

The peace motif in Luke-Acts; its meaning and its affects

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ABSTRACT

The kingdom of God ushered in and launched by Christ's presence through the work of the Spirit, the salvation of the people of God, which brings them into the sphere of peace, and the community of the people of God are interconnected concepts in Luke-Acts. Informed by both the Psalter and Isaiah, Luke's concept of peace is both political and theological, although the theological emphasis takes precedence—peace with God. By using the peace motif during the time of the Pax Romana, Luke is not giving a theological interpretation of the political category of peace as perceived by the Greco-Roman world, although this does not mean that God's providential hand was not in absolute control of the Pax Romana. However, "The *eirene* of the Gospel of the kingdom is not a puppet, nor even an ally of the Pax-Romana" (Swartley, 1983:32). The peace motif of Luke-Acts is most often linked to the King, his kingdom, his gospel of salvation and the forgiveness of sins. It must never be confused with salvation, but nor should it be divorced from it. It is so closely connected to the concepts of salvation and the kingdom of God that one can almost use them interchangeably. The Lukan peace is therefore not primarily something achieved by force or military endeavour. It is predominantly peace with God, resulting in the harmonious relationships and well-being of a multicultural community of the people of God (people on whom his favour rests, Luke 2:11). This peace with God incorporates a social peace, peace of mind through the forgiveness of sins, which each individual member of the kingdom of God (child of peace, Luke 10:6) has personally received. Having said that, one should not overlook the possibility that there is an eschatological dimension to peace which may be brought about in part by the coercive judgement of God (the last battle).

[**KEY WORDS:** Peace, Kingdom, King, Salvation, Judgement, Messiah, Justice, Prosperity, Enemy]

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1. TITLE

The peace motif in Luke-Acts; its meaning and its affects

1.2. BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.2.1. Personal Motivation

In our postgraduate New Testament classes at George Whitefield College, the focus for the past few years has been on Luke-Acts. We have had a number of essays which helped us to familiarize ourselves with the Lukan theology in his double work. In 2015, the college introduced a structured Master's program for the first time, incorporating course-based assignments. We are the first candidates to undergo this program. Now, since we had already undertaken the Luke-Acts course at the honours level, we were required to do a major piece of work as a research project in one of the significant areas of Lukan studies. Dr David Seccombe, our lecturer in Luke-Acts, informed us that not much in-depth scholarly work has been written on the Luke-Acts peace motif. He therefore suggested that we take it as a research project for our major essay.

Further reading around the subject of peace in Luke-Acts led me to realize that there are quite a few well written scholarly work on the subject of peace in Luke-Acts but not in a way that addresses the main problem of this study. I also came to discern that the topic of peace was as prominent and fundamental to the Lukan theological agenda as are many other topics such as salvation, kingship, the Spirt, and prayer. Furthermore, my interest in Peace Studies has been growing from the moment I attended the African Peacebuilding Institute (API) in 2007 through the sponsorship of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) at Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation (MEF), Kitwe, Zambia. Consequently, I volunteered to work as a peace activist for a few years after my training in Peace Studies. As a result of the combination of these contexts, together with the fact that I started reading Luke-Acts and other scholarly works on the subject in more detail, the seed of this research became strongly planted and grew in my heart, and the journey of this project commenced. I developed a keen interest in endeavouring to understand the role and meaning of the motif of peace in Luke-Acts.

Given this, I decided to undertake this study as a mini-dissertation rather than just a minor research paper. It seems to me that the focus of this study is relevant and important, because unless the topic of peace is carefully studied and well understood, the theological purpose of Luke will have lacunae. Its link with other fundamental themes within Luke-Acts enhances a better understanding of Luke's main theological agenda.

1.2.2. Background

The concept of peace, as previously stated, is essential to the appreciation of the theological message of Luke-Acts. It is noticeably one of the fundamental pieces in the overall message Luke intended to convey in his twofold work. A first reading of Luke's Gospel will demonstrate that the birth narratives (Luke 1–2) are central to the presentation of his purposes. It is also worth pointing out that the repetition technique can never be underplayed in any narrative, for it is repetition that most clearly conveys the author's message. Hence, the fact that the term 'peace' is mentioned three times in the infancy narratives—in Zechariah's song, the song of the heavenly host, and in Simeon's praise—shows its prominence in Luke's agenda.

Moreover, Swartley (1983:25) indicates that “in Mark both the verb ‘be at peace’ (9:50) and the noun (5:34) appear only once. In Luke's Gospel the noun appears 13 times and in Acts, it appears another seven times. Luke speaks *explicitly* of peace more often than Mark, Mathew, and John combined” [italics mine]. Based on these statistics, Swartley (1983:25) concludes that “he [Luke] obviously has a *particular* interest in the topic of peace” [italics mine]. Though theology cannot be deduced merely from statistics, in agreement with Swartley, this paper will analyze and evaluate Luke's explicit and particular interest in this motif. In fact, Luke's concept of peace occurs in many places in his twofold work, even where the word “peace” is not mentioned.

The biblical text is our primary source of authority on matters of faith and practice. Nevertheless, we will be appealing to key scholars who have to some degree dealt with the subject of peace in Luke-Acts: Harnack (1907), Swartley (1983), Sölle (1983), Tyson (1983), Marshall (1988), Richard (1990), Westermann (1992), Dinkler (1992), Frankemölle (1992), Yoder and Swartley (1992), Grassi (2004), Bovon (2006), Mittelstadt (2009), and Ford (2010) are some of the scholars in New Testament studies whom this study will consider. Since Luke's theology of peace is mostly sourced from Isaiah and the Psalter, this paper will make use of, among many others, Old Testament scholars such as Gowan (2000), Robertson (2008) and Lundbom (2010) for the book of Isaiah, and Johnston & Firth (2005) and Shead (2013) for the Psalter.

A possible explanation as to why scholars have not sufficiently covered the subject of peace in Luke-Acts might be that *peace* and *salvation* are intertwined in Luke's theology; hence they are sometimes used interchangeably. This approach is sometimes misleading, because peace does not always mean salvation in Luke's theology. Nonetheless, the abovementioned scholars have to some degree dealt with the subject generally from the Gospels. The present paper will

indicate that there are significant gaps in the current knowledge on this subject. One omission is that most scholars, with the exceptions of Grassi (1983), Frankemölle (1992) and Swartley (1983), have not dealt satisfactorily with Luke's understanding of peace on its own terms. For instance, when dealing with the major themes in Luke, the authors of *Beyond the Q impasse: Luke's use of Matthew* have completely left out the motif of peace (McNicol et al, 1996:36–41). This study will therefore endeavour to make a new contribution in the area of understanding the possible meaning and critical role of the peace motif in Luke-Acts.

Mittelstadt (2009) stands out among the abovementioned scholars because he considers Luke's two-volume work in his treatment of the subject. However, his agenda is to explore possibilities for a dialogue between Pentecostals and Anabaptists through the theme of *Spirit and Peace in Luke-Acts*. Thus the question of what Luke could have meant by using this motif both explicitly and implicitly in his undertaking remains. The following three scholars will prove significant in helping us to put such things in perspective, making the rationale behind this study more obvious.

Swartley (1983) has dedicated a chapter titled "Politics and Peace in Luke's Gospel" in *Political issues in Luke-Acts*. His purpose is to propose a method of evaluating the rival interpretations of Conzelmann, Cassidy, and Yoder (Swartley, 1983:18). For Conzelmann, Luke's view of Jesus and Christianity was apologetic to the Roman Empire, whereas for both Cassidy and Yoder the Jesus of Luke was a revolutionary and a threat to the Roman Empire. Hence, Swartley goes to different uses of *eirēnē* in Luke's gospel in order to evaluate the rival interpretations. Swartley's assessment of the use of *eirēnē* vis-à-vis the political interpretation of Luke's Gospel is commendable and insightful. He has helpfully agreed with Marshall (1988) by equating peace and salvation in Luke. However, he goes on to point out rightly the weakness of equating peace and salvation in Luke. This "approach misses Luke's special interest in *eirēnē* and precludes the discovery of nuances of meaning for *eirēnē* that *sōtēria* may not connote", he says (Swartley, 1983:34). Though Swartley has flashed out the holistic meaning of peace in Luke's Gospel, the question still stands: what is the meaning of "peace" in Luke's twofold work? Moreover, Swartley's presentation does not deal only with Acts but also with the Old Testament texts which might have influenced Luke's understanding of *eirēnē*.

The other scholar who has equally taken the time to deal with peace in Luke is Frankemölle (1992). His focus is on the fundamental problem emerging out of contrasting concepts of "peace" and "sword" (1992:213). For this reason, Frankemölle wrote his article on "Peace and

the Sword in Luke” (1992:220–226). He argues that “Luke’s Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles as a unit must be understood as a compromise.” Interestingly, he goes on to submit that “Nowhere is this as clear as on the theme of peace” (1992:220). It is interesting, because it shows how prominent the motif of peace is for Luke. For Frankemölle, “it is with the work of Jesus that the time of peace, that is, the Messianic time of salvation begins” (1992:220). One can see that, like many other scholars, here Frankemölle uses “peace” and “salvation” interchangeably. He then ties up the Christian peace with the cross (1992:221). His thesis is that Luke is no supporter of a utopia of universal, everlasting peace, no supporter of the slogan “Swords Into Plowshares” or “peace-making without a weapon.” For him, “Luke reflects in a more realistic and sober fashion on the possibility for peace in this world” (1992:226). Though there is some truth to this, this is not the whole truth on the subject of peace in Luke-Acts. Besides that, Acts, which is the other piece of Luke’s work, is left out. The whole Lukan double work must be taken into account as far as his assessment of peace is concerned.

Grassi (2004) could be one of the most recent scholars to have spent their time on the subject of peace in Luke’s Gospel. Again, as with Frankemölle and Swartley, the focus is more on the Gospel of Luke than on Luke’s twofold work. Furthermore, the purpose of his work is to “trace the theme of peace through Luke’s Gospel, emphasizing the very practical means Jesus suggests to make it a reality” (2004:x). Each chapter of his book is well organized, with a meditation on the text or the theme followed by a short corollary for today (Mercer, 2005:147). Some of his chapters do not deal either with the Lukan texts or with the theme of peace itself; nevertheless, they are well structured and very practical. Grassi does not always fully engage with the scholarly findings, especially with respect to the nature and role of the apocalyptic in relation to Jesus and the early church (Mercer, 2005:147). Yet, as Mercer (2005:147) contends, “this issue [nature and the role of the apocalyptic] is important enough that its implications for understanding peace in Luke should have been considered by G.A good feature of G.’s explanation is the considerable attention he gives to the meaning of words.”

1.2.3. Main Problem of the Research

Having detailed the aforementioned scholarly work on the motif of peace, it is worth indicating that their contributions to the theme of peace in Luke’s Gospel are insightful. Nevertheless, a fair assessment of their findings raises the important question which still remained unanswered with greater clarity: *What does Luke mean by peace, and what are its affects in his twofold work?*

In connection with the problem of this study, here are some of the important questions which are crucial to this paper: How was the concept of peace understood in Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds at the time of Luke? How does Luke link the motif of peace to his other major themes, such as salvation, the Spirit, Jerusalem, King, and exile? What is Luke's view of the eschatological and sociopolitical categories of peace? What role does the theme of peace play in the infancy narratives? What is the significance of the motif of peace in Luke's theological agenda?

1.2.4. Presupposition and Hypothesis

Since this study will involve the exegesis of selected texts, it is necessary to affirm the authority of Scripture as final for both orthodoxy and orthopraxis. Some might believe that a biblical text may have a range of meanings. This may be true when there is an intentional ambiguity from the author in the text. Also, it is true that some Old Testament texts meant one thing to the original audience and yet found their fuller meaning later, for example, in Christ. Concerning the structure of Luke's Gospel, this paper agrees with and uses the findings and conclusions of the research team of the International Institute for Gospel Studies contained in *Beyond the Q impasse: Luke's use of Matthew*, edited by McNicol, Dungan and Peabody (1996).¹

This paper assumes that Luke-Acts was written during the Pax Romana era, but prior to the destruction of the temple.² Hence, this essay presupposes a date after Paul's two years of imprisonment in Rome and before the outbreak of the Neronian persecution, that is, between AD 62 and 64. The "peace" that people enjoyed under the Roman Empire provides the underlying background to Luke's motif of peace in Luke-Acts. Swartley (1983: 34) says that "Luke reads the Christ-event through the eyes of the peace of Augustus." However, he adds that "they identified the Jews as those who disrupted that peace in the war of 66–74, and with whom the Christians could be all too easily identified."

1.3. POSSIBLE VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

The value of this study lies in the fact that, owing to a massive rise in conflicts and wars, particularly in Africa, there is a great concern for peace. Liberation theology has been greatly

¹ Luke 1:1–2:52 Birth and infancy of John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth; Luke 3:1–4:16a The new era of salvation announced by John and Jesus; Luke 4:16b–7:15 The inauguration of the Prophet-Messiah's mission; Luke 7:16–9:50 Jesus is shown to be the Son of God; Luke 9:51–19:27 Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem; Luke 19:28–21:38 The arrival of Prophet-King in Jerusalem; and Luke 22:1–24:53 The arrest, death and resurrection of Jesus the King.

² Seccombe's defence of Mittlestaedt's thesis (2005) of an early date for Luke (not later than AD 64) is worth reading in this regard. Besides that, one has to consider other respectable scholars who hold the same view: Rackham (1901); Harnack (1907); Matill (1978); and Robinson (1976).

used as a theological framework to address the problem of conflict and peace on this continent. Devotees of civil and human rights use different approaches to preaching peace at all levels of human conflicts. For the past two decades, the rise of competing exegetical readings has given the concept of peace many and varying facets of meanings (see Martey, 1994:53–57).³

Now, if the world and “secular” organizations are concerned with peace and have taken it as one of their main agendas, the community of the people of God must be more concerned with peace than they are. Commenting on trauma, which is a theme related to peace, Motsi and Masango in their article “Redefining Trauma in an African Context” (2012:1) submit that “it is time for the Church to be involved and have a say because of the Church’s proximity to the public and its role in the community.” This is a challenging and noble cause.

Since it appears that Luke is the only one among the Evangelists who has taken a keen interest in the topic of peace, one has to seriously study and comprehend his view on the subject. Given that, this study is intended to contribute in the following ways:

- (i) To contribute to the current evangelical academic concerns that seek to explain the motif of peace in the context of Scripture.
- (ii) To provide a responsible and pastoral approach in the presentation of the gospel of peace for the lost, fallen and broken world, for “good theology always has pastoral implications” (Alexander, 2008:11).
- (iii) To contribute to the ongoing need for the articulation and elaboration of a clear and precise presentation of the motif of peace in the body of Luke-Acts.
- (iv) To serve as a springboard for further study at the Ph.D. level in addressing the critical concept of peace under biblical studies, such that it will endeavour to engage with and answer the critical need for peace in the context of Africa.

1.4. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.4.1. Aim

The main aim of this study is to make a theological evaluation of the meaning and affects of the motif of peace in the Luke-Acts corpus.

1.4.2. Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

³ On these competing exegetical readings, I would recommend the first chapter of a book by Martey (1994) on *African Theology: Inculturation and Liberation*, and a book by Hopkins (1990) on *Black theology USA and South Africa: Politics, culture and Liberation*.

- (i) Explore and evaluate the understanding of peace in Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds at the time of Luke.
- (ii) Explore and evaluate the link between the peace motif and other major themes in Luke-Acts, such as salvation, kingship, the Spirit, Jerusalem, etcetera.
- (iii) Study and assess the meaning of the peace motif in the infancy narratives.
- (iv) Study and evaluate the significance of the peace motif in Luke's theological agenda.

1.5. CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

The central theoretical argument of this study is that, like salvation, peace is both a theological and a sociopolitical category in Luke-Acts. Reading the *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, it appears that the Old Testament books that were most used by Luke were the Pentateuch, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, and the Psalms (Pao & Schnabel, 2007:251–253). Notwithstanding the contributions of all these books, with regard to the categorization of peace as sociopolitical and theological in Luke-Acts, we will turn to the Psalter and Isaiah's contributions, for these are the most alluded to in the Gospels, especially with regard to the motif of peace. Besides, the so-called Zion theology which somewhat informs the Lukan theology of peace is basically from Isaiah and the Psalms. Furthermore, in this present age before Christ's return, the concept of *šālôm* is *predominantly* theological, that is, referring to peace with God. This peace arrives as the content of momentous news, that is, the gospel of the arrival of the kingdom of God. The latter was announced and inaugurated by Jesus, whom Luke acknowledges as King under the titles of Christ and Son of God. Now, when experiencing peace with God through the forgiveness of sins, the forgiven person is welcomed into the new community of the people of God, where relationships are to be harmonious, even though not perfect. The sociopolitical category of peace, on the other hand, concerns the physical facet of the people of God and is realized through the destruction of the enemies of God's people by the messiah. This category is certain, and not merely the wishful thinking by Luke. However, though Luke does not leave everything to do with peace in its sociopolitical sense after this fallen world, it will be *fully* and perfectly achieved upon Christ's return.

1.6. METHODOLOGY

The author of this study writes from a reformed evangelical perspective. The exegesis of the selected texts will be conducted according to the historical-grammatical method as explained by Kaiser and Silva (1994). This means that by using the said methodological approach, the primary concern will be to arrive at *Luke's intended meaning* of the motif of peace in his double work. To solve the research problem, this study will use a purely literary approach.

Having said that, this approach will not go against narrative criticism as it is elaborated in *Judges & Method* by Richard Bowman (2007:19–45). This is because Luke-Acts is narrative in genre. Narrative criticism is useful in this study since it works explicitly with three worlds in a text, that is, its narrative world (world in the text), the text's referential world (the world behind the text), and the contextual world of the text (the context of its intended hearers/readers). This is true even though Bowman does not seem to agree with (cf. Bowman, 2007: 21). Furthermore, this study may employ *some* features of social-scientific criticism as explained by Naomi Steinberg (2007:45–63) and advocated by Malina (1993). The features which we have in mind are specifically those that will help this research avoid the pitfall of anachronism and ethnocentrism, such as attributing our modern understandings of peace, the city and livelihood into Luke's time and culture (cf. Malina, 1995:5). By means of these features, we will overcome some limitations of narrative criticism.

Given this, it is difficult, if not impossible, to use narrative criticism without the services of cultural and literary criticism, so these, too, will be employed to attempt a better understanding of the selected texts.

1.7. DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

The study falls within the field of New Testament biblical studies that is motivated exegetically. Regarding the design of this essay, there is considerable written material in each of the four steps in this study. This thesis will require four main sections in addition to the introduction and conclusion.

The section divisions are as follows. *Introduction*: The introduction presents the problem and the research plan by which the paper deals with the methodological issue. After the introduction, the essay will grapple with the *Concept of Peace in the Jewish and Greco-Roman Worlds*. Here the study will begin by investigating the use of peace in Jewish and Greco-Roman understandings and see how this usage may have informed Luke. The possibility of an Old Testament influence, together with the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran community, will also be examined in this chapter.

Next in this essay is *The Meaning of the Motif of Peace in the Infancy Narratives*. This step will analyze the significant role the motif of peace plays in one of the crucial sections of Luke's Gospel, namely the infancy narratives. Isaiah's categories of kingship, righteousness and peace will also be taken into account.

The paper will then look at *The Message of Peace in Luke-Acts*. At this stage, the paper will endeavour to engage exegetically with Luke-Acts in order to familiarize us with what Luke understands as the message of peace. Passages such as Luke 10:4–6; Luke 24:36–39 and Acts 10:34–38 will be critically analysed. The Pilgrim Psalms 120, 121, and 122 and the Jerusalem/temple motif will also be brought into the conversation. Luke’s understanding of the new age of šālôm beginning with the end of exile will also be tackled at this stage (Isa 35; cf. 40–66; Luke 7:20).

Finally, the essay will address the issue of *Things That Bring about Peace, According To Luke*. At this juncture, the paper will engage with Luke 19:38–44 and examine the source of peace—something which Jerusalem (the city of peace) was not aware of. Isaiah (Deutero-Isaiah) and the Psalms (Songs of Ascent; Luke 24:36), with their flavour of kingship, and the Jerusalem motif will be taken into account. Furthermore, a section on how Luke understands the eschatological age of peace by making use of Psalm 2 twice (Acts 4 and 13) will be examined.

Finally, we arrive at the *Conclusion*. Here the essay will summarize the findings of the research and attempt to answer the research question by positioning the motif of peace within Luke’s main thesis. Some pastoral implications of the research will also be elaborated.

CHAPTER 2: THE CONCEPT OF PEACE IN THE JEWISH AND GRECO-ROMAN WORLDS

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that, just as Luke may have been influenced by the Old Testament Jewish understanding of the concept of salvation, so too was he influenced in his understanding of *šālôm*. This paper will agree with Pao and Schnabel (2007:268) that “Peace... is a typical Lukan theme that draws on the OT (cf. 1:79).” Luke adopted the theological category of peace as presented in the books of Psalms, Jeremiah, and Isaiah. But it is Isaiah, especially Second Isaiah, and the Psalms that will be the main focus of this paper.⁴ This section will demonstrate the antecedents to Luke’s understanding of peace by engaging with the whole concept of peace as it was understood and used in both the Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds. The books of Maccabees will be considered to inform us regarding what peace entailed during the Hellenistic period. With regard to the Jewish world, the paper will also investigate the meaning of peace and its affects in non-canonical literature such as the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Qumran community and the Psalms of Solomon. The hypothesis of this chapter is that, notwithstanding the social milieu of Jesus and his hearers, Luke’s concept of peace is more informed by familiarity with the Hebrew Bible, especially the Old Testament books mentioned above.

2.1. PEACE IN JEWISH THOUGHT AND THE GRECO-ROMAN WORLD

One could not do justice to Luke’s particular interest and his understanding of the topic of peace without giving consideration to his cultural milieu. This is true because “it is important to realize that the Gospels were written against this background of unrest and unrest that had repercussions in some countries beyond Palestine where Jews resided” (Ford, 2010:1).⁵ Language is an integral part of any given culture. The words people use to communicate a given thought are critical to the understanding of what they communicate. Thus, Luke might have been influenced by the Jewish understanding of the concept of *šālôm*, or the Greco-Roman

⁴ The choice for Isaiah is because “Isaiah was the most detailed and influential with respect to the New Testament” (Seccombe, 2016:31). His contribution to the New Testament is mostly his language of the gospel. The gospel is a fundament piece in grasping Luke’s theology of peace.

⁵ Ford (2010:3–10) is referring to the general unrest of the whole of the first century, and particularly the climax that came with the outbreak of the memorable war with the Romans in AD 66. But since this paper argues for an early date for Luke-Acts, we are only interested in the unrest prior to AD 64. She points out a number of causes of unrest in first-century Palestine. Many of them apply to the period in which we believe Luke-Acts was written. Examples of these causes include occupation by foreign troops, class conflicts, social banditry (cf. the Parable of the Good Samaritan), revolutionary prophets and messianic pretenders (cf. Acts 5:36), and misconduct of Roman officials.

use of the term (*eirēnē/pax*) or even by both. The *pax* (peace) brought about by the Roman Empire during the time of Luke's writing was a great achievement. At that time, one could not talk about peace or allude to it without calling up thoughts of the Pax Romana. Peace was the god of the time, as Wengst (1986:11; cf. 1986:8) points out: "Pax, the goddess of peace, usually portrayed in the Greek sphere with a cornucopia, also appears in this form on Roman coins, e.g. on the obverse of a denarius from the early period of Augustus' sole rule." The importance of peace in [some context] cannot be underestimated. Therefore, what was meant by "Pax Romana" needs to be considered as we investigate Luke's use of *eirēnē* in his double work.⁶

2.1.1. In the Books of Maccabees

The books of Maccabees (especially the first book) narrate the events of the war and the deeds of the five Maccabean brothers from the year 170 to 130 BC. This period was predominantly, if not solely, Hellenistic. First Maccabees begins with the narrative of Alexander's conquests and is followed by the conquests of his generals in their expansion of Greece. The whole context is war. In these events, Israel is often endangered by threats of war, and so peace is the first and most important thing on her agenda, as well as being paramount to many of the other nations of that time. The purpose of this section, then, is to trace what "peace" could have meant in this Hellenistic period. The books of Maccabees are just one of the resources that can help us in this quest.

In Maccabees, peace is regarded as the opposite or the absence of war. Peace in this sense can, therefore, be disturbed; consider, for example how it is articulated in the following quote, "Alcimus struggled to have the Israelites recognize him as chief priest, and all who *disturb the peace* of the people joined" [italics mine] (1 Macc 7:21–22; cf. 4 Macc 3:20). It can also be enjoyed in a land: "the land of Judah enjoyed peace for a short time" (1 Macc 7:50; cf. 9:57–58, 73; 11:52; 14:4, 8). When a nation is said to be seeking peace, it is the antithesis of war because it is negotiated politically; "the men from the group of Hasideans, the first to seek peace in Israel, reasoned like this..." (1 Macc 7:13–14; cf. 1 Macc 11:62; 13:45; 2 Macc 13:24). When seeking to resolve a conflict, it is often the weaker nation that seeks peace from the one that seems stronger. Consequently, phrases like "words of peace", "the message of peace" and

⁶ Sölle (1983: 18) rightly describes the Pax Romana as a two-fold system. She argues that the so-called Pax Romana was experienced differently from its periphery. She contends that citizens enjoyed life in the centre, where there was a tremendous richness and wealth of merchandise brought from all over the world into Rome. However, she claims that others described this world as soulless and empty, an empire of absolute moral corruption. This is what Sölle calls "the other side of the *Pax-Romana*". Luke's letter was not penned at Rome's centre, where people "enjoyed life", but on "the periphery, in small countries like Palestine, and the whole of north Africa. What you find there is starvation, people living just on the survival level, joblessness, lack of food, water and medicine."

“proposal of peace” are synonymous in the Maccabees, and they mean negotiations for a situation which will protect a weaker nation from the threats and danger of war: “Judah sent them a message of peace, saying...” (1 Macc 5:48; cf. 1:30; 7:10; 11:2). This is a far cry from the *message of peace* with which Jesus is sending his envoys in Luke 10 or in Acts 10. In Luke, it is the initiator of peace who comes from a strong position. Jesus is the one initiating and seeking to make peace with a weak and sinful world (cf. Acts 10, 11). In Maccabees, when a *proposal or message of peace* is accepted by the other party, a covenant of peace, which is also called a treaty of peace, will be concluded: “Judas Maccabeus, his brothers and the people of Israel sent us to you to conclude a covenant of peace with you and to be numbered among your allies and friends” (1 Macc 8:20; cf. 9:70; 2 Macc 11:26; 14:20). In these political treaties of peace, skillful and diplomatic messengers are needed (1 Macc 6:61; 7:10; 9:70; 2 Macc 11:14). Again, the messengers of peace in Luke-Acts are not political envoys sent to negotiate a political treaty. Peter, for example, will be sent as a messenger carrying the message of peace to Cornelius and his household (Acts 10, 11; cf. Luke 10), but this is not the same message as that of the Maccabean messengers. It will be argued in this paper that in Luke-Acts the social aspect of peace is often a by-product of peace with God.

