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EVIDENCES OF ISAIANIC SOCIAL JUSTICE RESTORATION  
IN THE EARLY COMMUNITY OF LUKE-ACTS

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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by  
Brandt Anthony Van Roekel  
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**APPROVAL SHEET**

**EVIDENCES OF ISAIANIC SOCIAL JUSTICE RESTORATION  
IN THE EARLY COMMUNITY OF LUKE-ACTS**

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To Heather, my beloved wife.

And to Carel, for bearing my many burdens throughout this course of study.

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## PREFACE

This project could not have been, were it not for the support of my dear wife. Her encouragement and hard work made my many hours of research and writing possible—for that support, I am grateful, and forever will be.

Many lectures in the classroom and hours of conversation form the background to this thesis. Dr. Peter Gentry first propelled me to consider social justice from a biblical perspective through his M.Div. class on the Hebrew text of Isaiah. Dr. Jonathan Pennington challenged my conceptions of what the full entailments of the gospel were through his class on the Gospel according to Matthew. And Dr. Brian Vickers' Acts seminar provided me with the opportunity to first explore the community texts of Acts 2 and 4. As for conversation, Johnson Pang and Randall Breland proved especially fruitful interlocutors, stimulating my mind to consider the ways God has seen fit to manifest the glory of his own character in the church by the radical transformation of dead sinners into fruit producing saints, who live out their salvation in this world through their interactions with one another.

Ultimately, not one drop of ink would have made it to these pages were it not for Jesus' sustaining presence, salvific action, and my hope in him for the glorious restoration of all things.

Brandt Van Roekel

Louisville, Kentucky

May 2016

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I will argue that, in Luke-Acts, Luke intentionally describes the early Jewish-Christian community in accordance with Isaiah's prophecy for an ethical restoration of social justice in Israel. I intend to prove this thesis in the three major chapters of my project (with chapters 1 and 5 as my introduction and conclusion). In my second chapter I will argue that Isaiah's program of restoration includes a specific ethical element of social justice through the Davidic Messiah and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit for faithful Jews prior to the gentile nations coming to the restored kingdom. In my third chapter I will argue that Luke's presentation of Jesus accords with this Isaianic picture of a socially just Davidic king empowered by the Spirit, who works to bring social justice through his reign. My fourth chapter will focus on the events of Pentecost and Acts 2:42–47 with insight gathered from Acts 4:32–37. I will argue that Luke draws Isaianic themes together from his gospel to demonstrate that, in Acts, Jesus' exaltation and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit result in Isaiah's vision of a Jewish community restored to fruitfulness as a socially just society.

Restoration is a complex idea in the OT and includes the following elements: Israel's return to God in repentance, the liberation of Israel from pagan rule and the overthrow of Israel's enemies, Israel's re-possession of the land of Israel, the return of the diaspora to the land of Israel, the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple in splendor, the conversion of the nations to the worship of the God of Israel and their pilgrimage to the temple in Jerusalem, the reconstitution of Israel as an independent theocracy under the rule of a legitimate king of the line of David and a legitimate high priest of the line of

Zadok, and the supremacy of Israel in the world.<sup>1</sup>

Some, noting these elements are not all represented in the church in Acts, and observing the strong rejection of the Christian message by a Jewish audience, argue that Luke's narrative began with jubilation, but ends in tragedy (Note especially Acts 28:25–28).<sup>2</sup> Others, however, are far more positive regarding the restoration of Israel.<sup>3</sup> While I recognize the benefit of caution in arguing too vehemently for restoration in the book of Acts given large-scale Jewish rejection,<sup>4</sup> it is my contention that at least one specific element of restoration has begun to be realized in the early chapters of Acts—Acts portrays some within Israel turning to God in repentance and experiencing ethical transformation because of the outpouring of the Spirit such that they live out social justice in the community.

The most important data-set that I will use to support my thesis is the OT text

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<sup>1</sup>This list is a reproduction of the one proposed by Richard Bauckham. Richard Bauckham, *The Jewish World around the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 325.

<sup>2</sup>See Robert C. Tannehill, "Rejection by Jews and Turning to Gentiles: The Pattern of Paul's Mission in Acts," in *Luke-Acts and the Jewish People: Eight Critical Perspectives*, ed. Joseph B. Tyson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1988), 101. Tannehill argues that the "pathetic" ending of Acts 28 and the Isaiah quotations hold forth little hope for Israel other than that the "hope that the situation will change" through patient preaching. In an earlier article Tannehill writes about Luke's purpose in Luke-Acts as "guiding the readers to experience the story of Israel and its messiah as a tragic story." Robert C. Tannehill, "Israel in Luke-Acts: A Tragic Story," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104, no. 1 (March 1985): 74. So also P. W. L. Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City: New Testament Perspectives on Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 89.

<sup>3</sup>For example, Allan McNicol argues that Acts shows the restoration of the house of David through the building of an eschatological temple at Jerusalem. Allan J. McNicol, "Rebuilding the House of David: The Function of the Benedictus in Luke-Acts," *Restoration Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1998): 37. Similarly, A. J. Thompson seeks to persuade his readers that the hope of restoration in Luke is answered positively by the inauguration of the kingdom in Acts 1–2. Alan J. Thompson, *The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus: Luke's Account of God's Unfolding Plan* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2011), 47. Along a similar vein, Richard Bauckham writes, "In some sense the whole narrative from Luke 3 to Acts 28 is recounted as the fulfillment of the hopes of restoration expressed in Luke 1–2." Richard Bauckham, *The Jewish World around the New Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 352.

<sup>4</sup>Luke *does* portray large-scale rejection by the Jews in Acts. Moreover, Rom 11, though a difficult text, appears to speak of future hope for ethnic Israel. Still, in Luke's gospel, Jesus gives the parable of the mustard seed. Analogous to the kingdom, Jesus' parable speaks of the mustard seed beginning small, in insignificance, yet growing into a mighty tree. Similarly, Daniel's vision of the statue has a stone fall and begin growing into a mighty mountain (Dan 2:34, 44). For further defense of restoration in Luke-Acts, see Bauckham's discussion of the regathering of the tribes of the dispersion, the ingathering of Israel, and the extension of the kingdom to the Gentiles in Acts Bauckham, *The Jewish World around the New Testament*, 352–70.

of Isaiah. Though it is true that some would argue the OT does not form the background for the NT writers (or is severely limited as a helpful background source-text),<sup>5</sup> my thesis follows the example of Richard Hays, who demonstrates that the NT must be read as a text deeply (inter)connected with the Jewish Scripture that came before.<sup>6</sup> Helpfully, Hays provides a methodology of seven criteria for identifying intertextual allusions, or “echoes”<sup>7</sup>: (1) availability of the source text; (2) volume, or distinctive prominence; (3) recurrence; (4) thematic coherence; (5) historical plausibility; (6) correspondence with the text’s history of interpretation; and (7) satisfaction—does the proposed reading illuminate the text.<sup>8</sup> These guides help protect interpreters from abusing the concept of intertextuality. Therefore, I will adopt them as my own checks and balances for my thesis.<sup>9</sup>

A potential weakness regarding these criteria for my thesis is that number 6 is somewhat lacking for my proposal. However, some have argued, similarly, that ethical (or internal) restoration via the outpouring of the Holy Spirit may be seen in these

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<sup>5</sup>A previous generation of NT scholars overlooked the significant role the OT played in the writings of the NT authors. See for example, Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*; (New York: Scribner, 1951), 187–352; Adolf von Harnack, *Das Alte Testament in den Paulinischen Briefen und in den Paulinischen Gemeinden* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1928), 124–41; Rudolf Bultmann, “The Significance of the Old Testament for Christian Faith,” in *The Old Testament and Christian Faith: A Theological Discussion*, ed. Bernhard W. Anderson (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 31–32.

<sup>6</sup>Richard Hays proposes the idea of “intertextuality” for productive New Testament study and urges that “we should learn . . . the discipline of tuning our ears to the internal resonances of the biblical text.” Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 21. Hay’s exhortation is exactly what I aim to do in my own work. Cf. Kenneth Duncan Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts: Telling the History of God’s People Intertextually* (London: T & T Clark International, 2005), 21. See the objections to intertextuality in G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 32–36.

<sup>7</sup>Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 20–21. Though, I prefer to use “allusion” rather than “echo” because it is more suited to carry the connotation of authorial intent. I am arguing that Luke is *intentional* in his description of the early church and its relationship to Isaianic social justice.

<sup>8</sup>These criteria are helpful, but are not entirely objective. Hays recognizes this potential weakness, and communicates that ultimately the reader will necessarily make their own judgment regarding the validity of the observations made. *Ibid.*, 30–31.

<sup>9</sup>This being stated, Hays recognizes that there are only “shades of certainty” when using the above criteria. Still, the more of these criteria that receive check-marks, the more certain a reader may be that the proposed echo is valid. *Ibid.*, 32.

passages.<sup>10</sup> I only differ with these writers in that I hope to refine their observation further by demonstrating that a key element of this transformed community is Isaiah's vision of restoration social justice. It may be observed, moreover, that the terminology of social justice is not old, and historical interpreters of Luke-Acts may be forgiven for not using it. Hence, I maintain that an ideal reader would have been able to recognize the restoration of social justice in the early community to be consistent with Isaiah's hopes of restoration.

My proposal that Luke especially intertwines Isaiah's (rather than other potential OT authors) presentation of an ethical restoration of social justice throughout his narrative may be defended initially because of Isaiah's prominence in Luke-Acts.<sup>11</sup> There are 23 quotations from the OT in Luke's gospel. Six of these are unique to Luke (Luke 2:23, 24; 4:18–19; 22:37; 23:30, 46). Of these, three are from Isaiah (4:18–19; 22:37; 23:30). Thus 50% of the quotations Luke adds as his contribution to the synoptic gospels are Isaianic. In Acts there are five clear quotations from Isaiah: Isaiah 66:1–2a (Acts 7:49–50); Isaiah 53:7–8c (Acts 8:32–33); Isaiah 55:3 (Acts 13:34); Isaiah 49:6 (Acts 13:47) and Isaiah 6:9–11a (Acts 28:26–27),<sup>12</sup> demonstrating a continuing prominence of this OT source text. Moreover, of the 525 allusions presented in the NA26 text of the Greek text of Luke, the highest concentration of allusions are from Isaiah (84 in total).<sup>13</sup> Additionally, Luke often places his Isaiah quotations strategically in key

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<sup>10</sup>Max Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 334; Thompson, *The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus*, 134.

<sup>11</sup>Moreover, though an argument may be made for my thesis from other portions of the OT, my thesis is limited in length, and is therefore intentionally limited in scope.

<sup>12</sup>Koet writes, "Although Luke uses fewer quotations from Isaiah than Matthew, this does not indicate that Isaiah is less important for him. It is not simply the quantity of quotations that is important, but their quality. Luke weaves Isaiah tightly into the structure of his double work, quoting at *crucial* places within the narrative." Bart J. Koet, "Isaiah in Luke-Acts" in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and M. J. J. Menken (New York: T & T Clark, 2007), 80.

<sup>13</sup>This data is from Charles Kimball. The newer NA27 was not consulted by Kimball. See Charles Kimball, "Jesus' Exposition of Scripture in Luke 4:16-30: An Inquiry in Light of Jewish Hermeneutics," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 21, no. 3 (September 1994): 49.

structural locations: Isaiah 40:3–5 in Luke 3:4–6; Isaiah 61:1–2 in Luke 4:18–19; Isaiah 56:7 in Luke 19:46; Isaiah 53 in Luke 22:37; Isaiah 66:1–2 in Acts 7:48–49; Isaiah 55:3 in Acts 13:34; Isaiah 49:6 in Acts 13:47; Isaiah 6:9–10 in Acts 28:25–27.<sup>14</sup> We might also infer from narratives like that of the Ethiopian Eunuch that Luke understood difficult questions about Isaiah, further demonstrating his familiarity with the book: “Does the prophet speak of himself, or of another?” (Acts 8:34).<sup>15</sup> Evidently, then, though Luke presents himself as competent with the Old Testament as a whole, Isaiah appears to have been particularly prominent in his mind, and close to the tip of his pen.

With the foregoing discussion out of the way, I am now able to move into the body of my thesis where I will defend my claim that Luke intentionally describes the early Jewish-Christian community according to Isaiah’s anticipation for an ethical restoration of social justice in Israel

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<sup>14</sup>David Seccombe even confessed that as he studied the way Luke used Isaiah so prolifically, he was forced to question “how far Luke might have been influenced not only by certain texts in Isaiah, but also by wider themes.” David Seccombe, “Luke and Isaiah,” *New Testament Studies* 27, no. 2 (January 1981): 252.

<sup>15</sup>All quotations will be taken from the ESV, unless otherwise specified. However, I will often intersperse these English quotations with either Greek or Hebrew from the NA27, or BHS for added clarity.

CHAPTER 2  
ISAIAH: VISIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE  
RESTORATION

**Introduction**

In this chapter I hope to demonstrate that Isaiah’s narrative follows a key structure built around Yahweh’s people’s lack of social justice, Yahweh’s refining fire of judgment, and Yahweh’s plans for his people’s restoration to righteousness—especially evidenced by social justice—through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> I will argue that Isaiah’s vision of ethical, social justice restoration for Israel only occurs through the reign of the Davidic Messiah and outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This restoration of Israel precedes the gentile nations coming to the restored kingdom. The rest of my argument in chapters two and three will lean heavily on my arguments here.

**Social justice**

In order to focus the discussion of social justice in Isaiah, I will examine key passages where the hendiadys *מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה* is found.<sup>2</sup> In the Old Testament, this word-pair describes a particular ethic exercised at a social level. Moshe Weinfeld, in his excellent study, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel*, argues persuasively that this hendiadys is parallel to the Akkadian concept of “truth and equity.” Specifically, Weinfeld argues that

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<sup>1</sup>In fact, these observations are not so dissimilar to James Hamilton’s thesis for a central theme in the biblical narrative. “God’s glory in salvation through judgment” could be squeezed to fit my understanding of Isaiah’s outline, especially if it were granted that part of God’s manifest glory post-restoration will be his own socially just character displayed in the behavior of his people. See James M. Hamilton Jr., *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010).

<sup>2</sup>Watson describes a hendiadys as “the expression of one single but complex concept by using two separate words, usually nouns.” Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 324.

(a) the hendiadys “can refer to a character trait granted by God to the king,”<sup>3</sup> where what is granted benefits the king in ruling the people well (cf. Pss 72:1–2). (b) The hendiadys may express a social ideal as in Isaiah 16:5 where justice and righteousness are parallel with the Davidic throne’s אֲמָת and דִּקְוָה.<sup>4</sup> And, (c) the practical application of the term “refers to just dealing in the social sphere[.]”<sup>5</sup>

Examined individually, the word צְדָקָה differs from צְדָקָה in that the former is more concrete while the latter is more conceptual.<sup>6</sup> Still, both share the root idea of correctness, rightness.<sup>7</sup> As support for this claim, Weinfeld states, “מִשְׁפָּט is what needs to be done in a given situation if people and circumstances are to be restored to conformity with [צְדָקָה].”<sup>8</sup> Yet, he argues that, when מִשְׁפָּט is found in parallelism with דִּקְוָה,<sup>9</sup> the two terms צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט refer to more than accurate jurisprudence—they communicate merciful and kind actions on behalf of the poor and vulnerable in society.<sup>10</sup> Thus, social justice is Weinfeld’s preferred translation, and will be adopted in this paper as well.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Moshe Weinfeld, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 27.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 29.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 30.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 34.

<sup>7</sup>Francis Brown et al., *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996).

<sup>8</sup>Christopher J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), 257.

<sup>9</sup>Pss 33:5; 89:15; Prov 20:28; Isa 16:5; Jer 9:23; Mic 6:8 (cf. Hos 12:6; Ps 101:1).

<sup>10</sup>These just and righteous actions apply in the Old Testament to the common man (Ezek 18:5–13), but may be seen in highest concentration in the prophets as indictments against the leadership of the people, whose particular responsibility it was to enact social justice in their wise and equitable rule. Weinfeld, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel*, 44.

<sup>11</sup>This term is, perhaps, cumbersome in that I do not mean to say that every modern conception of social justice is found in the pages of the book of Isaiah. Rather, what I mean to communicate by employing this term is the way Yahweh’s own gracious and righteous character ought to be manifested in the social (horizontal rather than vertical) relationships between his creatures. This sort of social justice will be consistent with the revealed law of Yahweh found in

The hendiadys מְשֻׁפֵּט וְצִדְקָה is prominent in the book of Isaiah, often occurring “broken” over two, conjoined lines of poetry—a characteristic of Hebrew parallelism.<sup>12</sup> This hendiadys is found only in the first (1–39) and last (56–66) sections of the book. Because this thesis is limited in scope, I will only discuss limited instances of the hendiadys in order to sufficiently demonstrate the trajectory of the narrative of social justice in the book. In my discussion of these passages, I will seek to demonstrate that Weinfeld’s definition of “social justice” is accurate within the various contexts in which it is used.<sup>13</sup>

### Some Structural Observations

For this chapter, it will be helpful to begin with some sort of structure to aid in understanding the overarching narrative of Isaiah. The Isaianic narrative<sup>14</sup> may be expressed as one of indictment, judgment, and restoration: particularly the restoration of

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Torah.

<sup>12</sup>This construction, and other pairs of words, were often broken up over lines of poetry. Watson writes of this practice as follows: “This must have been a stand-by technique in improvising verse. A secondary effect was that the produce tended to evoke the original phrase and its associations.” Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 329–30. I will refer to any hendiadys that spans parallel lines of Hebrew poetry as a broken hendiadys.

<sup>13</sup>Leclerc observes that the hendiadys occurs particularly when a concern for social justice is predominant. He notes, moreover, with Gentry and Oswalt, that the hendiadys occurs only in the first and last sections of the book of Isaiah. Thomas L. Leclerc, *Yahweh Is Exalted in Justice: Solidarity and Conflict in Isaiah* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 160; Peter J. Gentry, “Isaiah & Social Justice,” *Midwestern Journal of Theology* 12, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 1–16; John N. Oswalt, “Righteousness in Isaiah: A Study of the Function of Chapters 56-66 in the Present Structure of the Book,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, (Leiden: E J Brill, 1997), 1:177–91.

The occurrences of the hendiadys, broken, or otherwise, are found in: Isa 1:21, 1:27, 5:7, 5:16, 9:6(7), 11:4, 16:5, 26:9, 28:17, 32:1, 32:16, 33:5, 51:5, 56:1, 58:2(2x), 59:4, 59:9, 59:14. The occurrences in 11:4, 51:5, and 59:4 are verbal forms of the root שָׁפַט. Though Leclerc does not list 51:5 in his study of justice in Isaiah, Gentry considers it equally legitimate to Leclerc’s recognition of the occurrence in 11:4. Gentry, “Isaiah & Social Justice,” 6.

