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The Tearing of the Temple Veil and the Death of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke

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THE TEARING OF THE TEMPLE VEIL AND THE DEATH OF JESUS

IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

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by

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To My Parents:

John Stowe †
and
Judith Stowe

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Luke's presentation of the death of Jesus is markedly different from that of Matthew and Mark. Both Matthew and Mark, on the one hand, follow the same narrative sequence. Unnatural darkness covers the land at noontime. At the ninth hour Jesus cries, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" After this the observers around the cross offer him sour wine, and he dies with a great shout. Then, the temple curtain is torn from top to bottom, and a centurion makes a confession (Mt 27:45-54; Mk 15:33-39).[1] On the other hand, Luke's narrative orders the events this way: first, the darkness; then the tearing of the temple veil; Jesus' last words, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit," followed by his death, and finally the exclamation of the centurion (Lk 23:44-47). This comparison of Luke with Matthew and Mark suggests the question that is the focus of this investigation: What does Luke intend to communicate through the tearing of the temple veil, placed as it is before Jesus' death?

A cursory review of the commentaries does not provide much help in interpreting the Lukan order. John M. Creed does not comment on the sentence at all,[2] and Luke

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[1]While both evangelists follow the same narrative sequence, differences exist between them as well. In addition to stylistic and verbal variations, Matthew adds a notice of an earthquake and the saints coming out of their tombs which Mark does not have (Mt 27:51b-53). The point to be made here, though, rests on the similarity of their sequence of events over against Luke.

[2]John M. Creed, *The Gospel According to St. Luke: The Greek Text, with Introduction, Notes, and Indices* (London: Macmillan, 1930), 288.

23:45 is not listed in the index to Scripture references in Robert Tannehill's literary commentary.[3] Alfred Plummer and William Arndt discuss which curtain is torn but do not interpret its significance.[4] Not only does the tearing of the temple veil receive scant attention in the commentaries but also, when it is discussed, that discussion often interprets the event in non-Lukan terms. For instance, I. Howard Marshall states, "The event is a forewarning of the destruction of the temple." However, the source he cites to support this assertion is a collection of the Talmud and the Midrash.[5] Even studies undertaken from the point of view of redaction-criticism tend to falter in providing a convincing rational for the shape of Luke's narrative. For example, Frank Matera argues that Luke has altered Mark's sequence "to avoid the impression that the death of Jesus is the end of the temple and its cult."[6] However, as Joel Green wonders, if Luke wants to avoid that impression, why record the tearing at all? From a redactional point of view, Luke does not object to such major omissions in other places.[7]

In addition to the paucity of references, a second problem one encounters in the secondary literature is a lack of agreement about the meaning of the event when one is suggested. One suggestion is that the torn veil points to Jesus' death as the opening of a

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[3]Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 329.

[4]Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke*, 5th ed. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1922), 537, and William F. Arndt, *Bible Commentary: The Gospel According to St. Luke*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1956.

[5]I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 875.

[6]Frank J. Matera, "The Death of Jesus According to Luke: A Question of Sources," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 47 (1985), 475.

[7]Joel B. Green, *The Death of Jesus: Tradition and Interpretation in the Passion Narrative*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 2. Reihe (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1988), 96. For example, even within the crucifixion narrative, Luke does not refer to a second offering of sour wine (Mt 27:48; Mk 15:36) nor does he refer to Elijah (Mt 27:47, 49; Mk 15:35, 36b).

new way to God.[8] Another, perhaps related, understanding is that the torn veil indicates the abrogation of the temple cult.[9] Going even further, some commentators suggest that the tearing of the veil is a prediction of the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D.[10] But others, especially Francis Weinert and Dennis Sylva, argue just the opposite. Demonstrating that Luke has a more positive assessment of the temple than Matthew or Mark, they assert that the torn veil is an indication of Jesus' final communion with the Father at his death.[11] Sylva states, "Thus, Luke's purpose in Luke 23:45b, 46a was not to signify the temple's destruction, the abrogation of the temple cultus, or the opening of a new way to God, but rather to present the last moment of Jesus' life as a communion with the God of the temple."[12]

Interpreting a Narrative Event

The multiplicity of possible interpretations highlights the difficulty of interpreting a narrative event. The text states that the temple veil was torn in the middle. It does not speak directly of the event's cultural or theological significance nor does Luke explicitly tell the reader what meaning is intended by the event. That is to say, Luke does not add an interpretative comment, like, "Now, the veil was torn to show that Jesus was the

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[8]Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 28A (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 1514.

[9]Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), 611.

[10]Cf. Frederick W. Danker, *Jesus and the New Age According to St. Luke: A Commentary on the Third Gospel* (St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1972, 240, who argues that the torn veil foreshadows Jerusalem's destruction.

[11]Francis D. Weinert, "The Meaning of the Temple in the Gospel of Luke" (Ph.D. diss., Fordham University, 1979), 203, and Dennis D. Sylva, "The Temple Curtain and Jesus' Death in the Gospel of Luke," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 105 (1986), 250.

[12]Sylva, "The Temple Curtain," 250.

Savior."[13] Rather, the meaning of the incident must be derived from its context--both immediate and remote, especially the rest of the gospel.

Yet simply appealing to the context does not answer all the difficulties of interpreting a narrative event because one must first determine which contextual elements should properly be used to inform a given text. A good example of this problem in Lukan studies is what role one assigns to the infancy narratives in interpreting the rest of the book. For example, in his seminal redaction-critical study, Hans Conzelmann excludes chapters 1 and 2 from his body of evidence,[14] but Paul Minear challenges this omission, stating, "If Conzelmann had taken full account of the nativity stories, I believe his position would have changed at several major points."[15]

Similarly, even when the nativity stories are included in the total interpretive framework, the way in which one understands elements in them can change one's understanding of the larger work. For example, David Moessner challenges David Tiede's reading of these chapters, arguing that reading Zechariah's and Mary's songs literally (i.e., nationalistically/militaristically) misses the ironic tension between the perspective of these characters and that of the omniscient narrator, who speaks most clearly through Jesus.[16] Indeed, the two men come to two different conclusions. Tiede asserts, "The fundamental tension of the plot still awaits a final resolution,"[17] while Moessner concludes, "The

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[13]Cf., for example, John 2:21, "But Jesus was speaking about the temple that is his body." Throughout this paper, the translations of the Scriptures are the author's own unless otherwise noted.

[14]Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of Luke*, trans. Geoffrey Buswell (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1961), 118.

[15]Paul S. Minear, "Luke's Use of the Birth Stories," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn (New York: Abingdon, 1966), 121.

[16]David P. Moessner, "The Ironic Fulfillment of Israel's Glory," in *Luke-Acts and the Jewish People: Eight Critical Perspectives*, ed. Joseph B. Tyson (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 37-40, 46.

[17]David L. Tiede, "'Glory to Thy People Israel': Luke-Acts and the Jews," in *Luke-Acts and the Jewish People: Eight Critical Perspectives*, ed. Joseph B. Tyson (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 23.

unrelenting history of stubborn resistance is broken decisively, eschatologically, in the death of the prophet like Moses. . . . Hence the familiar pattern . . . is radically altered even as it is proleptically terminated."[18]

James Voelz summarizes well the problems surrounding the interpretation of narrative events, "Just as not every matrix of words is meaningful, so there is not helpful significance in every possible matrix/combination of deeds, situations, etc."[19] Appealing to the narrative context to interpret an event forces the interpreter to account for all of the evidence in that context and thereby greatly broadens the task of exegesis. For that framework is best which accounts for all the evidence in the text under consideration as well as in the work as a whole.[20]

Therefore, in order to interpret the tearing of the temple veil in Luke, one must first examine how Luke portrays the temple throughout his gospel. While allowing room for Luke to use irony or to similarly juxtapose expectations and final results, one would expect the meaning of the tearing of the veil to be congruent with the larger portrayal of the temple. Likewise, because the torn veil is joined so closely to Jesus' death, one must also examine Luke's wider understanding of the significance of the death of Jesus to inform the meaning of the torn veil. These two matrices, together with any submatrices that support them, then, can be used to interpret the fact that the temple veil was torn.

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[18]Moessner, "Ironic Fulfillment," 49.

[19]James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean? Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World* (St. Louis: CPH, 1995), 158. Hereafter *WDTM*.

[20]Voelz, *WDTM*, 160, lists four considerations that assist in forming a proper interpretive matrix. "In general, items which are in proximity, alike or contrasting in features, depicted by the same vocables, and important in their meanings 'on their own' seem likely candidates for 'matrixing,' i.e., for connecting for interpretation."

Methodological Considerations

This investigation, then, is an attempt to provide a thorough interpretive framework for the tearing of the temple veil in Luke's gospel. To this end, chapter 2 of this study is essentially an examination of the temple throughout Luke's gospel. Next, chapter 3 investigates Luke's presentation of the death of Jesus. A final chapter will examine the account of Jesus' crucifixion (23:26-48) and will employ the conclusions from chapters 2 and 3 as a matrix for interpreting the tearing of the temple veil. While occasional comparison will be made with Matthew and Mark, little emphasis will be placed on source- or redaction-critical methods.[21] Furthermore, this study will examine only the evidence from the Gospel of Luke and not from the wider body of Luke-Acts. This limitation is primarily pragmatic. Because Luke-Acts taken together comprise approximately 25% of the New Testament, attempting to incorporate all the data found in the two books would go beyond the scope of this thesis.[22] The Gospel of Luke itself

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[21]Francois Bovon, "Studies in Luke-Acts: Retrospect and Prospect," *Harvard Theological Review* 85 (1992), 183, notices, "A new kind of Lukan study--rhetorical, structural, or literary interpretation--has emerged." He cites "the gradual increase of skepticism facing the historical-critical method, particularly the two-source hypothesis and the excesses of redaction criticism," and "the growing interest in literary interpretation" as the causes. However, this study does not intend to suggest that source- and redaction-critical studies are defunct. For example, Frank Connolly-Weinert, "Assessing Omissions as Redaction: Luke's Handling of the Charge against Jesus as Detractor of the Temple," in *To Touch the Text: Biblical and Related Studies in Honor of Joseph A. Fitzmyer*, ed. Maurya P. Horgan and Paul J. Kobelski (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 359, notes that one of weakness of redaction-critics is that they often argue from omissions (i.e., which words Mark has that Matthew or Luke do not, assuming some form of the two-source hypothesis). Unfortunately, "the larger the omission, the more numerous and potentially complex become the author's possible reasons, and the less positive evidence is available for determining them. The result is interpretation that becomes increasingly vague, spotty, and diffuse." Yet the method still has insights to offer, and Connolly-Weinert suggests these four controls: 1) demonstrate that the omission is the redactor's; 2) relate the omission to editorial themes in the immediate context; 3) relate the omission to editorial themes in the unit under consideration; and 4) demonstrate that there is an editorial bridge that fills the gap left by the omission. This study prefers a thematic investigation as the more appropriate method for interpreting the meaning and significance of a narrative event but still utilizes insights from other fields.

[22]Cf. Mikeal C. Parsons and Richard I. Pervo, *Rethinking the Unity of Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 123, who suggest that Acts forms a sequel to Luke and not a simple continuation. "These stories are connected, to be sure, often ingeniously, but they are also distinguished by Lukan narrative devices and themes."

offers ample material to interpret the tearing of the temple veil in suitable narrative context.

CHAPTER 2

LUKE'S PORTRAYAL OF THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE

Summary of the Relevant Texts

While the temple is a prominent setting in Luke's Gospel, the evangelist makes few explicit comments about it. For example, Luke omits the charge against Jesus that he would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days (Mt 26:61; Mk 14:58, 15:29), and he does not encourage comparisons between Jesus and the temple, as Matthew does when he records Jesus' saying, "Have you not read in the law that on the sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the sabbath and are innocent? But I say to you that one greater than the temple is here. . . . For the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath" (Mat 12:5-6, 8). Furthermore, unlike Matthew, who locates Jesus' statement about Jerusalem's house being desolate in the temple, Luke records the saying being spoken in an unspecified place on the way to Jerusalem (Mt 23:37-39; Lk 13:31-35). For Luke the temple often stays in the background, and his evaluation of it must often be inferred from the activities and speeches that he places within its courts.[1]

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[1]In truth, Matthew and Mark do not offer many explicit statement about the temple either. J. Bradley Chance, *Jerusalem, the Temple, and the New Age in Luke-Acts* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press. 1988), 19-21, 45, contrasting Matthew and Mark with Luke, attempts to show briefly that these evangelists evaluate the temple negatively, but he too is working on a secondary level, drawing conclusions from the arrangement of pericopes and from thematic allusions. [Cf. James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean? Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World* (St. Louis: CPH, 1995), 156-167.] While this paper cannot address the issue of the portrayal of the temple in the first two gospels, it is fair to affirm with Chance that Luke's presentation tends toward a more positive assessment of the temple than the others.

Despite this lack of explicit commentary, the temple is prominent in at least 14 Lukan pericopes, which provide an adequate basis for interpreting Luke's view of the temple: 1) the annunciation of John (1:8-22); 2) Simeon and Anna in the temple (2:22-39); 3) the boy Jesus with the teachers (2:41-50); 4) the third temptation from the temple pinnacle (4:9-12); 5) Zechariah's murder between the altar and the sanctuary (11:51); 6) the story of the Pharisee and the publican (18:9-14); 7) the cleansing of the temple (19:45-46); 8) Jesus' activity in the temple (19:47-48); 9) various controversies within the temple (20:1-47); 10) the Lukan apocalypse, beginning with a statement about the temple (21:5-36); 11) Jesus' further activity in the temple (21:37-38); 12) Jesus' comment about not being arrested in the temple (22:53); 13) the tearing of the veil (23:45); and 14) the post-ascension disciples in the temple (24:53).

Additional texts could also be adduced as oblique, secondary references to the temple. For example, during the first series of Sabbath controversies, Jesus tells of David and his companions entering the house of God and eating the bread of the presence (6:3-5). While it could be argued that the sanctuary at Nob to which David fled is the pre-Solomonic equivalent of the temple, the reference is not explicitly to the temple (1Sam 21:1-9). If the temple corresponds to the cult which occurs within it, then it is legitimate to take this text as part of the evidence for this study. However, this ambiguity of referent spoils it for primary use. This same ambiguity affects the use of texts which refer to making sacrifices and to persons with cultic offices. So, for example, Jesus' comment about Pilate mixing the blood of some Galileans in their sacrifices (13:1) may or may not inform Luke's view of the temple. The temple is the logical place to make sacrifices, but in the absence of an explicit reference this verse can at best support other, explicit temple pericopes. Similarly, Jesus' commands on two occasions to cleansed lepers ("Show yourself to the priest and make a purification offering" [5:14], and "Show yourselves to the priests" [17:14]) and his reference to the priest in the parable of the Good Samaritan

may reflect his opinions about the priesthood and by association the temple cult, but in this case the connection is even further removed because priests are not necessarily confined to the temple precincts (as the performance of sacrifice would be). This lack of clarity makes these references secondary and (at most) supportive to this investigation rather than primary.[2] Because of the contextual setting of the references in Jerusalem and in the temple, the actions of the chief priests, scribes, and officers[3] with whom Judas plots to betray Jesus (22:4) can be adduced to enhance one's understanding of Luke's view of the temple--even when those actions occur outside of that locale.

The primary and secondary references to the temple divide into three major sections: those within the infancy narrative (1:1-2:52), those in the central section of the book (3:1-19:27), and those that occur in the final days of Jesus' life and after his resurrection (19:28-24:53). The greatest concentrations of references occur in the first and third sections. While the middle section contains relatively few explicit references, it does bear examination on its own. Therefore this investigation will survey each section individually in order to detail how Luke portrays the temple.

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[2]Michael Bachmann, *Jerusalem und der Tempel: Die geographisch-theologischen Elemente in der lukanischen Sicht des jüdischen Kultzentrums*, Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament Sechste Folge, Heft 109 (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kolhammer, 1980), 186, argues that 5:14 and 17:14 should be interpreted in light of the Luke's larger presentation of the temple and the priesthood, especially as it is set up in the story of Zechariah, and he emphasizes the connection between the office of priest and its location in the temple. However, this investigation prefers to handle them as correlative data. C. van der Waal, "The Temple in the Gospel according to Luke," in *Essays on the Gospel of Luke and Acts: Proceedings of the Ninth Meeting of Die Nuwe-Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap van Suid-Afrika*, Neotestamentica, no. 7 (Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 1973), 54, attempts to encompass even more pericopes in his assessment of the temple by arguing that activities in the synagogue should also be included as temple texts: "The synagogue was linked to the temple and was in normal times, outside the Jewish festive seasons, in so far as no offerings were required, a substitute for the temple. We, therefore, have to regard Jesus' preaching in the synagogue also as a coming to His temple." While this may historically be the case in first-century Judaism, Luke offers no connection between the two locales. For this reason, these texts can be adduced only subordinately.

[3]στρατηγός, while unmodified here, is often used with the genitive "of the temple" (cf. Lk 22:52; Act 4:1; Act 5:24), specifically linking this group to the temple.

The Temple In The Infancy Narrative

Immediately after his prologue (1:1-4), Luke writes about details of Palestinian, specifically Jewish, life. In view of his prologue, addressed as it is to "most excellent Theophilus," an ostensibly Hellenistic title of respect,[4] and styled after Greek literary models,[5] this move is surprising. Yet, in the very next pericope, Luke assumes that his reader is familiar with the function of the temple cult and the organization of the priesthood.[6] He gives no explanation of the customs narrated; he simply writes:

> In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah from the division of Abijah and his wife (also from the daughters of Aaron) named Elizabeth. They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and judgment of the Lord. And they did not have a child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were well-advanced in their days.
>
> Now it happened that while he was performing his priestly service in the order of his division before God, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priestly office, to offer incense, and he entered the sanctuary of the Lord.[7] The whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense burning (as was customary). Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When he saw it, Zechariah was agitated, and fear fell on him.

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[4]Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and updated by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, 2nd edition, rev. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 449; hereafter cited as BAGD, notes that κράτιστος is an "official rendering of the Latin title vir egregius," but acknowledges that it is often used as "a polite form of address with no official connotations." The fact that Josephus employs the title shows that it is not unknown to a Jewish audience, and it is noted here only to highlight Luke's presupposition that his reader--whether he is a Gentile, Jew, or God-fearer--is familiar with the temple and its function.

[5]Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 62, for example, counts this "among the best Greek literature of the first century."

[6]Cf. Jacob Jervell, "God's Faithfulness to the Faithless People: Trends in Interpretation of Luke-Acts," *Word and World* 12 (1992), 30.

[7]On ἔλαχε τοῦ θυμιᾶσαι, see BAGD, 462. It is technically not passive as this translation suggests nor is the component "by lot" explicitly stated, but Zechariah is the implied subject of the verb. If the verb was impersonal it would require an indirect object to specify Zechariah; also the nominative singular participle εἰσελθών suggests a definite subject rather than an impersonal one.

> But the angel said to him, "Stop being afraid, Zechariah, for your petition has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear a son for you, and you will name him John. He will be joy and gladness for you, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great before the Lord; he will never drink wine and strong drink, and he will be full of the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. He will turn many from Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.
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> Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well-advanced in her days."
>
> The angel answered, "I am Gabriel, who stands before God, and I was sent to speak to you and to proclaim these good things to you. Now, look! You will be made mute, and you will not be able to speak until the day these things occur, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time."
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> Now the people were expecting Zechariah, and they were astounded while he delayed in the sanctuary. When he came out, he was not able to speak to them, and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept on making signs to them and remained mute. When the days of his service were fulfilled, he went into his house (1:5-23).

The only hint of a value judgment regarding the temple and its cultus in this pericope is the description of Zechariah's character: he and Elizabeth are "both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and judgments of the Lord" (1:6). While one cannot assert from this statement that their righteousness consists wholly in their involvement with the temple cult, their activity with the temple and the priesthood does not exclude them from true piety; there is overlap between being righteous before God and the expression of the piety in the temple. Indeed, such an expression of piety is consistent with keeping the Lord's commandments and, for that reason, may even be said to be God-pleasing.

Luke's comment that "the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense burning" (1:10) furthers the last observation. Luke uses a periphrasis of ἦν and present participle, stressing the ongoing, customary nature of the prayer. This particular gathering is not extraordinary; rather, it is indicative of the people's habitual,

regular assembly in the temple for prayer.[8] Luke provides no commentary on this action, positively or negatively, but the context leans toward a favorable reading. "In each instance the temple is presented in the best possible light. It stands at the heart of pious Judaism; it is the place where the devout express their deepest religious commitments."[9]

A second element that one observes in this pericope is that there is some degree of separation in the temple. Zechariah enters into the sanctuary (ναός), while the people wait outside. Luke uses the word ναός only here (1:9, 21, 22) and at 23:45, when the veil is torn. An appropriate question is whether Luke uses temple vocabulary consistently. Ἱερόν (2:27, 37, 46; 4:9; 18:10; 19:45, 47; 20:1; 21:5, 37, 38; 22:52, 53; 24:53) and οἶκος (11:51) are the other two words that Luke uses to refer to the temple. Ἱερόν apparently refers to the broader courts of the temple, in which the people in general interact. Merchants sell there (19:45), and people gather to be taught there (2:46; 19:47). The second word, οἶκος, is a general reference at best. That the word even refers to the temple is contingent on its coupling with θυσιαστήριον, the altar of burnt offering.[10] The distinction between the altar, physically located in the courtyard outside of the temple

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[8]Stanley Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, Biblical Languages: Greek, no. 2 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 45-46, argues that a periphrasis only exists when there are no intervening terms between the auxiliary verb and the participle except those which modify the participle. Jospeh A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke (I-IX)*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 28 (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 303, translates, "All the people were assembled outside, praying at the time of the of incense-offering." By downplaying the verbal aspect of the participle in this way, Fitzmyer supports Porter's contention regarding periphrasis, but he doesn't do justice to the word order (ἔξω immediately follows the participle) or to the meaning of πλῆθος, which does not carry a particularly verbal meaning as a primary component. I. Howard Marshall, , *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 54-55, notes the habitual nature of the people's gathering, supporting the periphrastic translation given here. Cf. also William F. Arndt, *Bible Commentary: The Gospel according to St. Luke* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1956), 45, who recognizes the periphrasis but does not comment on its significance.

[9]Naymond H. Keathley, "The Temple in Luke-Acts: Implications for the Synoptic Problem and Proto-Luke," in *With Steadfast Purpose: Essays in Honor of Henry Jackson Flanders, Jr.*, ed. Naymond H. Keathley (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 1990), 81.

[10]In 13:35 and 19:46, the exact referent of οἶκος may be the temple, but its referent is ambiguous. These passages will be treated below.

proper, and the "house" (οἶκος) in 11:51 shows that the latter term is a generic reference to the building of the temple.[11] In contrast to these two less specific words, the juxtaposition of Zechariah's going in and the people's waiting outside indicates that ναός refers to the interior of the temple proper, the sanctuary. Entrance to the sanctuary is restricted: the person who goes in is a priest, he is selected by lot, and the people are left in a state of amazement at Zechariah's delay in it (1:21), implying that no one could be sent in after him. Because Luke only uses ναός here and when the temple veil is torn, the suggestion of separation may prove to be significant to this investigation.

Within the sanctuary, an angel appears to Zechariah, bearing the answer to prayer. Luke does not record Zechariah's prayer, and it is tempting, based on the angel's second statement that Elizabeth would bear a son, to assume that his prayer was for a child. As J. M. Cross points out:

> We were not told that Z. was praying for a son in his old age, and his incredulity, *v.* 18, does not readily suit these words of the angel. It is a mistake to look for close consistency in narratives of this character. . . . The difficulty here has often been met . . . by supposing that the prayer of Z. had been for the redemption of Israel. This is too subtle. The following words imply that he had prayed for a son.[12]

Cross' appeal to Lukan inconsistency fails to give full weight to the evangelist's intentions in writing his gospel.[13] A better reading of Zechariah's prayer is that of Francis Weinert,

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[11]Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988), 81, 83 , support these distinctions, noting that in general New Testament usage οἶκος has the broadest range of meanings of the three terms and that ἱερόν includes "the surrounding consecrated area."

[12]John Martin Cross, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (London: Macmillan, 1930), 10.