The word “peace” is mentioned 38 times in 1 Maccabees, 21 times in 2 Maccabees, three times in 3 Maccabees, and twice in 4 Maccabees.⁷ It is interesting that peace is sought only once from God (whom he describes as the LORD, Lord, King of the heavens, and Ruler of the whole creation, Holy among the holy, sole Governor, Almighty, 3 Macc 2:2), during the prayer of the priest Simon (3 Macc 2:20). Besides that, the Jews in Jerusalem express their *wish* that God would give peace to their fellow Jewish brothers in Egypt (2 Macc 1:4). On all other occasions, peace is never sought from God. Peace is not even with God (theological) in Maccabees. It is peace negotiated and concluded between two nations, between fellow human beings. The books of Maccabees advocate for a sociopolitical peace. It is peace in its secular sense. As in Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, peace with God is completely foreign in the books of Maccabees. It is against this background that even the peace which is referred to in the introductory formula of letters written in this Hellenistic time should be understood. For instance, “Lucius, consul of the Romans, to King Ptolemy, peace!” (1 Macc 15:16; cf. 10:18; 11:30; 12:6; 15:2). Therefore, the Greco-Roman understating of peace was mostly political: a peace which is won either through war or political treaties.

⁷ The mentions in English translations vary widely, but *eirēnē* and cognates are mentioned a total of 77 times in 47 verses in Rhalf’s LXX.

2.1.2. Areas of Applicability of the Concept of Šālôm in Scripture

As indicated earlier in our introduction, the whole purpose of this section is to find out where Luke got his understanding of the concept of peace. Only when this task is complete can one begin to understand what Luke meant and what he communicated through this motif of peace. Westermann (1992:40) presents three areas of application in the use of šālôm in the Old Testament. He argues that two of those areas of application are in the category of Old Testament contemporary reality, whereas one has to do with a future šālôm. The first use of šālôm, according to Westermann (1992:41), is primarily neither theological nor political. It is a general and broader sense of peace. It is “Not even a specifically historical point of reference or a salvation history tone”, he argues. In this area of application, that is, this first use of šālôm, Westermann (1992:41) argues that šālôm means “wholeness or wellness in a comprehensive sense—that is, the well-being or welfare of the person in a community, including all areas of human existence, a healthy human existence in all its possibilities.” It is in this sense that David could even ask about the šālôm of the war (2 Samuel 11:7). Even in that general sense of peace, it seems that to completely omit a theological category in this area of applicability would be unthinkable to the reasoning of any Israelite. Perhaps Dinkler (1992:168) is correct when he observes of 2 Samuel 11:7 that “comparing this with similar passages, one must conclude that *shalom*, in this case, can only mean whether everything was in order, well organized, and properly implemented, with reference to the life of Joab and of the people as well as to the course of the war.” Westermann’s understanding accords with that of Dinkler at this juncture. However, Dinkler (1992:168) goes further and makes a reasonable observation: “But again that is not to say that šālôm is *completely cut off* from the concept of ‘*God’s salvation*,’ since order as well-being might well be thought of as victory anchored in the hand of God, even if there is no explicit reference to that effect” (1992:168; italics mine). Hence it can be argued that, although the primary meaning of peace in Scripture is not theological, as seen in Westermann, the idea that God is the source of the wholeness or intactness of a community or a thing is implicitly part of the concept of šālôm. Šālôm is predominately derived from God.

The second area of applicability of the concept of šālôm is its political category. In this sense, šālôm could mean what our English word “peace” means, namely the opposite or the absence of war (cf. “peace” in Maccabees in 2.1.1). Peace is here depicted and understood in a context where a healthy community is especially endangered by the threat of war. Westermann (1992:41) claims that “the threat to the community has now become so severe that *šālôm* becomes a conceptual opposite to war. Here for the first time, *šālôm* comes to mean peace in

our political sense. Peace in this political sense becomes a future hope.” This idea of peace as a political category is the one conveyed by the Greco-Roman understanding of both *Pax Romana* and *eirēnē*. This is what Dinkler refers to as a secular understanding of *eirēnē*. Dinkler (1992:165) is right when he asserts that “only toward the end of the first century of the Christian era does the secular Greek understanding of *eirēnē*, one often linked in antiquity with *homonoia* (‘concord’), enter early Christian literature, especially through Clement of Rome.”

The third applicability of *šālôm* in the Old Testament, according to Westermann, is its theological character. He (1992:42) argues that “a change in the concept has occurred by the time of Jeremiah, in his words of salvation, and later also Deutero-Isaiah identify the future acts of Yahweh as *šālôm* (salvation). Here finally *šālôm* has become a theological concept in the strict sense.” But again Westermann (1992:41) maintains that “the broadest and the most dominant area of use is the first one, in which *šālôm* has not yet developed into a specifically theological concept.” Interestingly, it is noteworthy that “it is this theologised meaning, a *šālôm* tied to the saving act of God, that is taken over into the New Testament use of the term” (Westermann, 1992:42).

2.1.3. Luke’s Concept of Šālôm

Coming to which aspect of “peace” might have influenced Luke in Luke-Acts, it is crucial to consider that

the general view of the literature holds that Luke received peace concepts from Mark, from the sayings of the Q source, and from the Lukan special source. This means that his Gospel and the Acts of Apostles as a unit must be understood as a compromise. Nowhere is this as clear as on the theme of peace (Frankemölle, 1992:220).

Now, looking at the juxtaposition of the concepts of *peace* and of *salvation*, especially in the birth narratives (Luke 1:67–69; 2:11–14), which indicate that both sociopolitical and theological dimensions of peace are tied together, it is hardly fair to completely rule out the idea of “military” force or battle in Luke’s concept of peace as it was also perceived in the *Pax Romana*.⁸ Further, the Saviour of the Magnificat, who is God (Luke 1:47), has “brought down rulers from their thrones” (Luke 1:52); this language is pregnant with force and undertones of judgement. Luke applies the same title of Saviour to Jesus (Luke 2:11).⁹ By so doing, as

⁸ Cf. chapter 3 of this paper, “The Meaning of the Motif of Peace in the Infancy Narratives

⁹ According to Sweetland (1990:93), Luke “is the only Synoptic evangelist to use the title ‘Savior’ (*sōtēr*), a title used for God in the Hebrew scripture (Isaiah 45:21), for Jesus (Luke 2:11; cf. Act 5:21; 13:23).”

Sweetland (1990:93) contends, “Luke is suggesting that Jesus acts with divine authority. God has determined to make available in Jesus the salvation that otherwise only he can accomplish.” The point here is the fact that at the birth of this Saviour (Luke 2:11), when the angels sing “peace on earth” (Luke 2:14)—which involves judgement in bringing God’s enemies down from their thrones (cf. Luke 1:52)—it appears that Luke is pushing both the theological and sociopolitical categories of peace. Wengst (1986:9) helps us to see that the peace which is part of the gospel of salvation is not free from political categories, as he asserts that “Augustus’ fame as the one who has ordained peace is closely associated with his famous title as the saviour of the world, the saviour of the whole human race.”

A careful study coupled with a thorough consideration of the context would really help in arriving at what Luke communicated by picking up the topic of peace as one of the building blocks in conveying his message. Wengst discusses different aspects of the Pax Romana, namely the military, political, economic and legal aspects. A close analysis shows that for Rome, “peace” was the opposite of war even though it was achieved and maintained through violence. Observing the military aspect of this “Pax”, Wengst (1986:13) asserts that “peace produced and maintained by military force is accompanied with streams of blood and tears of unimaginable proportion.” However, on the political aspect of the Pax Romana, he raises the issue of being able to enjoy one’s possessions in peace (Wengst, 1986:19). This means that the Pax Romana, with its compelling military power, offered peace and security to people and their possessions or goods. In other words, what is envisaged here is “protection against any threats from outside the boundaries of the empire” (Wengst, 1986:19). This is what we mean by enjoying one’s possessions in peace in the Pax Romana. This could be true for some and not for others in Roman Empire.

The political category of peace is probably the one Tertullus refers to when he accuses Paul before Felix at Caesarea: “Since through you we enjoy *much peace*, and since by your foresight, most excellent Felix, reforms are being made for this nation” (Acts 24:2; italics mine)¹⁰. In Acts 9:31 the church is said to enjoy a moment of peace. Here again, according to the context, peace is the absence of persecution. Nonetheless, as with all the New Testament writers, Luke’s concept of peace means much more than a political program. It is worth pointing out that Luke has the social aspect of peace in mind as part of Christ’s program. This paper will argue that

¹⁰ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (2011). Scripture quotations marked ESV are from *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (2016). Scripture quotations marked NIV1984 are from *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (1984).

the message of peace¹¹ and the proclamation of the kingdom of God are synonymous and are often used interchangeably in Luke-Acts (cf. Luke 10 and Acts 10). Towards that end, it will argue that when Jesus in Luke 11:19 claims that the kingdom of God has arrived, as proven by his driving out of demons, Luke through that claim underscores, among other things, the social facet of peace. This is evident because the demon-possessed man was set free from demonic oppression and restored back in his society.¹² Besides, according to Conzelmann's thesis, Luke is an apologetic for Rome, whereas for both Cassidy and Yoder it is exactly the opposite. After a reasonable analysis of Conzelmann's and Cassidy's theses, Swartley concludes: "first it is clear that the *eirene* of the gospel of the kingdom is not a puppet, nor even an ally of the *Pax-Romana*" (1983:32). Moreover, Swartley claims that

the *eirene* of the Gospel has its own mind and mission. It will not be seduced into either the Pietist or Sadducee-Zealot perversions. It creates its own agenda, seeking to find more 'children of peace' and to testify to all people about 'the things that make for peace' (Swartley, 1983:35).

To sum up, this section has indicated that there is a body of scholarship which holds that the peace motif is predominantly a theological concept which means peace with God. As will be elaborated later, this paper contends that, indeed, the Lukan peace motif is primarily a theological concept (social peace, peace of mind, and peace with God) in Luke-Acts. Its agenda goes far beyond whatever it meant to enjoy peace in the Greco-Roman world (cf. Acts 9:31; 24:2). Nevertheless, it has also been shown that that the enjoyment of the real peace by the people of God as presented by Luke demands or presupposes the defeat of their oppressors who deprive them of peace. The latter sounds political. Consequently, a political undertone and all its social implications are also an integral part of the peace that the Saviour brings to his people through the breaking in of his kingdom on earth. As Christ's kingdom grows, peace in its full meaning and reality is materializing.

2.2. PEACE IN NON-CANONICAL JEWISH LITERATURE

As in the canonical Hebrew Bible and Jewish thought, so also in non-canonical Jewish apocalyptic writings the concept of peace is closely associated with and cannot be divorced from a number of themes. Usually in these traditional corpora peace is identified with an

¹¹ Remember that the phrase "message of peace" is different from the concept of the message of peace which Jesus' envoys are to carry into the mission field.

¹² For further reading on the social aspect of God's kingdom and peace, I would recommend Wengst in *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ* (1986:65 -69).

eschatological figure, that is, a priestly or a kingly messiah, or both (cf. Psalms of Solomon 17). These are the characters responsible for the peace of God's people and for bringing the new age of peace. Themes usually associated with peace are the motifs of salvation, righteousness, Zion, Jerusalem and the rule of Yahweh, as they are identified with these eschatological figures (cf. Second Isaiah).¹³ To substantiate this claim, the following sections will elaborate as they grapple with the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. Luke, as this paper will demonstrate, was influenced more by the concepts of peace in the Hebrew Bible than he was by these corpora. This does not mean that Luke did not see any change in how to apply the Old Testament concept of peace now that Jesus has come.

For this reason, the following sections will analyse the meaning of peace in different Jewish non-canonical corpora as it is connected with Israel's hopes for the eschatological messiah. Many of these were available in Luke's time. In fact, it is not accidental that Luke also connects the same themes around the peace motif, such as the coming of Davidic messiah, Jerusalem, the Spirit, and salvation, as in much of the Jewish and Hellenistic literature. Having said that, one must not think that peace is always an eschatological motif in Jewish literature. It is equally and primarily a present and contemporary category. This is the case in the following document.

2.2.1. Peace in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

In the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the word "peace" is mentioned about 27 times (see some references below). It does not appear in the Testaments of Reuben, Simeon, Issachar or Zebulun. Only once is it used as an eschatological reality which will be brought about by an Aaronic messiah (T. Levi). The remaining times, peace is a present reality either in the context of international wars (T. Judah) or in relation to brotherly everyday affairs.

In the *Testament of Levi* (cf. 18:4), the age of peace is portrayed as being ushered in by a priestly messiah rather than a Davidic kingly messiah, as it was commonly and traditionally believed (cf. Isaiah and the Psalms). It is the presence of this priestly messiah who will shine forth on the earth and will remove darkness; only then shall there be peace on all the earth:

... His [the Lord's] star shall arise in heaven, as a king shedding forth the light of knowledge in the sunshine of day, and He shall be magnified in the world until His ascension. He shall shine forth as the sun in the earth and shall drive

¹³ Cf. Isaiah 11.

away all darkness from the world under heaven, and there shall be peace in all the earth (T. Levi 18:4).

Here we have a picture of a universal aspect of peace which reaches and embraces even the Gentiles (T. Levi 18:9), but only when darkness is removed. It appears that even the kingly office is associated with this priestly figure. Peace in this Testament is characterised by the presence of knowledge, understanding and the truth of the Lord, together with sanctification which will be poured out on earth (T. Levi 18:5–6). Sin will come to an end, and the lawless will cease to do evil (T. Levi 18:9).¹⁴ So far, this picture of peace seems to be a statement of faith and hope, rather a historical fact.

Commenting on this text, Mowry (1966:161–162) submits that

In this hymn the poet does not express a hope for restoration of Israel under the political leadership of a Davidic messiah from the tribe of Judah but rather the spiritual hopes for a world of righteousness, peace, understanding, knowledge, and release from sin and the power of evil. The whole world will rejoice when the ideal figure appears.

Therefore peace, as it is identified with the Aaronic priestly messiah in the Testament of Levi, is a theological category. It is brought in by the priestly messiah, along with truth, knowledge and the understanding of the Lord, and above all brings an end to sin and evil. The apolitical and non-military category of peace in the Testament of Levi is again well expressed by Mowry (1966:160–161), who says that “while the new priest’s star would rise like that of a king, he would come, not to defeat Israel’s national enemies, but to remove darkness from the world, to bring peace to the earth and especially to open the gates of paradise for the saints.”

In the *Testament of Dan*, peace occurs six times (see some references below) in the context of brotherly day-to-day life. It is the obedience to the law, specifically in speaking truth to each other rather than lies, and the controlling of anger that create a peaceful condition in relationships among brothers and sisters in a community. Here, peace is the opposite of strife and misunderstandings that usually occur as a result of lies and unrestrained anger (T. Dan 6, 7). In the *Testament of Naphtali*, peace is mentioned once (see below). It is stated that “... and when the storm ceased, immediately the ship reached the land, *as though in peace*. And, lo, Jacob our father came, and we rejoiced with one accord” (T. Naph. 6; italics mine); “peace”

¹⁴ These roles are identified with the Servant figure in the book of Isaiah (cf. Isaiah 53).

here means safety. The *Testament of Gad* mentions peace four times, again in the context of relationships. Here, love, not hatred, promotes peace among brothers (T. Gad 6, 7, 8). Thus, anger, lies, dishonesty, two-facedness and hatred are threats to peaceful relations in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (cf. Acts 5; 6). Peace is predominantly about the wholeness and well-being of the people in a community (see chapter 4, below).

2.2.2. Peace in the Psalms of Solomon's Community

However, coming to the *Psalms of Solomon* 17¹⁵, though there is no *mention* of the word “peace,” the *notion* of peace is there and yet is different from that of the Testament of Levi. Two vital things are to be pointed out in this Psalm. First, the sociopolitical undertones of the Psalm linking to the Davidic messiah cannot be ignored. The description of peace here is political but non-military. Second, the centripetal feature of the Psalm, with the idea of localizing salvation and peace within the boundaries of God's people (Israel), is to be noted. Since there are 18 Psalms, it is the Davidic messianism of the Psalm of Solomon 17 which may shed some light on the notion of peace in Luke-Acts.

In fact, this Psalm is noteworthy because its historical context, though contentious, appears somewhat closer to Luke's time. Perhaps Atkinson's paper *On the Herodian Origin of Militant Davidic Messianism at Qumran* (1999) is more helpful on this matter.¹⁶ Setting up his purpose, which is “to present a new scenario for understanding the historical origin of militant Davidic messianism in the Qumran texts,” Atkinson (1999:435) says upfront that his

investigation will propose that militant Davidic messianism first emerged in the latter years of the Hasmonean era and became widespread during the Herodian period. This violent messiah was fashioned predominantly as a righteous counterpart to Herod the Great and subsequent Herodian rulers, whom he was expected to overthrow before then inaugurating an eternal reign of peace.¹⁷

¹⁵ “The Psalms of Solomon, an anti-Hasmonean and anti-Roman collection composed in the latter half of the first century BC, represents the strongest expression of this hope in the second temple period. The Psalms are written from the perspective of a group of Jewish pietists who cry out against certain ‘sinners’ (Hasmonean priest-kings) who have arrogantly usurped the Davidic throne and have defiled the temple of God (1.6–8; 2.3–5; 8.8–13; 17.5–9, 19–22). In response to their sins, God has sent a foreign conqueror, ‘a man alien to our race’ (17.8), who defeated the city, killed and expelled citizens, and laid waste the land (2.6–8; 2.3; 7.2; 8:14–22; 17.11–20)” (Strauss, 1995:40–41).

¹⁶ Atkinson (2004:13) argues regarding Psalms of Solomon 17 that “because this text contains the earliest and most detailed pre-Christian expectation for a Davidic messiah, it is perhaps the most important of the Psalms of Solomon.”

¹⁷ According to Strauss (1995:41), “There is a general consensus that these allusions best fit the subjugation of Jerusalem by the Roman general Pompey in 63 BC, and that the psalms (at least those with historical allusions) were written sometime after this event.” The historical background is debatable. However, Atkinson's (1999:458)

If Atkinson's thesis is right, then this Psalm of Solomon becomes more relevant to our discussion of peace (brought about by the Davidic messiah) in Luke-Acts, because its historical context gets closer and closer to Luke's time. Nonetheless, whether or not its historical context fits in within Pompey's invasion of Jerusalem, its relevance still stands, as far as our reading of the eschatological and sociopolitical categories of peace in Luke-Acts is concerned (cf. Luke 1–2). In Psalms of Solomon 17, peace is brought not by a priestly messiah but by the Davidic kingly messiah. Similar to the priestly messiah in the Testament of Levi, the portrait of the Davidic messiah in this Psalm is not military (17:33). He does not rely on any military force (cf. Isaiah 11). But it is worth noting that his purging of the nations from Jerusalem is *decorated* in militant imagery (17:22–24). Salvation, which is a related theme to the peace motif in many parts of Scripture, and particularly in Luke-Acts, is also depicted with a political connotation. Consequently, a peace which follows after a mighty act of deliverance brought about by the Davidic messiah against the enemies of God's people is a sociopolitical category in this Psalm of Solomon.

The author(s) is imagining a Davidic messiah who drives out sinners from their inheritance and smashes the arrogance of the sinner like a potter's vessel (Pss. Sol. 17:23).¹⁸ The language sounds violent. For Atkinson, based on this language, the reign of the Lord's messiah will *not* be peaceful (2004:134). This is true especially with regard to Yahweh's enemies. Further, Atkinson (1999:460) contends that

while the communities that composed Pss. Sol. 17, the Qumran texts, and Revelation are commonly regarded as pacifistic, their common image of a warrior messiah suggests that they looked forward with apparent eagerness to great bloodshed and annihilation of their enemies.¹⁹

thesis is worth noting: "While the Qumran community first placed its hopes in other messianic paradigms, such as the dual messiah, new historical circumstances created by the Herodian dynasty stimulated their expectation of a violent Davidic messiah who was fashioned as a righteous counterpart to the Herodian rulers."

¹⁸ Strauss (1995:40) continues to argue that "This waning of messianic expectations appears to have reversed in the late Hasmonean and early Roman periods, when the failures of the priestly leadership brought about the renewal of Davidic hopes. Growing disenchantment with Hellenizing tendencies and abuse of royal power of the later Hasmoneans, and the subsequent subjugation by Rome, renewed hopes for a new Davidic king who would act as God's agent to judge corrupt rulers and priests, to purge the nation of foreign influence and domination, and to bring in an era of justice, peace and prosperity."

¹⁹ "Perhaps with this image in mind we can better understand the apparent frustration of those followers of Jesus who, having witnessed Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem as king, along with his rampage in the temple and prediction of its very destruction, were disappointed when Jesus become the slain messiah, rather than the slaying messiah", argues Atkinson (1999:460).

However, it is this same non-peaceful act of the Lord's messiah against God's enemies which will establish peace for the holy people that he will gather and lead in righteousness (Pss. Sol. 17:25, 26). According to the Psalms of Solomon community, peace will be realized only when justice is established and Jerusalem is purged from the nations that trample her in destruction (Pss. Sol. 17:22). It appears that for the sake of the peace of God's people, God's enemies are to be destroyed and taken out of Jerusalem. Embry (2002:110) submits that "while it is undeniable that the messiah of *Pss. Sol. 17* is a political figure, the more central issue for the author is purity, not polity". Peace in this Psalm is linked to the political and "militant" Davidic messiah, as Embry (2002:108) observes: "whatever else he may be, the messiah of *Pss. Sol.* is, without a doubt, a, a political figure." It also has to do with purging unworthy rulers from Jerusalem. Peace is for the people of God, Israel. Above all, the author(s) of this Psalm paints peace as a sociopolitical category. "The evidence delineated in this study suggests that the common pre-Christian expectation of a Davidic messiah is a violent warrior who would function as a righteous counterpart to the current Herodian monarch", contends Atkinson (1999:460).

2.2.3. Peace in the Dead Sea Scrolls

In the Dead Sea Scrolls we get mostly the connotation of a military and sociopolitical peace. This peace is primarily a present and contemporary reality, rather than eschatological. Under the *Rules of the Community*, for instance, the sons of truth, who are presumably members of the Qumran community, are to walk in the counsel of the Spirit. Consequently, the scroll indicates that "And as for the visitation of all who walk in this spirit, it shall be healing, great peace in a long life, and fruitfulness, together with every everlasting blessing and eternal joy in life without end, a crown of glory and a garment of majesty in unending light" (1QS4).²⁰ Here, peace is a present category. It means the wholeness and the welfare of a person in a community. In the *War Scroll*, the concept of peace is understood as a situation of the sons of righteousness after the destruction of the sons of wickedness. These wars may be symbolic of the eternal struggle between the spirit of light and the spirit of darkness. In this sense, these may have some eschatological undertones.²¹ Something worth emphasising is that peace is brought about when the enemies of God's people are destroyed. It is detailed that

²⁰ Vermes in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (1974:76).

²¹ "Violence, human and divine is written into almost every apocalyptic writing and is antecedent to the establishment of the kingdom of God" (Russell, 1978:20).

The sons of righteousness shall shine over all the ends of the earth; they shall go on shining until all the seasons of darkness are consumed and, at the season appointed by God, His exalted greatness shall shine eternally to the peace, blessing, glory, joy, and long life of all the sons of light (M^a [4Q491] and M^c [4Q493]).²²

Another significant text is the *Royal Psalm* (4Q427), because it shares themes with the Lukan Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55), for example, the humbling of the proud, the lifting up of the poor (lowly), the display of the Lord’s mercy, etcetera. The second section of this hymn shows that God and his king have to deal with certain unpleasing things before they bring in the age of peace. Unlike in the Testament of Levi, but like the Psalms of Solomon 17, this Royal Psalm emphasises the work of a king. It states that “... wickedness ends... oppression [ceases], the tyrant ceases... treachery stops and there are no senseless perversities. Light shines and joy bursts forth; mourning [vanishes] and sorrow flees. Peace is revealed, dread ceases” (4Q427).²³ Peace is established and realized when all its terrors, that is, wickedness, oppression, tyranny, treachery, perversities, mourning, sorrow, and dread end; but this depends on God and his king, not a priestly messiah.

The Dead Sea Scrolls have many *Zion Psalms* as well. The Zion theology is predominately a concept of the book of Isaiah and the canonical Psalter. It is Yahweh’s administration in the Zion Temple that brings about peace to the ends of the earth. Now, in the *Apostrophe to Zion*, one of the Apocryphal Psalms, the poet says,

I will remember you, O Zion, for a blessing; with all my might I love you; your memory is to be blessed forever. Your hope is great, O Zion; Peace and your awaited salvation will come. Generation after generation shall dwell in you, and generations of the pious shall be your ornament. They who desire the day of your salvation shall rejoice in the greatness of your glory (*Apostrophe to Zion*, XXII).

Here we note that, as in Isaiah and the Psalter, peace is in apposition with salvation and is never independent of Yahweh’s King, the temple, and Jerusalem or Zion. This can also be seen in the *Words of the Heavenly Lights*:

²² Cf. *The Dead Sea Scrolls* by Wise & Cook (1996:152).

²³ Wise & Cook (1996: 113).

All the nations have seen Thy glory, Thou who hast sanctified thyself in the midst of Thy people Israel. They brought their offering to Thy great Name, silver and gold and precious stones together with all the treasures of their lands, that they might glorify Thy people, and Zion Thy holy city, and the House of Thy majesty. And there was neither adversary nor misfortune, but peace and blessing... and they ate and were satisfied and grew fat... (4Q504).²⁴

In the *Poetic Eschatology* which seems to be part of the Testament of Naphtali (4Q215), again peace is realized when God's enemies are destroyed.

... and the stressful constraint and the ordeal of the pit and they shall be refined by them to become the elect of righteousness, and all their wickedness will be blotted out (?) because of His loving-kindness. For the age of wickedness is complete and all injustice has [passed] away. [For] the time of righteousness has come and the earth is full knowledge and the praise of God. In the day[s of] ... has come the age of peace and the precepts of truth and the testimony of righteousness to make one understand the ways of God and the might of His deeds for ever and ever (4Q215a 1 ii).²⁵

2.3. CONCLUSION

It is important at this stage to highlight some essential features and draw some conclusions in order to see how these noteworthy findings will inform our study of peace in Luke-Acts. The concept of peace as presented in the aforementioned non-canonical Jewish writings is to some degree shaped by the Hebrew Bible. This means that peace in its eschatological aspect is mainly understood in light of a messianic figure, and it goes together with other significant motifs, such as salvation (which also has political connotations), temple and Jerusalem. As in the foregoing writings, Luke is realistic and not simplistic in his presentation of peace, as this paper will demonstrate. Three basic things are to be noted in this survey with respect to the portrait of peace.

First, peace is believed to be relational and social (cf. the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs). It is made possible as people shun vices and threats of peace and promote virtues which create harmonious relationships. So far nothing has been said about peace with God. Peace has been horizontal up to this point. The vertical aspect of peace (peace with God) may be implicit in

²⁴ Wise & Cook (1996:412).

²⁵ Wise & Cook (1996:261).

the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs because it is obedience to the law, which translates into avoiding some things and pursuing other things for the well-being of the community. This concept of peace as harmony and acceptance of one another is also presented in Luke-Acts. Peace as the wholeness and pleasant relationship within the community of God's people is one of the Lukan categories. In Luke, however, that peace is a result of individuals having peace with God (cf. Luke 10; Acts 10).

Second, peace is also thought to be sociopolitical (cf. Pss. Sol.). In this category, haters of peace and rivals of God's people must be destroyed and shattered by the Lord's messiah. The bloodshed and violent acts of the Lord's messiah bring about peace for God's people. Luke picks up this aspect of peace as well. A glimpse of this category is found in Jesus's pronouncement of judgement against Jerusalem, but more especially in his driving out of those who traded in the temple (Luke 19:41–46). However, for Luke peace as a political category will also be fully realized at the end of history in the coercive judgement of God (cf. Luke 17).