<sup>14</sup>By narrative, I do not mean to say that Isaiah is a narrative. It is not. Yet, it is my operating assumption that Isaiah was the single author of the book and organized its material according to a specific progression, or unfolding of the vision. This narrative-like progression may be seen in the way that he prophesies indictment, judgment, and restoration, as if these things had taken place. Thus, for lack of a better word, I will refer to this unfolding progression as narrative at points throughout my thesis.

the holy city, Zion, through the emergence of a holy remnant.<sup>15</sup>

This pattern may be seen, perhaps most clearly, through the metaphor of a plant, employed judiciously throughout the book. In 6:13 Yahweh declares the reason for Isaiah's commissioning in a programmatic chapter for the book as a whole in response to Isaiah's question עֲדָר־מָתִי אֲדַנִּי? Yahweh answers,

Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, and the LORD removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled. The holy seed is its stump. (Isa 6:12–13)

God's people will be burnt again and again because of their sin, the same way an oak tree is burnt when felled, in order to rid the land of the stock. Yet, that stump, when reduced to nothing, will be precisely the stalk Yahweh desires for his restoration project. This plant metaphor is employed again in the central portion of the book, describing the remnant that God will spare from judgment by the hand of foreign oppressors: "And the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this" (Isa 37: 31). Then, again, in Isaiah 61:3, the servant of the Lord announces his project of restoration and states the result of that work for the holy city: "That they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified."<sup>16</sup> These quotations show that Isaiah's use of various plant metaphors describe Yahweh's judgment, and the resulting holy remnant that will grow up into mighty fruitfulness as "oaks of righteousness" (cf. Isa 5, 27).

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<sup>15</sup>Barry Webb's thesis is that the transformation of Zion forms the central motif of the book of Isaiah. Barry Webb, "Zion in Transformation: A Literary Approach to Isaiah," in *Bible in Three Dimensions* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 65–84.

<sup>16</sup>Barry Webb argues that not only the plant metaphor, but also the birth and metal refining metaphors communicate the same idea of restoration of a holy remnant through judgment: refining (Isa 1:24–26; 48:10–11), birth (cf. Isa 7:14; 66:7–9). See Webb, "Zion in Transformation," 82–84.

The various themes of judgment and restoration overlap with the theme of “righteousness” in the book. In the first section, Isaiah 1–39, “righteousness” often occurs with the word “justice” (thus, forming the hendiadys described above) and communicates the idea of an ethical righteousness lived out on the social plane—Oswalt defines the hendiadys, “Living according to God’s character and demands.”<sup>17</sup> In this section of the book, righteousness is often used in the context of an indictment against Israel for their immoral behavior (e.g., Isa 1:21–23).<sup>18</sup> For Israel to be saved, this section articulates that they need to evidence right moral actions (“If you are willing and obedient you shall eat the good of the land” Isa 1:19). A prime example of the need for right moral actions expressed through the hendiadys is Isaiah 28:16–17:

Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: “Whoever believes will not be in haste.” And I will make טִשְׁפֹּת the line, and צִדְקָה the plumb line; and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter.

By making “justice the line, and righteousness the plumb line,” Yahweh is using the language of new construction on both the horizontal and vertical axes spatially (טִשְׁפֹּת and צִדְקָה, respectively) to express the standard by which his new restoration city shall be built. Whatever does not measure up to social justice will be destroyed (cf. “hail” and “water” in v. 17). Not only does Isaiah communicate that eschatological restoration will include social justice, social justice *must* exist for eschatological restoration to happen.

On the other hand, the middle section of the book, chapters 40–55, use

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<sup>17</sup>Oswalt, “Righteousness in Isaiah,” 179.

<sup>18</sup>See Gentry’s exposition of holiness in Isa 6 in Peter Gentry “The Meaning of ‘Holy’ in the Old Testament,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 170, no. 680 (October 1, 2013): 409–14. Gentry argues that Isaiah 5 is the foil for Yahweh’s holiness proclaimed in chap 6. Isa 5 is an indictment against Israel for their lack of social justice, while v. 16, “But the LORD of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness,” stands to demonstrate Yahweh as righteous and just, specifically in regard to social justice. Chapter 6 follows as an exposition of God’s holy character. Also, Christopher J. H. Wright argues that the social realities of justice and righteousness are bound up with the very reason Yahweh saved Israel—he desired them to reflect his own character in their lives together. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics*, 48–75; 253–80.

righteousness, not in a moral or ethical sense,<sup>19</sup> but as a reference to the saving righteousness of God.<sup>20</sup> Look, for example, at the way that God’s creational goodness accompanies the parallelism of “salvation” and “righteousness” in 45:8: “Shower, O heaven, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit; let the earth cause them both to sprout; I the LORD have created it.”<sup>21</sup> For much of Isaiah 40–55, the action recommended to the people also differs from the first and final sections of the book. In this section, dependence upon Yahweh, waiting for him to act in salvation (not looking for other means of salvation) is the morally obligatory action (Isa 51:12–13), as opposed to the exhortation to do justice and righteousness in the first.<sup>22</sup>

Our discussion of righteousness in the middle section of the Isaianic narrative would be incomplete without acknowledging the role of the servant figure. Certainly

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<sup>19</sup>I am indebted to the observations of John N. Oswalt for much of this section, though my own study of the word-pair “justice and righteousness” in Isaiah led to similar conclusions. Still, Oswalt is appropriately reluctant to declare a hard a fast distinction of usage in each of the three sections. Rather, he proposes that these observations about the use of the word “righteousness” are true *in general*, with exceptions. Still, his observations are helpful for my thesis as they tie “righteousness” to the theme of indictment, destruction, and restoration discussed above. Oswalt, “Righteousness in Isaiah,” 180.

<sup>20</sup>So, John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: 40–66*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 187. This use of righteousness accords with the way righteousness is often used alone—doing what is right. For Yahweh, doing what is right accords with salvation.

<sup>21</sup>Also compare the other four instances where “righteousness” is paired with “salvation” rather than justice in this section (salvation and justice are not used as a hendiadys at all in chapters 40–55): Isa 46:13; 51:5, 6, 8. I am, again, indebted to Oswalt for this observation, Oswalt, “Righteousness in Isaiah,” 186.

<sup>22</sup>The first thirty-nine chapters speak to a people who have not yet gone into exile, and who ought to repent and do righteousness in order to avoid judgment. The middle chaps. (40–55), communicate the best line of action to a people who are in exile—wait for Yahweh’s (righteous) salvation. Similarly, *ibid.*, 181.

This diversity of assumed audience brings to hand the discussion of Isaianic authorship—how could Isaiah have predicted the reality of the exile and prophesied of things that would happen in the future? Isaiah declares the difference between Yahweh and the Babylonian gods in terms of Yahweh’s ability to declare the end from the beginning (Isa 46:9). It is a presupposition of Scripture that Yahweh is able to cause his prophets to prophesy about the future. Those who deny Isaianic authorship of the entire book typically do so not because of the weight of textual data or scholarly proof, but because it is unconscionable for them to believe Isaiah saw visions of the future. So, R. Reed Lessing, *Isaiah 40–55*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Pub., 2011), 20.

Yahweh's saving hand acting righteously is central in these chapters, but getting the people out of Babylon is not the full scope of the salvation Yahweh has in mind. For the fullness of his redemptive plan he also plans to get Babylon out of the people.<sup>23</sup> The following literary structure of chapters 40–55 demonstrates the central role forgiveness and atonement play in Yahweh's project of redemption:

A<sup>1</sup>. Universal Consolation 40:1–42:17

1. The Consolation of Israel 40:1–42:17
2. The Consolation of the Gentiles 41:21–42:17

B<sup>1</sup>. Promises of Redemption 42:18–44:23

1. Release 42:18–43:21
2. Forgiveness 43:22–44:23

B<sup>2</sup>. Agents of Redemption 44:24–53:12

1. Cyrus: Liberation 44:24–48:22
2. Servant: Atonement 49:1–53:12

A<sup>2</sup>. Universal Proclamation 54:1–55:13

1. The Call to Zion 54:1–17
2. The Call to the World 55:1–13<sup>24</sup>

Thus, even in the middle section of the book, where righteousness and salvation are used in nearly synonymous ways and the servant figure stands prominent, salvation includes atonement for sin—Isaiah's narrative of indictment, judgment, and restoration holds forth hope for a new kind of people as a result of the ministry of the servant.

Finally, in the third section (chapters 56–66), the hendiadys is resumed, but

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<sup>23</sup>I am indebted to Dr. Peter Gentry for this pithy phrase, but I am sure its origin precedes him.

<sup>24</sup>Adapted from Peter Gentry's literary analysis in his excellent article: Peter J. Gentry, "Daniel's Seventy Weeks and the New Exodus," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 14, no. 1 (2010): 31.

with some notable differences from chapters 1–39. For the first time since 33:5 Isaiah opens the third section of the book with the hendiadys *מְשֻׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה*, but with the added element *יְשׁוּעָתִי* included, following *כִּי*, which gives the reason for the action: “Keep *מְשֻׁפָּט*, and do *צִדְקָה*, for soon *יְשׁוּעָתִי* will come, and my *צִדְקָה* be revealed” (Isa 56:1). Both *מְשֻׁפָּט* and *צִדְקָה* are paralleled as well as *צִדְקָה* and *יְשׁוּעָה*. Unlike chapters 1–39, it is not the coming destruction that motivates morally righteous, socially just behavior, but impending salvation.

Oswalt writes that in 56–66 “twelve of the twenty-three occurrences [of righteousness] have to do with the character of the lives of the people of God”<sup>25</sup> unlike the middle section (chaps. 40–55), where only three such occasions may be found. This sectional division of the use of the word “righteousness” helps us to see that the central question dealt with in 56–66 has to do with the righteous character of the people. They maintain they are righteous, but Yahweh exposes their false righteousness: “I will declare your righteousness and your deeds, but they will not profit you” (Isa 57:12); “Yet they seek me daily and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that did *צִדְקָה* and did not forsake the *מְשֻׁפָּת* of their God” (Isa 58:2); “You meet him who joyfully works righteousness . . . Behold, you were angry, and we sinned; in our sins we have been a long time, but we were saved” (Isa 64:5).<sup>26</sup> The occurrences of the broken hendiadys *מְשֻׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה* demonstrate that social justice is again central to the righteousness Yahweh speaks of.

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<sup>25</sup>Oswalt, “Righteousness in Isaiah,” 189.

<sup>26</sup>Isa 64:5, my translation. This text is troublesome to translate. The chief difficulties are *בהם עולם* and the subsequent *weyiqtol*. I have chosen to translate the *weyiqtol* in the indicative since there is no textual indication that it should be interrogative. Further, I have taken as adversative the *waw* of the *weyiqtol*. I think this reading makes the best sense of the verse, and it fits contextually with the narrative of the book: this verse, thus translated, is a microcosm of Israel’s history, “Behold! You were angry, and we sinned, we have been sinful since ancient times, but we were saved.” The verse is confessional, holding out hope in Yahweh’s salvation while recognizing the reality that their past righteousness is “menstrual rags” (vs. 6). They are hopelessly unclean and rely completely on Yahweh’s salvation; they are needy of righteousness, but they rely on the past gracious action of Yahweh in salvation. For a thorough description of the possible translations of this difficult verse, see Jan De Waard, *A Handbook on Isaiah* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 219.

Yet even though the nation lacks righteousness on its own, God will save them and will make them righteous: “Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard” (Isa 58:8); “Instead of bronze I will bring gold, and instead of iron I will bring silver; instead of wood, bronze, instead of stones, iron. I will make your overseers peace and your taskmasters righteousness” (Isa 60:17); “Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I might be glorified” (Isa 60:21); “To grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified” (Isa 61:3); “For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the LORD GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations” (Isa 61:11). These texts demonstrate that the language of restoration in 56–66 includes more than a physical restoration—it includes a restoration of righteousness in the community.

This brief discussion of both the key metaphors in the book of Isaiah (e.g., planting) and the progression of the righteousness theme in the three sections of Isaiah provide a structure of indictment (1–39: recommended action of social justice), judgment (40–55: recommended action of reliance on Yahweh), and salvation (56–66: Yahweh intercedes and brings both salvation and restoration of social justice to the people).

Below, I will examine Isaiah’s use of the social justice motif in key texts to further demonstrate that the restoration to righteousness in the latter part of Isaiah includes social justice as a key component.

### **Isaiah 1:21**

This text holds the first occurrence of the word pair in the book, “How the

faithful city has become a whore, she who was full of **מִשְׁפָּט**! **צְדָקָה** lodged in her, but now murderers.” These words are an indictment against sinful Judah. The context reveals, in this prominent section of the book, that it is social sins which grieve Yahweh.

In the context, Isaiah goes so far as to compare the people with Sodom and Gomorrah (Isa 1:10). Naming the people “Sodom” and “Gomorrah” may emphasize the lack of social justice Yahweh is concerned about. In Genesis 18, the Sodom and Gomorrah story occurs on the wings of the angelic news, brought to Abraham and Sarah, that they would have a son. Then, climactically, they are told,

The LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing **צְדָקָה** and **מִשְׁפָּט**, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.”<sup>27</sup> (Gen. 18:18-19)

Note the juxtaposition: Yahweh reveals that he has chosen Abraham and his family so that they might follow the LORD by doing **מִשְׁפָּט וְצְדָקָה**—social justice. Then, immediately afterward, Yahweh declares his intention to examine the situation in Sodom: “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave.” (Gen 18:21). The word for “outcry” is **זַעֲקָה**. **זַעֲקָה** is a different spelling of **צַעֲקָה** but shares the same meaning.<sup>27</sup> The word **צַעֲקָה** occurs in Exodus 14:10 where the people saw Pharaoh marching toward them and they “cried out” to Yahweh for deliverance. It is also used of Abel’s blood in Genesis 4:10, “crying out” from the ground. The form of the word occurring with the *zayin* occurs in Proverbs 21:13 in reference to those who close their ears to the “cry of the poor.” Both words receive similar definitions: **צַעֲקָה** 1. “to shout, call out” 2. “to shout (for help, for deliverance),” while **זַעֲקָה** is defined as a

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<sup>27</sup> *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* states that **זַעֲקָה** “is probably a dialect by-form of the word [**צַעֲקָה**].” Ludwig Köhler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (New York: Brill, 1994)., s.v. “**צַעֲקָה**.”

“plaintive cry, cry for help.”<sup>28</sup> What the usages have in common is a crying out for deliverance from wrong—the voice of the oppressed, crying out for rescue.

Yahweh’s concern is that these two utterly wicked cities had caused an outcry to break forth from those they wronged; social injustice filled their borders. But why is this text juxtaposed with Genesis 18:19? Likely, Genesis 18:19 is juxtaposed with the Sodom and Gomorrah narrative to show Yahweh’s desire for Abraham’s family to stand in stark relief to the wickedness of these cities, specifically by the way they lived out their covenant lives before God in social justice.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, in 1:10, when Isaiah accuses Judah of being “rulers of Sodom . . . people of Gomorrah,” he is including in Yahweh’s indictment of their wickedness social injustices. Verse 17 confirms this: “Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause.” Also, verses 21–23 lament that the city’s lack of justice and righteousness reveals itself in it becoming a den of murderers (21) that lacks justice for the marginalized (23).

Thus, already from the first chapter of the book, there is an emphasis on the necessity of social justice (justice and righteousness) within the framework of indictment, destruction, and restoration in Isaiah.

## Isaiah 5

Isaiah 5 has two occurrences of the word pair in parallel lines of poetry: (1) “For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid. s.v. “זעק.”

<sup>29</sup>See also, Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis = Be-Reshit: The Traditional Hebrew Text with New JPS Translation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 132. Sarna comments that “the sin of Sodom, then, is heinous moral and social corruption, an arrogant disregard of basic human rights, a cynical insensitivity to the sufferings of others.” Furthermore, Ezekiel identifies the sin of Sodom as a specific social sin’s against the poor and needy (Ezek 16:49). Ezekiel’s usage is a helpful corrective to those who would like to reduce the sin of Sodom to sodomy, though that particular sin was evidenced in the cities (Gen 19:5). For a discussion of the history of interpretation of Sodom’s sin, see Edward Noort and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds., *Sodom’s Sin: Genesis 18-19 and Its Interpretation* (Boston: Brill, 2004). So also, Weinfeld, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel*, 30.

his pleasant planting; and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, an outcry” (Isa 5:7); (2) “But the LORD of hosts is exalted in justice and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness” (Isa 5:16).

The occurrence in Isaiah 5:7 comes at the end of the parable of the vineyard, and is parallel with 5:2: “He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes” (Isa 5:2).<sup>30</sup> The parallelism of the vineyard parable may be seen below:

Verse 1: Introduction:

Verse 2: Looks for good grapes, but produced bad grapes.

Verse 3: Direct address, “What more could I have done?”

Verse 4: What more was there to *do* לְעֵשׂוֹת for לְכַרְמִי.

Verse 5: This is what I will *do* עָשָׂה to לְכַרְמִי.

Verse 6: Yahweh promises destruction of the vineyard.

Verse 7: I looked for מְשֻׁפָּח but behold מְשֻׁפָּח “bloodshed”<sup>31</sup> לְצִדְקָה  
but behold צַעֲקָה “a plaintive cry for help.”

Verses 2 and 7 are parallel in that Yahweh looks for something that should be there, but finds the opposite. Verses 3 and 6 are parallel in that they reference what Yahweh did positively for the vineyard in verse 3 and communicate what he will do negatively to the vineyard in verse 6. Verses 4 and 5 are parallel also: verse 4 communicates Yahweh’s question about what more he could have possibly done for the

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<sup>30</sup>Williams does a good job demonstrating that the poem repeatedly employs a literary device that causes the reader to expect something, but then to have the opposite revealed. This reversal of expectation, writes Williams, highlights the point of the poem: Yahweh’s disappointment with the outcome of his people. Gary R. Williams, “Frustrated Expectations in Isaiah 5:1-7: A Literary Interpretation,” *Vetus Testamentum* 35, no. 4 (October 1985): 459–65.

<sup>31</sup>*The Hebrew Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* notes the word play with this word, where the definition may be rendered “legal infringement” in parallelism with מְשֻׁפָּח a “legal pronouncement.” The concrete definition is “bloodshed,” however. Köhler et al., *The Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, s.v. “מְשֻׁפָּח.”

vineyard. It also describes what the vineyard “did” וַיַּעַשׂ for Yahweh—it produced wild grapes. Verse 5 is Yahweh’s statement regarding his retribution, what he will *do* to his vineyard.

Hence, the course of action that Yahweh will take with his people, the center of the chiasm (vv. 4, 5), depends on the parallelism of verses 2 and 7 that demonstrate that the fruit Yahweh looked for from the people was מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה. Because מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה occurs in the final verse of the parable, and is structured to parallel the rotten grapes of verse 2, it stands as a sort of punch-line—Israel’s rottenness is their lack of social justice.