[13]Cross is a source critic, and when he refers to the inconsistent character of the narrative, he is probably thinking in terms of a compilation from several divergent sources. While Cross will speak of Luke's "aim to write a connected narrative" based on Luke's prologue (1:3) (p. lxix), it is not until Hans Conzelmann a quarter of a century later that a comprehensive attempt is made to interpret Luke on his own merits. Ironically, Conzelmann himself refuses to use data from the infancy narratives; e.g. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, trans. Geoffrey Buswell (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961),

who argues, based on the couple's reported age, Elizabeth's infertility, and Zechariah's unbelief, that the prayer is not for a son but that it is precisely for the salvation of Israel. Weinert writes:

> Nothing in this episode, however, portrays Zechariah's prayer as anything more than the execution of his priestly duty, although God's response certainly is undersood partially as a personal favor by God to Zechariah and Elizabeth.[14]

The bulk of the angel's announcement supports this contention. If the angel had stopped speaking when he had announced that John would be born and that he would be a joy to his parents, then one could more easily assert that Zechariah's prayer was for a son. However, the angel's message continues that many will rejoice at his birth, that he will not drink alcoholic beverages, that the spirit of the Lord will rest on him from birth, and that he will go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah. These statements indicate that John is the answer to more than a prayer for a son.

Luke' portrayal of John's annunciation alludes to at least three Old Testament characters, and these allusions show that John stands in the line of God's salvation-historical promises to Israel. First, the descriptions of his diet, the Holy Spirit, and his mother's infertile condition bring to mind the birth of Samson, the last of the named judges (Jdg 13-16). He, too, was born to a barren woman, and his birth was predicted by an angel who specified that he would be a Nazirite from birth and forbade even his mother from drinking alcohol (Jdg 13:2-5). Further, the spirit of Yahweh was on Samson from his youth (Jdg 13:25). While this judge is most often remembered for his weaknesses, the angel who announced his birth had said that he would begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines (Jdg 13:5), and it is this assessment to which Luke alludes. Second, Luke's

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118. Cf. Paul S. Minear's response, "Luke's Use of the Birth Stories," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn (New York: Abingdon, 1966), 120-125.

[14]Francis D. Weinert, "The Meaning of the Temple in the Gospel of Luke" (Ph.D. diss., Fordham University, 1979), 279.

description of John alludes to the birth of Samuel, whose conception and early life was tied closely to the tabernacle (1Sam 1) and who was also born to a formerly barren woman. Samuel was the transitional figure between the period of the judges and the establishment of the kingdom, and he was expressly named a prophet (1Sam 3:20).[15] Finally, Luke also explicitly makes a comparison with Elijah, a prophet whose defining moment was his challenge of the prophets of Baal and his dialogue with Yahweh in which he hears of the faithful remnant of Israel (1:17; cf. 1Kng 18:16--19:18). Taken together, these allusions place John in the long stream of deliverers and prophets by which the Lord has called his people to repentance and, in part, effected their redemption, fulfilling his promises to them. More than the answer to a personal prayer, John is portrayed as the fulfillment of Israel's corporate prayer for God's renewed activity on her behalf. Stein argues:

> For the majority of Israel the prophets had fallen asleep (2 Bar 85:1-3; 1 Macc 4:46; 9:27; 14:41) and the Holy Spirit had ceased in Israel (*Tosefta Sota* 13:3). As a result most people tended to look back to the period of the law and the prophets when God was active among his people or forward to the time of the messianic age when God would once again be active and fulfill his covenantal promises. Thus God's visit to Zechariah marks for Luke the breaking in of the messianic age, i.e., the beginning of the things that God has fulfilled among his people.[16]

That this announcement is made in the temple illustrates that the fulfillment of God's salvation-historical promises does not necessarily signal the end of that institution. Indeed, the temple is an appropriate place to look for God to fulfill his promises. Luke implies no antagonism or opposition between the temple and its activities and the salvation-historical, prophetic impulse.

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[15]Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, The Anchor Bible Reference Library, 2nd ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1993), also notes the allusions to Samson (273) and Samuel (268-269).

[16]Stein, *Luke*, 73.

In summary, this investigation of the annunciation of John has found these two perspectives on the temple in Luke. First, the temple is an approved place for the practice of righteous piety, especially prayer (expressed as a corporate activity). In the temple, moreover, God answers prayer, personally and especially as it relates to the fulfillment of his promises and his salvation-historical purposes. Secondly (and conversely), Luke does not view the fulfillment of salvation-history as antagonistic to the temple and its cult; rather the temple is an appropriate place to announce the approach of the messianic age.

After the annunciation of John, the temple does not appear again as a setting until the presentation of Jesus (2:22-38). However, the manner in which Luke arranges the pericopes between these two events strengthens the conclusions that the temple is appropriate both as a place of piety and as a place for the announcement of the fulfillment of God's purposes. Luke structures the pericopes about John in parallel with the pericopes about Jesus, thereby inviting the reader to compare the two and to understand each one's particular role better in light of the other. Fitzmyer outlines the structure thus:

I. *The Angelic Announcements of the Births (1:5-56)*

1. *About John (1:5-25)*	2. *About Jesus (1:26-38)*
The parents introduced, expecting no child (because barren) (5-10)	The parents introduced, expecting no child (because unmarried) (26-27)
Appearance of the angel (11)	Entrance of the angel (28)
Zechariah is troubled (12)	Mary is troubled (29)
"Do not fear . . ." (13)	"Do not fear . . ." (30)
Your wife will bear a son (13)	You will bear a son (31)
You shall call him John (13)	You shall call him Jesus (31)
He shall be great before the Lord (15)	He shall be great (32)
Zechariah's question: "How shall I know?" (18)	Mary's question: "How shall this be?" (34)
Angel's answer: I have been sent to announce this to you (19)	Angel's answer: The holy Spirit will come upon you (35)
Sign given: You shall become mute (20)	Sign given: Your aged cousin Elizabeth has conceived (36)
Zechariah's forced silence (22)	Mary's spontaneous answer (38)
Refrain A: Zechariah "went back" (23)	Refrain A: The angel "went away" (38)

3. *Complementary Episode:* The Visitation (1:39-45)
   Canticle: Magnificat (46-55)
   Refrain A: Mary "returned" to her home (56)

II. *The Birth, Circumcision, and Manifestation of the Children (1:57-2:52)*

4. *The Birth of John (1:57-58)*
   The birth of John (57)

   Joy over the birth (58)

5. *The Birth of Jesus (2:1-20)*
   The birth of Jesus (1-12)
   Canticle of the Angels (13-14)
   Joy over birth (15-18)
   Refrain B: Mary treasured all this (19)
   Refrain A: The shepherds returned (20)

6. *The Circumcision and Manifestation of John (1:59-80)*
   John circumcised and named (59-64)
   Reaction of the neighbors (65-66)

   Canticle: Benedictus (68-79)

   Refrain C: "The child grew . . ." (80)

7. *The Circumcision and Manifestation of Jesus (2:21-40)*
   Jesus circumcised and named (21)
   Reaction of Simeon and Anna (25-38)
   Canticle: Nunc dimittis (29-32)
   Refrain A: They returned (39)
   Refrain C: "The child grew . . ." (40)

8. *Complementary Episode:* The Finding in the Temple (2:41-52)
   Refrain A: "went" to Nazareth (51)
   Refrain B: His mother kept all this in her heart (51)
   Refrain C: Jesus grew in wisdom, age, and grace (52)[17]

Fitzmyer summarizes: "The parallelism does not merely suggest that John and Jesus are twin agents of God's salvation on the same level. Rather, there is a step-parallelism at work, i.e., a parallelism with one-upmanship."[18] Or, As Jack Dean Kingsbury notes, "Jesus is manifestly superior to John."[19]

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[17]Fitzmyer, *I-IX*, 313-314.

[18]Fitzmyer, *I-IX*, 315.

[19]Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Conflict in Luke: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1991), 38-39.

While the temple is not mentioned in the annunciation of Jesus or in the nativity stories, the arrangement of the pericopes brackets the whole narrative with temple settings. By structuring these events in parallel, Luke is able to strengthen his presentation of John as a vital link between the Old Testament salvation-historical expectation and God's fulfillment of it, and he is able to tacitly affirm the appropriateness of the temple as the place in which God announces the fulfillment of his promises. Thus, John is announced in the temple, but is born and raised in the countryside/wilderness; and Jesus is announced in the countryside, but he is closely connected to the temple in two different episodes as he is growing up.[20] The temple is an appropriate place for divine revelation, and in the infancy narratives that revelation specifically concerns the imminent coming of the messiah, known by the coming of his forerunner who will proclaim salvation through the forgiveness of sins (1:77). The parallel events serve to highlight Jesus' special connection to the temple as he completes God's work of salvation.

As stated above, after the annunciation of John, the next explicit reference to the temple comes in the episode of Jesus' presentation (2:22-38).

> When the days of their purification were fulfilled according to the law of Moses, they brought him into Jerusalem to present to the Lord, as it stands written in the law of the Lord, "Every first-born male will be called holy to the Lord," and to make an offering according to that which is spoken in the law of Lord, "A pair of doves or two young pigeons."
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> Now there was in Jerusalem a man named Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, eagerly expecting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit

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[20]H. Wayne Merritt, "The Angel's Announcement: A Structuralist Study," in *Text and Logos: The Humanistic Interpretation of the New Testament*, ed. Theodore W. Jennings, Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), argues that Luke 1-2 shows a "binary" opposition between nature and culture (wilderness and city) and between sacred and secular (prophetic-priestly and kingly). In structuring the chapters as he has Luke has depicted Jesus as "the mediating term of the initial polar opposition in that he embodies within himself both aspects of the sacred-secular binary; namely, Jesus is both king/secular functionary and Son of God/religious functionary" (107).

> that he would not see death until he saw the Lord's Christ.[21] He came into the temple at the prompting of the Spirit,[22] and when Jesus' parents brought in the child to do these things for him according to the custom of the law, he took him in his arms and blessed God, "Master, now you are releasing your servant in peace, according to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all peoples: light for the revelation of the Gentiles and glory for your people, Israel."
>
> Jesus' father and mother were amazed at the things that Simeon was saying about him. Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary, his mother, "Look, this one is set for the fall and rise of many in Israel and for a contradicted sign (a sword will also pierce your soul) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."
>
> There was also Anna, a prophetess, a daughter of Phanuel, from the tribe of Asher. She was well-advanced in days, living with her husband seven years from the time of her marriage, and she was a widow until she was 84. She did not leave the temple, but worshipped there night and day with fasting and with prayer. Approaching at that hour, she began to give thanks to God and to speak about his to all those who were eagerly expecting the redemption of Jerusalem.

The temple is mentioned only secondarily when Simeon enters it at the prompting of the Spirit. Yet it is clear that the trip to Jerusalem had the temple as its goal. Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord and to offer sacrifice according to the law of Moses and of the Lord (1:22, 24), but they bring him into the temple according to the custom of the law, where Simeon is waiting.[23]

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[21]Cf. F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and rev. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 194-195.

[22]ἐν τῷ πνεύματι is a causal dative. Cf. Nigel Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3, "Syntax" (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), 260ff., on the broad range of ἐν in NT usage. Cf. also Porter, *Idioms*, 98-99.

[23]Brown notes that Luke has conflated two separate customs in these verses. The first, the purification of the mother, is based on Lev 12, in which a woman is said to be unclean for 40 days after the birth of a son. She must offer a burnt offering and a sin offering, usually a lamb and a pigeon, but possibly, as Luke cites, two doves or pigeons. The unusual fact here is that Luke speaks of *their*, not *her*, purification. The second is the redemption of a first-born son, explained in Ex 13. Unusual here is that this redemption did not require the presence of the child at the sanctuary. Brown suggests that the conflation is the result of "a strange combination of a general knowledge of Judaism with an inaccurate knowledge of details" (449), and warns against unreflected theologizing based on other NT concepts of Jesus as sacrifice or priest. Brown (as also Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 117) concludes that the conflation is

The Simeon episode focuses primarily on the temple as a place for God's revelation of the fulfillment of his salvation-historical purposes in Jesus. The Spirit reveals to Simeon that he will not die before seeing the messiah. After he has entered the temple at the Spirit's prompting and held Jesus, Simeon knows that God has fulfilled this promise, because he has seen God's salvation, which he has prepared in the presence of all peoples. Further, Simeon notes that this salvation is a light for revelation to the nations (1:32). Significantly, God's salvation is equated with the person of Jesus who already exhibits a special connection with the temple (a connection that will be strengthened throughout the Gospel) but who is not exclusively tied to the temple. As far as Simeon is concerned, the practice of piety in the temple is not primarily in view, although it is not excluded. (Personal righteousness is compatible with the temple activity, and, as Mary and Joseph show, participation in the temple cultus is tacitly commended because the cult functions as part of the law of the Lord.)

Immediately following the Simeon episode, Luke introduces Anna. Two things are asserted about her. First, as a prophetess, she stands (with John) in the train of all those who have announced the fulfillment of God's purposes. Second, her personal piety is intimately connected to the temple, where she worships night and day with fasting and with prayer (1:37). Once again Luke shows his high estimation of the temple as a place where the faithful people of God worship him. Anna does not speak directly in the text, but Luke records that she gives thanks to God and speaks to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem, highlighting that the temple is a site of prophecy and the place where people (appropriately) look for the salvation of God to come.

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due to Luke's desire to move the family to Jerusalem and to pattern Jesus' early life after that of Samuel (449-450). These problems lie beyond the scope of this paper, but Brown's conclusion is solid. Luke uses these verses to move Jesus to Jerusalem and *the temple* and to further the associations between Jesus and his Old Testament precursors.

To summarize, the episodes around Simeon and Anna portray the temple as a place where God's people gather to express their piety in worship and prayer. Specifically, they look for the fulfillment of God's salvation-historical purposes there. Further, the temple is an appropriate place for the announcement of the looked-for salvation, especially Jesus' role in accomplishing God's purposes. Finally, these episodes suggest that, while the temple is a fitting place to look for and announce the Lord's activity, it is not the exclusive place for that action.

The final episode in the infancy narrative (2:41-51) further illustrates the themes about the temple noted above and also strengthens Jesus' connection with the temple.

> Every year, his parents were in the custom of going to Jerusalem for the festival of the passover. When he was 12 years old, they went up according to the custom of the festival. When the days were completed, while they were returning, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and his parents did not know it. Because they thought that he was in the caravan, they went a day's journey, and they began to search for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. It happened after three days that they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and questioning them. And all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers.
>
> When they saw him, they astonished, and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you done this to us? Look, your father and I were looking for you because we were worried."
>
> He said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" (They did not understand this thing which he said to them.) Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and he was obedient to them.

The notice that Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem every year for the feast of the Passover is another indication that traditional Jewish piety is appropriate.[24] The fact that Jesus is found in the temple listening to the teachers and questioning them affirms the temple as a

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[24]Fitzmyer, *I-IX*, 438, writes, "Here the scene is dominated by Jewish piety, fidelity, and respect for custom, and it goes further in emphasizing the training of the young Jewish male, and the celebration of the most important pilgrim feast in the Jewish calendar."

place for teaching as well. There is no hint of the hostility that will later mark Jesus' dialogue with the religious authorities of Israel; indeed, the teachers are astounded by him.[25] Luke portrays a mutually positive relationship between Jesus and the teachers of Israel, and he places it in the context of temple, further affirming that institution as a proper place for the expression of faith both unofficially by the people at large and by individuals and officially by priests and by teachers.

More important, though, than the implicit approval of traditional piety is the special connection that Jesus expresses between himself and the temple, especially the activities that properly occur there. Jesus' words to Mary, ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου δεῖ εἶναι με, allow several translations. It may be a spatial reference best rendered, "I must be in my Father's house."[26] This would accord well with the fact that Jesus is specifically in the temple. However, the phrase may also be translated functionally, "I must be about my Father's business," or personally, "I must be among my Father's people."[27] Dennis Sylva provides a convincing resolution to the ambiguity. Arguing that the statement "prefigures Jesus' teaching in the temple during his final days in Jerusalem," he states, "2:49b should be translated as 'do you not know that I must be concerned with my father's words in the temple.'"[28] This argument gives full weight to the temple as a location and to the teaching activity that occurs there, and it coheres well with the rest of the gospel.

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[25]Kingsbury notes that astonishment is an ambiguous response at best. It is paired in Acts 2:12 with perplexity. Further, the crowd is amazed after Jesus casts out a demon in chapter 11, but some of them accuse him of working with Beelzebub! Kingsbury, *Conflict*, 83, 158. The point here is simply to note that *initially* Jesus' relationship with the authorities is not antagonistic or hostile.

[26]Cf. Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 129, and Frederick W. Danker, *Jesus and the New Age According to St. Luke: A Commentary on the Third Gospel* (St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1972), 40.

[27]Francis D. Weinert, "The Multiple Meanings of Luke 2:49 and their Significance," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 13 (1983), 20.

[28]Dennis D. Sylva, "The Cryptic Clause *en tois tou patros mou dei einai me* in Lk 2:49b," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 78 (1987), 136. Sylva summarizes his arguments in

Thus the final episode of the infancy narrative reaffirms Luke's positive assessment of the temple as a place where genuine and approved piety is exercised, cultically and non-cultically. The scene not only reaffirms the temple as a place for prayer and worship but also adds the idea that the temple is a place, perhaps even the place *par excellence*, for teaching and learning the things of God. Weinert notes, "In this story the Temple emerges as the paramount forum in Israel for making God's will known through Jesus' teaching word."[29] Furthermore, Jesus states that his work is intimately connected with the temple and the activities that go on there, by highlighting the salvation-historical necessity of his being about his Father's affairs in that place.[30]

In summary, Luke situates three episodes in the temple in the infancy narrative, and these episodes enable the interpreter to draw four conclusions about the temple. First, Luke approves the temple as a place for the exercise of corporate and individual piety through prayer, sacrifice and obedience to the law, and teaching and learning. Second, Luke portrays the temple as a major site for announcing the consummation of salvation-history. In the temple angels, the pious, and Jesus himself all make pronouncements regarding the fact that in Jesus God is bringing his promises to fulfillment. Third, Luke implies that the temple is a mark of separation; only a priest is allowed to enter the sanctuary and then only because the lot has fallen to him. Finally, Luke portrays Jesus'

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this way: "First, the statement in Luke 2:49 is articulated in the context of Jesus' concern for God's word while he is in the temple (Lk 2:46-47). Secondly, the similarities between Lk 2:41-51 and Lk 19:51-21:38 justify looking to this latter part of Luke's gospel for a solution to the ambiguous phrase *en tois tou patros mou* in Lk 2:49. Thirdly, the fact that Luke modifies the Markan account so that Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem is confined to a teaching ministry in the temple and so that Jesus' teaching ministry in the temple is a planned, rather than a spontaneous, activity that indicates necessity (*dei*: Lk 2:49) of Jesus' teaching in the temple for Luke. Thus, for Luke *en tois tou patros mou dei einai me* in Lk 2:49 expresses the necessity of Jesus' teaching in the temple and refers forward to Lk 19:47a, 20:1, 21:37-38" (139).

[29]Weinert, *Meaning of Temple*, 303.

[30]On the salvation-historical import of the verb δεῖ, cf. chapter 3 below.

proper place as in the temple, engaged in the pious activities of God's people. There is a necessity to his being there and to his being involved in God's affairs there.

The Temple in the Body of the Gospel

After the episode of the boy Jesus in the temple, the narrative is not significantly situated in the temple again until the adult Jesus enters it in 19:45. However, the temple does not fall completely out of sight in the intervening material. Several texts allude to it, and from 9:51 on Jesus begins to journey towards Jerusalem and to the temple there. Luke conceives of Jerusalem as the center point of his narrative, and the events of the gospel tend to be geographically situated in relation to the city.[31] The following observations support this assertion.

The first named setting in the gospel is the sanctuary of the temple (1:9). From there the action moves to Mary in Nazareth (1:26) and to John's birth in the hill country of Judea (1:39, 65), but as argued above, a close connection is still maintained with the annunciation in the temple. The next major narrational sequence occurs in Judea at Bethlehem (2:4), after Luke specifically notes that Joseph went up out of Galilee. Soon, Jesus is brought to Jerusalem to be presented, and within Jerusalem he is brought to the temple (2:22, 27). His parents take him back to Nazareth, where he grows up (2:39-40), but he returns to the temple at age 12 to be about his father's business (2:49). Once again, his parents take him to Nazareth, but the expectation has been set up that he will end up in Jerusalem, in the temple again, for that is where he must be (2:49).

In broad strokes, Jesus' ministry begins in Galilee, but even as he works there, Luke keeps Jerusalem as a focal point of the story. John baptizes in the region around the

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[31]Fitzmyer, *I-IX*, 164-171, has an excellent discussion of the Lukan geographical perspective. Cf. also Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R, Trask (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1959), 36-47, for an interesting discussion of this phenomenon from a comparative religions perspective.

Jordan (3:3), the devil tempts Jesus in the wilderness and in Jerusalem on the temple (4:1-2, 9), and Pharisees and teachers of the law from Jerusalem come to Jesus as he is teaching (5:17ff). In 9:51, as Jesus' conflict with the religious authorities begins to intensify, he sets his face for Jerusalem. The central portion of the Gospel is cast as a final journey towards Jerusalem (13:22, 17:11, 19:11, 19:28).

Upon his entry into Jerusalem, Jesus' first action is to enter the temple and to drive out those who are selling goods there (19:45-46). After this, he begins teaching there every day (19:47-48). Luke condenses all of Jesus' temple teaching into one day, and only notes in passing that Jesus spent his nights on the Mount of Olives (21:37). In the story of the passion, the temple falls out of view, but the chief priests, that is, those whose authority is tied to the temple, seek to kill Jesus (22:2). Jesus is arrested outside of the city (22:39), but his trial occurs in the city (22:54). Even his crucifixion is portrayed as very close to the city (23:26, 33). Simon is depicted as coming in from the countryside (23:26), and Golgotha is not explicitly named as outside of the city. One does not want to read too much into these details except to highlight that Luke is careful to emphasize Jerusalem and the temple as the central locations of his story.[32] Even the post-resurrection Emmaus episode and the ascension are geographically tied to Jerusalem (24:13, 47).[33]

Jerusalem functions as the central point of the narrative, even when the events are literally taking place in other locations. Luke accomplishes this task by setting the beginning and ending of the gospel predominantly in the city. Even more narrowly, a great deal of the action revolves around the temple. It is the most prominent location in the infancy narrative, and it figures significantly in the final confrontation between Jesus

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[32]For example, Weinert, *Meaning*, 19-22, suggests that Jesus' instructions to prepare a place for the passover were spoken from the temple. This stretches the evidence too far.

[33]Matthew closes his gospel on a mountain in Galilee (Mt 28:16).

and the religious authorities of Israel. Indeed, it is his usurpation of the temple which finally pushes them to implement a plan to kill him. Thus, even though the temple is explicitly mentioned only a few times in the body of the book, the expectation set up about the importance of the temple in the infancy narrative and Luke's emphasis on Jerusalem as the center point of his gospel work together to maintain the temple as a prominent locale in the course of the narrative.

From 3:1 and 19:44, three pericopes explicitly refer to the temple: 1) 4:9-12, in which the devil tempts Jesus to throw himself from the temple; 2) 11:51, a part of the larger discourse against the Pharisees and lawyers (11:37-54); and 3) 18:9-14, the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. The temple functions as a primary narrative setting in the first reference, that is, Jesus and the devil are physically there. In the second and third pericopes, however, the temple is a secondary setting since Jesus, who in the primary narrative is en route to Jerusalem through Samaria and Galilee (17:11), relates both sayings in direct speech, placing them in the temple. That Jesus intentionally places the parable in the temple may lend weight to its portrayal in that text, since the action could have happened anywhere. The second pericope listed, on the other hand, may not prove helpful since it does not use the same vocabulary for the temple and since it simply refers to an historical fact.[34] Each of these three texts will be examined below.