Third, the theological category of peace, which has to do with the forgiveness of sin, is an interesting one (cf. T. Levi). Nevertheless, Psalms of Solomon 17 goes on to make this point clear. "In vv. 26–32, the messiah purifies the people (v. 26) and Jerusalem (v. 30)" (Embry, 2002:113).²⁶ It is interesting because the purging of nations from Jerusalem and the ending of sin are in a sense putting sin and 'sinners' outside of the Holy City rather than embracing them within it. Nevertheless, nations which will submit to the Davidic messiah will serve under his yoke (not in Jerusalem); the Lord's messiah will rule over them and they will benefit from his²⁷ rule of justice and peace (Pss. Sol. 17:30, 32). Some nations will be forgiven and be shown mercy, according to this Psalm, but outside of Jerusalem (Pss. Sol. 17:34). This is the "non-missionary" feature of this Psalm. "Later, in v. 34b, the messiah shows compassion to the nations who are reverent before him. Most importantly, however, one should remember that the chapter is enclosed by claims of God's kingship (vv. 1 and 46)" (Embry, 2002:113)

²⁶ "The argument in *Pss. Sol.* regarding the political function of the messiah is secondary to the work of the messiah as purifier. The purgation of the people, Jerusalem and the nations is tantamount to the establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth. Such seemingly was the issue for Christ" (Embry, 2002:13).

²⁷ It seems that this rule of God's and not the Davidic king. This is shown by the inclusio of Pss. Sol. 17, which stresses that the Lord himself is the king for ever. Yet it could be that the Davidic king will still rule, but on God's behalf, as has always been believed in the Jewish notion of kingship. If this is the case, then Embry (2002:113) might be wrong when he argues that "As such, it is the rule of God that is at issue in Ch. 17 and it is into this theological concept that the work of the Messiah should be placed. In short, the work of the Messiah in *Pss. Sol.* is to *establish* the kingdom of God on earth, not to *rule* it."

CHAPTER 3: THE MEANING OF THE MOTIF OF PEACE IN THE INFANCY NARRATIVES

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, this paper will argue that the peace motif, as a *Pax Christi* rather than a *Pax Augusti*, is one of the fundamental pieces of Luke's theology. Luke's theological and sociopolitical categories of peace are both included in the major sections of his Gospel. Peace in the infancy narratives is associated with Christ's kingship and his mission of salvation. The Lukan theological category of peace is the basis for peaceful relationships among the community of God's people. It will also be argued that peace in the infancy narratives, especially in its political aspect, is adopted by Luke, reshaped and anticipated to take a surprisingly different route from the expected Jewish traditional view of armed violence. To accomplish this, the essay will investigate Luke's use of the peace motif in the infancy narratives, focusing mainly on the Benedictus, but also on the Magnificat, the angelic carol, and the Nunc Dimittis.

3.2. IMPORTANCE OF PEACE MOTIF IN THE BIRTH NARRATIVES

To begin with, one has to appreciate the fact that the birth narratives play an important role in Luke's purpose for writing his double work, in that his "thesis" is introduced in these infancy stories and then solidified and tightened up in the body of Luke-Acts.²⁸ They serve to set up both the *identity* and the *mission* of the man Jesus. In fact, themes which are embedded in these birth narratives are intentionally and carefully chosen by the writer in order to achieve his goal (cf. Luke 1:1–4). Just as the coach of a football team will carefully select key players and place them in key positions in order to achieve his goal, so Luke selects key material and key themes to accomplish his purpose.²⁹ Remarkably, Luke does not leave the motif of peace out, but rather considers it to be so crucial that he explicitly points to it three times in his birth narratives. This shows that this theme was not secondary, but one of the main building blocks of his agenda.

Furthermore, the theme is vital, as it is woven together and brought forth under divine intervention. The theme of peace is juxtaposed with the theme of the Spirit.³⁰ Regarding the

²⁸ For Strauss (1995:86), "the role of the nativity is not only to introduce themes which will be important later in Luke-Acts; it also forms a bridge between the Old Testament age of promise and the age of fulfilment structurally setting the stage for the theme of promise-fulfilment which will run as a connecting thread through the whole Luke-Acts."

²⁹ Tannehill (1986:15) reminds us that "the Lukan birth narrative is a *careful* composed literary unit. It is united both by an elaborate pattern of repetition and by sequence of increasing disclosure of *God's purpose* in Jesus" [italics mine].

³⁰For further reading on the link between the concept of peace and the Spirit, I would recommend a paper written by an outstanding Pentecostal scholar, Martin William Mittelstadt (2009), "Spirit and Peace in Luke-Acts: Possibilities for Pentecostal/Anabaptist Dialogue."

mention of the Spirit in Luke's writings, Evans (1993:26) asserts that "the principle purpose seems to be to show that the gospel is truly of divine origin, meets with divine approval and is advanced by divine agency."³¹ One can then take note of how, for instance, Luke does not want his readers to miss the fact that the Benedictus, which is Zechariah's prophecy ahead of John's circumcision, is pronounced under divine influence. Zechariah the priest was "filled with the Holy Spirit" and prophesied that the rising sun would guide the feet of Israel in the "path of peace" (Luke 1:67, 79). Moreover, the way Luke introduces the speaker of the Benedictus is emphatic and deliberate: Zechariah is introduced as a priest. In addition, we are told that he and Elizabeth his wife are "upright in the sight of God and blamelessly observe all of the Lord's commands and regulations" (Luke 1:6). By highlighting Zechariah's priestly office and his unquestionable moral life, it is likely that Luke is calling for his readers to pay close attention to *what* comes from his mouth. The words of a blameless priest saying that "the rising sun will guide our feet into the path of peace" (Luke 1:79) are to be received with great respect. This is confirmed by Mittelstadt (2009:19), who argues that in Luke-Acts "readers are assured that anticipatory statements come from the lips of reliable characters who often speak under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit." This is true, since Zechariah is trustworthy and not like the corrupt priests of his time.³² Zechariah's words are trustworthy and given by God. Furthermore, who could have ignored the very *first words* of one who had been silent and unable to speak for over nine months (Luke 1:19–22)? A miracle of speech accompanies the Benedictus.

Again, the song, "glory to God in the highest and on *earth peace* to men on whom his favour rests", also known as the Gloria in Excelsis Deo (Luke 2:14), is carolled by the *heavenly* host, that is, by angels. Thus, the entire melody is God's idea. This angelic chorus accentuates the divine message of their fellow angel pertaining to the "good news of great joy that will be for all the people" (2:10). Angels are trustworthy agents in bringing this news. Now, coming to our third text of peace in the birth narratives, again three times Luke underscores the role of

³¹ Tannehill (1986:22) is also right as he argues that "we can scarcely doubt that angels are reliable messengers for God within the Lukan world view. The indications that Elizabeth, Zechariah, and Simeon speak under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (1:41, 67; 2:25–27), and the description of Anna as a 'prophetess' (2:36), would seem to indicate that they, too, are reliable spokesperson for God."

³² Ford (2010:5) describes the priesthood of the first century as falling into two classes: upper (Jerusalem priests) and lower (rural priests). She goes on to point out that "Jewish aristocracy, especially the Sadducee priests, collaborated with Rome to enrich themselves. The high priest families were especially corrupt and the office was often obtained by bribery. The immense luxury of the high priest was a cause of great indignation on the part of the masses." Zachariah was a rural priest.

the Spirit in connection with Simeon's prophetic office: "the *Holy Spirit was upon him*" (Luke 2:25); "it had *been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit* that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26); he went to the temple "*moved by the Spirit*" (Luke 2:27). Like, Zechariah, Simeon's character is emphasized. The man was righteous and devout (2:25), therefore credible enough to be listened to.

Therefore, the fact that the topic of peace is not left out in the birth narratives and it is presented by reliable people under the influence of the Spirit and by the angelic choir shows how crucial it is for Luke's message. For Luke, it is not merely a question of *what* is being said and *who* is saying it, but also *under whose influence* the words are being spoken, underlining the source of the words, which must never be ignored. Peace is, therefore, crucial and significant for Luke. Peace is an important part of Luke's intentions.

3.3. PEACE IN THE BENEDICTUS

Having pointed out the manner in which Luke crafts this topic, including in birth narratives and by associating it with the themes of the Spirit, let us now look at the Benedictus closely and in more detail. It is divided into two stanzas. In the first stanza, the Lord, the God of Israel is praised for his salvation of Israel (vv. 67–75). The word "visitation" (v. 68; cf. Luke 7:11) is very important. This is not an ordinary visit. It is as though the Minister of Education were visiting an educational institution: the visit has a connotation of accountability expected from the party who is visited. Another key word here is "redemption". In the second stanza, John's calling and mission are described (vv. 76–79) as being that of a prophet who will make the people of Israel aware of that salvation. Salvation is the major theme of the Benedictus. It is not merely a coincidence that the topic of *peace* is juxtaposed with the theme of *salvation* in the birth narratives (cf. 1:76–79; 2:10–14, 29–32). It is essential to note that by salvation, Luke meant the fulfilment of God's promises to Israel (Luke 1:72, 73). This juxtaposition is there to give the reader a glimpse of what Luke means by peace.³³ It is also there to resonate with Isaiah's prophetic words to his readers (Isaiah 9, etc.). Peace is to be understood in the context of *God's act of salvation on behalf of his people*. The Saviour is the Prince of Peace. Where the Saviour is, there is peace, and vice versa. In both stanzas, salvation is for Israel.

³³ Reading Bovon (2006:276) and scholars such as Marshall (1988) on Luke's vocabulary of the theme of salvation, one could conclude that peace is synonymous with salvation. Though the two can never be divided in Lukan theology, conflating them will result in the reader losing the different flavours that the subject of peace conveys which cannot be found in the motif of salvation.

Israel is referred to nearly 16 times in Zechariah's song. In both stanzas, the phrase τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ ("to his people") refers to Israel (1:68, 77).³⁴ What is striking is that in the angelic chorus (2:14), "peace on earth" is to/in ἀνθρώποις (not λαός), referring to all people. By using ἐν ἀνθρώποις instead of τῷ λαῷ, it seems that Luke had in mind a universal scope of the people of God extending to Gentiles. But a closer reading shows that it is more likely that Luke has not yet gone to the Gentiles at this stage. Usually, Luke uses ἔθνη for Gentiles and λαός for Israel, and only when the nations are part of God's people does Luke on one or two occasions use λαός to refer to them. Hence, the angelic message to the shepherds is depicted as a gospel that will cause great joy for all the people (2:10). This good news is expressed as peace on earth to those on whom the Lord's favour rests (2:14).³⁵

Israel is the main object of God's salvation and peace in Zechariah's prophetic words. The personal pronouns "us", "our" and "their" are all referring to Israel as the people of God. Hence, God has raised up a horn of salvation for Israel (v. 69). This salvation is from Israel's enemies (vv. 71, 74). This is a political category of salvation.³⁶ It is important at this stage to note that "since, in the Roman period, Rome claimed ownership of the land it ruled, it is easy to see why, despite the presence of Jews in the land, they did not see themselves in possession of the land as God had promised to the patriarchs" (Bauckham, 2008:338). Coming to the source of this salvation, it is evident that its *source* is God's mercy shown to Israel's fathers (v. 72). Its *result* is to enable Israel to serve God without fear (in peace?),³⁷ in holiness and righteousness all their days (v. 75). Now, John emerges to give Israel as God's people the knowledge of this salvation (v. 77). This salvation is not only from their enemies, but also involves the forgiveness of Israel's sins (v. 77). This is the theological undertone of salvation. The political and theological categories attached to the concept of salvation are also true when it comes to the peace motif. Yet, the primary association of the word σώζω is not with healing but *rescuing* from enemies. The word σώζω has a deep background in the Old Testament. The paradigm for

³⁴ Cf. Marshall (1988:100) for more light on this subject.

³⁵ Green (1997:134) makes an interesting comment, as he submits that "Luke's notion of 'good news' borrows from Isaiah 40–66. There, the herald defines the 'good news' as the coming of God (40:9), the salvific reign of God in peace and justice (52:7) on behalf of the outcast (61:1–2)."

³⁶ For Tannehill (1986:34), "the earlier repetition of 'enemies' and 'hand' in 1:71, 74 is also significant, for this helps to give remarkable emphasis to salvation as political freedom, connecting it both to the promise to David and to Abraham."

³⁷ "Luke 1:68–73, 78–79 (i.e. the Benedictus with the two verses about John the Baptist omitted) depicts God's liberation of Israel, by Messiah of David, from Gentile domination and oppression in order for God's people to be free to serve him, rather than their enemies, in the land God's has given to them for an eternal possession" (Bauckham, 2008:337).

salvation in the Old Testament is the exodus. Henceforth Israel started to think that God was going to save (σώζω) them again, which is the new exodus. The word σώζω is not a religious term but a normal Greek word. In redemptive history, the period of peace and rest from enemies often comes after a mighty act of God's rescue (cf. Exodus, the period of Judges). In this case, peace is the condition that people enjoy with the rescuer and with one another away from the threats of their enemies. In discussing the expectation elaborated in the Benedictus of God's liberation of Israel by the Messiah King in order for Israel to serve God in the land, rather than being enslaved by their enemies, Bauckham (2008:337) points out three scriptural motifs: God's promise to the patriarchs (the land in particular), redemption from domination by enemies, and a new King from the line of David as a deliverer of God's people from their enemies. Expanding on the second theme, that is, redemption from enemies, Bauckham (2008:337) argues that

The logic of the second motif is that the exodus (redemption) from Egypt was God's fulfilment of his promise to give the descendants of Abraham the land of Canaan (Gen 15:18–21, Exodus 2:24; 6:5). So, when Israel experienced exile from the land and subjection to pagan rule in the land, God's promise to the patriarchs required fulfilment in a new exodus, as depicted in Deutero-Isaiah.³⁸

Therefore, peace in this context is a by-product of salvation from enemies of God's people. It is sourced in the Davidic king,

It is likely that the metaphors of a *horn of salvation* which has been *raised up* by God *for Israel* in the first stanza (v. 69) and the *rising sun*, which will come *to Israel* in the second stanza (v. 78) refer to the same character. The one *raised up a horn of salvation* is indeed the *rising sun*. He is the Davidic descendant. Grassi (2004:26) is probably wrong when he identifies the guiding of Israel's feet in the way of peace (1:79) with John and his mission. Identifying that task with John would place him in parallel with the metaphor of the *rising sun*. Yet both the syntax and the immediate context do not suggest that the mission of *guiding in the way of peace* is John's. It is Jesus who is to guide in the path of peace. Peace is identified with this *rising sun*, not with John (v. 79). "Zechariah's song (1:78–79) speaks of Jesus as the rising sun who will lead those in darkness into peace" (Bock, 2000:276).³⁹ It is probable that Luke had in mind

³⁸ "The convergence of the second and third motifs brings together the expectation of a new exodus and the hope of a new Davidic ruler, but this combination is to be found in Jewish literature as early as Isaiah 10:11–16" (Bauckham, 2008:337).

³⁹ Bauckham (2008:343) is also correct when he comments: "Thus Luke 1:78–79 depicts the Messiah lighting the way of escape for his people from darkness of captivity and into the way of peace."

the words of Malachi 4:1–4 here. There, the prophet talks of the sun of righteousness which will rise with *healing* in its rays (4:2) [italics mine]. What is striking is that before this happens, Elijah, who according to the context is John, is to be sent. Just as one cannot confuse the mission of the *Sun* of righteousness (Malachi 4:2) with that of Elijah (4:5), so one cannot confuse the task of the rising sun with that of John (Luke 1:79). The rising sun will bring about healing, according to Malachi. People will be made whole again. This is peace. People are brought into the sphere of *šālôm* when their spiritual condition is touched and made whole by the healing rays of the Sun of righteousness (cf. Luke 7:50; 8:48).

Furthermore, the Greek verb *κατευθύνω*, which is translated as *I guide* or sometimes as *I direct* in our English Bibles, occurs three times in the New Testament (Luke 1:79; 1 Thess 3:11; 2 Thess 3:5). Remarkably, in both of the Thessalonian texts the Lord Jesus is the subject of the verb. Consequently, in Luke, John prepares (from *ἐτοιμάζω*, I prepare) the way (*ὁδός*) of the Lord (1:76), whereas it is Jesus, the rising sun, who directs or guides (from *κατευθύνω*, I guide) people's feet in that way (*ὁδός*), which is the way of peace (1:79). Hence, like Paul, Luke argues that it is only the Lord Jesus who directs both Jews and Gentiles in the way of peace.⁴⁰ It must also be pointed out that it is plausible that the aorist active infinitive of *κατευθύνω* is expegetical to *ἐπιφᾶναι* (Culy et al., 2010:62). If that is the case, then this paper would argue that the context indicates that the end is intended and not realized. This infinitive should therefore be taken as an infinitive of purpose rather than result, given the future verb it modifies (Culy et al., 2010:62). Interestingly, the verb *κατευθύνω* can by definition mean *making straight* or *putting in the right way*.⁴¹ Israel has hopelessly lost the way of peace. Therefore, Israel needs someone to prepare the way for them. John did this. More than that, they needed someone to take them through that way of peace. Christ, the Prince of Peace, does that. No human could do this. No depraved human could guide (*κατευθύνω*) their fellow, fallen creatures in that way. One cannot, therefore, miss the fact that it is Christ who makes Israel's feet straight and right in the way of peace. Though Luke has a holistic picture of peace, it is important to note that it is peace with God, which results in the enjoyment of harmonious relationships within the community of faith, which sits at the heart of his theology: a peace which comes as a result of people's sins being freely forgiven (1:77), and which is the natural by-product of being put right with God (v. 79; cf. *κατευθύνω*). As described earlier, “the

⁴⁰ This is true, although, the context shows that it is the feet of Israel which are to be directed in the way of peace. “The way of peace” is attributive and in the genitive case. It could be translated also as “a peaceful way” or “that way that brings about peace”.

⁴¹ Does this suggest the doctrine of justification in Luke?

primary focus of the New Testament peace teaching concerns the divine-human relationship which in turn unites peoples in the salvation reality of Jesus Christ” (Swartley, 1992:152).

As for John, as he goes before the Lord his task is twofold. He is to prepare the way for the Lord and to give Israel the knowledge of salvation (vv. 76, 77). However, guiding Israel in the road of peace is the Davidic king’s task (v. 79). Hence, looking at Luke 2:1, we would suggest that this peace is the *Pax Christi* rather than the *Pax Augusti*. Unlike the Pax Romana, this peace is both theological and political, both present and future. Remarkably, the end of the second stanza, like the end of the first stanza, climaxes with the concept of peace, that is, directing God’s people in the way of peace (v. 79). Its apex resonates with the motif of peace, that is, God’s people serving Him *without fear*, which perhaps has the connotation of worshipping the Lord in peace (v. 74).⁴² The phrase “those living in darkness and in the shadow of death” (v. 79a), echoes Isaiah 9:2 and refers to Israel’s spiritual condition.⁴³ Again Bauckham (2008:339) makes an insightful comment when he states that

For Israel to serve God in the land ‘without fear’ (Luke 1:74) is also Tobit’s understanding of the promise to Abraham: ‘they will go to Jerusalem and live in safety forever in the land of Abraham, and it will be given over to them’ (Tob 4:11), and the hope of possessing the land in safety, secure from oppression and attacks by enemies, was a prominent part of the expected restoration of Israel (Lev 25:18–19; Isa 32:18; Jr 23:6; 32:37).

This is a statement of faith. The enemies of God’s people must be dealt with in order for God’s people to enjoy peace.

It appears that Luke’s uses of “the way of the Lord” and “the way of peace” in the Benedictus are synonymous. Malina and Neyrey (1991:92) point out that “In Acts, Luke speaks about the ‘the Way,’ meaning the following of Jesus according to certain ways of acting (9:2; 18:25; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).” By doing so, the authors continue, “Luke builds on the Jewish tradition of ‘walking in the way of the Lord.’ This is characterised in Halakha, which are specific steps for walking in the way of the Lord” (Malina & Neyrey, 1991:92). It is plausible that this is what Luke is doing by putting these two categories, namely, the way of the Lord

⁴² “In light of the Lukan uses of the peace motif, the meaning of the word here should not be limited to the realm of interpersonal relationship. As the conclusion of the Benedictus, the word evokes the prophetic hopes for the eschatological era, the presence of which affects the entirety of humanity” (Pao & Schnabel, 2007:265).

⁴³ I am aware that, the text being poetical, “those living in darkness and in the shadow of death” could refer to the “our” of the next line, i.e. Israel. However, the meaning could be ambiguous.

and the way of peace, side by side in the Benedictus. He is likely building on the Jewish tradition of walking in the way of the Lord. If this assumption is correct, then it also suggests that Luke is identifying the *Halakha* with the sunrise, that is, Jesus, who will lead Israel's feet in the way of peace. Hence the way of the Lord is the way of Jesus, which is the way of peace. This leads us to conclude that peace here is primarily theological and brings about a transformation in one's moral life, since the *Halakha* falls within the moral category. The way of Jesus is not opposed to the way of Yahweh. If one wants to follow the way of Yahweh, one must follow Jesus. The Way is his Way; hence it is the way of peace. This way will bring about peace with God and with one another within the community of those under its leader, but it will also attract opposition and suffering for those who are following it (cf. Acts).

Therefore, according to the Benedictus, peace is identified with the Lord's visitation (1:68, 79); it is experienced when God's enemies are destroyed (1:71, 74). This peace finds its source in Christ, who is depicted as the *sunrise* leading God's people in the way of peace. Following the exodus as the paradigm of salvation, this exodus enables God's people to serve him in peace (1:74). This salvation from which peace springs is both from enemies and from sin (1:71, 74, 77). Hence, this peace which is a result of salvation is both political and theological, but peace with God is exclusively theological. There is no peace without the leader of peace, that is, the sunrise, who is Christ (1:79).

3.4. PEACE IN THE NUNC DIMITTIS AND THE PROPHETESS ANNA'S ACCOUNT

The Nunc Dimittis (Luke 2:29–32) is one of the birth narrative speeches which explicitly expresses the Lukan theology of peace.⁴⁴ It has already been noted earlier in this paper that Simeon's utterance was divinely and supernaturally superintended. Luke wants his readers to view Simeon as a reliable (righteous and devout) man. Three things go together with what is at the heart of Simeon's speech, that is, his request made to the sovereign Lord to be dismissed in peace.

First, *the basis* on which the request is made is founded on the Lord's promise. Second, *the reason* or *the rationale* behind the request resonates through Simeon's prophetic words in the Nunc Dimittis that he should be dismissed in *peace* because his eyes have seen the *salvation* of the Lord (Luke 2:29). Again note that, similarly to the Benedictus, peace and salvation are

⁴⁴ Commenting on the Magnificat, the Benedictus and the Nunc Dimittis, Stohlman (1981:368) argues "that these songs continue to celebrate the New Age in which we live is demonstrated by the fact that our situation and that of the Anawim of the Old Testament and the Lukan birth narrative are similar. We live in the New Age and yet we await its fulfilment at the end of time."

placed side by side. Simeon's release should be *in peace*, for the Lord's salvation is no longer a promise but a fulfilment. Salvation is, according to Simeon, embodied in a person ("for my eyes have seen your salvation"). This is confirmed by v. 33, "the mother and father marvelled at what was said about him." Third, *the extent* or *the scope* of this salvation is prepared in the sight of *all* people. The phrase "all people" could mean that salvation embraces Gentiles as well as Israel, or simply Israel as a whole. Hence, there is a good reason for Simeon's dismissal to be *in peace*, because the eschatological era of peace is no longer a promise but a reality in the presence of the infant Jesus.⁴⁵ This child is, according to Luke, salvation, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory to the Lord's people, Israel. Similarly to the Benedictus, salvation is key in the Nunc Dimittis.

This Nunc Dimittis is significant first because this is the only place in Luke 1–2 where salvation is envisaged going beyond Israel.⁴⁶ Of course, the Saviour and his salvation will move to the nations, especially in Acts. Second, because, like any pious Jew, Simeon is said (Luke 2:25) to have been waiting for the *consolation of Israel*.⁴⁷ For Isaiah the prophet, the consolation consists of the restoration of the Davidic kingdom (Isaiah 40:1; 52; 61:3). Unless the Davidic kingdom is restored, there is no rest, peace or comfort for Israel. For Luke, Jesus's birth is the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecies. Jesus is the new David (cf. Luke 2:2, 11). The Lord will give Jesus the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever (Luke 1:32, 33).

It follows that the *consolation* of Israel should be understood as the *peaceful* age for Israel brought by the Davidic king (see Isaiah 40). It is like the "serving God without fear" of the Benedictus (Luke 1:74). One can then see that the long-awaited moment has arrived. Israel's consolation (peace?) has materialized (cf. Isaiah 9:6–7). Bauckham's (2008:343) submission on this passage is insightful, as he contends that

the two prophetic figures, Simeon and Anna, who recognize the infant Jesus as the promised Messiah (Luke 2:25–38), are associated respectively with 'the consolation of Israel' (v25) and 'redemption of Jerusalem' (v38). The two

⁴⁵ According to Tannehill, speaking on God's dismissal of Simeon in peace indicates his share in the Messianic peace celebrated in Luke 1:79 and 2:24 (1986:39–40).

⁴⁶ Tannehill's (1986:16) comment on the Nunc Dimittis highlights its unique contribution as he asserts: "... but the Nunc Dimittis is supplemented by other revelatory statements concerning the significance of Jesus' birth (2:10–11, 14, 34–34, 38)."

⁴⁷ To be developed later in this chapter.

phrases reflect Isaiah 52:9b (though usually in Luke 1–2, not the LXX): ‘YHWH has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.’

Through Simeon and Anna’s words, we learn what the *whole* of Israel, reunified and regathered at the temple in Jerusalem, thought about the ideal Davidic ruler and the concept of peace. The aforementioned motifs (from both Simeon and Anna), together with everything said pertaining to the birth of the royal child/son in Luke’s infancy narratives, are significant because they highlight and inform the reader concerning *the meaning and affects of peace* in Luke-Acts.

Moreover, in Luke 2, the birth of Jesus, who is clearly described as a Davidic king (cf. Luke 1:27, 32, 69), is accompanied by a number of different motifs. These motifs demonstrate that for Luke *the new age of peace* has been launched in Jesus. For instance, Jesus is the long-awaited ideal king for whom the people were waiting in anticipation of the *consolation of Israel* (2:25) and the *redemption of Jerusalem* (2:38); his birth brings to mind *God’s salvation* (2:30); this royal child is depicted as the light for revelation to the Gentiles and for *glory to Israel* (2:32). Besides, the royal child was *appointed for the fall and rising* of many in Israel and for the *sign that is opposed* (2:34). The italicized words are those of Simeon and Anna, who represent the people of God living in Jerusalem and those from the diaspora, respectively (cf. Bauckham, 2008:344, 345), and therefore Israel as a whole. Bringing these themes together, one cannot fail to see the reality of the long-awaited eschatological age of peace coming to its fulfilment. Expounding Isaiah 9:1–3, Webb (1996:68) argues that

in retrospect, the people walking in darkness (2a) must include both *Northerners* and *Southerners* (9:1; 8:19–21), but in verse 3 they are simply the nation. Thus the oracle subtly anticipates the *reunification* of Israel and Judah under a single, ideal, Davidic ruler of the future (7) [italics mine].

It appears, then, that by bringing Simeon and the prophetess Anna together, Luke sees the reunification of Israel coming to its fulfilment under this newborn, ideal, Davidic king.⁴⁸ This is substantiated by the fact that Anna is from the tribe of Asher (2:36), hence a Northerner, and Simeon is presumably a native of Jerusalem, making him a Southerner. Bauckham (2008:345) contends that “Anna’s importance in Luke’s narrative is to ensure that Israel, whose hopes of Messianic restoration are so fully represented in Luke’s first two chapters, is truly Israel as a

⁴⁸ For further details on this motif (Anna and Simeon), I would recommend Bauckham’s *The Jewish World around the New Testament* (2008:334, 335).

whole, including the northern tribes as well as the southern, exiles as well as inhabitants of the land.”