Notice the parallelism each of these words has in verse 7: “justice” with “bloodshed” and righteousness with “a plaintive cry for help,” the same word describing what Yahweh heard from Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 18:20. The parallel structure of verse 7 functions as the climax to the parable, demonstrating that the opposite of מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה is bloodshed and cries for deliverance. Thus, in this key section of the book, Yahweh has spoken in no uncertain terms that the heart of his problem with Israel is their failure to live out their covenant purpose in relationship with him. They have failed to bear fruit. They have failed to be socially just.

The following section (Isa 5:8–23), describes the moral decay of decadent Israel and Judah: “Woe to those who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is no more room, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land” (Isa 5:8).<sup>32</sup> This verse describes an abuse of land ownership in Israel as prescribed in Leviticus 25:23–28. In Israel, the land was Yahweh’s. Property could be bought and sold, but there was legislation that stated that on the fiftieth year (Jubilee) the land must return to its rightful family owners. In this way, care was taken so that families would not be

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<sup>32</sup>Oswalt writes, “Isaiah accuses the landgrabbers of wanting to possess everything in sight until they could live by themselves in their own little world.” John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 159.

impoverished permanently. However, adding house to house by those who had the means to do so indicates an abuse of this system. Those who were the rightful heirs of the land had been oppressed, likely sold into servitude of the wealthy land-owners.<sup>33</sup>

The decadence of morning drinking and leisure is damningly described in another of the woes in the passage: “Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may run after strong drink, who tarry late into the evening as wine inflames them!” (Isa 5:11). “Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink” (Isa 5:22). This decay led to a lack of justice, and the oppression of the innocent: “[Heroes at drinking wine] who acquit the guilty for a bribe, and deprive the innocent of his right!” (Isa 5:23).

The “bribe” in verse 23 helps us to see that the wealthy ruling society is particularly indicted in this passage. They would have been the ones to occupy positions of leadership in the community as well as the only ones likely to have been able to afford a bribe sufficient to acquit a guilty party. Drinking fits into this context because it was the wealthy who were able to be at leisure.<sup>34</sup> The connection between injustice and wine can

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<sup>33</sup>Leclerc writes, “The economic and social situation this passage presumes points to the breakdown of traditional systems of property ownership. While the tribal period was characterized by clan ownership, economic and social conditions were merging that favored individual ownership . . . . Two social factors contributed to this transformation: the monarch and urbanization. On the one hand, land acquisition undertaken by the crown, either corruptly (for example, Naboth’s vineyard, 1 Kgs 21) or legally (for example, through the confiscation of the estates, fields, vineyards, and orchards of traitors or other criminals), made it possible to bestow land grants on favored ‘servants of the king.’ In this way, a man’s inherited patrimony could be augmented by a royal grant (1 Sam 8:14–15). The recipient of this royal largess would live in the capital city and was expected to eat at the king’s table, all the while enjoying the produce of his land holdings. Thus, important officials and nobles, especially those who had ingratiated themselves to people in power, were well placed to acquire, by both illegal and legal means, the property of those vulnerable to oppression.” Leclerc goes on to describe the mechanisms of interest abuse and divesting of the socially weak. All this was, “Presumably done according to the laws of the marketplace and by statute, it [was] all strictly legal—but utterly immoral. This is a powerful demonstration of the parable of the vineyard at work: the outward form of the land acquisition is all legal but perfectly corrupt—the productive harvest upon closer inspection is rotten.” Leclerc, *Yahweh Is Exalted in Justice*, 59–60.

<sup>34</sup>Bernhard Lang writes that these wealthy landowners “live parasitically at the expense of the working class and [do] nothing but feast night and day.” These feasts would have included music and every luxury available to the elite of that day, all at the expense of the ruled class, who were often tenant farmers enslaved by their interest payments. Bernhard Lang, “The Social Organization of Peasant Poverty in Biblical Israel,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Sheffield*, no. 24 (1982): 55, 56–57.

be seen in Proverbs 31:4–5 where Lemuel is exhorted not to pervert justice by giving himself to strong drink. Ultimately, excessive leisure led to justice becoming a joke.<sup>35</sup>

Verses 13–17 then unpack the punishment the people will reap for their lack of fruitfulness: they will go into exile—they will face destruction. The second occurrence of the hendiadys is found in verse 16: “Man is humbled, and each one is brought low, and the eyes of the haughty are brought low. But the LORD of hosts is exalted in *טָפַחַת* and the Holy God shows himself holy in *קִדְקִדַּחַת*” (Isa 5:15–16).

Verses 15–16 stands at the center of this section, communicating the lack of social justice in Israel. This emphatic juxtaposition of righteous and just Yahweh versus his socially unjust people indicates that Yahweh, the “Holy God,” is particularly exalted and sanctified by the establishment of social justice: In fact, verse 16 is connected to verse 7 in that *קִדְקִדַּחַת* *טָפַחַת* stand both as the standard by which God’s people are judged (v. 7), as well as the criteria by which God is exalted and sanctified (v. 16).<sup>36</sup> In the context of verse 16, what distinguishes Yahweh from humanity is his own commitment to these principles. He does not waver from them. The seriousness of the indictment is therefore highlighted—Yahweh would be seen to be who he is in *קִדְקִדַּחַת* *טָפַחַת* if his people lived out these character traits “through the enactment of a just social order, the precise remedy to the conditions described throughout 5:8–24,” as Leclerc writes.<sup>37</sup> However, the “Holy God” is impugned instead by the failure of his people to show forth

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<sup>35</sup>For more on the oppression of the weak and downcast by the decadent ruling class in this passage, see H. G. M. Williamson, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 1–5*, International Critical Commentary (London: T & T Clark, 2014), 393; Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, 165.

<sup>36</sup>So, Leclerc, *Yahweh Is Exalted in Justice*, 61.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 62. Leclerc also writes that “it is no surprise that YHWH expects the people to act with justice (Isa 5:7; cf. also Isa 1:21–28), or that YHWH requires just dealings in society. It would seem enough to say that God finds it acceptable (for example, Isa 56:7; 58:5; 60:7) or is satisfied (for example, Isa 56:4; 62:4) when obligations are fulfilled and divine expectations are met. But this verse asserts more: that YHWH is *exalted* and *sanctified* by acts of social justice . . . *the implication is that acts of social justice have the same effect as hymns and sacrifices of praise*” (emphasis added). Ibid. 167.

his מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה.<sup>38</sup> Isaiah 5, therefore, communicates that social justice stands at the very heart of Yahweh’s displeasure with the people.

### **Isaiah 9:7; 11:4**

These passages all use מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה to speak of a righteous king whose rule looks nothing like the current unrighteous and unjust rulers of Israel and Judah. Yahweh’s answer to Israel and Judah’s eighth century evil is to cause Isaiah to prophecy regarding the coming rule of a king who descends from David: “Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with מִשְׁפָּט and with צִדְקָה from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this” (Isa 9:7).

Weinfeld writes that one of the reasons the lack of social justice within Israel’s leadership was so egregious was because “the establishment of a just society was the responsibility of the king.”<sup>39</sup> This responsibility was a reality, both in Israel, and the Ancient East. For Israel’s kings, Deuteronomy 17:14–20 was a charter for them to follow in their exercise of authority over the people.<sup>40</sup> The king was required to write out a copy of the Torah for himself and to read it “all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes” (Deut 17:19). Furthermore, Daniel Block insightfully comments, “Whereas other kings were viewed as administrators of justice, the primary role of Israelite kings was to embody the divinely revealed standard of covenantal justice.”<sup>41</sup> This justice they were to assimilate through

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 171.

<sup>39</sup>Weinfeld, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel*, 45.

<sup>40</sup>Even Israel’s desire for a king to rule them may hint at a social justice. Daniel Block writes that one of the major motivators for a community to desire a king was so that justice and righteousness would be defended in the land. Daniel Isaac Block, *Deuteronomy*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 417.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 421.

their constant interaction with the revelation of Yahweh to them through Torah. Hence, at the highpoint of Israel's history, when David ascended the throne, Scripture attests, "And David administered *מִשְׁפָּט* and *צְדָקָה* to all his people." The King was responsible for establishing justice in the land, and Scripture presents David as establishing justice and righteousness as a good king.

Somewhat analogous to the responsibility of Israelite kings, other kings in the Ancient East used their ascension to the throne to establish justice and equity in the land. For example, Hammurabi says in the prologue of his law code that its purpose is so that the strong do not oppress the weak.<sup>42</sup> The king would establish justice both negatively—by punishing the oppressor—and positively by canceling debts and setting captives free. This establishment of justice can be seen in various statements to such effect in Mesopotamia as well as in Egypt. For example, the Egyptian Pharaoh Haremheb states in the beginning of his edict that he is both establishing justice and destroying the unjust oppressor.<sup>43</sup>

A king reigning with righteousness and justice was the ideal, but Israel and Judah had strayed far from God's commands in Isaiah's day. Still, the description of the king in Isaiah 9:7 gives hope; Yahweh would again place someone on the throne of Israel who would rule as David did, in justice and righteousness, consistent with the revealed will of Yahweh. He would be just, and his rule would bring peace.

Isaiah 11:1–4 also describes a messianic kingly figure ruling with social justice. However, this time the Spirit of Yahweh empowers him for his rule:

And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD [Deut 17]. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, but with

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<sup>42</sup>Weinfeld cites more data from Mesopotamia as well. See Weinfeld, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel*, 48.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, 50.

צִדְקָה he shall שִׁפְתֵי the poor, and decide with equity [מִישׁוֹר]<sup>44</sup> for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked (Isa 11:1b–4).

This king, like the kings of the ancient world, establishes justice both positively, by his just judgments on behalf of the oppressed, and also negatively, by punishing the oppressors.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, the Messianic king described by Isaiah will be a Davidic descendent who will establish justice and righteousness as a key component of his imperium.

Empowering him for his rule, the Spirit of Yahweh will be upon him.

### Isaiah 32

Isaiah 32 is located after several chapters impugning the stupidity of foolish leaders (chapters 28–31). Now, in chapter 32, Isaiah enlightens his audience regarding the rule of good leaders who act wisely. Moreover, he imagines a day when these good rulers will reign and the foolishness of the foolish is exposed for what it is (Isa 32:5). The context for these statements are the preceding chapters where Isaiah warned about foolishly following evil leaders and going down to Egypt for safety in the face of coming destruction.<sup>46</sup> There are two related occurrences of the hendiadys in this chapter—one in 31:1 and the other in 32:16.

The chapter begins, “Behold, a king will reign in צִדְקָה, and princes will rule in מְשֹׁפֵט. Each will be like a hiding place from the wind, a shelter from the storm, like streams of water in a dry place, like the shade of a great rock in a weary land” (Isa 32:1–

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<sup>44</sup>This is the Hebrew cognate for the Akkadian *mīšarum* used to describe the Akkadian King’s equitable rule. Weinfeld argues specifically that this Akkadian concept means, “Walking in the path of *kittum mīšarum* . . . the establishment of social equity, i.e., improving the status of the poor and the weak in society through a series of regulations which prevent oppression.” In Weinfeld’s argument, *mīšarum* is carefully linked with justice and righteousness in Israel. In the present discussion of Isaiah 11, it appears that both the Hebrew cognate מִישׁוֹר and מְשֹׁפֵט and צִדְקָה are also linked, further underscoring the responsibility of the king in bringing justice to his domain. *Ibid.*, 33–39.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. Isa 16:5.

<sup>46</sup>So, John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah: 1–33*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), 484; Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, 581.

2). Note the way that the king and his rulers' reign is first described with the social justice hendiadys (verse 1), then with the imagery of “hiding place,” “shelter,” “streams of water in a dry place,” and “shade.”<sup>47</sup> Storm and heat could be life-threatening in the land of Israel and are employed as metaphors of the dangers the people faced. Rising up in their stead, the righteous rulers establish security by their justice and righteousness for those threatened from oppressors. Thus, this verse describes a government that will prioritize justice and protection of the weak.<sup>48</sup>

The metaphor “streams of water in a dry place” describes the rulers' just, righteous, and protective rule as life-giving. The anticipated end of streams of water in dry places is abundance.<sup>49</sup> The language of abundance is especially intriguing when we consider the following context: After instructing his readers about wisdom and foolishness in light of wise and foolish leaders (Isa 32:1–8), Isaiah warns “complacent women” of coming disaster—the foolishness of their allegiance to foolish kings will bring destruction (Isa 32:9–14) upon them. The warning describes desolation with the language of unfruitfulness (Isa 32:10, 12, 13)—verse 14 describes an utterly desolated and unfruitful country.

The restoration reversal, post-destruction, only comes with the Spirit: “[All this will be the case until] the Spirit is poured upon us from on high and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field and the fruitful field is deemed a forest” (Isa 32:15). The result of the Spirit-outpouring will be *מְשֻׁבֵּט* and *צִדְקָה*: “Then *מְשֻׁבֵּט* will dwell in the wilderness, and *צִדְקָה* abide in the fruitful field, And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever” (Isa 32:16–17).

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<sup>47</sup>These images are also used elsewhere in the book: shade from the sun's heat (Isa 4:6; 25:5), shelter from the storm (Isa 4:6; 16:4; 25:4; 28:15, 17; 30:2–3), and streams of water (Isa 30:25).

<sup>48</sup>John Goldingay, *Isaiah*, International Critical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001), 3:180.

<sup>49</sup>Watts writes that the rulers are “symbols of security and vital prosperity.” Watts, *Isaiah: 1–33*, 483.

The imagery of fruitfulness and fruitlessness, in a parallel structure, is key to Isaiah 32: (A) Fruitfulness: the rulers are described as a shelter and a stream, bringing security and fruitfulness/prosperity with their reign of justice and righteousness (Isa 32:1–2). (B) Fruitlessness: the warning to the foolish ones makes use of the language of desolation through metaphors of fruitlessness including the language of “grape harvest” (Isa 32:10), a “fruitful vine” (Isa 32:12), and “the soil of my people” (Isa 32:13). Finally, (A’) in 32:15, the passage returns to the metaphor of fruitfulness with which it began in verse 1—but instead of a flowing stream, it is the poured out Spirit that brings fruitfulness (Isa 32:15). Just as the king and princes ruled in justice and righteousness, so too, the result of the Spirit’s outpouring is justice and righteousness. The Spirit, therefore, must be connected to the righteous and just rule of the good leaders of verse 1.

Thus, this passage similarly reflects the fruitfulness/social justice themes of Isaiah 5. The difference, however, between Isaiah 5 and 32 is the addition of the figure of the king and the outpouring of the Spirit. Following foolish leaders will result in destruction and a continued impoverishment of fruitfulness—lack of justice and righteousness as well as literal desolation.<sup>50</sup> The reign of the good king, however, will be different. It will be just and righteous. Through his rule the Spirit will be poured out with the result that justice and righteousness are abundantly present—fruitfulness will be the norm.<sup>51</sup>

Thus, it is the rule of the king, and the presence of the Spirit that together bring forth social justice as the prosperous fruit of the restored community. The result is

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<sup>50</sup>I believe Isaiah intends polyvalence in his imagery in 32:9–14: desolation is described as real fruitlessness in the land. But that fruitlessness is juxtaposed with the fruitfulness of justice and righteousness in the restoration in vv. 15–16.

<sup>51</sup>Both Sweeney and Oswalt recognize the connection between 1–8 and the Spirit of 15–19, though Sweeney only connects the abundant fruitfulness of the Spirit to the king, while Oswalt correctly recognizes that through the king the Spirit is poured out more broadly on the populace. Leclerc, *Yahweh Is Exalted in Justice*, 83–84; Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39: With an Introduction to Prophetic Literature*, Forms of the Old Testament Literature 16 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 418.

peace—hearkening back to Isaiah 9:7 where peace, Spirit, and the coming king were first connected.

### **Isaiah 58 and 59**

These two chapters contain the highest number of uses of the hendiadys **הַשְׂפָּקָה וְיִצְדִּיקָהּ** in the book: Isaiah 58:2(2x), 59:4, 59:9, 59:14. This last section of Isaiah (56–66) begins with the hendiadys (56:1). It follows chapters 40–55 which used the language of righteousness in parallel with salvation but not with justice. Now, however, Isaiah 56–66 again employs “righteousness” in parallel with “justice,” returning to the theme of social justice.

Chapter 58 indicts the people for false public piety using the hendiadys (Isa 58:2), which may be seen in 58:3, where the people’s ostensible piety is a thin veil over the oppression they propagate: “Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers.” Yahweh then makes known his desire for social justice from the people:

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share 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? (Isa 58:6–7)

Isaiah 58:6–7 describes the sort “righteousness” and “justice” that Yahweh wishes for his people and which verse 2 laments they do not have. But, were they to practice this social justice their situation would be different: “Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard” (Isa 58:8).

Moving forward, chapter 59 opens with, “Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear” (Isa 59:1–2). Following the restoration hopefulness of the

latter part of Isaiah 58, these verses stop the hopeful reader in their tracks; restoration would be possible, but persistent sin blocks the way. Once again, like chapter 58, sin is spoken of in particular social categories, “No one enters suit justly; no one goes to law honestly” (Isa 59:4). “Their works are works of iniquity, and deeds of violence are in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they are swift to shed innocent blood” (Isa 59:6b–7a; cf. Isa 59:8). These persistent social sins have a tragic result: “Therefore **טִשָּׁנָה** is far from us and **הַדָּקָה** does not overtake us; we hope for light, and behold, darkness, and for brightness, but we walk in gloom” (Isa 59:9). The “light” of righteousness and justice that Yahweh desires from his holy planting is not to be found.

Interestingly, the text takes a turn at this point. Verse 10 communicates that the people’s lack of social justice results in their suffering: “We grope for the wall like the blind; we grope like those who have no eyes; we stumble at noon as in the twilight,<sup>52</sup> among those in full vigor we are like dead men. We all growl like bears; we moan and moan like doves; we hope for **טִשָּׁנָה**, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far from us” (Isa 59:10–11). The people hope for Yahweh to act justly in saving them from their suffering—a twist in how justice has been used in this passage so far.<sup>53</sup>

Then, after verses 12 and 13 openly confess sin before Yahweh, verse 14 uses the social justice hendiadys to negatively describe the state of the people: “**טִשָּׁנָה** is turned back, and **הַדָּקָה** stands far away; for truth has stumbled in the public squares, and uprightness cannot enter” (Isa 59:14–15). Next, verses 16–20 go on to describe Yahweh as a dread warrior who saw the lack of justice and his people’s suffering, and he rose up

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<sup>52</sup>Note the parallel with Deut 28:29. In confessing these words, the people are confessing that the curses for disobedience that Moses prophesied have come upon them. Now they look to Yahweh for salvation for the oppression that has come upon them because of their disobedience (Deut 28:33).

<sup>53</sup>Justice is often connected with salvation in Scripture. For those who are oppressed, God’s justice is the exercise of freeing them from the oppressor. For example, Ps 35:23–24 communicates the desire for the writer’s cause to be heard before God. It ends with a request for justice, which can only mean salvation in the context. If God acts justly, the supplicant will receive salvation. So also, Weinfeld, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel*, 41–42.

to intervene by bringing salvation.

