus, as elsewhere in Lk. (7:36; 11:37; 14:1; possibly 13:31-33), but their advice is unacceptable. They think that Jesus should restrain the fervour of his disciples. They may possibly have feared for Jesus’ safety (and their own skins) if such outbursts led to a messianic demonstration. Or they may have felt simply that Jesus should not tolerate such extravagant and (in their eyes) unwarranted sentiments.” Marshall, *Luke*, 716.

¹⁰⁶Lohse makes no mention of Luke 18:38-39 in his article. Eduard Lohse, “ὁ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 8, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972), 478-88. Most commentators understand the phrase to be messianic but none understand the rebuke in terms of a response to blasphemy. See Garland, *Luke*, 741-42; Green, *Luke*, 663-64; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1508-09; Marshall, *Luke*, 693; Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 900-01. Fitzmyer argues that Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-40) should be understood in “a non-eschatological, non-political sense.” Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1246-47.

Rightly Strauss, who states, “The king whom Gabriel predicted in Lk. 1:32-33 would reign forever on the throne of David is at the very gates of Jerusalem. This vivid and seemingly political picture calls for immediate clarification. Luke does this first by indicating that it is Jesus’ disciples who recognize his identity, an identity established not by activities traditionally associated with a conquering messiah but by Jesus’ miraculous works. In addition, Luke brings out more clearly the allusion to Zech. 9.9-10 with its portrait of the humble and just king bringing peace. This peace, however, is a spiritual peace, not yet fully realized on earth. Finally, Luke precedes the scene with the parable of the pounds, further emphasizing that the kingdom is not yet about to appear (Lk. 19.11). Jesus has arrived in Jerusalem not to establish his kingdom physically on earth but to fulfill his *exodus* (9.31) – to complete his messianic task and assume his kingly reign at God’s right hand.” Mark L. Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts: The Promise and its Fulfillment in Lukan Christology*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series, vol. 110 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 316 (emphasis original). Though Strauss does not state it explicitly, if his conclusions are right, an implication is that the Pharisees too grasp the significance of the

purpose of the rebuke seems more like that of the Pharisees than of the disciples. So then, if the group was composed even partially of Pharisees, the motivation for the rebuke is similar to that which motivated the rebuke of the crowds upon Jesus' entry to Jerusalem.¹⁰⁷

Luke 18:40-43. Despite the rebuke the beggar cries out (*κράζω*) all the more for Jesus to have mercy on him (Luke 18:39; cf. Luke 4:41; 9:39). His persistence echoes that of the widow (Luke 18:1-8; cf. *βοάω* in Luke 18:38) and is rewarded like the widow's. Hearing the beggar's cries, Jesus stops and engages him asking what it is that the beggar wants (Luke 18:40-41). Jesus grants the man's request to regain his sight which causes great celebration among the crowd who recognized the divine activity (Luke 18:42-43).

There are strong thematic and lexical ties to Jesus' parable of the widow and the judge (Luke 18:1-8). The beggar's persistence parallels that of the widow but so too does the faith he exhibits (Luke 18:42). Jesus' summary statement regarding the Son of Man's search for faith (Luke 18:8) is echoed here in the Son of David's commending of the beggar's faith (Luke 18:42).¹⁰⁸ There is a distinct messianic parallel in the two

disciples' actions. Thus, the Pharisees rebuke of the disciples for their response to Jesus' entrance at least implies that the Pharisees are concerned with blasphemy.

¹⁰⁷Contra Bock who takes the rebuke as more "mundane" in that those who rebuked the beggar did so because they did not want Jesus to be bothered with him. See Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1509. Green is ambiguous about the identity of those who rebuke the beggar but he does leave it as a possibility. Green, *Luke*, 664.

¹⁰⁸Green draws the connection between the Son of God (Luke 1:27, 32-35; 2:4) and the beggar's declaration that Jesus is the Son of David (Luke 18:35-43), both of which should be understood messianically. Green, *Luke*, 663. To these descriptors I would add Son of Man as it is used in Luke 17:20-

pericopes as well. Given the eschatological context of Jesus' discussion with the Pharisees in Luke 17:20ff., the reference to the Son of Man in Luke 18:8 introduces a strong link to Daniel 7:14. The Davidic motif appears in Luke 18:38-39 as well and draws together the two passages. These three common factors in the text – social outcasts, crying out, and the Davidic motif – draw the two texts into a hermeneutically fruitful parallel.¹⁰⁹

The usage of $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\zeta\omega$ in this setting brings out Luke's theologically rich understanding of salvation as both a physical and spiritual reality.¹¹⁰ For Luke, $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\zeta\omega$ can refer both to physical healing (Luke 6:9; 8:48; 17:19) as well as eschatological salvation (Luke 7:50; 8:12; 9:24; 13:23; 18:26).¹¹¹ So then, Jesus' announcement that the beggar has been healed ("saved") refers not only to the beggar's sight but to his standing – literally – before God. It is the beggar's faith to which Jesus responds with both physical healing as well as eschatological acceptance.¹¹² To such as these belongs the kingdom

18:8. This is because the Son of Man is described as "coming" on that "day" which alludes back to John's previous question (Luke 7:18-19).

¹⁰⁹Contra Nolland who cuts off the travel narrative at Luke 18:34. See Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 894. Luke intentionally parallels Bartemaueus with the widow which ties Luke 18:35-43 both structurally and thematically to Luke 18:1-34.

¹¹⁰By "physical and spiritual" I do not mean to introduce a sort of dualism. Salvation is typically understood as a spiritual reality in that it has to do with one's standing before God. By using $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\zeta\omega$, Luke seeks to demonstrate the holistic nature of salvation in that it certainly pertains to one's relationship to God but that relationship issues forth in physical wholeness (i.e., having sight) as well. That the beggar asks the Son of David for his sight links both realities since the son of David has been raised up in order to bring salvation (cf. Luke 1:68-69; Acts 13:30-33) which he does by healing the beggar.

¹¹¹Marshall, noting the dual meaning of salvation, writes, "There is some link between the healings wrought by Jesus and the spiritual salvation which He brought to men, a link which is not merely linguistically easy but has its deeper roots in that fact that common to both sets of activity is the power of God revealed in Jesus in response to faith. The power to heal and the authority to save both reside in God." I. H. Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian*, 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 95.

(cf. Luke 18:15-17).

In what way are the beggar's actions a response of faith? In other words, what causes Jesus to say it is the beggar's faith which has saved/healed him? There are at least three qualities of the beggar's actions which fit Luke's concept of faith. First, the beggar although he is blind, sees the severity of his situation. His healing, if it is to happen, must come from God. The crowd misses the significance of Jesus' approach – to them he is merely Jesus of Nazareth (Luke 18:37). The blind beggar understands that the Son of David, the one who gives both freedom and sight (Luke 4:18; cf. Luke 7:22), is near. His persistence in calling for Jesus demonstrates that the beggar grasped the urgency of the moment given the severity of his circumstances.

Second, his is a cry for mercy as opposed to a demand based on merit. In contrast to the beggar, take for example the centurion whom Jesus commends for his faith (Luke 7:1-10). The Jewish elders appeal to Jesus based on the centurion's apparent worthiness – he loved Israel and had acted generously towards the nation by building a synagogue (Luke 7:4-5). But when the centurion pleads his own case, he argues based on mercy – as one who understands authority and recognizes that Jesus authority is greater than his own (Luke 7:6-8). The centurion recognizes that Jesus is in no way obligated to act on his behalf. His plea then is rooted in mercy, not in obligation.¹¹³ The same can be said of the blind beggar. He recognizes that he has no chance for healing apart from Jesus and understands he is in no position to leverage Jesus' help. Both the centurion and

¹¹²Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 548.

the blind beggar are found in the same position before Jesus and both men receive the same affirmation.

Finally, the beggar's two-fold response of following Jesus and glorifying God confirms a genuine response of faith on the part of the beggar (Luke 18:43). In Luke, to follow Jesus is to follow him as a disciple (cf. Luke 5:11, 27-28; 9:23, 57-62; 18:28).¹¹⁴ In contrast to the rich ruler who does not follow Jesus (cf. Luke 18:22-23), upon hearing Jesus' words the blind beggar instinctively follows Jesus (Luke 18:43). The beggar does not need to be prompted to follow, he simply knows to follow. Luke also describes the beggar as glorifying God (δοξάζων τὸν θεόν), a phrase which consistently points to a positive encounter with and response to Jesus (Luke 18:43; cf. Luke 2:20; 5:25-26; 7:16; 13:13).¹¹⁵ In addition to the beggar's act of glorifying God, Luke records the response of the surrounding crowd who "give praise to God" (Luke 18:43; ἔδωκεν αἶνον τῷ θεῷ). Thus, the weight of the event is not lost on the crowd either as they recognize the significance of Jesus' healing of the beggar (Luke 18:43).¹¹⁶

¹¹³Nolland writes, "There is a deliberate contrast between the high estimate of the Jewish elders and the centurion's own sense of personal unworthiness." Nolland, *1-9:20*, 319.

¹¹⁴Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1511; Stein, *Luke*, 464; Marshall, *Luke*, 694; Culpepper, "Seeing the Kingdom of God," 439.

¹¹⁵Green writes, "As is typical in Lukan accounts of healing, people attribute restorative power to God, even while recognizing Jesus as the one through whom that power is manifest. Jesus is thus identified as the authorized agent of God – in the language of the pericope, 'Son of David.'" Green, *Luke*, 665.

¹¹⁶As with the shepherds in Luke 2:20, the crowds saw the miraculous and responded by praising God. There is a definite connection in Luke between sight and praising/glorifying. Culpepper writes, "Therefore, the response of the beggar and the crowd, like that of the Samaritan leper who praised God (17:15), not only recognizes that Jesus acted by the power of God but also fulfills his mission to announce God's kingship on earth. The pattern of all praising God because of the healing that had come to

Summary. Though not explicitly mentioned, Luke’s kingdom motif is not too far from the surface of Jesus’ encounter with the blind beggar.¹¹⁷ The parallels between the blind beggar (Luke 18:35-43) and the defrauded widow (Luke 18:1-8) as well as the rich ruler (Luke 18:18-30) demonstrate that the kingdom motif is interpretively significant even in contexts where it is not explicit. Positively, the widow’s cries picture the faith-filled persistence necessary to see the kingdom, a characteristic present in the blind beggar as well.¹¹⁸ Negatively, the rich ruler’s inability to see past his possessions prevented him from entering the kingdom. The blind beggar – as with the defrauded widow (Luke 18:1-8), the tax-collector (Luke 18:9-14), the children (Luke 18:15-17), and the disciples (Luke 18:28-29) – stands as an outcast but has been brought near to the kingdom by faith. The beggar saw his inability and need and responded in faith.

Beyond the characterization in Jesus’ encounter with the blind beggar, salvation is explicitly in view which helps strengthen our understanding of Luke 18:9-14 as both eschatological and soteriological. The beggar’s cry for mercy (Luke 18:38-39), which Jesus affirms as a cry of faith (Luke 18:42) parallels the tax-collector’s cry for mercy (Luke 18:13).¹¹⁹ Just as God granted the request of the tax-collector by sending him home “having been justified” (Luke 18:14a), Jesus – the Son of David (Luke 18:38-

one through the mercy of Jesus is itself a vision of the nature of the kingdom.” Culpepper, “Seeing the Kingdom of God,” 439.

¹¹⁷The blind beggar should be understood as one who does in fact see the kingdom of God in that Jesus opens his eyes to it (cf. Luke 8:9-10).

¹¹⁸The widow’s cry for justice is paralleled with the elect’s desire for the coming of the Son of Man (Luke 18:8) which is tied to the coming of the kingdom of God (Luke 17:20-22).

39), the Lord (Luke 18:41) – granted the beggar’s request for sight on account of his faith (Luke 18:42). Thus, God’s divine mission for Jesus is fulfilled in both giving sight and salvation to a blind man (Luke 18:43; cf. Luke 4:18; 7:22) as well as justification from sin to a tax-collector (Luke 18:14a; cf. Luke 4:19; 5:32).

Luke 19:1-10

The travel narrative comes to a close with this last pericope which centers upon Jesus’ encounter with a chief tax-collector named Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10).¹²⁰ Jesus is now in Jericho and met with so much fanfare that the diminutive Zacchaeus must climb into a tree in order to get a glimpse of Jesus (Luke 19:1-4). As Jesus passes the tree into which Zacchaeus climbed, he calls Zacchaeus down and insists on dining with the tax-collector (Luke 19:5). Although Zacchaeus joyfully accepts the invitation (Luke 19:6), the crowds voice their displeasure at Jesus’ choice to dine with a “sinner” (Luke 19:7). The tables are turned as the host of the meal becomes the recipient of salvation which was in fact the self-attested focal point of Jesus’ mission – the salvation of the lost (Luke 19:8-10; cf. Luke 15:32).¹²¹

¹¹⁹Although the link word βούω is missing in Luke 18:9-14, both scenes envision emotional responses to the respective circumstances of the tax-collector and the beggar both of whom stand in need of divine assistance.

¹²⁰I recognize there are a variety of scholarly opinions on where Luke’s travel narrative ends. I hold that Luke intends to end his travel narrative at Luke 19:10 with Jesus’ summary statement about the purpose of his travels, namely, the salvation of the lost. The parable of the minas which follows (Luke 19:11-27) should be understood as a transitional story which precedes Jesus’ triumphal entry (Luke 19:28-40).

¹²¹I follow the traditional interpretation that Jesus’ encounter with Zacchaeus should be understood as a conversion story. This interpretation has been questioned though. See Richard C. White, “A Good Word for Zacchaeus? Exegetical Comment on Luke 19:1-10,” *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 14 (1979): 89-96; Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1220-21; Green, *Luke*, 672. For those who understand the

Luke 19:1-3. Since Luke 9:51, Jesus has been set on arriving in Jerusalem in order to fulfill his divine mission.¹²² Given the proximity of Jericho to Jerusalem, Luke's intention is to highlight the nearness of Jesus' destination both from a geographic as well as theological perspective.¹²³ Jesus' stated task has been to suffer in Jerusalem. So then Jericho is the last step on that journey. Given this setting Jesus' actions are particularly significant.

Beyond the geographical setting, Luke's description of Zacchaeus links him back with several other characters in Luke 18:1-43. He is a tax-collector and extremely wealthy (Luke 19:2) thus there are parallels with the tax-collector in the temple (Luke 18:13)¹²⁴ as well as the rich ruler (Luke 18:23). Zacchaeus is in fact a conflation of the two characters since he is an ἀρχιτελώνης – a ruling, or chief tax-collector.¹²⁵ Being both a tax-collector and wealthy means Zacchaeus is doubly excluded – on account of his being a tax-collector, Zacchaeus stands as a sinner (cf. Luke 19:7) and thus stands outside

episode as describing Zacchaeus' conversion see Marshall, *Luke*, 697; Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 906; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1520; Stein, *Luke*, 468.

¹²²Luke mentions Jerusalem throughout the travel narrative (Luke 9:51, 57; 10:38; 13:22; 17:11; 18:31) thus giving it theological weight regarding Jesus' mission to fulfill the Scriptures in his death and resurrection.

¹²³See especially Green, *Luke*, 668. See also Stein, *Luke*, 467; Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 904; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1516.

¹²⁴Luke includes several other thematic links between Zacchaeus and the tax-collector in the Temple (Luke 18:9-14). Besides the obvious similarities in that they both are tax-collectors, both men are referred to as "sinners" by the supposedly "righteous" (Luke 18:9; cf. Luke 19:7). Though not explicit, both men by their actions demonstrate faith (Luke 18:13; cf. Luke 19:8). Both men receive positive declarations from Jesus (Luke 18:14a; cf. Luke 19:9). While the Pharisees obedience exceeds the requirement of the Law (Luke 18:12), Zacchaeus' repentance goes beyond the requirement of the Law (Luke 19:8).

¹²⁵Given Luke describes Zacchaeus as a an ἀρχιτελώνης, it is likely he governed other tax-collectors in the region although the title could imply he was a well-known or ranking tax-collector in the region. Marshall, *Luke*, 696; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1516; Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 904-05.

the kingdom; on account of his being rich, Zacchaeus' entry into the kingdom, humanly speaking, is impossible (cf. Luke 18:24, 27).

In addition to his vocation and its societal consequences as well as his wealth, Zacchaeus' stature also links him back to the blind beggar in the immediately preceding episode (Luke 18:35-43).¹²⁶ The beggar, unable to see Jesus on account of his blindness, is initially hindered by the crowd from speaking with Jesus (Luke 18:39). On the other hand, Zacchaeus, on account of his height (Luke 19:3), is unable to see (*ιδεῖν*) Jesus and is thus initially kept from being able to find out who Jesus is (Luke 19:3). Both men desire to see yet both men are on the fringes of the crowd because of their respective vocations – one a tax-collector, the other a beggar – as well as their respective physical limitations – one is short, the other is blind.¹²⁷

Luke 19:4-6. Realizing he must act quickly, Zacchaeus runs ahead of Jesus and climbs into a tree in order to see him (Luke 19:4). As Jesus approached the tree in which Zacchaeus had climbed, the “seer” becomes the “seen.” Looking up (*ἀναβλέπω*), Jesus saw Zacchaeus and called him down from the tree in order that he might stay with

¹²⁶Green notes that *ἡλικία* could refer not to Zacchaeus' stature but to his age. Green, *Luke*, 669 n. 199. Regardless of whether it is height or age, Zacchaeus stands as an outcast. Green writes, “Whether short or young, then, Zacchaeus is presented as a person of diminutive status in Jericho, thus rendering him as a member of the unenviable association of the lowly in ch. 18, along with the widow, a toll collector, children, and a blind beggar.” *Ibid.*, 670.

¹²⁷Nolland writes, “Though there is no reason to think that this man's desire to see Jesus expresses the same sense of need, the crowd here constitutes the same barrier to access to Jesus that they were initially for the blind man (18:39; cf. v 36). Despite this man's wealth and official power, he is quite unable to penetrate the crowd: he is clearly a social outsider, whose ‘littleness’ in the eyes of others is more than physical.” Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 905. Building upon Nolland's conclusion, Parson writes, “This physical characterization [small of stature] joins with the other descriptors of ‘rich’ and ‘tax collector’ to form the derisive image of a Zacchaeus who is traitorous, small-minded, and greedy. But Luke's intention is to reverse these conventional tropes to show that the penitent Zacchaeus is also a ‘son of

him (Luke 19:5). Hurrying down, Zacchaeus gladly receives Jesus into his home (Luke 19:6).

The motif of sight carries over from Luke 18:35-43 as well as from Luke's setting up of the current episode. However, in looking up, it is Jesus who emphatically takes the initiative in the encounter. Luke's use of *δεῖ* carries with it the idea of divine necessity, that Jesus encounter with Zacchaeus is in some way at the heart of his divine mission. It is divinely necessitated that Jesus stay with Zacchaeus.¹²⁸ Similarly, Jesus statement that he must stay with Zacchaeus "today" (Luke 19:5) adds to the urgency of the encounter but also informs his usage later in the passage that salvation has come to Zacchaeus' house "today" (Luke 19:9). Thus, the combination of *δεῖ* and *σήμερον* highlights the necessity of Jesus' stay since it vividly demonstrates the purpose of his mission and brings about the fulfillment of God's purpose to save sinners like Zacchaeus.¹²⁹

Using the participle *χαίρων*, Luke notes that Zacchaeus receives Jesus joyfully which, in Luke, is characteristic of those who have experienced salvation (Luke 19:6).¹³⁰

Abraham." Mikeal C. Parsons, "'Short in Stature': Luke's Physical Description of Zacchaeus," *New Testament Studies* 47 (2001): 50.

¹²⁸Cosgrove writes, "Jesus derives the *must* of his preaching (Lk. 4:43) from his divine commission. There is no reason to press this *δεῖ* the direction of compulsion. It expresses the logical means to the accomplishment of the mission. Similarly, the *δεῖ* of Lk. 19:5 is a specific example of the choices Jesus makes all through the Gospel regarding the accomplishment of his mission. That is, Jesus determines that he must stay at Zacchaeus' house in order to fulfill an aspect of the mission: 'The Son of man came to seek and save the lost' (19:10)." Cosgrove, "The Divine ΔΕΙ in Luke-Acts," 175 (emphasis original). See also Stein, *Luke*, 467; Marshall, *Luke*, 697; Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, 905; Green, *Luke*, 670.

¹²⁹Green, *Luke*, 670; Stein, *Luke*, 468; Marshall, *Luke*, 697; Nolland, *Luke, 18:35-24:53*, 905; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1518.

Though not explicitly mentioned, Luke appears to be describing a response of faith on the part of Zacchaeus without using the language of faith.¹³¹ Given Luke's usage of *χαίρω* elsewhere, this seems likely and fits best with the remainder of the passage.

Luke 19:7-10. As is typical of a response to Jesus' acceptance of sinners, some grumble over Jesus' choice to share a meal with a "sinner" (Luke 19:7; cf. Luke 5:30; 15:2). The term "sinner" is clearly meant as a pejorative since Zacchaeus, in both his vocation and in his behavior,¹³² has demonstrated himself to be a "sinner" in the crowd's estimation. Previous occurrences of *γογγύζω* (Luke 5:30) and *διαγογγύζω* (Luke 15:2) refer to the Pharisees' response to Jesus though in Luke 19:7 it is the crowds who grumble. The make-up of the crowd is obviously mixed but it is unclear as to whether or not Luke has a specific group in mind which dominates the crowd. However, despite the ambiguity on the make-up of the crowd, the attitude is typical of the Pharisees even if they are not the dominant group in the crowd.¹³³

¹³⁰The joy motif is significant in Luke: See Luke 1:14-17; 2:10; 6:23; 10:20; 15:5-7, 10, 15:32; 19:37; cf. Luke 22:5; 23:8.

¹³¹Green writes, "Because of the association of 'joy' with the news of divine intervention and salvation, that Zacchaeus welcomes Jesus with joy . . . signifies genuine receptivity on the part of Zacchaeus, intimating that he is one who embraces the values and claims of the kingdom of God." Green, *Luke*, 670. It should be noted that Green does not see the Zacchaeus episode as a story of conversion, rather it is a story of restoration as Jesus' acceptance of Zacchaeus is programmatic for the acceptance of outsiders into the kingdom of God.

¹³²The assumption that tax-collectors were by definition dishonest as well as Zacchaeus' own admission that he had defrauded tax-payers (Luke 19:8) here informs Luke's description of Zacchaeus as a "sinner." Beyond these two observations, Parsons notes that less than ideal physical appearance was often perceived as a result of sin: "Thus, Luke's authorial audience may naturally have heard a *double entendre* in the crowd's pronouncement of Zacchaeus's sinfulness: he was born a sinner, as evidenced by his physical size, and he lived as a sinner, as evidenced by his cheating fellow countryfolk out of their money." Parsons, 55 (emphasis original). Parsons also notes that physical beauty is also understood as a sign of acceptance with God (Saul = 1 Sam 9:2; David = 1 Sam 16:2). Parsons, "Short in Stature," 52.

The interpretive crux of the passage comes in Luke 19:8 with the verbs *δίδωμι* and *ἀποδίδωμι*, both of which occur in the present tense. If the sense of these two verbs is understood as a true present, then the scene Luke intends is one in which Zacchaeus states his habit, not his future intention, thus Jesus' announcement is a vindication of Zacchaeus against the charge of "sinner" leveled by the crowd. Green writes,

It is fully consistent with the progression of the Lukan narrative to this point, however, to take these verbs as present progressives . . . Luke's narrative mentions nothing of Zacchaeus's need for repentance, act of repentance, or faith; nor of Jesus' summons to repentance; nor does he in any other way structure this episode as a 'story of conversion.' According to this reading, Zacchaeus does not resolve to undertake new practices but presents for Jesus' evaluation his current behaviors regarding money . . . Jesus' reference to 'salvation' (v 9), then, signifies Zacchaeus's vindication and restoration to the community of God's people; he is not an outsider, after all, but has evidenced through his economic practices his kinship with Abraham (cf. 3:7-14).¹³⁴

Although possible, this interpretation is inadequate at several points. First, it is an argument from silence to say that faith is not present in the passage since the language is missing. Likewise, the lack of a demand from Jesus that Zacchaeus repent does not mean that Zacchaeus had no need for repentance. Luke intentionally parallels Zacchaeus with the rich ruler, whom Jesus clearly calls away from riches in order to follow him. This turning from riches to Jesus is clearly an image of repentance although the language does not occur. When the parallel is extended to Zacchaeus it seems clear that Luke is

¹³³Green writes, "The line between Pharisees and others, including disciples, has become increasingly hard to discern, however, with the consequence that no such distinctions are possible here (cf. 18:9-14, 15-17). In spite of Jesus' repeated attempts throughout the journey (9:51-19:27) to address disciples and Pharisees, and indeed all who would listen, on issues of status and membership among God's people, his message seems thus far to have fallen universally on deaf ears." Green, *Luke*, 671. Although the disciples are not always cast in the best light, Luke never describes them as grumbling which certainly draws to mind images of the wilderness generation's wanderings (Exod 15-17; Num 14-17; cf. Acts 6:39-41; 13:18). Thus, it seems that the crowd is portraying an attitude typical of the Pharisees although the crowd need not be predominantly made up of Pharisees.

highlighting Zacchaeus' willingness to repent, to turn away from riches in order to follow Jesus.¹³⁵

Second, this interpretation does not fully account for the pejorative term “sinner” as Luke uses it throughout the narrative. The “sinner” in Luke is not just a social outcast in need of vindication before other societal powers. The “sinner” in Luke is also one who is alienated from God yet throughout the narrative is welcomed to God by Jesus.¹³⁶ As a “sinner,” Zacchaeus certainly finds himself – literally – on the edge of the crowd (i.e., society), unable to see Jesus (Luke 19:3). Yet, his positive response, his joyful willingness to host Jesus in his home, highlights the acceptance before God that Zacchaeus and other “sinners” in the narrative have experienced (Luke 19:6; cf. Luke 5:32; 7:47; 18:13).¹³⁷

Finally, this interpretation does not adequately explain the significance of the two occurrences of *σήμερον* which are closely connected to the concept of the urgency and immediacy of salvation. Zacchaeus' actions are loaded with a sense of urgency.

¹³⁴Green, *Luke*, 671-72.