Likewise, this association of the prophetess Anna and Simeon causes the reader to think (amongst many other Old Testament passages) of Isaiah 11, especially verses 10–16. There it is said (v. 10) that Yahweh will reclaim the remnant of his people (Israel and Judah) from exile (cf. the prophetess Anna), remove the hostility between them, and establish his rest *יְהַבְתֵּם* for all the people (11:10, 13). This is likely what Luke is doing with this juxtaposition of Simeon and the prophetess Anna. What was a prophecy in Isaiah becomes a reality in Luke. Yahweh is gathering the exiles of Israel (Isa 11:12a), embodied in Anna (Luke 2:36) and assembling the scattered people of Judah (Isa 11:12b), represented by Simeon (Luke 2:25). No more enmity nor jealousy between these two kingdoms (Isa 11:13). There are peaceful and pleasant-sounding relationships between them. The means the Lord is doing the same thing in both Isaiah and Luke through the Davidic king, who is called the “Root of Jesse” in Isaiah (11:10), and David’s Son, born in the town of David in Luke (1:32; 2:11).

It is likely that this is how Luke understood Isaiah 9:1–2 as well, because in the Benedictus it is indicated that by God’s tender mercy the *sunrise* shall visit Israel (“us”) from on high *to give light* to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide Israel’s feet into the way of peace (Luke 1:79). At this point, it is plausible that Luke had the whole of Israel in mind. In Simeon and Anna, as already pointed out, we therefore see the reunification of Northerners and Southerners as one people waiting for the consolation of Israel and the redemption of Jerusalem (cf. Isa 52:9b). Thus, even a casual reading of the Old Testament leads one to conclude that this, in and of itself, signals the messianic age of peace, because what would one expect to characterize the messianic age of peace, other than the presence of the ideal Davidic king, the reunification and regathering of Israel, the consolation of Israel and the redemption of Jerusalem, and the coming of the light for revelation to the Gentiles and for the glory of Israel? Is this evidence not sufficient to prove that with Jesus, *the peace on earth* has been inaugurated, in Luke’s opinion? Is this not the reason why Jesus’s birth is described as the “good news of great joy” (Luke 2:11; cf. Isa 52:9–11)?

In other words, in splitting Isaiah 52:9b (“... for the Lord has *comforted* his people, he has *redeemed* Jerusalem”) into two and applying it to Simeon (waiting for the *comfort* of Israel) and Anna (waiting for the *redemption* of Jerusalem), Luke sees the crushing of the walls of

separation between the two kingdoms (Israel and Judah; cf. Ezekiel 37:15–28).⁴⁹ It is also probable that the balance of genders is intentional as well, that is, male and female (Simeon and the prophetess Anna) united together as the people of God.⁵⁰ Later in the book of Acts, the walls of separation and conflict between Israel and the Gentiles will likewise be torn down as God will *visit* the Gentiles with the gospel, the good news (Acts 15:14), just as he has *visited* Israel (Luke 1:68; 7:16). This [unity of Gentiles and Jews] is the horizontal dimension of peace (peace with one another). It is peace with God, which results in peace with one another.

Therefore in the Nunc Dimittis and the prophetess Anna’s account, as in the Benedictus, peace is identified with Jesus. The eschatological age of peace has been inaugurated with the Davidic king. True peace breaks the political barriers (Northern and Southern). Once again peace goes hand in hand with salvation. However, the surprising route of peace is expressed in Simeon’s words that “this child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thought of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.” (Luke 2:34). Jesus will be the cause of many divisions. He will be hated and ultimately crucified.

3.5. PEACE IN THE BIRTH NARRATIVE AND ISAIANIC ALLUSIONS

The connections between the Lukan infancy narrative (1–2) and the Isaianic oracle of salvation (9:1–7) are so overwhelmingly clear that they should be read in juxtaposition. We shall gradually go through these connections climaxing to the Prince of Peace motif in both Isaiah and Luke. Grassi (2004:6) is possibly correct in submitting that “Luke would expect his audience to know these Scriptures as part of Isaiah, the first prophet he mentions by name (3:1). Principal among these are those referring to the birth of a future Messianic descendant of David.” Having said that, now, in chapter 1 of Luke’s Gospel, it is *explicitly* stated, on no fewer than three occasions, what the Messianic figure will be called (κληθήσεται): “You shall call his [the son’s] name...” (v. 31); “he [the son] shall be called...” (v. 32); and “the child to be

⁴⁹ It appears that Luke’s mention of the fact that Simeon was a man in Jerusalem (Luke 2:25) and that Anna was from the tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36) is significant. It appears that Luke wants to make sure that the whole of Israel is represented as their Messianic hopes of restoration are being fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. Otherwise I do not see any point in these small details (“man in Jerusalem”, “of the tribe of Asher”). I think this is a fulfilment of Ezekiel 37:15–23.

⁵⁰ Luke has thus portrayed Simeon and Anna as male-female counterparts, who represent the best of expectant Israel and testify to the central place Jesus already occupies in God’s redemptive plan (Green, 1997:143). In addition, Tannehill (1986:39) also points out that “They [Simeon & Anna] represent the long history of an expectant people, nourished by God’s promise.”

born will be called..." (v. 35). There are four main names (or titles) which the child/son is unambiguously expected to be called.

First, Mary is told to call the child *Jesus*, which name is accompanied by the attribute of greatness: "he shall be great" (v. 31).⁵¹ The quality of greatness refers primarily to the fact that, like Abraham, David, and John, Jesus will play an (or the) important role in God's unfolding plan of salvation. Reflecting on Isaiah 9:1–7, Wildberger (1991:405) points out that "Greatness in one's role is promised to the king again and again in the OT; e.g. Pss. 2:8; 72:7ff; Jerusalem is the city of the great king." Second, Mary is told by the angel Gabriel that the child will be called *the Son of the Most High* (v. 32). This title goes with a threefold description of what it denotes. It involves the child being a Davidic king⁵² ("the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David"), a king over Israel ("he will reign over the house of Jacob forever") and a king forever ("of his kingdom, there will be no end"). Third, two titles follow Mary's question as to how the words of the angel could be possible since she was a virgin. Here the child to be born will be called *Holy*.⁵³ The attribute of holiness is followed immediately by the title *Son of God*. Hence, Jesus, the Son of the Most High, Holy and the Son of God are the four *explicit titles* (names) which come after the phrase "you will call his name" or "he shall be called."

Although it might not appear that these *four explicit* names (titles) given by God through the angel Gabriel to Mary's firstborn son in Luke (1:31–35) are intended to match the *four explicit* titles the royal child of Isaiah 9:6 *shall be called* (שִׁׁקְיָן)—Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace—the allusion of Mary's firstborn son to the child (טָרִי) who was born and the Son (בֶּן) given in Isaiah 9:6 cannot be easily discarded. We therefore have four names for the royal child in Luke, as in Isaiah. In fact, it is noteworthy, according to Ford (2010:30), that all of the keywords chosen by Luke in the infancy narratives were not foreign to the imperial cult of his time. The angelic words to the shepherds, in particular, have imperial undertones. The word "gospel" (good news) referred to both the coming and the birth of emperors. The title "saviour" was associated with emperors. The phrase *peace on earth* was also closely associated with emperors. In addition, the title *saviour* was in many people's minds related to Augustus, who was believed to be the great hero and the saviour of the world. This

⁵¹ While John is great "before the Lord" (1:15), Jesus is great without qualification (1:32) (Strauss, 1995:83).

⁵² "One need say no more about the king as the one responsible to preserves peace (see Ps. 72:3, 7)" (Wildberger, 1991:405).

⁵³ It is vital to note that none of all those who were great (Abraham, David, John) was called holy, except this royal child of Luke 1, namely Jesus.

demonstrates the political flavour which could come with the title “saviour” in the first-century Greco-Roman world. So the titles given to Jesus are not without foundation.

Besides, the words of the angel to the shepherds that “*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord*” resonate with the phrase “*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given*” of Isaiah 9:6. That is further evidence connecting the Lukan birth narratives to the text in Isaiah. Furthermore, the sixfold mention of the word *child* (παἰδίον) in Luke’s infancy narratives, as seen in Grassi (2004:7), and the fivefold use of the word *son* (υἱός), provide further evidence for the allusion.⁵⁴

Coming to the mission of Jesus in Luke chapter one, a lot can be construed from the titles and attributes that he is given. However, Luke *explicitly* mentions two major things the Lukan Jesus is expected to do. First, it is the Messiah’s task *to reign over Israel* (1:33), and second, as a Sunrise, he is expected *to visit Israel* with the twofold purpose of giving them light and leading their feet onto the *path of peace* (1:78, 79). In Isaiah, the climax of the titles given to the ideal Davidic king to be born resonates with the motif of peace—“*Prince of peace*” (Isaiah 9:6)—whereas Luke ends his last section of the Benedictus in a climax clearly showing through the prophetic words of Zechariah the Messiah’s mission of leading Israel’s feet onto the *path of peace* (1:79) before he concludes with the growth of John in v. 80. This leads us to contend that the mission of Jesus as the leader of peace is fundamental in Luke-Acts.

Commenting on Isaiah 9:1–7, Wildberger (1991:401) submits that

For Isaiah, the birth of the child and the proclamation that he would be the successor are both a sign and down-payment that Israel could have hope and that foreign domination would not be an unalterable part of its destiny. If succession is ensured, that means the covenant bond between Yahweh and the house of David is still in force. In turn, according to the way the ancients thought, that meant *world order was intact and peace could flourish* [italics mine].

⁵⁴ Grassi (2004:7) points out that the words child, prince of peace, endless peace, David and Lord of hosts in Isaiah 9:2–7 are those echoed in the Christmas story. He links the Davidic motif with the city of David, where the birth takes place. He relates the darkness motif of Isaiah to the darkness in which the shepherds found themselves as they watch over their flock at night (2:8). Grassi relates the shining light of Isaiah to the shining of the glory of the Lord around the shepherds (2:8). The joy motif is connected to the good news of great joy for the people (2:9). Further, Grassi sees the sixfold mention of the word “child” as an allusion to the child motif of Isaiah 9:6. Finally, he contends that the appearance of a multitude of angelic hosts echoed the zeal of the Lord of hosts in Isaiah 9:6–7. By making these connections, Grassi argues that Luke is presenting Jesus’s mission as that of the Messiah of peace.

In Isaiah 9, the most significant of the four titles of the royal child/son is the one connected to the motif of peace, namely Prince of Peace, as Wildberger (1991:405) argues that “connected with the entire prediction, it would seem that the name ‘prince of peace’ is the most important.”

Therefore, we must ask: If Luke has alluded much to this Isaianic text, does it mean that he borrows from there the meaning of peace and what it entails? To answer this question, we need to establish what Isaiah meant in 9:1–7 by נְסִיךְ שָׁלוֹם in the first place. On this, Wildberger (1991:405) is probably right when he adduces that “the easiest title to understand is ‘prince of peace.’” He goes on to point out that Alt translates it “welfare official”. Considering the literary context of chapter 9 (vv. 7–12), one would agree with Wildberger (1991:404) that “ נְסִיךְ שָׁלוֹם (peace) should not actually be considered as the opposite of ‘war.’ But as shown in relationship with vv. 1–4, the basic sense here speaks of *peace as freedom from foreign powers who make war; it is guaranteed by legitimate kingship*” [italics mine].

Now, coming to Luke, the concept of *eirēnē* (peace) includes the idea of freedom from foreign powers. Nevertheless, there is much more to it. In other words, Luke’s *realistic* category of peace includes deliverance from the hand of the enemies of God’s people, as clearly pointed out in the Benedictus (Luke 1:71–74). Moreover, in the Magnificat, Mary’s exclamation that “He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their throne and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things” (Luke 1:51–53) clearly shows that freedom from Israel’s enemies is one of Luke’s ways of understanding peace. It means that peace emerges from salvation from Israel’s political enemies.⁵⁵ This peace is political in a sense but not necessarily violent. Though this (the endorsing of the political aspect of peace) is true, it appears that it does take a different shape and route altogether in Luke’s theology. This different shape and route are anticipated, as already pointed out in Simeon’s prophetic words, “Behold, this child is appointed for *the fall and rising of many in Israel*, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed” (Luke 2:34, 35). This shows that expectations of the messianic age will not follow the route that was expected by many in Israel (see Luke 7:23). These words come (2:33–35) after Simeon’s powerful song concerning the child Jesus. His eyes have seen *the salvation of the Lord*, but the means by which it will be accomplished is surprising. We know from Simeon’s words that Jesus will be hated and killed by the Jewish establishment and the Roman

⁵⁵ See Straus (1995:100). “Similarly, God’s fulfilment of the oath to Abraham will mean that Israel be free, to ‘serve’ God ‘without fear having been delivered for the hands of the enemies’ ” (Tannehill, 1986:34).

authorities. The following chapters will expand upon this reshaping and taking of a different, unexpected route.

Furthermore, beyond what we see in the Isaianic text concerning the royal child, we will see that Luke's peace is not only about liberation from Israel's political enemies, but *first and foremost* deliverance from Israel's dreadful, spiritual enemy, namely sin. Commenting on Jesus's kingdom-winning ministry, Seccombe (2002:313) helpfully adduces that

It begins to be apparent why against all expectation, Jesus did not move in the direction of armed revolution and why, he refused to treat any human being as an enemy. As he saw it, his real enemy was not flesh and blood but the dark power behind all human beings and all human institutions.

Hence, peace in the birth narrative arises from the giving of the knowledge of salvation to his people in the *forgiveness of their sins* (Luke 1:77). It goes together with the notion of people serving God without fear, *in holiness* and *righteousness* all the days of their lives (Luke 1:74, 75). This *eirēnē* is thus, at least at this stage, a political peace. Looking forward, that includes peace with God, or internal peace, which will enable peace with one another such as characterizes the community of faith. Like Isaiah, Luke believes in the ideal kingship for people to appreciate and experience peace in both theological and political categories. Hence, commenting on the order of peace, Wildberger (1991:401) adduces that

The kingship is what guarantees this order. Wherever it was able to carry out specific functions which were assigned to it, then justice, righteousness, and 'peace with no end' (v. 6) would someday of necessity be completely realized. Even if that applied in the narrow sense only to the (to us)? in the palace, it really applied at the same time to the people as a whole.

In the birth narrative, peace is not violent but is rather a theological peace (that is, peace with God, forgiveness of sin, walking in holiness and righteousness), which reunifies the people of God and harmonises their relationships, and it is also a political peace (freedom from enemies), even though it will take an unexpected shape and route, as already realised in Simeon's words (cf. Luke 2:33–35).

3.6. FURTHER ALLUSIONS OF PEACE MOTIF TO ISAIAH

Perhaps one of the most important Isaianic allusions with regard to the motif of peace in the Lukan birth narratives is the distinction between the Messianic and the Servant figures in the book of Isaiah, and how these categories merge into one in Lukan theology. To do justice to

the preceding section⁵⁶, this aspect cannot be left out. A lot has been said and written on the identity of these figures of Isaiah. Scholars have debated whether the Messiah and Servant figures in Isaiah are one or two different characters.⁵⁷ This paper does not enter that discussion. Our focus is rather on how the peace motif embodies these Isaianic figures in the book of Luke.

There is a peace in Isaiah which comes as a result of *redemption* and *forgiveness of sin*. This peace is associated with the *Servant figure* of Isaiah. The four *Servant Songs* of Isaiah (42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12 and 61:1–4) peculiarly attribute the role of saving, redeeming, restoring and forgiving sin to this figure. In fact, one of the Servant Songs stipulates that there is *a peace* which is brought by this figure in connection with the forgiveness of sin and justification of many (Isaiah 52:13–53:12) “... but he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that *brought us peace*, and with his wounds, we are healed” [italics mine]. Luke picks up *the forgiveness of sins* motif as presented in the words of Zechariah (Luke 1:67) and the concept of the suffering of the Messiah anticipated in the prophetic words of Simeon (Luke 2:34, 35) under the theme of peace possibly to make the point that Jesus is the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. Peace in Isaiah 53 is fundamentally peace with God resulting from salvation, restoration, healing and forgiveness of sin. The restoration being talked about is basically a spiritual one (cf. Webb, 1996:169–173, 193–194, 209–214). This figure seems more priestly than kingly, especially in Isaiah 53. This, then, matches the kind of messiah anticipated in the Testament of Levi.

Moreover, there is also in Isaiah peace which comes as a result of a unique role of ruling (reigning) in righteousness and of administering justice.⁵⁸ This peace is strikingly identified not with the Servant figure but with the *kingly Messianic figure* of Isaiah. The traditional Messianic passages of Isaiah (7:14; 9:6–7; 11:1–5; 16:5; 32:1; and 44:28–45:1) attribute the *ruling* and *governing* roles to this figure, who is also Davidic. One of these Messianic texts depicts the concept of peace in connection with the ruling and governing roles of this kingly and Davidic Messiah: “... and he shall be called ... *Prince of Peace*. Of the increase of his government and of *peace* there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom...” (Isaiah 9:6–7; italics mine). Peace here is basically social and political. This category of messiah is the one expected and emphasized in the Psalm of Solomon 17.

⁵⁶ Peace In The Birth Narratives and in Isaianic Allusions.

⁵⁷ Cf. Webb (1996); Oswalt (1986); North (1948); Motyer (1993); Oswalt (1998).

⁵⁸ These categories, namely justice and righteousness, are equally associated with the Servant figure in Isaiah, not their legal or kingly terms but in a far bigger sense (cf. the abovementioned scholars).

Though there are some similarities between these two figures in Isaiah (for instance, justice and righteousness are associated with both), one should note also the difference between them. One (the Servant figure) is uniquely associated with the redemption and spiritual restoration of God's people and the nations, and the other (the Messiah figure) with the ruling and the governing of God's people. For this reason, the two must not be confused as one, at least as far as Isaiah is concerned. Likewise, the *meanings* of peace which are associated with both must not be confused.

Furthermore, as for Luke (as well as other New Testament writers), the two Isaianic figures, together with whatever is associated with them, are merged and fulfilled in one figure, Christ. The latter is the Servant and the Messiah of Isaiah. *Salvation, redemption and forgiveness of sin* (cf. the Servant figure), as this paper has already demonstrated, are applied to Christ in Luke-Acts (1:46, 67, 69, 77; 2:11, 30, 38). *The rule, throne and reign* (cf. the Messianic figure) are equally applied to Christ in Luke-Acts (1:32–33; 2:11; Acts 10).

Therefore, as both the Servant and Messiah, Christ's peace is both a present reality, that is, peace with God, and a future reality, that is, peace as justice and righteousness are fully administered, and enemies are destroyed through the rule of Christ. With the fulfilment of these Isaianic figures in Christ as presented in Luke's theology, peace is both a theological and sociopolitical category. Hence, themes associated with these figures (ruling, forgiveness, redemption, righteousness, restoration and comfort) permeate Luke's birth narrative as he describes the identity and role of Jesus Christ. There is no peace without the priestly and kingly Messiah.

3.7. PEACE AND THE SHEPHERDS

There is a need at this stage to go back to the angelic choir and their song to the shepherds (2:8, 14). The question as to why the melody of *peace on earth* is carolled to this category of people in Luke is to be considered. It seems that Luke is both associating Jesus with the motif of the Messianic shepherd and teasing up the social undertones of peace through Jesus amongst the shepherds.

Many scholarly works have been written arguing that “the imagery of shepherding (Mic. 5:4) together with references to Bethlehem in the context of the promises of the ‘ruler over Israel’ (Mic. 5:2) evokes the memory of King David, who ‘tend[s] his father’s sheep at Bethlehem’ (1 Sam. 17:15)” (Pao & Schnabel, 2007:267). The purpose here is therefore to depict Jesus, who is born in the shepherd-country, as the Davidic Messiah (Pao & Schnabel, 2007:267).

Harris (2012:29), like many other scholars, agrees with this submission that the purpose of including the shepherds is to point to the birth of a Messianic shepherd.

This paper agrees with this assumption because even the so-called Davidic covenant passage (1 Sam 7:1–17) informs and confirms it. Themes that permeate this text, for instance, are alluded to by Luke in his birth narratives. David is mentioned twice by his name (2 Sam 7:5, 8), and Luke mentions David about six times in his birth narrative (1:27, 32, 69; 2:4a, 4b, 11). David is twice referred to as the king (7:1, 3), and yet Luke calls Jesus the Christ (Luke 2:11), which still has the connotation of kingship, and Luke expects his readers to understand it this way. It is from the pasture and from following the flock that God had picked David to rule his people (7:8), whereas in Luke it is from the manger (φάτνη) that the Saviour and Christ, who will reign over the house of Jacob, is “picked” (2:7, 12, 16). Salvation from Israel’s enemies is another motif which appears in both (2 Sam 7:10, 11; Luke 1:71, 74). A greatness motif is also here to substantiate the Messianic shepherd allusion (2 Sam 7:9c; Luke 1:32). The concept that their kingdom will not have an end is in both texts (2 Sam 7:13b, 16; Luke 1:33, 55). The shepherd and flock motifs are in both the Samuel and Lukan texts (2 Sam 7:7, 8; Luke 2:8, 15, 19, 20). Nevertheless, in the former, it is used in its verbal form, and in the latter in its noun form (ποιμήν.). All these confirm that the mention of shepherds in the Lukan birth narrative points to Jesus as a Davidic messiah who is going to *shepherd* God’s people in a way that none of Israel’s kings has ever done. It is interesting to point out that none of the kings of Israel, nor of Judah in the book of Kings, was referred to as either a servant or as a shepherd king.⁵⁹ In fact, the only occurrence of the shepherd motif in Kings is to prove that there is actually none (1 Kgs 22:17). Further, it is only when the eschatological David will be king over the reunited Israel that these will follow God’s laws and be careful to keep Yahweh’s decrees (Ezek 37:27). Only then God will make an everlasting *covenant of peace* with his people (Ezek 37:26). That moment is fulfilled in Luke-Acts through the arrival of Jesus.

In addition, the fact that Luke structures this text (2:1–20) by introducing the shepherds at the beginning of the section (2:8) and concluding with the shepherds at the end (2:20) whilst putting the song of the angels in the middle (2:14, *Glory to God... and peace on earth*) reinforces the idea that real peace is brought about only by the Shepherd King and not by any

⁵⁹ This applies even to incomparable kings such as Solomon, who is depicted as wise, to Hezekiah, who is presented as the most faithful king, and to Josiah, who is portrayed as the most obedient king in the book of Kings. None of these is the ideal king whom it will take to build the kingdom of God. It will take someone far better and greater than these incomparable kings in Kings. It takes not only a wise, faithful and obedient king, but more than that, a servant (1 Kgs 12:7) and shepherd king (1 Kgs 22:17), to build God’s kingdom.

imperial king. In fact, the text before this section introduces Caesar Augustus delivering a decree which does somewhat contribute to the Pax Romana (2:1–6). One of the reasons 2:1–7 is juxtaposed with the shepherds and the angels’ text (2:8–20) is presumably to contrast the imperial kind of ruling with the shepherding kind (2:8–20). It is to distinguish Christ from Caesar. It is to suggest the kind of ruler and kingdom from which real peace comes. It is Jesus Christ who is, according to Luke, associated with the whole idea of *peace on earth* (2:13–14), and not Caesar Augustus. It takes more than Caesar to establish a peaceful world. Thus, finally, a *Shepherd King* is to be born. In Luke this is good news of great joy (2:10). So, the angels praise God about it (2:13) and shepherds glorify and praise God for it (2:20). Therefore *peace on earth* requires God’s King, who is both servant and shepherd.

Furthermore, this paper would also argue that the mention of shepherds in the Lukan Christmas story and particularly the announcement of “peace on earth” *to them* do much more than merely proving the Davidic shepherdhood of Jesus. It also points dramatically to the peaceful relationship which comes along with the Great Shepherd to these shepherds.

At this stage, it is important to remember that in Luke the countryside is generally peaceful, as opposed to cities.⁶⁰ For Oakman (1991:172), “cities in Luke are frequently presented as the place of confrontation and conflict over the message of *peace and salvation* (Nazareth, 4:29; ‘One of the cities’: 5:21; Capernaum [?]: 6:11; Jerusalem: 13:34; 19:42; etc.)” [italics mine]. Nevertheless, Oakman specifies that there were frequent conflicts between the shepherds and settled villagers in the first century, since the shepherds were causing problems for rural, settled villagers (Oakman, 1991:171).⁶¹ In other words, there were no peaceful socioeconomic relationships amongst these groups.

Moreover, by telling at the beginning of his gospel the quaint (to us) story about the shepherds at the birth of Jesus, Luke could have been imagining a number of possibilities, according to Oakman (1991:171). “Does Luke intend that one of the more violence-prone groups of rural antiquity is the first to hear the ‘peace on earth,’ or is the countryside in Luke the place where peace is assumed to be prevalent, or where peace may get a receptive or sympathetic hearing?”

⁶⁰ Even if some of Luke’s ‘cities’ are patently villages (Oakman, 1991:172).

⁶¹ Oakman (1991:171) helps us to see that the phrase “peace on earth” was not somewhat accidentally addressed to the shepherds. Conflicts between shepherds and settled folk were common during the emergence of Christianity. Oakman points out that the enmity between settled villagers and shepherds, who invariably kept flocks belonging to others, arose because mobile flocks were a grave danger to the sown fields and shepherds were careless of others’ fields (Oakman, 1991:171).

If so, Oakman continues, “then Luke has idealized the countryside into a region of peacefulness” (1991:171). If these proposals are true, then this “peace on earth” is meant to settle disputes among social relationships, to bring about justice by making things right for both shepherds and settled villagers, and to make the countryside enjoyable for everyone.

Hence, “a genuine restoration of peace between shepherd and peasant villagers of antiquity would have been the resettlement of shepherds upon the land and the incorporation of their flocks into the rural economy”, submits Oakman (1991:171). The interesting thing is how Luke links such peaceful socioeconomic relationships with the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:8–21). This means that, whatever real peace entails, whether with God or with one another, it has to do with Jesus. If peace was the shepherds’ long-awaited need, then they have to hear it sung as fulfilment on the occasion of Jesus’s birth. Only when people are at peace with this royal child can they enjoy peaceful relations. Therefore, the theological category of peace has tremendous positive impact on societies.

3.7. CONCLUSION

Peace, as this chapter has argued so far, is frequently intertwined with salvation in the Lukan birth narrative. It is identified with the coming of the Lord, as has been demonstrated in the Benedictus, Nunc Dimittis and the angelic carol. In the Lukan view, this chapter has demonstrated that there is no peace in the absence of the long-awaited Davidic king, who is also identified as the Shepherd Messiah. It is kingship, especially the Davidic kingship, which guarantees the order of peace. This peace which is interwoven with the salvation motif involves both peace with God, that is, forgiveness of sins, and salvation from Israel’s enemies, which will enable God’s people to worship and serve him in peace. It has also been argued that Luke in his birth narrative does not limit his concept of peace to a theological category. It is much broader than that. Peace is equally sociopolitical. Nevertheless, Luke has pointed out in his birth narratives that this peace will take a surprisingly different route to what was traditionally expected. So far, no violence is attached to the Lukan meaning of peace.⁶² It has also been shown that peace in Luke is for God’s elect, which begins with Israel and moves to the Gentiles, as it is well presented in the angelic chorus and Nunc Dimittis.

Though not explicit, it appears that in the Lukan birth narrative, peace has a tremendous impact on the sociopolitical life of God’s people. This was tantalizingly explained in the juxtaposition of Simeon and the prophetess Anna in the Lukan infancy stories and the mention of the

⁶² Maybe an aspect of violence and force can be seen in the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55).

shepherds and flock motifs in the birth stories. This paper has also suggested that the mention of the shepherds three times in the birth narrative shows that Luke was trying to communicate Jesus's harmonization of social relationships to his audience. The parallelism of Simeon and the prophetess Anna also suggests that the gender conflict has been abrogated by the arrival of the Prince of Peace. Therefore, the peace which is guaranteed by a shepherd and the Davidic king constitutes peace with God, resulting in peace with another.