Isaiah 59 uses the word justice in two different (but related) ways: first, justice (with righteousness) is used to describe the people's heinous moral failure. That failure resulted in Yahweh pouring out destruction on them through the agency of human powers. However, those human powers were oppressive and unjust toward God's people. Therefore, Yahweh hears them ("The LORD saw it, and it displeased him, that there was no *מִשְׁפָּט*" [for his oppressed people]) and promises to intercede: "According to their deeds, so will he repay, wrath to his adversaries, repayment to his enemies; to the coastlands he will render repayment" (Isa 59:18). This second sense of justice is salvific—it is just for Yahweh to rescue, even sinful people, from oppression. Therefore, Yahweh's just intervention here has to do with restoration of the people to a place of security. However, as the following passage will make clear, Yahweh also intends to restore the people to a state of holiness—which, given the context of chapter 58 and 59:4–9, must be social justice.<sup>54</sup>

Finally, the theme of Yahweh's just salvation culminates in 59:20: "'And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression,' declares the LORD."<sup>55</sup> Yahweh will deliver his people (justice = salvation), but 59:1–2 makes it clear that restoration requires their persistence in sin (social injustice) to be dealt with. Graciously, Yahweh meets the need for salvation (Isa 59:18) and for internal transformation via the Isaianic new-covenant promise in 59:21:

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<sup>54</sup>For a brief exposition of this passage along these lines, see Rodrigo Jose Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel: New Exodus and New Creation Motifs in Galatians* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 24–25.

<sup>55</sup>The word *לִמְדָן* "redeemer" comes from Israel's social laws concerning an individual's right to buy back family members from slavery (Lev 25:25), as well as the right to avenge bloodshed (Num 35:12). It is used metaphorically of Yahweh at the Exodus, redeeming Israel from slavery (Exod 15:13) and avenging her innocent spilled blood by redeeming her from enemies (Ps 106:10). Given the context of this passage, where Yahweh rises up as a dread warrior to avenge his people, *לִמְדָן* likely communicates both senses of "redeemer": a family member buying back those who are enslaved, and a family member avenging innocent blood. These two senses of redemption remind one of the negative and positive elements of a king's social justice prerogative.

“And as for me, this is my covenant with them,” says the Lord: “My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or out of the mouth of your children’s offspring,” says the Lord, “from this time forth and forevermore.”

The Spirit that equips the Messianic king to rule in justice and righteousness (Isa 9:1–7), who accompanies the King’s reign and is poured out on the populace (Isa 32:15), resulting in social justice fruitfulness (Isa 32:16), is now promised to the people by Yahweh himself in the context of eschatological redemption.

Turning the page to Chapter 60 reveals the result of this promise: a transformed, restored people,

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. (Isa 60:1–3)

Yahweh’s glory first shines upon the people in a time of great darkness (verses 1–2a). But, then his glory will be seen upon [the people], and, when the nations come to the restored people, they come, “To *your* light . . . to the brightness of *your* rising.” Note the change of pronoun in reference to the light—Yahweh’s light becomes the people’s light. His glory is manifested among the people and they then seem to radiate that glory outward attracting others to them. This text appears to display a transformation occurring in the people themselves.

I believe that it is possible, given the context of these verses, to identify the light with the manifestation of Yahweh’s holy character among his people—social justice.<sup>56</sup> Isaiah 58:6–7 describe the works of social justice with light imagery: “[When you do these socially just things] Then shall your light break forth like the dawn . . . your

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<sup>56</sup>The ancient world also connected light with manifestations of the deities’ character. Utu gave justice and truth to Shamash. Shamash, in ancient Mesopotamia, was the sun God and Hammurabi declares that he received his just law-code from Shamash. Mircea Eliade and Charles J. Adams, *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987). Similarly, Nahum Sarna writes in his book on the Psalms that the Ancient East identified good and evil actions with light and darkness. See also Weinfeld’s discussion of the role of the king, who, upon his ascension, would *shine* forth justice and righteousness, reflecting the gods who did the same. Weinfeld, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel*, 52–53.

righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.” Also, Isaiah 59:9 connects light with social justice: “Therefore טִשָּׁפָּנוּ is far from us, and צְדָקָה does not overtake us; we hope for light, and behold, darkness, and for brightness, but we walk in gloom.” This latter text uses parallelism to connect a lack of light with a lack of justice and righteousness.<sup>57</sup>

(A) justice is far from us

(B) righteousness does not overtake us

(B') we hope for light, and behold darkness

(A') for brightness, but we walk in gloom

Finally, when Yahweh promises the Spirit, the agent that brings social justice fruitfulness (Isa 32:15–16), the following passage opens with a description of a restored people attracting the nations by their *light*, after Yahweh pours out his *light* upon them.<sup>58</sup>

Even if this argument is deemed unconvincing, Isaiah 62:1–2 connects Yahweh’s restoration of Jerusalem’s righteousness with brightness, “I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as *brightness*, and her salvation as a *burning torch*. The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory” (Isa 62:1b–62:2a). The

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<sup>57</sup>Weinfeld’s Justice and righteousness are again connected with light imagery in v. 9, as they were in 58:6–7.

<sup>58</sup>Oswalt observes that darkness is connected with sin in Isa 60:1–2, and even connects that description to pre-salvation Goshen, but he does not further define light, other than by writing that it is the presence of God. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, 537–39. Alternatively, Goldingay’s description of this glorious light is as follows, “Here [the light] suggests a manifestation visible in something that happens in the city itself, or rather a manifestation of someone, of Yhwh’s own person. Yhwh’s splendor is the outward manifestation of Yhwh’s holiness, Yhwh’s supernatural deity, God revealed ‘in the glow of holiness and the dynamism of being,’” Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 3:254. Goldingay’s description is of God’s presence manifest among the people, working outward through the people. This perspective is right, so far as it goes, but does not take into account the immediate context where darkness and light have to do with social justice. Leclerc, however, wisely recognizes the way that the exercise of justice is light to the people in Isaiah, whereas the absence of justice is darkness. Leclerc ties this observation to his interpretation of holiness in Isaiah 6 and its tie to the proclamation in 5:16—Yahweh’s holiness is manifest by the social behavior of his people. When they are dark, lacking justice, they are not sanctifying Yahweh, but living contrary to his holiness. When they walk correctly, they manifest his holiness in justice and righteousness, which enlightens those around them. Leclerc, *Yahweh Is Exalted in Justice*, 167–70. Similarly to Leclerc, Wong, in her dissertation on glory, recognizes the way Isaiah ties righteousness to both light and glory. Corinne Hong Sling Wong, “The Doxa of Christ and His Followers in the Fourth Gospel: An Inquiry into the Meaning and Background of Doxa in John 17:22” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pretoria, 2008), 58–59.

result is that “all the kings” see their glory (in parallel construction with “righteousness”)—a similar description to the nations streaming into glorious Zion in 60:1–2.

Thus, when Isaiah communicates Yahweh’s new covenant promise in 59:21, it is the presence of the Spirit that finally brings about righteousness (Isa 60:1–3; 62:1–2) of social justice in particular (Isa 32:15–16). Moreover, I have argued that social injustice is the main sin component of the indictment and the cause for Yahweh’s judgment throughout the book thus far. Further still, social injustice is the problem described in chapters 58–59 to which the promise of the new covenant speaks. Thus, the final chapters of Isaiah answer the question, “What will happen to socially unjust Israel?” with a positive affirmation of restoration from destruction and to social justice fruitfulness. When the reader reaches chapter 60:1–3, they are ready to understand that light dawning on the holy city is more than an ethereal shining, visible as a piercing light, but a metaphorical depiction of a city reflecting the glory of Yahweh by specifically reflecting his holy character of justice and righteousness:<sup>59</sup> no longer stealing, no longer oppressing, no longer rendering unjust judgments. Rather, they walk in the ways of Yahweh, fulfilling the covenant purpose between Yahweh and Abraham: “For I have chosen [Abraham], that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing *וַיִּשְׁפָּט וַיִּדְרֹךְ וַיִּמְשֹׁפֵט*, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him” (Gen 18:19).

These words from Arthur Ramsey demonstrate the way Yahweh must fulfill his promises to Abraham:

Since the glory of Yahveh in His purpose in history is clouded by Israel’s

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<sup>59</sup>Compare this statement with Oswalt’s belief that servanthood is the central motif of Isaiah: “God has called all people, but particularly his own people, to lay down their self-exaltation and be dependent upon him, to *become evidence of his character and deliverance in order that the whole world might know him* as he is and thus be delivered from their own destruction.” Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, 54. Emphasis added.

sinfulness, Israel can give glory to Him aright and set forth His glory among the nations only if Israel is herself a people in whose conduct He is glorified . . . Israel glorifying God involves the glory of God, in the fullness of its ethical meaning, dwelling in Israel.<sup>60</sup>

The result of all of Yahweh's redemptive work in his people is that the nations are attracted to the glorious manifestation of Yahweh's character among the people (Isa 60:1–3) in fulfillment of his promise to Abraham.

Thus far I have attempted to demonstrate that the narrative background of Isaiah uses *מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה* as a core element of its argument. From indictment, to judgment, to restoration, Yahweh desires his people to manifest social justice in acts of love and mercy toward one another. To this end, Isaiah prophesies of a socially just king, and an empowering Spirit who will together effect social justice among the people. Yet Israel fails. Sin is irrepressible. Judgment is poured out and suffering ensues. That is, until the divine warrior, Yahweh, intervenes by his strong arm of deliverance and the servant atones for sin. Only then is the Spirit poured out upon the people with the result that they shine forth his divine character. Only then will the restored, glorious people attract the nations.

Now I will turn to the book of Luke to demonstrate Luke's familiarity with this narrative in his exposition of the life of Jesus as the Messianic king, heretofore described.

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<sup>60</sup>Arthur Michael Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949), 92.

## CHAPTER 3

### LUKE: THE MINISTRY AND EMPOWERMENT OF THE MESSIANIC KING<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction

This chapter will demonstrate that Luke drew heavily from Isaiah's vision of an ethical restoration of social justice in Israel, especially as he articulated that restoration through the work of the Davidic Messiah and Spirit of Yahweh. I will argue that Luke's presentation of Jesus accords with the Isaianic picture of a socially just Davidic king empowered by the Spirit who works to bring social justice through his reign.

Certainly Luke drew from many other places in the OT besides Isaiah<sup>2</sup>—but his attention to the Isaianic motif of the role of the Messiah, through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, in bringing about an ethical restoration, particular in regard to social justice, can be demonstrated through (1) his use of Isaianic themes in his introductory chapters; (2) the Nazareth Manifesto, where Jesus declares the purpose of the Spirit upon

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<sup>1</sup>Though I do not have sufficient space for a lengthy defense, my understanding is that Luke-Acts form one narrative, written by Luke, and designed by him to be read together. For argumentation on the fruitfulness of this approach see David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002); Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts* (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 204–6; Peter Mallen, *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke-Acts* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 208.

<sup>2</sup>The weight of scholarship on Luke's use of the Old Testament is vast. (See Darrell L. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology* [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987], 13–37 for an excellent discussion of the history of scholarship. Since Bock, another important work is Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts*, who appreciates Bock, so far as he goes, but argues that framing-in-discourse is a more accurate description of Luke's use of Scripture.) Because this thesis is not sufficiently long to enter into a discussion of all the various perspectives of Luke's use of Scripture, I will only go so far as to state that I greatly appreciate Bock's Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern perspective, while also acknowledging that not all Luke's use of Scripture is apologetic, or as proof-from-prophecy oriented as it is in Acts 9:20–22. Thus, I agree with Litwak that framing-in-discourse may be a helpful way to read Luke's use of Scripture, especially in the birth narrative, but still observing that Luke understood these events to actually fulfill Scripture, as per Bock's proclamation from prophecy and pattern approach. Cf. Mallen, *Reading and Transformation of Isaiah*, 203–7.

him by means of an Isaiah quotation using the language of social justice; and (3) the subsequent ministry of Jesus, rife with the actions of a socially just king. These last two points will be considered together because Luke's description of Jesus' ministry sheds light on Luke's understanding of the Nazareth Manifesto.

### **Luke's Setting: Evidences of Isaianic Restoration**

The first chapters of Luke are famously full of intertextual allusions and Old Testament quotations. At least one of the reasons Luke began his account of Jesus this way was rhetorical—he needed to demonstrate to his audience that the events of Jesus' birth were connected to the Scriptures that preceded it.<sup>3</sup> To this end Luke connected John the Baptist to the Elijah figure who prepares the way for the Messiah (Luke 1:15–17), tells the birth narratives in ways evocative of Sara, Hannah,<sup>4</sup> and makes use of the virgin of Isaiah 7 in his description of Mary.<sup>5</sup> Further, Luke alludes to the covenants with Abraham (Luke 1:55, 73) and David (Luke 1:32–33), and intertwines textual allusion after textual allusion in the Benedictus and the Magnificat.

Yet, a particular Isaianic influence may be seen in the midst of Luke's intertextual references through (1) the use of the virgin birth motif; (2) the connection of Jesus' birth to anticipation for a Davidic Messiah; (3) the liberal references to the Holy Spirit working and empowering for eschatological events; (4) and Jesus' baptism for the refining of the people.

First, the *παρθένο*s who will beget a child—the central figure of this

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<sup>3</sup>Mallen, *Reading and Transformation of Isaiah*, 209; Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts*, 32. Moreover, these Scriptures were an available source for Luke to use in his arguments regarding Jesus Christ and the Christian community.

<sup>4</sup>So, Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 52–58; Kenneth Duncan Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts*, 70–103; 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) 256.

<sup>5</sup>I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978), 66–67.

pericope—may have drawn the reader’s attention to Isaiah 7. The table below demonstrates how Luke 1:31 bears a strong resemblance to the LXX of Isaiah 7:14 (italicized words occur in both locations):<sup>6</sup>

Table 1: Isaiah 7:14 and Luke 1:31

LXX Isaiah 7:14	Luke 1:31
<i>ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει</i> [3 <sup>rd</sup> person] καὶ τέξεται <i>υἴον</i>	<i>ἰδοὺ</i> [παρθενου (vs. 27)] συλλήμψη ἐν γαστρὶ καὶ τέξῃ [2 <sup>nd</sup> person] <i>υἴον</i>
καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Εμμανουηλ	καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν

The verbal similarity between the passages is strong. Yet, Bock has argued that this similarity is only the case because of general correspondence between annunciation stories in the Old Testament.<sup>7</sup> This similarity being stated, there are still several significant points in favor of the Isaiah 7:14 allusion: the word *παρθένος* is used twice, possibly for emphasis;<sup>8</sup> *συλλαμβάνω* is used to translate *הָרָה* “conceive” instead of *ἔχω*

<sup>6</sup>Those who see a strong parallel between Isa 7:14 and Luke 1:26–38 include I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 66; Pao and Schnabel, *Luke*, 259. Those who are rather skeptical include the following, Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 61; Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in Matthew and Luke* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 299–300.

<sup>7</sup>Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 61. Bock compares the announcement to Mary to Isa 7:14 and Gen 16:11 to show that the parallels are very similar in all three, and that the text does not lead one to Isa 7:14 exclusively.

<sup>8</sup>For the translation of *παρθένος* as “virgin” see William F. Arndt and Walter Bauer, Logos Research Systems, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2000), s.v. “παρθένος;” Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 64; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, Anchor Bible 28 (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 343. Yet, there is significant discussion about the source text, Isa 7:14, and whether the original referent is to a virgin. The question is, then, one of whether Matthew and Luke over-interpret Isaiah. For arguments to this end see Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 147–54.

(the word used in the MT of Isaiah 7:14) in the LXX; and the expectation of Isaiah 7:14 is the child who is born as king in Isaiah 9:6. The Davidic King who would rule in justice and righteousness (Isa 9:1–7; 11:1–5) is related in Isaiah to the virgin’s child (Isa 7:14).<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the child who Mary will bear will sit on the throne of David forever as the Messianic king. For these reasons, an allusion to the virgin birth ought to be seen here.<sup>10</sup>

Next, though some commentators argue against any specific fulfillment in the birth narrative of Messianic texts from the OT,<sup>11</sup> it may be observed that the promise to David (2 Sam. 7:13–16) is the background of (a) the angel’s announcement to Mary that her son would sit on the throne of David (Luke 1:32);<sup>12</sup> (b) Zechariah’s statement that God has raised up a horn of salvation in the house of David who would deliver the people from their enemies (Luke 1:69); and (c) Joseph, the descendant of David, who goes with Mary to the city of David in order for Jesus to be born there (Luke 2:1–20). Darrell Bock goes so far as to say that a Christological motif of Davidic kingship is the “one clear theme” that emerges from Luke’s opening chapters.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Notice especially the way that Isaiah 9 introduces the coming king as a child who will be born for the benefit of the people. Moreover, the Immanuel prophecy is explicitly identified with Jesus’ birth in Matthew 1:23. Cf. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 244–48.

<sup>10</sup>Also, note the way that most of Hay’s criteria are met: (1) availability of the source text = LXX; (2) volume, or distinctive prominence = the birth narrative is distinctly prominent as the origin story for Jesus in the narrative; (3) recurrence = this criteria is not met; (4) thematic coherence; (5) historical plausibility = the readers would have understood based on the fact that Matthew makes the connection explicit; (6) correspondence with the text’s history of interpretation = the virgin birth is a cherished part of Christian interpretation and is even found in our earliest creeds; and (7) satisfaction—does the proposed reading illuminate the text = as I will argue, this reading adds to the Isaianic parallel, satisfactorily drawing the whole narrative together and foreshadowing what is to come. Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 21.

<sup>11</sup>Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts*, 71.

<sup>12</sup>Moreover, consider the way in which the people reveal Messianic expectation prior to John’s teaching about the one who comes after him, 3:15.

<sup>13</sup>Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 56. Cf. Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts*, 66–111. While I appreciate some of Litwak’s nuanced approach to Luke’s use of Scripture, I find it regrettable that he does not emphasize Davidic kingship in any way in his discussion of the early chapters of Luke. The data provided above should, at minimum, demonstrate that the subject of Davidic kingship was not far from Luke’s mind or the tip of his pen, and much more likely were included because he considered Jesus to fulfill the promises to David.

In support of the Davidic connection in Luke’s early chapters, Pao and Schnabel write that Luke 1:32–33 demonstrates that Luke “unmistakably point[s] back to OT expectations of the renewal of the Davidic dynasty.”<sup>14</sup> Its conceptual connections to 2 Samuel 7 are detailed below:

Table 2: 2 Samuel 7:8–16 and Luke 1:32–33

2 Samuel 7:8–16	Luke 1:32–33
Davidic descent (8)	Δαυὶδ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ (32)
Promise of greatness (9)	οὗτος ἔσται μέγας (32)
Throne of David (14)	καὶ δώσει αὐτῷ κύριος ὁ θεὸς τὸν θρόνον Δαυὶδ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ (32)
Eternal kingdom (16)	βασιλεύσει ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰακώβ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας (33)

The next connection point between Isaiah and the early chapters of Luke is Luke’s emphasis on the Holy Spirit. In Isaiah, the restoration of Israel takes place through the instrumentality of the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the exaltation of a Davidic king. Likewise, Luke begins the narrative of God’s intervening hand of salvation in his gospel with a unique emphasis on the Holy Spirit in a way proleptic of the consummate outpouring in Acts 2: John the Baptist has the Spirit from conception (Luke 1:15); Jesus’ entrance into human history is because of the Holy Spirit’s power (Luke

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<sup>14</sup>Pao and Schnabel, *Luke*, 260.