¹³⁵Bock writes, “Faith is not explicitly mentioned because the actions imply its presence in concrete expression, recalling the teaching of John the Baptist (3:8-14) as well as the example of the sinful woman (7:36-50) . . . Zacchaeus's encounter with Jesus has led him to change the way he handles money – from taking advantage of people to serving them.” Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1520.

¹³⁶Take for example the woman who anoints Jesus in Simon's home (Luke 7:36-50). Although the nature of her sin is not explicit, that the Luke the narrator (Luke 7:37), Simon (Luke 7:39), and implicitly Jesus (Luke 7:47) refer to her as a “sinner” demonstrates that there is both a societal as well as spiritual aspect to the term “sinner.” Luke introduces her as a “sinner” to set the stage for Simon's use which clearly highlights its use as a social barrier. But, in acknowledging her many sins (Luke 7:47), Jesus brings out the separation from God the woman experienced as a “sinner,” a separation which is overcome by Jesus' acceptance of her on account of her faith which was demonstrated in her anointing him.

¹³⁷Parsons concludes, “The negative characterization of Zacchaeus as short, a tax collector and rich, and his description as a ‘sinner’, ultimately for Luke shows both his need of and his desire for

Despite repeated effort,¹³⁸ he is unable to see Jesus because of the crowd (Luke 19:3). Undeterred by the crowd, he ran ahead and climbed into a tree in order to see Jesus (Luke 19:4). When Jesus emphatically calls Zacchaeus down from the tree in order to go to his home (Luke 19:5), Zacchaeus hurries down the tree and joyfully accepts Jesus' offer (Luke 19:6). Zacchaeus, like the blind beggar (Luke 18:35-43), recognizes the significance of this day and acts accordingly (cf. Luke 19:41-44).

The immediacy of salvation is highlighted in the second occurrence of *σήμερον* (Luke 19:5, 9; cf. Luke 2:11; 4:21; 19:42; 23:42-43).¹³⁹ Zacchaeus' repentance – pictured in his commitment to the poor as well as his restitution (Luke 19:8) – is affirmed by Jesus who announces that salvation has in fact come to Zacchaeus and his home “today,” a reality which defines the purpose and scope of Jesus' ministry (Luke 19:9-10; cf. Ps 95:7b). Beale rightly draws a close parallel between the coming of the Son of Man in Daniel 7:13 and the coming of the Son of Man in Luke 7:34 and by extension Luke 19:10.¹⁴⁰ By summarizing his mission in terms of the coming of the Son of Man, Jesus is

repentance. It is therefore most likely that Luke's audience would have heard the story of Zacchaeus as a conversion narrative.” Parsons, “Short in Stature,” 57.

¹³⁸The imperfect of *ζητέω* and *δύναμαι* denote the ongoing force of Zacchaeus' actions.

¹³⁹Bock writes, “The emphasis on ‘today,’ besides underscoring fulfillment, also highlights the immediacy and availability of that blessing. Right now God makes available such blessings and promises. Such immediacy informs the background of other elements of the plan. Salvation is here and now.” Darrell L. Bock, “A Theology of Luke-Acts,” in *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, ed. Roy B. Zuck (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1994), 93. See also Green, *Luke*, 670.

¹⁴⁰Beale writes, “In contrast to Dan. 7, which portrays the Son of Man surrounded by an angelic royal host (cf. vv. 9-10) as he approaches the heavenly divine throne to receive a kingdom, Luke 7:34 depicts Jesus as beginning to fulfill the Daniel prophecy in an apparently different way than prophesied. The wording ‘the Son of Man has come’ is sufficient to recognize an allusion to Daniel, and, as with Mark 10:45, it is best to assume that Luke has in view incipient fulfillment rather than a mere analogy to Daniel's Son of Man. Strikingly, those who surround the coming of the Son of Man are not angels, as in Dan. 7, but rather Jesus's retinue is tax collectors and sinners. Again, this appears to be part of

defining his eschatological messianic mission in terms of the salvation of the lost, and not primarily the conquest of Israel's most obvious enemy, Rome (cf. Luke 19:11-27, 28-40; Acts 1:6). Messiah, the Son of Man, the Son of David, has come in order to save those separated from God and others. "Today" was the day in which Zacchaeus experienced that salvation.¹⁴¹

Summary. The richness of Luke's salvation motif pulses through Jesus' encounter with Zacchaeus. In this episode one finds an embodiment in Zacchaeus of that which makes salvation so difficult even, humanly speaking, impossible (cf. Luke 18:24, 27). Zacchaeus is rich (Luke 19:2); he is a tax-collector and therefore a "sinner" (Luke 19:2, 7); and he is short (Luke 19:3), a physical limitation which implied a spiritual deficiency. But it is precisely in saving people such as Zacchaeus that Jesus fulfills his divine mission (Luke 19:5, 10; cf. Luke 5:32). Zacchaeus, having received Jesus with joy (Luke 19:6), experienced a declaration of salvation (Luke 19:8) much like the tax-collector who went home "justified" (Luke 18:14a). Though considered a "sinner" (Luke 19:7; cf. Luke 18:9, 13), Zacchaeus finds himself a candidate for salvation.

Conclusion

Luke weaves several significant narrative characteristics together throughout Luke 17:20-19:10 which gives the passage a rich thematic cohesiveness. Each of the

his incognito victorious coming to receive authority over a kingdom, which begins even before his death and resurrection." Gregory K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 197.

¹⁴¹So then the OT concept of the Day of the Lord, which is not too far removed from the context of the Zacchaeus episode (cf. Luke 17:24), is here portrayed in the salvation of a Son of Abraham.

individual pericopes in Luke 17:20-19:10 is marked by a deeply eschatological framing. The Kingdom of God (Luke 17:20-21; 18:16-17, 24, 29), the Day of the Lord (Luke 17:22-37; cf. Luke 18:8, 14; 19:9), the coming of the Son of Man (Luke 18:8, 19:10), the exaltation of the humble (Luke 18:14, 16-17), eternal life (18:18, 30), resurrection (Luke 18:33), and the nearness of salvation (Luke 18:9) are eschatological realities which course throughout the text and bind it together. This binding is hermeneutically significant in that each pericope aids in interpreting the others since they share a rich eschatological fabric.

The eschatological significance of Jesus' ministry serves as the vehicle by which Luke communicates his multifaceted soteriological perspective. Salvation is pictured as losing one's life in order to keep it (Luke 17:33), the granting of justice in response to faith (Luke 18:7-8, 14a), the justification of the humble (Luke 18:13-14, 33), receiving the kingdom of God (Luke 18:17), inheriting eternal life (Luke 18:18, 30), entering the kingdom of God (Luke 18:17, 24-25), receiving mercy from the Son of David (Luke 18:38-39; cf. Luke 18:13), and becoming a son of Abraham (Luke 19:9-10). So then, enmeshed in the eschatological framework is a soteriological thrust which culminates in Jesus' declaration in Luke 19:10.

The day of the coming of the Son of Man – the Day of the Lord – is certainly one which issues forth in judgment and wrath for some but for others it is the day of their salvation.

CHAPTER 4

NARRATIVE CONGRUENCE: JUSTIFICATION AS IT RELATES TO OTHER LUKAN PARTICULARS – KINGDOM AND REVERSAL

Introduction

The argument up to this point has been that justification in Luke 18:9-14 is both eschatological and soteriological. This conclusion is based on both the exegesis of the parable itself as well as the significant rootedness of the parable in Luke 17:20-19:10. The argument of this chapter will seek to broaden the scope of the enquiry in order to evaluate whether or not this understanding of justification fits within the wider flow of Luke's narrative. In other words, does an eschatological-soteriological reading of justification in Luke 18:9-14 make sense in Luke's overall theological purposes? This chapter will seek to answer in the affirmative by looking at two significant themes in Luke – the Kingdom of God and eschatological reversal, neither of which is interpretively mutually exclusive. The goal is not to read these themes through the lens of Luke 18:9-14 but rather to observe how these themes shed light on, relate to, and impact Luke's understanding of justification as we have argued for it in the previous material.¹

¹These two particulars are not entirely distinct in that there is much overlap between the two motifs as they are presented in the narrative. That being said, each of them does have its particular emphasis as it relates to justification which will be highlighted in the exegesis to follow.

Justification and the Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God as a theme is relatively more significant in Matthew than in Luke;² however, it is still significant in Luke especially as one recognizes the unique emphases of Luke's depiction of the Kingdom of God. Several passages are key in establishing what, if any, connection there is between justification and Luke's understanding of the Kingdom of God as he portrays it in the broader scope of the narrative. These particular texts are Luke 7:18-35, 36-50; Luke 10:1-24, 25-37; Luke 14:1-24; and Luke 15:1-32.³

Luke 7:18-35, 36-50

In Luke 7:1-17, Jesus healed the centurion's servant (Luke 7:1-10) and resuscitated the widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:11-16) thus setting the stage for Jesus' discussion of his messianic roles with John's disciples.⁴ Word about Jesus' activities, having spread throughout Judea, eventually reaches John the Baptist who had been imprisoned by Herod (Luke 7:17; cf. Luke 3:20; Matt 11:2).⁵

²This observation is based on the number of occurrences of kingdom language in each gospel as well as Matthew's inclusion of extensive didactic material related to the kingdom. A search of βασιλ yielded 74 occurrences in Matthew to 58 in Luke. Matthew includes a significant amount of additional material on the kingdom relative to Mark and Luke (Matthew 5:2-11, 17-20; 13:24-52; 20:1-16; 21:28-32; 22:1-14; 25:1-13).

³Each of these texts is unique to Luke or has been shaped in such a way that Luke makes a unique and particular point *vis a vis* the other Synoptics.

⁴Luke's concern for the outsider should not be missed in whom he mentions as the recipients of Jesus' healing ministry – the dying slave of a foreigner (Luke 7:2) and the dead son of a widow (Luke 7:12).

⁵That John had to send messengers to Jesus implies that he was not free to go to Jesus himself. So then, by implication it appears that John was in prison at this point in Luke's narrative. John Nolland,

Luke 7:18-23. It seems likely that John's imprisonment had raised questions in his mind about the identity of Jesus whom recently he baptized (Luke 7:18; cf. Luke 3:21-22).⁶ John sends disciples to enquire of Jesus whether or not he is the long expected one, *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* (Luke 7:19-20; cf. Luke 19:10).⁷ Jesus, alluding to several passages in Isaiah which highlight the messianic activities of his ministry,⁸ assure John that he is in fact Messiah, that there is no need to expect another (Luke 7:21-23).⁹

Jesus notes six distinct activities which define him as *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* and in fact

Luke 1-9:20, Word Biblical Commentaries, vol. 35a (Dallas: Word Publishers, 1989), 328; Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 295.

⁶Rightly Marshall though, who, referring to John's disciples' trip to the "Lord" (Luke 7:19), writes, "Although John may have his doubts about Jesus, Luke as the narrator has none." I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 289.

⁷Luke's use of *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* is Christologically significant since he appears to describe Jesus in terms of Isaiah's Servant of Yahweh (Isaiah 29, 35, 61), thus Luke fills out the concept of *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* with the content of Isaiah's Servant. Contra Nolland who views the descriptor as a general concept referring to eschatological hope, "but [it] does not refer to any specific figure of Jewish eschatological thought." Nolland, *1-9:20*, 332. Pao and Schnabel argue that it likely points back to Malachi 3:1 and Psalm 118:26. David W. Pao and Eckhard J. Schnabel, "Luke," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 299. This seems likely since Jesus quotes from Mal 3:1 in Luke 7:27 although a reference to the Son of Man (Dan 7:13) or the prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15) is not out of the question either. Stuhlmacher argues for the former. Peter Stuhlmacher, *Reconciliation, Law, and Righteousness* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 31. That the phrase is Christologically significant seems clear though its specific OT background is less certain.

⁸See especially Isa 29:18-19, 35:5-6, 61:1ff. Seccombe writes, "We are aware of Luke's interest in the fulfillment of Scripture, but how deep is his understanding of it? With respect to Isaiah, did he use it simply as a quarry for texts or was he influenced by a deeper appreciation of Isaianic themes? Examination of Luke's Nazareth story and his use of the Servant theme have convinced me that the latter is the case." David Seccombe, "Luke and Isaiah," *New Testament Studies* 27 (1981): 253. Hays, speaking generally of Luke's use of the OT, writes, "Thus in many passages Luke will allude continuously to OT themes and promises without making any direct citations." J. Daniel Hays, "'Sell Everything You Have and Give to the Poor': The Old Testament Prophetic Theme of Justice as the Connecting Motif of Luke 18:1-19:10," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 55 (2012): 44.

⁹Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 3a (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994), 668.

are programmatic for Luke's Christology:¹⁰ the blind receive their sight (Isa 29:18b; 35:5a; cf. Luke 14:13, 21; 18:35-43); the lame walk (Isa 35:6a; cf. Luke 5:17-26; 14:13, 21); lepers are cleansed (Luke 5:12-14; 17:11-19)¹¹; the deaf hear (Isa 29:18a; 35:5b, 6b; cf. Luke 11:14); the dead are raised (Luke 7:11-15; 8:40-42, 49-56); and the poor have good news preached to them (Isa 29:19b; 61:1; cf. Luke 4:18; Luke 6:20; 14:13).¹²

Jesus concludes his Scriptural self-appraisal with a beatitude which announces a blessing by means of an exhortation.¹³ Those who do not stumble – literally, are not scandalized – on account of Jesus will receive eschatological blessing.¹⁴

Luke 7:24-30. Once John's disciples depart, Jesus presses on the crowd the significance of John's question by further questioning the crowds about John's identity (Luke 7:24-27). John was not easily shaken like a reed (Luke 7:24) nor did he dress in

¹⁰Commenting on Jesus' Nazareth sermon in Luke 4, Seccombe writes, "Luke defines the person and mission of Jesus by means of a quotation from Isa. 61. I f./58. 6. However, whereas Matthew might quote the passage and leave it, content with having drawn attention to its fulfillment, Luke keeps returning to it. In his Great Sermon (Luke 6.20), in Jesus' answer to the disciples of John (Luke 7.22) and in Peter's speech to Cornelius (Acts 10.38) the same understanding of Jesus' mission resurfaces, indicating a significant depth of interest in these particular Isaianic categories, and suggesting that Isaiah may have had a formative influence on Luke's theology." Seccombe, "Luke and Isaiah," 253. The influence of Isaiah on Luke's theology will be especially significant later as Luke's portrayal of Jesus in the Passion Narrative is discussed.

¹¹It should be noted that no reference to lepers can be found in the Servant Songs. Marshall understands Luke's reference as an intentional allusion to Elisha, not the Servant. Marshall, *Luke*, 292.

¹²Marshall, who notes only general references to Jesus' preaching in Luke, writes, "No specific incidents regarding preaching to the poor are attested." Marshall, *Luke*, 291.

¹³Luke 7:23 reads, "And blessed are those who are not scandalized because of me."

¹⁴Commenting on Luke 7:23, Marshall writes, "The saying thus refers to the possibility of a person not accepting Jesus as 'the coming One' because he 'stumbles' at the kind of things done or left undone by Jesus, and thinks that he should have behaved differently. Stumbling is thus the opposite to believing in Jesus. The saying pronounces an eschatological verdict upon the people concerned; by their attitude to Jesus they will stand or fall at the last judgment. . . . The saying is thus an invitation to John [as well as Luke's subsequent readers] to consider the scriptural significance of Jesus' ministry, and hence to attain to a deeper, and lasting, faith in him." Marshall, *Luke*, 292.

fine clothes as though he worked in the comfort of a palace (Luke 7:25). Both in his appearance and his resolve, John preached the reality of God's approaching judgment on sin (Luke 3:1-17). John's preaching was marked by urgency due to the coming Day of the Lord (Luke 3:3, 7-9). He was certainly a prophet but due to his role as the one who would go before Messiah,¹⁵ John is much more than a prophet (Luke 7:26-27). Despite his eschatologically significant place in God's plan, Jesus' evaluation of John hinges on the reality of the Kingdom of God – of those born of a woman, John is the greatest by far (Luke 7:28a); however, even as great as John is as Israel's final prophet, he is less than the least in God's kingdom (Luke 7:28b). In other words, it is not genealogical lines (Luke 3:8; cf. Luke 19:9) or eschatological task which matter ultimately. One's position in regards to the Kingdom of God is paramount. Those who enter the kingdom by faith will experience God's eschatological blessing while those who are "offended" by Jesus will experience eschatological judgment (Luke 7:23).

Jesus' conclusion of John spurs the crowd, most notably the tax collectors in the crowd, to "justify" God (Luke 7:29),¹⁶ in that they received John's baptism (Luke

¹⁵In Luke 7:27, Jesus' quotation of Mal 3:1 uses the 2nd person singular "you" instead of the original 1st person singular "me." This change in pronouns shifts the imagery from the messenger going before God to the messenger going before Israel. So then, the imagery would be that of God's messenger going before Israel as in the Exodus (Exod 23:20), rather than God's messenger going before God's anointed as with the original sense of Malachi 3:1. However, the "you" before whom God's messenger goes should be understood as God's anointed, not Israel. Thus, John's task is to prepare the way for Jesus. Marshall, *Luke*, 296.

¹⁶The NASB translates *δικαιόω* as "they acknowledged God's justice". This is a legitimate but unnecessary translation of *δικαιόω*. It seems best always to render *δικαιόω* as "justify" so that English readers do not miss the typically Pauline word. This is not to imply that a Pauline sense should be hoisted onto *δικαιόω*, it is only to acknowledge the conceptual link between the "justification" of God in Luke and the justification of the tax-collector in Luke 18.

7:29).¹⁷ This is Luke’s first use of the verb *δικαιόω*, the meaning of which he draws out by means of parallelism.¹⁸ While the tax-collectors justify God by receiving John’s baptism, we are told that the Pharisees “rejected God’s purposes” because they refused (*ἠθέτησαν*) John’s baptism (Luke 7:30). Thus, Luke understands *δικαιόω* here as acknowledgment of and obedience to God’s purposes especially as it relates to God’s judgments. The tax collectors “justify” God (i.e., demonstrate him to be in the right in his judgment of them as “sinners”) by accepting John’s baptism of repentance while the Pharisees condemn God’s purposes (i.e., demonstrate him to be in the wrong in his judgment of them as “sinners”) by refusing John’s baptism, a rejection which is on account of their inability to recognize their own sin (cf. Luke 3:7-14).

Luke 7:31-35. Immediately after Luke’s insertion about the crowd’s justifying God (Luke 7:29-30), Jesus explains the connection between his and John’s ministry as well as the similar rejection both experienced. John came “singing a dirge” in that his preaching was marked by the need for repentance in light of God’s approaching judgment, yet he was rejected as one with a demon (Luke 7:33). On the other hand, Jesus came “playing the flute” and he too was rejected but as a glutton in that he, by his acceptance of “tax-collectors and sinners,” sullied himself by associating with the “tax-collectors and sinners” (Luke 7:34).

John and Jesus both came as “children” to other “children” – one playing the

¹⁷*βαπτισθέντες* should be understood as an adverbial participle of means. It should be noted that Luke describes John proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Luke 3:3). So then, the crowds who “justify God” do so in that they – in their baptism of repentance – acknowledge God’s verdict against them – that they are sinners – and accept his verdict of forgiven.

flute, one singing a dirge – and yet both were rejected by their contemporaries who had ultimately rejected the truth of God’s judgment against them (Luke 7:31-32; cf. Luke 3:7-14).¹⁹ They had been scandalized by Jesus on account of their misguided expectations (Luke 7:23) of what Messiah would and would not do.²⁰

Jesus concludes his comments with a proverbial statement – wisdom is “justified” by her children (Luke 7:35).²¹ Luke’s use of parallelism is significant:

- v 29 All the people. . .justified God.
- v 30 the Pharisees and scribes reject God’s purposes for themselves.
- vv 31-34 the people of this generation reject John and Jesus.
- v 35 Wisdom is justified by all her children.²²

Just as the crowds, specifically the tax collectors, justified God by accepting John’s baptism of repentance, Wisdom would be justified – declared to be in the right – by all the “children” (Luke 7:35; cf. Luke 7:31-32) who responded positively to Jesus.²³ So

¹⁸Of the occurrences of *δικαιῶ* in Luke, only 7:35 is paralleled in the other Synoptic gospels (Matt 11:19). Matt 12:37 is the only occurrence of *δικαιῶ* in the Synoptic tradition not paralleled in Luke.

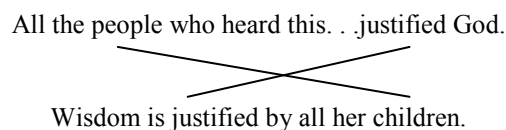
¹⁹William R. Farmer, “Who are the ‘Tax Collectors and Sinners’ in the Synoptic Tradition?,” in *From Faith to Faith: Essays in Honor of Donald G. Miller on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Dikran Y. Hadidian (Pittsburgh: The Pickwick Press, 1979), 170.

²⁰Carroll writes, “Not only their [the Pharisees] exclusivism and self-assurance but also their kingdom-expectations require correction.” John T. Carroll, *Response to the End of History: Eschatology and Situation in Luke-Acts*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, vol. 92 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 75.

²¹Matthew includes a similar statement but states that wisdom is justified *ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῆς*, “by her works” (Matthew 11:19).

²²Green, *Luke*, 304.

²³*Ibid.* Green also notes the chiasmic structure of Luke 7:29, 35 which draws a tight parallel between God and Wisdom:



then, how one responds to God in the ministry of both John and Jesus is determinative. In other words, the expectations one places on God in terms of his activity will determine whether or not one responds properly.

Luke 7:36-50. Although a new scene begins²⁴ at Luke 7:36, thematically there is no separation between Jesus' discussion of John with the crowd (Luke 7:18-35) and Jesus' meal with the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-50). In fact, the meal-scene in Luke 7:36-50 functions as a true-to-life example of those who are not "offended" by Jesus (Luke 7:23) and who "justify" both God (Luke 7:29) and wisdom (Luke 7:35).²⁵

As is common in Luke, Jesus is found eating a meal, in this case at the home of a Pharisee (Luke 7:36). A woman, a "sinner" (Luke 7:37a), learns of Jesus' meal plans and takes a jar of expensive perfume in order to anoint his feet (Luke 7:37). As the woman went about anointing Jesus' feet (Luke 7:38), the host Pharisee, because of her being a "sinner," began to question Jesus' status as a "prophet" (Luke 7:39). It is the

²⁴It should be noted that despite similarities with other anointing scenes in the Gospels (Mark 14:3-9; Matthew 26:6-13; John 12:1-8), the anointing scene in Luke 7:36-50 is unique to Luke in that for Luke it serves a unique didactic function both in its content and its narrative location. Many scholars argue against seeing this anointing as uniform in each of the Gospels. There are obvious similarities but Luke's account is a different anointing than the anointings depicted in Matthew, Mark, and John. See Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 689-90; Robert Stein, *Luke* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 1992), 235; Nolland, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, 351-53. Contra Ken A. Van Til, "Three Anointings and One Offering: The Sinful Woman in Luke 7.36-50," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 15 (2006): 73-74.

²⁵Kilgallen writes, "It seems, then, reasonable to formulate a hypothesis wherein one sees the discourse of Jesus concretized in a story which makes clear particularly the inability of the Pharisee to understand aright both John and Jesus and by which John and Jesus are proved right by Wisdom's child." John J. Kilgallen, "John the Baptist, the Sinful Woman, and the Pharisee," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985): 678. Nolland writes, "The touching display of affectionate gratitude shown to Jesus by this woman off the street well illustrates the claim of v35 that Wisdom is justified by her children. Simon saw little to impress him in his guest (he was of that class which had seen fit to ignore the urgent appeal of John) and remain imperceptive to the coming of God's salvation into his midst, but the woman (already prepared by John's baptism of forgiveness?) was ready with a fitting welcome for the coming Lord, and in her encounter with him her experience of God's eschatological forgiveness comes to its full flower." Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, 353.

Pharisee's disposition, both towards the woman and by implication, towards Jesus, to which Jesus responds with a parable about two people whose debts – five hundred denarii and fifty denarii respectively – had been cancelled (Luke 7:40-42). The Pharisee, having been asked by Jesus which of the two would love the moneylender more (Luke 7:42b), responds correctly that the one who had received the greater pardon would be the one who loved more (Luke 7:43).

Just as Jesus had pressed on the crowd the significance of John the Baptist (Luke 7:24-28), Jesus here explains the significance of the parable to his host in terms of what the woman has done for Jesus (Luke 7:44-50). One of the most discussed interpretive questions surrounding this text revolves around at which point the woman experienced forgiveness – before or after her encounter with Jesus.²⁶

There are at least two reasons to understand the woman as having already been forgiven when she seeks out Jesus. First, the most compelling reason to see her as having already experienced forgiveness before this scene is Jesus' statement about the motivation for great love which is fundamental to the parable itself (Luke 7:43, 47). Jesus states that the debtor who had been forgiven the larger debt would love more than the debtor who had been forgiven the smaller debt but when understood against the backdrop of the meal scene, Jesus' point is that the kind of love he commends in the parable

²⁶Many scholars understand the woman as having already been forgiven: Green, *Luke*, 308; Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 703-04; Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, 351; Marshall, *Luke*, 313; David E. Garland, *Luke*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary Series on the New Testament, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 329-30; William F. Arndt, *Luke*, Concordia Classic Commentary Series (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), 220; Robert C. Tannehill, *Luke*, Abingdon New Testament Commentary Series (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 137; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1981), 691-92; Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Third Gospel*, rev. ed. (Macon: Smith & Helwys Publishing, 2002), 90.

flows from an experience of forgiveness. So too, the woman displayed great love for Jesus in her actions because she had already been forgiven much (Luke 7:41-43; cf. Luke 7:47).²⁷ Her display of love for Jesus is rooted in a past experience of forgiveness just as the first debtors love is rooted in a past experience of forgiveness. In other words, that which explains the woman's great acts of love is her having already been forgiven much.

Second, Luke intentionally contrasts the Pharisee and the woman as representative of those who have rejected God's purposes and those who have accepted God's purposes.²⁸ The woman is intended to be viewed as one of those who "justified God" (Luke 7:29) in that she had accepted God's way of salvation.²⁹ She loves much because she has been forgiven much. On the other hand, Simon the Pharisee does not even recognize his need for forgiveness.³⁰ In fact, the lesser love of the second debtor in the parable is a subtle indictment on the Pharisee since he did not do any of those acts of

²⁷I understand the *ὅτι* clause in Luke 7:47 to express the cause of her love. Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 703 n. 23.