Luke has the same three temptations as Matthew, but he records them in a different order. First, Satan tempts Jesus to turn stones to bread (Matthew's first). Next, he tempts the Lord to worship him (Matthew's third). In the third temptation, "the devil brought Jesus to Jerusalem, stood on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, 'If you are the son of God, throw yourself down from here'" (4:9; Matthew's second). Fitzmyer argues that the sequence of temptations must be explained literarily or theologically and

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[34]The verse refers to Zechariah being killed between the altar and the building. The location is obviously the temple, but this reference is more oblique than the others.

suggests that "Luke reversed the order of the last two scenes because of his geographical perspective--the climactic scene takes place in Jerusalem."[35] Others have tried to infer more meaning from this ordering. In the end, though, to attempt to be more specific about Luke's intentions in arranging the three temptations would be to try to read too much into scant evidence.[36]

However, while little can be deduced from Luke's sequence, he does add at least one factor to his portrayal of the temple. Luke's narrative shows that the devil has access to the temple, and if he can tempt Jesus there, he can certainly tempt other men and women there.[37] The temple is not inviolable; it is possible to abuse it despite its positive assessment and the appropriateness of the pious activities that occur there.

The second text for consideration is 11:51, the saying that Zechariah was killed between the altar and the building is part of a larger discourse directed against the Pharisees and lawyers (11:37-54), the relevant portion of which is the second woe against the lawyers (47-51). Jesus says,

> Woe to you, for you build the tombs of the prophets, but your fathers killed them. Thus you are witnesses and approve of the works of your fathers, for they killed them, but you build. On account of this also, the wisdom of God said, "I will send among them prophets and apostles, and they will kill and persecute from them, so that the blood of all the prophets which has been shed from the creation of the world might be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who died between the altar and the building." Yes, I say to you, it will be required of this generation.

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[35]Fitzmyer, *I-IX*, 507.

[36]For example, Weinert, *Meaning*, 231, suggests that the temple locale and the danger of the temptation focus attention on the temple as a "place of refuge under God's special protection." Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke*, 5th ed., International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1922), 113, hypothesizes that the temple locale might make this temptation a public act that would convince the people of his messianic credentials while avoiding the cross.

[37]This may have import for the plot by the authorities who seek to kill Jesus (20:19; 22:2) and the entrance of Satan into Judas to betray Jesus (22:3-4).

The two individuals that Jesus mentions are both associated with the exercise of cultic worship. Abel was killed by Cain because the former's sacrifice was accepted by God (Gen 4:4-8), and Zechariah was slain in the temple (2Chr 24:20-22).[38] Luke, as before, does not criticize cultic worship. As a matter of fact, Abel and Zechariah are portrayed as prophets. God determines to send prophets and apostles among the people of Israel, and because the Israelites kill and persecute those who are thus sent, God charges the blood of all the prophets to them. By association, Abel and Zechariah are counted among the prophets. Participation in cultic worship is portrayed as a prophetic and righteous act, but the temple is seen as a place where evil men can operate. Just as the devil can enter the temple (4:9), so evil men can enter it and work against God's messengers and against his purposes.

The final temple pericope in this section (18:9-14) incorporates many of the themes concerning the temple identified from earlier pericopes. Jesus tells a parable specifically to some people who were trusting themselves. A Pharisee went to the temple and gave thanks that he was not like other men; a tax collector was also in the temple, and he begged God for mercy. The latter went home justified (δεδικαιωμένος). As was noted above, here the temple is an appropriate place for the exercise of one's piety.[39] Proper piety, though, is portrayed as that which humbles itself and seeks forgiveness from God.[40] In this way, piety and the fulfillment of salvation-history are connected in the

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[38]While Zechariah was murdered for denouncing the people's apostasy, he was a priest by descent and could very well have preached from the temple. The point is the same: Luke does not criticize the temple cult in this pericope.

[39]Here corporate piety may well be in view. Cf. Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes: More Lucan Parables, their Culture and Style* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 145-146, and Weinert, *Meaning*, 263.

[40]Bailey, 154, argues that the tax collector's prayer is a prayer for atonement. "The tax collector is not offering a generalized prayer for God's mercy. He specifically yearns for the benefits of an atonement. . . . There in the temple this humble man, aware of his own sin and unworthiness, with no merit of his own to commend him, longs that the great dramatic atonement sacrifice might apply to him."

temple, for the pious look for God to keep his promises there.[41] As salvation was initially announced in the temple, this pericope illustrates that that salvation is also distributed there. In sharp contrast, the Pharisee illustrates improper use of the temple. He did not go there to seek God in humility, but to glorify himself, and Jesus evaluates his piety negatively: whoever exalts himself will be humbled (18:14).[42]

Despite Luke's high estimation of the temple and his positive appraisal of its role in salvation-history, the fact that it lends itself to abuse introduces an element of doubt about its continuation into the future. Thus in 13:31-35 Jesus grieves over Jerusalem, in a passage that implies a dark end for the temple.

> At that hour some Pharisees came to Jesus and said, "Leave and go from here, for Herod desires to kill you."
>
> Jesus said to them, "Go tell that fox, 'Look I will continue to cast out demons and heal today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will be finished.' In any case I must journey today and tomorrow and the following day, for it is not possible for a prophet to die outside of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to her, how often I have desire to gather your children as a hen

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While Bailey may overread the cultic aspects of the verb ἱλάσκομαι, Weinert tends to downplay any cultic activities that occur in the temple (*Meaning*, 263).

[41]John H. Elliott, "Temple versus Household in Luke-Acts: A Contrast in Social Institutions, in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, ed. Jerome H. Neyrey (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1991), 214, asserts, "The upshot of the story (18:14) involves not only a contrast in Jesus' verdict between the tax collector who was justified by God and the Pharisee who was not, but also a shift in locale. . . . The story begins in the temple, the 'Holy Place' (*to hieron*), which is the conventional place for demarcating social and religious differences; it concludes in the house (*oikos*) as the locus of the justified." While Elliott's essay is thought-provoking and insightful in its discussion of the opposition between the house and the temple, in this instance he overstates his case and misses the grammatical point: the tax collector had been justified in the temple and then went down to his house (aorist indicative κατέβη and perfect participle δεδικαιωμένος).

[42]Richard Glöckner, *Die Verkündigung des Heils beim Evangelisten Lukas*, Walberger Studien derAlbertus-Magnus-Akademie, Theologische Reihe, bd. 9 (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald-Verlag, 1975), 138, writes, "The dismissal of the Pharisee over against the named sinners and over against the tax collector by the prevailing understanding of the law here legitimized is appraised as thorough self-righteousness. He would not acknowledge himself as a sinner, and directly, for this reason, he goes from the temple not justified." ("Die vom geltenden Gesetzesverständnis her berechtige Absetzung des Pharisäers gegenüber den genannten Sündern and gegenüber dem Zöllner wird dadurch als Selbstgerechtigkeit abgewertet. Er will sich als Sündern anerkennen, und gerade deshalb geht er nicht gerechtfertigt aus dem Tempel.")

> gathers her brood under her wings, and you did not desire it. Look, your house is abandoned against you, but I tell you will not see me until the time has come when you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

At first glance this saying can be taken as a word of judgment on Jerusalem and her temple. However, one should note that the οἶκος here referenced is not necessarily the temple.[43] But even if the house of verse 35 is indeed the temple, this verse is not necessarily a judgment on that institution. The context tells how the Pharisees warn Jesus of Herod's plans and tell him to flee the area. Jesus in turn suggests that he will leave in God's own time to go to Jerusalem to be killed. Verse 35, when read against this background, could indicate that her house is abandoned, not absolutely, but temporarily, i.e., because Jesus has not yet taken up his residence there, an event that will take place at its appointed time.[44] This interpretation can be supported by noting the similarity of the acclamation that Jesus says will accompany him and the acclamation of his disciples as he approaches the city and the temple, "Blessed is he who comes, the king, in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest" (19:38).[45] However, even though the note of judgment is muted in this pericope, one recognizes the implicit thought that the

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[43]Based on Luke's usage in 11:51 and 19:46 there is evidence to support such a referent. However, Francis Weinert, "Luke, the Temple, and Jesus' Saying about Jerusalem's Abandoned House (Luke 13:34-35)," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 44 (1982), 75-76, states that the house is not the temple, arguing that Luke understands the house in personal rather than spatial terms, that he tends to avoid using οἶκος for the temple, and that Luke draws on Jer 22:1-9 in portraying the opposition to Jesus as the leaders of the land. "Thus *oikos* in Luke 13:35a does not refer primarliy to the Temple. Rather, it designates Israel's Judean leadership, and those who fall under their authority."

[44]Charles H. Giblin, *The Destruction of Jerusalem according to Luke: A Historical-Typological Moral*, Analecta Biblica, no. 107 (Rome: Biblical Pontifical Institute Press, 1985), 42, notes that Luke's use of the present tense ἀφίεται supports this view and allows the possibility of repentance on the part of the leaders. Cf. also Luke's comment that Anna never left (ἀφίστατο) the temple (2:37), which shows that Luke uses the verb in a non-pejorative manner, specifically of the temple.

[45]εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου (13:34); εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου (19:38).

abuse of the temple, especially by the religious leaders, could lead to its eventual destruction.[46]

To summarize the Luke's portrayal of the temple in these first two section: Luke portrays the temple positively as a setting. In the temple, the people, corporately and individually, pray and worship, and God, in turn, answers prayers in the temple. The temple is not the exclusive setting in which God and men behave this way (cf. 11:1-13), but Luke affirms the temple by showing God acting favorably towards his people there. Similarly, faith in God's mercy is closely tied to the temple. When Zechariah doubts the angel's message in the temple, he is struck dumb, but when he believes that message, his speech returns. Likewise, the tax collector goes to the temple to seek forgiveness and goes to his house justified.

Because the temple is a place where God deals favorably with his people, it is also a place where God makes revelations concerning the coming of the messiah and salvation. Jesus exhibits an extraordinary connection with the temple; he must be there doing the work of his Father, a work which Luke has portrayed as fulfilling God's promises in salvation-history and described as a teaching ministry. Once again, the temple is not the exclusive place where such revelations are made or where Jesus engages in his messianic work. After all, the larger part of Jesus' ministry occurs outside of Jerusalem. However, Luke keeps Jerusalem and its temple in the forefront of the action by noting that people from the city come to Jesus and by explicitly portraying Jesus as advancing on Jerusalem for a large part of his ministry so that, while he is technically outside of the city, for nearly ten chapters he moves towards it.

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[46]Giblin, *Destruction*, 43, argues that the saying has more to do with Jerusalem's historical character than her present hostility to Jesus, and he writes, "Its fate is not sealed or lamented, much less its destruction envisaged at this point of the story." However, Keathley, "Temple," 85, asserts the temple "is doomed for destruction." In this pericope, one must acknowledge the implicit judgment on the city and her temple while allowing that "its fate is not sealed."

Despite this centrality of the temple as the place of God's activity, there are hints that the temple is not an inviolable sanctuary. Simeon prophecies that Jesus will be a contradicted sign (2:34), and the devil is able to take Jesus there to tempt him (4:9). The Pharisee in the parable abuses it by trusting in his own righteousness (18:9ff), and the Pharisees and scribes are implicated in the slaying of Zechariah there (11:51). These verses invite a connection between the devil and the religious authorities in Israel, because both misuse the temple.

The Temple During Passion Week

As noted earlier, Luke narrates his story so that Jerusalem appears as the center of the plot, and the temple is a major locale within that center. This arrangement becomes even more apparent in 19:28-21:38, which relates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and his teaching in the temple. Luke comments that after Jesus tells the parable of the minas (19:11-27) the Lord moved forward and went up to Jerusalem (19:28).[47] However, except for this notice, Luke never mentions that Jesus actually enters Jerusalem.[48] He narrates that Jesus drew near to (εἰς) Bethany and Bethphage and to (πρός) the Mount of Olives (19:29), that he went on and approached the descent of the Mount of Olives (19:36-37), and that he drew near and saw the city (19:41). The next geographical note follows Jesus' prophecy over the city, spoken outside the city, and says simply, "He entered the temple" (19:45). Thus, while Luke has depicted the latter half of Jesus' ministry (9:51-21:44) as a journey towards Jerusalem, when he portrays Jesus at his

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[47]ἐπορεύετο ἔμπροσθεν ἀναβαίνων εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα. ἔμπροσθεν is used adverbially only here and in 19:4 (of Zaccheus) in the Lukan works. It occurs 9 times in that corpus as a preposition. Given the redundancy of the sentence, some emphasis is probably intended.

[48]If verse 28 is taken as a summary verse of the events that will take place shortly thereafter, then the preposition εἰς could be taken to mean that Jesus went into the city. However, Porter argues that the fundamental meaning of εἰς is 'movement towards.' (Porter, *Idioms*, 151-152.) It is unlikely that this verse should be construed as a proleptic summary.

destination, the setting is the temple. The events in the temple are the heart of the events that happen in Jerusalem.

> When Jesus completes his journey and approaches Jerusalem, he weeps and says:
>
> > Would that you had known this day and the things that bring peace, but now it is hidden from your eyes! For days are coming upon you, and your enemies will set up a barricade against you, encircle you and hem you on all sides, and dash you and your children in you to the ground. They will not leave a stone on a stone in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation (19:42-44).[49]

Following as it does after the Pharasaic objection to the acclamations of Jesus' disciples, the ignorance of Jerusalem is connected to the opposition of the religious authorities, centered in the subsequent narrative in the temple. Further evidence that the temple is implicitly judged in this statement is Jesus' similar prediction about the temple in 21:6, where he says, "These things which you see--days will come in which a stone will not remain on a stone which will not be torn down." Luke mutes his judgment on the temple; the temple's destruction is ancillary to that of the city. The immediate context of 21:6 illustrates this: the disciples ask about the timing of the destruction of the temple (21:7), and Jesus tells them about the signs of the end of the world (21:8-12; cf. 17:20ff.), about their own persecution (21:9-19; cf. 12:11-12, 51-53), and then about the destruction of Jerusalem (21:20-24). The temple serves only as an entry in a discussion of the greater judgment of Jerusalem and the world. In both texts, then, Luke portrays the temple as a doomed building not because it is corrupt in itself, but because the whole city will be destroyed on account of Jesus' rejection by Israel, especially by her religious leaders. The undeserved fate of the temple serves to heighten the tragedy of the gospel. Israel, the

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[49]Giblin, 55-56, suggests translating "the terms for peace" or "the conditions of peace." In view of Jesus' conflict with the leaders of Israel, this may be a better rendering because it implies warfare. Thus, God in Jesus was offering peace to his rebellious people, especially their leaders.

recipient of all of God's salvation-historical promises, will at least in part be destroyed for her obstinant rejection of her messiah.

As the narrative of the temple cleaning shows, Luke does not delight in the fate of the temple. He writes, "Jesus entered the temple and began to throw out the merchants, saying to them, 'It stands written, My house will be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of robbers'" (19:45-46).[50] Weinert summarizes well:

> Jesus' action, as Luke presents it, is not opposed to the Temple institution as such nor to the Temple cult; rather it affirms the Temple as having been intended by God Himself, and Temple worship as valid, at least for Israel, to the extent that such worship constitutes a form of true prayer. Jesus' criticism is diercted precisely against the attempt to exploit such prayerful activity commercially, and declares such pursuits to be a form of dishonest gain, as self-serving, and as a perversion of th Temple's true and valid function in God's eyes. Accordingly, Lk 19:45-46 can hardly be read even as a symbolic destruction of the Temple or abrogation of the worship there. If anything Jesus' initiative is one that would prevent the Temple's destruction by restoring it to the function envisioned for it in Jer 7:2-3 and

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[50]Comparison with Matthew and Mark is informative. First, when compared with the parallel passages in Mark and Matthew, one notices that Luke has condensed the pericope. As the text stands in the body of NA^{27}, Matthew uses 45 words, Mark 61, Luke only 25. Second, he mentions only that Jesus expelled the merchants. Matthew and Mark both have him throwing out merchants and buyers (Mt 21:12; Mk 11:15). Here again Luke is careful not to portray those who worshipped in the temple as acting improperly; it is appropriate to participate in the temple cult, even if one has to buy the sacrifical animals there. Luke has consistently shown the temple as an appropriate place to worship, and he has even made reference to Mary's and Joseph's sacrifice of 'a pair of doves or two pigeons' (2:24). In order to protect Mary and Joseph as reliable characters and to enhance their action at Jesus' presentation, Luke avoids condemning the cultus and the worshippers. Rather those who are pictured negatively are those who abuse the temple, that is, those who steal by dishonest business transactions. Finally, Luke changes the citation from Isa 56:7, which reads, "My house shall be called (κληθήσεται) a house of prayer for all nations." Keathley, "Temple," 87, notes, "The omission of the last phrase ['for all nations' (Mk 11:17] comes as a surprise for the reader of Luke, because of the evangelist's well-known propensity to magnify the inclusive nature of Jesus' messiahship which is extended even unto the Gentiles (nations)." He suggests that the omission "downplays the radical, eschatlogically-oriented condemnation of the temple as a failure" which is found in Matthew and Mark. But Luke changes the verb to ἔσται, "it will be," thus avoiding any implication of impropriety with regard to the temple. Not only will it be called a house of prayer, but it will actually be one. All of these are arguments from omission, which makes them less convincing in and of themselves. However, taken together and in view of Luke's positive portrayal of the temple in earlier passages, these three facts highlight Luke's continuing, approving assessment of the temple, in spite of its foreboding future.

in the oracle of blessing in Isa 56:7-8, at least for the time that Jesus' corrective action remains in force.[51]

Jesus' subsequent activity in the temple validates Weinert's analysis. Until the night of his betrayal, Jesus is constantly in the temple. Luke writes, "Every day Jesus taught in the temple. But the chief priests, scribes, and the leaders of the people kept on looking for a way to destroy him, and they did not find a way to do what they wanted, for the whole people hung on his words" (19:47-48).[52] Then, he relates two chapters of didactic material (20:1-21:36), presenting the material as one continuous example of teaching.[53] Only at the end of the section, when he supplies a second summary of Jesus' activity, does Luke note that Jesus spent his nights outside the city on the Mount of Olives (21:37). Thus, Luke brings Jesus' unique relationship with the temple, which was foreshadowed in 2:49, to a climax. At 2:49 the temple was filled with pious people and teachers; in chapters 20 and 21 it is filled with pious people but self-serving, unrighteous leaders. At 2:49 Jesus declared that he must be in the temple and that he must be about his Father's

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[51]Weinert, *Meaning*, 38-39.

[52]Luke uses two constructions to emphasize that 19:47-48 is a summary of Jesus' ongoing activity. First, he uses a periphrasis, ἦν διδάσκων, to emphasize the action as habitual and customary. (The imperfect could have served the same function, but Porter concedes that "the periphrastic is more emphatic or significant" [Porter, *Idioms*, 46].) Second, he uses an articularized prepositional phrase τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν, where he could have used a simple accusative (2:37; 21:27) or the preposition without the article (2:41) to achieve the same effect. (Luke uses this construction only one other place--the Our Father [11:3].)

[53]Matthew presents Jesus entering and leaving the temple on two days (Mt 21:12, 17; 21:23, 24:1) and Mark records three appearances in the temple (Mk 11:11; 15, 19; 27, 13:1). Luke does not explicitly spread Jesus activity in the temple out over several days.

affairs, especially as those affairs dealt with teaching the people of God.[54] In chapters 20 and 21 he takes possession of the temple and teaches there on a continuous basis.[55]

A second clue to the importance and meaning of the temple is the rising conflict with the different groups of religious authorities. The conflict is present throughout the gospel, and it will be discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter. Note for the present discussion the following points. In the early chapters of the gospel, Jesus comes into controversy most commonly with the Pharisees, especially regarding matters of Sabbath-keeping and ceremonial law. For instance, the Pharisees object to Jesus' healing on the Sabbath (6:6-11; 14:1-6) and to his eating with 'sinners' (5:30; 15:1-2). They engage in debate with Jesus and seek to accuse him of wrongdoing (6:7). As Jesus heads for Jerusalem, the controversies become more hostile, and the Pharisees try to trap Jesus in his words (11:53-54). In turn, they cannot answer Jesus' questions posed to them (14:6). Closely connected with the Pharisees are the scribes (5:21, 30; 6:7; 11:53; 15:2), a party also associated in the final section of the Gospel with the chief priests (19:47; 20:1, 19; 22:2, 66; 23:10).

By switching his emphasis from the Pharisees and scribes to the chief priests and scribes, Luke is able to tacitly connect the controversies more closely to the temple.[56] Just

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[54]Weinert, *Meaning*, 79, argues that Luke's use of εὐαγγελλίζομαι "designates that teaching as an expression of God's saving mercy for the people of Israel." Fitzmyer, *I-IX*, 147-148, notes that the verb is a Lukan favorite but argues that it "normally means no more than 'to preach,' often having as its object the 'kingdom,' '(Christ) Jesus,' or 'the word.'" One should probably avoid reading too much into the word.

[55]Conzelmann's observations are helpful. "By breaking up the daily routine that is found in Mark, Luke creates the impression of a fairly long period of activity, . . . which again is clearly marked by its special character, e.g. by the absence of miracles and on the positive side by a special kind of teaching. Everything leads up to the ministry in this important place, which gives to the teaching its special quality. . . . In Luke it is not a question of the eschatological end of the Temple, but of its cleansing; in other words, Jesus prepares it as somewhere he can stay, and from now on he occupies it as a place belonging to him." Conzelmann, *Theology*, 77.

[56]Kingsbury, *Conflict*, 22, warns against trying to acquit the Pharisees of responsibility in the events of the latter chapters of Luke, even though they are last explicitly mentioned in 19:39. Pharisees

as the controversy escalated outside of Jerusalem, it intensifies within the city, and especially within the temple. In his first summary of Jesus' activity (19:47-48), Luke notes that the authorities were seeking to destroy him. However, because the people were so attentive to Jesus, the authorities could not find a way to accomplish their goal. The stratagems that the authorities attempt in the temple are similar to those of the Pharisees. They try direct confrontation, only to be silenced by a counter-question (20:1, 7). They try to catch Jesus in his words, only to fail (20:20, 26). Finally, they are silenced (20:40). While these attempts are going on, the authorities' motives become more hostile. After Jesus tells the parable of the wicked vinedressers, they seek to lay hands on him at that very hour (20:19).[57] Frustrated by the people's devotion to Jesus and by their fear of the people, the authorities seek a way to deliver Jesus over to the political authorities. Their scheme, however, fails once again. Only after Luke has narrated his second summary of Jesus' temple ministry (21:37-38) does he tell of the authorities' final plan to eliminate Jesus (22:2-6).

Luke, then, depicts the temple in a two-fold manner. It is the center of Jesus' activity in Jerusalem, but it also is the locale where his controversy with the religious authorities of Israel is resolved in his favor. The authorities cannot eliminate him while he is in the temple because the people support him. It is only outside the temple, after the authorities' repeated challenges have been met there and after Jesus has taught his disciples there, that the chief priests and scribes are able to succeed against Jesus. In these chapters, the temple is depicted as the appropriate place for Jesus to finish his teaching

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come from Jerusalem to hear Jesus already in 5:17, and it is the Pharisees who object to the song of Jesus' followers as he makes his final approach to Jerusalem (19:39).

[57]In this context, the idiom indicates violent intent. Luke uses it of the persecution that the disciples will undergo (21:12, where it does not refer to murder). It may be that Luke is alluding to the Septuagint, especially the near-sacrifice of Isaac (Gen 22:12) or the death of Absalom (2Sam 18:12). Based on the language 19:47 it is probably safe to say that Luke has a murderous intent in view here. The new element is the immediacy of the threat.

ministry to the people. Also highlighted is the abuse to which the temple is subject by those who are responsible for it. Again, Jesus' special connection with the temple is highlighted. In 2:49, Jesus listened to the teachers and answered their questions. In these chapters, Jesus is depicted as the teacher of Israel, and the religious authorities are portrayed as self-serving. Further, while Jesus astounded them with his answers as a boy, the leaders are unable (or unwilling) to answer his questions (20:7, 40, 41-44).