1:35);<sup>15</sup> and the prophecy to Mary in Luke 1:35 likely alludes to Isaiah 32:15.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, consider the frequency of Luke’s Spirit narratives—three separate times in one chapter—John the Baptist (Luke 1:15), Mary’s conception announcement (Luke 1:35), and Elizabeth’s greeting (Luke 1:41). These would be striking to Luke’s first century readers. In the Old Testament, the Spirit came upon people relatively infrequently—but here, three times in quick succession.

Notice also that as the gospel progresses Luke adds to the growing theme of the eschatological Spirit’s presence upon Jesus following his Spirit baptism (Luke 3:22), by using Luke 4:1 (entering the trial in the wilderness) and 4:14 (returning to Galilee) to provide contact points for the Spirit’s empowerment of Jesus’ ministry. These references prepare the reader for Jesus’ explicative words when he stands up in the Synagogue in Nazareth: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to” (Luke 4:18). Thus, it appears probable that Luke intentionally draws the reader’s mind to the eschatological working of the Holy Spirit (Isa 32:14; 42:1; 59:21; 61:1) in these passages.

Lastly, after Luke’s long introduction, Jesus’ ministry is described by John the Baptist in Luke 3:16–17 with these words, “βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρὶ” (Luke 3:16–17). This text parallels Isaiah 4:4, by its reference to Spirit and fire, אַם רָחַץ אֶדְנִי אֵשׁ וְרוּחַ קְדוֹם יְיָ יְרוּשָׁלַם יְדִיחַ מִקְרָבָהּ בְּרוּחַ מְשַׁפֵּת וּבְרוּחַ בָּעַר: צֵאת בְּנוֹת-צִיּוֹן וְאֵת-דְּמֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם יְרוּשָׁלַם יְדִיחַ מִקְרָבָהּ בְּרוּחַ מְשַׁפֵּת וּבְרוּחַ בָּעַר.<sup>17</sup> Isaiah 4:4 uses this language in the context of the eschatological cleansing Yahweh will pour out on his

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<sup>15</sup>Turner argues persuasively that the parallelism in Acts 1:35 points unequivocally to the (new) creational power of the Most High as “referentially equated with the Holy Spirit[:]” (A) Πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σέ, (B) καὶ δύναμις Ἑσπέρου ἐπισκιάσει σοι. Max Turner, *Power from on High* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press), 156–57.

<sup>16</sup>So Pao and Schnabel, *Luke*, 260; Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 70. Both commentators argue for likelihood, not certainty. The evidence for this connection is that both texts use the same verb, ἐπέρχομαι, in reference to the Holy Spirit, with related words for the place from which the Spirit comes: ὑψηλός (Isa 32:15) and ὑψιστος (Luke 1:35). Similarly, in Acts 1:8, Luke uses ἐπέρχομαι and the same preposition ἐπὶ to describe Jesus’ words to the disciples regarding Pentecost (Acts 1:8). This choice of words, at very least, suggests that Luke conceives of the Spirit’s eschatological presence in both texts in ways evocative of Isa 32:15.

<sup>17</sup>The LXX reads, ἐκπλυνεῖ κύριος τὸν ῥύπον τῶν υἱῶν καὶ τῶν θυγατέρων Σιων καὶ τὸ αἷμα ἐκκαθαριεῖ ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν ἐν πνεύματι κρίσεως καὶ πνεύματι καύσεως.

people.<sup>18</sup> The result Isaiah depicts is as follows:

Then the LORD will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy. There will be a booth for shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain. (Isa 4:5–6)

Because Jesus' eschatological ministry as the Messiah is introduced with the same language of Isaiah 4:4, it seems likely that the Spirit and fire of Jesus' baptism are related to the Spirit of judgment and burning of Isaiah 4:4.<sup>19</sup> The metaphor of burning and judgment also reminds the reader of Isaiah 1:25 (the smelting of the Lord), Isaiah 1:31 (the wicked are burned together in judgment), and Isaiah 6:13 (the burned stump, that produces a holy seed).<sup>20</sup> The result of this eschatological burning, as my Isaiah section discussed, is ethical purification resulting in social justice in the community. Indictment for social justice failure (Isa 1, 5, 58, 59) preceded judgment (burning). Finally, restoration followed, through the power of the Spirit (Isa 32:15; 59:21), both ethical and physical.

Therefore, the early chapters of Luke describe the way a Davidic Messiah (Isa 11:1–4), born of a virgin (Isa 7), has come, endowed with the eschatological Spirit of restoration (Isa 32:15; 59:21), and whose work will be judgment and burning (Isa 4:4), resulting in the purification of his people (Isa 59:14–60:3; cf. Luke 1:74–75). Already in these early chapters, Luke has shown his familiarity with the Isaianic narrative and emphasized Jesus' work of ethical restoration.

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<sup>18</sup>Mark L. Strauss also recognizes the Isaiah 4:4 background to this passage. Mark L. Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts: The Promise and Its Fulfillment in Lukan Christology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 201.

<sup>19</sup>Turner wrote about Jesus' hand in pouring out the Spirit in Acts, "Indeed it is [Jesus] who baptizes Israel with Holy Spirit, cleansing, purging, and so restoring her, and taking her forth as a light to the world." Turner, *Power from on High*, 430. Thus, the cleansing/refining element of the baptism John describes may be seen to foreshadow the outpouring of the Spirit that accomplishes the ethical transformation of God's people.

<sup>20</sup>Turner observes, "[John] forged his metaphor to affirm the stronger one to come would *cleanse* Israel (in accordance with the Isaianic oracles as they were currently understood), and that he would be able to do this because (as those oracles promised) God would mightily endow him with Spirit-and-power to accomplish that promised restoration." *Ibid.*, 185.

## The Nazareth Manifesto

Scholars widely acknowledge the programmatic role Luke 4:18–19 have for the ensuing narrative.<sup>21</sup> Up to this point, Luke has described Jesus' early life-events and preparation, but not his ministry. Throughout, great emphasis is placed on the Spirit. Now, the reason is given,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. (Luke 4:18–19)

Because this passage is programmatic, Jesus' subsequent ministry unpacks its various elements.<sup>22</sup> Hence, my exegesis of the Nazareth Manifesto will include some analysis of the ways Luke uses the terms discussed in 4:18–19 in the rest of his gospel.

I will argue here that the Nazareth Manifesto prepares the way for readers to recognize Jesus' actions as the Messianic king, anointed by the Spirit, who rules in righteousness and justice.

The passage is constructed in notably balanced prose, following an A, B, A' pattern: (A) Jesus stands (ἀνίστημι) to read, receives (ἐπιδίδωμι) the scroll, and unrolls (ἀναπτύσσω) it to find his place. (B) Then, he reads. (A') Finally he rolls (πτύσσω) up the scroll, returns (ἀποδίδωμι) it, and sits down (καθίζω). The middle portion of the account, the reading from Isaiah, thus receives a highlighted place in the account.<sup>23</sup>

In regard to the construction of the quotation, it has some important idiosyncrasies: (1) Luke spliced it together from Isaiah 61:1–2 and 58:6, (2) Luke did not

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<sup>21</sup>Jack T. Sanders wrote honestly, "This scene is 'programmatic' for Luke-Acts, as one grows almost tired of reading in the literature on the passage." Jack T. Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 165.

<sup>22</sup>So, Bart J. Koet, in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and M. J. J. Menken (New York: T & T Clark, 2007), 84.

<sup>23</sup>So also Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 208–9. Because the quotation is highlighted and Luke uses it in such a key way in his text, the second element of Hays' criteria, recounted in my introduction, applies to this text. This text, however, only forms a piece of my argument. But, the volume with which the piece of the evidence is used suggests that I am not amiss in thinking Isaianic social justice (a point I will argue is evidenced in this passage) is close to Luke's heart.

include broken heart mending (61:1), and (3) the day of the Lord’s vengeance is missing.

These texts and their differences are detailed below:

Table 3: Manifesto and Source Comparison

Isaiah 61:1–2 LXX	Isaiah 58:6 LXX	Luke 4:18–19
Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ’ ἐμέ		Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ’ ἐμέ
οὗ εἶνεκεν ἔχρισέν με, εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς		οὗ εἶνεκεν ἔχρισέν με εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς
ιάσασθαι τοὺς συντετριμμένους τῆ καρδία		
κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεςιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν		ἀπέσταλκέν με κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεςιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν
	ἀπόστ <u>ε</u> λλε τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει	ἀποστ <u>εῖ</u> λαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει
καλέσαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν		κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν

This quotation provides four reasons for the Spirit’s presence upon Jesus: (1) he has been anointed to preach good news to the poor, (2) he has been sent to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, (3) he is to send the oppressed

free, and (4) he is to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

The first element is Jesus' ministry to the poor, to whom he comes "preaching good news" (Luke 4:18). The concept of "good news" is used in the LXX of Isaiah to refer to a time of eschatological restoration (Isa 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; 60:6; 52:7).<sup>24</sup> The recipients of this eschatological good news are the πτωχος "the poor." Scholars have debated the identity of the poor at length, and their conclusions are disparate.<sup>25</sup>

The first question we must answer, in order to identify the poor, is whether this term (or the others in the quotation, for that matter) is to be taken literally and physically, or as some sort of metaphor for spiritual realities. Extreme examples may be found among the commentators at both ends of the spectrum.<sup>26</sup> However, *purely* physical/literal and purely spiritual positions grossly misinterpret Luke and the Isaianic texts from which he borrows. Rather, I will argue below that Luke understands both literal (physical) and metaphorical (spiritual) elements in this quotation. Luke's preservation of a distinct physical element in this quotation helps prepare the reader to see the socially just way Jesus fulfills his ministry as the Messianic king, pre-exaltation.

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<sup>24</sup>"In its Isaianic context such proclamations connote hope of deliverance." Daniel M. Gurtner, "Luke's Isaianic Jubilee," in *From Creation to New Creation: Biblical Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and G. K. Beale (Peabody, MA: 2013), 139.

<sup>25</sup>For a history of scholarship on the identity of the poor in Luke-Acts see S. John Roth, *The Blind, the Lame, and the Poor: Character Types in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 28–55. Roth observes in this chapter such interesting designations as a pietistic sect and spiritual suffering Israel.

<sup>26</sup>John MacArthur makes no distinction between Matt 5:3 and this passage, though Luke does not describe his "poor" as "poor in spirit." Thus, MacArthur has no difficulty in identifying spiritual realities as the meaning of each of the items in this text, John MacArthur, *Luke 1–5, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2009), 263–73. Though presuppositionally in a different universe than MacArthur, Hans Conzelmann shared a similar dismissal of the raw physical meaning of the text: "The 'Ebionism' of Luke vi, 20 comes from the source, and is not developed as a theme by Luke. We cannot speak of an ideal of poverty either in the Gospel or in Acts." Conzelmann's source criticism prevents him from meaningfully discussing the poor. Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke* (New York: Harper, 1961), 125, 233.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Sharon Ringe, describes forgiveness according to a paradigm of liberation, not of sin-cleansing, thereby dismissing any spiritual elements in this text: "Like the message of 'good news to the poor,' 'forgiveness' as an image of the Jubilee points to the political choice of standing with the oppressed, and in that choice confessing one's relationship to Christ and thus to God." Sharon H. Ringe, *Jesus, Liberation, and the Biblical Jubilee: Images for Ethics and Christology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 95.

First of all, the original Isaianic context requires that 58:6 and 61:1–2 describe a literal and physical restoration. Because the punishment of disobeying Yahweh is literal and physical (Isa 5:13–30; cf. Deut 28:15–68), the presentation in 61:1–2 of a figure proclaiming liberation speaks of the end of physical judgment by enemy nations (Israel’s experience of oppression) and, by implication, the beginning of social justice [cf. Isa 61:8]. So too, 58:6 refers to physical subject matter, as it discusses the need for physical oppression to cease. Undergirding the entire statement, the Spirit of the Lord, connected so often in the book with the power to establish social justice (Isa 11:2; 32:15–16; 59:21; cf. 42:1), is on this figure, empowering him for his ministry.<sup>27</sup>

Secondly, Luke’s emphasis on possessions and poverty indicate that the poor may not be dismissed as a spiritual metaphor. For example, the poor man, Lazarus, is raised to heaven while the rich man suffers in hell in Jesus’ parable in 16:20; Jesus commands the rich man to sell all that he has and give his possessions to the poor (Luke 18:22); Zacchaeus demonstrates true repentance by giving half his possessions to the poor and paying back those whom he has cheated (Luke 19:8); Jesus praises the poor widow for giving more than everyone else because of the greatness of her sacrifice (Luke 21:1–4);<sup>28</sup> Mary praises God because, “He has filled the hungry with good things and the rich he has sent away empty” (Luke 1:53);<sup>29</sup> John the Baptist teaches the repentant

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<sup>27</sup>So, John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: 40–66*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 564. Oswalt writes, “The only places in the OT where Spirit filling and anointing are mentioned together are in connection with the establishment of the kingship, first in Saul (1 Sam 10:1, 6–7), then in David (1 Sam 16:13).” This point is further evidence that the figure is more than a prophetic voice. Rather, the socially just rule of a Messianic king better fits the evidence.

<sup>28</sup>Luke also evidences his concern with physical poverty by expressing Jesus’ teaching in 6:20, “Blessed are the poor,” without Matthew’s qualifying, “Of spirit.”

<sup>29</sup>Richard Bauckham wrote that the background to the Magnificat, Hannah’s song (1 Sam 2:1–10), and its rewritings in Pseudo-Philo and the expansion of the song in Targum Jonathan show that “the general approach of understanding the activity of God in reversing status [is] characteristic both of his general activity in his people’s history but also of the messianic salvation of Israel.” Richard Bauckham, *The Jewish World around the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 347.

crowds to demonstrate their repentance socially by just usage of material possessions (Luke 3:10–14); Tax collectors demonstrate faith in Jesus when they leave everything behind and follow him (Luke 5:27–32); Jesus declares woes to those who are wealthy (Luke 6:24–26); Luke 11:4 compares God’s forgiveness of us to the way we “release”<sup>30</sup> those who are οφειλω “indebted” to us; Jesus’ teaching about anxiety in Luke is summarized with an exhortation that disciples ought to “sell [their] possessions and give to the needy” (Luke 12:33).

Although the “poor” and Jesus’ teaching about poverty occur liberally throughout the book, however, there are indications that poverty may refer to more than financial suffering. When one considers the wide variety of those who do in fact hear the good news of the gospel and receive the benefits of Jesus’ ministry in Luke-Acts (Isa 61:1; Luke 4:18), we might conclude that “the poor” refers broadly to needy character types who receive God’s salvific mercy.<sup>31</sup> The term was often used this way in the LXX.<sup>32</sup> There were, in Luke-Acts, a variety of suffering ‘poor’ peoples who were on the outside of the establishment that might have received this designation consistently with the LXX usage.<sup>33</sup> Yet, if the poor were strictly the financially disadvantaged in Luke, wealthy tax-collectors would not have received the gospel (Isa 3:12; 5:27; 15:1; 19:8).

Thus, though “the poor” are the recipients of the good news, this designation may not be reduced either to those who are financially suffering or to those who are spiritually needy. Luke appears to broadly use the poor to refer to those who receive

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<sup>30</sup>There is a confluence of meaning in this passage: repentance and release overlap here. God releases us from our sin and we release those indebted to us from what they owe.

<sup>31</sup>Roth, *The Blind, the Lame, and the Poor*, 214. On the following page Roth notes how these characters are not dynamic. They are relatively two-dimensional and mark the, “Powerless, vulnerable, and a-responsible,” as well as other key terms for oppressed individuals like the captive, blind, deaf, and leper.

<sup>32</sup>Roth argues persuasively that the LXX uses πτωχος to refer to “Conventional recipients of God’s saving action,” as downcast character types who deserve to receive God’s salvific mercy. Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>For example, the Temple elite turned the temple courtyards into a place of extortion instead a place for minorities to worship Yahweh (Luke 19:46).

God’s salvific mercy, while at the same time emphasizing the way that mercy extends especially to those who suffer as downcast members of society (cf. Luke 7:22).

Next, Jesus announces “liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind.” One word often considered central to the discussion of this passage is ἄφεσις, used in this statement (translated “liberty”), and in the following one, to refer to the figure’s ministry to the “oppressed.” It is often recited as evidence that Luke intends the elements of the quotation as metaphor, because it is itself used for “forgiveness” elsewhere in Luke-Acts.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, this is usually simply stated without any analysis of the word’s usage.<sup>35</sup> Careful analysis shows that both the noun ἄφεσις and verb ἀφίημι only mean “forgiveness” elsewhere in Luke when ἁμαρτία is the accusative object of the verb (or contextually implied), or the noun appears with ἁμαρτία as a genitive modifier.<sup>36</sup> But, in both occurrences in Luke 4, ἁμαρτία does not appear at all, indicating that the way we ought to read ἄφεσις is according to its primary meaning, “release.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>For example, Marshall merely states that elsewhere ἄφεσις is used of “forgiveness,” and, therefore, we might be intended to hear that meaning here as well. Marshall, however, makes no analysis of ἄφεσις. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 184.

<sup>35</sup>For example, Gurtner states emphatically that “in Luke-Acts, such release . . . is used exclusively in reference to those who are captive to sin as a release, or to forgiveness, from that state of captivity (Luke 1:77; 3:3; 7:47; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18).” Gurtner writes this just after he has acknowledged that “captives” refers to exiles in the texts Luke draws from. Gurtner’s failure to actually analyze the uses of ἄφεσις allows him to import meaning into this text that is questionable. Gurtner, “Luke’s Isaianic Jubilee,” 140.

<sup>36</sup>I am not arguing in any way that Luke does not concern himself with forgiveness of sin—he uses the language of forgiveness (with the genitive modifier or accusative object “sin”) plenty of times throughout Luke-Acts. I am only arguing that this passage may suffer from over-interpretation and that Luke’s intended meaning may be missed by commentators eager to jump to the spiritual meaning of Jesus’ words. For example, see Gurtner’s essay *ibid.*, 138–45.

<sup>37</sup>The following are occurrences of ἄφεσις with ἁμαρτιῶν: Luke 1:77; 3:3; 24:47. Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18. Without ἁμαρτιῶν, ἄφεσις only occurs in 4:18. As for the verb ἀφίημι, it occurs with “sins” explicitly in the context when it is translated “forgive” (e.g., Luke 5:20, 21, 23, 24) but as “leave” or “release” without sins as the accusative object of the verb (e.g. Luke 4:39; 5:11).