²⁸Talbert, *Reading Luke*, 88.

²⁹Nolland writes, "Scholars have regularly noted that the woman's approach to Jesus seems to presuppose a prior experience of forgiveness. Whatever we make of this in the tradition, in the Lukan text vv 29-30 may encourage us to view the woman as coming to Jesus to express gratitude to him for the forgiveness already proleptically bestowed on her by John (cf. at 3:3)." Nolland, *1-9:20*, 354.

³⁰This is not to say that Simon is a hostile character. That Jesus is eating with Simon demonstrates openness on Jesus' part to the Pharisees. The point of Jesus' interaction with Simon and his guests is that as it stands they are rejecting God's purposes but it need not be that way. The actions of the woman are intended to call for a definite response from Simon and his guests. Green argues against Simon as "typical" of the Pharisees who reject God's purposes mainly on the grounds that it does not leave room for nuance in Luke's portrayal of the Pharisees. Green, *Luke*, 307. Although nuance is certainly necessary in approaching the Pharisees in Luke, the parallelism Luke uses in Luke 7:29-30 and Luke 7:36-50 means that Simon can be understood as "typical" of those who reject God's purposes yet still read sympathetically since Jesus dines with him. Arndt writes, "While many of the Pharisees were hostile toward Jesus, we must not imagine that all of them shunned Him or that He refused to have contact with any member of the party." Arndt, *Luke*, 218. Arndt does make the parallel between Simon, the woman, and Wisdom's children. *Ibid.*, 216.

hospitality the sinful woman had done for Jesus (Luke 7:44-47).³¹ Thus, the wider context of Jesus' encounter with the sinful woman and the Pharisee argues in favor of the woman having already been forgiven prior to the meal-scene.

The meal-scene concludes with a question regarding Jesus' identity which results from his pronouncement of forgiveness (Luke 7:48-50). Although in the course of speaking with his host Jesus states that the woman's sins had been forgiven (Luke 7:47), Jesus intentionally turns to the woman and tells her that her sins are forgiven (Luke 7:48). The statement is meant for the woman as well as for those at the table. The fulfillment of what had been promised to the woman in John's baptism comes in the form of Jesus' "authoritative word" regarding her forgiveness.³² Those at the table with Jesus are privy to his statement as well, although their response is not that of the woman (Luke 7:49). Just as the host had questioned Jesus' identity as a prophet early in the meal (Luke 7:39), the other table guests subtly question Jesus' identity because of his pronouncing forgiveness to the woman (Luke 7:49; cf. Luke 5:21).³³ Jesus again presses the point, this time affirming her faith (Luke 7:50; cf. Luke 7:9).

The two responses – that of the Pharisee (and his guests) and that of the sinful

³¹Questioning whether or not the Pharisee was required as a host to do for Jesus the things which the woman did misses the point of the parable. She has shown extraordinary love for Jesus in her actions while Simon has shown less love than the debtor who was forgiven the fifty denarii! Simon's failing is not in his lack of hospitality but in his inability to recognize his need for repentance. Repentance and not hospitality is the issue.

³²Nolland writes, "In the pericope already the connection is drawn between the woman's forgiveness and Jesus and his coming. Now this connection becomes explicit by means of Jesus' authoritative word: it is Jesus who brings the eschatological forgiveness of God." Nolland, *1-9:20*, 359.

³³Bock writes, "In Luke-Acts, the right of Jesus to judge and thus forgive sins is one of Luke's major claims, which shows one must deal with Jesus in order to be accepted by God. . . . Here is raw eschatological authority, and the Pharisees know it. It is not the claim of a mere prophet." Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 707.

woman – highlight the responses to John’s ministry and ultimately to God’s purposes. The Pharisees rejected John’s baptism of repentance (cf. Luke 7:29) because they did not see their need for repentance.³⁴ On the other hand, neither did the Pharisees embrace Jesus’ ministry which was directed towards “sinners” (Luke 7:38, 48; cf. Luke 5:31-32). The Pharisees rejected John’s dirge and Jesus’ flute (cf. Luke 7:32) and in so doing demonstrated themselves to be those who rejected God’s purposes (Luke 7:30).³⁵ But by her love the sinful woman demonstrates that she is Wisdom’s child (Luke 7:35) and greater than John in that she is “in the kingdom” (Luke 7:29).

Summary. The rich eschatological context of the passage sets the tone for much of Luke’s description of Jesus’ interactions with the “righteous” and the “sinners.” In both Jesus’ dealings with John’s disciples (Luke 7:18-35) and his dinner host (Luke 7:36-50), one finds an eschatological context in which the nature of God’s kingdom is both discussed and displayed. The healing of the centurion’s slave (Luke 7:1-10) and the widow’s son (Luke 7:11-17) setup John’s question over the coming one (Luke 7:19) which gives Jesus the opportunity to make explicit one facet of the kingdom, namely its availability to all who will repent (Luke 7:29). The kingdom itself is thus an eschatological reality which is available in the here and now to those who will acknowledge and joyfully accept God’s purposes (cf. Luke 19:6; cf. Luke 3:7-14), a reality which is imaged in the meal-scene itself (Luke 7:36-50).

³⁴Note Simon’s lack of love compared to the woman’s extraordinary love (Luke 7:44-47).

³⁵York writes, “Simon, on the other hand, doubts Jesus is a true prophet, loves little, and is forgiven little; and in the end Simon appears as one who rejects the purposes of God (7:30) by failing to accept the true identity of Jesus.” John O. York, *The Last Shall Be First: The Rhetoric of Reversal*, Journal

The eschatological context of Luke 7 also informs Luke's usage of righteousness language, especially *δικαιόω*. The nuance is certainly different than in Luke 18:13 but the eschatological shading of Luke 7:29 (cf. Luke 7:35) is significant since in the salvation of sinners God himself is vindicated. This is particularly apparent in the woman's great acts of love which demonstrate that she has in fact been forgiven and experienced entrance into the kingdom. In other words, her love vindicates Jesus' statement about her that her sins are forgiven. Similarly, the Pharisee, by his lack of love, demonstrates his lack of forgiveness and thus he vindicates Luke's previous statement that the Pharisees had rejected God's purposes (Luke 7:30).

Luke 10:1-24, 25-37

Luke places Jesus' commissioning of the seventy-two and their subsequent ministry in the area at the start of the travel narrative (Luke 10:1-24; cf. Luke 9:51-62). Jesus' commissioning of some of his followers (Luke 10:1-24) is linked to the parable which follows (Luke 10:25-37) by two significant thematic parallels: (1) Eschatological salvation/judgment and the kingdom, as well as (2) The cosmic contest seen in the juxtaposition of the ministry of the seventy-two (Luke 10:17-18) and the testing of the Pharisee (Luke 10:25-37).

Luke 10:1-16. Though referring to different events, Matthew and Luke both record Jesus sending his followers out to heal and preach the kingdom using similar

for the Study of the New Testament Supplemental Series, vol. 46 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 125.

instructions (Matt 10:5-15; Luke 9:1-6).³⁶ Luke then records Jesus' commissioning of seventy-two followers whom he sends to the villages he is about to visit (Luke 10:1-2), presumably in Samaria or outlying areas of Judea (cf. Luke 9:51-52). The language each narrative employs in speaking of the nearness of the kingdom is almost identical (Matthew 10:7; Luke 10:9) but Luke does add a second statement about the kingdom being near in those cities which reject the disciples (Luke 10:11). So then Luke understands the coming of the kingdom as one of both salvation and judgment – salvation for those who embrace the kingdom (Luke 10:9), condemnation for those who reject it (Luke 10:11-12).

Jesus' subsequent woes bear this out as well (Luke 10:13-16). Tyre and Sidon would have repented thus experiencing the eschatological blessing of the kingdom had they seen the same "mighty works" done in Chorazin and Bethsaida who rejected Jesus and thus will experience eschatological wrath (Luke 10:13-14). Jesus ties himself fundamentally to the message of the kingdom in that to reject the message of the kingdom is to reject him (Luke 10:16).³⁷ The one who will not "hear" the seventy-two and their message of the kingdom (Luke 10:16a; cf. Luke 10:9) has rejected Jesus which is ultimately a rejection of God who sent Jesus (Luke 10:16b).

³⁶Bock, commenting on Luke 10, writes, "The source discussion is complex and may be characterized as confused." Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 3b (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996), 986. It seems best to understand Luke recording two different commissionings – one of the Twelve (Luke 9:1-6; cf. Mark 6:7-13; Matt 10:1-6) and another of a larger group of seventy-two (Luke 10:1-12). Historically it is not unlikely that Jesus would have used similar instructions in order to prepare different groups to do the same task. *Ibid.*, 988.

³⁷Carroll writes, "Luke ties the kingdom of God closely to the person and activity of Jesus. In his public ministry, Jesus extends the offer and challenge of the kingdom. Participation in the future kingdom of God is decided on just this basis: has one responded positively to Jesus' summons?" Carroll, *Eschatology and Situation in Luke-Acts*, 87.

Luke 10:17-24. Having completed their missionary journey, the disciples return with great joy at the mighty works they themselves have been able to accomplish, especially the dominion they have been granted over demons (Luke 10:17). Jesus responds with a statement about his vision of the fall of Satan (Luke 10:18).³⁸ The significance of Jesus' response to the disciples then is that the certainty of Satan's defeat guarantees their protection as they go about their ministry (Luke 10:19-20).³⁹ Not only Satan's defeat, but their election also guarantees that God will protect them (Luke 10:20).⁴⁰

Upon the return of the seventy-two, Jesus responds in joyful prayer at the work of God (Luke 10:21-22) and impresses upon the twelve the significance of the eschatological blessing to which they have been made privy (Luke 10:23-24).⁴¹ The

³⁸Jesus' vision has been understood in a variety of ways. Gathercole categorizes three interpretive options. He writes, "The three principal interpretive options can be categorised as follows: that which refers to a vision of Jesus of a primeval past event; that which refers to a vision of Jesus of an event in the recent past, prior to (or even simultaneous with) the vision; and finally, that which refers to a vision of a future event." Simon J. Gathercole, "Jesus' Eschatological Vision of the Fall of Satan: Luke 10,18 Reconsidered," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 94 (2003): 144. For our purposes, the interpretation of Jesus' vision is not definitive for the overall goal of this section which is to draw out the close connection between Jesus' (and the disciples) contest with Satan (Luke 10:1-20) and Jesus' contest with the lawyer (Luke 10:25-37). That being said, the view which understands Jesus' vision one of the eschatological or final fall of Satan fits the context the best as well as explains the significant role Satan play in the remainder of Luke-Acts.

³⁹Rightly Gathercole, who writes, "After telling the disciples, then, of his vision of Satan's fall from heaven in 10,18, he tells them that nothing will harm them: it would have been odd for Jesus to respond to their triumphalism with simple scare tactics. However, he does not want their minds to focus on their abilities derived from the authority over evil powers which they have been granted." Gathercole, "Jesus' Eschatological Vision," 161-62. See also Green, *Luke*, 419, who writes, "The decisive fall of Satan [which Jesus sees] is anticipated in the future, but it is already becoming manifest through the mission of Jesus and, by extension, through the ministry of his envoys." On the other hand, contra Stein, *Luke*, 309 who understands the fall of Satan to be happening in the ministry of the seventy-two. Similarly Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1007 who writes, "The point is clear: the disciples' ministry spells defeat for Satan."

⁴⁰Gathercole writes, "Their confidence during the final tribulation should rest in the fact that they belong to God's elect, that their names are written in the heavenly book of life." Gathercole, "Jesus' Eschatological Vision," 162.

motif of sight is important in this text (Luke 10:21, 23-24; cf. Luke 18:35-43; 19:1-3). Jesus thanks the Father that “these things”⁴² have been hidden from the “wise” but revealed to the “little children” (Luke 10:21). The disciples are blessed since their eyes have seen things which prophets and kings had previously longed to see and hear (Luke 10:23-24). These things were revealed to them by the sovereign choice of God (Luke 10:22). The blessing the disciples have been given is an eschatological gift, it is the “good pleasure” (εὐδοκία) of God to open the eyes of the disciples in order to see the fulfillment of God’s plan (Luke 10:21-22).⁴³ So then, Luke roots the certainty of their success in preaching the kingdom (cf. Luke 10:9-11), both in its saving and judging capacity, in the security of having ones name written in the book of life.⁴⁴ It is election

⁴¹Jesus’ prayer is linked to his debriefing of the seventy-two by the time marker ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ (Luke 10:21) as well as the concentration of language which is expressive of joy. Green, *Luke*, 421; Marshall, *Luke*, 432. Bock rightly adds the nuance to the time-marker, understanding it as a reference to the eschatological significance of the timing. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1009 n. 49. In addition to the time marker and the theme of rejoicing, Gathercole argues that the theme of election is what fundamentally binds Luke 10:17-24. Gathercole, “Jesus’ Eschatological Vision,” 162.

⁴²The content of ταῦτα is likely the kingdom and its eschatological fulfillment which is displayed in the present ministry of the seventy-two. Thus the eschatological triumph of the kingdom is displayed in the success the disciples had experienced. Ladd writes, “When they [the disciples] expressed delighted surprise at the power they had exercised, he [Jesus] replied that their mission only illustrated the defeat of Satan – his fall from his place of power (Luke 10:17-18). This is the most important passage illustrating the fact that the Kingdom of God was present not only in Jesus but also in his disciples.” George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974, reprinted 2000), 257.

⁴³Luke’s use of εὐδοκία fits within his overall emphasis upon God’s sovereign plan. The significance is that it is God’s good pleasure to involve the disciples in and open their eyes to God’s saving plan. See Marshall, *Luke*, 435; Green, *Luke*, 422.

⁴⁴Gathercole writes, “The language of God’s εὐδοκία evokes the sense of God’s electing will, his predetermining purpose, as it does elsewhere in the NT (Eph 1,5; 1,9; Phil 2,13; 2Thess 1,11). The uses of the verb εὐδοκέω also have a very similar sense: in Luke, both in baptismal *bat qol* (Lk 3,23), and in Jesus’ promise to the disciples that God has elected to give them the kingdom (Lk 12,32). Jesus’ rejoicing in God’s election of the disciples in 10,21 seems, then, to have a very strong connection to the inscription of their names in the heavenly book of life in 10,20. Lk 10,21-24 serves, then, to reinforce the importance

that gives eschatological certainty as the disciples are involved in the eschatological contest between God and Satan.

Luke 10:25-37. The context of eschatological contest carries over into the episode which follows.⁴⁵ The lawyer's question is described as a "test" (*εκπειράζων*; cf. Luke 4:2).⁴⁶ So then the conversation is immediately introduced as one of confrontation.⁴⁷ The lawyer's intention is to trap Jesus thus the question is a court summons of sorts in which the lawyer attempts to put Jesus on trial but in the final act finds himself on the stand. The lawyer's question is straightforward and simple enough: what must one do in order to inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25; cf. Luke 18:18-30).⁴⁸

Jesus responds with a question regarding the Law which is certainly motivated by the fact that he is speaking with a lawyer (Luke 10:26). The lawyer knew his Torah and thus likely expected some type of answer from Jesus regarding Torah. The context of testing should also heighten the reader's senses to the move Jesus has made. Jesus is clearly engaging in the conversation on the lawyer's terms. The lawyer's answer, which

of the disciples' election, rather than the authority over demons, as the basis of their confidence." Gathercole, "Jesus' Eschatological Vision," 162-63.

⁴⁵Missing the rich connections between Luke 10:1-17 and Luke 10:25-37, many scholars see Luke 10:25 as introducing an entirely different setting. Bock writes, "Luke gives no setting for this event." Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1022. See also Stein, *Luke*, 315; Marshall, *Luke*, 441; John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, Word Biblical Commentaries, vol. 35b (Dallas: Word Publishers, 1993), 583. Green rightly notes that there is no change in scene. Green, *Luke*, 425.

⁴⁶The connection back to the testing of Jesus in the wilderness should not be missed. We will return to the testing motif later in this chapter.

⁴⁷Although Bock does not describe it as an eschatological test, he does recognize the confrontational setting evoked by Luke's word choice. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1023.

⁴⁸The phrase "eternal life" should be understood as an "eschatological notion." Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 583.

Jesus affirms, is a synthesis of Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 (Luke 10:27-28).

The sum of the Law is love of God and love of neighbor. Jesus replies with another text with which the lawyer would have been familiar (Leviticus 18:5).

The intention of the lawyer's question becomes clear as he is unable to allow for apparent theological agreement between himself and Jesus (Luke 10:29). In an attempt to distinguish himself – to make himself out to be right – the lawyer seeks further clarification on what he must do to inherit eternal life.⁴⁹ “Who is my neighbor?” points to the lawyer's true intention with respect to the Law. Though he answers Jesus correctly, the lawyer has missed a significant purpose of the Law (the doing of mercy; cf. Luke 11:42) and has thus distorted this function, a point which the parable addresses.⁵⁰

Jesus answers the lawyer's question with a parable about a passerby who is robbed and left for dead on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho (Luke 10:30). The identity of the victim is never explicitly stated which appears to be intentional on Luke's part.⁵¹ It is the need and not the identity of the man which matters. Again, the context of

⁴⁹Luke's use of *δικαίω* in Luke 10:29 is important because of the confrontational context in which it falls.

⁵⁰There are significant connections between Luke 10:25-37 and Luke 11:42. Thematically, both speak to the Law in its essence as well as to the love of God. In terms of vocabulary, it appears Luke draws a connection in Luke 11:42 back to Luke 10:31-32 by the use of *παρέρχομαι* which is augmented with *αντι* in Luke 10:31-32. Thus it seems reasonable to conclude that when Luke is pronouncing woes on the Pharisees (Luke 11:37-44), he intends his readers to understand the parable of the compassionate Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) as exemplary of not neglecting justice and the love of God.

⁵¹The ambiguity can be seen in the language used to describe the man (*Ἄνθρωπός τις*). The lack of specificity on the identity of the wounded traveler implies that it is the need and not the identity which matters in determining the identity of one's neighbor. Green writes, “The choice of opening, ‘a certain man,’ constitutes a powerful rhetorical move on Jesus' part. In light of the debate surrounding the reach of love, grounded in how one reads Leviticus 19, the impossibility of classifying this person as either friend or foe immediately subverts any interest in questions of this nature. Stripped of his clothes and left half-dead, the man's anonymity thought the story is insured; he is simply a human being, a neighbor, in need.” Green, *Luke*, 429.

testing should be noted since it frames the parable and helps build up the tension Luke intends for his reader to see between Jesus and the lawyer. The lawyer is testing Jesus but implicit in Jesus' parable is a test for the lawyer. Jesus wants the lawyer to make a value judgment regarding the actions of the two religious professionals who leave the beaten man to die.

Two religious leaders – one a priest, the other a Levite – pass by the man (Luke 10:31-32).⁵² As with the ambiguity of the identity of the beaten traveler, that Luke does not explicitly state the motivations of the two Jewish religious leaders points to the fact that there is no legitimate reason to have left the man to die. Jesus' point is that concerns over ritual purity or concerns for safety do not negate one's responsibility to come to the aid of one in circumstances such as the traveler.⁵³ This appears to be the same reality behind Jesus' previous statements about plucking grain on the Sabbath (Luke 6:1-5) and the healing of the man with the withered hand (Luke 6:6-11) – the Law was never meant as to be used as a reason not to do mercy but that is precisely what had happened (cf. Luke 14:1-6).

While the Jewish religious leaders are the ones expected to stop and aid the injured traveler, it is actually a Samaritan who does in fact stop in order to help (Luke 10:33). Understood adversatively, the particle *δέ* suggests the shock Luke intends his readers to experience hearing the parable read. While the motivations of the priest and

⁵²Any conclusion regarding the respective motivations of the priest and the Levite is speculative at best.

⁵³Green writes, "Given the concern with motives characteristic of the interchange between the legal expert and Jesus (vv 25, 29), it is remarkable and probably significant that no inside information

the Levite are left unexposed, Luke indicates the Samaritan's motivation – compassion (σπλαγγίζομαι).⁵⁴ It is the Samaritan's compassion which moves him to be the neighbor to the injured traveler. So then, it is the Samaritan who in fact has fulfilled the Law.

After the climax of Jesus' parable, the lawyer recognizes he is actually the one on trial and has been found guilty of being merciless. Rather than being the neighbor, the lawyer tried to limit those to whom he was responsible to show mercy. The parallel uses of ποιέω (Luke 10:28, 10:37) demonstrates that the law is fulfilled only when the intent of the law is understood and obeyed. Mercy lies near the heart of the law but the lawyer missed this crucial point. Unable to justify himself, the lawyer stands condemned since he in fact has not kept the Law.⁵⁵

Summary. At issue in Luke 10:1-37 is the eschatological contest between God and Satan and their respective kingdoms. The nature of the contest is seen in the preaching of the kingdom (Luke 10:1-24) as the seventy-two are sent out as “lambs in the midst of wolves” (Luke 10:4). They meet positive responses to the kingdom (Luke 10:8-9) but they also meet negative responses which guarantee the eschatological judgment of those who reject the kingdom which is ultimately a rejection of Jesus as God's agent (Luke 10:10-16). This same eschatological judgment befalls Satan as well (Luke 10:18).

By juxtaposing the ministry of the seventy-two with the parable of the Good

regarding the incentive(s) of the priest and Levite is provided. The stark reality is simply they do nothing for this wounded man.” Green, *Luke*, 430.

⁵⁴It should also be noted that the only characters whose motivations are explicitly mentioned are the lawyer (Luke 10:29) and the Samaritan (Luke 10:33). Thus, the contrast is between the lawyer and the Samaritan.

Samaritan, Luke infuses the parable and its framing with the same eschatologically charged context as the kingdom preaching of the seventy-two. Scholars have tried to interpret the parable apart from the Lukan framing but this misses the thematic connections between the two episodes as well as the final form of the text.⁵⁶ The assumption is that an intentional placing of the parable in this literary setting actually changes the intention of the parable. But this assumption is rooted in the belief that we know what the parable meant apart from the way in which Luke has framed it.

Whereas in Luke 10:1-24, the contest has to do with Satan's activity in opposing God's kingdom, in Luke 10:25-37 the contest is between two understandings of the Law and its role in inheriting eternal life. That the lawyer has not actually loved his neighbor turns on its head the notion that obedience to the Law is the means by which one may inherit eternal life. The lawyer's love is motivated by self-preservation in that it operates from a kind of religious tribalism which excludes foreigners as well as other Jews with whom he disagrees.⁵⁷ The kind of love which fulfills the Law is motivated by and rooted in the love of God (*σπλαγχνίζομαι*; cf. Luke 1:78; 7:13; 15:20), a love which does not discriminate based on social status or ethnicity.

⁵⁵Contra Kertelge, who writes, "A theologically laden interpretation of the expression is nevertheless not brought to bear." See Karl Kertelge, *δικαίω*, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 333.

⁵⁶Longenecker writes, "In brief, the Samaritan story performs functions far beyond those given to it by the Lukan frame, to the extent that the literary context in which the parable currently resides appears to be a secondary feature." Bruce W. Longenecker, "The Story of the Samaritan and the Innkeeper (Luke 10:30-35): A Study in Character Rehabilitation," *Biblical Interpretation* 17 (2009): 425.

⁵⁷Rightly Green, who writes, "As a consequence of Hellenistic imperialism and Roman occupation, it could not be generally assumed in the first century of the Common Era that those dwelling among the people of Israel qualified as 'neighbors.' Different attitudes toward those foreign intrusions developed into a fractured social context in which boundaries distinguished not only between Jew and Gentile but also between Jewish factions." Green, *Luke*, 429.

So then, the use of *δικαίω* in Luke 10:29 should be understood in terms of contest as well as in terms of salvation. As opposed to justifying God by recognizing his own need for repentance (cf. Luke 3:8; 7:29), the lawyer attempts to justify himself and his reading of the Law which is itself a test of Jesus. Thus, the lawyer aligns himself against the kingdom of God, rejecting God's purposes (cf. Luke 7:30). The contest motif is clear but there is a soteriological nuance to the usage which is significant as well since the lawyer frames his question in terms of inheriting eternal life. As with Luke 18:18-30, in Luke 10:8-12 the one who will inherit eternal life is the one who responds positively to Jesus and his teaching. In other words, it is the one who justifies God – who accepts his judgment of them and does not reject God's purposes – this one is who will inherit eternal life.

Luke 14:1-24

While dining on a Sabbath at the home of a Pharisee, Jesus heals a man with dropsy (Luke 14:1-6). Later in the meal Jesus notices how those attending the meal jockeyed for the most important seats around the table (Luke 14:7). Responding in a parable about a wedding feast, Jesus warns the guests of the consequences of choosing seats based on a wrong perception of one's importance (Luke 14:8-10). The least important seat at the table is in fact the most important since those who humble themselves are the ones who will be exalted (Luke 14:11; cf. Luke 18:14). Luke's intention is not merely to point out what makes for good table manners but to highlight his theologically rich understanding of the nature of God's kingdom and the kinds of folks who will dine in it (Luke 14:15-24; cf. Luke 5:29-32; 7:36-50; 10:38-42, 11:37-52; 15:1-2; 19:1-10; 22:16, 18, 30; 24:28-43).

Luke 14:1-14. Jesus is here pictured eating at the home of a ruler of the Pharisees on a Sabbath (Luke 14:1). Luke records that they were watching (αὐτοὶ ἤσαν παρατηρούμενοι) Jesus closely, presumably in order to see if he would do anything to violate the Sabbath (cf. Luke 4:31-37; 6:1-5, 6-11; 13:10-17). Jesus, grounding his action in the actions of the Pharisees themselves (Luke 14:5), heals a man with dropsy (Luke 14:4) which hushes the attendants (Luke 14:6). The tone of this Sabbath healing scene differs from previous ones in that despite the Pharisees' close watch of Jesus, there is no mention of an angry response or a plot against Jesus (cf. Luke 6:11; 13:10-17). The lack of hostility should likely be understood in terms of Jesus' mixed relationship to the Pharisees. In other words, the lack of open hostility points to the reality that not all of Jesus' encounters with the Pharisees were negative or hostile (cf. Luke 7:31-50; 13:31).⁵⁸

Jesus proceeds to tell a parable which is motivated by the guests at the dinner table and their choice of seats (Luke 14:7-11). The point of the parable is that the choice of seats is tightly bound to one's eschatological fate (Luke 14:11).⁵⁹ Those who in humility choose the lowest place will be exalted to a place of honor (Luke 14:10; cf. Luke 14:11b) while those who in pride choose the best seats will be humiliated as they are asked to move to the lowest seat (Luke 14:9; cf. Luke 14:11a).

