Salvation, revelation, and rejection: Foundations for a hermeneutic of certainty in Luke 1-7

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Preface

It is with a mixture of sentiments that I arrive at the conclusion of this study.

On the one hand, it is profoundly satisfying to know that this project is the fruit of an international partnership between the Faculty of Theology of the North-West University and the Instituto Bíblico Português (Portuguese Bible Institute). While this study was largely completed in Portugal, it would have been impossible without South African digital resources and expertise; I am deeply grateful for the assistance, encouragement and support of these two partner institutions and, particularly, of Dr Albert Coetsee, Dr Fabiano Fernandes and Dr Hermanus Taute.

On the other hand, it no small source of sadness that my mother, Cheryl, was unable to see this study in its finished state; after a long and valiant battle with neurodegenerative disease, she went home to be with the Lord in May of 2021. This project would have been impossible without the foundations of critical thinking and argumentative writing she labored for years to lay as a homeschooler. Thank you, mom.

As Luke the evangelist built on the foundations laid by the eyewitnesses and servants of the Word who labored before him, it is my sincere hope that this study's humble contribution honors the investment of those who have invested in me and labored before me.

…ἵνα ἐπιγνῷς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν. (Luke 1:4)

Matthew Watson

Summary

This study answers recent calls to explore the narratives of the gospels as “proper conclusion[s to] an already existing and presupposed narrative” (Wright, 2013:194). Such an approach necessitates going beyond narrative pattern and theme to discover how the gospel’s underlying hermeneutic aimed to challenge and respond to reader presupposition. This dissertation investigates the way human reaction to God’s revealed plan and commissioned agents fuels the progression of the narrative and serves to indicate key features of Luke’s interpretive framework, especially in light of Old Testament expectation. Luke’s hermeneutic legitimates John, Jesus and the apostles as divinely appointed signs that will result in both salvation and rejection, as well as revealers of God’s plan to bring about the expected fulfillment in unorthodox fashion and with unforeseen timing. These hermeneutical features provide the reader with an interpretive framework that supplies certainty in the face of a gospel narrative that was likely to defy first century presupposition.

Key terms

New Testament studies, Luke-Acts, Hermeneutics, Narrative theology, Literary criticism, Certainty, Salvation, Rejection, Conflict, Persecution

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BDAG	3rd Edition of Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich and Danker's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature (cited as Danker *et al*., 2000)
ESV	English Standard Version
LEB	Lexham English Bible
LXX	The Septuagint
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NET	New English Translation
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
THGNT	The Greek New Testament: Greek text produced at Tyndale House, Cambridge
UBS 5	The United Bible Societies' 5th revised edition of the Greek New Testament

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1.1 Background

The last few decades of study in Luke-Acts have witnessed a profound paradigm shift. Throughout the beginning and middle of the 20th century, redaction and source critical approaches dominated scholarship and Lukan studies saw a great deal of focus on historiography and historicity, the delayed parousia and a division between “Jewish” eschatology and “Christian” eschatology (Conzelmann, 1960:135-136; 1969:307-317; Bauckham, 1980:4). In the 1970s and 80s this approach gradually gave way to more literary studies which viewed the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts as complementary volumes united by a single, multifaceted perspective which could be analyzed by choosing a particularly recurrent theme in the Lukan corpus and tracing it from the earliest episodes of the gospel through to Acts’ conclusion in Rome.

Given the impact of Conzelmann’s division of Lukan theology along Jew/Gentile lines, it is unsurprising that Jew/Gentile themes have remained among the most contested topics in Lukan studies over the last half century. The perception that Gentile inclusion in God’s project of salvation represented the rejection of Israel initially resulted in a stylized standard reading that is thankfully no longer standard (Brawley, 1987:159; Bock, 2012:288-289, 300-301). Recent decades have seen the gradual emergence of more critical and nuanced understandings of the roles of Israel and other nations, particularly as seen through the prism of individual and collective responses to God’s intervention (Jervell, 1972:44-61; Farris, 1985:157-158; Bosch, 1991:97-98; Jervell, 1996:34-43; Forbes, 2000:69-71; Reinstorf, 2002:1282; Grams, 2009:107-108; cf. Irik, 1982:283; Meyer, 1986:95). Luke’s narrative presents the realization of God’s plan as a of result human agency and characterizes human responses to it as complex and varied. The mere fact that Luke-Acts characterizes reactions from individuals, families, social and religious groups and national/imperial authority figures attests to the complexity of a multi-faceted presentation that defies absolutist and unilateral conclusions (Brawley, 1987:159-60; Gowler, 1991:305-317; Bachmann, 2011:61; cf. Rese, 1999:185-186).