After 21:37-38, a second summary of Jesus' activity in the temple, there are only three more references to the temple in the Gospel. Jesus comments that the chief priests and temple guard had not arrested him even though he had been in the temple every day but (ἀλλά) that the hour of his arrest is the hour of the power of darkness (22:53).[58] At the death of Jesus, Luke writes that the veil of the temple tore in the middle (23:45). The interpretation of this passage will occupy the last chapter of this paper. Finally, Luke records that the disciples returned to Jerusalem following Jesus' ascension and were in the temple all the time (24:53). This last verse serves as an indication that at least one aspect of Luke's temple theology still applies after the resurrection: the temple remains a place where piety can be exercised appropriately by God's people.

Thus, in the passion narrative, Luke brings together several of his themes regarding the temple. The temple can be abused, and the merchants and the religious leaders do so. Jesus drives the merchants out of the temple, and he challenges the leaders' right to teach the people there, preempting there claim to authority. However, Luke still regards the temple as an appropriate place for the people of God to worship him, and he is careful to not suggest that the worshippers are complicit in the misuse of the temple. Just

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[58]The strong adversative ἀλλά may be an indication that they were unable to arrest him in the temple because God's time had not yet come (cf. 13:34-35). It would stretch the evidence to assert that they could not arrest Jesus in the temple simply because he was in the temple. This pericope has more to say about the divine plan for salvation than about the sacrosanctity of the temple. *Pace* Weinert, *Meaning*, 231.

as the temple was a fitting place for God to announce the fulfillment of salvation-history in the infancy narrative, it is a fitting place for Jesus to engage in the activities which signal that fulfillment, cleansing the temple for his use, teaching authoritatively there, and claiming leadership of the people by that teaching. Significantly, it is precisely Jesus' teaching in the temple which brings his conflict with the religious leaders to a head and leads to the final plot to have him killed.

Summary of Luke's Portrayal of the Temple

Luke makes few explicit comments about the temple, but his portrayal of that locale as a setting in his narrative suggests much about it. As an explicit setting, the temple figures prominently in two extended sections of the gospel--the infancy narrative and the events of Holy Week. However, the temple also remains in the background in the central section of the book. In varying degrees, four themes are associated with the temple in each of the three sections: 1) the temple is an appropriate place for the people of God to exercise their piety through worship and prayer; 2) the temple is the central (though not exclusive) site from which the culmination of salvation-history is announced; 3) the temple contains a note of separation; and 4) the temple can be (and often is) abused, even by those entrusted with its care, and for that reason is doomed to destruction.

First, Luke portrays the temple positively as the place where God's people exercise their piety by worship and by prayer. So, at the time of the offering, the people gather outside the sanctuary to pray (1:10). Mary and Joseph go there to fulfill the commands of the law regarding their newborn son (2:22-24). Jesus tells of a publican who prays for salvation there and approvingly describes him as a person who went to his house justified (18:13-14). The people gather in the temple to listen to Jesus' teaching, just as he had been taught there as a youth (19:47-48; 2:46-47). Finally, after Jesus' ascension, his disciples return to the temple to bless God (24:53).

Second, the temple is a fitting place for God's announcements about the culmination of salvation-history. From the temple God first announces the approach of salvation by foretelling the birth and work of the messiah's forerunner (1:13-17). When the messiah is born, he is acclaimed as such in the temple (2:28-35, 38), and he is about his father's business (especially teaching) in the temple from a young age (2:49). As an adult, Jesus returns to the temple, cleanses it, and teaches there as Israel's authoritative leader (19:45-48). Significantly, it is Jesus' teaching in the temple that brings his conflict with the religious leaders to a head and leads to the final plot to have him killed, an event full of salvation-historical implications.

Third, the temple suggests a separation of some sort. Luke only speaks of the sanctuary (ναός) twice (1:9, 21, 22; 23:45), and in the first of these episodes it becomes clear that the sanctuary is distinct and separate from the temple courts (ἱερόν). Only a priest may enter the sanctuary, and then only by lot.

Finally, while Luke's positive impressions of the temple endure throughout the gospel, the reader is soon notified that the temple is not inviolable. The devil has access to it (4:9). Righteous men have been slain in its courts (11:51). It is the scene of the hypocrisy of the religious leaders of Israel (18:11-12) and the place where they most directly challenge Jesus' performance of his father's teaching work (20:1-2). "The temple, at first the locale of hoped for salvation and symbol of Israel's holy union with God, eventually is unmasked as the political concentration of power opposed to God's people and the truly righteous."[59] Thus, while the temple is affirmed as an appropriate place for the people of God to worship, it is also portrayed as an institution which can be and is abused by those who are supposed to care for it. Because of the opposition of the

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[59]Elliott, "Temple versus Household," 217. Once again, while Elliott's observation of the conflict over and in the temple is insightful, he overstates his case by failing to see Luke's distinction between the institution itself and the abuse to which it is subject.

religious authorities to Jesus, Jerusalem and its temple are destined for destruction (13:34-35; 19:41-44; 21:6, 20-24).

CHAPTER 3

THE DEATH OF JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Introduction

It is a commonplace assertion in Lukan studies that Luke understands salvation as proceeding from the living Jesus and that he has replaced a theology of the cross with a theology of glory.[1] Thus, John M. Creed can assert, "There is indeed no *theologia crucis* beyond the affirmation that the Christ must suffer, since so the prophetic scriptures foretold."[2] And Hans Conzelmann argues, "There is no trace of any Passion mysticism [in Luke], nor is any direct soteriological significance drawn from Jesus' suffering or death. There is no suggestion of a connection with the forgiveness of sins."[3] Even when Jesus' death receives positive treatment, its soteriological implications are softened. Thus, it is analyzed as a necessary prelude to his resurrection, that is, "a *sine qua non* on the way to glory,"[4] from which the living Jesus dispenses the gifts of salvation. Alternatively, Jesus' death in Luke is explained as martyrdom, Jesus' witness to his total dedication to the

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[1]Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (I-IX)*, Anchor Bible, vol. 28, (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 23, calls it "a rather widespread thesis about Lukan soteriology."

[2]John M. Creed, *The Gospel According to St. Luke: The Greek Text, with Introduction, Notes, and Indices* (London: Macmillan, 1930), lxxii.

[3]Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, trans. Geoffrey Buswell (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1961), 201.

[4]Jerome Kodell, "Luke's Theology of the Death of Jesus," in *Sin, Salvation, and the Spirit*, ed. Daniel Durken (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979), 225.

Father, which serves as an example of the sort of faith and constancy that leads to eternal life when one faces martyrdom for oneself.[5] However, the assertion that Luke's soteriology is unrelated to Jesus' death or that his death exerts only "'mediate influence' on our salvation,"[6] has not gone unchallenged. Robert Stein, David Tiede, Richard Glöckner, and Jerome Neyrey all argue that for Luke the death of Jesus is an essential aspect of his soteriology.[7] In view of this lack of scholarly consensus, the difficulty and the importance of understanding Luke's presentation of Jesus' death becomes clearer.

Joseph B. Tyson further highlights the difficulty of interpreting the death of Jesus in its Lukan narrative context when he notes, "Luke's treatment of the death of Jesus is not confined to the passion narrative; nor is it confined to his gospel. The earlier parts of the gospel build toward it and anticipate it, and the book of Acts recalls it and reflects on its implications."[8] An interpreter faces not only the brute fact of Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion but also the thematic climax which Jesus' death represents. This forces the interpreter to work with the major themes of the entire gospel, a state of affairs which confronts anyone who expounds any of the gospels. However, in Luke's gospel another challenge is added to interpreting Jesus' death: Luke never explicitly interprets that death

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[5]So Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Third Gospel* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 212-213.

[6]Kodell, "Luke's Theology," 225.

[7]Stein, *Luke*, New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 54-56, argues on the basis of Jesus' words over the bread and cup in the last supper (22:19-20); Tiede, "Contending with God: The Death of Jesus and the Trial of Israel in Luke-Acts," in *The Future of Early Christianity*, ed. Birger A. Pearson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 301-308, and Glöckner, *Die Verkündigung des Heils beim Evangelisten Lukas*, Walberger Studien der Albertus-Magnus-Akademie, Theologische Reihe, Bd. 9 (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald-Verlag, 1975), 164-169, place the soteriological value of Jesus' death in its place in salvation history. Neyrey, *The Passion According to Luke: A Redaction Study of Luke's Soteriology*, Theological Inquiries (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 165-184, suggests that Luke works with a New Adam model of salvation.

[8]Joseph B. Tyson, *The Death of Jesus in Luke-Acts* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1986), x.

for his readers. This leaves the exegete in the difficult situation of having to form an interpretive matrix for the climactic event of the gospel without the clear help of the evangelist. "Luke does not write discursive theology; his message is transmitted through narrative."[9]

The explicit textual evidence concerning Jesus' death in Luke's gospel falls into three basic categories: references to the fact of the death, references to various people seeking Jesus' death, and Jesus' own sayings regarding his death. In the first category are statements to the effect that Jesus was crucified (23:33) and that he breathed his last (23:46). Also the reports of witnesses to the death fall into this category, such as the Emmaus disciples' testimony that the chief priests and leaders had crucified Jesus (24:19-20). While these statements establish the fact of the event, they do not offer much aid in interpreting it.

More helpful in interpretation is the second category, where Luke records, for instance, that the worshippers in the Nazareth synagogue intended to throw Jesus from a cliff (4:29),[10] that the chief priests, scribes, and leaders of the people were seeking to destroy Jesus (19:47), and that Satan entered Judas and that the latter discussed with the chief priests and the temple police how he might hand over his master to them (22:3-4). These statements provide a thematic clue to the meaning of Jesus' death by placing it into the context of his relationship with Israel. This placement broadens the data with which one can interpret Jesus' death.

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[9]Donald Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1989), 164.

[10]Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and updated William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, 2nd ed., rev. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 900, notes that ὥστε can indicate intended result and that in this sense it "is scarcely to be distinguished in meaning from ἵνα. Hereafter cited as BAGD.

Finally, Jesus' own sayings about his death provide important information regarding the manner in which Luke would have his readers understand that death, assuming that Luke desires Jesus' self-understanding to be the most determinative and reliable witness to his own significance.[11]

Although the latter two categories provide clues to the meaning of Jesus' death, the statements in them do not yet answer all the difficulties in interpreting that event. As noted above, Luke never makes an explicit statement regarding the meaning of Jesus' death nor does he place such an interpretation in the dialogue of his characters.

This Lukan tendency becomes most apparent when viewed in relation to Matthew and Mark. For example, Luke appears to soften Jesus' last words. Where Matthew and Mark record Jesus crying, "My, God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34), Luke writes that Jesus said, "Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit." While the former saying is not an explicit statement about the meaning of Jesus' death, it is a stronger statement than that found in Luke and points toward a theological conclusion, namely, that God forsook Jesus. Contrarily, Luke's statement speaks to Jesus' faithfulness even at death, that is, it addresses Jesus' character rather than the character of his death.[12]

In a more explicit manner, Matthew and Mark interpret Jesus' death by citing his saying that the Son of Man came to give his life as a ransom in the place of many (Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45). Stanley Porter supports the idea that Matthew and Mark are placing a

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[11]Cf. David P. Moessner, "'The Christ Must Suffer,' The Church Must Suffer: Rethinking the Theology of the Cross in Luke-Acts," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1990 Seminar Papers*, ed. David J. Lull (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 172-174.

[12]It may be that Matthew's and Mark's citation here is meant to be an allusion to the whole of Psalm 22. If this is the case, then the divergence between their emphasis and Luke's could be less than is implied in this paper, because Psalm 22, like Psalm 31 which Luke cites, is a prayer of faith in which God finally does not abandon his servant but hears him and delivers him. Peter Doble, *The Paradox of Salvation: Luke's Theology of the Cross*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 169, discusses the theological problems raised by the citation of Ps 22 and suggests, "Luke himself replaced this problematic citation with a more 'suitable' prayer."

specific interpretation on the death of Jesus by noting, "Although the basic sense of ἀντί is 'facing, against, opposite,' the most widely applied sense in the NT, and well-known in classical and other Hellenistic Greek, is substitutionary." Porter goes on to cite Mk 10:45, stating, "This is a well-known passage used to argue for the theological concept of substitutionary atonement."[13] In contrast, in a similar discourse, Luke cites Jesus as saying, "I am among you as one who serves" (22:27).[14] In both of these examples--Jesus' last words and his ransom-saying--one needs to be careful not to over-read the differences among the evangelists. Yet, even so qualified, Luke's omissions draw attention to his lack of clear interpretative statements about Jesus' death.

In the absence of explicit statements regarding the meaning of the death of Jesus, this investigation will proceed along three main lines suggested by the themes of the gospel itself. First, the death of Jesus will be examined against the background of Luke's well-developed theme of the reversals of fortune and of expectations. Second, the escalating conflict between Jesus and the leaders of Israel, which culminates in the successful plot to kill him, will be investigated as a source of meaning for Jesus' death. Finally, Jesus' own sayings--both direct and oblique--will be explored to discover how Jesus understood his death. This procedure aims to provide a thorough interpretive matrix by which to understand more clearly the death of Jesus.

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[13]Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 144-145.

[14]The literary history of the relationship between these passages as sought by source-criticism lies outside the scope of the present investigation. However, one notes that, even though the pericope is verbally similar in all three gospels, Matthew and Mark place it in a different context than Luke. (The former two place it prior to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem; Luke places it during the last supper.) For this reason, Luke may have been using an independent source, and the importance of the "omission" is diminshed by this fact.

Reversal in the Gospel of Luke

Reversal of fortune and expectation is a prominent theme in Luke's gospel that occurs already in the infancy narrative. For example, the first story, that of the annunciation of John, begins with the statement that Elizabeth and Zechariah had no children because she was barren and they were both well-advanced in their days (1:7). However, contrary to their expectations the angel announced that she would bear a son (1:13). That this is unexpected is supported by Zechariah's negative reaction, which the angel describes as a failure to believe (1:20). Mary also sounds the theme of reversal when, in response to the annunciation of Jesus' birth, she says, "The Lord has scattered those who are arrogant with respect to the attitude of their hearts. He has cast down the powerful from their thrones and has exalted the humble. He has filled up those who are hungry, and has sent away empty those who are rich" (1:51b-53). These two examples show that Luke uses the concept of reversal both as a structural feature of individual stories and as an explicit commentary on God's work.

In addition, the theme is quickly applied specifically to Jesus. Aside from the implicit irony that the Savior born in the city of David who is Christ the Lord would be found in a manger (2:11-12), Simeon says of Jesus in the temple, "This one is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel and for a contradicted sign so that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed" (2:34-35). This saying stands in sharp contrast to the other statements which have been made regarding Jesus in the infancy narrative. For example, Gabriel had said, "He will be great and will be called the son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will have no end" (1:32-33). More immediately, Simeon himself refers to the child Jesus as the salvation which God made ready before the face of all peoples (2:30-31). There is no hint of conflict in these sayings. Rather, they offer a positive appraisal of Jesus' presence among his people (indeed among all peoples).

According to these sayings, Jesus' presence brings salvation. However, by recording Simeon's saying about the fall of many and about Jesus as a sign that will be contradicted, Luke is able to foreshadow the contrast between the expectations that he has thus far set up and the final outcome of Jesus' life. Robert Tannehill describes the phenomenon in this way:

> Narratives permit transformation of expectations. Resisting forces cause twists and turns not anticipated at the beginning. Yet the angels and prophetic men and women of the birth narrative were speaking of the saving purpose of God rooted in Scripture. Their understanding of God's saving purpose reaches to the theological core of Luke and cannot be simply laid aside because the way is hard. Expectations are transformed, but basic hopes persist. . . . Although we are expected to take Zechariah's words seriously as an accurate statement of God's saving purpose, they do not fully tell us what kind of king Jesus will be nor what kind of kingdom he will bring. They do not reveal the difficulties that must still be faced by Jesus and his witnesses in establishing this kingdom in a resistant world.[15]

Contrary to what has been said of Jesus to this point, his presence alone may not be the totality of the salvation that he brings and the pious, faithful reception that he has received from Mary, the shepherds, Simeon, Anna, and even the teachers in the temple (2:46-47) may not be the whole story of his reception in Israel, because some will speak against his presence and reject him.

Jesus himself carries this note of reversal through the gospel by repeatedly speaking of the inversion of the first and the last, the humble and the great. For example, when the disciples argue about who is the greatest, Jesus places a child in their midst and tells them that to receive the child is to receive himself. "For the one who is least among you is great" (9:46-48). Jesus had made a similar statement already in chapter 7 where, in praising John the Baptizer, he adds the qualification, "But the least in the kingdom of God

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[15]Robert C. Tannehill, "What Kind of King? What Kind of Kingdom? A Study of Luke," *Word and World* 12 (1992), 18-19.

is greater than he" (7:28). These sayings suggest that greatness is redefined in the kingdom so that expectations of stature and fame are reversed there.

Luke shows that this reversal of expectations is a point of entry into his soteriology by twice recording Jesus' saying that whoever exalts himself will be humbled and that whoever humbles himself will be exalted (14:11; 18:14). Both of these sayings are spoken against the background of specifically pharisaic behavior, the first against the practice of taking a seat of honor at table, the second to conclude the parable of a self-righteous Pharisee praying in the temple. By placing these sayings in the context of Jesus' arguments with the Pharisees Luke connects the reversal to the larger themes of Jesus' life and destiny, especially his reception (and finally rejection) as the messiah, especially by the religious authorities. (That Jesus' conflict with Israel and her leaders is a major theme of Lukan soteriology will be demonstrated in the next section; see below.)

The second saying (18:14) is especially significant for understanding Lukan soteriology because, as Kodell notes, "The spirit of self-exaltation is the key to sinfulness for Luke."[16] This key is clearly stated in the pericope; for the parable is directed against those who were trusting in themselves that they were righteous (18:9). Glöckner writes:

> Luke depicts in the person of the Pharisee a sinful state of affairs that is concretized in connection with the conduct of a particular "profession," but finally should show the universal, basic deportment of humanity. Not just any "vice" or fault should be denounced, nor does it go only to an ethical norm of conduct. Luke aims at a basic situation, which characterizes all humanity.[17]

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[16]Kodell, "Luke's Theology," 226.

[17]Glöckner, *Verkündigung*, 139. "Lukas schildert in der Person des Pharisäers ein Fehlverhalten, dass zwar in Zusammenhang mit dem Verhalten eines bestimmten 'Standes' konkretisiert wird, letztlich aber allgemein eine Grundhaltung des Menschen aufzeigen soll. Nicht irgendwelche 'Untugenden' oder Fehler sollen angeprangert werden, noch geht es nur um ethische Verhaltensnormen. Lukas zielt auf eine Grundbefindlichkeit, die das ganze Menschsein charakterisiert."

While one could understand Jesus' directives against self-aggrandizement as simple ethical admonitions, such an understanding would reduce the full implication of Luke's presentation. The reversal of fortune and expectation is not simply a literary device nor a reflection of Luke's social concerns; rather, it cuts to the heart of the problem with humanity which Jesus confronts in the gospel.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus promotes the theme of reversal by teaching that the ways of God are different from the ways of men. While humanity looks for stature, honor, and fame, Jesus teaches that God expects humility and servanthood from his people. On this basis, one may anticipate that Jesus, characterized as obedient to his earthly parents and to his heavenly father (2:49, 51), will demonstrate both humility and service and that his life will end in a manner contrary to human expectations, in humiliation rather than exaltation.

As Tannehill noted above, narratives lend themselves to the transformation of expectations, especially as those expectations meet conflict and resistance. Expectations for Jesus are no exception, and Luke demonstrates this fact by the manner in which he connects the concept of salvation to Jesus' life and work.

From the outset great things are expected of Jesus. The message of Gabriel to Mary (1:32-33), the proclamation to the shepherds that a Savior was born and that there was peace on earth among those whom God favored (2:14),[18] and Simeon's claim to have seen salvation in the person of the baby Jesus all establish the thought that Jesus' presence makes salvation a reality. Salvation is considered so near in the infancy narrative that Zechariah can say that God has visited his people and redeemed them and that he has

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[18]I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text,* New International Greek Testament Commentary, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1978), 112, and Fitzmyer, *I-IX*, 410-412, both cite the Septuagintal use of εὐδοκία for רָצוֹן and evidence found in the Dead Sea Scrolls to support the interpretation of ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας as "those who are favored by God." Fitzmyer, *I-IX*, 412, summarizes, "*Eudokia* was to understood of God's 'good pleasure,' and the complete phrase, *anthropoi eudokias*, as 'people whom God has favored,' i.e. with his grace or predilection"

raised up a horn of salvation simply at the birth of the one who will go before the Lord to prepare his way (1:68-69, 76). In addition, six of the eight occurrences of the noun forms of the 'salvation' word-group (σωτήρ, σωτηρία, and σωτηρίον) occur in chapters 1-2.[19] Of the other two uses, one is in a scriptural citation regarding the Baptizer (3:6) and the other is in Jesus' commentary on Zacchaeus, "Today salvation has come to this house" (19:9). This concentrated usage stresses the positive expectation that Luke sets up regarding the presence of Jesus and salvation. The Zacchaeus comment also supports the notion that Jesus' presence brings salvation with it. Yet, as noted above, despite the essentially positive expectation set up in the infancy narrative, there is a note of reversal in the statement that Jesus is appointed as a contradicted sign (2:34).

Luke continues to portray Jesus' messianic work in a largely positive light throughout the gospel in that Jesus is portrayed as the dispenser of salvation throughout his ministry.[20] On six occasions, Luke eschews a narrower term, e.g., θεραπεύω, in narrating a healing story, preferring instead the term σώζω, which term holds enough ambiguity in this context to allow the reader to understand Jesus' work of healing as also the distribution of salvation.[21] The ambiguity is particularly apparent in the healing of the ten lepers, of whom only one returned to give thanks to Jesus. The Lord comments to the one, "Were not 10 cleansed? . . . Rise and go, your faith has saved (σέσωκεν) you"

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[19]1:47, 69, 71, 77; 2:11, 30.

[20]Cf. Mark Allan Powell, "Salvation in Luke-Acts," *Word and World* 12 (1992) 5-8, who offers a concise summary of Luke's use of the salvation word-group in Luke and Acts.

[21]The texts in question are 8:36, 48, 50; 17:19, and 18:42. Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988), 269, allude to the ambiguity in the terms. Under the entry for θεραπεύω they write, "To cause someone to recover health, often with the implication of having taken care of such a person." Semantically similar is σώζω, "To cause someone to become well again after having been sick." However, they note, "It is also possible that in a number of contexts σώζω and διασώζω may have the added implication of having rescued such persons from a state of illness." It is this latter component that provides the overlap between healing and saving in a religious sense, which Louw and Nida, 241, describe as a figurative extension of the word.

(17:17, 19). Jesus specifically notes that all ten had been cleansed, yet he only tells one that he has been saved. While this could simply be a commentary on the healing that had taken place beforehand and still stood (σέσωκεν is perfect tense), the semantic ambiguity raises the question in the reader's mind whether Jesus means more than simply 'heal' by the word σώζω.

Luke furthers the expectation that Jesus' messianic work is fulfilled in his healings by twice referring to Isaiah. The first reference is a direct quotation from Isaiah 61:1, which Jesus reads in the synagogue in Nazareth: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He sent me to proclaim release to the captives and restoration of sight to the blind" (4:18). Second, when the Baptizer sends messengers to Jesus to find out if he is the Messiah, Luke writes:

> At that very hour Jesus healed many of diseases, illnesses, and evil spirits and granted to many blind people that they might see. Then he answered and said to them, "Go, report to John what you have seen and heard: 'Blind people receive sight, lame people walk, lepers are cleansed, and deaf people hear. The dead are raised; poor people are evangelized'" (7:21-22).

In this way, Jesus alludes to a whole complex of Isaianic, messianic ideals (cf. Is. 29:18; 35:5-6; 26:19) and connects his healing work with that positive expectation that the messiah would come as a dispenser of salvation.