⁵⁸Many scholars understand this scene to be one where the Pharisees are trying to catch Jesus violating the Sabbath. παρατηρέω could certainly imply a trap in which case the man with dropsy had been invited by the Pharisees in order to trap Jesus. See Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1256-57; Stein, *Luke*, 385-86; Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 747.

⁵⁹Noël writes, "Likewise choosing the lowest place at table, demeaning yourself, is like inviting the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind to your feast. These people, rejected by society, are precisely the ones ultimately invited to the feast in the parable of the Great Banquet. Those who choose places of honor tend also to ignore the poor and the outcasts. Those who humble themselves can also invite the poor to their tables." In other words, to invite the lame, etc. is to humble oneself which is ultimately to

The host of the dinner is not exempt from the attitude of the guests against whom Jesus is speaking. Jesus' words to his host are a warning about who to invite since the host's motives are brought to light in looking at his guest list. If the guests are able to repay with an invitation of their own, then the host has his reward in full (Luke 14:12). But if the guests are the outcasts of society, then the host's reward is from God and will be his at the resurrection of the righteous (τῶν δικαίων), a future event, the experience of which is rooted in one's current activity. So then, the imagery of the banquet clearly portrays the nature of the eschatological kingdom.

Luke 14:15-24. That Jesus has the eschatological kingdom in mind is also clear from the parable which follows.⁶⁰ Jesus responds to a guest with a parable about those who are the "blessed" who will eat bread in the kingdom of God (Luke 14:15). The point of Jesus' statement is that those who are the "blessed" will not be those whom one expects to find at such a banquet. In this case, those who were initially invited to the feast will be on the outside of the kingdom, while those who were the last to be invited will fill the banquet hall (Luke 14:24). Those who will eat bread in the kingdom (Luke 14:15), those who will partake in the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:14), those who will have the seats of honor around God's table (Luke 14:10) will be those who embody humility which is required by God, the great host of the feast (Luke 14:11; cf. Luke

be exalted by God. Timothy Noël, "The Parable of the Wedding Guest: A Narrative-Critical Interpretation," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 16 (1989): 21.

⁶⁰Carroll writes, "A programmatic series of texts, all linked through verbal echoes, identifies as the beneficiaries of Jesus' ministry the poor, blind, and lame. Luke 14-15 makes this locus of Jesus' activity the wedge separating those participate in the kingdom, namely those sinners who accept the invitation into the kingdom by repenting, and those who exclude themselves, namely Pharisees and others

18:14).

Summary. The kingdom is marked by reversal in that it involves the exaltation of some and the humiliation of others based on their humility or lack thereof (Luke 14:8-11). It is also marked by reversal in that those expected to sit at the eschatological banquet table are in fact shut out from the meal (Luke 14:18-20; cf. Luke 13:29-30). Just as with the Pharisee and the tax-collector (Luke 18:9-14), one group finds acceptance before God while the other finds rejection.

Also significant in this passage is Luke's reference to the "resurrection of the righteous," a phrase which brings together two Lukan emphases.⁶¹ The "resurrection of the righteous" is a kingdom event in that it is paralleled with the guest's statement about the blessedness of those who will eat bread in the kingdom (Luke 14:15). Those who will eat bread in the kingdom are in fact not those whom one would expect.⁶² Just as the host will be rewarded in the resurrection of the righteous since he invited the poor, crippled, blind, and lame (Luke 14:13), so too it is the poor, crippled, lame, and blind who will be invited to eat bread in the kingdom (Luke 14:21). Luke parallels the

who decline the invitation. The banquet parable in Luke 14:16-24 gives the clearest depiction of this kingdom accompanied by division and reversal." Carroll, *Eschatology and Situation in Luke-Acts*, 85.

⁶¹Luke more than any of the other Synoptic writers spends much time on the resurrection appearances, central to which are the necessity of Jesus death and resurrection according to the Scriptures. Also significant is Luke's understanding of the "righteous" as those who eagerly anticipate the coming of God's kingdom (Luke 2:25-32, 36-38; 23:51). Simeon is "awaiting the comfort of Israel" (*παράκλησιν τοῦ Ἰσραήλ*; Luke 2:25). Anna is in the temple speaking to those who were "awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem" (*λύτρωσιν Ἱεροσολήμ*; Luke 2:38). Joseph is "awaiting the kingdom of God" (*τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ*; Luke 23:51). See also Luke 12:36; Acts 24:15; cf. Heb 11:35.

⁶²Speaking of Jesus' ministry to the poor, blind, and lame, Carroll writes, "Luke 14-15 makes this locus of Jesus' activity the wedge separating those who participate in the kingdom, namely sinners who accept the invitation into the kingdom by repenting, and those who exclude themselves, namely Pharisees

“resurrection of the righteous” with entrance into the kingdom of God. From the perspective of the host, it is necessary that he invite the poor, crippled, lame, and blind in order to take part in the kingdom. On the other hand, from the perspective of the guest, it is those who are the poor, crippled, lame, and blind who will enter the kingdom. So then Luke defines the righteous in terms of those who are poor, crippled, lame, and blind or who willingly associate with such (cf. Luke 18:15-17).

Luke 15:1-32

Luke 15 consists of three parables – the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Sons.⁶³ Although each parable has its own distinctiveness, it is best to interpret them together since Luke 15:1 is the contextual arc linking them and there are no other narrative indicators pointing to a change in setting.⁶⁴ There are thematic links between the three parables which make a comprehensive interpretation more compelling as well. The main connection between the three is the presence of something lost which is later found and results in great joy.

At issue in these parables is Jesus’ acceptance of “tax-collectors and sinners” demonstrated by his willingness to eat with them (Luke 15:1-2). The table imagery is compacted in to Luke 15:2 but it is important since Jesus’ table fellowship with “tax-collectors and sinners” points to their entrance in to the kingdom of God (cf. Luke 14:15-

and others who decline the invitation. The banquet parable in Luke 14:16-24 gives the clearest depiction of this kingdom accompanied by division and reversal.” Carroll, *Eschatology and Situation in Luke*, 85.

⁶³“Sons” is not a typo. This parable is typically understood as centering on the younger son but it seems clearly to be about a father who has two, one in a far country and one at home, both of whom are lost.

⁶⁴Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1301; Green, *Luke*, 568.

24).

Luke 15:1-10. The first of the parables deals with a lost sheep. Realizing one of his sheep is missing, the shepherd leaves the remaining ninety-nine sheep and goes in search of the missing one (Luke 15:4). After finding it, the shepherd returns with joy and celebrates with his neighbors (Luke 15:5-6). Jesus concludes the parable, saying, “I say to you there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous ones who have no need for repentance” (Luke 15:7). Since the parable is spoken to the scribes and Pharisees, it appears likely that Jesus intends to draw a parallel between the ninety-nine “righteous” and the scribes and Pharisees. The usage of *δικαίους* here would be similar to that in Luke 5:31-32 where the tone is one of irony.⁶⁵ Heaven’s joy is wrapped up in the repentance of the one who acknowledges his sin, not in the supposed righteousness of those who think they need no repentance. The second parable carries much the same idea as the first. Jesus is pressing the point that heaven delights in repentance, in the lost being found, a theme which summarizes Luke’s travel narrative itself (cf. Luke 19:10).

Luke 15:11-32. The third parable is the most developed of the three, as well as perhaps the best known of Jesus’ parables. Like the first two, this parable is meant to lay bare God’s joy over the repentance of the unrighteous. The parable divides into two

⁶⁵Luke has an ironic twist on the meaning of righteous seen in the parallelism in Luke 5:31-32. Replying to the Pharisees, Jesus says, “It is not those who are well who need a doctor but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:31-32; cf. Mk. 2:17; Mt. 9:13). “Those who are well” is paralleled with the “righteous” while the “sick” are paralleled with “sinners”. Jesus’ mission is not on behalf of those who are well and righteous, but those who are sick and sinners. The irony is readily apparent since Jesus’ reply is aimed at the Pharisees who believed Messiah would not associate

sections with each detailing the father's dealings with his two sons (Luke 15:11), the younger (Luke 15:12-24) then the elder (Luke 15:25-32). The younger son requests his portion of his father's estate (Luke 15:12). The younger son, having insulted his father in the request itself, quickly leaves his family and squanders his inheritance on "extravagant living" (Luke 15:13). After recognizing his great need and how well those in his father's house are treated (Luke 15:14-17), the son prepares a speech (Luke 15:18-19) and sets out towards home (15:20a). The father sees the son from a distance and, moved by compassion (*ἐσπλαγγίσθη*), races out and welcomes him home (Luke 15:20; cf. Luke 10:33). The father, unwilling to allow his son to finish his speech, announces a celebration for his "dead" son who has been raised back to life, his lost son who has been found (Luke 15:21-24; cf. Luke 19:10).

At this point in the parable, Jesus shifts his attention to the elder son who has been diligently laboring in his father's fields (Luke 15:25). As the elder son returns to the house from the field he hears the celebration and comes to find out that it is on account of his brother's return (Luke 15:26-27). When the elder brother hears about all the father has done, he is enraged (*ὠργίσθη*) and refuses to enter the house and join the celebration despite his father's pleading (Luke 15:28). Unable to contain his anger, the elder son responds with great disdain for his father's apparent lack of appreciation for his years of faithful labor (Luke 15:29-30). The elder son did not receive so much as a goat, and yet the younger son, who wasted the father's estate,⁶⁶ was honored with the fattened calf. The father's response highlights the heart issues which had gripped the elder

with the kinds of folks Jesus was welcoming. Their assumption is that when Messiah comes, he will be with the well and righteous, not the sick and sinners, an assumption which Jesus turns on its head.

brother (Luke 15:31). The elder son had always been near the father and had access to all that belonged to the father. But the elder brother's desire was only for his father's things so that he might celebrate with his friends, not his father. It is the heart of the elder brother, filled with rage, which keeps him from celebrating the new life of his younger brother (Luke 15:32).

The heart condition which infected the elder brother is the same which kept the Pharisees from tabling with Jesus and his guests (Luke 15:1-2). The younger brother repents and returns to his father just as the tax collectors and sinners were coming to Jesus. But, just like the elder son who was enraged (*ὠργίσθη*) by his father's acceptance of the younger son, the Pharisees too stand far off from Jesus because of his acceptance of "tax collectors and sinners" and thus exclude themselves from the kingdom.⁶⁷

Summary. In Luke 15 we see that entrance into the kingdom of God is dependent upon repentance. Luke's point is that the truly righteous are those who repent while the supposedly righteous stand outside the Father's presence, outside the Kingdom, because they recognize in themselves no need for repentance. In other words, the issue at

⁶⁶Literally the father's life (*βίον*).

⁶⁷Wright's interpretation, which hinges on an exilic background, places Israel as the younger brother, those who oppose Jesus as the elder brother, and the father as representative of God. He writes, "Exile, as some of the greatest prophets had seen, was itself part of the strange covenant purposes of Israel's father-god. Israel could be allowed to sin, to follow pagan idolatry, even to end up feeding the pigs for a pagan master, but Israel could not fall out of the covenant purposes of her god. She could say to her god 'I wish you were dead', but this god would not respond in kind. When, therefore, Israel comes to her senses, and returns with all her heart, there is an astonishing, prodigal, lavish welcome waiting for her. Equally, the same generous love is still extended to those who, hurt and upset, cannot at the moment understand how it can possibly be right to welcome the prodigal home." N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 129. Wright, speaking of the elder brother, continues, "The elder brother in the story is, implicitly, condemned, in order then to be offered a new chance." *Ibid.*, 130. Although Wright is correct to see in the father's invitation to the elder brother an invitation by Jesus

stake in the parable is not a lack of hospitality on the part of the Pharisees, it is a lack of recognition of their own need for repentance, of their inability to agree with God's judgment of them, their unwillingness to justify God (cf. Luke 7:29-30). And yet, the call to enter the kingdom also goes to those outside the kingdom, namely the Pharisees. In light of the parable of the wedding feast (Luke 14:15-24), the parallel between the "tax-collectors and sinners" who dine with Jesus (Luke 15:1-2) and the feast which the father puts on for his repentant son (Luke 15:25) bears out this dynamic in which the repentant are the truly righteous.

Summary

In Luke justification is a kingdom reality. That is to say, justification is one of several ways in which Luke images something of the nature of the kingdom. This can be seen in the way in which Luke uses righteousness language, especially his use of the contrasting categories "righteous" and "sinner." The "righteous" are not so because of their moral aptitude but because of their submission to God's purposes which is ultimately seen in their response to Jesus (Luke 7:29-30; cf. Luke 7:36-50). The self-justifying resist Jesus and his message (Luke 7:30; cf. Luke 10:25) while the truly "righteous" embrace Jesus and his message and thus respond out of a new status, that of one who has entered the kingdom (Luke 7:47-50; cf. Luke 10:33, 36-37).

The "righteous" are also marked by humility which is a prerequisite for entrance into the kingdom (Luke 14:10-11; cf. Luke 18:14). He who, in humility, rightly evaluates his status (Luke 14:8-10; 15:18-19, 21; cf. Luke 18:13) is the one who will

that those who oppose him enter the kingdom, he misses the parable's strong parallel between the enraged

experience God's presence in the kingdom (Luke 14:11; 15:22-24; cf. Luke 18:14).

Justification, Christology, and Eschatological Reversal

As with the kingdom of God, the motif of eschatological reversal is significant in Luke (cf. Luke 1:51-52; 14:11; 16:19-30; 18:14).⁶⁸ It is perhaps most clearly seen in the connection between the resurrection and Luke's Christology in that Jesus' resurrection functions as God's reversal of the verdict rendered at the cross regarding Jesus' identity. The theme of contest which permeates Luke heightens the impact of the reversal motif as well. The goal of this section is to demonstrate that an important facet of Luke's Christology is an understanding of Jesus as the resurrected Righteous One (ὁ δίκαιος) who will justify the many (Luke 23:47; cf. Isa 53:11).

Tracing the Trial

Conflict and opposition, especially with the Pharisees,⁶⁹ mark the narrative flow of Luke but there are other examples of conflict as well, the most significant being Jesus' conflict with Satan which begins with Jesus' wilderness testing. Each of the Synoptic writers includes Jesus' wilderness testing (Mark 1:12-13; Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13). But Luke's account uniquely highlights the wilderness testing as the beginning of Satan's opposition and anticipates the passion narrative as the pinnacle of the testing.⁷⁰

elder brother (Luke 15:28) and the grumbling Pharisees (Luke 15:2).

⁶⁸As seen in Luke 14:1-24, there is clear overlap between the two motifs so a sharp divide between reversal and kingdom is not at issue. Rather, the goal of this section is to highlight one specific example of Luke's reversal motif, the resurrection, which Luke emphasizes more so than the other synoptic writers.

⁶⁹See chap. 2 for a look at Jesus' conflict with the Pharisees specifically.

The context confirms that Jesus' identity is the key issue since Satan's testing of Jesus (Luke 4:1-13) is separated from God's declaration about Jesus' sonship at his baptism (Luke 3:21-22) by only the genealogy (Luke 3:23-38). So then, the flow of this section of the narrative presses to demonstrate Jesus' status as God's Son. Jesus, the beloved Son of God (Luke 3:22; cf. Luke 3:38), goes out into the desert filled with Spirit and led by the Spirit as he is tested by Satan (Luke 4:1-2) whose goal is to undermine Jesus' status as the true Son.⁷¹

While Mark includes very little detail regarding the testing, Matthew and Luke each expand the scene into three shared tests related to provisions (Matt 4:3-4; Luke 4:3-4), authority (Matt 4:8-10; Luke 4:5-8), and protection (Matt 4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12). Two of the three tests explicitly make the point that Jesus' identity is at stake in the testing while the third implicitly makes Jesus' identity the issue (Luke 4:3, 9; cf. Matt 4:3, 6). Matthew concludes his testing scene with Satan's departure and the arrival of ministering angels (Matt 4:11). Luke on the other hand records Satan's departure but points out that there is only a pause in the testing since Satan left Jesus until a more "opportune time" (*ἄχρη καιροῦ*; Luke 4:13; cf. Luke 22:53).

Jesus' identity is explicitly questioned in several places up until Jesus' arrest

⁷⁰Nolland writes, "Temptations characterize Jesus' whole ministry (Luke 22:28), but the opportune time that Luke here particularly anticipates is the passion period with its heightened activity of Satan (22:3, 31, 53) and for Jesus imminent prospect of drinking the cup of suffering (22:39-46, esp. 42)." Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, 182.

⁷¹Fitzmyer writes, "Whereas in Matthew Jesus is said to have been 'led by the Spirit into the desert to be tested by the devil' (4:1) and the infinitive of purpose thus attributes the experience to both heavenly and diabolic influence, Luke's modification makes it clear that Jesus, 'filled with the holy Spirit,' departs on his own from the Jordan and is led about for forty days by the Spirit in the desert, where he is 'tempted by the devil' (4:2). In other words, Luke portrays the testing of Jesus as undertaken at the devil's

(cf. Luke 5:21; 7:39; 8:25; 9:9, 18-20; 18:18-19, 37-38; 20:41-44). But in the Last Supper (Luke 22:3, 31), Jesus' prayer on the Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39-46), and subsequently Jesus' arrest (Luke 22:53), the opposition of Satan plainly reappears. Satan actively attacks Jesus, first entering Judas in order to have Judas betray Jesus (Luke 22:3). Luke then records Satan approaching God in order to receive permission "in order to sift" (τοῦ σινιάσαι) Peter (Luke 22:31), whose betrayal of Jesus is intended by Satan as a mortal blow to Jesus. Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane is marked by a note of satanic attack as well. Before kneeling to pray, Jesus urges the disciples to pray in order to avoid bowing under the stress of the current testing (Luke 22:40; cf. Luke 4:2).⁷² The weight of the moment is of such intensity, seen in the content of Jesus' prayer (Luke 22:42) as well as the agony (ἀγωνία) Jesus experiences, that an angel comes to strengthen him (Luke 22:43; cf. Matthew 4:11). Finally, as those coming to arrest Jesus approach him, Jesus states that this is their "hour and the power of darkness" (ἀλλ' αὕτη ἐστὶν ὑμῶν ἡ ὥρα καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ σκοτοῦς; Luke 22:53), a phrase which also alludes back to Satan's departure from Jesus in the wilderness (Luke 4:13).⁷³

initiative, and not as an experience purposefully guided by the Spirit." Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Luke the Theologian: Aspects of His Teaching* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 152.

⁷²Luke's use of *πειρασμός* in the garden prayer (Luke 22:40) links back to the wilderness testing where the Devil is described as testing (*πειραζόμενος*) Jesus (Luke 4:2). Jesus' statement to the disciples appears to be a request for them to pray in order to not succumb to testing, not that they could avoid it or escape it as though it were not present. The testing is very real and very close. Jesus' desire is that they would be able to stay strong during the testing (cf. Luke 22:32).

⁷³Brown writes, "The reference to 'the power of darkness' in the arrest scene is related to the presence of Satan in Judas, who has led the arresting party, and to Satan's request to test the disciples like wheat (Luke 22:31), so that here Luke comes close to the outlook in John 16:32-33, where the hour (of the scattering of the disciples and thus implicitly of the arrest) is a time of struggle between Jesus and the world whose Prince he overcomes. Thus for Luke the 'hour' has two sides: It is the hour of Jesus, which begins with his self-giving at the Last Supper and will culminate as he delivers his spirit into the hands of his

So then Jesus' ministry is framed in terms of satanic testing/opposition in the wilderness and throughout his ministry but especially in the events immediately leading up to the cross.⁷⁴ It is in the trial and crucifixion scenes that Luke juxtaposes Jesus' innocence with the accusations of the religious leaders, the soldiers, and even a criminal. His identity as the Son of God is questioned, in some sense legitimately, by the religious leaders as Jesus hangs cursed on a tree (Deut 21:22-23; cf. Luke 23:39 κρεμάνθημι)⁷⁵ but the resurrection will set the record straight on Jesus' identity.

Jesus the innocent. The significance of Jesus' innocence is a key theme in Luke's passion narrative. Jesus implies his innocence in his question to those who came out to arrest him as a common thief (Luke 22:52). Jesus is brought before Pilate who finds no guilt in him (Luke 23:4). Pilate sends Jesus to Herod in hopes of avoiding a decision on Jesus (Luke 23:7). Herod questions Jesus himself, then hears the accusations of the chief priests and scribes, but eventually sends Jesus back to Pilate because he too

Father; it is also the hour of Satanic domination through enemies who will crucify him. The devil, who after testing Jesus at the beginning of the ministry [4:13] left him until 'an opportune time [*kairos*],' has at last his hour." Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1994), 293. The phrase ἡ ἔξουσία τοῦ σκότους linked with the time reference ἡ ὥρα also links back to Satan's departure from Jesus (Luke 4:13).

⁷⁴Fitzmyer rightly notes that the testing Jesus experienced in the wilderness stretches out through his ministry and climaxes in the cross. In Luke 22:28, Jesus describes his disciples as those who had stayed by him during his trials (οἱ διαμεμενηκότες μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς). Based on the perfect διαμεμενηκότες and the plural τοῖς πειρασμοῖς, Fitzmyer writes, "They [the πειρασμοῖς of Luke 22:28] are the 'trials' that confronted Jesus in his ministry, the hostility, opposition, and rejection that he experienced. They became for him a diabolic seduction to use his power on his own behalf. At his baptism Jesus is presented as a heaven-sent agent, indeed God's Son (reiterated in the genealogy), but the temptation scenes stress as a secondary, but equally programmatic aspect of the mission that he is about to undertake. They reveal the adversarial aspect of that mission and its cosmic dimensions. When Satan enters Judas (22:3), that is the time when 'the hour and the power of darkness' (22:53) descend upon him in a new sense." Fitzmyer, *Luke the Theologian*, 163-64. See also Peter J. Scaer, *The Lukan Passion and the Praiseworthy Death* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005), 100.

was unable to find Jesus guilty of any capital offense (cf. Luke 23:15).

Having been returned by Herod, Jesus appears before Pilate who once again declares Jesus to be not guilty but offers to have him punished and released (Luke 23:15-16). Pilate's decision incenses the crowd who then demand that Jesus be put to death and Barabbas be freed instead (Luke 23:18-21). For the third time Pilate offers to punish Jesus then release him despite the fact that Pilate recognizes Jesus is not guilty and has done nothing deserving death (Luke 23:22). The crowd prevails and Pilate hands Jesus over to the will of the crowd to be put to death (Luke 23:23-25). Even in the crucifixion scene itself Jesus is declared innocent. In a statement unique to Luke, one of the criminals crucified alongside Jesus rebukes the other for harassing (ἐβλασφήμει) Jesus (Luke 23:39). He recognizes the innocence of Jesus as well as his own guilt, noting that their punishment is "just" since it is the right punishment for what each had done (Luke 23:41).⁷⁶

Jesus the accused. Luke's trial scenes further the testing/opposition motif as well as accentuate the contrast between Jesus the innocent and Jesus the accused. Inherent in each of the episodes of Jesus' trials is a clear Christological question regarding Jesus' identity. Each of the accusations highlights something of Luke's Christological understanding of Jesus. Those who came out to arrest Jesus blaspheme him, doubting his status as a prophet in their request for a prophecy as to who had struck Jesus (Luke 22:63-65). In the first official trial, the chief priests and scribes ask two

⁷⁵Marshall notes the allusion to the cursed man of Deut 21:22-23. Marshall, *Luke*, 871.

⁷⁶καὶ ἡμεῖς μὲν δικαίως, ἄξια γὰρ ὧν ἐπράξαμεν ἀπολαμβάνομεν· οὗτος δὲ οὐδὲν ἄτοπον ἔπραξεν.

questions regarding Jesus' identity – “Are you the Christ?” (Luke 22:67)⁷⁷ and “Are you the Son of God?” (Luke 22:70) – the first of which is especially reminiscent of Satan's questions during Jesus' wilderness testing.⁷⁸

Being brought before Pilate (Luke 23:1-5), Jesus is again accused by the entire council of seeking to subvert Rome, a charge which would have been particularly important to a Roman governor.⁷⁹ Unable to find any guilt in him, Pilate sends Jesus to Herod to decide Jesus' fate (Luke 23:6-7). Like Pilate, Herod is unable to find any guilt despite impassioned accusations by the chief priests and scribes (Luke 23:10). Like those who arrested Jesus, Herod and his soldiers ridicule (ἐξουθενήσας δὲ αὐτὸν; cf. Luke 18:14) Jesus because of his claim to kingship by dressing him in royal clothing and sending him back to Pilate (Luke 23:11). Pilate attempts for a third time to have Jesus released but the crowd is now set on having Jesus crucified, a request which eventually prevails (Luke 23:22-24).

That Satan is Jesus' ultimate accuser is clear from the statements made by the three groups which question Jesus as he hangs on the cross – the rulers (Luke 23:35), the

⁷⁷The first question should be understood as a First Class conditional sentence in which case those questioning Jesus assume he is the Christ for the sake of discussion in hopes that he will implicate himself in one of his answers.

⁷⁸Green writes, “The first question put to Jesus, regarding his messiahship, is suspiciously similar in form to the temptations posed by the devil much earlier in the narrative (4:3, 9); given the collocation of ‘Messiah’ and ‘Son of God’ in 1:32-35, the council's first question and the requests of the devil . . . are also comparable in substance. Insofar as the activity of the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem has already been interpreted as diabolic . . . , this connection is not surprising.” Green, *Luke*, 794.

⁷⁹Luke is the only Synoptic writer to expand on the specific charges the council brought to Pilate against Jesus. Luke's charges are very specifically related to issues of Roman control over a conquered state – social stability, taxes to Caesar, and the authority of Caesar (Luke 23:2). Mark and Matthew each record a general accusation against Jesus but give no specifics (Mark 15:3; Matt 27:12).

soldiers (Luke 23:36-37), and one of those crucified with Jesus (Luke 23:39).⁸⁰ Each question brings into sharp relief Jesus' identity and his accusers' perception of him. Each group of accusers disparages Jesus. The rulers "scoffed" (ἐξεμυκτηρίζον; Luke 23:35), the soldiers "mocked" (ἐνέπαιξαν; Luke 23:36), and the criminal "blasphemed" (ἐβλασφήμει; Luke 23:39) Jesus as he hung on the cross. The focus of each mocking statement is Jesus' identity. The rulers question Jesus' ability to save himself as well as his status as the "Christ of God, his Chosen One" (Luke 23:35). The soldiers seize on Jesus' claim to royalty in that if Jesus were in fact a king he could save himself (Luke 23:36-37).⁸¹ The criminal's accusations against Jesus are interesting in that all three (Jesus and the two criminals) experience crucifixion. From the perspective of the criminal, Jesus is in fact no different since he too hangs on a cross. Yet, the other criminals statement is meant as an interpretation of Jesus' death in that he recognizes the injustice of Jesus' death compared to the justness of his own (Luke 23:41).