Luke’s multi-faceted characterization has been further supported by studies highlighting the legitimating role conflict, suffering and persecution play in confirming God’s agents and their message of salvation before Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles (Moessner, 1986; Cunningham, 1997; Tabb, 2015). Successive literary studies have shown that nuanced and multi-faceted

treatments of theological themes is a common literary characteristic of Luke-Acts, reflected in such themes as God's divine plan for all nations (Talbert, 1992:20-21; Squires, 1993; Bachmann, 2011:80-82) and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy/echo of Old Testament thought (Kummel, 1957; Bock, 1987; Stenschke, 2009:89-90). It is worth noting that the most consistently cited and well-reviewed literary studies of recent generations share a common tendency to relate Luke's multi-faceted narrative characterizations back to his authorial and hermeneutical aims. This extra layer of literary sensitivity helps safeguard the inter-textual integrity of a hypothesis by ensuring its consistency with Luke's underlying hermeneutical concerns.

In light of the current abundance of high quality literary studies, the question must be posed: Is there need for another one? The present author firmly believes that there is a need to follow the paradigm shift noted in Lukan studies from single theme approaches to synthetic projects which weave multiple themes together into a comprehensive Lukan hermeneutic and theology. This shift has been reflected by the authorial progression of the careers of prominent Lukan theologians of the previous generation. J. Jervell (1972; 1996), J.A. Fitzmyer (1981; 1989; 1998) and D.L. Bock (1987; 1994; 1996; 2012) all rose to prominence by following a single thematic thread through Luke-Acts and/or writing technical commentaries before turning to the synthetic task of analyzing his theology as a whole. F. Bovon (1987; 2002, 2013) and J.B. Green (1995; 1997; 2015; 2021) followed an inverse trajectory in their monographs, first analyzing Luke's theology before moving on to produce detailed commentaries.

It is with immense respect for the groundwork laid by these and other scholars that the present author proposes to adopt a similarly synthetic approach and outline a Lukan hermeneutic based on the programmatic narratives at the beginning of the gospel. This study proposes to examine the opening chapters of Luke's gospel by applying well established literary techniques and respecting narrative sequence. In this way, the natural evolution of the reader's encounters with human reaction to divine agency will be highlighted and analyzed. Such an approach guarantees that the complex states of conflict and persecution in the climactic stages of Luke and Acts are not divorced from their humble beginnings in the gospel's opening chapters. In keeping with the synthetic approach outlined above, the author proposes to cross-examine the results of this progressive narrative study against the conclusions of previous decades of scholarship with the aim of clarifying the role human response to God's plan plays in pointing the reader toward Luke's interpretive framework.

1.1.2 Problem statement

Proposing to work synthetically and build on the results of an already vast body of Lukan scholarship requires adjustments in terms of scope. Examining human reactions in the Lukan text and integrating them with Luke's interpretive and theological framework makes it impossible

to sufficiently investigate the entirety of the gospel, let alone Acts. The author therefore proposes to limit his study to the effective narrative arc of John the Baptist, covered by the first seven chapters of Luke's gospel (i.e. Luke 1:1-7:50).