It has also been argued in this chapter that both the titles and mission that are given to Jesus in the Lukan birth narratives have strong allusions to the titles given to the child in Isaiah 9 and the roles attributed to the servant and the kingly Messianic figures of the book of Isaiah. In Isaiah, the servant figure provides peace through forgiveness of sin as he plays his priestly role (Isaiah 53), whereas the Messianic figure provides peace through his rule as he displays his kingship (Isaiah 9). Interestingly, the Lukan Jesus embodies the roles played by both the servant and the kingly figures of Isaiah. Jesus is both the ultimate priest and the long-awaited kingly Messiah. In Luke, however, peace has both a present and a future reality: present through the salvific work of Jesus's propitiatory death and resurrection, and future also through Jesus as he administers justice through judgement upon the enemies of peace.

CHAPTER 4: THE MESSAGE OF PEACE IN LUKE-ACTS

The second section of this paper dealt with the sources of Luke's understanding of the peace motif. The paper has argued that Luke was influenced mainly by the Old Testament use of *šālôm*, especially by Isaiah. In the third section, this paper has demonstrated the prominent place of the peace motif in Luke, as evidenced by its inclusion in the infancy narrative. It was contended that peace was intended primarily for Israel, but goes beyond the boundaries of Israel in the *Nunc Dimittis* (Luke 2:28–32). Peace in Luke is primarily peace in relationship with God through forgiveness of sins in Christ, without ruling out its political sense. This section will deal with Luke's intention through *the message of peace*. This paper asserts that the message of peace is nothing but the content of the gospel of the kingdom of God, that is, it introduces Jesus, a King who demands allegiance from whosoever puts their trust in him. The presence of the King brings about the kingdom through the Spirit, and thus this kingdom is the sphere of *šālôm*. To demonstrate this, the essay will examine the sending out of the 72 in Luke 10 and the Petrine missionary trip to Cornelius in Acts 10. Further, given that Luke 10 is a key chapter of this section and that it is part of the travel narrative of Luke (Luke 9:51–19:27), the latter will be compared with the Songs of Ascent in Psalms 121–134. This comparison will inform us on the peace motif in Luke-Acts and on what the message of peace entails.

4.1. THE MESSAGE OF PEACE AND THE ELECT IN LUKE 10 AND ACTS 10

References to the *peace motif* occur at key points throughout the Lukan narrative. The motif is used either to introduce an important piece of Lukan narrative or to close it. It also sometimes serves as a summary of a substantial discourse of the narrative, for example, the statement “peace be to this house” (Luke 10:6) is a summary of the gospel message, as this paper will elaborate. To begin with, it should be noted that Luke 10:2–12 is from the Q source used by both Luke and Matthew.⁶³ It is situated at the climax of Luke's gospel. It is noteworthy that Luke places the subject of peace in very strategic places in his narrative. First it was introduced right at the beginning of his selected material in the infancy narratives, but it is also present at the punchline of his story, in the so-called travel narratives (9:51–19:27). Here Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem, heading down the road towards his death.

⁶³ For further reading, I would recommend *Beyond the Q Impasse: Luke's use of Mathew*. This is a book written by an international research team who argue for a Matthew-dependent Luke. The team argues that the Lukan account of the sending of the 72 disciples is sourced and dependent on Matthew's account of the sending of the 12, but modified (McNicol et al., 1996:160–173). This debate is insignificant as far the purpose of this paper is concerned.

Upon a careful reading of the Lukan work, it is evident that the concept of peace in Luke's twofold work is *efficacious* for the chosen. Although Luke does not use the word "elect," the concept is clearly there. For instance, in the Benedictus, the rising Sun does not guide the feet of anyone but the feet of the *elect* (cf. "our feet") people of God in the path of peace (1:79). The angelic chorus highlights that the peace on earth does not reach every descendant of Adam, but *men (people) on whom God's favour rests* (2:14).⁶⁴ As with Noah (Genesis 6:8), there are men and women from every nation, tribe, people and language who have found favour in the eyes of the LORD. However, since we as humans do not know the identity of the men and women *on whom God's favour rests*, we are called to present the gospel, which is a message of peace, to every human being we meet (Luke 10:5–6). The Lukan message of peace has a general scope in that it entails an offer which is extended to every house and town we enter, to borrow Luke's language. Nevertheless, although the proclamation of the message of peace is made to "any house" into which the missionaries enter, peace will only *rest* on the *son of peace* (Luke 10:6). The peace which Luke is advocating can be received or rejected. Green (1997:414) presents two possibilities as to what a "son of peace" could refer to: "that is, one whose life is characterized by peace which has already begun to embody the wholeness these delegates of Jesus's mission will communicate, or it can refer to those who are *predisposed* to welcome these messengers together with their messages" [italics mine]. Besides that, the child of peace could also mean someone who already belongs to the eschatological era of peace, that is, a child of the kingdom. The meaning is ambiguous. Nonetheless, the point is that not everyone to whom the message of peace is preached is a child of peace. Only those whom God had eternally appointed and incorporated into the community of *šālôm* are the sons (and daughters) of peace. Only these will accept the gospel, which contains a message of peace (Luke 10:5–6). This conclusion accords with Acts 13:48. Therefore, even though peace is preached to everyone, it does not reach everyone. Commenting on Acts 13:48, Peterson (2009:399–400) states that

not everyone is affected in the same way by the preaching of the gospel. God must open hearts to enable people to listen and respond with faith (cf. 16:14; 18:10). Those who seek the Lord from among the nations are those he has

⁶⁴ "Most scholars now agree that the phrase *ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας* reflects a common first century Jewish way of expressing 'those upon whom God's favour rests'. It should, therefore, not be read as a description of people who themselves show good will" (Culy, 2010: 73).

already claimed as his own (15:17). Yet, this does happen as God enables some to believe through the proclamation of the gospel (14:1).

This is what is meant by the message of peace being efficacious only to the chosen.

4.2. THE MESSAGE OF PEACE BY THE 72 IN LUKE 10 AND BY PETER IN ACTS 10

To begin with, let us point out that it is likely that the expression “peace be to this house” in Luke 10:5 goes beyond just a normal greeting.⁶⁵ The angels brought the good news, that is, the gospel to the shepherds, which was meant to be news of great joy to all people (Luke 2:11). Jesus is the one who announces this gospel and inaugurates the kingdom of God. Here, the disciples are to take this gospel of peace on their special mission. It seems, then, that Luke had Isaiah 52:7 in mind and wanted his readers to realize that the Christ-event is the fulfilment of the prediction of the arrival of the gospel of the end times. Jesus’s words in Luke 10:4 “do not take a purse or bag or sandals and do not greet anyone on the road” consolidate the idea that Luke had Isaiah in mind at this stage. In fact, the way the messengers⁶⁶ are described in Christ’s instructions might have been intended to convey several points to Lukan readers. One of those points, as Pickering (2006:2) suggests, is that it seems that

Jesus intended his envoys to look like long-distance running ‘gospellers’ or heralds.⁶⁷ It is evident that Luke makes more of an issue of this point than Mark does. In Luke 9 and 10, we learn that there were two similar missions, one for Galilee and one for Judea, although Mark mentions only one.

In the second mission, Pickering (2006:2) continues,

they are not even allowed to wear sandals, just like the old heralds who could not be slowed down by footwear. One look at the disciples should have told the townsfolk that they were bearers of an important message, and one that was urgent. ‘How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good

⁶⁵ Parsons (2015:172), quoting Bosold, helpfully points out that “the commandment to greet householders with ‘peace’ is not only adopting the common Jewish practice (Judges 6:23; 19:20), but it characterises the message of Jesus’s good news (Acts 10:36), fulfilled the promises expressed in the infancy narrative (Luke 1:79; 2:14, 19), anticipates the greeting issued by the resurrected Christ (Luke 24: 36), and thus expresses a robust eschatological hope.”

⁶⁶ Messengers of peace in Luke-Acts are not to be confused with those in Maccabean narrative. Those in the Maccabees are political envoys sent to negotiate for a political treaty (cf. chapter 2 of this paper).

⁶⁷ Another reason could be that Jesus is sending them out in reliance upon God for provision. The mission requires that the disciples proclaim the message of the Kingdom and then receive the hospitality of those who respond well (note also that they are forbidden from accepting a second, presumably better, offer of hospitality after they have accepted the first. They are to honour whoever welcomes them for the duration of their stay in the village). Those who reject them are to be rejected in return. Their needs would be met only if God provided them with listeners who welcomed their message.

news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!” ’ (Isaiah 52:7).

The message of peace is, therefore, a momentous and urgent message. It is a must-hear kind of message.

This expression (“peace be to this house”) is pregnant with the concepts of both acceptance and hosting. Mittelstadt (2009:27) contends that “while the salutation ‘peace in this house’ may indicate an ordinary and formulaic greeting, the context suggests otherwise. Luke deliberately associates the offer of peace with the mission of the disciples.” In the act of offering a peace greeting, one is included in the sphere of *šālôm* (Westermann, 1992:26). For a stranger in Judges 19:20 to whom a peace greeting is offered, the acceptance could mean security, shelter, and assuaging his hunger and thirst (Westermann, 1992:26). Paradoxically, in Luke’s Gospel, it is the missionaries, the “guests,” who are instructed to offer *the* peace “greeting” to the host (Luke 10:5).⁶⁸ It is certainly true, as we have already noted, that the expression “peace be to this house” is the summary of the gospel message and resonates with Isaiah 52:7. It is the same message the missionaries are instructed to preach when they enter *a town*. It is the message that underscores the *nearness* of the kingdom of God (Luke 10:9, 11). In fact, in Isaiah 52:7 *peace, good tidings, salvation* and *God’s reign* are packaged together as features of one and the same message of the gospeller. Hence, it is not surprising to see Luke equating the “peace be to this house” with the “kingdom of God is near.” The latter is the equivalent of the “Your God reigns” in Isaiah, and the former is the proclamation of peace in Isaiah. The presence of Jesus, who is Christ and Lord of all (Acts 10:36), is the evidence of the nearness of God’s kingdom to the people. This is the message of peace. This is again substantiated by Acts 28:23, in which the declaration of the kingdom of God is nothing but the preaching of and about Jesus. Thus, for Luke, as will be explained later, the message of peace is the declaration of the kingdom of God, which is the preaching of and about Jesus the king. Whoever believes this message and submits to the lordship and kingship of Christ is included in the sphere of *šālôm*. This also means that their sins are forgiven. As the “hospitality to a stranger represents the acceptance of the latter into the circle of *shalom*, which will normally include only the family or clan” (Westermann, 1992:26), so it is to all strangers to God’s covenant and family who believe in and submit to his Son.

⁶⁸ In Luke-Acts the missionaries are representatives of Jesus, the bringer of peace (cf. Tannehill, 1986:237).

As we have pointed out in discussing the words of Simeon (Luke 2:34, 35), the message of peace in Luke-Acts is taking a different route to the anticipated Jewish traditional and violent one. Wright (2001:121) adduces that, “for the most part, Jesus’s contemporaries were not wanting peace. Thus, whether dealing with their traditional enemies, that is, Samaritans, or with the feared and hated Romans, the Jewish people would have opted for the way of violence rather than the way of peace.” Surprisingly, as Wright (2001:121) submits, “Jesus’ vision of the kingdom of God was going in the opposite direction.” Again, Wright points out that “other movements had tried the way of violence with disastrous results” (2001:121). It is, however, the ultimate opponent (Satan) of peace who is to be dealt with by Christ through the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom (cf. “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” in Luke 10:18) and through Christ’s death on the cross. Further, one can see that right from the beginning of the travel narrative, James and John single out Samaritans for destruction by fire from heaven for refusing to welcome their Master (Luke 9:51–56). On this, Lenski (1948:557) points out that “no special effort had been made to win the villagers for Christ; the gospel had not been preached to them. They had not, after all such efforts, hardened their hearts, as Ahaziah and Ahab did in Elijah’s time. Thus they were not ripe for judgement. John and James were, therefore, wrong for making such an out-of-place proposal to Jesus. Judgement is indeed part of the message of peace, but it will come only when people have rejected the gospel of peace and the kingdom (cf. Luke 10:13–15; 13:34–35; 19:41–44).”

In Luke 10, the missionaries are not presented in an action on the missionary field. The narrator tells us only of their return and their report of what happened in the field. It is assumed that they followed the Master’s instructions. However, in Acts 10 we are told how Peter carried out the Lord’s instructions in his missionary task.⁶⁹ Peter unpacks the “peace be to this house” as he entered Cornelius’s house and preached the good news of peace to Cornelius and his household. For that reason, the Petrine speech in Cornelius’s house echoes the words of Christ in Luke 10:5, 6 instructing the 72 missionaries what to say when *entering a house* (εἰς ἣν δ’ ἄν εισέλθητε οἰκίαν). The first thing they were to say was “*Peace to this house.*” This is precisely what Peter did in his missionary voyage as *he entered* (Ὡς δὲ ἐγένετο τοῦ εἰσελθεῖν τὸν Πέτρον) *the house* of Cornelius (Acts 10:25). The Petrine version of “peace be to this house” in Cornelius’s house is critical, since it is the gospel of the kingship of Christ in a Gentile

⁶⁹ On this, Tannehill (1986:237) highlights that “the seventy-two not only share Jesus’ work of proclaiming God’s reign and healing but also are representatives of Jesus, the bringer of peace. In Acts 10:36 Peter declares that God was ‘preaching good news of peace through Jesus Messiah,’ and the birth stories affirm that the coming of Jesus the Messiah means peace (Luke 1:79; 2:14).”

community. It is the same message God sent to his people, which was described as the good news of peace.⁷⁰ Two passages are probably at the background of the Petrine mission to the Gentiles. To these, we now turn.

Psalm 96 is the *new song* in which Israel is ordered by the Psalter to *evangelize* the gospel of salvation among the *nations* (v. 2). Peter as a gospeller is called to do that in a Gentile house. Peter is likely bringing to Cornelius the psalmist's idea that "great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods, for all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens" (Ps 96:4). This Psalm seems to fit here for a number of reasons. First, it is a song that Israel is to sing *not alone*, but with and among the *nations*.⁷¹ Second, it is a *mission* song which celebrates the fact that Yahweh alone is King. Third, it is an invitation for allegiance and loyalty to Yahweh as King (vv. 7–9). Fourth, it is the gospel song of Yahweh's salvation with which Israel is to evangelize (בְּשִׁירָו) the nations (v. 2). Cornelius and his household had to abandon the nothing-gods (good for nothing) אֱלֹהִים אֲלֵיָם (cf. Ps 96:4, 5) of the nations and put their trust in Christ, the Davidic king.⁷² Then they will experience peace.

Isaiah 52:7 is certainly the second passage to consider. Literally, Peter says that Jesus "evangelized peace" (Acts 10:38). Peace is the content of the gospel. Jesus came announcing an amnesty to all who would lay down their arms. Jesus is *the* gospeller of Isaiah 52:7. By declaring to Zion, "your God reigns", the gospeller is at the same time proclaiming the downfall and uselessness of all other 'kings'. Cornelius and his household's right response is identical to Psalm 96:4, laying down his arms and pledging allegiance to the new and true King. Now they can join the community of God's people singing *a new song* that celebrates the marvelous deed of Christ. Here we see Peter and Cornelius as members of the community of God's people in unison "singing" a new song of Psalm 96.

This indicates that the Lukan phrase "peace to this house" (Luke 10:5) is more than just an ordinary greeting. For this reason, this paper argues that the "peace be to this house" is not just the *first thing* the messenger has to offer, but *the one and only message* the sinner needs to hear for their salvation. It is the gospel which contains peace with the King who has already announced and inaugurated his kingdom.

⁷⁰ This peace is reconciliation with God and neighbour (Stott, 1990:190).

⁷¹ The new song can be opposed to the old song (Exodus 15) which was sung by Israel alone celebrating their salvation and deliverance out of Egypt.

⁷² Cornelius appears to be a God-fearing person in the way he is presented in Acts. Hence he might not be an idolater. However one of the general characteristics of gentiles is idolatry.

Moreover, referring to the Petrine speech in Cornelius's house, Fitzmyer (1998:459) asserts that "in effect, even though it is the last great missionary speech that Peter delivers in Acts, it is the beginning of apostolic testimony being borne to Gentiles without insistence on the obligation to obey the Mosaic Law." Hence, peace means everything that the sinner will benefit from and enjoy by virtue of being *accepted* by God and *included* in the family of God's people. At this stage, it is important to appreciate Tyson's important observation regarding some literary patterns in Acts. Tyson (1983:147) argues that the entire book of Acts is organized with an introduction, body, and conclusion. He claims that in the introduction, Acts picks up where the Gospel of Luke ends, by painting a picture of the peace and harmonious well-being of the apostolic community. It ends with Paul's teaching in Rome to restore that harmony. The body of the book, according to Tyson, consists of a series of threats to that harmonious peace of the community of the people of God. "Over and over the peace of the church is threatened", he argues. He goes on to claim that the stories included in the body of the book of Acts are given shape by the use of a fourfold pattern consisting of *peace, threat, resolution and restoration* (Tyson, 1983:148–149). He demonstrates the presence of this pattern in many stories, including the Petrine trip to Cornelius. What harmony and well-being of relationships exist—better, resulted—between Jews and Gentiles in the Cornelius story! Thus, for Luke peace also means fellowship with whomsoever the Lord has forgiven and included in his family, regardless of whether they are Jews or Gentiles. Ford (2010:136) is thus partially right when she observes that

One of the purposes of Luke was to respond to these post-war conditions and to show Palestinian and diaspora Christians that the peace that Christ came to bring was not won through weapons but through love, forgiveness, and acceptance of enemies into *the covenant community*⁷³ [italics mine].

The message of peace breaks the walls of racial and religious discrimination.⁷⁴ For Luke, "the make-up of the new community knows no boundaries. The good news is available to all, but society's weak and vulnerable are often most able to respond" (Bock, 2000:277). Who, then, is Peter to call impure that which God has made clean (Acts10:15)? In Luke's Gospel, the eating and drinking of whatever the *son of peace* has given to the missionaries (10:7)

⁷³ I have said Ford is "partially right" because I do not hold that Luke-Acts was written beyond AD 64. Her point still stands in consideration of the unrest of the first century before 62 and not beyond AD 64D.

⁷⁴ Cf. the juxtaposition of the accounts of Simeon and the prophetess Anna in the birth narratives, as has been argued in the previous chapter of this paper.

emphasizes acceptance of one another and sincere fellowship. Peter puts this into practice when invited by Cornelius (Acts 10).⁷⁵ He agrees to stay for a few days with people with whom he would never have thought he would ever spend even a single minute (Acts 10:48). This issue is critical in the Lukan theological agenda. By recording the whole Petrine mission to Cornelius, Luke is establishing the legitimacy of God's desire that the Gentiles⁷⁶ should be included within the people of God and the legitimacy of table fellowship. This was a remarkable and radical move for a Jew such as Peter, for as Ford (2010:7) points out, "in the first century eighteen laws were passed to prevent defilement from association with the heathen. There was an intensified desire for pure food, dietary laws, and table fellowship, all designed to keep Jews separate."⁷⁷ It is a vertical peace with God which is foundational for a horizontal peace with one another. As stated in the introduction, the Lukan concept of peace is influenced mainly by Isaiah and falls into a theological category. Based on Acts 10:36, Fitzmyer (1998:463) argues that "peace is not just the absence of war (in a social or military sense), but *šālôm*, the state of bounty or well-being that comes from God and includes concord, harmony, order, security, and prosperity."

Furthermore, what Cornelius hears from Peter (Acts 10:22) is nothing but what the Lord has commanded Peter to tell him and his household (Acts 10:33). And what the Lord has commanded Peter is basically what he has commanded all the disciples (Acts 10:41), that is, the message through which Cornelius and his household will be saved and included into the community of faith (Acts 11:14). Hence, this message is none other than the one God sent to the people of Israel, and *announces the Gospel of peace* through Jesus Christ (Acts 10:36).⁷⁸ It

⁷⁵ In his *Acts 6:1–7 and Dietary Regulations in Early Christianity*, Tyson (1983:145) commences his paper by pointing out the special importance of food. He states that "In a recent study of the Eucharist in early Christianity, Feeley-Harnik includes a discussion called 'The Anthropology of Food.' He observes that castes are frequently defined by diet and that religious communities usually prescribe what one can eat and what one cannot eat. In general, anthropologists de-emphasize the pragmatic, medical, and nutritional aspects of dietary regulations and look for bases of mythological conceptions or social relationships. Mary Douglas, for example, called attention to the correspondence between Jewish dietary regulations and the creation accounts in Genesis. In view of the prevalence of dietary regulations in human societies and in view of the particular importance of such regulations in the Jewish tradition, it would be most surprising if there were no food problems among the earliest Christians."

⁷⁶ Cf. *The Nunc Dimittis* (Luke 2: 28–32).

⁷⁷ To give us a hint regarding some of these laws, Ford points out that "The pious Jew would not accept anything from heathens—their food, their gifts, their first fruits or their sons and daughters in marriage. This was to be a source of great controversy in the early church" (2010:7).

⁷⁸ Tannehill (1990:138) points out that "It is important to recognize that v. 36 is summary of the angel's abonnement of Jesus' birth to the shepherds in Luke 2." He then goes on to highlights similarities between them. "The angel says, 'I preach good news (εὐαγγελίζομαι)' concerning the birth of 'Messiah Lord' (Χριστὸς κύριος).' Then the angel chorus proclaims 'on earth peace' (Luke 2:10–14). According to Acts 10:36 God, in sending a message to the sons of Israel, was 'preaching good news of peace through Jesus Messiah,' who is also 'lord.'" (1990:138, 139).

is indeed correct, as we have already on several occasions alluded, and as Peterson (2009:336) maintains, that “there is an echo of Isaiah 52:7, with its promise that someone would come ‘proclaiming peace’ to God’s people. In its fulfilment, that long-expected *peace* has now been proclaimed ‘*through Jesus Christ*’ (cf. Luke 1:67–79; 2:14; 4:16–21)” [italics mine]. This is the gospel message. At the core of this message is the proclamation that the man *Jesus is the Christ and Lord of all* (Luke 2:11; Acts 10:36).⁷⁹ Hence, we continue to reinforce that idea that Luke 10:5, 6 does not contain just a greeting formula of “peace be to this house”, but also the message that Jesus who is Christ is the Lord of all—the King. This is the only message which brings about peace with God and with one another. This is true because it involves the forgiveness of sins for those who respond with repentance and faith (Acts 10:43; cf. 1:77). The message of peace is the proclamation of the arrival of the kingdom in the presence of its King (Luke 9:60; 10:9, 11; cf. Acts 28:23). In Luke-Acts, Jesus’s kingship and his mounting to David’s throne are very much emphasized (cf. Luke 1:23–33, 69–70; Acts 2:25–36; 13:22–23, 32–37). Submission to these realities accompanies many in the sphere of peace.

In closing this section, a careful reading of the Petrine mission and the sermon to Cornelius in Acts 10, which this paper calls *gospel*, will notice and appreciate the basic features which naturally belong to this message. The main subject of the *gospel* is the man Jesus, who is the Christ, that is, the King. Peace is part of the gospel, not the whole gospel. The gospel announces the King and his kingdom. The response is faith in Christ, resulting in the forgiveness of sin, which is peace with God (v. 43). This gospel stresses Jesus’s appointment for ministry (v. 38), his life and ministry (v. 36), his death (v. 39), his resurrection (vv. 40, 41) and his second coming to judge the living and dead (v. 42). All these are to be proclaimed (“evangelized”; cf. Ps 96:4) to Israel and among the nations for the sake of peace. In the sending of the 72, the results seemed negative, compared to the Petrine missionary trip to Cornelius. Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum did not repent, but Cornelius and his household believed and submitted their lives to Christ.

4.3. PEACE WITH GOD IN THE LUKAN SENDING OF THE 72

As already noted, Luke 10:5–7 and 8–12 suggest that “peace be to this house” and “the kingdom of God is near you” are intended to convey one and the same thing. The former is a summary of the gospel message to be proclaimed when messengers enter a house (v. 5). The latter is the same message to be broadcast when the disciples enter a town. This does not mean

⁷⁹ “The centrality of Jesus’ kingship in God’s reign explains the repeated dual description of the preacher’s message in Acts 8:12; 28:23, 31. The message concerns both God’s reign and Jesus” (Tannehill, 1990: 351, 2).

that a “house” had to hear a different message from what a “town” ought to. The words are used interchangeably in this text. However, in anticipation Luke (10:13–16) shows that the message was not going to be accepted. He shows that by annexing the verdict on the cities (Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum) which have had many opportunities to hear the gospel.

Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, as Pickering (2006:4) points out,

were the Galilean towns that saw most of Jesus’ preaching and miracles. Tyre and Sidon were Phoenician towns that were renowned for their wickedness, but even they could not match the Galileans for the hardness of heart. Galilee had been extremely privileged, but its inhabitants had not *repented*. When the apostles return from the second mission (in Judea if I am not mistaken), they rejoice in the power of the Kingdom that accompanied them (10:17–23). Jesus rejoices too, even considering this mission to be the sign of Satan’s defeat coming on the cross (Jesus uses ‘saw’, which in Greek doesn’t necessarily mean that the event has happened, but that it is as certain as if it were past tense). However, Satan’s defeat on the cross comes about because the people fail to *repent* and rather kill Jesus. Jesus also urges them not to rejoice in the things that are of lesser importance (that the demons flee), but that they have been enabled to *repent and receive salvation*, the implication being that Judea had not responded with true repentance. So, the urgent message taken by the disciples is ultimately met with unbelief and rejection [italics mine].

Repentance and faith in Christ, as the next chapter will elaborate, are the right response to the gospel message, which is what leads to peace. The focus on repentance in this text brings the connotation that peace—which was at the heart of the message carried by the 72 (Luke 10:5, 6)—is peace with God.

In other words, repentance is what is required and expected from hearers of the message of peace. Repentance (μετάνοια) is a radical change of mind about God, oneself and about the need for salvation. It is a turning away from sin. Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum did not do that (10:13–16), whereas the rest of the passage (10:17–23) suggests that the disciples have already repented and believed in Christ. Their names are already written in heaven (v. 20). The disciples are thus the opposites of those who by failing to repent have rejected the message of peace: they are at peace with God; they are the little children to whom the hidden things have

been revealed (v. 21). In the context, “these things” (v. 21) which have been revealed to disciples could refer, as Parson (2015:178) notes, to “the downfall of Satan and the ultimate protection of God’s people.” Moreover, it is worth noting that “these things” which are *revealed* to disciples could also be the very things which lead to peace (the gospel) which were *concealed* from the eyes of Jerusalem (Luke 19:42). Revealed to his disciples (10:21), but hidden from the eyes of religious leaders (19:42). It is interesting to note that the subject of “revealing” and “concealing” is the Father, whom Jesus describes as the Lord of heaven and earth (v. 21). This is significant, because unless the Father open the eyes of the blind, they will never appreciate nor receive the message of peace. They are the ones to whom the Son has chosen to reveal himself and the Father (v. 22). The disciples to whom “these things” have been revealed are the blessed ones (v. 24). All these are the features and benefits of the real peace that disciples were enjoying with God. Repentance and faith in Christ (cf. Cornelius and his household), as the next chapter will demonstrate, are the right response to the message of peace (peace with God). On the other hand, unbelief and unrepentant hearts, as exhibited in Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, prevent one from receiving the gospel of peace and consequently not enjoying peace with God.