Two other uses of the verb σώζω also point to Jesus as the dispenser of salvation. First, when a woman, described as a sinner, wets Jesus' feet with her tears and pours perfume on them, Jesus tells her, "Your sins are forgiven. . . . Your faith has saved you" (7:48, 50). Here the salvation which Jesus disburses is forgiveness. Secondly, Jesus himself describes his words as salvific. In explaining the parable of the sower to his disciples, Jesus says that the seed, which is the word of God, that fell on the path and was trampled and eaten by birds stands for those from whom the devil snatches the word so that they might not believe and be saved (8:12). The context shows that the word of God

is the same as the word of Jesus, because the point of the parable is that attention should be paid to those things which Jesus teaches. Thus Jesus concludes, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (8:8). Likewise, when the crowds gather to hear the word of God, Jesus teaches them (5:1-3). In summary, Luke sets up positive expectations for Jesus' life both in the infancy narratives where his presence is spoken of as the presence of salvation and throughout his ministry where he is portrayed as the dispenser of salvation through healing, forgiveness, and teaching the word of God.

Given all of these positive expectations that Jesus' presence brings salvation and that he is the distributor of salvation in all its forms, the reversal that Jesus experiences in his arrest, passion, and death is all the more obvious. Jesus' end stands in sharp contrast to his birth and his ministry. But Luke has prepared the way for this event by clearly associating the theme of reversal with Jesus' death. For example, immediately after predicting his impending passion and death to his disciples (9:18-22), Jesus says to everybody, "If anyone desires to come behind me, let him deny himself, take up his cross every day, and follow me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it" (9:23-24). In the face of a desire to live, Jesus points to death as the only way to save one's life, just as he must suffer many things, be killed, and rise to life on the third day (9:22). Likewise, as his passion approaches he says, "Who is greater--the one who is seated at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is seated? But I am in your midst as the one who serves" (22:27). In his humiliation on the cross, Jesus rejects the temptation to save himself three times (23:35-39), just as he had earlier rejected Satan's three temptations to exalt himself (4:3-13). By dying in humiliation and lowliness Jesus confronts humanity's condition that rejects the ways of God and seeks to glorify itself.

> The climax of this divine-human conflict is the death of Jesus. From within humanity Jesus overcomes the desire for self-exaltation. He is lowly and serves the lowly; he announces salvation for the poor, the captive, the

> blind, the oppressed (Lk 4:18); he defeats sinfulness by accepting the thorough humiliation of his passion and death, which prepares the way for his exaltation by God and opens the door of salvation to all.[22]

Luke strongly highlights the irony of Jesus' death by once again concentrating his use of the 'salvation' word-group in the crucifixion narrative.[23] The leaders ridicule Jesus, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself" (23:35); the soldiers make fun of him, saying, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself" (23:37); and one of the malefactors crucified with him, blasphemed, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us" (23:39). Jesus brings salvation to others throughout the gospel, yet his opponents suggest that he is incapable of doing the same for himself. With the exception of the second criminal, who rebukes the first and asks Jesus to remember him when he comes into his kingdom, the observers at the cross cannot see that Jesus is the dispenser of salvation, even in his death.

However, there is a double irony in the story. In the first place, Jesus' death surprises those who have only focused on the positive aspects of his messianic role by reversing those expectations. But in the second place, one might say that the death of Jesus reverses the reversal. For his death is consistent with the prophecy made about him by Simeon (caused as it is by the rejection of the leaders of Israel, cf. below), and it is consistent with Jesus' own teaching that human expectations are not necessarily congruent with the manner in which God accomplishes things. Indeed, in his death Jesus makes the kingdom of God manifest, embodying its ideals of humility and service.

In the kingdom of God, the least are great and the humble are exalted. Similarly, the one who loses his life for Jesus' sake will save it. Jesus' own life reflects this pattern: where one expects the living Christ to be the totality of God's salvation, that Christ is

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[22]Kodell, "Luke's Theology," 227.

[23]Luke's use of the 'salvation' word-group in the crucifixion scene is not the only example of the reversal theme in the passion account. Cf. John Paul Heil, "Reader-Response and the Irony of the Trial of Jesus in Luke 23:1-25," *Science et Esprit* 43 (1991), 175-186. Heil, 185-186, argues that a "recognition and appreciation of Lucan dramatic irony is indispensable" for understanding Jesus' trial and his death.

crucified. Yet his death does not negate the positive expectations which the evangelist has set up; rather Jesus' death is a necessary part of the salvation which he dispenses, as he himself repeatedly testifies. Sinful humanity looks for stature, honor, and fame as the marks of a favored life, but by confronting human self-exaltation (personified by Luke especially in the behavior of the religious authorities) with his own humiliation Jesus destroys those expectations and reverses human standards. Though he is God's royal son (1:32-33) and the dispenser of salvation (and for that reason worthy of honor) Jesus humbles himself to death at the hands of those who represent humanity's worst condition. In so humbling himself, he brings the kingdom of God into the world, shows the error of human expectations, brings repentance for one's complicity in that error (23:47-48), and thereby defeats that condition. In the kingdom of God humility becomes exaltation, just as the humiliated Jesus is exalted by the Father in his resurrection.

Jesus' Conflict with the Religious Leaders as a Key to His Death

While Luke portrays Jesus' death as a reversal of expectations, it is not for that reason altogether unexpected. Luke foreshadowed the reversal already with the Simeon saying (2:34), and throughout the gospel he has documented that Jesus' relationship with the leadership of Israel is marked by an escalating hostility.[24] At the outset, Jesus' appears to have a good relationship with the religious authorities. As a child he listened to and questioned the teachers in the temple, and they were amazed by his understanding and answers (2:46-47).[25] However, when the Pharisees and scribes are first named in the text,

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[24]Jesus' relationship to the people of Israel is marked by ambiguity. It is generally good, marked by amazement and approval (4:15; 5:26; 7:16, 29; 19:48). However, all those in the Nazareth synagogue were filled with anger against him (4:28-29), and the people are listed among those who called for Jesus' crucifixion (23:13, 18).

[25]Luke uses the term διδάσκαλος for someone other than Jesus only one other time in the Gospel--in reference to the Baptizer (3:12). 13 times the word refers to Jesus in direct speech; once Jesus uses the word aphoristically (6:40). This datum suggests that this pericope (2:41-52) has more to do with

they name Jesus a blasphemer because he claims to forgive sins (5:20-21), and they question his piety, especially his dining with 'sinners' and his failure to fast (5:30, 33). Their hostility becomes more apparent in a series of subsequent Sabbath controversies. As Jesus is teaching in a synagogue, the Pharisees and scribes watch him closely to find a reason to accuse him. When Jesus heals a man with a shriveled hand and demonstrates that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath, they become filled with rage and discuss what to do about Jesus (6:7, 11). However, at this early point of the gospel, the leaders do not force the issue. When Simon the Pharisee invites Jesus to dinner and he again claims to forgive sins, Luke simply writes, "Those who were dining began to say among themselves, 'Who is this who also forgives sins?'" (7:49), without noting whether the comment is motivated by hostility, ambivalence, or faith.

The transition between his (largely) Galilean ministry and his journey to Jerusalem includes the confession of Peter, his first passion prediction, and his transfiguration. There Jesus himself comments on the final outcome of his relationship with the religious leaders, "It is necessary that the Son of Man suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes" (9:22). This implication of open hostility becomes manifest when Jesus, once again dining with a Pharisee, pronounces three woes on the Pharisees and three woes on the experts in the law (11:42-52). After these declarations, the Pharisees and scribes begin to be very hostile to him, lying in wait for him to catch him in something he said (11:53-54). Until Jesus arrives at Jerusalem, the Pharisees and scribes are reduced to silence (14:4, 6) and to muttering (15:2; 16:14). However, Jesus continues his offensive first by warning his disciples to be on guard against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, implying that the latter would persecute his followers (12:1-12). Next, he chides a synagogue ruler for claiming that it was inappropriate to be healed on the

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Jesus' teaching ministry, especially as it is expressed in the temple (cf. chapter 2 above). However, it still supports an initial, positive expectation regarding Jesus' relationship with the leaders of Israel, even if Luke subsequently uses different terminology for those leaders.

Sabbath; the saying results in his opponent's being put to shame (13:14-17). Indeed, many of Jesus' sayings in the travel narrative are directed against specifically pharisaic behavior. The parable of the great supper (14:15-24) is spoken while Jesus is dining with a Pharisee and after he has criticized the pharisaic behavior of choosing the best seats. By implication, the invited guests who will not taste the banquet are the religious leaders. Similarly, the parables of the lost sheep, lost coin, and prodigal son are all placed after the Pharisees and scribes mutter about Jesus' eating with sinners (15:2). Likewise, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31) follows a comment by the narrator that the Pharisees loved money and a statement by Jesus about their self-righteousness (16:14-15).

Throughout the gospel, then, Jesus engages in debate with the religious authorities of Israel, and the debate is marked by increasing hostility on the part of the leaders and by Jesus' increasingly open critique of the leaders' positions. Therefore, when the conflict breaks into direct confrontation between the two parties and the leaders' murderous intent becomes explicit, the attentive reader is not completely surprised.[26]

As noted in chapter 2, the conflict climaxes in the temple in Jerusalem, where the chief priests, scribes, and leaders of the people keep searching for a way to kill Jesus. Luke structures the conflict in this way. First, the leaders question Jesus about the source

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[26]Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Conflict in Luke: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 97-98, writes, "Throughout these two phases [3:1-9:50; 9:51-19:46], both the tenor and the intensity of Jesus' conflict with the authorities remained remarkably constant. Though fierce and even acrimonious, this conflict nonetheless assumed the form of an extended, intermittent 'conversation.' Concerned to summon the authorities to repentance, Jesus willingly associated with them. They, in turn, afforded him the respect due a teacher and accepted him socially as their equal. True, provoked to fury, the authorities discussed what they might do to Jesus (6:11) and began to resent him and lie in wait to catch him in something he might say (11:53-54). Despite such animosity, their conflict with him never became mortal." Kingsbury is correct in noting that Jesus and the leaders continue in conversation throughout the Gospel, but he under-reads the escalating tension between the two parties, seeing instead an "abrupt change" when Jesus begins teaching in the temple (19:47-48). (Kingsbury, 98.) However, Charles H. Giblin, *The Destruction of Jerusalem according to Luke: A Historical-Typological Moral*, Analecta Biblica, no. 107 (Rome: Biblical Pontifical Institute, 1985), viii, argues that recognition of the "narrative progression" of escalating conflict "becomes essential to the clarification of a sequence of key texts" concerning the fate of Jerusalem. Because Jerusalem is the central locale in the gospel, its fate is intimately connected to Jesus' fate and purpose.

of his authority. However, when they are unwilling to answer his counter-question about the source of John's baptism, Jesus refuses to answer them (20:1-8). The next episode is important in understanding Jesus' conflict with the authorities and the meaning of his death.

> Then Jesus began to tell this parable to the people: "A man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went on a journey for a long time. At the proper time he sent a servant to the vinedressers so that they might give to him from the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers sent him away empty-handed after they had beaten him. He proceeded to send another servant, but that one, after they had beaten him and treated him shamefully, they sent away empty-handed. He proceeded to send a third, but again, after they wounded him, they threw him out. Then the lord of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Perhaps they will respect this one.' But when they saw him, the vinedressers reasoned with each other, saying, 'This is the heir. Let's kill him, so that the inheritance may become ours.' They threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the lord do to those from the vineyard? He will come and destroy these vinedressers, and he will give the vineyard to others."
>
> But when they heard this, they said, "May this not be so!"
>
> He looked at them and said, "What then is this which stands written: 'The stone which the builders rejected, this has been made into the head of the cornerstone'? Every one who falls on that stone will be broken into pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed."
>
> The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, and they were afraid of the people, for they knew that he had spoken this parable to them (20:9-19).

Underlying the parable is an allusion to the song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5, in which Judah is the vineyard that will be forsaken for its lack of righteousness. However, here the vineyard remains intact, though it is entrusted to others, and the vinedressers are destroyed. Thus, Jesus places his controversy with the leaders parabolically into the context of salvation history by adapting a well-known oracle of doom and applying it to the conflict. The leaders understand that the parable is spoken to them and that Jesus has equated their opposition to him with the vinedressers who will be destroyed for their own self-interest and for their rejection of the lord's reasonable request for a share of the crop.

Also clear is Jesus' comparison of himself to the lord's son, showing that the conflict will result in his own death.[27]

It is here that the death of Jesus receives a specific interpretation. His death will usher in new leadership for the people of God. The objection of the people to the parable suggests that they do not want to see their leaders rejected,[28] but Jesus' saying about the rejected stone indicates that the people cannot have both Jesus and the current leadership. The summary statement that the leaders feared the people suggests that in the end the people favored Jesus. In order to protect their position, the authorities need to kill Jesus.

Thus, Jesus' conflict with the religious authorities in Israel reaches its climax in Jerusalem, where direct confrontation leads to the search for a way to kill Jesus. The leaders view the plot as a means to protect their position, but actually Jesus' death will restore God's people to a proper relationship with him because it will result in new leadership under Jesus. However, as Tannehill comments, "The kingdom that Jesus is establishing does not retain the structure of other kingdoms, with simply a change in management."[29] To have Jesus as the head of the people of God will change the very nature of that people. While the religious authorities embody the sinful impulses of self-glorification and self-preservation, Jesus embodies service and self-denial. Where he is king, the exalted are humbled and the humble are exalted.

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[27]Giblin, *Destruction*, states, "Luke does not intend allegorically to foreshadow Jesus' death 'outside the enclosure (sc., the city),' as has often been held. . . . For he speaks of the event of Jesus' crucifixion precisely as what transpired 'in Jerusalem' (cf. 13,33; 24,18)." While it is true that parabolic details should not, as a rule, be over-interpreted, as Giblin warns, he fails to emphasize the point that Jesus is the son of the parable. Luke's use of father/son terminology for God and Jesus elsewhere (e.g., 1:32; 2:49; 3:22; 9:35; 10:22; 23:46) favors this identification.

[28]Marshall, *Commentary* 731-732, states, "The remark may be taken as expressing horror at the reaction of the owner or at the whole course of events; in either case the application of the story to the Jewish leaders is in mind. While it is generally assumed that the former interpretation is correct, it is more probable that the horror is at the fact that the Jewish leaders would act in such a way towards God and suffer the inevitable consequences."

[29]Tannehill, "What Kind?" 19.

The passion narrative account of Jesus' conflict with the religious leaders continues while Jesus is teaching publicly in the temple. The leaders cannot act against him because the whole people hangs on his words (19:48) and because the leaders fear them (20:6., 19; 22:2). However, the leaders keep looking for a way to destroy him, and at the beginning of chapter 22 they find it.

> Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, who was from the number of the 12. Judas went and spoke with the chief priests and officers how he might deliver Jesus to them. They were glad and arranged to give him money. Then he agreed, and he began looking for an opportune moment to deliver him to them away from the crowd (22:3-6).

Significantly, the religious leaders only conceive their final, successful plot with the help of Satan, who moves Judas to betray Jesus (cf. 4:13 and 8:12). Shortly after this meeting, the conflict with the authorities comes to its climax. The chief priests, officers of the temple, and elders arrest Jesus on the Mount of Olives (22:47ff). His guards beat him (22:63-65); he is tried by the council, by Pilate, and by Herod; and he is given over for crucifixion.

The leaders have Jesus crucified from a sense of self-preservation, to protect their authority. However, precisely by having Jesus killed they ensure their own downfall. Simeon alluded to this fall already when Jesus was a baby (2:34), and Jesus hints at it when he says, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to you, how often I have desired to gather your children as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you did not desire it. Look, your house is abandoned against you, but I tell you, you will not see me until the time has come when you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'" (13:34-35). As noted in chapter 2, this saying in itself does not indicate destruction. The connection, however, between 1) the unwillingness of Jerusalem (the center of the opposition to Jesus and the seat of the religious authorities) to receive Jesus, 2) the rejection of Jesus by the leaders of Israel, and

3) the death of Jesus soon becomes apparent. When Jesus approaches Jerusalem for the last time, he says:

> Would that you had known this day and the things that bring peace, but now it is hidden from your eyes! For days are coming upon you, and your enemies will set up a barricade against you, encircle you and hem you on all sides, and dash you and your children in you to the ground. They will not leave a stone on a stone in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation"(19:41,44).

In this way, Jesus indicates that the judgment that will eventually fall on Jerusalem is the direct result of rejecting Jesus, the responsibility for which (as has been shown) Luke places primarily on the shoulders of the religious leaders. Finally, on the way to his crucifixion, Jesus says:

> "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me. Rather weep for yourselves and you children, for look days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs which have not given birth and the breasts which have not nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' For if they do these thing with a green tree, what will happen with a dry one?" (23:28-31).

Once again Jesus ties the fate of Jerusalem to the activities of her leaders. In rejecting Jesus (the green tree) and handing him over to be executed the leaders have ensured their own rejection and the judgment of Israel (the dry one).[30]

Thus Jesus' death is a decisive event in the history of Israel, because it is viewed as the final rejection of God's salvation (especially by the leaders of Israel) announced by the prophets and Jesus.[31] Tyson notes, "The betrayal and the arrest, however, constitute a

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[30]That Israel is the dry tree is supported by Jesus' saying, in which he equates his presence with a new garment and new wine and notes that the old garment cannot be patched with the new and that the new wine cannot be held in old skins (5:33-39). Similarly, he speaks of a new covenant in his blood, implying the existence of an old covenant not of his blood (22:20). There is also a warning in the parable of the unproductive fig tree (13:6-9).

[31]Whether Luke desires to present Israel as a whole as rejected, replaced, or reconstituted is really a discussion that is best answered in the broader context of Luke-Acts. The gospel leaves the people in an ambiguous relationship to Jesus, having called for his crucifixion (23:13, 18) and yet not mocking him on the cross (23:35) and mourning his death (23:48).

turning point, and thereafter the lack of [public] support allows the narrative to come to its inevitable resolution in Jesus' death."[32] Indeed, the betrayal and arrest are a turning point. For the first time, the leaders, with assistance from the devil (22:3, 53), are able to act against Jesus without fear of retribution from the people. But more than that, the people actually come around to their side and are complicit in putting Jesus' to death.[33] To this point the people have responded favorably to Jesus, but at the crucial point they too oppose and reject him. Luke does downplay their role in the conflict: they call for Jesus' crucifixion, but they do not participate in mocking him on the cross (23:35) and they repent of the act when it is over (23:48). However, they are still among those responsible for Jesus' death.

Likewise, Luke downplays the role of the Romans; three times Pilate announces that Jesus has committed no crime (23:4, 14, 20). Yet he still grants the mob's demand, and his soldiers ridicule Jesus on the cross (23:36). "As Luke's passion theology . . . interprets these events the religious leaders, Pilate, Herod, the people, the Gentile (Roman) soldiers were all gathered together against God and God's anointed in the passion."[34] In essence all parties in some manner reject God's messiah and in rejecting him assert their own wills in defiance of God's.

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[32]Tyson, *Death*, 38.

[33]The actual composition of the group that called for Jesus' death (23:18) is hard to determine. In 22:66, the council of the elders of the people with the chief priests and scribes is in view. This whole assembly (ἅπαν πλῆθος) takes Jesus to Pilate (23:1). Then Pilate addresses the chief priests and the crowd (τοὺς ὄχλους). The last reference to the crowd was to the group, composed of the chief priests, temple officers, elders, and at least one servant, that arrested Jesus (22:47). However, it is possible that a broader group is referred to here. In any case, in 23:13 Luke specifically refers to the presence of the people (λαός). Thus, he shows that the Israel as a whole is culpable in calling for Jesus' death.

[34]Richard P. Carlson, "The Role of the Jewish People in Luke's Passion Theology," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 101.

Thus the conclusion reached above in regard to the theme of reversal is confirmed in the theme of conflict with Israel's leaders and indeed all people. Self-assertion, self-exaltation, and self-righteousness are diametrically opposed to the way of the kingdom of God which manifests itself in service and humility In his death Jesus confronts and defeats the opposition that these forces pose to God's will by reversing human standards, especially as they are manifest in the religious authorities, and replacing them with the standard of selflessness, embodied in his death. Significantly, the two groups that Luke is most careful to isolate from the burden of responsibility for Jesus' death--the Romans and the people--are the first to be brought to faith and repentance by him: the centurion glorifies God (23:47) and the whole crowd returns, beating their breasts.[35] In his death Jesus has humbled their selfish opposition to him and restored them to a proper relationship to God.

The Necessity of Jesus' Death:
Jesus' Sayings about His Death

The evidence adduced so far has shown that Luke presents Jesus' death as a reversal of the expectations both of the faithful (e.g., Zechariah and Simeon) and which Luke himself set up (e.g., that the messiah would come to bring salvation in the form of healing, forgiveness of sins, and authoritative teaching). While Jesus' death is a reversal of these expectations, it is consistent with the way things are done in the kingdom of God. The reversal is not unexpected, however, because this first theme develops alongside the prominent and escalating conflict between Jesus and the religious authorities of Israel. A third strand of evidence which informs the previous two consists of Jesus' own sayings

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[35]Cf. Richard S. Ascough, "Rejection and Repentance: Peter and the People in Luke's Passion Narrative," *Biblica* 74 (1993), 349-365, who argues that the people's actions are parallel to those of Peter and "that Luke uses the people's rejection of Jesus to prepare the way for the repentance and conversion of many of the people of the book of Acts" (365).

regarding his death, sayings which center on the necessity of that death in fulfillment of the scriptures.

Luke commonly uses the impersonal verb δεῖ to express a divine necessity, an event or activity that must happen, especially in accordance with God's will. Of his 12 uses of the word, 11 have a connection to salvation history and the unfolding of God's plan of salvation.[36] Especially important to this study are those places where Jesus speaks of his own activity in terms of divine necessity. Jerome Kodell writes, "This synoptic theme of destiny is broadened in Luke to embrace all of Jesus' life. . . . But ultimately his life and mission funnel into the passion as the focus of the way of salvation decreed by God."[37] Thus, as a child in the temple, Jesus asks Mary and Joseph, "Did you not know that it is necessary that I be about my Father's business?" (2:49), and early in his ministry he tells the people, "It is necessary that I preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities, because I was sent for this" (4:43). The most frequent use of the verb, however, is in connection with Jesus' death. When first predicting his death to his disciples Jesus says, "It is necessary that the Son of Man suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, be killed, and on the third day rise" (9:22). Again, when speaking of his second coming he says, "But first it is necessary that the Son of Man suffer many things and be rejected by this generation" (17:25).[38]

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[36]2:49; 4:43; 9:22; 12:12; 17:25; 19:5; 21:9; 22:37; 24:7, 44. Three of these occurrences may be excluded from this study: 12:12, in which Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will teach his disciples what they must say in the face of persecution; 19:5, where Jesus tells Zacchaeus that he must stay at his house; and 21:9, in which Jesus tells his disciples that wars and disorder must precede the eschaton.

For comparison, Matthew uses the form only 4 times in his whole Gospel, always in the context of salvation history (twice of Jesus' death [16:21; 26:54], once of the Baptizer [17:10], and once of the signs of the end time [24:6]). Mark uses it five times, four times in the context of salvation history (once of Jesus' death [8:31], once of the Baptizer [9:11], and twice of the signs of the end time [13:7, 10]).

[37]Jerome Kodell, "Luke's Theology of the Death of Jesus," in *Sin, Salvation, and the Spirit*, ed. Daniel Durken (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979), 227.

[38]Cf. also 13:33; 22:37; 24:7, 44.

Significantly, the necessity of the messiah's suffering is closely tied to the fulfillment of the scriptures. Jesus tells the 12, "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all the things which stand written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished" (18:31). On the night of his betrayal, he says, "For I say to you that it is necessary that this thing which stands written be accomplished in me: 'And he was reckoned with the lawless.' For the matter which concerns me is being completed" (22:37).[39] Finally, on Easter evening, Luke writes:

> Then Jesus said to them, "These were my words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, 'It is necessary that all the things which stand written in Moses, the prophets, and the psalms concerning me be fulfilled.'" Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it stands written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day" (24:44-46).

Jesus understands his death as essential to God's ordering of salvation, an ordering which is, to those with the understanding to see it, revealed in the scriptures of Israel. However, simply to acknowledge that God willed Jesus' death as a necessary part of his plan of salvation does not answer the question of how that death provides salvific effects within that plan.