This choice is strategic because of the unique role John plays in Luke's narrative. Luke sets his ministry up to parallel that of Jesus in the gospel's opening chapters and Jesus' review of John's ministry in 7:18-35 ties off many of these expectational threads for both the reader and the audience in the narrative (Bock, 2012:70-71). Chapters one through seven contain the principal programmatic episodes that establish the expectation that merciful salvation will be a chief focus of God's revealed plan for the ministries of Jesus and the apostles. These chapters also exemplify how this salvation will challenge the presupposed narratives of many within Israel, defying their notion of what prophetic ministry and national restoration should look like and occasioning episodes of rejection and growing opposition to God's agents over the course of Luke-Acts. Thus, while Luke 7:50 is not a major structural turning point in the gospel of Luke, it is nonetheless an effective point of demarcation for the emphases of this study.

Two notes by D.L. Bock in relation to Israel's Scriptures are of great interest in justifying the decision to explore Luke 1-7. Bock's groundbreaking 1987 study linking Old Testament prophecy to Lukan Christology spent an entire chapter on the infancy narratives and more than 59 pages on the first seven chapters of the gospel, devoting more than a fifth of his discussion of Luke-Acts to these foundational chapters (1987:55-114). In his 2012 study, Bock notes that of the twelve references to Israel in Luke's gospel, seven of them appear in the infancy narratives, highlighting the programmatic role these chapters have in establishing reader expectations for the rest of Luke-Acts (2012:280). This emphasis on key themes early in the gospel is also highly reflective of first century Hellenistic rhetorical and literary convention (Kennedy, 1984:36-37). These observations provide the present author with confidence that Luke 1-7 provides a sample size small enough to permit satisfying interaction with reactions of acceptance, opposition, rejection, conflict and persecution in the text. It is also strategically large enough to guarantee adequate exploration of potential reader presuppositions through the lens of Old Testament expectation.

While Luke 1-7 provides an ample sample size for exploring the majority of the themes and expectations created in Luke's infancy narratives, the gospel deliberately leaves a selection of themes (prominent among them is Jesus' predicted eternal reign over "the house of Jacob") undeveloped and "hanging", not just in Luke 1-7 but right through Jesus' crucifixion. Luke touches on these themes again in the post-resurrection review scenes of Luke 24 and in the disciples' eschatological questions in Acts 1. As studying the entirety of Luke's gospel in narrative order would represent a scope *far beyond* the limits of this study, the present author proposes to use Luke 24 and Acts 1 as a "testing ground" to confirm that the hermeneutical

framework outlined in Luke 1-7 remains valid in these transitional chapters of Luke-Acts and to eliminate “loose threads” that Luke himself only ties off at the end of gospel.

The present author also considers it essential that this study contemplate Luke’s interpretive framework against the rich backdrop of the Biblical canon as a whole. N.T. Wright has recently suggested that further study in all four gospels is needed to clarify how each author attempts to justify the unexpected events presented as the proper outcome of the Old Testament narrative: “All four Gospels seem to me to be saying, in their different ways: ‘This is the ending you were waiting for, even though it doesn’t look like you thought it would’” (2013:193). The present author concurs, emphasizing the need to guarantee that any literary framework that emerges from the text corresponds to reader presuppositions, which Wright rightly indicates depend heavily on Israel’s scriptures (2013:190-194).

These concerns raise the question: How do the human responses of acceptance, opposition, rejection, conflict and persecution presented in the narratives of Luke 1-7 contribute to the construction of an interpretive framework that makes sense of first century expectations and presuppositions? The validity of this question is underscored by the gospel’s preface (another Lukan peculiarity) where the author outlines his purpose: to provide certainty or surety (ἀσφάλεια) for his readership regarding events about which Theophilus had already been instructed. Recent studies suggest that answering this primary question depends on the multi-faceted examination of more specific questions:

- How are human responses of acceptance, opposition, rejection, conflict and persecution previewed, presented and developed by the text of Luke 1-7?
- How does the preexisting influence of Old Testament expectation interact with the narrative development of human responses in Luke 1-7 to establish foundations for a hermeneutic of certainty?
- How does the interpretive framework of certainty introduced in Luke 1-7 apply to understanding the episodes of acceptance of salvation, as well as those of rejection, opposition, conflict and persecution in the rest of Luke-Acts and, especially, in the transitional chapters of Luke 24 and Acts 1?