The child of peace on whom peace was to rest (cf. 10:5) is thus characterized by a turning away from sin, that is, repentance, faith in the gospel of the kingdom and receiving salvation. The message of peace results in bringing peace with God to those who repent. They are forgiven, and their names are written in heaven. Regrettably, it seems that in the towns into which the disciples entered with the message of peace, which is the message of the nearness of the kingdom of God (Luke 10:5, 9), the people did not submit to the momentous message of the arrival of the king. As already elaborated, Luke shows us this by recording Jesus’s complaint about Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum (Luke 10:13–15).

4.4. THE PILGRIM MOTIF AND PEACE IN LUKAN TRAVEL NARRATIVES

This section is an attempt to compare the so-called Songs of Ascents in the Psalter, especially the first three (120–122),⁸⁰ to the so-called Lukan journey narrative (9:51–19:27). Based on this exercise it may be adduced that Luke’s meaning of peace might have equally been informed by the pilgrimage Psalms. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is depicted in this section as the

⁸⁰ Crow indicates two reasons behind this collection. The first was the tendency to nationalise the songs so that they become songs for “Israel” (cf. Pss 122, 132). The second was to see in Jerusalem an *omphalus mundi*, a centre from which God’s blessing flows forth (Crow, 1996:182). Jerusalem and Zion are made the centre of that reality, the source of all blessing (Crow, 1996:184). Blessing flows forth from Zion, coming upon individuals who fear Yahweh, so that ultimately *šālôm* comes upon all Israel (Ps 133) (Crow, 1996:184).

pilgrim on his way up to Jerusalem, the supposed foundation of peace. Note that the final destination of both the pilgrim in the Psalms and the traveling King in Luke is Jerusalem, the “foundation of peace” (cf. Ps 122; Luke 19).⁸¹ The sceptic at this stage might quickly think that this approach is Midrashic.⁸² However, a careful reading of these texts side by side will never fail to spot and appreciate strong analogies between them.

The similarities and contrasts are so strong that Ellis (1974:152) submits that Luke might have been alluding to the *Pilgrimage Collection* in the Psalter in his travel narratives. It seems that Luke might have had these pilgrimage Psalms in his mind as he was writing his travel narratives. This claim is only a suggestion, since there is no evidence to substantiate it. Even so, the travel narratives in Luke’s Gospel appear to be constructed around the framework of the pilgrim motif of the Songs of Ascent.

Luke records that as Jesus’s time to be taken *up* (ascension) to heaven approached (Luke 9:51), he resolutely *set out* for Jerusalem. The italicized words echo the *going up* to Jerusalem of the pilgrims in the Psalms of Ascent. Crow (1996:178) points out that “it seems that Jerusalem has a primary place as a centre of Yahwistic worship for at least some diasporic Jews. By the first century CE, of course, pilgrimage to Jerusalem has become common not only for local people but for Jews all around the Mediterranean (cf. Acts 2:5). This does not seem to have been common practice until the end of Hasmonean era, but it does demonstrate the tendency of diasporic Judaism to orient itself toward Jerusalem.” Now, if Jews from the diaspora had developed the trend of traveling up to Jerusalem, especially during festivals, it could be that the pilgrimage Psalms were being used or chanted during these occasions. If this assumption is correct, then it is a real possibility that Luke might have used them to frame his travel narratives. Besides, when commenting on the arrival of Jesus in the city and the song carolled for him, Parson (2015:283) reminds us that “the part of the Psalm quoted by the crowds at Jesus’s entry (Ps 118:26) was originally a reference either to the *king as he approaches the temple* to worship God or, more likely to *any pilgrim* who comes to the temple (see 2 Samuel 6:18)” [italics mine]. In fact, in the Lukan travel narrative, we have the One who is both the

⁸¹ Tannehill (1986:229) adduces that “readers of Luke have been carefully prepared for the statement in 9:51 that Jesus ‘set his face to go to Jerusalem’ (see 9:22, 31, and 44). This is a turning point in the narrative only in the sense that action is initiated to fulfil a destined role that has already been revealed. Beginning with 9:51, there are repeated references to journeying, sometimes with a reminder that Jerusalem is the goal (9:53, 13:22, 33; 17:11; 18:31; 19:11, 28).”

⁸² As elaborated by Sterm (2011:565), “Midrash refers to the activity of biblical study as pursued specifically by rabbinic sages in the first five centuries CE. It derived from the root d-r-sh, which carries the primary meaning of ‘inquire, investigate,’ and by extension came to mean both ‘explicate’ and ‘study.’ In more contemporary usage, the word is often used in the sense of an ‘imaginative interpretation...’”

king and the pilgrim on his way to Jerusalem, and particularly to its place of worship. Again, Parson helpfully adduces that “he who is to come” is understood as the title for Jesus in Luke (7:35; 13:35). It is, therefore, plausible that Luke wants his readers, through the lenses of the Pilgrim Psalms, to picture Jesus as *the Pilgrim-King*, or the Coming One (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) on his way to Jerusalem, the so-called foundation of peace.

In Psalm 120, the pilgrim begins by describing and lamenting the *non-peaceful* environment in which he has been living for a long time (exile?). Limburg (2000:421) adduces that

the writer of Psalm 120 is identified as ‘an alien in Mishech,’ living ‘among the tents of Qedar’ (v5). These are the names of a nomadic tribal group of uncertain location but far from Jerusalem (see Isa. 21:16–17; Jer. 49:28–33). Was the Psalmist living in such a faraway place? Or were these names used figuratively, indicating that the writer has been living among war-loving foreigners?

Both suggestions are plausible. Nonetheless, the juxtaposition of the next Psalm, 121, suggests that the Psalter wants us to imagine the pilgrim, after a long time of suffering and hardship, resolving to *go up to Jerusalem*, which is the foundation of peace and a place of peaceful people. He banks all his hopes for peace and security in Jerusalem. Right from the beginning of the pilgrimage, the motif of *šālôm* resonates. The pilgrim informs us that he has been living among those who hate *šālôm* (: אֲנִי־שָׁלוֹם וְכִי אֶדְבָּר הָמָּה לְמִלְחָמָה).

In Psalm 121, the Psalmist is now on the way to Jerusalem, where his hope is. As he approaches and *lifts up* his eyes to the mountains, it gives him the confidence of having the Lord’s help on his journey. Yahweh has provided safety and protection all the way through his pilgrimage. Coming to Psalm 122, the mood of the pilgrim dramatically changes from lament (120) to celebration (122). The pilgrim has finally and safely arrived *home*. From Mishech and the tents of Qedar (120:6), places of no peace, to Jerusalem, the place of peace (122:8). The peace which was not experienced before and was longed for in Psalm 120 is now a real experience as the pilgrim enters Jerusalem in Psalm 122. Just like the motif of peace resonated (אֲנִי־שָׁלוֹם וְכִי אֶדְבָּר : הָמָּה לְמִלְחָמָה ; Psalm 120:8) at the beginning of the pilgrimage, so it does at the end (122:6–9). The last stanza in Psalm 122 takes the form of a prayer for Jerusalem. Will Jesus, the Lukan pilgrim, also pray for Jerusalem upon arrival? Will he celebrate his arrival in the city? We are yet to find out. In the Psalm, the prayer is positive about the city. The pilgrim is, in fact, *rejoicing* upon arrival in Jerusalem as he recalls having been once invited to go to the temple, which is the house of Yahweh (122:1).

It appears that, like every Israelite, the psalmist has a *high esteem* for Jerusalem. As Harman (1998:404–405) points out,

The city was not just a conglomeration of buildings, but a compact, well-ordered city—the capital. It was a symbol of the unity of the nation, as all the tribes of the Lord went up there on special festive occasions. It was a place God had chosen as a dwelling for his Name. Jerusalem was also the centre of civic life (verse 5), to which people came to have the king adjudicate their complaints.

The question is whether Jerusalem connoted the same things to Jesus in Luke-Acts, especially in the travel narrative.

The themes of Psalm 121, as elaborated by Harman (1998:403), are recorded in Luke’s long section on the King’s way *up to Jerusalem* (19:51–19:27). The themes are the pilgrim’s *help* (Ps 121:1–2), the pilgrim’s *safety* (Ps 121:3–4), the pilgrim’s *protection* (Ps 121:5–6) and the pilgrim’s *preservation* (Ps 121:7–8). For instance, it appears not accidental that it is on *the way up to Jerusalem* that Jesus explains the toughness of following him (Luke 9:57–62). The pilgrim and Jesus’s disciples find a place where care is provided (Luke 10:38–41) as they carry on with their journey. It is significant at this stage to note that “the Samaritan village did not receive Jesus (using δέχομαι, 9:53), neither did Nazareth, where Jesus was not δεκτός (‘acceptable,’ 4:24). However, Martha (10:38) and Zacchaeus (19:6) did receive (ὑποδέχομαι) Jesus” (Tannehill, 1986:235). So, Martha and Zacharias are children of peace (cf. Luke 10:6).⁸³

Unlike for the pilgrim in the Psalm, both the point of departure and the goal of the journey of Jesus were not friendly. Like Qedar, the Samaritan village was not peaceful towards Jesus. It refused to receive him. Moreover, even Jerusalem will not be friendly at all to the Prince of Peace. Again, during the journey to Jerusalem, he teaches his disciples to pray to the Father, “do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one” (Luke 9:3–4). He guarantees his disciples that the heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit when they ask (Luke 11:13). The Spirit is extensively needed on this hard voyage. On his way to the city, he tells his fellow pilgrims not to be afraid, for God will take care of them (Luke 12:2–7), even when they are before the magistrates (Luke 12:8–12). They should not worry about life (Luke 12:22–33).

⁸³ The book of Acts has many other examples of ‘children of peace’, i.e., those to whom the gospel message is effectual. Here Tannehill (1986:235) points out that “the similar language is applied both to receiving the word or witness (δέχομαι, 8:14; 11:1; 17:11; ἀποδέχομαι in 2:41, παραδέχομαι in 22:18) and to receiving a missionary as a guest (ὑποδέχομαι in 17:7; ἀποδέχομαι in 18:27; 21:17; ἀναδέχομαι in 28:7; παραδέχομαι in 15:4)”.

They should make peace with their adversary, because they are children of peace and not of war (12:57–59; cf. Test. Judah 7).

Unusually, in the middle of his travels, the pilgrim laments over his prospective destination, Jerusalem (Luke 13:34–35). This is not something one would expect, especially with regard for the high esteem one should have about Jerusalem. This is something the pilgrim psalmist could never do, because Jerusalem is where he longs for to be away from a non-peaceful place. Again on the way, Jesus elaborates on the cost of following him (Luke 14:25–33). It is noteworthy that the sending of a delegation to ask for conditions of peace (v. 32) in the second illustration of calculating the cost of following Christ is the picture of what happened in the Testament of Judah. In a context of war, retelling the story of the sons of Esau to his children, Judah says, “Then they asked us terms of peace; and being aware of our father's purpose, we received them as tributaries” (Test. Judah 9). Unexpectedly, instead of longing for Jerusalem, disciples long for *the day of the Son of Man* (Luke 17:20–37). This shows that it is not their destination, that is, Jerusalem and the temple, which will bring about justice and peace, but rather the day of the Son of Man. Is this day referring to the day when Jerusalem will be destroyed, or the end of the age? Whatever the case, it involves judgement.⁸⁴ The latter is absolutely necessary for real peace to be established. Hence, the Lukan pilgrims long for it. Back to the Psalter, when the pilgrim approaches and reaches Jerusalem, he expresses his happiness and prays for peace for the city (Ps 122:6–9). This, as already indicated, is because the peace and prosperity of the people depend on Jerusalem in the Old Testament theology.

Unlike the pilgrim in the Psalter, when Jesus, the Lukan pilgrim, draws near Jerusalem and sees the city, he expresses his *sadness* and *weeps* for it (Luke 19:41–44). He first lamented over Jerusalem in the middle of his journey (Luke 13:34, 35); now, as he draws near, he weeps over it. As in the Psalter, Jesus's journey narratives begin with the motif of peace in a non-peaceful environment (Luke 9:51–56) and end with the same motif (Luke 19:39, 42), but in a non-peaceful environment unlike in the Psalter. Like the pilgrim in the Psalter (Ps 122), Jesus goes to the temple upon arrival in Jerusalem (Luke 19:45). Unlike in the Psalter, the city and its holy

⁸⁴ “George Caird in this connection makes a helpful distinction between *das Ende* and *die Endzeit*: ‘to expect the End is not the same as to expect and End time. The one is an event beyond which nothing can conceivably happen. The other is a period of indefinite duration in which much is expected to happen. He concludes that what the Jewish people expected was not *das Ende* but *die Endzeit*. Such a distinction is valid, but I myself would prefer to define *das Ende* in terms of transcendental and the end of history, and *die Endzeit* in terms of temporal and the continuation of history and to say that in Apocalyptic thought there is fluctuation between the one and the other and, at times, a mingling and merging of these two concepts” (Russell, 1978:214).

place have no good reputation in Luke 19.⁸⁵ Religious leaders have turned the temple into a den of thieves (19:45, 46); hence Jesus laments instead of praying for the peace of Jerusalem. Ironically, it is in the temple, or at least in connection with Jesus's teaching in the temple, that the religious leaders sought *to destroy* him. In this sense, the temple, the house of the Lord, is no longer a place where a pilgrim could rejoice when invited to go (cf. Ps 122:1). It becomes a non-peaceful place because it harbours a band of thieves (haters of peace) plotting to kill the king of peace (Luke 19:46, 47). Paradoxically, there is no child of peace in the city of peace (cf. Luke 10:6).

Jerusalem, according to both its etymological and theological meanings, was supposed to be a place of peace. Yet Luke shows us in many of his narratives where Jesus the king of peace is in Jerusalem that there was no peace. Jesus weeps over the city because they have missed the source of their peace (Luke 19:41–44). Though Jesus cleanses the temple, it is here described as a den of thieves (19:45–48). Nearly everything in Jerusalem failed to indicate peace. For instance, there is a conflict in the Jerusalem's temple on Jesus's authority. They questioned Jesus's authority, not in a peaceful way, but in a non-peaceful and confrontational way (Luke 20:1–8). Jesus's arrival in Jerusalem is the opposite of the three pilgrimage Psalms. It is the opposite of the Psalmist pilgrim's arrival in the city. Paradoxically, what *Mishech and tents of Qedar* were to the Psalmist (Psalm 120:5–7) is exactly what Jerusalem has surprisingly turned to be for Jesus, the Prince of peace. Jesus, who is for peace, is now living among people who hate peace and are for war (cf. Psalm 120:6–7), in this case, haters of peace are Pharisees and teachers of the law.

Additionally, the parable of the wicked vineyard is a clear indication that there is no peace at all in Jerusalem. Jesus is to be killed by the religious leaders in Jerusalem, the supposed city of “peace”, according to the parable (Luke 20:9–19). The next narratives (Luke 19:20–43) focus on the traps set up by religious leaders to seize him at his word in order to hand him over to the power and authority governor (19:20). Every piece of the Lukan narratives in Jerusalem shows that Jesus the *Pilgrim* did not find anything looking like the *שְׁלוֹמִים* of Psalm 122 in it. Nonetheless, it is interesting that it is the risen King who is the bringer and not the receptor of peace to his disciples (Luke 24:36). The Lukan peace comes from the Risen King, and not from

⁸⁵ Jerusalem, the home of peace and the only hope for the pilgrim in the Psalms (120–121), is the complete opposite of that for Jesus and his followers. Almost every that Jerusalem is said to be Jesus's goal, he does not fail, as Tannehill (1986:229) points out, to make “references to rejection, death, and resurrection that will happen there (12:49-50; 13:33–34; 16:31; 17:25; 18:31–33; 19:14).”

the temple nor from the city. “The phrase ‘peace in heaven’ suggests that the Messianic peace that Luke connects with Jesus is realized now only in heaven; since the Jerusalem leadership rejects the ‘peace on earth’ (2:14) of the kingdom of God (19:42), it must await the parousia to be realized” (Pao & Schnabel, 2007:356).

Though this paper does not agree with Chance’s (1998:1) main thesis on *Jerusalem, The Temple and the New Age in Luke-Acts*, his discussion on the motif of Jerusalem and the temple in Luke-Acts is insightful on this theme of peace. He (1998:1) fairly adduces that “even a casual reading of Luke-Acts reveals the prominent place that Luke assigns to the city of Jerusalem and the temple.” It is indeed true that any Jew would not think of the real šālôm away from Jerusalem and the temple. The ultimate purpose of Chance’s monograph is to examine Luke’s perception of the eschatological functions of Jerusalem and the temple (1998:5). Starting with the Jewish conception of the city and the temple, Chance (1998:5, 6) submits that Israel’s eschatological expectations in relation to the city and its holy place may be summarized as consisting of four interrelated motifs. First there would occur a glorious restoration of Jerusalem and the temple, which, second, would serve as the focal centres of God’s restored people of Israel, and, third, as important places in Yahweh’s dealings with the nations. Fourth, according to some expectations, the Messiah would play an important role in relation to the temple and the city.

For Chance (1998:6),

The postexilic portions of Isaiah express particular interest in the hope of a restored Jerusalem and temple. The operating premise of the prophet was that Yahweh had not forgotten Zion (49:14–18). She was to be comforted (40:1–2; 51:3) by a declaration of the good news (52:7; cf. 41:27). The salvation of Yahweh was going to visit the forgiven city (46:13; 62:11; cf. 52:9). Zion would be filled with justice and righteousness (35:5–6). She would be rebuilt in splendour (54:11), and her glory would be beheld by all (60:1–12).

This is a colourful and positive description of the future of the city of Jerusalem and its holy place, the temple.

Coming to a non-Lukan early Christianity, Chance begins by pointing out that this early Christianity was aware of Jewish expectations concerning Jerusalem and the temple and the eschatological age (1998:32). He then argues that non-Lukan early Christianity thoroughly reformulated traditional Jewish expectations (1998:33). “The dominant pattern among the

earliest Christians was to reserve *no place for a new physical temple or city*”, maintains Chance (1998:33) [italics mine]. Hence the replacement motif was influential in their writings. The temple is replaced either by Jesus or the community of the people of God, and the city is replaced by the community of the people of God.

On the other hand, for Chance (1998:35), Luke does not share the prevailing pattern in early non-Lukan Christianity, which was to transfer to Jesus or to the church the prerogatives and functions of the eschatological Jerusalem and the temple. “Instead, Luke maintained the traditional eschatological significance of the literal, physical city and the house of God. Chance goes on to argue that, for Luke, the salvation of both Israel and the Gentiles is still inextricably bound up with these sacred places” (Darr, 1990:150).

This is Chance’s main thesis. Though there are some truths in that, it does not seem that Luke is advocating *against* the replacement motif. If he were, then why would he paint Jerusalem in such negative light, as this paper has elaborated above? The picture of both the city and the temple in Luke’s gospel has more negative connotations than positive ones. Furthermore, in Acts it is Antioch, and not Jerusalem, which become the main sending place of missionaries. The physical Jerusalem and the literal temple do not maintain traditional eschatological significance. Chance has overstated his case. Further, the tearing in two of the curtain in the temple of Jerusalem (Luke 23:45) is a negative depiction of the place, and it suggests the replacement motif. Jerusalem (which will later be destroyed) and its holy place as the centre of Yahwistic worship are destroyed and replaced by the dying King of peace on the cross. The Lukan Jerusalem and its literal temple are equal to the Mishech and tents of Qedar of Psalm 120. It is not as glorious as depicted in the traditional eschatological significance.

Now, back to the travel motif in Luke-Acts, what have we achieved by this comparison, one may ask? Does it contribute anything to our quest for the meaning and affects of peace in Luke-Acts? The answer to this last question is positive. *If* Luke was indeed referring to these pilgrimage Psalms in his long section of travel narratives, as this study has suggested, then he might to some degree have borrowed the meaning of *šālôm* שָׁלוֹם as it is portrayed in those pilgrimage Psalms and communicated it to his readers. Supposing this to be the case, both categories of peace advocated for in this paper, namely sociopolitical and theological, are in view here. Hence, peace means the absence of war, the absence of violent people (haters of peace). It means living away from frustration and traumatic experiences brought by lying lips and deceitful tongues (Ps 120:1–2). Peace involves a deliverance from the sharp arrows of the

warrior (cf. Ps 120). But it also means a delight in joyous fellowship with people who share the same faith and hopes (Ps 122:1, 8). Peace is realized when one gets to Yahweh's temple (Jesus, the new Temple) and fellowships with him and the community of faith (Ps 122:1). Hence, it is peace with God and peace with God's people. Moreover, significantly there is no peace without the Davidic king, because it is the king who administers justice and brings about righteousness (Ps 122:5; cf. Isa 11). "Shalom of both an individual and a nation depends on righteousness (Ps 85:10). Righteousness in Psalm and Isaiah (40–66) refers to God's acts of salvation *tzdk*. In Isaiah 46:3 *Tzedakah* refers to God's deliverance of Israel from exile" (Neusner & Green eds, 1996:532, 574). The other question which arises from this comparison concerns its contribution to the *message of peace*, which is the focus of this chapter. As explained above, the message of peace does not exclude justice, judgement, and good governance. Justice and judgement are the implications of the gospel message, which is the kingdom message, especially when people respond to it negatively. The verdict which comes from the weeping King over Jerusalem is part of the message of peace. The justice and judgement of the righteous king are not foreign aspects of peace, but fundamental to it. Perhaps it is important to note that many modern peacekeeping organisations often miss this.

Though (unlike other Christian thinkers) Luke might not have spiritualized Jerusalem and its holy place, as elaborated and contended by Chance, even a casual reading of Luke's narrative does not show that *šālôm* will depend on the *literal* Jerusalem and its *literal* temple. Neither the city nor the temple portrayed anything peaceful, as expected in Jewish apocalyptic writings and the canonical Hebrew Bible. What an expression of God's discontentment with the temple of Jerusalem is the tearing in two of the curtain that separates the holy place from the holy of holies (Luke 23:45)! This observation raises questions about Chance's thesis. Jesus did not *celebrate* upon arrival in Jerusalem, but rather wept over it. Nevertheless, the literal Jerusalem and the temple still play a significant role in Luke-Acts. However, neither Jesus as a pilgrim nor his followers found and enjoyed peace in them (cf. Acts 4:1–31; 12:1–19; 21:27–36). Instead, the disciples received peace from the risen Lord (Luke 24:36). Parson is right when he contends that with the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem, "the travel narrative has come to a close, but Jesus's journey in its deepest sense only now begins" (2015:285). Since *peace* is found neither in Jerusalem nor in its place of worship, the pilgrim King has to proceed with another journey; this time, it is the journey to the cross in order to secure the real peace for his people. Only through this way of the cross and resurrection would the risen Lord offer to his followers what Jerusalem and the temple could not: the real peace, that is, peace with God (Luke 24:36).

The ultimate peace in all its aspects is expected on the day of the Son of Man, since the literal Jerusalem and the temple became the “Mishech and tents of Qedar” for Jesus and his followers. It is at the Parousia, as argued earlier, that the “peace on earth” will be realized in full. As of now, children of peace enjoy the peace with God (“peace in heaven”? Luke 19:38) and a glimpse pleasant relationships with one another.⁸⁶

4.5. CONCLUSION

The message of peace is, therefore, a component of the proclamation of the arrival of the kingdom of God in the presence of its king. This message is packaged with the forgiveness of sins for those who lay down their arms at the feet of this king, Jesus. This message carries, along with Jesus’s good governance over God’s people, justice and judgement against God’s enemies. The “peace be to you” and the “kingdom of God is near” messages are one and the same message which should be urgently proclaimed. This message introduces the king, who can be received through repentance or rejected in unbelief in Luke-Acts. In Luke 10, it appears that the message was largely rejected, whereas in Acts 10 it was received by Cornelius and his household. But it was also received by Martha and Zacchaeus and many more. This message of peace is effectual for the elect, who in Lukan language are known as the *children of peace* or the *people on whom God’s favour rests*. When this message is proclaimed, it is the coming of the king which is introduced. When this message is received, there is peace with God, and children of peace enjoy peace with one another (cf. Peter and Cornelius). Jesus, who replaces both Jerusalem and its temple, is the giver of this peace.

⁸⁶ Tannehill (1986:229, 230) comments that Jesus’s journey commences with a report of his rejection in a Samaritan village, and that “those who journey with Jesus not only receive his teaching but receive power to heal and share Jesus’ experience of rejection.” Tannehill (1986:231) goes on to argue that “What will happen at the end of the journey—being ‘rejected ‘in Jerusalem (Luke 9:22)—is anticipated at the beginning of the journey when Jesus is ‘not received’ (Luke 9:53), and Jesus’ messengers will have the same experience as they carry out their mission (Luke 10:10).” Therefore, the emphasis in this section (Luke 9:51–19:27), which has Jerusalem as the goal) on the suffering and rejection of both Jesus and his followers indicates that the full realization of peace on earth in this age is hard. Peace, especially in its political sense, is a reality of the age to come, and not of this age. This is true because, from the start of travel narrative to the final destination, the embodiment of peace, the real peace, that is, Jesus, and his followers are rejected. Envoys of peace preach the message of peace in a non-peaceful mission field.

CHAPTER 5: THINGS THAT BRING ABOUT PEACE, ACCORDING TO LUKE

After attempting to grasp what Luke may have meant by his use of the peace motif in the previous sections of this paper, the aim of this section is to identify the things that lead to peace according to Jesus's words when weeping over Jerusalem. What are the things which lead people to an experience of peace with God which will usher them into a community of harmony and acceptance? This paper argues that Christ's identity as the King of God's kingdom and his Messianic mission are the fundamental things that were hidden from the religious leaders.⁸⁷ In other words, it is Jesus and his kingdom which were a mystery to the Pharisees and teachers of the law. It is not about morals, militarism or war. Repentance and faith are the correct response to the message of peace, but these are not the things Jesus meant by "what would bring you peace" (Luke 19:42). To demonstrate this, a thorough and critical analysis of the text (Luke 19) is needed. From this chapter, the coming of the king and the judgement motifs will also be elaborated in relation to peace.

5.1. JESUS AND HIS KINGDOM AS THE CHANNEL OF PEACE

As mentioned earlier, Luke places his theme of peace in strategic places in his telling of the story, especially in the major sections of the book. In fact, he claims to have written an orderly account for Theophilus, after a careful investigation (Luke 1:1–4). Since the peace motif is one of the fundamental elements in the building of his theological message, Luke includes it at the beginning of his first section (1:1–2:52), which focuses on infancy narratives. Again, at the beginning of a major section (9:51–19:27), Luke records the sending of the 72 with the message of peace. This section will focus on Jesus's journey toward Jerusalem. Now, as Hughes (1998:238) puts it, Jesus is at the end of a long journey that he had begun some nine months earlier (cf. 9:51–19:27). This journey began with the sending of the 72 missionaries to preach *the message of peace* in every house they would enter, and *the nearness of the kingdom of God* in every town (cf. Luke 10).