Ὁντως ὁ ἄνθρωπος
οὗτος δίκαιος ἦν

It is the twin themes of Jesus' innocence and his being accused which make Luke's description of Jesus' death especially significant. The Synoptics each describe the reaction of one of the centurions standing near the cross as Jesus died. In both

⁸⁰Green notes the diminishing social status of each accuser. He writes, "Here, person of diminishing status – the religious leaders, the Roman soldiers, and an executed criminal – turn their derisive attention on Jesus, scoffing at him, mocking him, and blaspheming him." Green, *Luke*, 817-18.

⁸¹That the soldiers bring wine to Jesus should likely be understood as a mock offering made to a superior. Brown writes, "The verb [προσφέροντες] is often used for a religious, respectful presentation of gifts (as in Matt 2:11), so that the action described here is not in itself mocking. Only when we hear the words of the soldiers does it become clear that their offering of cheap wine is a burlesque gift to the king."

Matthew and Mark, the centurion declares Jesus to be the Son of God (Matt 27:54; Mark 15:39). In Luke's account, the centurion states: "Ὀντως ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος δίκαιος ἦν." Several significant English translations render δίκαιος as "innocent."⁸² The concept of innocence falls within the semantic range of δίκαιος⁸³ and given that Luke emphasizes Jesus' innocence in the passion narrative this translation certainly fits the context.

However, several factors render "righteous" or "just" the best translation for δίκαιος in Luke 23:47. First, if Luke had wanted only to highlight Jesus innocence, he had other choices of words to use.⁸⁴ Second, Luke uses δίκαιος in several places in Acts in describing Jesus (Acts 3:14, 7:52, 22:14; cf. 1 John 2:1) so it is not uncommon for him to do so.⁸⁵ In each of those occurrences it is explicitly messianic and appears to have roots in Isaiah's Servant Songs (cf. Isa 53:11).⁸⁶

Third, Jesus' last words from the cross (Luke 23:46) allude to Psalm 31:5 which highlights the vindication expected by the righteous.⁸⁷ Fourth, δίκαιος is used of

Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1994), 997.

⁸²Innocent: ESV, NASB, NLT. Righteous: NIV, ASV, HCSB, KJV, NKJV, TNIV. δίκαιος is rendered "innocent" in other places as well (Matt 23:35).

⁸³Gottlob Schrenk, "δίκαιος," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 187.

⁸⁴καθαρός (Acts 18:6, 20:26); cf. ἀκέραιος (Matt 10:16; Phil 2:15; Rom 16:19); ἄκακος (Heb 7:26); ἀθῶος (Matt 27:4); ἀναίτιος (Matt 12:5, 7).

⁸⁵Although Luke's other uses of δίκαιος in reference to Jesus have the article, the lack of an article in Luke 23:47 should not diminish the theological freight here.

⁸⁶Referring to Acts 3:14, Seccombe writes, "Considering the presence of the Servant theme in this passage [Acts 3:14], the likelihood is that it [ὁ Δίκαιος] echoes the 'Just One' of Isa. 53:11." Seccombe, "Luke and Isaiah," 257. See also Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 1165 with reference to Luke 23:47.

Joseph of Arimathea in Luke 23:50 and is translated “righteous” so contextually there is a parallelism Luke intends between Jesus and Joseph. Also, one of those crucified with Jesus rebukes the other for mocking Jesus since unlike Jesus’ punishment theirs was “just” (δικαίως; Luke 23:41). It would be strange for Luke to use the same word group yet intend for it to be understood so differently.⁸⁷ Finally, it is a matter of Lukan emphasis to use δίκαιος and other δικη root words. It seems clear that Luke is doing more with the centurion’s statement than merely saying something about Jesus’ standing before Pilate and the other accusers.

A translation of δίκαιος as innocent misses the theological freight Luke intends in his description of Jesus as he dies. For Luke, Jesus suffers and dies as the “Righteous One,” not primarily as the righteous sufferer par excellence, but as the one who, having been raised, will “justify the many” (cf. Isa 53:11).⁸⁹ Luke pulls broadly from the

⁸⁷Bock writes, “In the original psalm, the remarks are the prayer of a righteous sufferer who wishes to be delivered from his enemies and expresses trust that his fate is in God’s hands. Jesus’ remarks are an expression of righteous faith. The use of the psalm is typico-prophetic: Jesus is the righteous sufferer *par excellence*. As he faces death, he expresses his trust that God will care for him. . . . Jesus’ prayer of trust is thus an expression of submission to God’s will, in which Jesus expresses faith that God will deliver him. Jesus is a model of the dying righteous one who can rest in God.” See Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1862. Certainly Jesus is the model sufferer but Luke intends more than to portray Jesus as the model sufferer. Surprisingly, Bock does not render δίκαιος as “righteous” but as “innocent”. Ibid., 1863-64.

⁸⁸Rightly Karris who notes, “Then there is the immediate context, wherein Luke uses the *dikai-* root twice: once in 23:41 and once in 23:50, meaning ‘justly’ and ‘righteous’ respectively. If this is so, then why would Luke have suddenly narrowed the meaning of *dikaios* in 23:47 to mean ‘innocent’?” Robert J. Karris, “Luke 23:47 and the Lukan View of Jesus’ Death,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 105 (1986): 66.

⁸⁹Contra Doble and Patella (rooted in Wisdom), Jipp (rooted in Psalms), and Scaer (rooted in Greco-Roman martyrological traditions). See Peter Doble, *The Paradox of Salvation: Luke’s Theology of the Cross* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 161-225; Michael Patella, *The Death of Jesus: The Diabolical Force and the Ministering Angel: Luke 23, 44-49*, Cahiers de la Revue Biblique 43 (Paris: J. Gabalda et C^{ie}, 1999), 161-70. See Joshua W. Jipp, “Luke’s Scriptural Suffering Messiah: A Search for Precedent, a Search for Identity,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 72 (2010): 257; Scaer, *The Lukan Passion*, 126-31. This is not to say that these other traditions do not influence Luke’s presentation

prophet Isaiah by means of both quotation and allusion, especially in his description of Jesus and his ministry, which demonstrates the impact Isaiah's theological concerns had on shaping Luke's description of Jesus (Luke 1:54; cf. Isa 44:21; Luke 3:4-6; cf. Isa 40:3-5; Luke 4:18-19; cf. Isa 61:1-2a; Luke 7:22; cf. Isa 29:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1; Luke 8:10; cf. Isa 6:9, 10).

Though the atoning aspect is arguably more explicit in Matthew's and Mark's respective texts, Luke's Passion Narrative still portrays Jesus in terms of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah since it begins with a quotation from Isaiah's fourth Servant song (Luke 22:37; cf. Isa 53:12) and contains several general allusions to the Servant in Isaiah 52:12-53:12.⁹⁰ Luke intends his readers to understand Jesus in terms of Isaiah's Suffering Servant not because of explicit references to Isaiah 53 but in the general portrait he paints of Jesus throughout the Passion Narrative.⁹¹ Given the emphasis upon Jesus' innocence, Luke's broad use of themes from Isaiah, his quotation of Isaiah 53:12 in Luke 22:37, and most significantly the centurion's calling Jesus *δίκαιος*,⁹² it seems best

of Jesus' death but rather that Luke understands the significance of Jesus' death as the *δίκαιος* as an intentional allusion to Isaiah 53:11.

⁹⁰Jesus is silent before Herod (Luke 23:9; cf. Isa 53:7); innocent (Luke 23:4, 14-15, 22; Isa 53:9); crucified with the wicked (Luke 23:33, 39; cf. Isa 53:9); with a rich man in his death (Luke 23:50-51; cf. Isa 53:9). These are general allusions which each of the Synoptic gospels includes in the narrative but Luke's emphasis on Jesus' innocence as well as his being described as *δίκαιος* are uniquely Lukan.

⁹¹Secombe writes, "What Luke gives his readers is not an abstract notion of the goodness of Jesus but an apologetic defence of his righteousness, designed to undergird his identity as the 'Just One'." Secombe, "Luke and Isaiah," 258.

⁹²The crowd's response (Luke 23:48) heightens the significance of the centurion's description of Jesus as *δίκαιος*. Neagoe writes, "In the light of the broader context of the passage, it can be confidently inferred that a distinction should be made between what, at a historical level, the multitudes could have meant by their action, on the basis of their limited knowledge of who Jesus was, and the reaction which is expected at this point from the readers, on the basis of the Gospel's overall characterisation of him. Thus, while from the limited perspective of the multitudes Jesus may have been simply someone who did not

to understand the centurion's confession as a reference to Jesus as the *δίκαιος* of Isaiah 53:11 who will "justify the many."⁹³

He Will Justify the Many

What does it mean for Jesus to be the *δίκαιος* of Isaiah 53:11 who will justify the many? How does Luke understand Jesus in this role? Jesus as the Righteous One should be understood primarily in terms of reversal in that Jesus' resurrection vindicates him as "the Christ of God, the elect one" (Luke 23:35, 39), "the King of the Jews" (Luke 23:37), and "righteous" (Luke 23:47).⁹⁴ That Jesus is accused is assumed in each of the statements made by those who accuse Jesus. The resurrection reverses those accusations and in so doing not only declares Jesus to be righteous, having been accepted by God, but

deserve to die because of his innocence, from the privileged perspective of the readers his death is all the more a cause for remorse (even if 'necessary' at the time), for he is the Christ of God. The centurion's response . . . provides a useful parallel in this respect." Alexandru Neagoe, *The Trial of the Gospel: An Apologetic Reading of Luke's Trial Narratives*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, vol. 116 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 104.

⁹³Rightly Green, who states, "The designation of Jesus as 'righteous' plays off several related motifs. First, we are reminded of Jesus' innocence, repeatedly testified in the trial scene. Second, we are reminded of Luke's identification of Jesus with the Suffering Righteous One of the Scriptures of Israel. Third, and more specifically, Luke thus identifies Jesus as the Isaianic Servant of Yahweh. This last point is made clear by two considerations: (1) the presence of other echoes of the Servant material in the Lukan passion account, and (2) the comparable use of 'righteous' in conjunction with Jesus' death in Acts 3:13-14, in a co-text where the allusion to Isa 52:13-53:12 is indisputable. Again, then, Luke has brought into close proximity the dual identification of Jesus as Messiah and Servant, so as to articulate the suffering role of the Messiah." Green, *Luke*, 827. Green, commenting on the way in which the crowd departed, writes, "Beating their breast suggests sorrow or mourning, with the result that Luke has framed the scene of execution with acts of grief. . . . Linguistic parallels invite further comparison between the humble, justified tax collector (18:9-14) and these crowds (23:48)." *Ibid.*, 828 See also Green, "The Death of Jesus, God's Servant," in *Reimagining the Death of the Lukan Jesus*, ed. Dennis D. Sylva (Frankfurt am Main: Hain, 1990), 18-28.

⁹⁴That it is a Roman centurion who recognizes Jesus' status as *δίκαιος* is in itself a reversal in that one expects the religious leaders and not a Roman to recognize Jesus' identity.

condemns those who accused Jesus.⁹⁵ Thus, in the resurrection, there is both justification and condemnation.

It is Jesus' status as the *δίκαιος* which enables him to offer justification to the thief hanging next to him (Luke 23:39-43). Just as the resurrection reverses the negative verdict on Jesus so too the thief experiences reversal in Jesus' declaration. Although he suffered justly (Luke 23:41), the criminal's status as cursed is reversed in Jesus' declaration that he will experience Paradise (Luke 23:43).⁹⁶ The criminal's recognition of his sin coupled with his request to be remembered by Jesus results in the criminal's entrance into Jesus' kingdom. So then, despite the lack of an explicit reference to

⁹⁵Talbert writes, "Christologically, the resurrection functions both as part of Luke's attempt to maintain the identity of the pre- and the post-Easter Jesus and as part of God's reversal of the human *no* to Jesus." Charles H. Talbert, "The Place of the Resurrection in the Theology of Luke," *Interpretation* 46 (1992): 21 (emphasis original). Stuhlmacher writes, "But God's righteousness is to show itself as a power creating new life for sinners in this way, that the sinner-destroying *no* (in biblical terms, the wrath of God) strikes the Son of man who takes the place of sinners and not those who are really guilty. . . . By the vicarious sacrifice of his life Jesus wanted to affirm God's judgment and at the same time enable God to appear as the one who said *no* to sin because he wanted to open the way for life. God's righteousness is not exhausted in the execution of judgment. Instead, by virtue of the vicarious surrender of Jesus' life, God's judgment becomes the source of a new righteous life for 'many.' As Isa. 53:10ff. puts it, Jesus interceded with God for sinners and by virtue of his sacrificial death opened for them the way to new life." Stuhlmacher, *Reconciliation, Law, and Righteousness*, 42. Stuhlmacher continues, "The execution of Jesus on the cross was the historical result of the messianic justice he brought. Despite the fact that he predicted his suffering and exaltation (Mark 9:31 par.; 14:62 par.), the cross also became the great crisis for this messianic justice." Stuhlmacher, *Reconciliation, Law, and Righteousness*, 44. He concludes, "The question about the validity and legitimacy of Jesus' messianic work of righteousness could not be put more radically. Before Easter this question received no compelling answer. *Only the exaltation of the crucified one to the right hand of God enabled Jesus to appear as the messianic Son of God vindicated by God who really had walked his way of the new righteousness in God's name (Acts 2:36; Rom. 1:3-4; 1 Tim. 3:16). Not until Easter did Jesus, the crucified one whom God raised, appear as the personification of God's saving righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30).*" Stuhlmacher, *Reconciliation, Law, and Righteousness*, 46 (emphasis original). In other words, the cross brings into question Jesus identity as the Son of God, the Righteous One; but, the resurrection confirms the truth of the centurion's statement.

⁹⁶Paradise is typically understood as the place in which the righteous would be gathered. See Hans Bietenhard and Colin Brown, "*παράδεισος*," in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 761. See also Martin Goodman, "Paradise, Gardens, and the Afterlife in the First Century CE," in *Paradise in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Views*, ed. Markus Bockmuehl and Guy G. Stoumsa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 57-63

justification, Jesus' encounter with the criminal crucified alongside him vividly pictures the concept of justification.⁹⁷ The criminal, although justly condemned, will experience new life in Jesus' kingdom because of Jesus' authoritative word to him in response to his faith.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that justification in Luke is not an isolated concept but is interwoven into the very fabric of Luke's narrative. Righteousness language is employed throughout the narrative but even more importantly, the concept of justification is closely associated with Luke's understanding of the kingdom of God as well as his theme of eschatological reversal. For Luke it is those who are the truly righteous – tax-collectors, sinners, the poor, the blind, the lame, and the crippled – who will experience entrance into God's kingdom, who will dine at his table. On the other hand those who suppose themselves to be righteous – the Pharisees and other religious leaders – actually exclude themselves from the kingdom because of their rejection of sinners, an attitude which is rooted in their inability to recognize their own sin (cf. Luke 13:1-5). Similarly justification is closely tied to Luke's motif of eschatological reversal in that Jesus as the Righteous One, who experienced the reversal of the curse in his own resurrection, is able

⁹⁷Stuhlmacher's words, though directed at the tax-collector in Luke 18, apply to the criminal as well: "The publican in Luke 18:13 cries out to God in the style of this same tradition [Ps 51; 4 Ezra 8] of repentance and God 'justifies' him, that is, through forgiveness God the gracious judge helps him find a new basis for existence. *Jesus expresses here in story form the principle of the justification of sinners.* According to this parable, however, this justification does not come about by God's simply disregarding his no to sin; instead, through this no he helps the sinner find new life! *For Jesus, God's righteousness is more than a judicial meting out of appropriate punishments and rewards; the righteous God helps the repentant find new life through the forgiveness of sins.* . . . By speaking forgiveness to this circle of people, sinners cut off from God, by expressly inviting them to the table (Luke 14:21) and admitting them into his company, he personally lived out the parable of the Pharisee and the publican and made himself the

to grant justification to those who turn to him in faith.

advocate of the life-creating righteousness of God that goes beyond merely punishing evil.” Stuhlmacher, *Reconciliation, Law, and Righteousness*, 35 (emphasis original).

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

That Luke has a conscious and detectable theological understanding of justification seems apparent from the preceding exegesis. Luke does not parrot Paul or misrepresent the Apostle. Rather, by means of characterization and thematic layering Luke, in his own way, describes justification in both eschatological and soteriological terms. It is eschatological in that justification is a reality which is brought about by the unique activity of Jesus; soteriological in that for Luke justification is fundamentally tied to the salvation of sinners.

The Pharisee and the Tax-Collector

Luke 18:9-14 is the most important text in order to establish what, if anything, Luke says about justification. This is especially true because of the concentration of righteousness language both in the pericope (Luke 18:9, 14) as well as its immediate context (cf. Luke 18:1-8). The parable underscores two things about Luke's understanding of justification. First, Jesus' interpretation of the parable (Luke 18:14b) as well as the parable's "courtroom" setting underscore the eschatological nature of justification. The humble – those who confess the truth about themselves in agreement with God's judgment on them – are those who will be exalted, while the proud will be brought low (Luke 18:14b; cf. Luke 1:51-53; 14:11). In other words, the humble will experience justification while the proud will experience condemnation. This is clear

from the vastly different verdicts pronounced on the Pharisee and the tax-collector. Set in the Temple, the parable reads as a courtroom scene in which God is the judge, a narrative feature which heightens the significance of the verdict.

Second, at its core justification in this parable is soteriological. Just as the Temple setting heightens the eschatological significance of the verdict, so too the parable's action in the Temple at the time when prayer and sacrifice was offered introduces a cultic element. In addition to the Temple setting, the content of the tax-collector's prayer, namely his cry for propitiation (*ἰλάσκομαι*), implies an atonement for sin. The tax-collector recognizes his sin and inability which leads him to beat his chest in an evocative cry for mercy. This same recognition can be seen in the juxtaposition of the tax-collector's and the Pharisees' posture. The tax-collector stands far off and is unwilling to lift his eyes up to God. On the other hand, the Pharisee stands off to himself but nearer to the presence of God while he lists those things which mark him off as "righteous."

The Broader Context of Luke 18:9-14

The nature of Lukan justification for which we have argued makes sense in the broader context of the parable. Several features link Luke 18:9-14 with what immediately precedes in Luke 17:20-18:8. The first is the eschatological current which is common to each of the texts. In Luke 17:20-37, the coming of the Son of Man is described in terms of the eschatological arrival of the Day of the Lord in the coming of his kingdom. On that day the Son of Man will be looking for faith (Luke 18:8), the kind of faith imaged in both the persistence of the widow (Luke 18:5, 7) and the humility of the tax-collector (Luke 18:13). This kind of faith means justice for God's elect from all

adversaries (Luke 18:5, 7) as well as eschatological exaltation into God's presence (Luke 18:14).

The second link is the concentration of righteousness language in Luke 18:1-14. Nine times Luke deploys righteousness language, three of which are verbs which drive the action of the parables (Luke 18:3, 5, 13).

A final connection is the rich characterization in each parable which draws them together into a mutually interpretive relationship. Luke intentionally parallels two sets of characters in each parable but each set fits into a broader Lukan category as well, namely the righteous and the sinner. In Luke 18:1-8, a "righteous" judge is contrasted with a widow which in Luke is to be an outcast, a sinner. In Luke 18:9-14, Luke contrasts a sinful tax-collector with a "righteous" Pharisee. Also, the main characters in each parable are marked by faith. This is explicitly true in the case of the widow (Luke 18:7-8). Though faith is not explicitly mentioned, the tax-collector's actions embody the faith which the Son of Man seeks (Luke 18:13; cf. Luke 18:8). Finally, both the widow and the tax-collector go home having received that which they desired, namely justification – the widow from her adversary and the tax-collector from his sin.

Several features also link Luke 18:9-14 to the material which follows in Luke 18:15-19:10. Luke portrays his characters in such a way that one is encouraged to understand the characters in light of each other. The blind beggar who cries out (Luke 18:35-43) is juxtaposed (albeit from a distance) with the defrauded widow who cries out for justice (Luke 18:5, 7) as well as the tax-collector who cries out for mercy (Luke 18:13). Both in profession and moral status, the two sinful tax-collectors (Luke 18:13; 19:2, 7) are also intended to be read in comparative terms. The blind beggar is paralleled

against the rich ruler as well.

Luke's rich characterization tightly links the passages together in such a way that the soteriological images he employs should also be understood as mutually interpretative. The humble tax-collector who goes home justified (Luke 18:14) is paralleled with the humble children who enter the kingdom of God (Luke 18:17). Those who inherit eternal life are those who enter the kingdom based upon their turning away from their own ability and righteousness and trusting in God who does the impossible (Luke 18:18-30). It is the beggar's cry of faith which saves him and restores his sight (Luke 18:42) just as the widow's persistent faith resulted in her being granted justice (Luke 18:5, 7-8). So too Zacchaeus the tax-collector experiences salvation (Luke 19:9), a point which helps shade the justification of the tax-collector (Luke 18:14).

So then, as with Luke 18:9-14, a close reading of the immediate context reinforces the conclusion that justification in Luke should be understood in both eschatological and soteriological categories.

Justification, the Kingdom of God, and Eschatological Reversal

Not only does a rich, theological understanding of justification make sense of the parable in its immediate context, this understanding also coheres with other significant themes in Luke's narrative. Justification is a kingdom reality in Luke which is to say that it reflects something of the essence of the kingdom of God. To be justified – to be truly “righteous” – is to experience the saving reality of God's reign. The pairing of the “righteous” and the “sinners” throughout the narrative demonstrates this aspect of the kingdom. It is the repentant “sinner,” the one who turns in faith, who experiences the

benefits of the kingdom (Luke 7:29, 50; 15:21-24; cf. Luke 19:10) while the “righteous,” who are so in externals only, are shut out from the kingdom (Luke 7:30, 44-47; 10:29, 37-38; 14:7-11; 15:25-32).

Justification as a soteriological image in Luke is rooted in its being an eschatological reality as well. Jesus is on trial throughout the entirety of Luke’s narrative. Conflict with the Pharisees is common but no less regular is the conflict between Jesus and Satan. This cosmic clash begins in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-13), moves to the Garden (Luke 22:39-46), and culminates in Jesus’ passion (Luke 22:53). Jesus suffers as the accused despite his innocence (Luke 23:1-5, 10, 35-37, 39; cf. Luke 22:52; 23:4, 7, 15, 22). But, it is more than innocence which is proven in his resurrection, it is Jesus’ status as the *δίκαιος* of Isaiah 53 which is ultimately vindicated in the resurrection. It is the centurion’s and not the crowds’ verdict which God – in the resurrection – declares true. Jesus’ death as the *δίκαιος* means justification for those who turn to him in faith (Luke 23:42-43; cf. Luke 7:29, 50; 15:21-24; 18:13-14).

Conclusion

The argument has been simple, but not simplistic: justification in Luke should be understood as both an eschatological and soteriological reality. This is not due to a reading of Luke through Pauline lenses but to a reading of Luke on his own terms. Lukan texts and themes understood in their own context should push the discussion past questions of whether Luke’s program is historically or theologically driven, whether his theology is original or borrowed. Luke-as-theologian speaks no less persuasively on the topic of justification than do other New Testament authors even if it is communicated in narrative instead of epistle.

APPENDIX

LUKAN CONGRUENCE: JUSTIFICATION AND PAUL'S SERMON AT PISIDIAN ANTIOCH (ACTS 13:16-41)

Introduction

The body of the dissertation was devoted to establishing a Lukan theology of justification primarily based upon exegesis of relevant texts and themes in Luke's Gospel. Since Acts 13 explicitly references justification in the context of Paul's preaching, it is important to determine what, if any, exegetical and theological similarities or differences exist between the two works. So then, the goal of this appendix is to investigate the relationship between justification as it is portrayed in Luke and Acts respectively, a portrayal which appears to be one in which there is significant theological congruence with both portraits of justification being eschatological and soteriological in nature.

Exegesis

Paul's synagogue sermon at Pisidian Antioch is significant since it is the only one Luke records for his readers in which Paul is preaching before a predominantly Jewish audience (Acts 13:13-41). The only other sermon of Paul's which Luke records takes place at Mars Hill which was before a predominantly Hellenistic audience (Acts 17:16-34). This sermon provides us with a glimpse into both the form and content Paul employed when speaking to a Jewish audience. The dialectic of "promise-fulfillment" is

significant in such a context. This chapter will seek to demonstrate that Paul understands Israel's history as one of failure and regress which means if they are to be set right with God it must be by means of God's acting on their behalf and not any doing of their own. In this way, God demonstrates there can be no mistaking who has acted. Resurrection is this great act, functioning as both fulfillment and promise.

The Setting (Acts 13:13-15)

Paul's sermon at Pisidian Antioch is set in the context of his first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-14:28). Having been commissioned by the Spirit, Paul and Barnabas leave for Cyprus (Acts 13:3). After arriving at Cyprus, they make their way throughout the island preaching and teaching in synagogues (Acts 13:5). When they arrive at Paphos, Paul and Barnabas are summoned to appear before the proconsul Sergius Paulus who desires to hear the word of God (Acts 13:6). Elymas the magician sought to hinder the work of the gospel in the life of the proconsul but is struck with blindness by the Lord (Acts 13:11).¹ As a result of their two-fold testimony of word and deed, the proconsul comes to believe (Acts 13:12).