1.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim of this dissertation is to conduct a literary study of Luke 1-7 in narrative order to determine how Luke’s gospel lays foundations for understanding and interpreting acceptance, opposition, rejection, conflict and persecution in light of first century presupposition.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- evaluate and demonstrate how the text of Luke 1-7 previews, presents and develops human reactions of acceptance, opposition, rejection, conflict and persecution in response to divine agency;
- evaluate and demonstrate how likely reader presuppositions based on Old Testament expectation and Luke's development of human responses to divine agency in Luke 1-7 contribute to establishing an interpretive framework that provides the certainty outlined in Luke 1:1-4;
- evaluate and demonstrate how the framework introduced in Luke 1-7 allows the reader to interpret acceptance, rejection, opposition, conflict and persecution through the rest of Luke-Acts, especially in the gospel's concluding chapter (Luke 24) and the opening episodes of Acts (Acts 1).

Prior to advancing to the central theoretical argument and methods of this study, it should be noted that the main aim's proposal to proceed "in narrative order" (i.e. the order of Luke's text rather than according to a topical rearrangement of the text) means that these objectives will not correspond to successive chapters of the study (i.e. the first objective will not correspond to chapter 2, with the second objective corresponding to chapter 3, etc.). To the contrary, *each* chapter will trace Luke's masterful use of human reactions, Old Testament expectation and the construction of a hermeneutical framework to ensure that the study honors the organic development of these themes in the order the original reader would have encountered them.

This aim has the added benefit of helping to minimize (as much as is possible) the human tendency to "clean up" difficulties and inconsistencies through reorganization into topics, as well as the temptation to "back read" more developed ideas and linguistic terms into their earliest uses. This approach has resulted in a disproportionately extensive chapter 2 (relative to the other chapters), as the preface and infancy narratives are extraordinarily rich in human reactions, Old Testament expectation and indications of the "master lines" of Luke's hermeneutical framework. In order to assist the reader in following the "big picture progress" of these aims, each chapter contains an introduction and conclusion outlining that particular chapter's aims and contributions to achieving these objectives.

1.3 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

The central theoretical argument of this study is that the prophetic previews, programmatic narratives and internal interpretations of Luke 1-7 prepare Luke's reader to accept the following conclusion: the plan of God as realized through the ministries of John the Baptist, Jesus and the apostles is the long-expected revelation of God's salvation for Israel and all peoples, in spite of

differences between the plan's realization and the expectations and presupposed narratives prevalent within Jewish society in the first-century. This central hermeneutic provides the reader with certainty by demonstrating that God's divine plan has always provoked complex human reactions. As was true with the prophets of the Old Testament, the message of God's agents in Luke-Acts is prophetically previewed to produce acceptance, leading to inclusion in the Christian community and mission, as well as rejection, leading to varying degrees of opposition, conflict and persecution. This framework legitimates the new Christian community as the next chapter in God's unfolding narrative, in spite of perplexing events. As the gospel's final chapter and the opening episode of Acts confirm, the unorthodox path of Luke's gospel is the direction the narrative had to go according to Old Testament prophecy and God's plan.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

In order to determine how Luke's gospel lays the foundations for the hermeneutic of certainty highlighted above, this study employs the well established techniques of literary criticism as applied to the narrative genre, placing the priority of investigation on authorial intention and reader comprehension, setting, purpose, structure, form and pattern (Hayes & Holladay, 2007:90). As a result, this study highlights Luke's frequent use of literary devices such as prevision through prophetic or angelic message, Old Testament reference, programmatic episodes that establish repeated patterns, and revision clarifying the author's interpretation of a particular character or theme. This methodological decision is motivated by the author's belief that much more can be gleaned about the theology of Luke-Acts by an examination of how literary threads within the two volumes are developed and interpreted than can be gathered by a comparison of Luke's gospel with the other Synoptic Gospels or their proposed common source material(s). Whatever conclusions Luke's reader would have arrived at upon finishing the text would have been influenced by the events, characterizations and interpretations presented in the two volumes, rather than by a dissection of the narrative in comparison with Mark. An excellent defense of this method, its assumptions and procedures can be found in the introduction of Scott Cunningham's monograph "Through many tribulations: The theology of persecution in Luke-Acts" (1997:14-21).