The verb ἀφίημι means, “To dismiss or release someone or something from a place or one’s presence” according to William F. Arndt and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “ἀφίημι;” Henry George Liddell et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), s.v. “ἀφίημι.” Liddell and Scott’s lexicon does not even have “forgiveness” as an entry. The noun form ἄφεσις receives the definition, “The act of freeing and liberating from something that confines, *release*” but “forgiveness” only when it is specifically release from ἁμαρτιῶν in William F. Arndt and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “ἀφίημι.”

For the first group of recipients in Luke 4:18b ἄφεσις is for the αἰχμαλώτοις—dative of advantage—“for the captives.” In this case, not only is sin not specified, but the sort of “release” Jesus refers to has to be the sort of “release” captives would desire—freedom, in the Isaianic context.<sup>38</sup> Yet, it is possible that captivity is appropriated by Luke as something metaphorical (or broader than the experience of exiles), and, therefore, forgiveness might be implied.

When the data is examined, it may be seen that captivity in Luke is usually captivity to suffering of various kinds, especially under the oppression or bondage of Satan (Luke 13:10–17; Acts 10:38).<sup>39</sup> Yet, importantly, the pericope of the woman whose sins are forgiven demonstrates that sin, in Luke, is also a great burden only relieved by forgiveness (Luke 7:36–50). Thus, Luke 7:36–50 seems to indicate that “forgiveness” may be a connotation of release from captivity, though “release for the captives” cannot be reduced to “forgiveness.”

“Recovery of sight to the blind” appears next in the quotation. Like the spiritualized interpretation of “the poor,” some commentators claim “the blind” (Luke 4:18) are really those who are spiritually blind.<sup>40</sup> As evidence for this claim, these commentators present Luke 1:77–80;<sup>41</sup> 6:39; 8:10; 10:23–24; 18:41–43.<sup>42</sup> Of these texts, only 8:10 and 10:23–24 actually connect the inability to see and spiritual blindness

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<sup>38</sup>P. Miller writes on the meaning of this word in Isaiah, “Isaiah spoke of concrete acts of deliverance, the setting free of captives, the announcement of release to people in slavery for economic reasons. In effect they have to do with all the experiences of human bondage which the men and women of Israel experienced as a nation and as individuals.” Patrick D. Miller, “Exposition of Luke 4:16-21,” *Interpretation* 29, no. 4 (October 1975): 419.

<sup>39</sup>So Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 212.

<sup>40</sup>So Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 184; Gurtner, “Luke’s Isaianic Jubilee,” 141; Pao and Schnabel, *Luke*, 289.

<sup>41</sup>Actually, rather than spiritual blindness which is not apparent in this text, light in Isaiah is often associated with the dawning of justice and righteousness (Isa 58:6–8; 59:9). This correspondence can also be seen in texts like Ps 44:3, where the light of Yahweh’s face is held in parallel with the arrival of saving justice.

<sup>42</sup>Gurtner, “Luke’s Isaianic Jubilee,” 141.

explicitly.<sup>43</sup> Still, it must be acknowledged that Luke has both uses of “blind” in his gospel (Luke 7:21, 22; 14:13; 18:35). In the MT, the idiomatic פְּקוּדֵי־חַקִּיִּים אֲשֶׁר־בְּיָדַי, “Opening of the prison for the prisoners,” the *Vorlage* of Luke’s LXX quotation, is in a parallel structure with, “To proclaim liberty to the captives,” indicating that the idiom does genuinely communicate release for those who are bound in the MT. However, the LXX translators replaced this difficult line with καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν. Luke has followed this usage. Whatever the reasoning of the LXX translators, Luke’s meaning appears to operate at two levels—the blind are healed through Jesus presence (Luke 7:21, 22; 18:35), and through his ministry many are enlightened spiritually (Luke 8:10; 10:23–24).

The next element is the quotation from Isaiah 56:8, and includes the second use of ἀφέσις: “He sent me . . . ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει.” Once again, the recipients of “release” are specified—the “oppressed.” In the context of Isaiah 56:8, the oppression is clearly oppression at the hands of those who are socially unjust. Still, the question must be asked, “Who does Luke identify as the oppressed in his narrative?” Gurtner writes that “the oppressed” refers especially “to the binding power of Satan (Luke 13:10–17; Acts 10:38), the release from debts (Luke 11:4), and the forgiveness of sins (Luke 5:20–24; 7:47–50; cf. Luke 1:77).”<sup>44</sup> Gurtner’s observations are correct, but, incomplete. Noticeably absent is Jesus’ more frequent attention to various forms of physical oppression (Luke 3:12–14; 5:27–32; 7:22–23; 14:12–14; 16:19–31; 18:1–8).<sup>45</sup> Thus, τεθραυσμένους, like αἰχμαλώτοις, may carry spiritual connotations, but cannot be

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<sup>43</sup>The claim, for example, that Luke 1:77–80 is a reference to spiritual enlightenment is flawed. What is portrayed in this passage is the Messiah, “Lighting the way of escape for his people from the darkness of captivity and into the way of peace.” Bauckham, *The Jewish World around the New Testament*, 343.

<sup>44</sup>Gurtner, “Luke’s Isaianic Jubilee,” 183.

<sup>45</sup>Gurtner does acknowledge debt forgiveness in Luke 11:4. However, the tone of his exposition tends toward heavily emphasizing spiritual realities. Gurtner, “Luke’s Isaianic Jubilee,” 183.

reduced to them.

Tying some of these elements together, it must be recognized that Jesus' ministry has a significant physical, social justice component in both his deeds and his teaching in Luke's gospel—merciful and kind actions on behalf of the poor and vulnerable in society. Consider, for example, Luke 14:13–14. At the resurrection of the just (δικαιος) the host of the feast will be repaid for going out into the highways and bi-ways to collect all manner of guests who will not be able to repay him. The picture is of one wealthy enough to host a feast acting in socially merciful ways to those unable to repay.<sup>46</sup> Thus the text has an implicit sense of social justice at a social level. Another text, Luke 16:31 implies, by its answer, that Moses and the prophets were sufficient to warn the rich man to behave differently at a socially just level prior to judgment. The reversal of this parable is that the poor sick man who was repeatedly passed over by the wealthy man in fine clothing ultimately receives salvation, while the rich man receives condemnation. One cannot help but think, given the stress already placed on Isaiah, that Isaiah's program of justice and righteousness lies close behind this text. In the parable of the persistent widow, the conclusion to the story of the woman coming before the judge for justice is Jesus' words that God will indeed give justice to his elect who cry out to him day and night (Luke 18:7–8. cf. Gen 4:20; Exod 2:23). God's concern here is evidently for the outsiders of society, like this widow, who endure oppression. They will receive justice. Furthermore, Jesus cleanses the temple in Luke 19:45–48 because it has been turned into a place where the poor are oppressed (cf. Isa 56:7; Jer 7:11). Moreover, Zacchaeus' repentance shows remarkable continuity with social justice (Luke 19:8), as does the repentance of those who receive John's baptism (Luke 3:10).

Finally, the 4:18–19 quotation ends, κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν. The

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<sup>46</sup>Certainly the point of the story has more to do with the juxtaposition of the invitation to the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' who finally come—yet this component of mercy to the oppressed is still an element of the story.

“favorable year of the Lord” is Yahweh’s time of eschatological salvation.<sup>47</sup> Many commentators see this as a reference to eschatological Jubilee.<sup>48</sup> Significantly, “The intent of the jubilee legislation was profoundly social in character[.]”<sup>49</sup> During the year of Jubilee fields lay fallow, debts were relinquished, families returned to their ancestral land-inheritance, and slaves went free (Lev 25).<sup>50</sup>

Jesus’ purpose in announcing this eschatological Jubilee may be enlightened via Daniel 9. This text connects the principle of Jubilee to the reality of eschatological deliverance for the people of God. Daniel, contemplating Jeremiah, recognized Yahweh’s determined 70 years of exile. However, he received revelation that 70 weeks of years are determined before a true return from exile in every sense will be accomplished, including atonement for iniquity (Dan 9:24). Thus, Daniel 9 indicates that ultimate Jubilee would include far more than physical restoration—it had spiritual elements too—the forgiveness of sins.

Though the concept of eschatological Jubilee began to carry spiritual connotations through the teaching of prophets like Daniel, it is important to read Luke carefully enough to see that the physical elements of eschatological Jubilee have not been abrogated because of the spiritual realities these prophets anticipated. Eschatological forgiveness of sin, and both actions and teaching regarding the easing the burdens of the poor, the oppressed, and marginal people in society, occur together throughout Jesus’ ministry.

In summary, P. Miller astutely strikes the right balance between physical and

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<sup>47</sup>Gurtner, “Luke’s Isaianic Jubilee,” 143–44.

<sup>48</sup>So, Robert Bryan Sloan, *The Favorable Year of the Lord: A Study of Jubiliary Theology in the Gospel of Luke* (Austin, TX: Schola Press, 1977), 44; Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 184.

<sup>49</sup>Sloan, “The Favorable Year of the Lord,” 12.

<sup>50</sup>Robert Sloan identifies significant Jubilee parallels in every element of the quotation from Isa. *Ibid.*, 45–68.

spiritual realities in Jesus' eschatological mission:

[Luke 4:18–19] enable us—indeed force us—to understand that which God began in Jesus not simply as release from sin but as all those concrete kinds of physical, social, and economic liberation of which the Old Testament speaks. At the same time Luke will not allow us to assume that those things which oppress the souls and minds and lives of people are wholly tied to their physical situation. The Gospel reminds us that the freedom God intends through Christ is at root release from the entanglement and dominance of sin in our lives.<sup>51</sup>

Hence, right interpretation of Luke 4:18–19 will likewise strike a balance between the physical and spiritual connotations of the passage: social justice is actuated through Jesus' work as the righteous and Just Davidic Messiah, anointed with the Spirit of restoration (Isa 11:1–4). Jesus' presence manifests justice and righteousness physically in a way proleptic of consummate restoration—<sup>52</sup>but there is more. It is clear that Luke cares deeply about spiritual separation from God (cf. Isa 59:2). Thus, forgiveness is a significant theme in Luke-Acts (Luke 1:77; 3:3; 5:20; 7:47; 11:4; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18). Jesus' ministry as the eschatological Messianic figure accomplishes the ultimate Jubilee for his people. The result is social justice wherever he is present, and forgiveness of sin as people enter the kingdom of God. The Davidic Messiah has come, anointed with the Spirit of restoration, ready to bring fruitfulness to the people.

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<sup>51</sup>Miller, "Exposition of Luke 4," 120.

<sup>52</sup>I must emphasize that I am not arguing for restoration in any final way as realized through Jesus' ministry. Rather, I am arguing that Luke intentionally portrays the ethical restoration of social justice in the people, as anticipated in Isaiah, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

## CHAPTER 4

### ACTS: THE SPIRIT AND THE JUST KINGDOM

#### Introduction

In this chapter, I will conclude my thesis by demonstrating that the early community is a place where Holy-Spirit indwelt people evidence social justice in their actions towards one another.<sup>1</sup> Luke demonstrated that social justice was a significant part of Jesus' ministry and teaching in his gospel, but he did not show how Jesus' righteous and just character could extend to others, as he will post-Pentecost. Thus, I will argue that Luke draws Isaianic themes together from his gospel to demonstrate that, in Acts, Jesus' exaltation and outpouring of the Holy Spirit result in Isaiah's vision of a Jewish community restored to fruitfulness as a socially just society. Significantly, I will call attention to the Jewish nature of this early community to show congruency with Isaiah's depiction of restoration: Jews are restored prior to the ingathering of the nations.

#### **The Outpouring of the Spirit: Isaiah 32:15; 59:21**

Spirit and witness are connected themes in Luke-Acts:<sup>2</sup> Luke 24:47–49 records

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<sup>1</sup>I chose Acts 2:42–47 as my chief text because of its primacy of place. For my thesis it is important to note that Luke's depiction of the community occurs at a key location in the book of Acts—immediately subsequent to the ascension of Christ and the out-pouring of the Spirit. This textual choice is congruent with Hay's criteria of narrative prominence. Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 32.

<sup>2</sup>One might fairly protest that Luke explicitly identifies Pentecost with Joel's prophecy, not Isaiah's. Though true, this objection does not rule out the likelihood of my argument. Luke shows great proficiency with the OT in Luke 1 and 2 by the way he incorporates far more from the OT than his explicit quotations. So here, Luke may demonstrate the eschatological working of Yahweh from one specific text without ruling out broader allusions to other OT motifs in his writing.

Moreover, another way to reconcile my thesis with Luke's identification of the Spirit with Joel's prophecy is through Turner's conclusions regarding the Spirit of prophecy. Turner argues that Luke specifically identifies the Spirit of prophecy as the element Peter extends to those who would believe the message of the gospel in Acts 2:28–39. However, this Spirit of prophecy, argues Turner, is

Jesus telling his disciples that they will receive “power from on high” as his witnesses so that the gospel, “repentance and forgiveness of sins,” may go forth “to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” Then, Luke 24:49 is fulfilled in Acts 1:8, when Jesus tells his disciples, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Thus, it is no wonder that the Spirit and empowered witness are connected in these passages.

Yet, is there more to the Spirit’s outpouring than *merely* empowerment for witness? Or, is empowerment for witness a complex reality that includes Isaianic restoration to socially just living, perhaps? The first clue drawing us toward an Isaianic restoration motif in this passage is the similarity between Isaiah 32:15 and Acts 1:8.<sup>3</sup> Both Acts 1:8 and LXX Isaiah 32:15 use ἔρχομαι, ἐπί, the plural accusative of σύ, and πνεῦμα, demonstrating some significant overlap in language. Acts 1:8 is the fulfillment of what was first promised by Jesus in Luke 24:49. Here, Jesus tells his disciples to remain in the city ἕως they are clothed with power from ὕψος. Isaiah 32:15 speaks similarly of the desolations that are consequences of Israel’s unfruitfulness continuing ἕως “until” the Spirit ἐπέλθῃ ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς . . . ἀφ’ ὑψηλοῦ. These parallels incline one to conclude that Luke’s articulation of the outpouring of the Spirit is tied to the Spirit’s role in the restoration of Israel in Isaiah, by the use of similar language.<sup>4</sup> The result of the Spirit’s

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congruent with the hopes of the Judaism of the time for a Spirit of prophecy that would bring about individual and corporate ethical renewal. Turner provides the analogue of Isa 11:1–4 for this point. In that text, it is the wisdom that is brought to the Davidic ruler that allows him to bring about the restoration of Israel. Turner does not connect this restoration empowerment to the social justice hendiadys in Isa 11:4. However, if he had, his argument would be strengthened. Thus, though the Joel quotation demonstrates that Luke wants to connect prophecy primarily to the power of the Spirit, ethical restoration is an entailment of the prophetic empowerment of the Spirit. My thesis is in no way hindered by Luke’s attention to the Joel quotation. Max Turner, *Power from on High* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 431–33.

<sup>3</sup>Isa 32:15, ἕως ἂν ἐπέλθῃ ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς πνεῦμα ἀφ’ ὑψηλοῦ. Luke 24:49, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πατρὸς μου ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς· ὑμεῖς δὲ καθίσατε ἐν τῇ πόλει ἕως οὗ ἐνδύσησθε ἐξ ὕψους δύναμιν. Acts 1:8, ἀλλὰ λήμψεσθε δύναμιν ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς.

<sup>4</sup>So, Alan J. Thompson, *The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus: Luke’s Account of God’s*

outpouring in Isaiah 32 (and also in Isa 59:21) is righteousness—particularly righteousness and justice (social justice) where before there was none. As we will see, righteousness and justice is also the result of Luke’s description of the Spirit’s outpouring.

The second clue that Luke has ethical restoration in mind comes from several prominent parallels to Ezekiel 37 in this passage.<sup>5</sup> Ezekiel 37 communicates a time when God’s people will be restored to life by the Spirit and subsequently re-united as one people. Like Isaiah 32:15, Ezekiel speaks of a time of restoration to life in covenant with Yahweh from a place of disobedience and metaphorical death (similar to Isaiah’s “fruitful field” [Isa 32:15] that stands in contrast to the former stinking grapes [5:2]). Luke draws together Acts 2 and Ezekiel 37 by (1) the Spirit references in each passage<sup>6</sup> (Ezek 37:6, 14; Acts 2:4), (2) the sound that accompanies the outpouring (Ezek 37:7; Acts 2:2), (3) and the reunification of Israel in each passage (Ezek 37:11, 17, 19; Acts 2:9–11).<sup>7</sup>

Thirdly, a narrative connection may be seen between Isaiah 32:1–16 and Acts 2. In Acts 2:33, the Spirit of restoration only comes upon the people subsequent to the exaltation of the Davidic Messiah, whom Luke has shown throughout his gospel to be a socially just king. In Peter’s sermon, the Holy Spirit is an essential proof of Jesus’ inaugurated reign (2:33).<sup>8</sup> Pentecost demonstrates that Jesus, the Davidic Messiah,

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*Unfolding Plan* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2011), 127.

<sup>5</sup>See for example Richard Bauckham, *The Jewish World around the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 358–59; Thompson, *Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus*, 111–12.

<sup>6</sup>Πνευμα in the LXX, רוּחַ in the MT, and “breath” in the ESV.

<sup>7</sup>Though Acts 2:9 is sometimes taken as a reference to the ingathering of gentile nations into the kingdom, it is more likely a reference to diaspora Jews from the northern ten tribes of Israel who witness the events of Pentecost, are subsequently preached to (Acts 2:14–36), and receive salvation (Acts 2:41). So Bauckham, *The Jewish World around the New Testament*, 358–59; Thompson, *Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus*, 109–12.

<sup>8</sup>C. F. D. Moule observes the way that miracles, signs and wonders are usually concentrated around the redemption hot-spots of redemption history. Thus, Jesus’ exaltation as the Davidic Messiah are corroborated by signs to demonstrate God’s salvific work through him. C. F. D. Moule, *Miracles: Cambridge Studies in Their Philosophy and History* (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co., 1965), 166.

received from the father the promised Holy Spirit and has now poured it out on the people, whom he describes behaving in strikingly different ways as a result in Acts 2:42–47.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, Isaiah 32:1–15 describes the reign of a socially just king before the Spirit descends bringing social justice to the people (Isa 32:15–16). The result, in Isaiah 32, is fruitfulness among the people—specifically fruit of social justice, “Then טְשׁוּמָה will dwell in the wilderness, and הַצְדִּיקָה abide in the fruitful field” (Isa 32:16).<sup>10</sup> As I have argued above, the progression of Isaiah 59–60 demonstrates something similar. It is only as Yahweh stands up and brings salvation to his people that the Spirit is then promised (Isa 59:21) with the result that social justice goes forth (at least one aspect of the glory in Isa 60:1–3). Thus, both Acts and Isaiah share a similar narrative progress: the righteous and just king is strongly associated with the outpouring of the Spirit, resulting in social justice.