After this early success, Paul and Barnabas, along with John Mark, arrive at Perga (Acts 13:13a). However, upon their arrival in Perga Luke notes that John Mark returns to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13b). Speculation abounds as to the exact reason for John Mark's departure, though certainly the departure should be understood negatively as a

¹Culpepper notes, "Acts 13:4-12 is a fitting introduction to Paul's mission. The competition between Paul and the Jewish magician for the faith of the proconsul foreshadows the struggle in the succeeding chapters and its outcome: the Jews oppose the inclusion of the Gentiles and thereby exclude themselves, while the Gentiles receive salvation." See R. Alan Culpepper, "Paul's Mission to the Gentile World: Acts 13-19," *Review & Expositor* 71 (1974): 488.

desertion (Acts 13:13; cf. Acts 15:38).² Regardless of the reason, the departure did not hinder Paul and Barnabas from continuing their journey. They soon arrive in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:14a).³ As was customary, Paul and Barnabas first make their way to the synagogue (Acts 13:14b; cf. Acts 9:20; 13:5; 14:1; 17:1-2, 10, 17; 18:19; 19:8). Luke then records what appears to be a typical synagogue service, readings from the Law and

²Conzelmann notes John Mark's desertion but does not speculate as to the reason for his leaving. Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, and Donald H. Juel, ed. Eldon Jay Epp with Christopher R. Matthews, *Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 123-24. See also F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988, revised edition), 250-51; Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, trans. Bernard Noble, Gerald Shinn, and Hugh Anderson, rev. and ed. R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971), 415. Parsons argues that John Mark deserted the work because he rejected the Gentile mission. Parsons points to John Mark's "allegiance to Jerusalem (12:12, 25; 13:13b)" and his role as "an assistant in their [Paul and Barnabas'] proclamation of the gospel in the synagogues of Salamis." Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts*, *Paidea Commentaries on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 222. Kistemaker holds a similar view. Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1990), 466. Munck understands John Mark's departure as a desertion which is due to the strenuous demands Paul placed on his fellow travelers. Johannes Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles*, *The Anchor Bible*, vol. 31, rev. William F. Albright and C. S. Mann (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing, 1967), 122. Fitzmyer holds that John Mark's desertion is due to the dangerous journey necessary to get to Pisidian Antioch. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, *The Anchor Bible*, vol. 31 (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing, 1998), 509; Pervo understands the mention of John Mark's departure as "Lucan invention designed to explain the eventual separation of Paul and Barnabas." Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, *Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 331. Most other recent commentators acknowledge John Mark's departure as desertion (cf. Acts 15:38) but do not speculate on the reason for the departure. See John Polhill, *Acts*, *New American Commentary*, vol. 26 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 296-97; David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 384; Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 450; I. H. Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles*, *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, reprint 1998), 222; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, *Sacra Pagina Series* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 229.

³The strategic nature of Paul's choice to work in Pisidian Antioch should not be overlooked. Bock writes, "It was a civil and military center for the province and so the leading city of the region and a Roman colony." Bock, *Acts*, 450. Paul's missionary strategy appears to be strategically focused on the major cities in a region. Of course this does not mitigate against Paul's journeying to more rural, outlying regions. But, as a matter of strategy, Paul seems to seek out witness in the city because of the larger populations of both Jews and Gentiles. See Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Paul the Missionary: Realities, Strategies, and Methods* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 258-87. See also Harvie M. Conn, "Lucan Perspectives and the City," *Missiology* 13 (1985): 409-428.

Prophets followed by a homily.⁴ After the readings Paul and Barnabas are asked by the synagogue rulers to deliver a “word of encouragement” (λόγος παρακλήσεως)⁵ to those in attendance, an opportunity which Paul does not pass on.

Promises in Doubt: Israel’s History (Acts 13:16-25)

In this section of the narrative, Luke begins to relay the content of Paul’s sermon at Pisidian Antioch. The structure and content of Paul’s sermon has parallels in the other speeches before Jewish audiences recorded by Luke in Acts (Acts 2:14-36; 7:1-53; cf. Luke 4:16-30). There are several points of contact between the speeches, especially between Paul’s sermon at Antioch and Peter’s Pentecost sermon. Polhill notes “the emphasis on the Jerusalem Jews’ responsibility for Jesus’ death, the contrast between the death on the cross and the triumph of the resurrection, the apostolic witness, the proofs from Scripture (even some of the same texts), and the call to repentance.”⁶ From these similarities one can deduce that there was likely a general kerygmatic outline which was followed by the apostles (cf. 1 Cor 15:1ff.).⁷

⁴See Bock, *Acts*, 451; Polhill, *Acts*, 298.

⁵Wills argues that the λόγος παρακλήσεως as presented in Acts 13 is the typical form and structure of both synagogue sermons and Christian preaching in the first-century. Lawrence Wills, “The Form of the Sermon in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity,” *Harvard Theological Review* 77 (1984): 277-99. Though less certain, Bruce notes the phrase λόγος παρακλήσεως could very well be a more or less technical term for the synagogue sermon (cf. Heb 11:22). Bruce, *Acts*, 252. See also Johnson, *Acts*, 230.

⁶See Polhill, *Acts*, 299.

⁷Dodd notes this as well. He writes, “According to Acts, Paul did preach in terms closely similar to those of the Petrine *kerygma* of Acts x.” C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Development* (Chicago: Willett, Clark, & Company, 1937), 38. See also I. H. Marshall, “The Resurrection in the Acts of the Apostles,” in *Apostolic History and the Gospel: Biblical and Historical Essays Presented to F. F. Bruce*, ed. W. Ward Gasque and Ralph P. Martin (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1970), 107;

Given the synagogue setting the audience was predominantly composed of Jews yet Paul does acknowledge the presence of those “who fear God” (οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν). The phrase likely refers to Gentiles, thus Paul highlights the mixed crowd by making a distinction between those in the audience who are Jews and those who are Gentiles.⁸ The use of the phrase in Acts should be understood as a reference to pious Gentiles but should not be understood as implying commitment to specific ethical expectations which mark them out as a clearly defined group.⁹ In other words, “God-fearers” is both a technical phrase in that it refers to Gentiles and a general phrase in that it refers to varying degrees of connection to Judaism and the synagogue and the synagogue.¹⁰ That the phrase refers to Gentiles is also to be preferred in light of the

Richard Bauckham, “Kerygmatic Summaries in the Speeches of Acts,” in *History, Literature, and Society in the Book of Acts*, ed. Ben Witherington III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 185-217. Bauckham’s work is significant in that he goes beyond comparisons with material found in the New Testament and finds similar kerygmatic parallels in extra biblical kerygmatic summaries. He argues these parallels point to an early textual tradition which more or less contained the general outline of the apostolic kerygma.

⁸Contra Wilcox who understands the phrase οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν (Acts 13:16, 26) as non-technical, referring to both Jews and Gentiles. Max Wilcox, “The ‘God-Fearers’ in Acts – A Reconsideration,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 13 (1981): 118.

⁹Collins, surveying the phrase in extra-biblical literature as well as Acts, writes, “What we find is a broad range of attachment, not a class with specific requirements or with a clearly defined status in the synagogue. . . . Not all so-called ‘God-fearers,’ even in Acts, were necessarily monotheists or had necessarily broken their ties with the pagan community.” John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 270. See also Finn who acknowledges the presence of Gentiles attracted to the Jewish faith but downplays the technical language of God-fearers as referencing a group of Gentiles marked out by a distinct ethical pattern. Thomas M. Finn, “The God-fearers Reconsidered,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 47 (1985): 75-84. See also Bock, *Acts*, 386; Polhill, *Acts*, 252 n. 71.

¹⁰Contra Kraabel who denies that pious Gentiles were connected to the synagogue in any significant way. He writes, “If interested Gentiles in some numbers had been an accepted part of the Diaspora synagogue life, something should have shown up in the excavations. To this date, nothing has.” A. T. Kraabel, “The Disappearance of the ‘God-Fearers,’” in *Diaspora Jews and Judaism: Essays in Honor of, and in Dialogue with, A. Thomas Kraabel*, ed. J. Andrew Overman and Robert S. MacLennan, South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism, vol. 41 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 124. Kraabel continues, “The God-fearers are a symbol to help Luke show how Christianity had become a Gentile religion

Cornelius episode (cf. Acts 10:1-11:18)¹¹ as well as Luke's reference to another group of Gentiles, τῶν σεβομένων προσηλύτων (Acts 13:42). There is a distinction between God-fearers and proselytes¹² – the latter (if converts to Judaism)¹³ having undergone circumcision and fully embracing Jewish observances¹⁴ – but both groups should be understood as composed of Gentiles. Therefore, it seems certain that both the God-fearers as well as the proselytes are Gentiles which is significant since it demonstrates that the Gentiles are not an afterthought in Paul's mind. From the beginning of the sermon, Paul is directing his “word of encouragement” to both Jews and Gentiles.¹⁵

legitimately and without losing its Old Testament roots. The Jewish mission to Gentiles recalled in the God-fearers is ample precedent for the far more extensive mission to Gentiles which Christianity had in fact undertaken with such success. Once that point has been made, Luke can let the God-fearers disappear from his story. That is just what they do, and that is why there is no further reference to them in the New Testament and no clear independent record of them in the material evidence from the classical world.” Ibid., 127. See also Levinskaya who surveys the epigraphic evidence and argues persuasively against Kraabel's position. See Irina Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in its Diaspora Setting*, The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting, vol. 5, ed. Bruce W. Winter (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 51-82.

¹¹Peterson, *Acts*, 386; Bruce, *Acts*, 216 (cf. Bruce, 271); Johnson, *Acts*, 240; Haenchen, *Acts*, 408; Pervo, *Acts*, 332.

¹²Contra Overman who equates the proselytes in Acts with the God-fearers. He writes, “In Acts προσήλυτοι are Gentiles closely allied with the synagogue and the Jewish people, yet are a group distinct from the Ἰουδαῖοι.” J. Andrew Overman, “The God-Fearers: Some Neglected Features,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32 (1988): 20. See also Bock, *Acts*, 462.

¹³Levinskaya understands the term in broad terms, thus it is not a technical phrase referring to Gentile converts to Judaism but a general term referring to anyone who converts to something new. Thus, in Matthew 23:15, the term refers to Jewish converts to Pharisaism while in Acts 13:42 the proselytes are recent Gentile converts to Christianity, not Judaism. Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in its Diaspora Setting*, 35-49.

¹⁴Scott McKnight, “Proselytism and Godfearers,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 844-46; Haenchen, *Acts*, 413; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 520; Peterson, *Acts*, 386 n. 58; Bruce, *Acts*, 264; Marshall, *Acts*, 229.

¹⁵Witherington writes, “Thus this address, while perhaps primarily for Jews, is nonetheless targeting those on the fringes of the synagogue as well from the outset.” Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1998), 409.

Since Paul's audience would have had a good grasp on the Old Testament, it is no surprise that he begins by reciting the major movements in Israel's history: election, exodus, conquest, judges, and David.¹⁶ This pattern of retelling Israel's history has parallels in the Old Testament documents as well.¹⁷ Bruce concludes, "These events, in fact, constitute an Old Testament *kerygma* which is summarized in Paul's address as a prelude to the New Testament *kerygma*: the events proclaimed in the apostolic preaching are shown to have taken place as the inevitable sequel to God's dealings with his people in ancient days."¹⁸ Thus, Paul's retelling is driven by a desire to demonstrate the continuity between Israel's history and the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth.

Before exploring what Paul does mention, it is interesting to note what he does not mention in his rehearsal of Israel's history. Although he refers to God's choosing of the fathers (Acts 13:17), Paul does not single out any one of them. Abraham receives no significant treatment in this sermon but he is given considerable space in others parts of the Pauline corpus (Rom 4; Gal 3-4). Neither is there any mention of Moses or the Law.¹⁹ Luke also omits any references to the temple or the sacrificial system of the

¹⁶Bruce writes, "Verses 17-22 correspond to an ancient confessional summary: they narrate 'precisely those redemptive acts of God to which the Israelite bore witness in his confessional recital of the works of God.'" Bruce, *Acts*, 254.

¹⁷Deut 26:5-10; 29:2-9; Josh 24:2-13, 17-18; 1 Sam 12:6-11; Neh 9:6-38; Pss 78; 105:5-45; 106:6-46; 135:8-12.

¹⁸Bruce, *Acts*, 254. I take slight issue with Bruce's use of the phrase "inevitable sequel". The phrase seems to imply a necessity that events happen in a certain way, a way which was clearly laid out in the OT *kerygma*. Certainly the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus were the "inevitable sequel" in that God had committed himself to redemption immediately after the sin in the Garden (Gen 3:16). That God would fulfill his promises to his people was certain. But, the way in which he would fulfill them was not clear, even to the eyes of faith (Luke 24:13-27; see esp. v25).

¹⁹Given Paul's concluding exhortation regarding the Law (Acts 13:38-39) as well as the prominence of Moses in Stephen's speech (Acts 7:20-44), it is curious that there is no mention of Moses or

temple.²⁰ Certainly this is an argument from silence, but it seems intentional on Luke's part in order to highlight the David-Jesus parallels. Paul moves rapidly through Israel's history in order to get to David and ultimately Jesus.²¹

Although Paul speaks broadly in terms of Old Testament promises related to the covenant (Acts 13:17), the land (Acts 13:19), and a king (Acts 13:23) – all of which find fulfillment in and culminate with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus – we must take care not to gloss over his retelling of Israel's history as though these events were mere historically-necessary stepping stones towards Messiah. The bulk of Paul's sermon as Luke records it focuses on Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises and the necessary response of faith, not on Israel's history per se. His audience of Jews and Gentile proselytes would have been familiar with these promissory acts of God so his intent cannot have been a mere retelling of Israel's history for its own sake. The retelling also does more than set the historical context into which Jesus came.

So then, why does Luke include this historical retelling and what is the particular significance in the way he has structured it? It seems it is included in order to show the pattern of judgment and mercy in God's dealings with Israel. In his historical retelling Paul goes back and forth between judgment and mercy. Thus, Paul does not seem to understand the "progress" of salvation-history in such a way as to flatten out

the Law in Paul's retelling of Israel's history. Paul's emphasis falls upon Jesus as the "better" David who did not see corruption but how this emphasis fits with his conclusion regarding justification will need to be developed.

²⁰Paul's failure to mention the Temple could be because Stephen is accused of speaking against the temple and is killed because of it (Acts 6:12-14; cf. Acts 7:44-50). However, Paul too is accused of speaking against the temple so certainty over the omission is impossible (Acts 21:28; 24:6).

²¹The pace with which Paul moves from election to David is striking. Kistemaker, *Acts*, 469; Polhill, *Acts*, 300-01; Munck, *Acts*, 230.

divine judgment in the midst of God's fulfilling his promises to Israel. Throughout Paul's restatement of Israel's history there is a consistent ebb and flow in God's purposes between judgment and mercy with God as the primary actor.²²

In mercy God chose the patriarchs and blessed them during their stay in the land of Egypt (Acts 13:17a).²³ But even in the midst of God's blessing comes one "who did not know Joseph" (Exodus 1:8).²⁴ Thus, God's plan to bless Abraham's descendants seems to go awry. But, in the high-water mark of God's saving acts in the Old Testament, he leads them out of bondage *μετὰ βραχίονος ὑψηλοῦ* (Acts 13:17b; cf. Exod 6:1, 6; Ps 136:11-12).

Once the nation is freed from bondage in Egypt, Paul notes that the Lord "endured"²⁵ Israel during their 40 year trek in the wilderness which is marked by sin and

²²God is the subject of the action throughout this section. He chose the fathers (13:17a), made them great (13:17b), lead them out of captivity (13:17c), put up with them (13:18), gave them the land (13:19), gave them judges (13:20), gave them Saul (13:21), and raised up David (13:22). Polhill writes, "All the stress is on God's mercy." Polhill, *Acts*, 300. Certainly, but mercy is heightened in Paul's sermon because of the pervasiveness of Israel's sin.

²³The verb *ἐκλέγομαι* carries the idea of a gracious choice of Israel on God's part. It is God's choosing to place his covenant love on the forefathers, no doubt a great act of grace and mercy (cf. Deut 4:37; 7:7; 10:15).

²⁴Although the rise of Pharaoh is not explicitly mentioned by Paul, the mention of the Exodus no doubt assumes the circumstances which necessitated an Exodus.

²⁵There is a textual variant in this verse which is caused by the ambiguity in the OT text it references (Deut 1:31). Metzger writes, "The evidence is singularly evenly balanced between *ἐτροποφόρησεν* ("he bore with [them]") and *ἐτροφοφόρησεν* ("he cared for [them]"). . . . In Acts a majority of the Committee regarded *ἐτροποφόρησεν* to be slightly better attested (by Alexandrian and several Western witnesses). . . . On balance it seemed best to adopt the reading that differs from the prevailing Septuagint text, on the ground that scribes would have been more likely to accommodate the two than to make them diverge." Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1998), 357. See also Bock, *Acts*, 452; Kistemaker, *Acts*, 470; Peterson, *Acts*, 387 n. 61. Contra C.K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd., 1994), 632; Bruce, *Acts*, 254-55; Marshall, *Acts*, 223; Munck, *Acts*, 231; Pervo, *Acts*, 335-36; Witherington, *Acts*, 410; I. H. Marshall, "Acts," in *Commentary on the New*

judgment (Acts 13:18; cf. Deut 9:6-8; Ps 95:10).²⁶ But, in mercy the Lord still gives them victory over their enemies (Acts 13:19a) and a land to inhabit (Acts 13:19b). But once again judgment appears as the time of the judges is mentioned (Acts 13:20b)²⁷ and with the giving of Samuel as prophet (Acts 13:20b) comes the request for a king (Acts 13:21a).

Despite the fact that Jesus was sent to be the ultimate Davidic king, one should be careful to note the sin involved with Israel's original request (1 Sam 8:4-9). Israel's sin certainly involved a desire to be like the other nations (1 Sam 8:5). But, God's response to Samuel's request is significant: "And the Lord said to Samuel, 'Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them'" (1 Sam 8:7). So then, it seems that it was not merely the kind of king requested but the very request for a king itself which was tainted.²⁸ This scene in Israel's history is a reoccurrence of the sin of the Garden (Gen 3:1-7) and is ultimately figured in the words of the chief priests at Jesus' Roman trial: "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15).

So then Saul becomes king as well as God's judgment on Israel on account of

Testament Use of the Old Testament, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 583.

²⁶One thinks of the plague after the golden calf incident (Exod 32:35), the plague after the Lord sends quail (Num 11:31-35), the Lord's promise to wipe out the rebellious generation who believed the report of the faithless spies (Num 14:20-23), Israel's defeat at the hand of the Amalekites and Canaanites (Num 14:39-45), Korah's rebellion (Num 16:31-35), the plague on those who rose up after Korah (Num 16:41-50), and the fiery serpents sent into the camp (Num 21:4-9).

²⁷One thinks of the refrain from the book of Judges: "And the people did what was evil in the sight of the Lord" (Judg 2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1).

²⁸Kistemaker, *Acts*, 471; contra Munck, *Acts*, 231.

the people's request, a judgment which lasts about 40 years (Acts 13:21b).²⁹ But, in mercy God removes faithless Saul (Acts 13:22a) and raises up David as king (Acts 13:22b; cf. Ps 89:20; 1 Sam 13:14).³⁰ Unlike Saul, David is one who will do all that God wills (ὅς ποιήσει πάντα τὰ θελήματά μου). The passage alluded to in the phrase “who will do all my will” is not entirely clear though it likely should be understood as further explaining “after my own heart.”³¹ The sense would then be that the one whom God chooses (i.e., the one “after my own heart”) will “do all my will.”³²

Paul passes over a thousand years of Israelite history and arrives at the point of his entire sermon: Jesus as the descendant (σπέρματος) who would fulfill God's promise of salvation (Acts 13:23). With language similar to the Gospels (especially the Fourth Gospel), Paul portrays the ministry of John the Baptist as the close of Israel's history

²⁹Bock, *Acts*, 452. Bock notes the occurrence of “40 years” with reference to Israel's wilderness wanderings (13:18) and to Saul's reign (13:21) but does not tease out the connection. It appears Luke wants to highlight the rebellion involved in both accounts. The wilderness generation who wandered 40 years in the desert is left outside God's blessing of life in the land. So too the generation who rejected Yahweh as king is left outside the blessing of being ruled by God through his anointed one.

³⁰There is an intentional allusion to Jesus' resurrection with Luke's use of ἤγειρεν (Acts 13:22b; cf. Acts 13:30). See Polhill, *Acts*, 300-01; Johnson, *Acts*, 232. Bock understands ἤγειρεν as a wordplay thus it refers to God's raising David “onto the scene of world history.” Bock, *Acts*, 452; cf. Barrett, *Acts*, 635. Certainly there is a word play going on in Paul's sermon, but Luke's intention in his statement regarding David's being “raised up” should be understood as God's gracious response to a sinful action. The request for a king, not just one like the nations, is in itself a rejection of God as King. David is God's gracious reversal of Israel's choice. Thus, there is not only a linguistic link, but more importantly, a conceptual link between David's installation as king and Jesus' resurrection.

³¹Some understand the phrase “who will do all my will” as a reference to Isaiah 44:28. Bock, *Acts*, 452; Parsons, *Acts*, 195; Polhill, *Acts*, 301 n. 31; Johnson, *Acts*, 232. Others see it as filling out the expression “after my own heart”. Max Wilcox, *The Semitisms of Acts* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1965), 21-24; Peterson, *Acts*, 388 n. 65; Bruce, *Acts*, 255; Barrett, *Acts*, 636.

³²This understanding of “after my own heart” makes the most sense of Samuel's anointing of David (1 Sam 16:1-13) in which election – God's rejection of Saul as well as David's brothers and his choosing of David – plays such a crucial role in the narrative's development. See P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., *1 Samuel*, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1980), 229, 277-78; David G. Firth, *1 & 2 Samuel*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2009), 156, 183-84.

before the coming of Messiah (Acts 13:24-25).³³ The Baptist stands last in the line of Old Testament prophets whose purpose was to continually call the people back to covenant fidelity, thus his “baptism of repentance” (Acts 13:24).

Summary. To read Paul’s retelling of Israel’s history as a mere progression towards Christ misses the stark contrast intended as Paul turns to the resurrection. At each significant juncture in Israel’s history one must recognize that their failures bring into question whether or not God is keeping his promises. For Paul, this uncertainty is not intended to cause doubt in God’s promises, rather, it is meant to highlight how deeply ingrained sin is in humanity, even in Israel, and the radical action God must take in order to fulfill his promises.

Promises Kept: The Resurrection Of Jesus (Acts 13:26-37)

As we have seen, Israel’s history is marked by failure which Paul (and Stephen for that matter) recognizes.³⁴ This failure casts doubt on the promises of God and raises a

³³The significance of the genitive absolute should be noted. deSilva writes, “The introduction of John the Baptist in Acts 13:24 occurs in a genitive absolute construction, making it syntactically dependent on verse 23. Here John is not presented, as in Luke 16:16 or Acts 10:37, as introducing the beginning of a new stage in salvation history, but as the forerunner of the One whose coming constituted the climax of the past history of salvation.” See David A. deSilva, “Paul’s Sermon in Antioch of Pisidia,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 151 (1994): 36. Polhill agrees and notes Paul’s use of direct address in 13:16, 13:26, and 13:38 as another clue in how to understand the structure of Paul’s sermon. See Polhill, *Acts*, 301.

³⁴Polhill writes, “There is a radically different function for the historical sketches in the two speeches, however. Stephen used Old Testament history to depict the rebelliousness of the Jews toward their divinely appointed leaders. Paul used it to show God’s faithfulness to his promises for Israel, promises that were ultimately fulfilled in Christ.” Polhill, *Acts*, 299. Polhill is right to see Christ as the fulfillment of the promises but does not give adequate weight to the negative portrayal of Israel’s history. See also Barrett, who writes, “The synagogue sermon of Ac 13 contains what may be called Luke’s Jewish understanding of the Old Testament – for it is Jewish, with the one additional conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah. . . Here [at David] the history stops, for the essential factors have all been disclosed: gracious election, deliverance, organized society, and a human king whose reign puts into effect the reign of God. David could only foreshadow and foretell the true king, but he did truly

significant question: can the promises be trusted?³⁵ This section of Paul's sermon demonstrates that Israel's history as one of repeated failure crescendos at the cross but is swallowed up in resurrection. God's promise appears to be defeated at Golgotha, but by the power of God, from the tomb walks fulfillment. There are two sub-sections in the text which will give shape to our discussion of these verses: one set off by direct address (Acts 13:26-31) and the other by OT quotations (Acts 13:32-37).³⁶

Acts 13:26-31. Paul's word to the synagogue here parallels his reiteration of the core of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-7. It is *ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης* (Acts 13:26) which Paul explicates for his audience. There is mention of Jesus' death (Acts 13:28; cf. 1 Cor 15:3), his burial (Acts 13:29; cf. 1 Cor 15:4a), his resurrection (Acts 13:30; cf. 1 Cor 15:4b), and his post-resurrection appearances (Acts 13:31; cf. 1 Cor 15:5-8). Paul also mentions Jesus' death and resurrection as the fulfillment of previously

foreshadow and foretell him, and the resurrection, to which there are trustworthy witnesses, establishes his identity – Jesus, in whom not only specific promises, such as Isa 55,3, but the whole story from the beginning, find fulfillment. *This is the point, says Paul, at which Jews must either accept or deny the destiny to which their history points.*" C. K. Barrett, "Old Testament History According to Stephen and Paul," in *Studien zum Text und zur Ethik des Neuen Testaments: Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Heinrich Greeven*, ed. Wolfgang Schrage (Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), 66-67 (emphasis added). Barrett misses the radical failure of Israel and the real threat it posed to God's promises. Israel's problem was not their perspective on their own history but rather their lack of understanding of their own sin as well as the remedy for that sin.

³⁵This appears in Rom 9 as well. Paul weeps at the vast resistance to the gospel among his "kinsmen" (Rom 9:3). The promises are theirs (Rom 9:4), but most have rejected Jesus. Yet Paul concludes, "But it is not as though the word of God has failed" (Rom 9:6).