To further clarify how Jesus' death functions within God's plan of salvation Luke presents it as an event consistent with the witness of the scriptures and based on the pattern of the Old Testament prophets. Jesus casts himself in the mold of the prophets. In the synagogue in Nazareth, he notes that no prophet is welcome in his own country, and he compares himself to Elijah and Elisha (4:24-27). Later, the reason he gives for going

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[39]Joel B. Green, "The Death of Jesus, God's Servant," in *Reimaging the Death of the Lukan Jesus*, ed. Dennis D. Sylva, Biblische Beiträge, bd. 73 (Frankfurt am Main: Anton Hain, 1990), 23-24, cautions, "It is not the case that for Luke the preeminence of the Servant motif lies in the fact that the Servant suffers. Rather, it embraces the whole of Jesus' work. . . . In fact, the Servant christology Luke develops embraces Jesus' whole ministry but focuses especially on his death and exaltation. That is . . . the Servant functions for Luke by holding in tension the centrality of the twin motifs of Jesus' crucifixion and exaltation."

to Jerusalem is that it is not possible for a prophet to be destroyed outside of Jerusalem (13:33). The people consider Jesus a prophet (9:8, 19), and his opponents evaluate his character in terms of a prophet (7:39).

Jesus, moreover, explains several times what it means to be a prophet--true prophets are persecuted and killed. For example, in the sermon on the plain Jesus says, "Blessed are you when men hate you and when they exclude you, insult you, and reject your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for your reward is much in heaven. For in this way their fathers treated the prophets" (6:23-24). He also notes, "For this reason also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send among them prophets and apostles, and they will kill and persecute some of them, so that the blood of all the prophets which has been shed from the foundation of the world may be required from this generation" (11:49-50). In this way, Jesus patterns himself as a prophet, and his death is a consequence of that role.[40]

However, Jesus also distances himself from the prophets and understands himself as the fulfillment of both their words and their deeds. When he refers to himself in prophetic terms, he does so in the third person; "A prophet is not accepted," "A prophet cannot die outside Jerusalem." In condemning the present generation as wicked, he notes that Jonah's preaching produced repentance in Nineveh and that one greater than Jonah is here (11:32). Not only do the scriptures (and the prophets who wrote them) speak of his passion and resurrection but also those same prophets desired to see the manifestation of God's kingdom that Jesus' disciples see (10:24). Jesus not only patterns himself on the

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[40]Morna D. Hooker, "'Beginning with Moses and from all the Prophets,'" in *From Jesus to John: Essays on Jesus and the New Testament in Honour of Marinus de Jonge*, ed. Martinus C. de Boer, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series, no. 84 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 229-230, finds several parallels between the careers of Elijah and Moses and that of Jesus in the travel narrative. "Whether or not we accept the suggestion that the travel narrative is meant to parallel the journey of Moses from Horeb to the promised land, therefore, it would seem that Luke intends to present Jesus as both the prophet like Moses and as the returning Elijah. In doing so, he demonstrates another way in which 'Moses and all the prophets' are fulfilled in Jesus."

prophetic model so that his life and death are consistent with the scriptural testimony but also fulfills that pattern and the prophecies which were spoken throughout the Old Testament. The prophets' persecutions and deaths are only foreshadowings, types, of Jesus' persecution and death.

> For Luke, Jesus is part of a long line of prophets God sent to his people with the offer salvation. Like them he has been rejected. But the distinguishing trait of Jesus is that he is more than a Prophet; he is *the* Prophet, God's final prophet. He is the Prophet Moses promised long ago. To reject him is to be cut off from the people.[41]

True, Jesus serves as an example of the life of a righteous person, reflecting the lives of the faithful before him and giving a guide to those after him. However, in Luke's gospel, Jesus is more than a prophet. He is the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation, of which his death is an essential part. In God's plan of salvation, Jesus' death stands out in that it is caused by the decisive and final rejection of God's ways. Just as ancient Israel's failure to receive the prophetic calls to repentance finally resulted in her being exiled from the land, failure to receive Jesus as the Lord's anointed and his call to repentance results in one being excluded from the people of God.

> The saving significance of Jesus' death in Luke is not invested in its expiation for sin. This death is rather portrayed within God's strategy for Israel, revealing both God's judgment and saving rule. . . . God's initiative in the reign of this Savior is not immediately salvific in the crucifixion. Jesus' death is a confrontation, in which God's will is tried. Those who resist the king's reign (see 19:11-27) or kill the royal heir (20:9-19) place themselves in grave peril, testing God's forbearance.[42]

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[41]Frank J. Matera, *Passion Narratives and Gospel Theologies: Interpreting the Synoptics through Their Passion Stories*, Theological Inquiries (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), 212.

[42]Tiede, "Contending with God," 304-305.

As Tiede notes elsewhere, complicity in Jesus' death does not preclude the possibility of later repentance,[43] but because Jesus is the fulfillment of the Scriptures and of salvation-history he is the touchstone upon which all salvation hinges and to reject him is to reject the ways of God in their ultimate manifestation.

Jesus' words over the bread and the second cup at the last supper emphasize that Jesus sees his life and especially his death as the fulfillment of God's salvation-historical purposes.

> And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. " And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. " And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. " And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But behold the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of man goes as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed! " And they began to question one another, which of them it was that would do this (22:14-23; RSV).[44]

The connection of Jesus' death with the fulfillment of salvation-history is strengthened by Jesus' statements that he desires to eat this meal before he suffers and that he will not eat it

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[43]David L. Tiede, "'Glory to They People Israel': Luke-Acts and the Jews," in *Luke-Acts and the Jewish People: Eight Critical Perspectives*, ed. Joseph B. Tyson (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 33-34. Carlson, "Role," 102, makes a similar point: "In truth, their rejection of Jesus is not only part of God's plan, it leads to the ultimate goal of God's plan which means salvation in Jesus' name will be offered to them. That is good news not bad news. Still, not all of the people will respond appropriately. Many will spurn those proclaiming that salvific message and will set out to kill those messengers."

[44]The textual question, whether 19b-20 are original or not, is a study unto itself. For a discussion of the arguments for and against the longer reading, see Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV*, Anchor Bible, 28A (New York: Doubleday, 1985). 1387-1389; Joel B. Green, *The Death of Jesus: Tradition and Interpretation in the Passion Narrative*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 2. Reihe, no. 33 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988), 35-42; and Bart D. Ehrman, "The Cup, the Bread, and the Salvific Effect of Jesus' Death in Luke-Acts," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 576-591.

again until it has been fulfilled in the kingdom of God. In this way Jesus himself connects his death and fulfillment. However, the connection is not yet certain because Jesus does not say when that fulfillment will occur--whether with his death or with the resurrection or with the parousia.[45] More importantly, Jesus' words over the cup, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you," connect his death to the fulfillment of salvation history.[46] The reference to the new covenant is an allusion to Jeremiah 31:31,

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[45]Neyrey, *Passion*, 13-14, notes the difficulty of answering the "when" of verses 16-18. He concludes, "We are encouraged, then, to think of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection as the context of Jesus' coming into his kingdom." Similarly Arthur A. Just, Jr., *The Ongoing Feast: Table Fellowship and Eschatology at Emmaus* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1993), 231, says, "The past/present/future aspects are all present in Luke's narrative." He further asserts, "When Jesus breaks bread at Emmaus, we know that 'it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God' (22:16)." Further confusing the picture is Jesus' statement, "I am giving you a kingdom just as my Father has given one to me" (22:29), which seems to indicate that the kingdom is already fulfilled.

[46]Both Stein, *Luke*, 544-545, and Fitzmyer, *X-XXIV*, 1391, argue that here Luke understands Jesus' death vicariously. This may well be true, but this study has shown that Jesus' death as a vicarious atonement is not Luke's primary soteriological emphasis. Indeed, as Green, *Death of Jesus*, 320, has noted, "It is also true that the passion story has very little to say about the significance of Jesus' death in salvation-historical terms, apart from the obvious point regarding its place of primacy in God's redemptive plan. We are told that Jesus' death was central to his mission, but we hear very little about why or how it so functions. We are told that Jesus' death was central to God's salvific purpose, but how it so functions is relatively unimportant in the passion account. In short, the passion account emphasizes much more the *that* of this connection than the *why* or *how* behind it." However, Green goes on to suggest that it is precisely in the words of institution that the passion narrative indicates an explicit atonement-theology. "We have put forward a body of evidence encouraging the thesis that the testimony of the eucharistic words, with their straightforward emphasis on Jesus' redemptive death, so pervaded the Christian celebration of the Lord's Supper, that no additional, explicit testimony to its soteriological significance was required in the passion narrative. . . . We have therefore set forth two ways of explaining the apparent lack of any significant emphasis on atonement-theology in the early passion narrative. . . . What must be asked is whether one is to be preferred over the other--i.e. which more closely fits the evidence we have assimilated? Alternatively, it is legitimate to ask whether we are in fact necessarily faced with the prospect of tendering an either-or verdict between these two alternatives, for it is certainly possible to recognize that the passion narrative assumes atonement-theology while at the same time recognizing that the narrative's more prominent theological emphasis is not so carefully nuanced. On the basis of the total evidence, no one can deny that in any case atonement-theology is not the central motif to which all others lead--and this is true not only for the passion narrative but also for the eucharistic words themselves. As we saw, the Supper-words gather together numerous OT motifs and bits of OT language to emphatically make the point, first, that Jesus' death is central to God's redemptive plan. Apparently, for earliest Christianity, the highest priority was on proving that Jesus' death was no surprise to God and constituted no contradiction of the christological claims that had been and were being advanced. The idea that Jesus died 'for us' evidently constituted one very early and important means of making this point clear--as is evidenced in the repetition of the Supper words. In the early celebration of the Supper--the context in which the passion narrative was given birth, the christological and soteriological interpretations of Jesus'

and it indicates, in Marshall's words, "not a temporal repetition but a new, eschatological beginning."[47] The old covenant (most likely the Sinaitic covenant) is replaced, not because it is intrinsically inferior, but because it has been broken by Israel throughout her history, and the violation of that covenant by killing Jesus is the final breach. "Nearly all the prophets proceed from this, that through her sin Israel wandered from God and broke the covenant and that a whole, new saving action of God is necessary if salvation history is to go further."[48] Thus Jesus stands at the end of salvation history, the last of the prophets and the touchstone by which one is included or excluded from the people of God.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has sketched three themes that form an interpretive background to the death of Jesus in Luke's gospel. First, Luke utilizes the concept of the reversal of expectations and fortunes as a key to understanding Jesus' death. This theme highlights the fact that God does not accomplish his ends in the same way that humanity

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death flowed together. However, if the passion narrative is one trustworthy guide for understanding the earliest Christian thought--as we have claimed--this salvific interpretation was only one among several by which Jesus' death was viewed in terms of God's redemptive purpose. The use of additional OT texts, themes, and figures--by allusion and citation--served a similar function. Hence, we have seen that primitive Christianity could never have contented itself with mere factual statements concerning the death of Jesus. Rather, the cross-event cried out for interpretation, with the result that an interpretive story of Jesus' suffering and death soon took shape. This narrative not only allowed but indeed purposed the blending together of historical events and theological reflection. Jesus' passion was thus recognized and proclaimed for its cruciality in God's salvific plan, an awareness that to a large degree arose from the eucharistic words of Jesus as they were remembered at the Lord's Supper" (Green, *Death of Jesus*, 322-323). See also Neyrey, *Passion*, 156-158, who distinguishes between christological, apologetic interpretations of Jesus' death and soteriological, "positive or kerygmatic" interpretation.

[47]Marshall, *Commentary*, 806.

[48]Glöckner, *Verkündigung*, 167. "Nahezu alle Propheten gehen davon aus, dass Israel durch seine Schuld sich von Gott abgewandt und den bund gebrochen hat and dass ein ganz neues Heilshandeln Gottes nötig ist, wenn die Heilsgeschichte weitergehen soll." This is also the since of the Jeremiah passage. J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 580-581, writes, "The history of Israel since the days of Moses was one of persistent failure to live according to the terms of the covenant. They had not merely refused to obey the law or to acknowledge Yahweh's complete and sole sovereignty, but were incapable of such obedience. . . . A new covenant was needed because they broke the first one despite the fact that Yahweh had undertaken mighty acts of deliverance on their behalf."

accomplishes its or in ways that humanity would expect. In God's kingdom those who exalt themselves and are rich are humbled and those who are humble and poor are exalted. Jesus embodies both of these truths. Born of a virgin who describes herself as the Lord's humble servant, Jesus is introduced and portrayed as the majestic dispenser of salvation, and, in keeping with God's manner of doing things, his majesty is humbled in his death. Yet his death does not negate the salvation that he has dispensed. Rather, by confronting in his death human self-exaltation, personified by the religious leaders of Israel, Jesus inverts the human framework that encourages such an attitude, brings repentance, and saves those who are thus humbled by bringing them into the framework of the kingdom of God where his humility and self-sacrifice prevail.

Second, Luke places the death of Jesus within a prominent and escalating conflict with the religious leaders of Israel. Just as the prophets experienced resistance, rejection, and mortal danger as a result of their ministries, so too does Jesus. Though the people acclaim him a prophet, the religious leaders of Israel resist his work and reject him. Though Jesus describes himself in Isaianic terms as the one who brings salvation through his healing and teaching, both of these aspects of his ministry bring him into conflict with the authorities. When the people appear to favor Jesus and to recognize him as God's messenger, the leaders plot how to destroy him. At the heart of Jesus' conflict with the authorities is the right to rule the people. However, the authorities' desire to lead the people is prompted by self-righteousness and self-interest, whereas Jesus' rule is characterized by his righteousness and service. True to the theme of reversal, Jesus, who was announced as the one who would rule the house of Jacob, is rejected by those who rule it now. True to the prophetic pattern, Jesus is killed in Jerusalem by the religious authorities, who at the climactic moment win the people and the Gentiles over to their side so that the conflict is understood as a general human condition rather than one that is connected only with the Jewish authorities of the first century C.E.

Finally, Jesus' death is portrayed as an essential element within God's plan of salvation. Jesus' death is more than another example in a larger pattern of prophetic rejection. Jesus stands in the train of the prophets, yet he brings the prophetic tradition to fulfillment. On the one hand, he is a prophet, and he invites comparisons both to the former prophets (e.g., Elijah) and to the latter prophets (e.g., Isaiah); but, on the other hand, the prophets looked forward to his coming, and he is greater than the prophets. He suffers and dies because the prophets have written in the scriptures that it must be so. Jesus brings salvation, and he dispenses it in the form of healing, forgiveness of sins, and authoritative teaching. However, his death is a necessary part of his messianic work, and it, too, brings salvation.

In conclusion, Luke understands the death of Jesus as an essential aspect of salvation history. Indeed, the death of Jesus, along with his resurrection, stands as the climax of salvation history. By tracing Jesus' genealogy to Adam, Luke indicates that salvation-history encompasses all of humanity because in Eden, Adam rejected God's ways and sought his own exaltation.[49] After God chose Israel as his people, they continued the pattern of self-aggrandizement that characterized all humanity. Throughout their history they rejected, persecuted, and killed God's messengers rather than be humbled and repent. When Jesus comes, Israel and representatives from all the peoples ultimately reject and kill him as well. However, in humbling himself and accepting his death, he destroys self-exaltation, produces repentance, and establishes a new covenant.[50] Thus, Luke portrays

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[49]Cf. Neyrey, *Passion*, 165-184, who argues that Jesus is the new Adam. Neyrey's case is interesting, but open to critique at several points.

[50]Just as the living Jesus brings forgiveness of sins as part of his salvific work, the new covenant that his death establishes is also intimately tied up with such forgiveness. While Luke does not record the words "for the forgiveness of sins" in Jesus' saying over the cup at the last supper (as does Matthew 26:28), Jeremiah 31 (to which Luke's "new covenant" alludes) states the Yahweh will forgive the sins of his people as part of the new covenant. By allusion, then, Luke emphasizes his point: the living Jesus dispenses salvation in many forms (including forgiveness), but Jesus' death is not to be seen as

Jesus' death as salvific in that it illustrates that God's ways are the ways of humility and servanthood. Jesus' death brings salvation history, replete with Israel's and humanity's rejection of God's ways, to a climax and produces repentance. Finally, Jesus' death institutes a new covenant and inaugurates the kingdom of God, ruled by Jesus, the Servant of God, and not by self-serving men.

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contradictory to this fact. Rather, Jesus' life, death, and resurrection stand as a complex whole by which God brings salvation-history to its fulfillment.

CHAPTER 4

THE TEARING OF THE TEMPLE VEIL AND THE DEATH OF JESUS

The Crucifixion Scene as the Thematic Climax to the Gospel

In the narrative of Jesus' crucifixion and death (23:26-48), the three themes discussed in chapter 3--reversal, conflict, and the necessity of Jesus' death for the fulfillment of salvation history--reach their culmination.

> Now, when they led him away, they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming from the field, and they laid the cross on him to carry it behind Jesus. A great crowd of the people and women who were mourning and weeping for him, began to follow him. Jesus turned to the women and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For, look, the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren ones and the wombs which have not given birth and the breasts which have not nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' For if they are doing these things to a green tree, what might happen to a dry one?" Two other criminals were also being led with him to be executed.
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> When they came to the place which is called 'Skull,' there they crucified him and the criminals--one on the right side and one on the left side. Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing."[1] Because they were dividing his clothes among themselves, they threw lots.

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[1]The textual problem here is difficult. Several important manuscripts (p^{75} [ca. 3rd century], $\aleph^{1}$, B, and D^{*}) omit this sentence, while $\aleph^{*.2}$ and A (omitting Πάτερ) include it. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (n.p.: United Bible Societies, 1975), 180, indicates that the omission is difficult to explain if the text is original. However, he is willing to allow that it "bears self-evident tokens of its dominical origin," even if it is not original to Luke. Joel B. Green, *The Death of*

> The people stood by and watched. The rulers began to ridicule and said, "He saved others; let him save himself, if this one is the Christ of God, the chosen one." When they approached him to offer him sour wine, the soldiers also made fun of him, saying, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself." (There was an inscription over him, "This is the king of the Jews.")
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> One of the crucified criminals was blaspheming him and saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other one answered him rebukingly and said, "Do you not even fear God? For you are under the same judgment. We [are judged] justly, for we are receiving [punishments] worthy of what we have done; but this one has done nothing wrong." He continued to say, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."
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> It was already the sixth hour, and darkness was over the whole land until the ninth hour, because the sun had failed. The curtain of the temple split in the center. Jesus shouted with a great shout and said, "Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit." When he had said this, he died.
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> When the centurion saw what had occurred, he glorified God, saying, "Truly this man was righteous." All the crowds assembled for this sight, when they saw the things that had happened, returned, beating their breasts.

As he did in the infancy narrative (cf. the discussion of John's annunciation in chapter 3 above), Luke builds the reversal of expectations into the structure of his narrative. For example, the women lament for Jesus, but he tells them to weep for themselves instead. The misfortune is not his but theirs, for in the rejection of God's messiah Jerusalem's fate has been sealed. Similarly, Jesus' request that his executioners be forgiven inverts the expectation: one would expect a condemned man to beg for mercy for himself, not for others. In both cases, Jesus indicates that despite appearances the tragedy of the situation really falls on his opponents and those associated with them.

Jesus: Tradition and Interpretation in the Passion Narrative, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 2. Reihe, bd. 33 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1988), 91-92, is probably correct when he concludes, "The textual evidence is evenly divided, so internal evidence must be given weighty consideration, and it points emphatically to the originality of the prayer." He lists the importance of forgiveness for Luke, the evangelist's emphasis on the ignorance of the Jews, especially in Acts, and a structural pattern of placing a saying of Jesus in each major section of the passion narrative. See also James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean? Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World* (St. Louis: CPH, 1995), 46ff, on the importance of internal evidence for textual criticism.

The three-fold taunt to save himself (23:35-43) furthers the theme of reversal in this text through its use of irony.[2] The rulers say, "He saved others; let him save himself, if this one is the Christ of God, the chosen one" (23:35). Arndt's comment highlights the irony, "While mocking, these enemies have to testify to his messianic greatness: He has rescued others."[3] Throughout his ministry, Jesus has appeared as the dispenser of salvation and his opponents expect him to behave in the same way for himself now. However, just as Jesus refused to succumb to the devil's temptations to abuse his power by using it for himself (4:1-13), he refuses to yield here either. Despite the positive expectations about the nature of the messiah's work, it is necessary that he suffer and die in fulfillment of God's plan of salvation. Similarly, the soldiers call for him to save himself if he is truly the king of the Jews. Although Luke connects the inscription above Jesus with the mockery of the soldiers (23:37-38), showing that those who placed it there intended it sarcastically, the irony of the scene is that the inscription is accurate: Jesus is a king (1:32-33; 22:29), but his kingship does not express itself in self-exaltation. "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, . . . but I am in the midst of you as one who serves" (22:25, 27).

Luke makes these ironies even more apparent in the third taunt (23:39-43). There one criminal blasphemes Jesus and demands that Jesus save all three of them. However, the second criminal intercedes for Jesus and defends his innocence. Although he recognizes the injustice and tragedy of Jesus' death, he alone of those who speak in this pericope understands that Jesus is still the giver of salvation and truly the king of the Jews,

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[2]Paul D. Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), 17, defines irony as "a double-leveled literary phenomenon in which two tiers of meaning stand in some opposition to each other and in which some degree of unawareness is expressed or implied.." Duke suggests that the act of deciphering the irony appeals to the reader and often brings the reader to the author's perspective (37-39).

[3]William F. Arndt, *Bible Commentary: The Gospel According to St. Luke* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1956), 469.

that is, he alone perceives that what the others say in mockery is actually a testimony to the reality of Jesus' person and work. "In any case his faith in one who is crucified with him is very remarkable. Some saw Jesus raise the dead, and did not believe. The robber sees him being put to death, and yet believes."[4]

The reaction of the crowds also signifies a reversal of expectations. The leaders of Israel had sought Jesus' death in order to preserve their positions of power and honor, but they had been unable to move against him because the people hung on his words (19:47-48; 21:38). Jesus had testified to their selfish motives in the parable of the wicked vinedressers, and they became afraid of the people (20:9-19). However, with the aid of Judas, who was influenced by Satan, the leaders formulated a plan that avoided a public confrontation (22:3-6) and eventually won the people to their side in calling for Jesus' death (23:13, 18). Yet, as soon as Pilate surrendered Jesus to their will, the character of the people's participation became less active. A great multitude of the people follow him as he is led to his crucifixion, and Luke records only that the women among them mourned for him (23:27). At the cross, the people stand by and watch in contrast to the rulers who ridicule Jesus (23:35). Finally, after Jesus dies, the assembled crowd returns, beating their breasts (23:48), indicating that they are repentant of the part that they have played in this matter (cf. 18:13-14).[5] Because of this reaction, the leaders' expectation that with the elimination of Jesus their position would be secure is reversed, and they find themselves in the same position they were in while Jesus was teaching in the temple. The people are still sympathetic to him, and the leaders have failed to destroy him and his influence.

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[4]Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke*, 5th ed (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1922), 533.

[5]Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes: More Lucan Parables, Their Culture and Style* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 153.

In these ways, then, Luke brings the theme of reversal to a climax in the crucifixion narrative. Jesus, who distributes salvation in the forms of forgiveness of sins, teaching, and healing throughout the gospel, refuses to save himself from the cross. His enemies take this as an opportunity for ridicule and mockery, but their own taunts only serve to illuminate the character of Jesus and his work. Indeed, far from being a personal tragedy for him, his death is tragic only for those who reject him--such as the inhabitants of Jerusalem whose city will be destroyed on account of their rejection of their messiah, especially as that rejection is embodied in their leaders.