The connection between Isaiah 32:1–16 and Acts 2 may have an additional layer. Galatians 3:14 likely identifies the reception of the Holy Spirit with one element of Yahweh’s promises to Abraham.<sup>11</sup> Genesis 18:19 predicates Yahweh’s promises upon the faithful discharge of righteousness and justice (social justice) by Abraham’s children: “For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him

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<sup>9</sup>The Spirit of restoration is anticipated in such texts as Isa 32:15–18, “Until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field. And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.” Cf. Isa 11 and the Spirit given to Jesse’s seed and Isa 42 where the Spirit is given to the servant. In all these texts, righteousness and justice are closely associated with the Spirit—first in His work in the Messiah, and then, through the reign of the righteous king, restoration grows outward. This association is especially seen in Isa 32, where the rule of a righteous king precedes the outpouring of the Spirit.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. Thompson, *Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus*, 127.

<sup>11</sup>I say “may” because the way to understand “the promise” in Gal 3:14 is difficult. It likely does not refer exclusively to the Spirit, because the preceding context indicates that inheritance is more likely. Yon-Gyong Kwon, *Eschatology in Galatians: Rethinking Paul’s Response to the Crisis in Galatia* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 108–11. Schreiner argues along similar lines that the (singular) promise of the Spirit may still be one element of the (plural) promises to Abraham. Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 218.

to keep the way of the Lord by doing  $\text{הַדָּקָה}$  and  $\text{טְשִׁיבָה}$  so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.” Luke shows that Jesus kept righteousness and justice in his merciful and kind actions to those who are downcast, as well as by his teaching to his disciples. Therefore, Jesus can receive what was promised to Abraham (note that Luke identifies him as a son of Abraham in Luke 3:34). The result is that Jesus pours out on his people the promised Holy Spirit. He received the Spirit because of his righteousness and justice, and he dispenses the Spirit with the result of more righteousness and justice upon those he gives it to. Social justice, then, is really a central element to both Jesus’ life and ministry (which qualify him to receive the Spirit) as well as the subsequent benefit for the early community (who, I will argue, walk in social justice).

These observations bring my argument one step closer to demonstrating that Luke intends to show that the exalted Davidic Messiah reigns in justice and righteousness and pours out his Spirit for the ethical restoration of the people in social justice as per Isaiah 32:15.

### **Acts 2:42–47: The Socially Just Community**

At this point in my thesis, I will take some time to exegete the first community text (with insight gathered from Acts 4:32–37 at key points)<sup>12</sup> in order to see whether Luke’s description of the early community supports my claim that the Messiah’s outpouring of the Spirit results in social justice among them.

In Acts 2:42, Luke begins his first community summary with an imperfect periphrastic construction modified by four dative arthrous nouns: <sup>13</sup> ἤσαν δὲ

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<sup>12</sup>Subsequent to Luke’s attention to ethical realities throughout his narrative in Jesus’ Nazareth Manifesto, his teaching, his ministry, and the first community text in Acts 2:42–47, this additional text (Acts 4:32–47) draws attention to the way that Luke repeats his emphasis on the social justice (ethical) component of the restoration in Luke-Acts. Thus, Hays’ third criteria may be seen to be satisfied in my observations of Luke’s corpus. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 32.

<sup>13</sup>I have maintained the literary structure most common among scholars—Acts 2:42–47 is the extent of the summary. For arguments for and against beginning the summary at v. 41 see Maria

προσκαρτεροῦντες τῇ διδαχῇ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῇ κοινωνίᾳ, τῇ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου καὶ ταῖς προσευχαῖς. The periphrastic construction is employed frequently in Κοινή Greek.<sup>14</sup> The use of this construction likely emphasizes that these four nouns were ongoing realities in the early church.<sup>15</sup> Bauer’s lexicon has the meaning of προσκαρτεροῦντες as “hold fast to, continue in, or persevere in” something (with object indicated by the dative case).<sup>16</sup> Thus, *ongoing* practices are denoted by this word. Moreover, Luke’s choice of the word προσκαρτερέω implies that these early believers were particularly devoted to the four dative objects of the participle.

Some argue that these terms describe a worship service.<sup>17</sup> Against this, the four concepts are by no means clearly demonstrative of elements of a service. Alternatively, the “perseverance” of the community in these four practices ought to incline the interpreter to see that Luke describes the early church’s lifestyle, rather than their worship service in particular—it is nowhere apparent that worship services were held constantly. If Luke wanted to communicate that worship was constant he could have stated that worship was, *κατὰ ἡμέρα*, or some such phrase. Rather, it is more likely that Luke wants to demonstrate how the eschatological events of Pentecost and Jesus’ ascension affect the

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Anicia Co, “The Major Summaries in Acts: Acts 2:42–47; 4:32–35; 5:12–16: Linguistic and Literary Relationship,” *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 68 (April 1992): 58–61.

<sup>14</sup>See A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), 322–23.

<sup>15</sup>Daniel Wallace understands this construction to be equivalent to the ongoing force of the imperfect verb. 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), 647. See also Blass, Debrunner, and Funk, where the discussion on periphrasis frequently notes the emphasis on temporal duration. Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961). So also C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 162.

<sup>16</sup>William F. Arndt and Walter Bauer, Logos Research Systems, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2000), s.v. “προσκαρτερέω.”

<sup>17</sup>J. Jeremias has argued extensively that these four terms are an *agape* meal concluded with the Eucharist. See Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*. (New York: Scribner, 1966), 118–22.

community in their daily lives, not merely in their worship service.

The first dative object of the participle is τῆ διδασχῆ, modified by the genitive τῶν ἀποστόλων. This construction is inherently ambiguous—it may indicate either the *activity* of the disciples’ teaching, or the *content* of their message.<sup>18</sup> It may also indicate both preaching publically and teaching privately (Acts 5:28; 13:12; 17:19).<sup>19</sup>

The genitive modifier “of the apostles” is important, in that it makes clear the specific teaching the believers were attracted to. The apostolic teaching takes narrative prominence throughout the book of Acts.<sup>20</sup> This prominence points to the apostles’ role in carrying out the mission of the risen Lord Jesus and bringing his teaching (and through it, his rule) to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Jesus had begun explaining the significance of his death and resurrection to the disciples in Luke 24:27 on the Emmaus road. Moreover, in the opening paragraph of Acts, Luke refers to a forty-day period where Jesus taught the disciples (Acts 1:3), which is followed by a statement that they will be Jesus’ μαρτυρες (Acts 1:8). It is impossible to know exactly what the content of the “apostles’ teaching” was, but it would be inconsistent with Luke’s narrative if it differed vastly from the teaching of Jesus on the Emmaus and the subsequent forty-day period—Luke is careful to tie the origin of teachings about Jesus to Jesus himself (cf. Matt 28:19–20). The apostles’ message must be consistent (if more developed because of the

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<sup>18</sup>So Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary*, Hermeneia: (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 92.

<sup>19</sup>So Barrett, *Acts of the Apostles*, 163; Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009) 160. Moreover, Barrett writes that “there is no indication how far the teaching of the apostles may have consisted in handing on the teaching of Jesus.” Yet, if Luke’s concern is to indicate the way the apostles carry on the eschatological ministry of Jesus (see the parallel between Joel’s eschatological prophecy, Jesus’ “signs and wonders,” and the disciples’ “signs and wonders” in Acts 2:19, 2:22, 2:43, respectively), then we ought to assume that the disciples are continuing the same ministry of Jesus, not in deed only, but also in word.

<sup>20</sup>Peter: Acts 1:16–22; 2:14–36; 3:12–26; 4:8–12; 5:29–32; 10:5–17; 15:7–11; James: Acts 15:14–21; 21:20–25; Stephen (not an apostle, but clearly significant for his teaching about Jesus): Acts 7:2–53; and Paul: Acts 13:16–41; 14:15–17; 17:22–31; 20:18–35; 22:1, 3–21; 23:1, 6b; 24:10–21; 26:2–23; 28:17–20, 25–28.

requirements of very specific circumstances, i.e., Acts 15) with Jesus' teaching.<sup>21</sup> Thus, whether content or activity is meant by "teaching of the apostles," it connects concretely to the teaching of Jesus.

Significantly, Jesus' teaching, as communicated by Luke, often describes the necessity of social justice in the lives of his followers (Luke 6:20–36; 10:25–36; 11:4, 42–44, 45–46; 12:32–33; 14:12–14; 16:19–31; 18:6–7). Hence, devotion to Jesus' teaching in the early community would have included devotion to Jesus' teaching about living lives that are socially just—just and righteous.

The next term τῆ κοινωvία is perhaps the most discussed and difficult of the four.<sup>22</sup> This difficulty is evident in the manuscripts, some of which place "breaking," in the genitive, following "the fellowship" in order to read sacramental communion into this word ("The fellowship of the breaking of bread").<sup>23</sup> Contrary to the sacramental reading, Bauer's lexicon provides, "Close association involving mutual interests and sharing, association, communion, fellowship, close relationship" as the primary definition for κοινωvία.<sup>24</sup>

Kοινωvία is often used in Hellenistic literature, but only here in Luke's writing. Two backgrounds may be discarded for lack of evidence,<sup>25</sup> but there are two that

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<sup>21</sup>Another pertinent point is that earliest Christian tradition asserts that valid Christian doctrine derives from what the apostles taught. If this is the case, then it must be granted that the earliest Christian tradition understood the apostles' teaching to be absolutely authoritative (because it was so clearly tied to the teachings of Christ himself)—clearly an indication of the early church's belief that God communicated his own teaching through the disciples. So Pervo, *Acts*, 92.

<sup>22</sup> Pervo calls it the "most difficult" of the four. *Ibid*, 92.

<sup>23</sup> See the following D-Texts, d vg syr<sup>p</sup> cops<sup>bo</sup>. I am indebted to Richard Pervo for this observation. *Ibid*, 92.

<sup>24</sup>Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, s.v. "κοινωvία."

<sup>25</sup>(1) Mealand has argued that the Greek concept of Utopia is the specific background to this word, and thus one should interpret it as Luke's conception of that Utopia in the early church. David L. Mealand, "Community of Goods and Utopian Allusions in Acts II-IV," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 28, no. 1 (1977): 96–99. However, it is not at all clear that Luke is drawing on Greek Utopian ideals rather than OT backgrounds. Furthermore, Utopian language is largely limited to Plato and Luke would not likely develop his understanding of Christian community based on pagan mythology. So, David Peter Seccombe, *Possessions and the Poor in Luke-Acts* (Linz, Austria:

comport well with the evidence in this passage. First, some argue that idealized Greek friendship should be understood as the primary background because of the ubiquity of the Greek proverb κοινὰ τὰ φίλων: “The belongings of friends are held in common.”<sup>26</sup> In this case κοινωνία would be employed here to demonstrate the virtuous height the early community reached in their friendship. Secondly, Philo described sharing of material goods as an extension of friendship and good-will:

Others conceiving the idea that there is no good outside doing justice to men have no heart for anything but companionship (ὁμιλίαν) with men. In their desire of *fellowship* (διὰ κοινωνίας ἕμερον) they supply the good things of life in equal measure to all for their use. (emphasis mine. Decal. 109)

Together, the Greek friendship background and Philo’s statement comport well with Bauer’s definition above,<sup>27</sup> where “sharing” seems to be a derived meaning from the primary semantic value of “close association,” what many have translated as “fellowship.” Thus, I believe a rich community “fellowship” that encompasses and spills over into material possessions is intended by κοινωνία.<sup>28</sup>

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A. Fuchs, 1983), 200.

(2) J. Y. Campbell identified a churchly collection (an offering/contribution) with κοινωνία. J. Y. Campbell, “KOINΩNIA and Its Cognates in the New Testament,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 51, no. 4 (December 1932): 352–80. However, against this perspective, there is no other place in Luke-Acts where “collection” ought to translate κοινωνία. So Seccombe, *Possessions and the Poor in Luke-Acts*, 205. Moreover, Peterman argues that κοινωνία is never used to refer to something concrete—rather it is an abstract concept. Gerald W. Peterman, “Social Reciprocity and Gentile Debt to Jews in Romans 15:26-27,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 4 (December 2007): 735–42.

<sup>26</sup>David Seccombe argues that the utopian ideal is only secondary to the primary friendship background. This is because (1) utopian ideas were largely limited to Plato, (2) Luke would not likely have developed his understanding of the Christian community based on a pagan mythological conception, and (3) Acts, “Tells us so little about the organization of the early church, and fails even to mention their work. Thus, it is doubtful Luke is portraying an ideal society.” Seccombe, *Possessions and the Poor in Luke-Acts*, 200.

<sup>27</sup>So Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, and Donald H. Juel, Hermeneia: (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 23; Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), 191; John B. Polhill, *Acts*, New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 119.

<sup>28</sup> The concept of a close community fellowship characterized by sharing property also has a specific Jewish parallel in the Essene community at Qumran. Note the words of 1QS 5.1–2, “They should keep apart from the congregation of the men of injustice in order to constitute a community (קָהָל) in law and possessions [.]” Moshe Weinfeld suggests that Qumran’s use of the word קָהָל for “community” is likely strongly influenced by the surrounding Greek culture’s use of the κοινωνία

Moreover, this definition offers a great deal of support for my thesis: The Holy Spirit is poured out on the people, and the result is a rich fellowship that includes the sharing of possessions (Acts 2:45; 4:34–35). Rather than adding house to house in a broken land (Isa 5), these people love one another fully and contribute to one another’s needs in a way consistent with Luke’s attention to possessions in his gospel (Luke 3:10–14; 6:24–26; 11:4; 12:33–34). This rich fellowship indicates the reversal of sinful inattentiveness to the needs of the poor by those who are rich (Luke 16:19–22). What Luke describes naturally emerges from the Isaianic expectation for a socially-just society.

J. Jeremias argued that the next term, τῆ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου, is a veiled reference to the Eucharist. However, scholars debate whether this phrase was a cultic term at this time.<sup>29</sup> There is some evidence that the phrase was not used as a reference to the Lord’s Supper until the second century AD (cf. *Did.* 14.1; Ignatius, *Eph.* 20.2). Moreover, in Jewish parlance τῆ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου was not a cultic act; the phrase described the beginning of a meal.<sup>30</sup> In the context of the summary, the expanded statement in 46 regarding breaking bread in various homes uses the phrase μετελάμβανον τροφῆς, “they shared food” to describe daily meals appositionally to “breaking.” Here, in verse 42, therefore, it is also much more likely a reference to daily meals (again, note the

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concept. This is because Qumran is the only place  $\tau\pi\tau$  is found with the “community” sense in all of Hebrew literature. Moshe Weinfeld, *The Organizational Pattern and the Penal Code of the Qumran Sect: A Comparison with Guilds and Religious Associations of the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (Fribourg, Switzerland: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 13–14. Barrett comments on this text that “in the sphere of Torah and property’, that is, the purpose of their association is the proper fulfillment of Torah and the joint (not individual) management of their property.” Barrett, *Acts of the Apostles*, 164. Like the community in Acts, and the Greek friendship parallel, the Qumran community lived out their fellowship in a way that involved material possessions.

<sup>29</sup>Those for a cultic reference include Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 120–21; Simon Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990), 111; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians and to the Philippians* (Columbus, OH: Wartburg Press, 1946), 116. For some of those against the cultic view, see Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 161; Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 151; *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), s.v. “κλάω,” by Johannes Behm.

<sup>30</sup>Behm, “κλάω.”

ongoing practice indicated by the imperfect periphrastic construction), than to the Eucharist, per se.<sup>31</sup>

Yet several commentators have noted the way that this meal, highlighted in this way, at this point in the church's history, was likely to *include* elements of the Lord's Supper (as it would eventually be practiced) in the observance of these daily meals—a hard distinction between the daily meals of the community and the Supper may not have developed yet.<sup>32</sup> This last suggestion has merit because it does not reduce the term “breaking of bread,” anachronistically, to the observation of the Eucharist, but does take seriously the religious motivations of this early Christian community—the meal was not *merely* a meal, nor was it likely the Eucharist as subsequently practiced. Rather, given Peter's foregoing sermon, Luke portrays the community as an eschatological one established because of the work of the Messiah. Therefore, the meals were probably religiously pithy and celebratory, as they shared together (v. 46).

If my conclusion is correct regarding the breaking of bread, one may see a socially-just community here, again, in the rich fellowship of the redeemed community. Those who had little and those who had much ate together and celebrated the work of the Messiah. The lines between the haves and the have-nots are replaced by the identity of the redeemed. Note the way this description fits the ethical priorities taught in Luke's gospel and highlights the themes of social justice from Isaiah (cf. Luke 3:10–14; 6:30; 12:32–33; 14:13–14).

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<sup>31</sup>Keener writes, “Because ‘breaking bread’ is so closely connected grammatically with ‘fellowship’ here, it seems likely that part of the disciples’ sharing of possessions included common meals at the expense of those who could afford the food. It was a daily (Acts 2:46) practice that involved shared use of property in, presumably, especially the more ample homes.” Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 1003. With Keener, I certainly understand this summary to broadly focus on the fellowship and unity of the community, rather than elements of its worship (though worship is not excluded [note the worshipful attitude of the community in 47]—it simply is not the focus). Hence, in this context, as I have argued, items of worship are less likely than items of community.

<sup>32</sup>See Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 23; Barrett, *Acts of the Apostles*, 165; F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 73; Pervo, *Acts*, 95.

Lastly, they devoted themselves ταῖς προσευχαῖς. What sort of prayers were intended here? In 3:1 we see that the apostles went up to the temple to pray at the Jewish times of prayer. The article with the plural noun may indicate a definite set of prayers, while a singular referent might be expected if it was to prayer in general.<sup>33</sup> The Messiah had come, adding significance to the set prayers of Judaism for those who believed.<sup>34</sup> Even so, like the breaking of bread, such prayers were more than likely infused with greater meaning because of the eschatological work of Christ in this nascent community. These prayers, then, would seem to describe the community of believers as exemplary Jews, rather than as an independent movement, at this point in the life of the church.

For Luke to parallel Isaiah's restoration program, then, first, Luke must mark the restoration of Israel (in justice and righteousness), prior to the expansion of the new community (cf. Isa 60:1–3). If I am right to identify “the prayers” with Jewish prayers that are infused with new meaning through the work of Christ, it would appear that Luke does highlight the particular redeemed Jewishness of the community here.

After verse 43 declares the result of God's work in the community: “And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles,” verses 44–45 describe the life of the community in further detail.

First, πάντες δὲ οἱ πιστεύοντες ἦσαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ. All the believers were ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, an extremely difficult to translate phrase.<sup>35</sup> It occurs in Luke 1:15; 2:1, 44, 47; 4:26. Moshe Weinfeld notes how this phrase translates τῆ in its occurrences in the LXX, suggesting that “together” is the most natural translation.<sup>36</sup> Weinfeld's conclusion may be

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<sup>33</sup>So Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 162. Bock suggests set prayers are intended here because such prayers existed in Judaism; the temple is referenced in Acts 2:46 and 3:1, where such prayers would be made; and Jesus himself gave the disciples a set prayer in Luke 11:2–4. Bock, *Acts*, 151.