³⁶Kistemaker divides Paul's description of the passion in this way although he does add Acts 13:38-41 to the section of OT quotations. Thus, he arranges the text in two parts: Acts 13:26-31 and Acts 13:32-41. See Kistemaker, *Acts*, 481. But as I said previously, Paul's direct address in Acts 13:38 appears to delineate a new section in the sermon.

given revelation (Acts 13:29; cf. 1 Cor 15:3b, 4b).³⁷ Thus, Paul shifts from the Old Testament *kerygma* to the New Testament *kerygma*, with the latter fulfilling the former.³⁸

Paul then notes that those who crucified Jesus did so despite hearing the Scriptures read each Sabbath (Acts 13:27; cf. Isa 6:9). As is common in the Lukan passion narrative, Jesus' innocence before his accusers is again highlighted here in Acts 13:28.³⁹ Paul then mentions Jesus' being taken down from the "tree" and placed in the tomb, a clear allusion to Deuteronomy 21:22-23 (cf. Acts 5:30; 10:39).⁴⁰ Although Paul's thought is laid out in more detail in Galatians 3:10-14, it seems that early on Paul understood the cross as the tree on which Jesus bore the curse of the people.⁴¹ Thus

³⁷There is mention of Jesus' death and resurrection being *κατὰ τὰς γραφάς* in 1 Cor 15:3b,4b. In Acts 13:29 the activities of those who condemned Jesus to death are said to be in fulfillment of *πάντα τὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένα*.

³⁸Bock, *Acts*, 454.

³⁹Five times in Luke's passion narrative Jesus is referred to as innocent (Luke 23:4; 23:14; 23:15; 23:22; 23:41). The centurion at the cross refers to him as *δίκαιος* which is often translated "innocent" though I understand it as a reference to Jesus as the "Righteous One" (Luke 23:47; cf. Acts 3:14; Isa 53:11). Witherington writes, "For Luke it is important to make clear to his audience that Jesus was not a criminal deserving of Roman execution, even though he was in fact executed by Pontius Pilate, the legitimate procurator of the region." Witherington, *Acts*, 411.

⁴⁰Bock, *Acts*, 454; Bruce, *Acts*, 259; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 234; Kistemaker, *Acts*, 479; Peterson, *Acts*, 391; Polhill, *Acts*, 302. Contra Marhsall, who acknowledges a reference to Deuteronomy 21 in Acts 5:30 and 10:39, but appears to deny an allusion to it in Acts 13:29. Regarding Acts 5:30, Marshall writes, "The phrase 'hanging him on a tree' (*kremasantes epi xylou*) picks up on Deut. 21:22-23, which refers to the practice of exposing the body of an executed criminal; this public humiliation and shame corresponded to the fact that the person was cursed by God. The same allusion occurs in 10:39; Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 2:24 (cf. the use of *xylon* for the cross in 13:29, and for the stocks in 16:24)." Marshall, "Acts," 555.

⁴¹Peterson writes, "This word [*ξύλον*] is apparently used to stress both the shameful nature of Jesus' death and its penal character (cf. Dt. 21:22-23; Gal. 3:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:24). Linked with the offer of the forgiveness of sins through Jesus (vv. 38-39), this suggests that his death was the vicarious atonement which made possible the inauguration of the New Covenant (cf. Je. 31:31-34; Lk. 22:20; Acts 20:28; Heb. 10:15-18)." Peterson, *Acts*, 391. Though he holds that the resurrection is decisive in Luke's understanding of salvation, Marshall does affirm Jesus' death as an atoning sacrifice. Marshall writes, "Such passages as Luke 22:19-20 (the longer text), Acts 20:28 and the references to Jesus 'hanging on a tree' (Acts 5:30; 10:40; cf. 13:29) are sufficient proof that Luke accepted the theory of Jesus' death as a means of atonement. . . . Nevertheless, he does not go out of his way to emphasize its soteriological character."

Paul's allusion to the "tree" of Deuteronomy 21:22-23 helps to give content to the "word of salvation" he brings to those gathered in the synagogue. The salvation which Paul references has to do with sin and Jesus' death on the "tree" as the atonement for sin.

The adversative particle $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ introduces the definitive example of the Lukan theme of reversal – the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (Acts 13:30). Luke, as is typical of his narrative, speaks of the resurrection of Jesus in the passive voice with God as subject and Jesus as object (Acts 2:24; 2:32; 3:26; 4:24). The contrast between the actions of the Jewish rulers and God is stark. Those in Jerusalem condemned Jesus (Acts 13:27), pressed Pilate to execute him despite his innocence (Acts 13:28), and buried him (Acts 13:29)⁴² but God raised him from the dead (Acts 13:30).⁴³ Thus, implicit in the contrast is a warning to those in Antioch regarding how they respond to the message concerning Jesus – to be like those in Jerusalem is to align oneself against God (cf. Acts 13:40-41).⁴⁴

Paul concludes his retelling of Jesus' resurrection by mentioning those to

Marshall, "The Resurrection in the Acts of the Apostles," 104-5. See also Joel B. Green, "Witness to His Resurrection": Resurrection, Salvation, Discipleship, and Mission in the Acts of the Apostles," in *Life in the Face of Death: The Resurrection Message of the New Testament*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 231.

⁴²That some of Jesus' followers removed his body from the cross and buried him does not negate the contrast. Those who buried Jesus were acting with the permission of Pilate (Luke 23:52) as well as the impetus of the Jewish leadership who wanted Jesus buried before the Sabbath began (John 19:31).

⁴³Bock, *Acts*, 455. Bock writes, "The Jewish leadership, citizens in Jerusalem, and Pilate led Jesus to his death, but God raised Jesus from the dead. This is the key 'contrastive act' of the kerygma. . . . It was also the central divine act of vindication, showing where God stood. The shift of subject here is important. The Jewish leaders and Pilate had handled Jesus up to this point, but now God acted on his behalf." Thus, the resurrection functions as God's vindication of Jesus but also as his condemnation of those who were responsible for Jesus' death.

⁴⁴Peterson writes, "As he tells the story of what happened in Jerusalem, Paul prepares for the warning against unbelief that will climax his sermon (vv. 40-41). The congregation in Pisidian Antioch should be aware of being like 'the people of Jerusalem and their rulers', who 'did not recognize Jesus' and condemned him to die." Peterson, *Acts*, 390.

whom Jesus appeared who were to be his witnesses (Acts 13:31; cf. 1 Cor 15:5-8). The reference to “many days” (Acts 13:31; cf. Acts 1:3) is likely intended as an allusion to Moses receiving the Law on Mt. Sinai (Exod 34:28; cf. Deut 9:9-11). Thus, Jesus is the prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15; cf. Acts 7:37).

Summary. The first part of Paul’s sermon focused on Israel’s history, especially its failures (Acts 13:16-25). In the second part of the sermon, Paul again focuses on Israel’s history, this time the death and resurrection of Jesus are in view (Acts 13:27-31). The message about the resurrection of Jesus is a message of salvation (Acts 13:26) but it remains to be seen if it is in fact good news. A mere announcement of the *history* of the death and resurrection of Jesus is not necessarily good news. History needs *interpretation*, in this case divine interpretation, to which Paul now turns.

Acts 13:32-37. After having articulated the basic “facts” of the gospel, Paul turns to the Old Testament in order to interpret the resurrection of Jesus and demonstrate that the promises could find fulfillment in no other way than in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It is this interpretation which makes the message about Jesus’ resurrection good news (Acts 13:32). He thus seeks to explain how a dying and rising Messiah is in fact good news for his audience (cf. 1 Cor 1:23).

Paul begins his explanation by announcing that the promises which were made to the fathers have come to completion in the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 13:32-33a). Again we see that God is the one who brings about the fulfillment since he stands as the subject of the action (ὁ θεὸς ἐκπεπλήρωκεν). He alone is the one who has worked in order to fulfill the promises. The perfective form of ἐκπληρώω also points to this reality since

the promises have certainly been fulfilled⁴⁵ and thus have their “Yes” in Jesus (Acts 13:33; cf. 2 Cor 1:20).

God has done this by raising Jesus (*ἀναστήσας Ἰησοῦν*) from the dead.⁴⁶ Some commentators hold that *ἀνίστημι* should be understood not as a reference to the resurrection, but God’s raising up Jesus onto the scene of world history in order to fulfill his purposes through him (Acts 13:33b; cf. Ps 2:7).⁴⁷ Thus, Jesus baptism, and not his resurrection, is in view.⁴⁸ This seems to miss the greater context where Jesus’ resurrection is immediately in view, a reality which would have been the main point of contention for Paul’s audience.⁴⁹ Thus it is more likely that Paul’s hearers would have connected his use of Psalm 2:7 with Jesus’ resurrection and not his baptism.⁵⁰

For Paul, the significance of the resurrection in light of Psalm 2:7 is that the resurrection is a declaration *by* the Father concerning Jesus’ relationship *to* the Father (Acts 13:33c). It is not meant to be understood as a statement about an ontological change in Jesus’ nature, but rather as a statement about the unique position granted to him

⁴⁵Bock, *Acts*, 456.

⁴⁶The participle *ἀναστήσας* should be understood as a participle of means. Thus, Paul’s point is that God has fulfilled the promises to the fathers *by* raising Jesus.

⁴⁷Barrett, *Acts*, 645; Bruce, *Acts*, 259 n. 79.

⁴⁸Bruce writes, “After long ages of earnest expectation, God, who had once ‘raised up David to be their king,’ had now raised up the Son of David, in accordance with the royal oracle of Ps. 2:7, ‘You are my Son; today I have begotten you’ . . . Jesus entered into no *new* relation of sonship to his heavenly Father; but on the day when God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and power and called him to his messianic mission, it was in terms of that oracle that he addressed him: ‘You are my Son’.” Bruce, *Acts*, 259-60. Contra Bruce, see deSilva, “Paul’s Sermon in Antioch of Pisidia,” 42.

⁴⁹Bock, *Acts*, 456; Polhill, *Acts*, 303.

⁵⁰See also Peterson, who notes, “The parallels with Psalm 110 are strong, and the enthronement in this psalm is applied to Jesus’ resurrection-ascension in Acts 2:33-36.” Peterson, *Acts*, 392 n. 80.

at his resurrection on account of his obedience to death (cf. Rom 1:4; 8:29; Col 1:15, 18).⁵¹ So then, the resurrection functions as God's vindication of Jesus from the charges brought against him in the trial/crucifixion scenes. At the cross, the religious leadership questioned Jesus' relationship to God (cf. Luke 23:35), but the resurrection is God's declaration that Jesus is in fact the uniquely begotten son. Given the original context of Psalm 2:7, Jesus' resurrection also means he receives an inheritance as the Son, namely "all the ends of the earth" (cf. Ps 2:8).⁵²

Paul's citation of Isaiah 55:3 is a continuation of his treatment of several Old Testament texts, the content of which prefigures Jesus' resurrection from the dead. This citation builds upon the reference to Psalm 2:7 by highlighting the reality that Jesus' resurrection from the dead means a new sphere of existence having been raised never to return to corruption (Acts 13:34a).⁵³ The certainty for this new sphere of existence lies in the fact that God in Christ has given to his people that which he promised, namely τὰ

⁵¹Paul uses similar language in Romans 1:4 where he says Jesus was declared to be the Son of God ἐν δυνάμει at his resurrection from the dead. The idea is one of eschatological revelation and not ontological change. See also Bock, *Acts*, 456; Polhill, *Acts*, 304; Witherington, *Acts*, 412.

⁵²Moessner rightly notes the import of the greater context of Psalm 2:7 in Paul's citation in his sermon. But, Moessner equates the inheritance with τὰ ὅσια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά. He writes, "But clearly David did not see his inheritance at the right hand of God, for he died and his body decomposed (Acts 13.36). Thus it is also clear that David did not live to see an eternal covenant of rule over the Gentiles (Isaiah 55) 'according to promise' (Acts 13.23, 32), nor as the Lord's χριστός did he 'inherit all the ends of the earth' (Ps. 2.8). Rather it is the Lord's Holy One (ὁ ὅσιος) Jesus who by virtue of being raised up (ἀνίστημι) from the realm of the dead has inherited these firm/trustworthy holy things (τὰ ὅσια)." David P. Moessner, "The 'Script' of the Scriptures in Acts: Suffering as God's 'Plan' (βουλὴ) for the World for the 'Release of Sins'," in *History, Literature, and Society in the Book of Acts*, ed. Ben Witherington III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 239.

⁵³Marshall, *Acts*, 227.

ἔσθια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά.⁵⁴

What Paul means by the phrase is not immediately clear. Most understand it as a reference to God's promise to establish David's throne forever so the phrase focuses on the kingly promises made *to* David by God.⁵⁵ Understood this way, Paul's intention is to demonstrate that God has in fact established David's throne and fulfilled his promises to Israel by raising Jesus from the dead. Now, certainly the phrase includes the kingly promises of the Davidic covenant but this does not seem to be the sum total of the blessings since it does not make sense for Paul to move from kingly promises to justification from sin at the close of his sermon (Acts 13:38-39).⁵⁶

The phrase seems best understood as a reference to the pious sufferings of the Servant on behalf of the people (Isa 52:1-53:12); sufferings which God, in the resurrection, declares effectual and acceptable (cf. Ps 2:7). So then, the phrase τὰ ἔσθια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά refers to something done by David, not just something promised to

⁵⁴Kilgallen writes, "Given the way Paul expresses this relationship [between Acts 13:34a-34b], the resurrection and incorruptibility of Jesus directs the attention of the Antiocheans to look beyond the resurrection of Jesus to the time of fulfillment for themselves of the promised expressed through Isa 55,3 LXX." John J. Kilgallen, "Acts 13,38-39: Culmination of Paul's Speech in Pisidia," *Biblica* 69 (1988): 492. Thus, the resurrection functions as both promise and fulfillment.

⁵⁵Barrett, *Acts*, 647-48; Bock, *Acts*, 457; Bruce, *Acts*, 260; Peterson, *Acts*, 392; Polhill, *Acts*, 304; Marshall, "Acts," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 586; Dale Goldsmith, "Acts 13:33-37: A Peshet on II Samuel 7," *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1968): 324. Thus, Δαυὶδ in LXX Isa 55:3 is understood as an objective genitive – the sure blessings promised to David.

⁵⁶Moessner recognizes the disjunction between kingly promises and forgiveness. He writes, "But Paul's climax does not come even with the accomplished fact of enthronement in the promise to David. He concludes ('therefore,' verse 38), rather, that the fulfilled promise of eschatological rule by a descendant of David has led to the release/forgiveness of sins (ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν)." Moessner, "The 'Script' of the Scriptures in Acts," 239. He wrongly concludes, "It is significant that this release is *not* tied directly to the act or process of Jesus being raised up any more than it is linked to his rejection and death. Both fulfillments, rather, are critical to the script or 'plan of God.'" Ibid., 239-40 (emphasis original).

David.⁵⁷ The phrase translated “sure mercies of David” in Isaiah 55:3, also occurs in 2 Chronicles 6:42, the context of which highlights the need for an obedient son to sit on David’s throne in order to fulfill the kings’ covenant stipulations (2 Chron 6:14-16), a need which only God can fill in light of the failures of Israel and its kings.⁵⁸ This understanding of the phrase makes the most sense in light of the greater context in which Isaiah 55:3 is located as well as in light of Paul’s use of the phrase in Acts 13:34.

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 highlights the Servant of the Lord’s death as a substitute (Isa 53:11-12) and yet there are hints that death would not be the final note as he would “divide the spoil with the strong” (Isa 53:12). The Servant would experience a crushing blow (Isa 53:10) but would be raised to life in God’s presence once again (Isa 53:12), which was a sure sign that he had in fact conquered sin and death and had accomplished his task.⁵⁹ If this understanding of the phrase is correct, then it makes perfectly good

⁵⁷Gentry has argued that the phrase “sure mercies of David” in Isaiah 55:3 should be understood as a subjective genitive which does not refer to the historical David himself but points forward to the future Davidic Messiah who himself will perform the “sure mercies.” Thus, in Acts 13:34, the phrase τὰ ἔσσια Δαυιδ τὰ πιστά (cf. LXX Isaiah 55:3) should be understood as the pious deeds done by the Davidic Messiah, Jesus, namely his suffering on behalf of the people. Peter J. Gentry, “Rethinking the ‘Sure Mercies of David’ in Isaiah 55:3,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 69 (2007): 279-304. Gentry’s article is helpful in explaining what τὰ ἔσσια Δαυιδ τὰ πιστά are though I do not think interpretively one should make a strong “either/or” distinction between “deeds done for/to David” or “deeds done by David.” As the new David, Jesus is both the everlasting heir promised to David and the obedient heir who performs that which was to be done by David. Both are necessary in order for the covenant blessings to be realized.

⁵⁸Gentry writes, “In v. 14 [of 2 Chronicles 6] Solomon begins by praising Yahweh as the God who keeps covenant . . . to those who walk before him in complete devotion. This is central. Certainly the covenant with David entails promises that Yahweh must keep to be faithful. But the oracle through Nathan makes clear that Yahweh will only keep them to and through a faithful son. Therefore, from the Chronicler’s point of view, the promises of Yahweh await fulfillment only when the throne is occupied by an obedient son. *What the subsequent course of history shows is that Yahweh must not only keep the promises, but also provide the obedient son if the covenant is to be maintained.*” Gentry, “Rethinking the ‘Sure Mercies of David’ in Isaiah 55:3,” 291 (emphasis added).

⁵⁹Gentry writes, “In short, as the son of God, a future David will bring God’s instruction and rule to all the nations as indicated in 2 Sam 7[:19].” He continues, “What acts of *hesed* on the part of the future David can constitute an eternal covenant [cf. Isaiah 55:3]? The arm of Yahweh is part of the New

sense for Paul to proclaim forgiveness of sins since part of the Servant's task was to accomplish justification for the many having taken upon himself their sin (Isa 53:11-12; cf. Acts 13:38-39).⁶⁰

Paul's notion of a new sphere of existence marked by life in God's presence is further explained in his final Old Testament quotation which shares the link word ὅσιος with Acts 13:34 (Acts 13:35; cf. Ps 16:10). The inferential particle διότι introduces Paul's reference and reinforces what he has argued for previously. God's promises are certain since Jesus – the “holy one” – did not see corruption (διαφθοράν) but was raised from the dead. Thus, resurrection guarantees long life in God's presence, not only for Messiah, but also for those who belong to him (cf. Ps 23:6).

At this point Paul picks up where he left off in his retelling of Israel's history by noting that David too was touched by failure since he died and saw corruption just as

Exodus theme that permeates all of Isaiah. The occurrence in 50:2 initiates a focus on the arm (51:5, 9; 52:10) that reaches a climax (53:1) in the Fourth Servant Song. Nevertheless, when Yahweh rolls up his sleeves and bares his arm no one would have believed it. The future king does not crush his enemies and rid the land of evil (11:3-5) by military force, prowess, and strategies, but simply by his word (11:4; 49:2; 50:4) and by offering himself as an *ʾāšām* (53:10). Thus, the means and manner in which Yahweh's Torah is brought to the nations and in which his Kingship is effected among them (a commander and leader of the peoples) is detailed by four Servant Songs, and in particular by the Fourth Song in 52:13-53:12. It is the acts of *hesed* on the part of the Servant that establish and initiate the discussion of the eternal covenant in ch. 54 of which 55:3 continues the thread.” Gentry, “Rethinking the ‘Sure Mercies of David’ in Isaiah 55:3,” 294.

⁶⁰Kilgallen argues that τὰ ὅσια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά are forgiveness and justification. He writes, “It seems best to interpret the terminology of God's promise (v. 34) to be ‘forgiveness of sins’ (v. 38) and ‘justification’ (v. 39). These two elements would be enough to justify the plural number expressed in τὰ ὅσια. Such an identification of v. 34, the central point of the scriptural passages explaining in what way Jesus is savior of the Antiocheans, with vv. 38-39 seems reasonable.” Kilgallen, “Acts 13,38-39: Culmination of Paul's Speech in Pisidia,” 498. I would modify Kilgallen's position only to clarify that forgiveness and justification are the fruit of τὰ ὅσια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά and not the τὰ ὅσια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά themselves. But, Kilgallen is right to link the two syntactically.

his fathers before him (Acts 13:36).⁶¹ Just as Israel's persistent failings cause doubts about the certainty of God's promises, David's death also means God's promises are brought into question. But as the three Old Testament citations have demonstrated, God is faithful to his promises and has demonstrated his faithfulness by raising Jesus from the dead. So then, Paul's understanding of the resurrection as represented in Acts 13 is similar to the way in which Luke describes Jesus' death and resurrection in his gospel. Jesus dies as the *δίκαιος* (Luke 23:47), a declaration which is confirmed as he is vindicated by God in the resurrection. Therefore, the thrust of these "proof" texts is two-fold: First, God is faithful in that he raised up the everlasting king who could fulfill the covenant stipulations as well as usher in those things which God had promised to David (2 Sam 7:13-16). Second, God is faithful in that he has acted to give his people long life in his presence, life which is assured since Jesus did not "see corruption" (Acts 13:37).

Summary. The resurrection is a matter of history which means that it stands in need of interpretation.⁶² For Paul, the significance of Jesus' resurrection from the dead is rooted in and explained by the Old Testament, especially the Psalms and Isaiah. Paul unfolds two significant aspects of the resurrection for his audience. First, the resurrection is God's eschatological announcement regarding Jesus' sonship (Acts 13:33; Ps 2:7). Jesus' status as son is brought into question at the cross, but decisively affirmed in the

⁶¹Gentry rightly notes that in Isaiah, whether we consider bad kings or good kings, "The history of the monarchy shows that we are still waiting desperately for an obedient Davidic son." Gentry, "Rethinking the 'Sure Mercies of David' in Isaiah 55:3," 297.

⁶²Rightly deSilva, who states, "The argumentation in 13:32-37 does not concern simply the resurrection of Jesus [i.e., mere historical event]. Instead the verses move to a new level – the discussion of the benefits or consequences [i.e., significance] of that resurrection, which are made certain by the incorruptible One." deSilva, "Paul's Sermon in Antioch of Pisidia," 47.

resurrection. Second, the resurrection affirms the vicarious nature of Jesus' death as the "Righteous One" who would justify the many by bearing their sins (Luke 23:47; cf. Acts 3:14; Isa 53:11-12). Jesus, as the ὅσιος who would not see corruption (Acts 13:35; cf. Ps 16:10), fulfilled τὰ ὅσια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά by suffering on behalf of the people (Acts 13:34; LXX Isa 55:3). Thus, Jesus' death as the δίκαιος (cf. Luke 23:47) is woven together with his resurrection as the ὅσιος since he fulfilled τὰ ὅσια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά by his sufferings (Acts 13:34-35).

The Call to Believe (Acts 13:38-41)

Paul's sermon has been pressing towards a call for response. In his concluding comments, Paul gives the synagogue audience both a positive and a negative motivation to follow Christ⁶³, though the negative motivation is secondary and flows logically from the positive motivation. Thus, the emphasis falls on the positive response found in Acts 13:38-39.⁶⁴

Positively, Paul first extends forgiveness of and justification from sin to πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων (Acts 13:39). Negatively, he warns those who might consider continuing in unbelief of the dangers inherent in rejecting the message of the gospel, a warning which picks up on Habakkuk's word to Israel regarding exile and the impending invasion of the Chaldeans (Acts 13:41; cf. Hab 1:5).⁶⁵

⁶³Bruce, *Acts*, 262.

⁶⁴Rightly Kilgallen, "Acts 13,38-39: Culmination of Paul's Speech in Pisidia," 480-506.

⁶⁵Kilgallen writes, "Verses 38-39 present the conclusion to the argument of Paul that the saving work of God, begun with Israel's fathers and highlighted by the promise of a savior from David's

Acts 13:38-39.⁶⁶ The first part of Paul’s conclusion highlights two significant, overlapping results of Jesus’ death and resurrection – forgiveness of and justification from sin.⁶⁷ The phrase *διὰ τούτου*, whose antecedent (*ὃν*) refers to the resurrected Jesus (13:37), should be read as modifying both the proclamation of forgiveness and the certainty of justification for all who believe. Since it governs both main verbs in Acts 13:38-39 (*καταγγέλλεται; δικαιούται*), the phrase *διὰ τούτου* should be rendered “through this man” but must be explained in terms of Jesus’ resurrection and its relationship not only to the forgiveness of sin but also to the justification of those who believe. Thus, the salvation Paul is proclaiming (i.e., forgiveness and justification) comes because of the crucified and resurrected Davidic Messiah, Jesus (cf. Acts 13:26-37).⁶⁸

line, is now, by virtue of the raising of Jesus to incorruptibility, presenting the Antiocheans with that salvation which is defined as forgiveness of sins and justification and described in Old Testament terms as ‘the holy things of David’. Verse 40-41, on the other hand, are not the fulfillment towards which the saving actions of God, described in the speech, has, over the centuries, been directed, but are rather an important, but subsidiary warning not to ignore the offer God is making to the Antiocheans, particularly not to refuse to believe that it is Jesus through whom the offer of justification and forgiveness of sins is being made. Verses 38-39, then, explain the plan of God for Paul’s audience today; vv. 40-41 serve as a conclusion to warn them not to reject God’s care which culminates now in the offer of salvation to these Antiocheans.” Kilgallen, “Acts 13,38-39: Culmination of Paul’s Speech in Pisidia,” 480 n. 2.

⁶⁶My translation of Acts 13:38-39 is as follows: “Therefore, let it be known to you, brothers, that through this man the forgiveness of sins, from all sin – from that which you were unable to be justified by the Law of Moses – is proclaimed to you. In him, everyone who believes is justified.”

⁶⁷The link between Jesus resurrection and justification should not be missed. Speaking specifically of justification, Bird writes, “Justification flows not only from the cross but also from its kerygmatic sequel in the resurrection. Jesus’ death and resurrection should be regarded as being inseparably part of one redemptive event. The cross without the resurrection is sheer martyrdom, an act of solidarity with the persecuted nation. Conversely, the resurrection without the cross is a miraculous intrusion into history and a salvation-historical enigma. Together they constitute the fulcrum of God’s righteousness in handing over Jesus to the cross and raising him for our justification. *This highlights that the justifying death of Christ is not efficacious without the resurrection.*” Michael F. Bird, “Justified by Christ’s Resurrection: A Neglected Aspect of Paul’s Doctrine of Justification,” *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 22 (2004): 90 (emphasis added).