Just as the theme of reversal comes to its climax in the crucifixion narrative, the theme of conflict reaches its culmination here. As noted above, Jesus' death results from the plotting of the religious leaders of Israel. Throughout chapters 22-23, these leaders are allied with other parties to form a unified front against Jesus, God's anointed. The chief priest, scribes (22:2), officers of the temple, and the elders (22:52) are named as the main conspirators.[6] However, at the decisive moment, the people join in calling for Jesus' death, and Pilate hands Jesus over to their desires (22:25). Further, this final plot against Jesus succeeds with the help of Satan, who entered Judas (22:3). At the cross, then, the conflict which marked Jesus' life and ministry reaches its zenith. In his crucifixion, the full extent of the conflict appears. Jesus is executed at the behest of the religious leaders of

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[6]E. Jane Via, "According to Luke, Who Put Jesus to Death?" in *Political Issues in Luke-Acts*, ed. Richard J. Cassidy and Philip J. Scharper (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1983), 132, attempts to moderate the role of the chief priests by showing that other groups are involved in the death of Jesus: "In Luke's Gospel, it is various individuals and groups, among whom the chief priests consistently appear, who put Jesus to death." Why she desires to clear the chief priests (or, perhaps better, to deflect some of the blame from them) is not immediately apparent. Regardless, Jack Dean Kingsbury's comment in *Conflict in Luke: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 80, stands: "Luke highlights not so much the historical differences that characterized the various groups as the solidarity they exhibit in their opposition to Jesus. *Indeed, Luke stereotypes the religious authorities*, which is the major reason they can be treated as a group character" (emphasis added). In the end, Via, 132, comes to the same conclusion: "Luke places primary responsibility on the rulers and secondary responsibility on the crowds, etc." The chief priests consistently appear among the rulers (Via, 132, 140).

Israel, who in the verses leading up to the crucifixion narrative are allied with Satan (22:53), the people, and the Gentiles.

The balance of various groups mocking Jesus on the cross with the response of individuals within those groups indicates that the conflict has peaked and is moving towards its resolution. The groups are the people, the criminals, the soldiers, and the leaders. Note the following:

First, Luke frames the crucifixion with the reactions of the people. They do not mock Jesus; they only stand by and watch, and they return, beating their breasts (23:35, 48). In this way, they acknowledge their involvement but repent of it. While they are responsible in part for putting Jesus on the cross, their conflict with him is sudden, erupting after his arrest while he is on trial, and short-lived. At the cross, they do not participate in his rejection any longer, and after his death they are sympathetic to him.

Next, Luke relates three taunts, spoken by the rulers, the soldiers, and one of the criminals, respectively. The criminal is immediately rebuked by the other criminal, who defends Jesus' innocence and prays that Jesus would remember him in his kingdom (23:40-42). Jesus, in turn, promises that he will be with him in paradise (23:43). Thus Luke balances the criminals against one another: one mocks and excludes himself from the kingdom, and the other humbly asks Jesus for mercy and receives salvation.[7]

Similarly, the soldiers make fun of Jesus, but the centurion balances their derision with his confession that Jesus was truly righteous (23:47). Doble suggests, "By his participation in the δοξ- phrase [ἐδόξαζεν τὸν Θεόν] the centurion at the cross may conceivably be thought to be Luke's way of representing a Gentile recognising and

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[7]I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 873, writes, "In the present passage it [παράδεισος] represents the state of bliss which Jesus promises to the criminal directly after death. The use of σήμερον thus presents no problem; it refers to the day of crucifixion as the day of entry into paradise. Nevertheless, it is significant that Jesus can use the term σήμερον which signifies that the era of salvation has become a reality and echoes the usage in 2:11; 4:21; 5:26 (diff. Mk.); 19:11."

responding worshipfully to God's salvation being unfolded before him."[8] So, Luke tempers the role of the Gentiles in Jesus' death by offsetting the soldiers' mockery with the centurion's declaration, which borders on faith.[9]

Finally, even though the religious authorities bear the burden of the blame for putting Jesus to death because they were the primary instigators of the plot against him, Luke indicates the possibility of a positive resolution to their conflict through his description of Joseph of Arimathea. Joseph was a member of the Council and a good and righteous man, who was eagerly expecting the kingdom of God (23:50-52). This description calls to mind the pious men and women of the infancy narrative--Elizabeth, Zechariah, Simeon, and Anna (1:6; 2:25, 38). Further, Joseph did not consent to the Council's purpose or to its deed (23:50-51). While Joseph's act of giving Jesus a proper burial is not explicitly an act of repentance (as the people), faith (as the thief), or confession (as the centurion), Luke still indicates in this way that Jesus' conflict with the authorities has climaxed and that a favorable resolution is possible.[10] Tannehill comments, "It is also noteworthy that the impression which seems to be encouraged by most scenes--that the Jewish leaders form a monolithic party of opposition to Jesus--is softened by the

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[8]Peter Doble, *The Paradox of Salvation: Luke's Theology of the Cross*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, no. 87 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 68. Doble observes that there is no explicit evidence that the centurion was either a Roman or a Gentile. However, Luke only uses ἑκατοντάρχης of Gentiles. For example, in chapter 7, he uses it of a man who is apparently not a Jew (7:2, 6), and in Acts he uses it of Cornelius, who is explicitly not Jewish (Ac 10:28).

[9]Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)*, Anchor Bible, vol. 28A, (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 1515, comments, "The evangelist's narrative comment about the pagan Roman centurion practically makes a Christian (or at least a Jew) out of him."

[10]Admittedly, two factors weaken the resolution with the leaders: 1) the incident occurs away from the place of crucifixion, thereby distancing Joseph's positive response from the mockery of the rulers; and 2) Luke indicates that Joseph did not consent to the Council's plan, implying that he may not have been included in the group of the rulers.

appearance of individual exceptions."[11] Jesus' death brings salvation even to those who are numbered among his most ardent opponents.[12]

In summary, Luke's presentation of the crucifixion brings the theme of conflict to its climax and points towards its resolution. Given an opportunity by Satan, the leaders, with the help of the people and the Romans, move against Jesus. Yet, as people are confronted with the dying messiah, Luke indicates the saving impact of that death. Even from the cross, Jesus distributes salvation (23:43), and his death moves the centurion to confession and the people to repentance (23:47, 48). Even one of the leaders acts favorably towards Jesus by burying him (23:53). Even though many may still refuse to receive Jesus as the messiah, his death brings some into his kingdom. Through his death, Jesus fulfills Simeon's words that he was appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel and for a contradicted sign. (2:34).

Finally, the crucifixion scene brings the theme of the necessary fulfillment of salvation-history to its conclusion. Throughout the gospel, Jesus has spoken of those things which he must do as the messiah--teaching, (especially in the temple, 2:49), preaching the good news of the kingdom of God (4:43), and especially suffering and dying (9:22; 13:33; 17:25; 22:37). In the temple, Jesus teaches the people and proclaims the good news to them (20:1). And, true to his prophetic character, he is finally rejected and killed in Jerusalem.

If Jesus were simply another prophet in a long line of prophets, then his death alone, without any other signs, would be sufficient notice that he had fulfilled his purpose. However, he is the culmination of the prophets and the fulfilment of all that they have

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[11]Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 178.

[12]That Luke's emphasis is on Joseph's connection with the Council becomes clearer in comparison with Matthew, who notes that Joseph was also a disciple of Jesus (Mt 27:57).

prophesied (10:24; 24:44), and in God's plan of salvation Jesus' death stands out as the decisive and final rejection of God's ways. Luke emphasizes the finality of the rejection of Jesus by those to whom he had been sent by placing his death in the context of two further witnesses--unnatural darkness and the tearing of the temple veil.

In Luke, the darkness at Jesus' death is best understood as an indication of opposition to the kingdom of God. Already in the infancy narrative Zechariah associates the work of the messiah with the coming of day and the enlightenment of those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death (1:78-79). Simeon calls Jesus a light for the nations (2:32). Jesus points to the restoration of sight to the blind as an aspect of his messianic work (4:18; 7:22).[13] Finally, when he is arrested, Jesus says to the crowd of the rulers, "This is your hour and the power of darkness" (22:53). On the basis of these passages, one may assert that for Luke, light is an aspect of the kingdom of God, which Jesus proclaims (4:43). Conversely, darkness is, at the least, indicative of the absence of that kingdom. Thus, although Luke describes the darkness at the cross in terms of a natural phenomenon,[14] he considers it a sign of opposition to God and his messiah.

Moreover, one may say that Luke understands Jesus' death not only against the backdrop of a conflict with Israel and her leadership but also against a cosmic struggle between Jesus and Satan. Satan claims to have dominion over all the kingdoms of the inhabited earth, and he offers it to Jesus if only the latter will worship the former (4:5-7). Jesus resists, and the devil leaves him until an opportune time (4:13). Later, as has been

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[13]Tannehill, *Narrative Unity*, 67, comments that Paul's speech in Acts 26 parallels the language of Jesus' own mission. "Here the reference to opening eyes is connected with turning from darkness to light, from the authority of Satan to God, as so clearly it is not limited to enabling blind people to see physical objects."

[14]Frederick W. Danker, *Jesus and the New Age According to St. Luke: A Commentary on the Third Gospel* (St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1972), 240. J. Bradley Chance, *Jerusalem, the Temple, and the New Age in Luke-Acts* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1988), 149, asserts that Luke's naturalistic language is consistent with his desire to place the gospel "on the plane of real history."

noted, Satan is instrumental in the final plot to kill Jesus (22:3). This satanic influence, coupled with Jesus' own statement that the time of his arrest was the power of darkness (22:53) indicates that Jesus' passion is yet another temptation by the devil.[15] The darkness covering the whole land is an indication of Satan's apparent victory over God's kingdom and messiah.[16] In this way, Luke pushes the death of Jesus beyond a limited conflict with one nation (Israel) and shows that that conflict is only the historical manifestation of a much larger conflict between Jesus and Satan, a conflict with universal ramifications for mankind, caught by sin in bondage to Satan's power (4:18; 13:16). However, Satan's victory is only apparent, as the next verse shows.

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[15]Jerome Neyrey, *The Passion According to Luke: A Redaction Study of Luke's Soteriology*, Theological Inquiries (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 177-180.

[16]Marshall, *Gospel*, 874, suggests, "γῆ need not refer to more than the locality." Fitzmyer, *X-XXIV*, 1517, agrees that the land in question is Palestine, but he adds, "The darkness should be understood as one of the cosmic phenomena often associated with the Day of Yahweh in the OT." Later, however, he asserts, "The darkness and the rending of the Temple veil may have an apocalyptic and cosmic dimension; but they should rather be related to the Lucan idea of evil's 'hour' and the 'power of darkness' (22:53), which reign as Jesus dies; they are signs of this domination" (1519). That the darkness indicates Satan's activity favors understanding γῆ in an eschatological, cosmic sense rather than in a localized one.

Fitzmyer notices an important tension in Luke's use of darkness. Frequently throughout the Scriptures, especially the Old Testament, darkness indicates the activity of Yahweh, especially as he acts in judgment. For example, in Exodus 10:21ff, darkness covers the Egyptians while the Israelites have light. Similarly, Exodus 14:20 records that the cloud and darkness stood between the fleeing Israelites and the Egyptian army. The latter prophets use darkness as a sign of the day of Yahweh. Amos warns that the day of Yahweh will be darkness, not light (5:18-20). Likewise, Joel (2:1ff), Micah (3:5ff), and Zephaniah (1:12ff) use the figure for Yahweh's activity.

However, Luke draws primarily on another darkness tradition which is found, for example, in Isaiah. For example, Isaiah describes a situation of darkness and distress into which the messiah will break as light (8:21-9:7). Similarly, Isaiah 42:7 descirbes the servant of Yahweh as bringing sight to those who sit in darkness. Also, in 60:2 the nations are described as sitting in darkness.

The tension of this dual background may be resoved for Luke in this way. Darkness is indicative of opposition to God, and such opposition can develop from several causes--ignorance, obstinacy, or satanic influence. However, God brings salvation-history to its fulfillment by allowing Satan to bring the ancient conflict to its climax at the cross. In the ultimate reversal, God exalts his apparently defeated messiah, and the seeming loss becomes victory. (Cf. Joel B. Green, "The Death of Jesus, God's Servant" in *Reimaging the Death of the Lukan Jesus*, ed. Dennis D. Sylva, Biblische Beiträge, bd. 73 (Frankfurt am Main: Anton Hain, 1990), 18-28, for a discussion of Luke's use of Isaiah's servant imagery.)

Tearing of the Temple Veil

The proper interpretation of Luke 23:45b, "ἐσχίσθη δὲ τὸ καταπέτασμα τοῦ ναοῦ μέσον," begins with two grammatical issues. First, whether one connects it with verses 44-45a or with verse 46 can affect the interpretation of the verse. Second, the referent of the veil is ambiguous.[17] In regards to the first problem, Raymond Brown observes:

> If that particle [δέ] is conjunctive, the darkening/eclipse and rending of the veil are yoked as negative signs in heaven and on earth. If it is adversative, setting up a contrast with the negative darkness, then the rending (perhaps understood as opening a path through the veil into the sanctuary of the Father's house) is connected with Jesus' loud cry as he places his spirit into his Father's hands.[18]

Later, Brown comments, "On purely grammatical grounds it is not possible to make a decision whether the *de* has a conjunctive sense . . . or an adversative sense."[19] Because the grammar does not decisively expose the relationship between these clauses, one will

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[17]There are two redactional questions as well: 1) why did Luke transpose the tearing of the veil to a position before Jesus' death (cf. Mt 27:50-51; Mk 15:37-38); and 2) is Luke's substitution of μέσον for απ' ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω significant?

[18]Raymond E. Brown , *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave, A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, vol. 2, Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 1043.

[19]Brown, *Death*, 1103. Grammarians seem to support Brown's point. G. B. Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek*, rev. 3rd ed., trans.W. F. Moulton (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1882), 552-553 observes, "Δέ is often used when the writer merely subjoins something new different and distinct from what precedes, but on that account not sharply opposed to it. . . . Hence in the Synoptic Gospels καί and δέ are sometimes parallel." Similarly, Nigel Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3, *Syntax* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), 331, writes, "Sometimes δέ will have the strong adversative force of ἀλλά after a foregoing negative (Ac $12^{9.14}$ Heb 4^{13} 6^{12}) but usually it is weaker and indistinguishable from καί." Stanley Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, Biblical Languages: Greek, no. 2 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 208, adds, "A third use is for emphasis." Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and updated William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, 2nd ed., rev. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 171, notes that δέ is used "very freq. as a transitional particle pure and simple, without any contrast intended *now, then*."

have to answer this question based on a more detailed study of the larger theme of Luke's understanding of the temple.

In a similar way, the referent of the veil (καταπέτασμα) is ambiguous. Citing rabbinic sources, Stein notes that the temple contained 13 different curtains in the temple.[20] Of the thirteen, two were of special importance--one separated the forecourt from the Holy Place and another separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place.[21] Alfred Plummer favors interpreting the curtain here as the inner curtain because another word (κάλυμμα) can be used for the outer one, as it is in Ex 27:16.[22] Stein also favors the inner curtain because of the connection between the Holy of Holies and the annual atonement sacrifice made there.[23] On the other hand, Marshall and Fitzmyer argue for the outer curtain, because "a reference to something generally visible is required."[24] However, as Darrell Bock correctly notes, "This argument is not entirely compelling, for the priests could have reported that the inner curtain was torn."[25]

A more persuasive argument for the outer curtain rests on Luke's vocabulary for the temple. As noted in chapter 2, Luke's favorite word for the temple is ἱερόν. He uses the narrower term ναός only in 1:9, 21, 22. In chapter 1, Zechariah is chosen by lot to

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[20]Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 595.

[21]Fitzmyer, *X-XXIV*, 1518, citing Jospehus' *Jewish War*.

[22]Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke*, 5th ed., International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1922), 537. Plummer's comments that the outer curtain "was more accurately, but not invariably, called τὸ κάλυμμα." But cf. Ex 39:19, where the same curtain is described as τὸ καταπέτασμα τῆς θύρας τῆς σκηνῆς.

[23]Stein, *Luke*, 595. Unfortunately, Stein refers the reader to Heb 9:6-28 and does not account for specifically Lukan usage or soteriology.

[24]Marshall, *Gospel*, 875. Cf. Fitzmyer, *X-XXIV*, 1518.

[25]Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 1860. Bock does concede that a reference to the outer curtain is "slightly more likely" due to the public nature of the other signs.

enter the sanctuary, the Holy Place (ναός), to burn incense on the altar there, and the people wait outside (1:10).[26] In chapter 23, then, when Luke refers to the curtain of the sanctuary (τὸ καταπέτασμα τοῦ ναοῦ) he is very likely referring to the curtain between the Holy Place and the court outside the temple building. While the inner curtain remains a possiblity, the fact that Luke uses little or no atonement language in speaking about the meaning of Jesus' death weakens the connection with the Holy of Holies.

To this point, two things are apparent about Luke's rendering of the tearing of the veil. First, the event can be most closely connected either with that which precedes it or with that which follows it. Thus, it may be connected to the darkness which stands for satanic influence and for that reason can be viewed in terms of conflict and judgment. Or it may be connected with Jesus' prayer of faith at his death and for this reason be understood positively as an indication of the completion of salvation in some sense. Second, Luke has prepared the reader for the tearing of the veil by using vocabulary similar to that of the infancy narrative and the themes introduced there, namely, 1) the temple as a proper place for worship, 2) the announcement of the fulfillment of salvation-history in the temple, and 3) the notion of separation in the temple (cf. chapter 2 above).

The evidence presented above, with all of its ambiguities, has produced widely varying interpretations of the tearing of the temple veil. Dennis Sylva's summary of the main positions (and the commentators who hold them) is helpful. He finds three basic interpretations of the torn veil: 1) it is a further prediction of the destruction of the temple; 2) it signals the abrogation of the temple cult; or 3) it signals the opening of the way to God through Jesus' death. [27] As has been argued in chapter 2, option 2 may be almost completely disregarded. Luke has a high view of the temple and is not antagonistic

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[26]See the Appendix of this study for a description of the layout of the temple.

[27]Dennis D. Sylva, "The Temple Curtain and Jesus' Death in the Gospel of Luke," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 105 (1986), 240-241.

to its cult.[28] He approvingly names Zechariah a priest and has him serve in the temple (1:5-9). Jesus' parents offer sacrifices there in accordance with the law (2:22-24). Even the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector may have cultic overtones (18:9-14). Similarly, while one cannot completely disregard option 1, one cannot interpret the tearing of the veil only as a further prediction of the temple's destruction either. As Naymond Keathley cautions, "Although there is an acknowledgement that the temple will be destroyed, there is no hint of condemnation for it or hostility toward it in this gospel."[29] The best interpretation is the one that most fully accounts for all the Lukan evidence, and that evidence includes not only predictions of future destruction but also a positive assessment of the role of the temple in the lives of the people of God.

Stressing that Luke has a more positive portrayal of the temple than the other synoptics, Francis Weinert and Dennis Sylva argue that Luke wants to emphasize Jesus' special and enduring relationship with God.[30] Weinert, utilizing redaction-criticism, argues his case on the basis of three Lukan changes from Mark. First, Luke transposes the tearing from after Jesus' death (Mk 15:38) to immediately before it, indicating that the occurrence in the temple is not an effect of Jesus' death but a commentary on the events

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[28]This is not to suggest that Luke presents the temple cult as an enduring aspect of the Christian faith. Taken together with his statements about the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, one rightly concludes that the temple cult will indeed cease. However, this fact is not a judgment on the intrinsic nature of the temple whose destruction is a concomitant result of Israel's rejection of her messiah. Indeed, the cult does not end with Jesus' death nor does the involvement of his disciples with that cult end with his death. After the ascension, the disciples worship in the temple (24:53), and Paul makes an offering there (Acts 21:24-26).

[29]Naymond H. Keathley, "The Temple in Luke-Acts: Implications for the Synoptic Problem and Proto-Luke," in *With Steadfast Purpose: Essays in Honor of Henry Jackson Flanders, Jr.*, ed. Naymond H. Keathley (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 1990), 90.

[30]Francis D. Weinert, "The Meaning of the Temple in the Gospel of Luke" (Ph.D. diss., Fordham University, 1979), 203, and Sylva, "Temple Curtain, 250.

leading to it.[31] Second, Luke's use of the disjunctive δέ instead of the Markan καί points to a new thought.[32] Third, by substituting the simpler μέσον for Mark's more graphic and negative εἰς ἀπ' ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω, Luke mutes the implication of destruction.[33] Weinert concludes, "For Luke, this event corresponds in a special way to Jesus' dying prayer, dramatizing the unimpeded access of Jesus' prayer to God to the very end. . . . Luke uses the Temple to affirm that the bond between Jesus and God in prayer remains intact and unbroken."[34]

Sylva arrives at a similar conclusion by means of three completely different arguments. First, he observes the parallels between Jesus' death and that of Stephen (Act 7). Both pray for forgiveness for their killers (Lk 23:23, Act 7:60); both die with a prayer on their lips (Lk 23:46, Act 7:59); and both are buried by devout men (Lk 23:50, Act 8:2). Based on these parallels he suggests another: just as Stephen sees the heavens opened and a vision of Jesus at the moment of death (Act 7:55-56), so Jesus sees the temple opened and sees in it the presence of God.[35] Second, he notes that for Luke the ninth hour is the

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[31]Fitzmyer's comment, *X-XXIV*, 1514, is helpful: "Even in the Lucan account, where the two cataclysmic events are recorded at the beginning, they are obviously intended by the evangelist as a setting for the death of Jesus." That is to say, the transposition may be nothing more than Luke's way of bringing the two signs together.

[32]But cf. footnote 18 above.

[33]Weinert, "Meaning," 200-201. Joel B. Green, "The Demise of the Temple as 'Culture-Center' in Luke-Acts: An Exploration of the Rending of the Temple Veil (Luke 23:44-49)," *Revue Biblique* 101 (1994), 496-497, notes that "the adverbial μέσον follows classical and Lukan usage (cf. Luke 22.55; Acts 1.18)." That is, the change could be merely a stylistic improvement and not a substantive modification.

[34]Weinert, "Meaning," 202.

[35]Brown, *Death*, 1105, objects that Sylva has underestimated the destructive nature of Luke's verb, σχίζειν, used in the gospel only at 5:36 for the tearing of a patch of cloth from a garment and in Acts for the dividing of a crowd in a hostile context (Act 14:4; 23:7). In addition, Green, "Demise," 503, offers a three-fold critique of Sylva's description of the parallelism between the two events.

hour of prayer in the temple (Act 3:1).[36] Finally, he suggests that the people's response of beating their breasts may be indicative of temple prayer. Sylva concludes, "Thus, Luke's purpose in Luke 23:45b, 46a was not to signify the temple's destruction, the abrogation of the temple cultus, or the opening of a new way to God, but rather to present the last moment of Jesus' life as a communion with the God of the temple."[37]

There is much to be said for these two arguments. First of all, both men are concerned to avoid interpreting Luke through Mark, Paul, or the author of Hebrews. Second, in trying to discover what Luke himself intended to convey by the tearing of the temple veil, both men have affirmed one of the conclusions reached in chapter 2 above, that is, that Luke has a generally positive view of the temple in itself and of the activities that occur there, especially as they relate to worship and prayer.

However, there are two serious weaknesses in these arguments as well. First, both authors overly restrict the significance of the event. Green comments about Sylva, "According to this reading it need have no function at all within the larger portrayal of the temple in Luke-Acts."[38] By interpreting the tearing of the veil in strictly personal terms (between Jesus and God) Weinert and Sylva miss the point that Jesus' death does not have only individual significance. Rather, Luke describes Jesus' death as the culmination of a conflict with Satan and with sinful humanity, represented most fully by the religious leaders. True, Weinert implies some sort of greater significance, noting that "the bond between humankind and God, symbolized in Israel by the Temple, in Jesus' case remains

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[36]Sylva, "Temple Curtain," 245, admits that this detail was part of the tradition that Luke received from Mark but defends his thesis by noting that Luke felt free to edit that tradition. (Cf. Weinert, "Meaning," 195-197.) Even if the time was a part of the tradition Luke received, if he did indeed plan to write an orderly and factual account (1:1-4), he would not have changed it to make it fit his agenda; at best one could expect him to omit the temporal reference. (Cf. Luke's portrayal of Jesus' activity in the Temple, ch. 20-21!)

[37]Sylva, "Temple Curtain," 250.

[38]Green, "Demise," 503.

intact and effective in a special way."[39] But that does not yet explain how Jesus' death brings salvation-history to its fulfillment nor how the tearing of the temple veil informs that death.[40]

Second, these arguments do not account for the fact that Jesus has prophesied destruction for the temple (21:6). Both authors have ably defended Luke's sympathies for the temple, but they have failed to account for its eventual cessation and destruction. Again, the best explanation of the torn veil needs to explain both aspects of Luke's presentation.