<sup>34</sup>See Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 73.

<sup>35</sup>So Polhill, *Acts*, 120.

<sup>36</sup>Weinfeld, *The Organizational Pattern*, 14.

seen to be correct in 4:26, where the most natural translation of ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ in the quotation from Psalm 2 is “together.” Because it is possible to read “together” as the translation of this phrase in each of the above locations in Luke-Acts, and because this was how it was used in the LXX, I am inclined to translate “together” for ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ in both 2:44 and 47.<sup>37</sup>

The believers were, therefore, together, and Luke states καὶ εἶχον ἅπαντα κοινά, “And they were having everything in common.” Then he expands this statement with καὶ τὰ κτήματα καὶ τὰς ὑπάρξεις ἐπίπρασκον καὶ διμερίζον αὐτὰ πᾶσιν καθότι ἄν τις χρεῖαν εἶχεν, “And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.” The imperfect tense of the verbs in this last clause indicate that this lavish generosity was an ongoing practice, rather than a onetime action.<sup>38</sup> This recurrence indicates two things: (1) the community differed from Qumran in that ongoing personal ownership of property continued (otherwise how could the ongoing sale of property according to need continue?). And (2) the community was marked by radical generosity and care for one another.

Historical plausibility can be seen for this community by a consideration of the Qumran parallels with this text.<sup>39</sup> (1) Like the Acts community, those in Qumran seem to have understood themselves in some sort of eschatological way.<sup>40</sup> In 4Q394–399 they

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<sup>37</sup>So Bock, *Acts*, 152; Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “αὐτός, ἡ, ό.” Cf. Barrett, *Acts of the Apostles*, 167.

<sup>38</sup>This observation may be seen to be correct because of the way that the verbal tense has changed from the immediately prior context where descriptions about what had happened at one time in the history of the church, as recorded by Luke, are described with the aorist tense: κατενύγησαν and εἶπόν (Acts 2:37), ἐβαπτίσθησαν and προσετέθησαν (Acts 2:41).

<sup>39</sup>See also Pieter W. Van Der Horst, “Hellenistic Parallels to the Acts of the Apostles 2:1–47,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 25 (October 1985): 59. Van Der Horst’s conclusions differ from mine in that he sees an Essene parallel to be the primary background (though he acknowledges Deut 15 also) to Acts 2:44–45. Conversely, I believe it is the reverse: Luke understands Old Testament fulfillment as the primary background and articulates that fulfillment in a way that resembles the various eschatological hopes of 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Judaism at the time of his writing *because* they drew from a common source—the Old Testament.

<sup>40</sup>Peter’s quotation of Joel, used to explain the events that just happened, begins, “And in the last days it shall be” (Acts 2:17a).

write explicitly, “This is the end of days.” The Rule of the Congregation, a supplement to the Rule of the Community, is introduced as “the rule for all the congregation of Israel in the End of Days” (1Q28a). (2) Moreover, their self-identity was also as a pure congregation. They saw themselves as the community of the sons of light, as opposed to the sons of darkness (1QS 1.9). They saw themselves as true Israel (if not restored Israel) and awaited the day when they would be vindicated by God in battle (1QM). This self-understanding had implications for the life of their community: they swore to return to Moses and the Torah completely, (1QS 5.8–9); they spoke of themselves as those saved from death and given life in a community of the congregation of the sons of heaven (1QH<sup>a</sup> 11.3–22); and they even used the language of re-birth and (new)-creation to describe their salvation (יצרה מעפר, “You fashioned out of dust” for an everlasting community 1QH<sup>a</sup> 11.21). Similarly, the Acts community’s self-identity was that of a pure remnant who had correctly placed their belief in the Davidic scion, whereas their contemporaries had rejected him (2:29–36). (3) Like the Acts community, part of the expression of the Qumran community’s eschatological viewpoint and pure (remnant) self-identity, was in their community of goods—in order to become a full member, one had to contribute all their possessions to the community (1QS 5.1–2).<sup>41</sup>

But why did they live/believe this way? E. P. Sanders could write of this period of Judaism, “In general terms it may be said that ‘Jewish eschatology’ and ‘the restoration of Israel’ are almost synonymous.”<sup>42</sup> The Qumran community certainly seems to have thought of themselves as a sort of remnant of (or, even, true) Israel living in (or on the cusp of) the last days. They looked forward to eschatological and apocalyptic vindication. Apparently it was important for them to exercise their community life

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<sup>41</sup>Flavius Josephus, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged*, trans. William Whiston (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987).

<sup>42</sup> E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 97. Note also the restoration heavy eschatological texts in the Isaiah and Micah: Isa 49:5; 56:1–8; 60:3–7; 60:3–7; 66:18–24; Mic 4.

consistently with their eschatological perspective. It seems probable, therefore, that the Qumran community's eschatological self-understanding and organization were tied to beliefs/hopes regarding the restoration of Israel.

In comparison, observe the way that Luke also describes the Acts community in an eschatological context by its devotion to the law (the authoritative teaching of the apostles, Acts 2:42) and the sharing of possessions (Acts 2:44–45). While the Qumran community parallel cannot be pressed as proof of any specific conclusion regarding the Acts community, it is useful because it provides an example of the way that even community organization during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple period could be related to concepts of eschatological restoration.

But how did Luke understand the eschatological significance of the Acts community specifically? Though Luke is laconic in his description in verse 44, the parallel summary, Acts 4:32, gives a little more information. In that passage the community of goods is described this way: οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐνδεής τις ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς. When one compares the LXX of Deuteronomy 15:4 (οὐκ ἔσται ἐν σοὶ ἐνδεής) with this text, it seems probable that Luke understood the community in the light of eschatological fulfillment of Deuteronomy 15:4. Further weight may be given to this observation when one notes that the promise that “there will be no poor among you” is followed by the conditional statement in Deuteronomy 15:5: “If only you will strictly obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all this commandment that I command you today.” Luke has already made certain that the reader understands this early community *was* devoted to the apostles' teaching and, therefore, to the Lord they represented—Jesus Christ. This devotion to the apostle's teaching (and, therefore, to Luke's presentation of Jesus' teaching) was expressed practically in the life of the community by care for one another—the obedience required in Deuteronomy 15:5 is evidently lived out with the result that “they did not have any poor among them.” The result was a socially just community, which is in fact what Deuteronomy prescribed, and which Isaiah anticipates

in his articulation of the restoration following the outpouring of the Spirit (Isa 32:15; 59:21–60:3). Peter T. Vogt articulates the radical social life prescribed in Deuteronomy this way:

Significantly, care of the landless and poor is established in Deuteronomy as one of the most important measures of the effectiveness of the people of Israel in living out loyalty to Yahweh and, therefore, being the people of God. Thus, social justice is an important expression of relationship with Yahweh[.]<sup>43</sup>

Vogt’s observation highlights Israel’s covenantal requirement—they were to act on earth as Yahweh himself would, with perfect righteousness and justice.<sup>44</sup>

My chapter on Isaiah argues for social justice as a key component to the indictment, judgment, restoration progression of the prophecy. Yahweh was furious that the people had abandoned their creational purpose prescribed in the Torah and had descended into abuses of social justice. It would not be until the coming of the Spirit that the people would be restored to fruitfulness in justice and righteousness (cf. Isa 6:43–45). Here also, in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit has been poured out on God’s people during the last days, with the result that the community is devoted to the law (through their devotedness to Jesus Christ’s own apostles) and to social justice, with the result that “there were no poor among them” (Isa 4:32).

Thus, in Acts 2:42–47, the poor are not marginalized, passed over, or ignored (Luke 16:19–21), instead they are shared with and cared for as they celebrate the work of Jesus (Deut 15:5; Acts 4:32–35). The Isaiah 32 picture of a king reigning in justice and righteousness, pouring out the Spirit that results in fruitfulness among the people is hard

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<sup>43</sup>Peter T. Vogt, “Social Justice and the Vision of Deuteronomy,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51, no. 1 (March 2008): 36.

<sup>44</sup>Christopher Wright comments on Deut 4:32–40, “So the flow of thought in this rich text . . . is that, first, Israel has had a *unique experience* of God’s revelation and redemption. As a result of this, secondly, they now have a *unique knowledge* of the identity of the LORD as God. That in turn means, thirdly, that they now have a *unique responsibility* to live in the midst of the nations in a manner that reflects in their own behaviour the ethical character of the LORD as expressed in the commands he has given them for their own good.” Christopher J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), 53.

to ignore in this text. By no means is it the only text that Luke is channeling in this passage, but, it does appear that Luke does want the reader to see social justice happening as a result of the Spirit's outpouring, in keeping with the Torah and ethical restoration anticipated in Isaiah.

Moving on to the next statement we read that the believers were meeting daily in the temple, καθ' ἡμέραν τε προσκαρτεροῦντες ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ (Acts 2:46–47).<sup>45</sup> Like the emphasis on “the prayers” in verse 42, this practice is another element that draws our attention to the Jewish nature of this group. These are not gentile converts, and they do not behave like gentile converts. Most commentators note that this ongoing temple attendance was because the early community had not as yet formed a complete split with Judaism.<sup>46</sup> In fact, Luke portrays these believers as exemplary Jews.<sup>47</sup> What might be his purpose in doing so? Acts 1:8 is broadly considered to be programmatic for the gospel expansion in the book of Acts. But, this expansion begins in Jerusalem. Furthermore, the gospel cannot expand at all until it has taken root, first of all, among the Jewish people. Is this not what we see in Isaiah 59–60? It is the restoration of the Jewish people (particularly, given the emphasis on justice and righteousness in 59, social justice) that precedes the expansion of the restored community to the gentiles. Social justice restoration is a necessary component of this mission. Before the gospel goes out, a kernel of Jewish believers (like a mustard seed) must first reflect the true character of Yahweh in social justice (60:1–3). This shows the reader that even when Jesus highlights

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<sup>45</sup>“Every day” is in the emphatic position emphasizing the devotion of the early community. So Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 163; Bock, *Acts*, 153.

<sup>46</sup>Polhill, *Acts*, 121; Barrett, *Acts of the Apostles*, 170; Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 24. Conzelmann argues that “the attendance at the temple represents the Christians’ claim to the temple (see Luke 19:45–48 along with Luke 2:49), and thereby their claim to be the true Israel.” The picture Luke gives of this early (Messianic) Jewish community’s religious practice is certainly exemplary in its dedication to their religious obligations.

<sup>47</sup>(1) They continued to go to the temple, possibly for prayer (Luke 24:53; Acts 3:1). (2) These prayers were likely (see my above arguments for 4:42) a set group of Jewish prayers infused with Christological meaning. (3) They gave themselves to the Torah and even saw its fulfillment in their midst (Acts 4:34).

empowerment for witness by the gift of the Spirit, ethical restoration for witness is included.

Luke emphasizes the witness of this community, restored to social justice, in 4:46b–47: ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει καὶ ἀφελότητι καρδίας, αἰνοῦντες τὸν θεὸν ἔχοντες χάριν πρὸς ὅλον τὸν λαόν, ὁ δὲ κύριος προσετίθει τοὺς σφζομένους καθ’ ἡμέραν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό, “With glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added together day by day those who were being saved.”<sup>48</sup>

This early community lived out their lives together with joy and thanksgiving. The result of their existence together as a restored community was salvation for those around them.<sup>49</sup> Luke has already communicated to the reader that salvation is the fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham (Luke 1:73). And we know that Abraham’s covenant with God had a specific purpose—the blessing of the nations (Gen 12:3; 22:18; 26:4; Acts 3:25; Gal 3:8). In his sermon at Solomon’s portico, Peter says,

You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness. (Acts 3:25–26)

Notice that Peter identifies the Jews as sons of the covenant. Then he recites the result of God’s covenant: “In your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Finally, he states that God visited the Jews *first* to “bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.” God’s work in restoring the broken ethical hearts of Israel is logically prior to the families of the earth being blessed. God’s blessing of those inside the community occurs before those outside the community are drawn in.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>My translation, taking into consideration my above comments on ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό.

<sup>49</sup>Causation is attributed to God for this growth—yet God accomplishes that growth through the means of a restored people who devote themselves to him and to one another.

<sup>50</sup>These last observations help to demonstrate that my thesis has significant narrative coherence, satisfying Hay’s fourth criteria. Not only do the people live out the ethics of Jesus in their community consistently with Jesus’ Nazareth Manifesto, ministry, and teaching, they also do so as restored Jews who are children of Abraham and who must be restored prior to the blessing going forth to the gentiles. Acts 1:8 may be seen to be programmatic, with my thesis functioning as a key

Observe, further, the way Isaiah’s vision of restoration appears here: it is through the ministry of the “servant” that outsiders are drawn in (cf. Isa 40–55; 61:1–3).

The beginning of the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy is what we see here: Jewish people are receiving salvation and being restored to rich community life with care for all manner of people within their ranks. The result is that those outside the community (likely still primarily Jews, but not necessarily exclusively so) are noticing, admiring, and being drawn in. Luke has masterfully placed this account first in his narrative, prior to the gospel extending through to the nations, according to Acts 1:8’s program—Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. God’s action in saving this community led to them living life in socially just ways that drew admiration from outsiders—they were the city on the hill, the Isaiah 60 Israel, shining forth. Just as God called Abraham and his family to obedience in justice and righteousness so that the nations would be blessed in him (Gen 18:19), so this restored, eschatological community finally devotes themselves to God and to one another with the result that outsiders are drawn in (Isa 60:1–3).

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component of that program.

Moreover, Hay’s seventh criterion of satisfaction may be seen here as well—the ethically restored Jews fulfill the law in Deuteronomy with the result that the poor are no longer found among them. This people shine forth the glory of Yahweh’s character and function within the narrative of Luke-Acts as the restored community from which the gospel goes out and to which gentiles are drawn in. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 32.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION: THE TREE AND THE KINGDOM

I have argued in this thesis that in Luke-Acts, Luke intentionally describes the early Jewish-Christian community according to Isaiah's anticipation for an ethical restoration of social justice in Israel. I sought to prove this thesis in three sections. In the first, I argued that Isaiah's program of restoration includes a specific ethical element of social justice through the Davidic Messiah and empowerment of the Holy Spirit for faithful Jews prior to the gentile nations coming to the restored kingdom. In the second, I argued that Luke's presentation of Jesus accords with this Isaianic picture of a socially just Davidic king empowered by the Spirit of restoration. In my last section I argued that Luke draws Isaianic themes together from his gospel to demonstrate that, in Acts, Jesus' exaltation and outpouring of the Holy Spirit result in Isaiah's vision of a particularly Jewish community restored to fruitfulness as a socially just society. I contended that even the order of restoration (Jews before gentiles), in Acts, parallels Isaiah's presentation of the restoration.

Moreover, Hays' criteria are largely met for my observations: (1) the OT source-text is readily available in the synagogue (Luke 4:18–19) and even to the Ethiopian Eunuch in Luke's narrative (Acts 8:27–39), indicating the texts were sufficiently available to be recognized by ideal readers. (2) The introductory narratives, Nazareth Manifesto, and community texts all occur at prominent places within Luke-Acts and are key, in their respective places, for setting forth the trajectory of the narrative. (3) The virgin birth does not appear again, and fails the criteria of recurrence. However, the themes of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:15, 35, 41; 3:16; 21; 4:1; 4:14, 18; Acts 1–2), Davidic Kingship (Luke 1:32; Acts 2:25–36), and eschatological purification (Luke 3:16; Acts

2:3, 42–47; 4:32–37)<sup>1</sup> all recur. (4) These allusions provide great thematic coherence for the narrative as a whole, which, I argued, presents the socially just Davidic Messiah exalted and pouring out the Holy Spirit for the purpose of ethical restoration. (5) Given the similar themes of eschatological restoration and pure community that the recipients of the Spirit share with Qumran,<sup>2</sup> it is historically plausible that the early readers would have been able to understand what I am suggesting. (6) The correspondence with the text’s history of interpretation regarding such things as the Davidic Messiah, virgin birth, ethical component to Jesus’ ministry, and ethical restoration (internal transformation by the Spirit) are strong. (7) This reading provides a level of satisfaction when navigating Luke-Acts, as the socially just Messianic figure, Jesus, the outpouring of the Spirit, the social justice transformation of the people in the new covenant community, and the resultant expansion of the gospel to the gentiles may be connected via these allusions to Isaiah’s narrative.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, can it be said, finally, that Luke portrays the restoration of the Jewish people in his narrative? I believe the evidence points to an inaugurated restoration, but not a complete one. Jewish believers come to saving faith, have the Spirit of restoration poured out upon them, and live out the Torah in socially just ways in their community, in Acts. However, the rejection by the Jews of the gospel in the book of Acts is disheartening. Paul takes his message to the gentiles because of the intensity of the Jewish opposition to his message. Moreover, Luke ends his book with Paul’s quotation of Isaiah 6 and the hardening of Israel’s heart. Additionally, Romans 11 may well speak of a time in the future when many more Jews are brought to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

The best analogues for an inaugurated restoration come from Jesus. He

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<sup>1</sup>Notice the way increasing judgment comes, prior to the end.

<sup>2</sup>See my argumentation to this end on pp. 63–64.

<sup>3</sup>Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 32.

compares the Kingdom of God to a mustard seed which grows into a tree large enough for birds to nest in its branches and to a lump of dough that receives the small amount of leaven leaven, but which, over time, is leavened completely (Luke 13:18–21). The kingdom has begun in insignificance; it will continue to compelling magnificence. Thus, the restoration has begun, faithful Jewish witness and transformation have preceded gentile peoples streaming into the inaugurated kingdom. Yet, consummation is future—much more is still to come. In the meantime, Luke’s narrative exhorts us to faithful gospel proclamation and ethical living in our own community as we await the Messianic King’s return on the clouds of heaven (Acts 1:9, 11).

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## ABSTRACT

### EVIDENCES OF ISAIANIC SOCIAL JUSTICE RESTORATION IN THE EARLY COMMUNITY OF LUKE-ACTS

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In Luke-Acts, Luke intentionally describes the early Jewish-Christian community in accordance with Isaiah's prophecy for an ethical restoration of social justice in Israel. This thesis accomplishes this argument in three chapters. First, it explores Isaiah's program of restoration and argues that it includes social justice through the Davidic Messiah and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Secondly, an argument is made that Luke's presentation of Jesus accords with the Isaianic picture of a socially just Davidic king empowered by the Spirit, who works to bring social justice through his reign. Lastly, the events of Pentecost and Acts 2:42–47 with insight gathered from Acts 4:32–37, are considered. Here the argument is presented that Luke draws Isaianic themes together from his gospel to demonstrate that, in Acts, Jesus' exaltation and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit result in Isaiah's vision of a Jewish community restored to fruitfulness as a socially just society.

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