⁶⁸Kilgallen writes, “The words *toutou, touto* are intentional ways of tightly linking all that has been said about Jesus of Nazareth to the offer of forgiveness and justification. That is, the savior (v. 23) whom the ever-saving God led to Israel, the raised one announced now by witnesses throughout the world

Forgiveness language indicates the need for a payment of sin's debt which in God's economy meant the shedding of blood (cf. Heb 9:22). Though not central to any of Paul's letters, he does speak of forgiveness on a few occasions so the concept is not foreign to him nor is it completely divorced conceptually from justification (Rom 4:7; Col 1:14; Eph 1:7).⁶⁹ As argued previously, atonement is clearly in view in Paul's explanation of Jesus' crucifixion on the "tree" as well as in his Old Testament interpretation of Jesus' death and resurrection.⁷⁰ So then Jesus' resurrection functions as

(vv. 30-32), the one whose resurrection reveals him to be the son of God because his very life is given him by God (v. 33b), the one who has been raised to incorruptibility with the result that one can now understand both how God could have promised holy things to all Israel and that this incorruptible one, an only he, is God's holy one (vv. 34-37) and thus the deliverer of the holy things – it is this person how is emphasized, as much as forgiveness and justification, in the body of the speech as well as in the final verses." Kilgallen, "Acts 13,38-39: Culmination of Paul's Speech in Pisidia," 504.

⁶⁹Polhill, *Acts*, 305 n. 39. See also Seifrid, who writes, "The dispersion of the conceptual elements of justification into the theology of the letter is characteristic of Colossians and Ephesians. Paul generally speaks of the forgiveness of sins rather than justification. But this forgiveness encompasses the whole life of the believer, not merely past deeds: by it God gives life to the dead and freedom from the powers of evil. As such, the theme of forgiveness approaches that of justification in the earlier letters. Paul interprets justification in terms of forgiveness in Romans 4:6-8, so this change in vocabulary is not unprecedented, nor does it involve a major semantic shift. 'Forgiveness' lacks, of course, the theme of God's justification in his contention with the world. But as we have just seen, this element of the gospel appears in God's triumph over the powers of evil and the exclusion of the human boast (Eph. 1:19-23; 2:2, 9: 6:10-17; Col. 2:15)." Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification*, New Studies in Biblical Theology, vol. 9, ed. D. A. Carson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 92-93. Contra Fitzmyer, who writes, "This reformulation of justification in terms of 'pardon, forgiveness, remission' also brings it about that Luke makes Paul speak of people being 'justified from': ἀπὸ πάντων ὧν οὐκ ἠδυνήθητε ἐν νόμῳ Μωϋσέως δικαιωθῆναι, 'from everything from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses' (Acts 13:39). The reason why Luke makes Paul so speak is that ἀφεις, 'release,' dominates his [Luke's] way of speaking about justification." "Pauline Justification as Presented by Luke in Acts 13," in *Transcending Boundaries: Contemporary Readings of the New Testament: Essays in Honour of Francis J. Moloney*, ed. by Rekha M. Chennattu and Mary L. Coloe (Rome: LAS Publications, 2005), 258.

⁷⁰See our discussion on the "tree" in Acts 13:29 as well as τὰ ὄσια Δαυὶδ τὰ πιστά in Acts 13:34. Contra Goppelt, who writes, "The other positive significance of Jesus' dying becomes evident here. It consisted of the fact that his dying belonged to God's plan of salvation. It was said to the disciples along the road to Emmaus who thought in their resignation, 'But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel' (Lk. 24:21), 'Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?' (Lk. 24:26). That meant in soteriological terms that the forgiveness that Jesus mediated in his earthly days through his turning in personal involvement was now offered to all from his resurrection: 'through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you!' (Acts 13:38). It was still bound to the turning

the tangible demonstration that his death on behalf of sinners was accepted as payment in order to forgive sinners. Thus, the certainty of the forgiveness which Paul announces is grounded in both Jesus' death and resurrection.

Though many have questioned Luke's portrayal of Paul⁷¹, it is no surprise that Luke here records Paul preaching justification by faith since it plays such a prominent role in several of Paul's early letters (Rom 3:21-26; Gal 2:15-16; 3:10-14). Luke's treatment of the Law is a significant issue in Acts with regard to Paul,⁷² and especially in Acts 13 given that Paul appears to contrast justification by faith with justification by Law-keeping.

Some understand Paul to be saying that the justification about which he speaks is a supplement to Law-keeping.⁷³ Thus, grammatically the prepositional phrase ἀπὸ . . . δικαιοθῆναι (Acts 13:38) is understood to be modifying the verb δικαιούται (Acts 13:39) and the genitives πάντων and ὧν are understood as partitive genitives. The sense of the

of Jesus' person, but it was not justified in any special way through an atoning death." Leonhard Goppelt, *New Testament Theology*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), 283.

⁷¹See chap. 1 of the current study. Contra those who argue that forgiveness language points toward Luke's misunderstanding of Pauline thought.

⁷²Daniel Marguerat, "Paul and the Torah in the Acts of the Apostles," in *Torah in the New Testament: Papers delivered at the Manchester-Lausanne Seminar of June 2008*, ed. Peter S. Oakes and Michael Tait, Library of New Testament Studies, vol. 401 (New York: T & T Clark, 2009), 101 (emphasis original). He writes, "Talk of the Law is concentrated primarily in the figure of Paul . . . and secondly in that of Stephen. . . . Thus relationship with the Law is matter for consideration in the Lukan portrait of Paul, whereas it is quite absent from the picture of the Twelve (Acts 1-5). This distribution of vocabulary for the Law already affords us a first clue: Luke is aware that the relationship with the Law has played an important role in Paul's activities. More precisely, if one observes that the occurrences of the three vocables mainly arise in polemical context where Paul (just like Stephen) feels himself blamed for a lack of respect for Torah, and protests his devotion to it, then one will conclude that the author of Acts has preserved the memory of a crisis involving Paul and the Law, even if the exact terms of this crisis do not appear more explicitly in his work."

⁷³Philippe Vielhauer, "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 41-42.

passage is taken to mean that there are some things from which the Law can justify, so then Jesus' death occurs in order to supplement the Law by justifying the believer from all those sins from which the Law could not justify.⁷⁴ Though grammatically possible, this rendering does not fit with the overall point of Paul's sermon nor does it parallel his usage in any of his letters.⁷⁵

Some have argued that Paul's point is that forgiveness is available for everything, even for that which the Law does not extend forgiveness.⁷⁶ Thus Paul is declaring forgiveness of all sins, even from those sins done with a "high hand." Though certainly a true statement, it does not accurately deal with the grammar, nor does it draw out the dramatic conclusion Paul intends for his sermon. Just as the grammar of the "partial justification" interpretation fails because it blunts the edges of the kind of forgiveness toward which Paul has argued, so too does the interpretation which sees Paul's point in the forgiveness of sins done with a "high hand." To understand Paul's statement this way is to miss the previous context in which he rehearsed Israel's history as one marked by a penchant for disobedience even as they possessed the Law (Acts

⁷⁴Vielhauer writes, "Clearly Acts [13:38] intends to let Paul speak in his own terms; one must however point out striking differences from the statements of the letters of Paul. First of all, justification is equated with the forgiveness of sins and thus is conceived entirely negatively, which Paul never does. . . . Finally, it is here a question only [of] a partial justification, one which is not by faith alone, but *also* by faith." Vielhauer, "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts," 33.

⁷⁵Haenchen writes, "Anyone who . . . makes the author here develop a doctrine that an incomplete justification though the law is completed by a justification through faith imputes to him a venture into problems which were foreign to him." Haenchen, *Acts*, 412 n. 4. See also Bock, *Acts*, 458-59; Bruce, *Acts*, 262; Peterson, *Acts*, 394 n. 88; Polhill, *Acts*, 305 n. 40; Marshall, *Acts*, 228.

⁷⁶Bruce has argued that even the Law, despite its provisions of sacrifice for the atonement of some sins, "makes no provision for sins committed 'with a high hand.'" See F.F. Bruce, "Justification by Faith in the Non-Pauline Writings of the New Testament," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 24 (1952): 70. This position does not seem essentially different from Vielhauer's though Bruce would certainly disagree with Vielhauer.

13:16-29). Israel's problem was not a failure to attain forgiveness from a narrow category of sins; rather, theirs was a failure to attain forgiveness, period.

Grammatically and contextually, it is best to understand the preposition ἀπὸ implicitly repeated and governing both πάντων as well as the relative pronoun ὧν.⁷⁷ So then, there are implicitly two prepositional phrases, both of which should be understood as modifying the verbal concept inherent in the noun ἄφεςις⁷⁸, a construction which is not uncommon in Luke's writings.⁷⁹ The phrase ἀπὸ πάντων carries a spatial idea so that forgiveness is from all sin; so too, ἀπὸ ὧν carries the idea that sin is that from which the Law is unable to justify.⁸⁰ The idea then is not a partitive notion, rather Paul is making a distinction between what is now available through the resurrected Jesus against that

⁷⁷Robertson writes, "The preposition is not always repeated with the relative. Usually the classical authors did not repeat the preposition with the relative when the antecedent had it. So the N. T. shows similar examples, as ἐν ἡμέραις αἷς ἐπέιδεν (Lu. 1:25), εἰς τὸ ἔργον ὃ προσκέκλημαι (Ac. 13:2), ἀπὸ πάντων ὧν (Ac. 13:39), etc." A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 4th ed. (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), 566.

⁷⁸Although prepositions typically modify verbs, grammatically prepositions can and do modify nouns. See Friedrich Blass and Alfred DeBrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 114; Gerald L. Stevens, *New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. (New York: University Press of America, 1997), 103; William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 59; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 357; Van Ness Goetchius states explicitly that prepositions do modify nouns, but gives examples in which the preposition modifies a person. Eugene van Ness Goetchius, *Language of the New Testament Greek* (Rochester: Scribner, 1965), 152. Robertson argues that in a prepositional phrase, the case of the object governs the preposition, not the opposite. Therefore, the case aids in determining what the preposition modifies. Robertson, *Grammar*, 553. Though Robertson does not comment on what ἀπὸ in Acts 13:38 modifies, his comments imply the genitive case, and not the preposition, is determinative in identifying which word ἀπὸ modifies.

⁷⁹Luke 5:36 (ἀπὸ could modify ἐπίβλημα though it does not make much interpretive difference if it modifies σχίσας); Luke 6:17 (ἀπὸ modifies λαοῦ); Luke 6:18b (ἀπὸ modifies the participle οἱ ἐνοχλούμενοι); Luke 9:5 (ἀπὸ could modify τὸν κονιορτὸν though it does not make much interpretive difference if it modifies ἀποτινάσσετε); Luke 9:38 (ἀπὸ modifies ἀνήρ).

⁸⁰Stanley Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed., Biblical Languages: Greek, vol. 2 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 146.

which is available in the Law of Moses. Paul further shades the meaning he intends when speaking of forgiveness by employing the language of justification. His point is that justification does not rest on Law-keeping since one is able to be justified only *διὰ τούτου*.⁸¹

Just as he understands the forgiveness of sin as a certainty because of the resurrected Christ (*διὰ τούτου*), Paul also regards justification as something accomplished *ἐν τούτῳ* (Acts 13:39; cf. Rom 4:25).⁸² Paul's use of *δικαίω* appears to refer to both the forensic aspect of justification as well as the liberating power of Christ in the lives of the justified. Having been declared righteous *ἐν τούτῳ*, the one who believes participates in his resurrected life. This means a never before experienced sphere of existence which is marked by a new found freedom from the power of sin (cf. Luke 1:72-75).⁸³

Paul's exhortation also highlights the universal scope of justification which is intended for *πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων*. Given Paul's mixed audience (Acts 13:16, 26; cf. Acts 13:44), both Jews and Gentiles are included in the offer of salvation (i.e., forgiveness and

⁸¹Menoud also argues that Paul intended a sharp contrast between *πάντων* and *πᾶς*, a contrast which "suggests rather that the law does not justify in any way, and that all sinners are absolved of all their sins by faith." Philippe Menoud, "Justification by Faith According to the Book of Acts", in *Jesus Christ and the Faith: A Collection of Studies* (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1978), 211.

⁸²The phrase *ἐν τούτῳ* brings to mind the Pauline category of *ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* (cf. Romans 3:24). The phrase should be understood as a locative dative, thus Paul is referring to a new sphere of existence for the believer who at one time was *ἐν νόμῳ Μωϋσέως* but now is *ἐν τούτῳ*. Moessner, over-reading the significance of the "plan of God" in Acts, interprets the object of faith as the "plan of God." He writes, "Now, according to Paul, 'this one' is himself present to 'rectify' all that they have misheard or 'been unable' to do 'by means of/in the law of Moses' if they will just come to 'believe' in the plan of God (13.38b-41)." Moessner, "The 'Script' of the Scriptures in Acts," 240.

⁸³Kilgallen writes, "The making of Israel into a forgiven and justified (holy) people is also an effect of the saving action of the savior described in the Benedictus. Ultimately, the freedom he brings is freedom which will allow not only worship, but worship in holiness and in justice." Kilgallen, "Acts 13,38-39: Culmination of Paul's Speech in Pisidia," 501.

justification).⁸⁴ Thus, the predominantly Jewish makeup of Paul's audience does not make "justification" an issue directed at Jews primarily anymore than it makes "forgiveness of sins" a primarily Jewish issue.⁸⁵ Given the whole city returns the following Sabbath, implicit in Paul's offer is a call to the Gentiles as well (Acts 13:38-39; cf. Acts 13:44ff.). So then justification cannot be construed as a Jewish doctrine in that table fellowship with Gentiles is the point of justification.⁸⁶ Justification is provided for and needed by *all* just as forgiveness is available for *all* sin.⁸⁷

Acts 13:40-41. Paul concludes his sermon with a warning regarding the consequences of rejecting this message of salvation. The warning takes the form of another Old Testament quotation, this one from Habakkuk 1:5. In Habakkuk's day the threat of exile at the hands of the Chaldeans was in view (Hab 1:6-11). Paul applies the verse to his predominantly Jewish audience who is in danger of responding to the work of

⁸⁴Peterson, *Acts*, 394; Marshall, *Acts*, 228; Kistemaker, *Acts*, 487. Bock notes the mixed audience in his discussion of Acts 13:16 but does not expand on the identity of the $\pi\alpha\tilde{\nu}\varsigma$ of Acts 13:39 though he seems to imply in his discussion on Acts 13:40-41 that the $\pi\alpha\tilde{\nu}\varsigma$ should be understood as the Jews. Bock, *Acts*, 459-61. See also Polhill, *Acts*, 304.

⁸⁵Contra Fitzmyer, who writes, "In these verses, in which he will speak about justification, he may be directing his comments more specifically to the Jews in the synagogue audience." Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 518.

⁸⁶Contra Wright, who states, "From Paul, it is clear that the doctrine of justification was a vital issue which the early church had to hammer out in relation to the admission of Gentiles to the church. The only mentions of the admission of the Gentiles in the synoptic tradition do not speak of justification, and the only mention of justification has nothing to do with Gentiles." It appears as though Wright understands justification as a primarily Jewish doctrine in that it is directed at Jewish Christians and their acceptance of Gentiles into the people of God apart from Gentiles becoming Jews (i.e. embracing Torah). N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 421-22.

⁸⁷ Bock notes the universality of salvation in Acts 13. Darrell L. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series, vol. 12 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 256.

God just as their fathers and their religious leaders did (Luke 23:35; Acts 13:27-29).⁸⁸

His point is that they are in no less danger than their forefathers of falling under the judgment of God for not believing the report of the work which God was doing in their day.⁸⁹

It is important to note the appearance of righteousness language as well as the theme of contention present in the context of Habakkuk. The narrative movement of the two complaints Habakkuk brings to God is instructive (Hab 1:2-4; 1:12-2:1). Habakkuk first complains that righteous Israel is surrounded by the wicked Gentiles which causes the “paralysis” of Torah (Hab 1:2-4).⁹⁰ Habakkuk’s complaint is rooted in his

⁸⁸Wall writes, “The use of Hab 1:5 in this narrative setting agrees broadly in language and spirit with its original sense in the prophecy of Habakkuk: even as the prophecy issues God’s warning of imminent destruction to an unfaithful Israel, its use in Acts appeals to a later generation of Israel to believe this new report of God’s work: by ‘reporting’ (ἐκδηγέομαι) the details of God’s ‘work’ through Messiah, Paul continues the prophet’s vocation of announcing God’s word to Israel. In this essential way, then, the performance of the antecedent text and its carrier has insinuated itself upon Paul and his gospel to make more clear to the current audience that the stakes for listening to Scripture’s prophetic announcement of God’s work among them remain as high as ever.” Robert W. Wall, “The Function of LXX Habakkuk 1:5 in the Book of Acts,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 10 (2000): 250.

⁸⁹This same warning is echoed again as Paul and Barnabas make their way to the Jerusalem Council. Wall writes, “The importance of the travel summary is underscored by a Council convened to discuss and debate (cf. 15:2) the legality of Paul’s ‘conversion of the Gentiles’ and the founding of independent Gentile congregations in the Diaspora. Upon closer reading, however, our attention is more keenly posited, not upon the subject of the report, but rather upon the activity of ‘reporting’ itself. The verb, ἐκδηγέομαι, is striking and exceptional; indeed, its only other use in the NT is as the concluding word of Habakkuk prophecy used in Acts 13:41, ‘even if someone reports.’ The use of it here is all the more striking when comparison is made with the more familiar vocabulary used in Acts for reporting conversions. Given this added linguistic evidence, then, my judgment is that the ἐκδηγέομαι in Acts 15:3 sounds an explicit—that is a *loud*—echo of the Habakkuk prophecy of Acts 13:41 and functions to recall that earlier episode to contextualize the conflict which has now convened the Jerusalem Council: Paul’s use of Hab 1:5 to warn those who might ‘scoff’ as his prophetic report of God’s work of grace is imported to this new setting, where Paul’s report of God’s conversion of the Gentiles carries with it an implicit warning to the Jewish protesters within the Judean church to receive it, as the others have, ‘with great joy.’” *Ibid.*, 255-56.

⁹⁰By “paralysis”, Habakkuk means that the promises are appear to be in jeopardy. Johnson writes, “Thus it appears that the prophet Habakkuk was a disillusioned Deuteronomist, one who had believed that the Josianic reform along Deuteronomic lines would clear the way for the fulfillment of God’s promises recorded in that law code. Habakkuk, however, came to see that the situation of his time would

expectation that Israel's faithfulness to Torah should have resulted in peace and security. But, rather than explaining why the Chaldeans have been raised up, God responds by affirming that that he is in fact behind the rise of the Chaldeans (Hab 1:5-11).

Habakkuk complains again but this time appeals to the righteousness of Israel contrasted with the wickedness of the Chaldeans (Hab 1:12-2:1). God again affirms his role in the Chaldeans' advance, but this time promises deliverance, delayed though it might appear (Hab 2:2-20). Especially significant is Habakkuk 2:4. The proud, whether the ungodly Chaldeans or those among Israel who do not believe God's work, will perish while the righteous, those who humbly wait on Yahweh, will live by faith (Hab 2:3-4). Thus, even in Paul's negative exhortation, faith – the need to believe (Acts 13:41b) – and not Law, takes center stage just as with his positive encouragement to be justified by faith.

The Gentiles play a prominent role in this latter part of Paul's sermon. The judgment in view in the historical horizons of Habakkuk 1:5 and Acts 13:40-41 involves Gentiles. In Habbakuk the judgment comes through exile by the Gentiles (Hab 1:6) while in Acts the judgment comes through the gospel going to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). Also, the two occurrences of ἔργον allude to God's work among the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas are set aside by God for the work (Acts 13:2) which is the proclamation of salvation to both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 13:41; cf. Acts 13:48). The greater context of

not improve but only become worse. He wondered whether the *torah* had been paralysed and, if so, why. To this question he was not, any more than Job, given a cognitive answer. But, also like Job, he appealed to an overwhelming vision of the awesome power of God (Hab. iii) and so, in spite of all the harsh realities of his time, he remained personally convinced of the eventual and final victory of God over all forces of violence and chaos (Hab. iii 17-19)." Marshall D. Johnson, "The Paralysis of Torah in Habakkuk I 4," *Vetus Testamentum* 35 (1985): 264-65.

both Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 55:3 have the Gentiles in view as well.⁹¹ In Psalm 2:8, the nations are Messiah's inheritance while in Isaiah 55:4-5, the Servant calls upon nations who then run to him.

What is the significance of Paul's focus – both implicit and explicit – on the Gentiles in this text? It is to highlight the new work that God is doing through the resurrected Jesus. When Paul speaks of a report about the work of God (Acts 13:40-41; cf. Acts 15:3), it is not a reference to the salvation of the Gentiles exclusively, rather it is also a report of the fulfillment of the promises in the resurrected Jesus, a fulfillment which includes salvation by faith for both Jews and Gentiles. Thus, the significant shift Paul has in mind is not just the inclusion of the Gentiles, but also that salvation is by faith which means it happens apart from the Law of Moses.⁹² Acts 15 and Peter's testimony (cf. Acts 15:10) before the Jerusalem Council make this clear.⁹³

⁹¹DeSilva, "Paul's Sermon in Antioch of Pisidia," 48.

⁹²Seifrid writes, "The reason that the inclusion of Gentiles appears so regularly in connection with Paul's teaching on justification is that their participation in the people of God was a visible and bodily expression of the justification of the ungodly, an event which cannot be reduced to a moral vision (see Gal 2:11-21). Table-fellowship with Gentiles was therefore a call to mission, to the evangelization of the world, a call to an ever-expanding community. This community of Jews and Gentiles was not held together by any visible outward ties but solely by the invisible bond of faith in the risen Messiah (Rom 15:5-13). It was a community of forgiven sinners who came to one another, not by means of an ideal of equality (defined on whose terms?), and certainly not by a common culture (cf. Rom 14:1-23), but through Jesus Christ alone. As Paul instructs his readers in Romans 9-11, Israel and the nations were, after all, God's work. Their varying paths to Christ were the open, visible, and necessary indications that God's mercy, if it is to be mercy, must be radically free." Mark A. Seifrid, "The Narrative of Scripture and Justification by Faith: A Fresh Response to N. T. Wright," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 72 (2008): 44.

⁹³Rightly Kilgallen, who writes, "After Peter's speech, James proposes that gentile Christians stay away from certain practices, but the basis for this proposal is concern for harmonious unity between Jewish and gentile Christian. *The four matters he identifies are not to be practised because they are necessary for salvation - faith in Jesus alone is necessary for salvation - but out of love for Jewish Christians.*" John J. Kilgallen, "A Major Difference between Law and Faith, in Luke and his Traditions," *The Expository Times* 116 (2004): 37 (emphasis added). See also Mark A. Seifrid, "Jesus and the Law in Acts," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* (1987): 47. Seifrid writes, "Most likely the Apostolic

Summary

In Paul's sermon at Pisidian Antioch we see a clear pattern of the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel. God makes promises and brings them to their fulfillment. As fulfillment, the resurrection is first and foremost a vindication of God by God. The context of Habakkuk in which righteous Israel appears to be abandoned, brings into question the reliability of Torah and ultimately the trustworthiness of God. The resurrection of Jesus thus serves as God's vindication of himself. He is in fact righteous and his promises are true (cf. Rom 3:25; 9:1-6).

Not only is the resurrection God's act of self-vindication, it is also that which secures the fulfillment of the promises made to Israel especially as they relate to the forgiveness of sins which impeded Israel's ability to dwell in God's presence. The pattern of fulfillment which Luke records is marked by God's acting on behalf of Israel. Thus, in Jesus, God acts in order to bring life to Israel when their choices brought them death. There is not one aspect of Israel's history which stands unaffected by disobedience. Thus, if salvation is to come, then it will come because God has acted decisively and definitively. The resurrection of Jesus is that decisive and definitive act of God.

Conclusion

In terms of the relationship between justification as it is presented in Luke and

Decree contains provisions which would prevent contact between Jewish and Gentile believers from giving offense to the most conservative of the former. Perhaps it also was intended to preserve the possibility of mission activity among unbelieving Jews, but this is less clear. Seen in this light, the Decree confirms that Luke employs an ethic which not only exceeds the stipulations of the Law apart from Jesus, but frees Gentile believers from direct obligation to the Law. Mosaic law does not serve as the governing force in Luke's ethic."

Acts 13 respectively, both are thoroughly eschatological and soteriological. We have already established this conclusion in Luke but it is no less true in Acts 13. Paul's sermon is structured in such a way as to heighten the eschatological significance of the "message of salvation" (Acts 13:26) with which he had been entrusted. Israel's history, especially in so far as God's promises to Israel are in view, culminates in the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 13:33) a point to which Israel's scriptures testify (Acts 13:33-35). But Israel's history which was marked by sin and failure (Acts 13:16-29) culminates in their salvation since Jesus' resurrection means that all who believe can in fact experience God's presence because they have been forgiven and freed, justified by God from the penalty and power of sin as it is expressed in the Law's power to condemn (Acts 13:38-39).

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ABSTRACT

JUSTIFICATION IN LUKAN THEOLOGY

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This dissertation explores Luke's understanding of justification especially as it is portrayed in the Gospel. Chapter 1 is a brief statement of the nature of and reason for my project as well as a survey of the history of interpretation regarding justification in Lukan theology especially in regards to scholarly opinion on the most explicit statements about justification in Luke-Acts – Luke 18:9-14 and Acts 13:13-41.

Chapter 2 is a thorough exegesis of the parable of the Pharisee and the tax-collector (Luke 18:9-14) with an eye towards determining the significance of Luke's use of δικαίω. The point of the chapter is to establish that Luke's understanding of justification is in fact both eschatological and soteriological.

Chapter 3 broadens the scope of the exegesis by looking at the immediate context of the parable in Luke 17:20-18:8 and Luke 18:15-19:10. The immediate context of the parable is thoroughly eschatological and makes Jesus' declarations regarding the Pharisee and the tax-collector highly significant. Also, issues of faith, election, entering the kingdom of God, salvation, and eternal life permeate the context and make a soteriological reading of the parable compelling.

Chapter 4 is a narrative reading of key texts which connect justification with two important Lukan themes – the kingdom of God and eschatological reversal. The contrast between the “righteous” and the “sinners” in Luke frames this material as Luke portrays the “righteous” as those who enter the kingdom, dine at his table, who look forward to God’s acting on their behalf and not to their own ability. Likewise, Jesus is presented as the Righteous One (cf. Isaiah 53:11) who suffers innocently, is accused by both earthly and cosmic authorities, yet in his resurrection is vindicated by God. It is Jesus’ resurrection which grants him the authority and ability to grant justification to the one who believes.

Chapter 5 is a brief conclusion which brings together the various strands of argumentation. The appendix is an exegetical look at Acts 13:13-41, Paul’s sermon at Antioch of Pisidia, which demonstrates the theological congruence between Luke’s narrative and his portrayal of Paul’s preaching.

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