When we arrive at the second-last section (19:28–21:38) of Luke's Gospel, which pictures the arrival of the King-prophet in Jerusalem, we discover that Luke's motif of peace once again resonates right at the beginning of the section. Strikingly, unlike in the sending of the 72, it is the sender of missionaries himself who is about to enter a town. It is the embodiment of peace himself, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:5), at the door of the city—and this is not just any city,

⁸⁷ The roles of both the servant and messianic figures of the book of Isaiah which were embodied in the person of Christ were hidden from the religious leaders.

but Jerusalem, the “city of God.” At this point in the narrative one might naturally ask whether Jesus is going to say “peace be to this city”, in line with the instructions he had previously given to his envoys. Peace in heaven is indeed the wish of the whole crowd of disciples (Luke 19:37, 38). Or will he say, “The kingdom of God is near”? Again, it is the whole crowd of disciples that confirms that the King has come to reclaim his city (Luke 19:38). Are there going to be “children of peace” on whom his message of peace will rest? Unfortunately, the religious leaders of the city have not proven themselves to be “children of peace” (Luke 19:39; cf. 10:6), and therefore peace will not rest in the city. Peace will return to the king of peace (Luke 10:6). Hence, Luke demonstrates what the expression “peace will return to you” in Luke 10:6 looks like in practice. McNicol and the members of the research team of the International Institute for Gospel Studies (McNicol et al., 1996:248) make the following observation concerning Luke 19:42–44:

Here Jesus pronounces two oracles against Jerusalem (Lk 19:42 and Lk 19:43–44). They are framed by the clauses εἰ ἔγνωσ (Lk 19:42) and ἀνθ’ ὧν οὐκ ἔγνωσ (Lk 19:44) to indicate something of the pathos of their failure to acknowledge the messianic mission of Jesus: divine punishment will be inevitable.

This is what it means for Luke when one is outside of the sphere of peace. Either one is a “child of peace”, and included in the community of the people of God, or one is not a “child of peace”, and will therefore face God’s judgement.

Many Jews in the first century believed that the king, or the Messiah, and Elijah were eschatological figures (cf. the second chapter of this paper). This eschatological category was often associated with political ideas. Religious zeal was linked to fanaticism and terrorism. To ensure that ‘peace’ was established, these figures had to bring with them a sword, as was the case with Phineas (Numbers 25:7–13). It was believed that such Phineas-like zeal would turn away God’s wrath, atone for sin and remove hindrances to the breaking in of salvation (Ford, 2010:6–7). It is evident that the things that lead to peace were indeed hidden to the Jewish religious leaders. The Lukan peace was never going to come through Jewish religious factions. Ironically, it is the death of the king, and not his sword, that will bring about peace. It is the Lord’s anointed King and his kingdom which bring peace. This is the gospel that needs to be proclaimed.

Furthermore, according to Luke, Jesus’s Messianic mission and all that it entails is key for understanding the things that lead to peace. His coming into the world, and his death and

resurrection are the very things that the King brings about in his visitation to the city. Hughes (1998:243) and many other scholars are most likely wrong when they claim that repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus are the things that will bring peace. This paper argues that repentance and faith are simply the right response to the things that lead to peace, namely Jesus and his kingdom. A fair reading of Luke reveals that it is the message that Jesus is the Saviour, the King and the Lord of all that needs to be received for one to have peace (Luke 2:10–12; Acts 10:36). Therefore, what was hidden from the religious leaders is not repentance and faith but the very identity of Jesus as the Prince of Peace. McNicol et al. (1996:249) are also right in asserting that

The oracles are connected by the repetition of *ō t* recitative. The first oracle says that the leaders of Jerusalem should have accepted Jesus's arrival in Jerusalem as a visitation of peace (cf. the Benedictus account in Lk 1:79). Indeed, worthy of note are a large number of echoes between Lk 19:41–44 and the Benedictus in Lk 1:71, 74, 78–79). But *the understanding of Jesus as the king of peace* has been hidden from the eyes of Jerusalem's leaders [italics mine].

The Pharisees in Luke 19:38 are blind. In Luke-Acts, unless God opens people's hearts (Acts 16:14) or eyes, Jesus's identity as the king of peace and his Messianic mission will not be perceived. As a result, they will not repent and believe for the forgiveness of their sins. Thus, for Luke peace is primarily relational:

Peace in Luke has no connection with the Roman Empire or with temple leadership, nor does it refer to subjective or individualistic tranquillity. Peace rather is a soteriological term—*shalom*, peace and justice, the gift of God that embraces salvation for all in all of its social, material, and spiritual realities (Green, 1997:690).

It is solely dependent on the King of peace. It is worth noting that

the dominant theme in both Testaments is one of the peaceful relations with God. In the OT, these peaceful relations are dependent on the sacrificial system, and later on the promised Davidic king. In the NT, peaceful relations between antagonistic parties are effected through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ (Porter, 2000:683).

Like the salvation motif, the kingship motif intertwines with the peace motif in Luke-Acts. This is true because Luke is more concerned with the *Pax Christi* than with the *Pax Augusti*.⁸⁸ For instance, at Jesus's *birth* in Bethlehem, the angelic chorus sings "glory to God in the highest and peace on earth, to those on whom his favour rests" (Luke 2:11). Here the *peace on earth* chorus is sung at the birth of the Saviour, who is *Christ*, that is, King, the Lord (Luke 2:10). On the great mission, the King asks his envoys to preach the nearness of his *kingdom* (Luke 10). Now, on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the whole crowd of disciples sings, "Blessed is *the king* who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest" (Luke 19:37–38). Here *peace in heaven* is sung of as the king enters the place of his death. According to Luke, this king is not like the earthly kings, for he is pictured as fulfilling Zechariah 9:9. Consequently, peace depends exclusively on Jesus and his kingdom, according to Luke. "Peace to those upon whom God's favour rests" comes along with Christ's birth, death and resurrection. Hughes (1998:241) states that

The heavenly chorus sang of peace on earth, while the earthly throng now sang of peace in heaven. They sang more than they knew, for peace on earth is dependent on peace in heaven. In fact, it comes down from above. It is only when a man finds peace with God that there is peace on earth.

5.2. THE COMING OF THE KING MOTIF AND PEACE IN LUKE-ACTS

For Luke, the *coming of the Davidic king* is what secures and supports the new age of peace. This motif goes along with the themes of judgement, restoration of God's people, and the singing or celebration motif because of the coming of the king of peace (cf. chapter 4 of this paper). This means that it is this king who has the ability to judge (which could also mean to govern) and to restore his people back to God. This is something worthy of joyful singing. For this reason, the coming of the Davidic king motif resonates with Psalm 98 and Isaiah 35 (and many other Old Testament texts, especially in the book of Isaiah), to which we now turn. As we will soon see, Isaiah 35 is key, because Luke explicitly alludes to it to make his point that Jesus is indeed the Coming One. In a nutshell, the coming of the LORD's King is a subject of joy for God's people, and the people have to sing and celebrate it; the celebration is linked to the purpose of his coming. He is coming to judge (rule or govern) the world with justice, and this will result in a creation of a better, stable and *peaceful* world.

⁸⁸ Ford (2010:30) argues that the Lukan Jesus is presented as an emperor. She thinks, for instance, that "the angel's announcement to the shepherds is in rhythmic prose and it echoes words and phrases from the Roman imperial cult."

In Psalm 98, the purpose of the King's coming is to judge the world with righteousness and equity (v. 9). For this reason, the whole world (v. 4) has to celebrate (cry out for joy) and join Israel in singing a new song (Ps 98:1, 4, 7). The Old Testament category of judgement is tied up with the imagery of Yahweh as a warrior King. To be a judge, one has to be able to declare who is innocent and who is guilty in a courtroom and to ensure that a society is well run by punishing and eradicating both evil and evildoers. Only a warrior-king could do both of these things. Thus, judgement is not to be perceived only in negative tones, but it is equally about good governance and the enacting of a just and righteous society by both bringing and maintaining peace and stability. The reason why the natural world is personified in Psalm 98:7–8 and described as shouting for joy (the sea roars, the rivers clap their hands, and the hills rejoice together before Yahweh) is simply that Yahweh is *coming* as the King to judge the earth (the people) with righteousness and equity (בָּא לְשִׁפּוֹט הַאֲרָץ Ps 98:9).

Coming to Luke's Gospel, when the King *comes* to the city (Luke 19:37–40), as in Psalm 98, it was something to sing about, cry out for joy over, and celebrate: "The whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen" (Luke 19:37). What is the major rationale behind this great celebration? As in Psalm 98, the King has *come* (Luke 19:38): "Blessed is the King who *comes* in the name of the Lord! *Peace* in heaven and glory in the highest!" (Luke 19:37–38). As in Psalm 98, at the coming of the king even the world of nature is to celebrate: "I tell you, he replied, "if the keep quiet, the stones will cry out" (Luke 19:40). Now, what is the significance of people crying out for joy at the coming of the king? He has the ability to judge, govern well and establish social justice, stability and peace on earth. He is the restorer of both the physical and spiritual lives. In fact, in the ancient Near East, one had to be a warrior if he was to create and establish a just and righteous world in which there were peace and stability. It is only then that peace, justice and stability would be recognized. Jesus gives a glimpse of his warrior image when he drives out those who had made his Father's house a den of thieves (Luke 19:45–48). This is just a foretaste of what will fully be done on the day of the Son of Man and at the end of the age. God's enemies will be driven out and utterly destroyed to make a full realization and experience of peace on earth as it is in heaven ("peace on earth", Luke 2:14; "peace in heaven", Luke 19:38). But for now his mission is one of peace; he will not force himself on his people.

Moreover, if the allusion to Psalm 98 is not overtly obvious in Luke, that in Isaiah 35 is explicitly referred to by the Lukan Jesus (as we shall see) and proves that in him we see the coming of God to save his people. In Isaiah 35, the motif of Yahweh's coming is repeated twice

in the original Hebrew Bible (v. 4). The third stanza (vv. 5–7) picks up where the second stanza (vv. 3–4) left off. Stanza 3 details what happens when (יָהוָה) Yahweh *comes* to save (יִשָּׁע). In verse 4 the we-jussive וְיִשָּׁעֲכֶם of this verb could convey the purpose of the previous action: He comes *in order that* he might save you. Consequently, his salvation at the coming of Yahweh brings a completely different state of affairs, that is, *the new age of peace*. His coming brings the exile to an end. Now the blind can see, the deaf can hear, the lame can leap like a deer and the dumb can sing (cry out for joy). This is peace in its full picture as Bock (1994:412) submits that “These events show the presence of the eschaton (Isa. 35:5–6 is a picture of paradise, when God’s rule is fully manifested; Jeremias, TDNT 5:772), for that is the period to which all these Isaianic passages⁸⁹ allude.” The singing motif is significant in the coming of Yahweh (Ps 98; Isa 35; cf. Luke 2:13–14; 19:37–38). The song (a cry of joy) is carolled because Yahweh has come to save his people and then establish a kingdom of peace and stability where the physical and spiritual life will both be restored. As in Psalm 98, the “gospeller” is imperatively told to strengthen the exiles’ weak hands and make firm their feeble knees. He is to tell those who are fearful-hearted to be strong and not to fear (Isaiah 35:3–4a). Why? Again, as in Psalm 98, the reason is simply that God will *come* (יָבֹא) as a *judging* and rewarding warrior. “Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; he will *come* יָבֹא and save you”, says the poet (Isaiah 35:4). In fact, as said in the previous chapter of this paper, the coming of God is what is at the heart of the gospel message. It is only when this happens that the new exodus occurs, the blind, deaf, dumb and lame are restored, and in the world of nature, the barren desert will bloom. At the king’s coming, the evildoer is punished, and Yahweh begins to govern his redeemed גְּאֻלָּיִם (v. 9) and ransomed וְפִדְוֵי (v. 10) people with joy, celebration and peace.

Remarkably, the Lukan Jesus alludes to this passage in Luke 7:18–23. Luke emphatically brings up the *coming* of the king motif twice, as in Isaiah 35. “And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, ‘Are you the *coming One*, (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) or do we look for another?’”⁹⁰ When the duo had gone to Jesus, Luke could have just said, “And they went and asked Jesus that”, without restating the question. Instead, Luke repeats for emphasis, “When the men had come to Him, they said, ‘John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying “Are

⁸⁹ Isaiah 35:5–6; 26:19; 29:18–19; and 61:1.

⁹⁰ Concerning the various views on the rationale behind John’s question, I would recommend Bock (1996:664). However, for the sake of this paper one has to bear in mind that “the question seems to be, ‘What kind of Messiah would Jesus be, if he is Messiah?’” (Bock, 1994:665).

You the *Coming One* (ὁ ἐρχόμενος), or do we look for another?" ' ' (Luke 7:18–23).⁹¹ It appears that this repetition is intended to draw to the readers' attention that the Messiah role is not to be mistaken with John the Baptist, but rather must be applied to Jesus. This is evident in the way John and Jesus are mentioned repeatedly. It appears, as Bock points out, that the major issues of 7:18–35 centre on the relationship between John and Jesus (1994:656). Strikingly, Jesus answers by quoting the third stanza of Isaiah 35, in which the gospeller breaks the “gospel” to the exiles, encouraging them not to fear, because Yahweh will *come to save* them. The implication of Jesus's reply to John's disciples is that, like other New Testament writers, Luke sees Israel as being theologically in exile. Jesus's coming means Yahweh has come to his people and put an end to the exile. Having that in mind, as well as Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:1–11 (see v. 10), one cannot fail to see the arrival of Jesus in Luke's perspective as the coming of Yahweh and the beginning of the new age of peace.

It is interesting to note that the question “are you the Coming One?” comes from none other than John. Yet, it is the latter who is described by Luke as “great” (Luke 1:15). According to Luke's birth narratives, it is John who is to bring the Messiah onto the stage (Luke 1:17, 76).⁹² Ironically, what John the Baptist is anxious to know and endorse, a large crowd of the city of Nain has already figured out. In the eyes of the crowd, *God has visited his people* through the person and work of Jesus (Luke 7:16). We would expect John the Baptist to discern this truth at this stage, but paradoxically it is the crowd who detected so quickly that in Christ, God has *come* to his people.⁹³ The Greek verb ἐπισκέπτομαι, which is sometimes translated as “I come” (cf. the NIV), means literally “to visit”. It echoes the words of Zechariah in Luke 1:67 (“for he has visited us...”). Bock (1994:654) contends that “ἐπισκέπτομαι refers to God's gracious activity for his people as he utilizes his power on their behalf (Ruth 1:6). Such activity would be an encouragement to people who perceived themselves to be largely absent from God's miraculous activity in recent time (1 Macc. 4:46; 9:27).” In the Benedictus it is clearly stated that God has visited his people Israel (Luke 1:67) and that the Sunrise shall visit his people Israel and lead them in the way of peace (Luke 1:78). In the words of the crowd in Nain “... 'A great prophet has appeared among us,' they said. 'God has come to help his people.'”, we see once again that God has visited his people Israel (Luke 7:16). However, coming to the book of Acts, in the words of James the half-brother of Jesus, we notice that God has this time visited

⁹¹ For Luke, there is no doubt from the way he presents Jesus that he is indeed the Coming one. This can be seen even as he enters the temple area (Luke 19:45; cf. 19:38 and Mal 3:1) (Stein, 1992:485).

⁹² Was John the Baptist fully aware that he was the forerunner of the Messiah?

⁹³ Again, I would recommend Bock for further reading on this issue (1994:665).

not only his people (Israel), as in the aforementioned texts, but now the *Gentiles* (Acts 15:14).⁹⁴ This is outstanding because it does make Gentiles part of the people of God and hence enjoy peace with God through the forgiveness of sin. The visiting God shows no favouritism (Acts 10:44). What he did to Israel, that is, visiting them, he also did to the Gentiles.⁹⁵ Peace in this context therefore refers to what results in God's benevolent acceptance and embracing of both Israel and Gentiles by forgiving and restoring them to himself.

Additionally, all these visits allude to Yahweh's visitation and the promise of visitation for his people in the Old Testament. For instance, Yahweh visited (יָקַץ) Sarah (Gen 21). Joseph promised his brothers that Yahweh would surely visit them (Gen 50:24–25). However, it is in Exodus where Yahweh fulfilled for the first time Joseph's promise and visited his people (Exod 3:16; 4:31; 13:19). Therefore, the strong allusion to Yahweh's *visitation* belongs to the exodus category more than in any other reference of the word even in Luke-Acts. This is evident by the fact that Jesus quotes Isaiah 35:5 in Luke 7:22 (though with a slight difference), which has much to do with the exodus of God's people. This suggests that one should read the words of Zechariah (Luke 1:68 "... He has *come* to his people and redeemed them"), the words of the crowd of Nain (Luke 7:16 "... God has *come* to help his people"), and of James (Acts 15:14 "... God first *intervened* to choose a people from the Gentiles...") all with exodus imagery and echoes in mind. Remarkably, the LXX has translated the Hebrew word יָקַץ with the same Greek word (ἐπισκέπτομαι) that Luke uses to express the idea of God *coming* to his people in order to help. Moreover, it is worth noting that this verb has a connotation of punishment as well (Exod 20:5; 32:34; 34:7; Ps 89:32). Hence, this visitation both in Greek and Hebrew can mean to look upon or after, to inspect, examine with the eyes with the purpose of saving, rescuing, helping, or even *punishing*. There is no real peace and authentic rest without exodus. There is no peace without God visiting his people. Peace depends on the *One* who has *come* and *visited* both Israel (Luke 7:16) and the Gentiles (Acts 15:14). Therefore, the Lukan peace does evoke God's mighty work of salvation in the exodus, for it is after the exodus that people have peace and Sabbath from slavery (Deut 5:15; cf. Isa 35). It encompasses peace with God because God has remembered his promises and has forgiven and restored his people to himself (Luke 1:67–79).

⁹⁴ Bock (2007:502) points out that "Also significant is the term ἐπισκέπτομαι (visit), for it refers to a miraculous or a messianic visitation that God has directed (Luke 1:68; 78; 19:44 etc.). Luke's uses suggest a messianic visitation (only 7:16 might be an exception). James's remarks are full of theological terms and ideas."

⁹⁵ This is visitation with the purpose to save.

The establishment of a peaceful world is unimaginable without God's king and his kingdom. This is the gospel—momentous news—as observed in both Psalm 98 and Isaiah 35. The gospel here means the announcement of the *coming* of Yahweh, who is the king, both the judge and the warrior. It is the coming of the LORD, who will enact a society of justice and of peace and stability. Yahweh is to come, because he alone is the warrior who fights against his enemies (the haters of peace) and for his people. He alone can judge (administer justice to) the world with righteousness and equity (Ps 98). He alone can drive away evil and evildoers in order to bring about peace and tranquillity. There is no question that the Lukan Jesus is presented as the Coming One “ὁ ἐρχόμενος” (Luke 7), as anticipated in Isaiah, Psalms and other Old Testament texts, such as Malachi 3. Furthermore, the Lukan Jesus is the *stronger man* who has *come* upon the strong man of this world and overcomes him (Luke 11:21–23). This language echoes the Old Testament warrior language. Ironically, without the coming of Jesus, who is depicted as the *Stronger Man*, the goods (τὰ ὑπάρχοντα) of the strong man are in “peace” εἰρήνη (Luke 11:20). Hence, in order to bring about peace, Jesus has to deal with the so-called peace in which the devil holds his goods. The undoing of “peace” brings about the real peace. Now, how do we know that Yahweh's king has come to establish his kingdom of peace and righteousness? For Luke, the coming of the Davidic Messiah is unmistakable in what Jesus is already doing, that is, destroying the kingdom of the evil one (Luke 11:20). Surely the kingdom of God, which is supposed to be a kingdom of peace, justice and stability, has already come and broken in Jesus Christ (Luke 11:20).

At this stage, it is important to remember that Luke does not envisage peace without the king who brings it. Hence the peace motif is tied up with the kingdom of God motif. For this reason, like the kingdom of God, the Lukan peace is dynamic. It is part of the present reality of the kingdom of God (Luke 17:21). For now, this is an inner reality, something hidden in people's hearts: peace with God, which enables peace with other members of the Christian community; peace with God, which brings both Israel and Gentiles into the community of the people of God. Moreover, this peace is also yet to be fully revealed in judgement (cf. Luke 17:22–37). Commenting on Luke 17:21, Wright (2001:210) dismisses translating that the kingdom of God is “within you.” He slightly agrees with the idea that it is “in your midst”, but he prefers “within your grasp” and helpfully goes on to contend that

the phrase is more active. It does not just tell where the kingdom is; it tells you that you have got to do something about it. It is ‘within your grasp’; it is confronting you with a decision, the decision to believe, trust and follow Jesus.

It is not the sort of thing that is just going to happen, so that you can sit back and watch. God's sovereign plan to put the world to rights is waiting for you to sign on. That is the force of what Jesus is saying.

5.3. THE LOSS OF PEACE IN JUDGEMENT

Luke, as we have already observed, does not rule out the concept of judgement in his understanding of peace. We have already established that one purpose of the king's coming is to judge (Luke 19; cf. Ps 98; Isa 35). To judge, be it in a positive (rule/govern) or negative (punish/destroy) sense, is a key element of what it means for Jesus to be the king of God's kingdom. Peace is fully realized as the King rules in equity, as he punishes and judges his enemies.

Nonetheless, it is important at this stage to differentiate in Luke-Acts the eschatological Day of Judgement, which is *final* and *universal*, from the first-century one, which has to do with the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. It is certain in Luke that there will be a judgement which will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon than for Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum (Luke 10:14). This judgement is ambiguous. It could apply to the Romans' invasion and destruction of AD 70 (Wright, 2001:122);⁹⁶ or it could be referring to the universal and the final judgement at the end of the age (cf. Bock, 1996:1004). The latter is more plausible, especially when parallel texts in Matthew (10:15; 11:22) are considered. Further, there will be a judgement day where the Queen of the South and the men of Nineveh will *rise* with the men of Jesus's generation to condemn it (Luke 11:31, 32). This is more likely the universal Day of Judgement at the end of this age. Bock is right when he describes this judgement as final (1996:1099). It does not seem to be referring to the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by the Romans. Wright (2001:141) is correct when he maintains that "the two words used to mean 'rise' are both regular early Christian words for the resurrection: Luke expects his readers to know about the resurrection of the dead and of the great judgement that will then take place." The judgement in Luke 11:31, 32 is thus to be distinguished from the one Jesus refers to as "the day", from "his day" (17:24) and from the "days of the Son of Man" (17:26). This, according to the words of Jesus in Luke, is the day when he (the Son of Man) will be *revealed* in judgement against the nation of Israel (Luke 17:30). These are the days when, as in Daniel 7,

⁹⁶ "Rome's punishment for rebel subject would be the direct result of God's people turning away from God's way of peace" (Wright, 2001:122).

the Son of Man will be vindicated after suffering (Wright, 2001:209).⁹⁷ This is the day when Israel's house will be left desolate (Luke 13:35).⁹⁸ This conclusion is substantiated by the rest of the pericope (Luke 17:31–35).

Furthermore, it is significant to note that for Luke, these days of judgement are preceded by the suffering and rejection of the king of God's kingdom (Luke 17:25). Thus, to think of the judgement day of Luke 17:22–34 as *the* final one, rather than as the destruction of Jerusalem, contradicts the whole idea of verse 25. The word “first” (πρῶτον) in 17:25 (“but *first* he [the Son of Man] must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation”), is here to indicate the priority of Christ's suffering (and his death) with regard to time. Thus, chronologically, peace by means of destroying all enemies of God's people will not happen until peace with God is established by means of Christ's suffering, rejection and death. His glorious kingdom is not separated from his suffering.⁹⁹ Through his suffering, rejection and death, the kingdom of God will be established (cf. Luke 9:27). Some people will submit to his rule and will be at peace with God (cf. Luke 23:43). Therefore, he will come in the near future to judge Israel in AD 70, and then all the enemies of God's people at the end of the age.

A brief look at the text of Luke 19:28–44 contrasts the promised peace, to which the religious leaders are blind, to the coming destruction of Jerusalem. This seems to intimate that Jesus has come with a very real offer of peace for his enemies, which they are about to push away. So, the nation of Israel is judged because out of their own *ignorance* (“... if you, even you, had only *known*...”) they could not see that Jesus brought them peace (Luke 19:42). In short, they have rejected the Prince of Peace. Not only are they dull and ignorant, but they are also *blind*, because what would bring them peace is *hidden* from their *eyes* (Luke 19:43). “Hidden”, Stein (1992:484) suggests, “could be a divine passive i.e. God has hidden. What the blind beggar saw (Luke 18:35–43) was not seen by the leaders of Jerusalem.”¹⁰⁰ Even the Samaritan village, by not receiving Jesus on his way to Jerusalem, have clearly exhibited their unawareness and blindness to what brings about peace (Luke 9:51–56). The fact is, as already established, that it is Jesus and his kingdom that brings peace, and this is what was hidden from religious leaders. For this reason “*the days* will come upon you...” These coming *days* of Luke 19:43 are the

⁹⁷ Wright (2001:210) helpfully adduces that “The days of the Son of Man, are the days in which this figure, representing God's true people is finally vindicated after suffering. And that vindication will take a form the destruction of the city, and the temple, that have set their dace against his gospel of peace.”

⁹⁸ Cf. Stein (1992: 384).

⁹⁹ cf. Luke 24:25 “...did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?”

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Luke 10:21, “I praise you, Lord of heaven and earth, because *you* have *hidden* these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure” [my italics].

same as the *days of the Son of Man* of Luke 17:26. These days are his day (Luke 17:24), the day that he will be *revealed* (Luke 17:30). Again, as in Luke 17:31-35, the rest of the text (Luke 19:43, 44) shows that this is exactly what happened when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. So, it takes God giving people *spiritual sight* for them to embrace God's peace and avoid his judgement. All those who will not embrace Christ's way of peace will be judged, that is, punished and destroyed.

Besides, the truth that Jesus is the appointed king of God's kingdom, with the ability to bring about judgement, is intended to be a source of encouragement to the "children of peace." In the face of persecution, for example, the disciples in their prayers quote Psalm 2:1, 2 (cf. Acts 4:25–26) to inspire themselves in the preaching of Jesus, God's anointed King. Peterson (2009:200) states that "these verses express their confidence that 'the problems which they [the disciples] face are an extension of the opposition to Christ Jesus and as such are part of the will of God.'" Further, we observe through Psalm 2 that rebelling against God's Anointed is rebelling against God (Acts 4:25; cf. Ps 2:1–2). In fact, every attempt to rebel against, destroy or escape from the King's power and rule is futile, according to Psalm. 2¹⁰¹ It is significant to point out that the truth of Psalm 2 is *a statement of faith* to all "children of peace" living in the midst of wicked people. Schnabel (2012:255) indicates that "the rhetorical question 'Why?' (Ἰνατί) expresses not lament, but a conviction concerning the arrogant and vain designs of hostile powers." However, apparently even in our world today, it does not look like the King of God's kingdom is indeed in charge. To the contrary, it seems like evil (moral and natural) and violence have taken the lead, having the upper hand in our day to day life. Political unrest, turmoil and setbacks do not seem to suggest that the raging of the nations is indeed useless (Acts 4:25; cf. Ps 2:1, 2). Yet, by alluding to Psalm 2 in Acts 4, Luke intends to encourage the community of faith to stand firm and trust that *in reality* and *in the end* the plans and designs of wicked people are in vain.¹⁰² In addition, in his sermon at Pentecost, Peter makes the point that it is to Jesus that "The LORD said to my Lord: 'Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool' " in Psalm 110 is applied (Acts 2:34-36).¹⁰³ Hence, the wisest thing to

¹⁰¹ It is important to consider Larkin's (1995:79) observation that "historically, there is no inaccuracy in the believers' interpretation, for even though both Herod and Pilate declared Jesus innocent, they did cooperate with those who conspired against Jesus (Lk 23:6-25; Acts 3:13)."

¹⁰² The two aorist indicatives describe the hostility as arrogant, haughty, insolent behaviour, and their schemes are "vain", that is, "without content, without any basis, without truth without power" (Schnabel, 2012:255).