A second line of interpretation connects the torn veil with Jesus' death (and therefore with the accomplishment of salvation) and interprets the torn veil as a sign of universal access to God through the death of Jesus. Thus, Fitzmyer observes the separation from God that the Zechariah incident (1:9ff.) implies and, noting the use of ναός there and in 23:45, writes:

> Luke may well be suggesting in his own way what the Epistle to the Hebrews does more explicitly (9:6-28), that by the death of Jesus access to the intimate presence of God has been made possible for human beings, even those not serving in the priestly courses of old. Similarly, it may be Luke's way of expressing what the Epistle to the Ephesians calls 'the dividing wall of hostility' between Jew and Greek (2:14-16), broken down 'through the cross.'[41]

However, another piece of data must be assessed as well. After Jesus' ascension (24:53) and throughout the book of Acts the disciples continue to make use of the temple. This suggests that the temple is not immediately superseded when Jesus dies. To account for this fact, Frank Matera asserts:

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[39]Weinert, "Meaning," 203.

[40]Responding to Sylva, Green, "Demise," 503, writes, "Sylva's proposal restricts rather narrowly the possible meaning of the torn veil for Luke-Acts as a whole. According to this reading it need have no function within the larger portrayal of the temple in Luke-Acts."

[41]Fitzmyer, *X-XXIV*, 1514.

> That Luke places the tearing of the temple curtain before the death of Jesus may be his way of indicating, contrary to Mark, that the temple cult does not end at Jesus' death. . . . Instead, the torn curtain, especially if it refers to the outer curtain, may symbolize that the Gentiles now have access to God's grace since it was that curtain that veiled the mystery of Israel's religion from them.[42]

Joel Green, while he defends the tearing of the veil as a positive indication of Christianity's expanding mission, notes that the bare statement that the torn veil opens the temple to all humanity is not strictly accurate. Acts shows that the Gentiles were still forbidden from the temple after Jesus died (Act 21:28).[43] Therefore, Green suggests a more nuanced understanding of the meaning of the tearing of the veil.

The essential point of Green's argument is that the temple served as a cultural barrier between the Jews and the Gentiles which the death of Jesus destroyed. Arguing on the basis of discourse analysis, Green asserts that the tearing of the veil, coupled with the darkness, prepares the way for Jesus' death which, in turn, brings the favorable response of the centurion and the crowds at the cross. The darkness indicates the responsibility of the Jewish leadership for the death of Jesus, and the tearing of the veil points to the cessation of a cultural boundary which socially excludes some from God's presence.[44] Green attempts to demonstrate that Luke is concerned with the "operative symbolism of the temple" from the wider context of Luke-Acts. First, Luke understands the temple as the place of God's presence (1:8-23; 2:22-24, 36-38; 24:53). Because God is present there, it is the place where God and humanity interact (18:10; 19:46). Furthermore, God's presence "establishes the temple as inviolable territory." Thus, even though the temple

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[42]Frank J. Matera, *Passion Narratives and Gospel Theologies: Interpreting the Synoptics through Their Passion Stories*, Theological Inquiries (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), 186.

[43]Green, "Demise," 513-514.

[44]Green, "Demise," 505-506.

serves to unify Israel as one people under one God, at the same time it isolates other peoples from that same God.[45]

Second, Green emphasizes Luke's portrayal of the temple as a place of teaching and piety. Taking the cleansing of the temple (and the omission of the phrase "for all peoples" from the Isaiah citation there) as a foundational event (19:45-46), Green argues that the temple may continue to function as a center of teaching and piety. However, because of its segregating force, it will cease to be an organizing center for the life of the faithful. "Rather than serving as the gathering point for all peoples under Yahweh, it has now become the point-of-departure for the mission to all people."[46]

Finally, Green asserts that the revelations given in the temple point to that place as the beginning of the Christian mission.[47] Thus, the tearing of the temple veil indicates that Jesus' death transforms the temple. No longer is its centrality defined in terms of increasingly restricted access to its courts and its sanctuary. After Jesus' death it is central as the place from which the gospel will go forth (24:47). Green summarizes, "Luke portrays the rending of the temple veil as symbolic of the destruction of the symbolic world surrounding and emanating from the temple, and not as symbolic of the destruction of the temple itself."[48]

Green's argument has certain weaknesses, including his article's very brevity and his reliance on the social sciences for a framework for the temple's functioning in Jewish society. Despite these criticisms, however, Green's presentation makes the best sense of the Lukan evidence. He accounts for both Luke's generally positive approach to the

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[45]Green, "Demise," 508-509.

[46]Green, "Demise," 512.

[47]Green, "Demise," 512.

[48]Green, "Demise," 514.

temple and the fact that it is finally destined for destruction. One can use the conclusions about Luke's portrayal of the temple and his understanding of the death of Jesus in the previous two chapters of this study to offer strong support to Green's interpretation of the tearing of the temple veil.

First, Green argues that the darkness is both a sign of the opposition to Jesus as well as a sign of the eschatological import of his death. This study confirms that conclusion. As argued in chapter 3, Jesus' death is the result of a conflict between himself and the religious authorities of Israel. However, the authorities do not act alone. They are able to move against Jesus only when Satan enters Judas (22:3-4), and Jesus himself understands their opposition as an indication of satanic activity (22:53).[49] In this way, Luke shows that the conflict with the leaders is not merely localized or temporally bound but is universal and eschatological, pointing to the cosmic conflict between God and Satan.

However, as Zechariah and Simeon prophesied, the messiah is a light in this satanic darkness (1:79; 2:32), and while the darkness may appear to indicate the victory of the devil, the reversal stands close at hand. For in his death Jesus brings salvation-history to its climax, and by humbling himself to death he manifests the kingdom of God. While the leaders (and implicitly Satan) had hoped to preserve their own authority by executing Jesus, his death only enhances the people's sympathy for him and brings them to repentance for their part in his death. In this way, the darkness becomes a prelude to the inauguration of the kingdom of God with Jesus as its messianic king.

Second, Green argues that because the temple served to separate Jew and Greek the torn temple veil was added to indicate the removal of that barrier. Green contends that

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[49]Furthermore, Luke has skillfully implicated all of humanity in their opposition to the savior by faulting the leaders for their self-righteousness (a condition endemic to humanity, 18:9) and by including the people at large as well as the Gentiles in the final outcry against Jesus (23:13, 18, 23-24).

the temple segregated society that it was, for this reason, superseded. That is to say, no longer would the temple be an organizing center for the life of God's people although they might still continue to gather and work there. Yet, this study has shown that the temple is not in itself opposed to the kingdom of God. Luke does portray the temple as a barrier, but he does so in the context of the religious authorities' abuse of the temple and their misuse of their leadership exercised there.

The religious authorities, by seeking their own ends and not the ends of God in the temple, that is, by their misuse of the temple, had exploited that holy institution in order to elevate themselves. It is in the very nature of such self-exaltation to put down and exclude others. For example, the Pharisee in the temple praises his own piety and gloats that he is not like the tax collector (18:9-14). In this way, the leaders have ceased to understand their leadership as the service of God's people and have used it instead to glorify and enrich themselves by excluding and putting down those they are meant to serve. This usurpation is most clear when Jesus occupies the temple and begins to teach the people there. Jesus' positive reception by the people leads to a plot by the leaders to kill him. As the parable of the vinedressers shows, this misuse of their position will lead to their own loss of leadership. The leaders' rejection of Jesus, symbolized by the unnatural darkness, results in God's rejection of them and their abusive stewardship of his people, symbolized by the torn veil. Therefore, when the temple veil is torn, Luke uses it as an indication that the primary base of power for the leaders' self-glorification (the temple) has been transformed by God.[50]

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[50]Green, "Demise," 506, argues that "the power of the temple to regulate socio-religious boundaries of purity and holiness had to be neutralized." However, the temple itself is not the problem. Rather, it is the misuse of the temple, manifested especially in the behavior of the religious leaders, which requires a change in the temple. Green seems to understand this when he asserts that "God's response to the rejection of Jesus (symbolized in the time of darkness) is the tearing of the temple curtain (reading ἐσχίσθη as a divine passive)."

Just as the darkness functions both as a sign of opposition to Jesus and as a sign of Jesus' own manifestation of the kingdom of God, so, too, does the torn temple veil function on two levels. First, the torn veil is a further indication of the temple's eventual destruction. However, this destruction is not the result of a defect in the temple *per se*. Luke continues to assess the temple cult positively throughout the gospel and indicates that even after Jesus' ascension his disciples worshipped there.[51] Rather, the temple will be destroyed because many in Israel, especially among her leadership, have rejected their messiah. This rejection will bring judgment on Jerusalem and on the temple which stands there. The temple's destruction is ancillary to that of the city.

However, on a second level, in the very rejection of Jesus by his people, God brings salvation-history to fulfillment, and through the death of his Son, caused by that rejection, he makes the kingdom of God manifest. Jesus, who portrays himself as the last of the prophets, indeed, the one to whom all the prophets looked (10:24), confronts human sinfulness, understood by Luke as self-glorification, by allowing himself to be humbled even to the point of death. In this confrontation, he destroys that human framework in which exaltation is most highly valued, brings repentance for one's participation in it, and replaces it with the values of the kingdom of God, that is, service and humility. Thus, while the temple curtain is torn to indicate God's rejection of those who reject him and his messiah, that same event points to Jesus' death as the means by which God brings repentance to mankind and brings them into his kingdom. The self-serving rulers of Israel, who stand, by their association with Satan, for all of sinful humanity and whose self-service is most clearly seen in the temple, are replaced by the selfless messiah, who understands how the temple was meant to function and transforms it into a source for God's mission to all people (cf. Acts 2:46-47; 4:1-4; 5:12-14).

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[51]As late as Acts 21:17ff., Paul and other believers are still making offerings in the temple.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This investigation began with the question, "What does Luke intend to communicate through the tearing of the temple veil, placed as it is before Jesus' death?" In order to answer that question within Luke's own narrative context, chapter 2 of this study examined Luke's portrayal of the temple and discovered four points that Luke makes regarding that institution. First, the temple is an enduringly appropriate place for the people of God to exercise their piety through worship and prayer, both individually and corporately, non-cultically and cultically. Second, the temple is the central (though not exclusive) site from which the culmination of salvation-history is announced. Third, the temple contains a note of separation. Finally, the temple can be (and often is) abused, especially by those entrusted with its care, and because of that abuse it will finally be destroyed.

Next, chapter 3 of this study sought to determine how Luke understood the death of Jesus. The investigation found that Luke places Jesus' death within the framework of three different themes. First, Luke utilizes the concept of reversal as a key to understanding Jesus' death. This theme highlights the fact that God does not accomplish his ends in the same way that humans attempt to accomplish theirs or in ways that they would expect. Thus, although people expect Jesus to continue to operate as the pro-active dispenser of salvation, he fulfills his purposes by dying in humility, reversing all expectations and creating repentance for one's complicity in the ways of sinful humanity.

Second, Luke places the death of Jesus with a prominent and escalating conflict with the religious leaders of Israel, who embody the sinful condition of humanity in their tendency toward self-exaltation and self-aggrandizement. Finally, Luke portrays Jesus' death as an essential element within God's plan of salvation. Through his use of these three, inter-connected themes, Luke portrays Jesus' death (taken together with his resurrection) as the culmination of salvation history. In his death, Jesus confronts sinful human expectations, brings repentance, and inaugurates the kingdom of God, which he himself rules as the servant of God.

The tearing of the temple veil, then, brings together these themes as a commentary on Jesus' death. Taken together with the darkness that proceeds it, the torn veil highlights the behavior of the religious authorities, who epitomize sinful humanity. These leaders rejected Jesus and used the temple for their own gain instead of for the good of the people. In this context, the torn veil is yet another reminder that Israel's rejection of her messiah will lead to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple within it. Further, the torn veil indicates that those who opposed Jesus and abused the temple have been replaced by Jesus himself, the king who reigns in the kingdom of heaven. No longer is the temple a center of power used to exclude people; rather it is the source from which God's people will go forth to incorporate others into the kingdom. Thus, the torn veil speaks both to the temple's future termination and to its present transformation, or perhaps better, its restoration to the purposes for which God originally intended it.

Further, the tearing of the veil is good news both for Israel and for the nations in an eschatological sense. For God has used Israel's rejection of her messiah to bring salvation-history to its climax. The conflict over the temple is more than a localized, limited occurrence. Rather, Luke portrays the conflict over the temple as a conflict between God and Jesus, on the one hand, and Satan and sinful humanity, on the other. For this reason, Jesus' death has universal ramifications. That is to say, in his death, Jesus

has confronted sinful humanity, which is ruled by selfishness, inverted their expectations, and inaugurated the kingdom of God, which he himself rules in humility and selflessness. Similarly, the tearing of the temple veil has universal ramifications because it is connected to that death. More than the replacement of Jewish leaders in the first century C.E., the torn temple veil is indicative of Jesus' reign in the kingdom of God which replaces the reign of the sinful self in humanity. And more than the restoration of a national institution to its proper use, the torn veil is indicative of the restoration of sinful humanity to a proper relationship with its God through Jesus' death.

APPENDIX 1

THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE AT THE TIME OF JESUS

For years, information regarding the physical layout of the Jerusalem temple at the time of Jesus was gathered from three primary sources: Josephus' *Antiquities* (*Ant.*), Book 15, chapter 11, his *Jewish Wars* (*J.W.*), Book 5, chapter 5, and the Mishnah tractate *Middot*. The New Testament offers very little in the way of a physical description of the temple and its precincts. For a long time, scholars considered Josephus' information unreliable. Archaeological excavations on the temple mount, however, undertaken between 1968 and 1978 by Benjamin Mazar, have confirmed much of Josephus' description.[1]

The temple as it stood in Jesus' day was the work of Herod the Great, who undertook the project with two goals in mind. By rebuilding and expanding the temple, Herod sought both to ingratiate himself with Palestinian Jews and to impress not only the Jews of the diaspora but the rest of the hellenized world as well.[2] The work invoked fear in the Palestinian Jews, who worried that Herod would not be able to finish what he had

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[1]Kathleen and Leen Ritmeyer, "Reconstructing Herod's Temple Mount in Jerusalem," *Biblical Archaeological Review* 15:6 (1989), 23-42, describe the results of the Mazar dig, especially regarding the outer walls of the area.

[2]*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman, vol. 6, (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 364-365; hereafter cited as *ABD*. Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* (trans. William Whiston in *the Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged*, updated ed. [Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1987]), 15.11.1, in which Herod addresses his Palestinian constituents.

started.[3] However, due to massive preparations before construction began, the temple proper was completed in a mere 18 months.[4] The rest of the project--the outer courts, colonnades, and walls--took considerably longer. (The Gospel of John indicates 46 years [Jn 2:20], and Josephus says that the final touches were not made until just prior to the Great Revolt.)[5]

Based on the magnitude of the finished project, it would seem that Herod's second goal, namely, impressing the hellenized world, was accomplished. While Herod left the temple itself roughly the same size, he embellished it by greatly expanding the surrounding precincts. The temple precincts occupied over 172,000 square yards, and they measured approximately 1500 feet by 900 feet, laid out in a trapezoidal shape. "The retaining walls themselves towered more than 80 feet above the roadways going around its perimeter and reached over 50 feet below street level in there foundation courses."[6] While he did not change the specifications of the temple itself, Herod felt free to overlay the building with gold, prompting Josephus to note:

> At the first rising of the sun, it reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away. . . . But this temple appeared to strangers, when they were at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow; for, as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceeding white."[7]

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[3]Josephus, *Ant.*, 15.11.2.

[4]Josephus, *Ant.*, 15.11.6.

[5]Josephus, *Ant.* 20.10.5, 7.

[6]*ABD*, 6, 365.

[7]Josephus, *J.W.*, (trans. William Whiston in *the Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged*, updated ed. [Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1987]), 5.5.6.

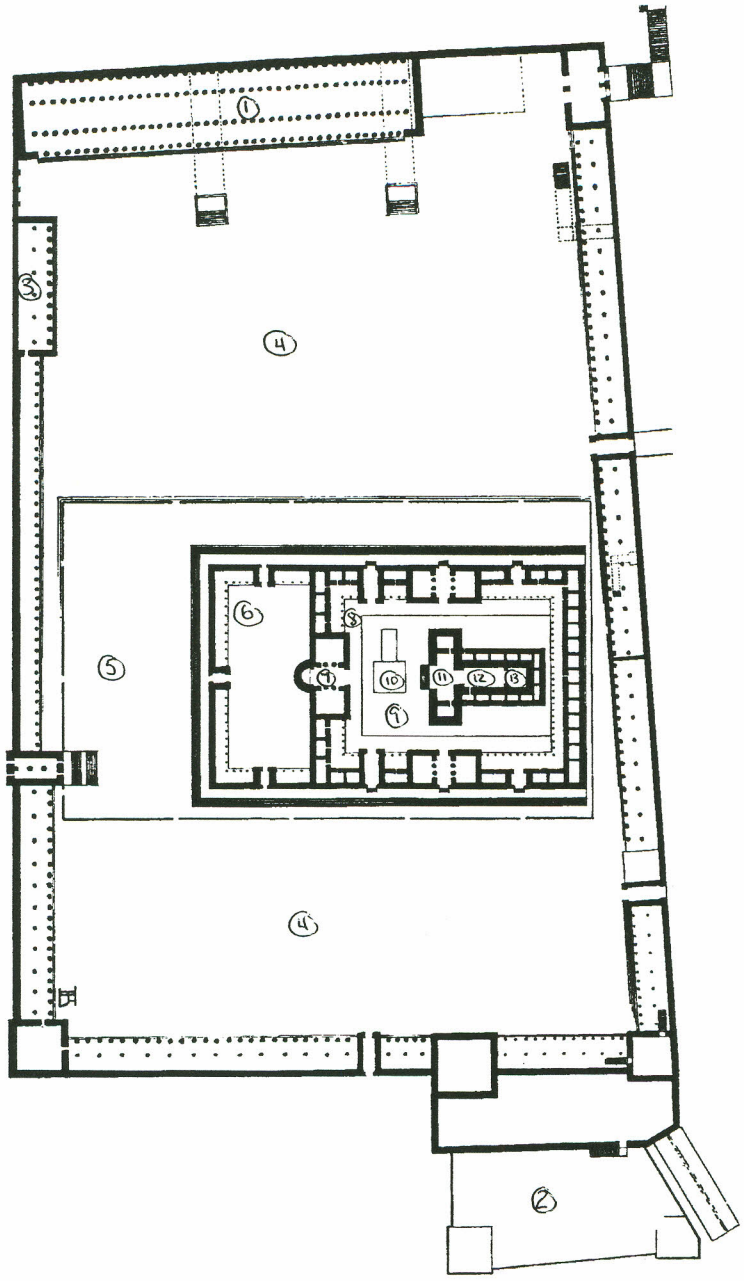

Diagram A: The Herodian Temple[8]

1) Royal Porch
2) Antonia Fortress
3) Solomon's Porch
4) Court of the Gentiles
5) Temple Platform
6) Women's Court
7) Great Gate
8) Court of Israel
9) Court of Priests
10) Altar of Burnt Offering
11) Facade
12) Holy Place
13) Holy of Holies

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[8]Diagram from Th. A. Busink, *Der Tempel von Jerusalem von Salomo bis Herod: Eine Archäologisch-Historische Studie unter Berücksichtigung des Wersemitischen Tempelbaus*, vol. 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 1179.

The temple project was larger than any comparable endeavor in the ancient world. For example, the temple precincts were twice as large as the Forum Romanum in Rome.[9]

The temple mount[10] was surrounded on all sides by a series of cloisters through which at least eight gates provided access. The Royal Porch (Diagram A, #1), very likely a center of commerce in the temple, extended along the southern wall. On the northwest corner stood the Antonia Fortress (Diagram A, #2). Although the fort was technically outside the temple walls, a set of stairs led down into the immense court of the Gentiles. Along the eastern wall stood Solomon's Porch (Diagram A, #3), remodeled and expanded like the rest of the buildings. The Mount of Olives was to the east of the temple. The Gentile courts (Diagram A, #4) were separated from the temple proper (and from the courts of women and of Israel) by a small fence with a sign affixed, "No Gentile may enter within the railing around the sanctuary and within the enclosure. Whosoever should be caught will render himself liable to the death penalty which will inevitably follow."[11] Josephus indicates that the fence stood 3 cubits; Mishnah *Middot* says it was 10 handbreadths high.[12]

The temple stood within this fence on a raised platform (Diagram A, #5). One went up 14 steps from the level of the outer court and about 15 feet in to reach the outer wall of the temple itself. Several gates opened on the north and south walls of the temple, allowing access to the courts of Israel and of the priests within. However, one generally

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[9]*ABD*, 6, 365.

[10]The temple mount was no longer a natural feature in the Herodian temple. Huge retaining walls had been raised to support the massive platform of the temple area so that what once was a hill separated from the city proper by valleys on three sides became an architectural wonder connected to the city by plazas and staircases.

[11]*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 5, ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 650.

[12]*J.W.*, 5.5.2. *Middoth* (trans. Jacob Neusner in *The Mishnah: A New Translation* [New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1988]), 2:3:A.

entered through the women's court (Diagram A, #6) from the east. Women were not allowed into the court of Israel, but there was a gallery so that they could see the sacrifices and services going on inside. 15 steps up and through the Great Gate (Diagram A, #7) was the court of Israel (Diagram A, #8), a narrow strip around the south, east, and north sides of the sanctuary. Only priests were allowed to ascend the 12 steps to the level of the sanctuary, that is, the court of priests (Diagram A, #9). Outside of the sanctuary was the altar of burnt offering (Diagram A, #10).

The temple building itself was divided into two parts--the facade (Diagram A, #11), which measured 100 cubits high, 100 cubits across, and 20 cubits deep, and the sanctuary, 60 cubits high, 20 cubits wide, and 60 cubits deep. The facade had an opening 70 cubits high and 25 across on its exterior, eastern side and a folding door 55 cubits high and 16 across opening into the holy place.[13] Josephus writes, "But before these doors there was a veil of equal largeness with the doors. It was a Babylonian curtain, embroidered with blue, and fine linen, and scarlet, and purple, and of a contexture that was truly wonderful." Interestingly, *Middot* seems to know nothing of this veil, expecting rather that the temple would be open to view. Thus, it notes that the eastern wall of the temple complex was not as high as the the south wall. "For the priest who burns the red cow stands at the top of the Mount of Olives and takes his direction, looking directly at the door of the *heikhal*, at the time of the tossing of blood."[14]

The sanctuary itself was divided again into two parts--the holy place (40 by 20 cubits; Diagram A, #12) and the holy of holies (20 by 20 cubits; Diagram A, #13). The holy place contained the lampstand, the table of showbread, and the altar of incense. The

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[13]So Josephus, *J.W.*, 5.5.4. *Middot*, 4:1, indicates that the door was 20 cubits high and 10 across.

[14]*Middot*, 2:4:IV:A-B. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia*, 5:646, suggests, "The curtain of which Josephus wrote may have been added at a later time when fears of defilement of the Temple by even a look by a foreigner were felt." However, while the exact dating of the Mishnah is difficult to determine, Josephus probably wrote earlier.

holy of holies, on the other hand, was empty. Josephus records, "This was also separated from the outer part by a veil. In this there was nothing at all. It was inacessible and invioable, and not to be seen by any."[15]

In regards to the present investigation, the history and layout of the temple makes two notable points. First, due merely to its size, the temple complex was an important location within the city of Jerusalem. "The Temple Mount as a whole could be viewed as a suitably imposing feature dominating the Jerusalem landscape."[16] Such architectural and geographical significance naturally led to the temple's cultural centrality and its appropriation as a seat of power within Israel.

Second, one notices from the description above that the temple precincts were marked by an increasing inaccessibility as one approached the center. So, Gentiles (and the unclean) must remain outside of the fence, women must remain outside the court of Israel, men must remain outside of court of priests, and even the priests' access to the holy place and the holy of holies was restricted. Thus, not only did the structure led itself to the exercise of power over the nation but also it helped to determine one of the ways in which that power was exercised by the exclusion of outsiders.

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[15]Josephus, *J.W.*, 5.5.5.

[16]*ABD*, 6:365.

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