¹⁰³ Keener (2012:962) argues that "Although Luke's primary point in quoting Ps 110 is Christology, the rest of 110:1 also supports the eschatology he establishes in Acts 1:6–8 and 2:17–18. In this eschatology Jesus's present reign is an interim period until its consummation (1:6–7; 3:21). The 'horn of salvation' in David's house (Luke

do is to *serve* the Lord with fear (Ps 2:11). Again, it is clear from the quoted Psalm (2:11, 12) that it is inconceivable to serve God without kissing, that is, *submitting* and *paying allegiance* to the Son. In fact, the consequence for rebelling against the Son and not submitting to his kingdom is severe judgement and destruction (cf. Ps 2:12). To avoid this, the Psalmist advises that *blessed* are those who take refuge in the Son. As said earlier, this is what the Lord implies by stating that his kingdom is “within your grasp” (Luke 17:21). It suggests that we ought to do something about it, lest we should face God’s wrath and be judged by his Son. The happy and peaceful life is found when we lay our tools down and submit to the anointed King of God by trusting in and following him (cf. Wright 2001:210). Throughout the book of Acts, we see Jesus and his kingdom being proclaimed in the power of the Spirit. Many people from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds are ‘kissing’ the Son. By so doing, to borrow the words of Psalm 2, they are serving God with fear, rejoicing and with trembling. They are paying allegiance to the Son. Therefore, they are the *blessed ones*, because they have taken refuge in the Anointed One. In other words, these are the ones who have found peace with God (cf. Cornelius and his household, Acts 10; Lydia, Acts 16:11ff; the Jailer and his household, Acts 16:30; etc.).

5.4. CONCLUSION

We have seen that the ‘things’ that lead to peace are God’s Anointed King and his kingdom. Submission to and taking refuge in Christ is the wisest thing to do in order to be at peace with God and avoid his judgement. This response is described in Luke-Acts as “repent and believe” in Christ (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 16:32; 20:21).¹⁰⁴ Commenting on Acts 2:36, Keener (2012:963) helpfully adduces, “That Jesus is Messiah (i.e., Israel’s king) and that he is Lord at God’s right hand are truth claims that demand universal allegiance; that is, they demand response of all humanity.” Presently, Jesus and his kingdom are within our grasp. We ought to do something about it, lest we perish. Unfortunately, according to Luke, people are blind to this truth which is the only source of real peace. Tannehill (1986:36) rightly points out that, since “Jerusalem will not recognize ‘the things that lead to peace’; therefore, the hope of peace on earth is not being realized for it.”

1:69) would bring salvation from enemies (1:71, 74)—presumably ‘enemies’ here made into his footstool.” Cf. Barrett (2002:29).

¹⁰⁴ Tannehill (1986:36) makes an important link between Luke 1:79 and 19:42. He adduces that “the Benedictus ends by speaking of Israel’s feet being guided ‘into a way of peace’ (1:79); Jesus mourns because Jerusalem does not know ‘the things that leads to peace’ (1:42). The repeated statement that Jerusalem does not know what is crucial to its welfare—the things that lead to peace and the time of visitation—should also be compared with the reference to giving ‘knowledge of salvation to his people in 1:77.’ ” By making such a comparison, one can see how difficult it is to divorce the theme of peace from that of salvation in Lukan theology.

For Luke, there is no real peace without the coming of a king who is responsible for that peace. The Coming One described and anticipated by Isaiah 35 and Psalm 96 is Yahweh himself. In Luke, peace is not located in a place such as Jerusalem or the temple. Peace is located in and delivered by the *risen* Jesus (cf. Luke 24:36). Peace no longer depends on a particular system of worship, such as the Jewish sacrificial system. For Luke, when Jesus died, the veil of the temple was torn from the top to the bottom, indicating that it is the *dying* saviour who replaces the Jewish sacrificial system from which peace with God was believed to come (Luke 23:45). Thus, both the *death* and *resurrection* of Christ are keystone miracles which inform our understanding of peace in Lukan theology. One has, therefore, to submit to the kingship of Christ in order to be at peace with God and with one another. According to Luke, judgement and destruction await those who reject (cf. the Samaritan village in Luke 9:51–56; Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum in Luke 10:13–17) and refuse to yield to Jesus Christ, who is the Coming One. Jesus's real identity as king of God's people and as the priest who offers an atoning sacrifice was completely hidden from the religious leaders. God's people have all the reasons to celebrate the arrival of Jesus, for he has come to judge the world with equity. He has come to end the exile of God's people.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND SIGNIFICANCE

This chapter brings the whole project full circle. It serves to build on the insights gained in the previous chapters as it briefly explores the extent of the Lukan meaning and the affects of the peace motif upon the church in the midst of political unrest, war and various domestic conflicts, particularly in the African context. It is presupposed that the need for a peaceful world, which was anticipated by many Jews in the first century, is still a yearning for many throughout the world and on the African continent in particular. Therefore, the findings of this study will attempt to inform our way of doing ministry and presenting the gospel in Africa, especially where peace is entreated and longed for every day.

6.1. OVERVIEW

Chapter one posed the central question of this research: “What are the meaning and affects of peace in Luke-Acts?” In answering this question, chapter two undertook to present the backgrounds on which Luke might have possibly drawn in his definition of peace. In that chapter, the concept of peace in the Greco-Roman and Jewish worlds was investigated and expounded. It was argued and concluded that Luke might have been influenced by the Jewish understanding of the concept of *šālôm* as it is presented in the canonical Hebrew Bible, and particularly in Isaiah and the Psalms. Hence, peace is presented in both theological and sociopolitical categories in Luke-Acts. In other words, it is peace with God (forgiveness of sins), which has sociopolitical implications in the life of God’s people. Chapter three expanded on the motif of peace by exploring what peace meant and how it functioned in the Lukan birth narratives. It was established that including the motif of peace in the birth narrative was vital as far as Luke’s purpose for Luke-Acts is concerned. Here the focus was on the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke, with a particular focus on the *Benedictus* (Luke 1:67–79), the *Nunc Dimittis* (Luke 2:28–32), and the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* (Luke 2:14). Chapter four endeavoured to answer the central question of this paper by analyzing what Luke might have meant by the message of peace (“peace be with you”). In this chapter, both Luke 10 and Acts 10 were addressed together in order to grasp the core of the message of peace entrusted to Christ’s disciples. This chapter also considered the so-called Lukan travel narrative (Luke 9:51–19). Chapter five went on to discuss the things which, according to Luke, lead to peace. Here, the words of Jesus when he wept for Jerusalem upon arriving at that city were at the heart of the whole discussion (Luke 19:41–44).

Given the foregoing chapters, this final chapter will seek to summarize and relate the findings of this study in a way that endeavours to answer the problem statement of this research. This chapter will also venture to validate possible implications of the Lukan meaning and the affects of the peace motif for the Church in an African context. In other words, this chapter will deal with the significance of our discoveries concerning the Lukan motif of peace in relation to the people of God globally, and more specifically to the church in Africa. Thus, we address questions of how one applies the outcomes of such research in the face of many sociopolitical conflicts which are experienced daily on the African continent. This research includes concepts of gender-, identity- and religion-based conflicts, whilst also raising the effects of omissions made by many peacekeeping and peacebuilding organizations.

6.2. SUMMARY

It is worthwhile to commence with a summary of the previous chapters. Firstly, it was argued that in the Greco-Roman world, whatever people associated with peace was nothing other than the absence of war. The Pax Romana was allegedly one of the greatest achievements of the goddess Pax. In this sense, peace, as we elaborated in the second chapter of this study, was merely political. The books of Maccabees, written to reflect on the intertestamental history, facilitated our arrival at the conclusion that even the Hellenistic period's concept of peace was merely political. It is in the context of a war that peace treaties were negotiated. Messengers of peace were basically political and diplomatic envoys sent with *words of peace* to a nation supposedly stronger than their own to bargain for peaceful relations. The purpose of such treaties was avoidance of war and bloodshed.

It was observed that the concept of *peace with God*, or peace in relation to forgiveness of sin, is foreign to many, if not all, non-canonical corpora that this study has so far considered. For instance, peace in the Twelve Patriarchs is perceived in both social and political categories. Peace in those corpora could mean harmonious relationships with one another or absence of war or lack of threats of war. Peaceful relationships in a given society (according to the Testaments of Dan and Gad) occurs when certain ethical rules are upheld and implemented in a community. Furthermore, the idea of relating peace to either a *priestly* or a *kingly* figure is fundamental not only in canonical texts but also in some non-canonical literature. The Testament of Levi, the Psalms of Solomon and some Dead Sea Scrolls at some points associate the age of peace with either a Kingly and Davidic figure or a Priestly and Aaronic character, or even with both. Take, for example, the Testament of Levi, in which the kingly office is attributed to the eschatological priestly figure, who is believed to be responsible for the age of

peace. Nevertheless, the point that peace is portrayed as completely impossible and inconceivable without God's anointed one is paradigmatic in the whole study of peace, particularly in Luke-Acts. This anointed figure could be priestly (Testament of Levi) or kingly (Psalms of Solomon) or both. This interpretation is crucial in the launch of a real and lasting age of peace in both Scripture and the abovementioned corpora. For this reason, the concept of peace was perceived to be either a political category focusing on the absence of war and destruction of the enemies of peace, or a theological category with a focus on the forgiveness of sin.

Just as it is inconceivable, according to Luke, to have peace on earth (whether peace with God, peace with one another or peace as an absence of war) without the presence of and submission to a Davidic king, so too is it inconceivable without the destruction of God's enemies. The two go hand in hand. This expectation is found not only in Holy Scripture but also in the Testament of Levi, the Psalms of Solomon and in some Dead Sea Scrolls. The Lord's Anointed will establish peace as he banishes the haters of God's people. He is the one who administers justice. Justice, righteousness and salvation, together with the kingship motif, are closely associated in Scripture and in many of the abovementioned corpora, and both explain and enrich the peace motif. The Lukan motif of peace shares a lot of features with those of extrabiblical texts, except for the idea of peace as a theological category.¹⁰⁵ Peace with God as observed in the forgiveness of sin and resulting in a harmonious relationship is found only in Scripture (e.g. in Luke-Acts). So, Luke was more influenced by the Hebrew Bible, Isaiah and the Psalms in particular than by the non-canonical texts.

For Luke, the motif of peace is so central that he had to integrate it in strategic places in his writings. It begins the first volume of his work, as it is present in the birth narrative (Luke 1, 2). It appears again at the beginning and the end of the travel narrative (9:51–19:27). Further, it is found on the lips of the risen Lord speaking to his disciples (Luke 24:36). From there, Christ's envoys carry the message of peace, as we see in the whole of Luke's second volume (cf. Acts 10).¹⁰⁶ Thus, peace as a theme is evident at the *birth* of the Prince of Peace, and during

¹⁰⁵ By theological category, this study means peace with God or peace as it is identified with the forgiveness of sin.

¹⁰⁶ A careful reading of the book of Acts shows that the Cornelius story is a fundamental piece in Luke-Acts. One can tell its significance from the genius of Luke in telling the story and from the repetition technique that is employed in this story. As significant and central to the inclusion of Gentiles in the community of God's people, Luke does not leave out the motif of peace in this event. Concerning the significance of the Cornelius event in Luke-Acts, I would recommend the *New Testament and Christian Apocrypha* by Francois Bovon (2009:110–128).

his *life* and *ministry*, particularly in the opening and closing sections of the travel narratives. Peace is also developed at the *death* of Christ and his *resurrection*. To demonstrate how significant the theme of peace is, Luke shows us how it is found on the lips of people who are presented in his work as reliable and filled with the Spirit. It is associated with credible characters such as Zechariah, Simeon, and the angels, who mention and introduce the motif of peace in Luke.¹⁰⁷

In both Zechariah's (Luke 1:79) and the angels' words (Luke 2:14), we see the efficacy of the Lukan peace for the *elect* people of God, Israel. But through Simeon's words, we see how peace will also reach out to the Gentiles. Besides, it is in the *Nunc Dimittis* and the prophetic Anna's accounts where we clearly see the comfort of Israel and the redemption of Jerusalem coming to fulfilment (cf. Isaiah 52:9).¹⁰⁸ The Northern and Southern kingdoms, represented by the prophetic Anna and Simeon respectively, are united and regathered. Male (Simeon) and female (Anna) are brought together in the anticipation of the Messiah, who is the Prince of Peace. Here we see the symbiosis of peace and how it breaks geopolitical, social and gender barriers.

In the birth narrative, Luke makes significant allusions to Isaiah in relation to the motif of peace. The servant and Messianic figures of Isaiah merge into one person, the person of Christ, even though these may appear to be two figures in the book of Isaiah.¹⁰⁹ This Christ, who is responsible for peace, is associated with the motif of Davidic kingship and shepherdhood in the Lukan birth narratives. He is the one who brings peace to a non-peaceful community (represented in the shepherds). This paper has endeavoured to establish that in its second chapter.

The message of peace revealed in Maccabees is significantly different from the Lukan narrative, bearing as it does the gospel message of peace. This message is used interchangeably with the proclamation of the kingdom of God (cf. Luke 10:5–6). In Maccabees, the message of

¹⁰⁷ All these characters are well portrayed in Luke. Zechariah and his wife were upright in the eyes of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly (Luke 1:5–6). He was also filled with Spirit (Luke 1:67). Simeon was righteous and devout. The Holy Spirit was upon him (Luke 2:25). Angels are portrayed as a great company from heaven i.e. from God (Luke 2:23).

¹⁰⁸ "... for the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem" (Isaiah 52:9).

¹⁰⁹ "Jesus seems to have gained much of his understanding of what would happen to him from the book of Isaiah (although God surely must have revealed specifics to him too). In Isaiah, a regular character is referred to as the 'servant'. This servant suffers to redeem Israel and bring them back to God. The Jews did not connect the servant and the Messiah together (as far as I'm aware), but Jesus understood that this was his role: to be suffering servant and King (Pickering, Mark 10:32–45:1)

peace consists of words of peace sent for *negotiation* of a political treaty. For this reason, messengers who carry this kind of message in Maccabees are regarded simply as diplomatic envoys. However, in Luke it is Jesus's disciples who are messengers carrying the message of peace to a lost world (Luke 10; cf. Acts 28:30, 31). This message is meant to be broadcast in every house and in every town they enter. Unlike in Maccabees, this message is not a negotiation. It can either be rejected (cf. Korazin, Capernaum and Bethsaida in Luke 10:13–16) or it can be received (cf. Cornelius and his household in Acts 10). In Maccabees, when a message of peace is received by a nation supposedly stronger, a political and peaceful alliance will be made in which the weaker nation will pay tribute and allegiance to the stronger one. War and threats of war from the stronger nation will thus be avoided. In Luke, it is the “child of peace” who is predisposed to receive the gospel, summarised in the “peace be with you” (cf. Acts 13:48). Once the message of peace is received there is forgiveness of sin and peace with God. For Luke, peace with God, which entails reconciliation with God and forgiveness of sin, always results in harmonious relationships amongst members and the community of faith. However, judgement awaits all those who are not *children of peace*, that is, all those who reject the gospel. The subject of the message of peace in Luke is Jesus, who is Christ the Lord. The right response is repentance and faith. This message announces the arrival of the Davidic king. The hearers are expected to submit and pay allegiance to this King. Moreover, this momentous news (gospel) is to be received with celebration, because everything (justice, salvation from enemies, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and good governance) that peace denotes can only come forth by this King (Luke 19:37-39; cf. Psalm 96; Isaiah 35).

The phrases “peace be to this house” (Luke 10:5), “peace be with you” (Luke 24:36) and “go in peace” (Luke 7:50) are more than just greetings and au revoir formulas in Luke. Traditionally speaking, in Jewish culture it is the host who will extend the “peace be with you” to the guest. This assures them that security and safety and everything which contributes to their well-being will not be jeopardized by their peace. In Luke, however, it is those who enter a house or a town, that is, the disciples, who stand in the position of host. They ‘host’ the gospel and invite everyone to submit to the King and be part of the community of faith. The Lukan message of peace is therefore the gospel, an urgent message which announces the presence of the king and must be rightly received by faith and repentance. No one has ever submitted to this message and remained the same. It radically changes the way one views others (cf. Peter and Cornelius). It brings people into a fellowship and communion with one another. On the other hand, the Lukan “go in peace” phrase (Luke 7:50) is a statement that describes the condition of one who

has come to the true experience of peace with God through faith in Christ. For this reason, Simeon can *go in peace*, because he has come to meet salvation in Christ (Luke 2:29-32). The woman could be told to *go in peace*, because her sins are forgiven (Luke 7:49-50); she has experienced salvation and she is at peace with God. Both with Simeon's and the woman's stories, peace, though not to be confused with salvation, is never divorced from it.¹¹⁰

Furthermore, in Luke the *things* that lead to peace are the gospel and all that it entails. Real peace with God and with one another is brought forth when people's *eyes have been opened to the gospel message*. Jesus thanks God because the heart of the gospel has been revealed to his disciples (Luke 10:21–23). These ones have received and submitted to Christ, who is the guarantor of peace, and their names have been written in heaven (Luke 10:20). The King, however, weeps for Jerusalem for being *blind* and not seizing the Lord's visitation (Luke 19:42–44). When people are blind to the message of the gospel, they seek peace in a wrong direction. People come up with initiatives and enterprises that will try to enact a peaceful society which is just, safe and full of joy on their own terms. It is interesting that “the language of blinding the eyes and deafening the ears is applied to those who are directly associated with idol worship cf. Isaiah 43:8” (Beale, 2008:42). In Luke, when peace is sought in human terms and apart from the gospel and the King, who is the guarantor of peace, it brings God's judgement, as such action is likened to idolatry. Jesus is displeased with the means and efforts that the religious leaders are fabricating to make themselves right with God and then enjoy peace with him. He demonstrates his displeasure by weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41–42) and by speaking judgement against the city (Luke 19:43–45). This same idea is also evident in the tearing in two of the temple curtain from the bottom to the top (Luke 23:45). No religious ceremony, place, tradition or mediator will bring about real and lasting peace. Jesus Christ alone is the giver of peace.

6.3. TENTATIVE ANSWER TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The Lukan meaning of peace and its affects have not been easy to pinpoint. The theology of peace in Luke-Acts is presented against a backdrop of conflicts and series of unrest in the first century.¹¹¹ Regardless of the so-called Pax Romana of Luke's day, the world was not peaceful

¹¹⁰ The link between peace and salvation is so thin that many have use them interchangeably. Commenting on Luke 10:5–6, Tannehill (1986:237) argues that “the instructions to the seventy-two concerning the peace greetings should probably be understood in light of other passages in Luke-Acts in which peace represents salvation.”

¹¹¹ For example, occupation by foreign troops, class conflicts, social banditry (cf. the parable of the Good Samaritan), revolutionary prophets and messianic pretenders (cf. Acts 5:36) and misconduct of Roman officials (Ford, 2010:3–10) were all realities during the time of Luke's writing.

in its real sense.¹¹² In fact, one of the startling statistics demonstrates that “only eight percent of the time since the beginnings of *recorded history* has the world been entirely at peace.¹¹³ In over 3,100 years only 286 have been warless and 8,000 treaties have been broken in this time” (Tan, 1988:987) [italics mine]. Though the Pax Romana became a song of many, for Luke, *peace on earth* was still missing. This peace is identified neither with Rome nor with Caesar, but with the birth (the coming into the world) of the Saviour, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:10–14). Furthermore, the *peace in heaven* is associated with the triumphal entry of the King in Jerusalem (Luke 19:37–44), and not with Rome. In a nutshell, Luke does not identify peace with either the Pax Romana or with Caesar, but with the *birth* (cf. Luke 1–2), *life and ministry* (cf. Luke 9:51–19; cf. 7:50), *death*¹¹⁴ (cf. Luke 19) and *resurrection* (Luke 24:36) of the Davidic Messiah. Hence, when Luke speaks about peace, he broadly means everything that is related to the messianic expectation of the age: peace as it was anticipated in the Old Testament, and particularly in the book of Isaiah (cf. Isaiah 11). Peace means establishment of a just and righteous society away from physical and spiritual enemies of God’s people. Thus, justice, righteousness, safety, good governance, judgement of the wicked and prosperity are all features and pieces of the peace motif in Luke-Acts. Peace is the category of an eschatological age which has been inaugurated with the Christ event only to be fully realised at the end of age (Luke 11:31, 32; cf. Luke 17:20–34?), when the enemies of God’s people will completely be dealt with by the Davidic king.

The primary focus of the Lukan peace, as this paper has adduced, is peace with God, which comes as a result of salvation and the forgiveness of sin (cf. Luke, 2:29–32; 7:48–50; 23:34;

¹¹² Sölle (1983:18) points out that there is another side of the Pax Romana which others have described: “this world as soul-less and empty, an empire of absolute moral corruption.” This is what Sölle calls “the other side of the *Pax-Romana*”. Luke’s letter was not penned at Rome’s centre, where people “enjoyed life”, but on “the periphery, in small countries like Palestine, and the whole of north Africa. What you find there is starvation, people living just on the survival level, joblessness, lack of food, water and medicine.” Reflecting on the Roman history, Tacitus (1989:10) writes “Even granting that the deaths of Cassius and of the Bruti were sacrifices to a hereditary enmity (though duty requires us to waive private feuds for the sake of the public welfare), *still Pompeius had been deluded by the phantom of peace*, and Lepidus by the mask of friendship. Subsequently, Antonius had been lured on by the treaties of Tarentum and Brundisium, and by his marriage with the sister, and paid by his death the penalty of a treacherous alliance. No doubt, there was peace after all this, *but it was a peace stained with blood*; there were the disasters of Lollius and Varus, the murders at Rome of the Varros, Egnatii, and Juli” [italics mine].

¹¹³ The word “peace” here must be understood in its political sense, i.e., the opposite or the absence of war. These statistics are probably true only as far as recorded history is concerned. Strife, conflict and war at all levels of human societies have always been the reality of this fallen world. Moreover, the absence of peace with God is the fundamental reason that human societies have never been at peace in its real sense.

¹¹⁴ Not finding peace in Jerusalem as a pilgrim who began his journey from Luke 9:51, Jesus proceeds to the cross, where he demonstrates that peace is through forgiveness of sin (Luke 23:34). He also declares the end of the Jewish system (there is no peace in it), as we see in the tearing of the curtain in the temple (Luke 23:45). On the cross he makes peace with the child of peace who submitted to his kingship and lordship (Luke 23:43).

Acts 10). It is this peace which enables us to have peace with one another. The reason why the community of God's people can experience acceptance of one another (cf. Jews and Gentiles in Acts 10; male and female in Luke 2:25-38) and harmonious relationships is that they themselves have first experienced that same peace with God through the forgiveness of their sins as they come to meet the Prince of Peace. Peace for Luke does not come through an institution, nor can it be found in a physical locality such as the temple or the city of Jerusalem. The Lukan peace comes with the person of Christ, and it is found only in and through him. Therefore, there is no peace without the gospel, according to Luke. That is why, when sending his messengers on a mission trip, the Prince of Peace instructs them to say, "Peace be with you" to every house they enter (Luke 10:5, 6). This means to proclaim the arrival and nearness of the kingdom of God, which was embodied in the presence of the Lord's Messiah (Luke 10:8). Consequently, the King is to be introduced and proclaimed to the lost and broken world, as we see in Luke 10, Acts 10 and in the whole book of the Acts. The *proclamation* of the King of peace and *submission* to him are fundamental pieces for which the Lukan peace advocates. A peaceful society is created *with* children of peace (10:5, 6), or with people upon whom God's favour rests (Luke 2:14). It is eventually created *without* haters of peace. The gathering of these children of peace is accomplished through evangelising, which is the proclamation of the message of the Kingdom of God (cf. Acts 28:30–31). The latter is the gospel and, as we have already mentioned, it consists of the things that lead to peace but which were hidden from the religious leaders (Luke 19:42–44).

The more the gospel is preached, the more the children of peace submit to the kingship and lordship of Christ, leading to a greater possibility of experiencing peaceful and harmonious relationship in any given society. But because the children of peace are still living in a broken world and intermingling with haters of peace, it is hard to experience peace in its full sense in this age. It will, however, be experienced in its fullness at the end of this age, when Christ will return and all haters of peace will be destroyed as justice and righteousness are established by Christ, so that full peace in all its effects will be experienced with God and with one another (Luke 11:31, 32). Thus, peace in Luke is not only a theological category but also a sociopolitical category as well. Like the kingdom of God, it is both present and future. It is internal and external at one and the same time.

6.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

In concluding, this paper will put forward the significance of the Lukan study of peace and its affects for those living and doing ministry in contentious environments and in desperate need

for peace. In other words, it is necessary to elaborate on how much the findings of this research should inform any peacekeeping and peacebuilding organizations, especially those working in Africa. What, according to Luke, is the message they are to carry as they seek to promote peace in a community? What fundamental pieces are not to be left out as they strive for justice, righteousness, prosperity and safety in a given society?

One of the essential things when doing ministry in our fallen world is that one must keep in mind that there are elements that must never be omitted from our theology and quest for peace. Luke informs us that faith and submission to the Davidic Messiah are crucial as far as the real experience of peace is concerned. Peace begins and ends in peace with God. For this reason, the gospel that accurately presents Jesus as Saviour and Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11) must *urgently*¹¹⁵ be the content of our evangelising in this world of conflict. The more children of peace we have, the less conflict and unrest we will experience in this world. This peace with God is the one that heals gender-based (cf. Simeon and the prophetess Anna accounts in Luke 2)¹¹⁶ and identity-based conflicts (cf. Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10). However, the hope for the return of Christ at the end of the age should never be sidelined in our presentation of peace. It is only then that what started (on a small scale) as inner peace on earth (cf. Luke 17:20–21) will be fully realized as external peace in all aspects of life in the new creation.¹¹⁷ It is the kingdom of God and of his Christ which will bring about perfect justice, good governance, righteous judgement, and prosperity. As for now, the people of God, who are a community of children of peace, should emulate and live out the principles of God’s kingdom (Luke 6:17–49) to which they have submitted, in order to create a harmonious atmosphere and show a glimpse of peace in their environment. This will reduce xenophobic attacks in some parts of our continent, tribal and civil wars, racial discriminations, injustices and other vices which do not reflect any peaceful society.

Finally, as stated in the previous chapter, the picture of our world and our day-to-day experience do not seem to convince us that the king of God’s kingdom, namely Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is indeed in charge of our world. Our world, and Africa in particular, is in

¹¹⁵ Luke 10:4, “Do not take a purse or a bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.”

¹¹⁶ A male figure (Simeon) and a female figure (the prophetess Anna) are brought together in a picture at the birth of the Messiah. Isaiah 52:9 (“... the LORD has comforted his people and he has redeemed Jerusalem”) is split in two and shared among them. Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel (Luke 2:25), and Anna was looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem (Luke 2:32). This combination of Anna and Simeon is a decoration of restoration and peace between the Northerners (Anna from the tribe of Asher) and the Southerners (Simeon likely a native of Jerusalem on the South).

¹¹⁷ “When you pray, say: ‘... Your kingdom come’ ” (Luke 11:2).

a total mess. It has always appeared so, even in the days of Christ's apostles (cf. Acts 4). For this reason, Psalm 2 (quoted by the apostles in Acts 4) is to be taken as a *statement of faith*. Hence, by referring to Psalm 2 in Acts 4, Luke intends to encourage the community of faith to stand firm and trust that *in reality* and *in the end* the plans and designs of wicked people, which disturb the sociopolitical peace of God's people, are in vain. Against the picture of our world that seems to show that moral and natural evils have taken their lead, Psalm 2 is a statement of faith. It is, therefore, a comforting thing for God's people to know that the hostility of people of this world—their arrogance, haughty and insolent behaviour and their evil schemes—are without content, without any basis, without truth and power (cf. Schnabel, 2012:255). This truth makes all children of peace rejoice in the midst of afflictions and sorrows. In addition, in his sermon at Pentecost, Peter makes the point that it is to Jesus that “The LORD said to my Lord: ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool’” is applied (Acts 2:34 - 36). “Peace be with you” (Luke 24:36).

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