Furthermore, the present author insists that Luke's theology be read in light of his self-declared purpose to provide interpretational certainty (ἀσφάλεια) for his reader(s). While a wide variety of themes and literary threads can legitimately be distinguished and studied throughout the two volumes, any study which does not attempt to relate the principal themes of the narrative to the purposes Luke sets out for the project in his preface neglects a foundational hermeneutical tool provided by the author for the reader's benefit.

To that end, the study proposes the following methods:

- in order to determine how the text of Luke 1-7 previews, presents and develops human reactions of acceptance, opposition, rejection, conflict and persecution in response to divine agency, a detailed literary study will be conducted in narrative order.
- in order to determine how Old Testament expectation and reader presupposition may have interacted with the human reactions outlined in Luke 1-7 to provide an interpretive framework for certainty, the results of the author's textual study will be synthesized with recent scholarship exploring Scriptural fulfillment and programmatic legitimation of God's revealed plan.
- in order to determine how Luke's hermeneutical framework for certainty facilitates the reader's interpretation of episodes of acceptance, opposition, rejection, conflict and persecution in the rest of Luke-Acts, the synthetic framework will be applied to Luke 24 and Acts 1 alongside the conclusions of recent scholarship in order to demonstrate how Luke's deft literary program challenges presuppositions and provides alternate interpretations to direct the reader toward secure conclusions.

1.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study is undertaken in compliance with the ethics policies of the North-West University and its Faculty of Theology. The highest respect for the work of other scholars will be maintained throughout and plagiarism avoided by complying with rules for the proper formatting of sources according to the Harvard method as presented in the North-West University's Referencing Guide. This literary study does not involve any form of direct interaction with participants through interviews, surveys, etc. and therefore represents a low risk study with regard to research ethics.

1.6 DEFINITIONS

1.6.1 Biblical text and translations

Except where otherwise indicated, all Biblical text presented in English represents the author's own translation from the original Greek. The Greek text used throughout this study reflects the 4th corrected printing of the UBS 5. Where particulars of translation and/or interpretation are being compared, modern English Bible translations will be referred to according to their commonly used abbreviations, which have been included in the list of abbreviations above.

1.6.2 “Luke” as original author and “Theophilus” as original reader/community

As is the case with all four canonical gospels, the author of Luke and of Acts is not explicitly identified by the text. However, the tradition of the early church was nearly unanimous in pointing to Luke, the companion of Paul, as the author of both documents (Danker, 1988:1; Bock, 1994:5; 2012:32-37, Carson & Moo, 2005:205-206). Given the early church’s preference for apostolic authorship, this singular identification of a non-apostle and a lack of convincing alternatives has resulted in widespread acceptance of Luke as the author of both documents.

In contrast with the unnamed author, the primary recipient of both documents is named: Theophilus (κράτιστε Θεόφιλε / ὦ Θεόφιλε – Luke 1:3 / Acts 1:1), but little about this person or pseudonymous group seems to have been recorded in early Christian tradition. Important information about both the original author and reader can be gathered from the gospel’s preface (Luke 1:1-4), which will be explored in the opening sections of chapter 2. More problematic is the inherent stylistic and linguistic tension that exists between Luke’s avoidance of Hebrew/ Aramaic names/titles widely used by the other Synoptic gospels on the one hand (Fitzmyer, 1981:58) and his appropriation and repetition of peculiarly Septuagintistic/Semitic expressions on the other, a topic which will be explored in section 2.3.2.

These linguistic and stylistic peculiarities are clearly deliberate authorial choices made with the reader in mind and are therefore important elements to consider in Luke’s construction of hermeneutical foundations. On the other hand, the information contained in Luke’s prologue, the gospel’s elevated literary style and the linguistic peculiarities mentioned above have been diversely pressed to justify conclusions about the ethnic and religious identity of Luke and/or Theophilus, ranging from Greek/Gentile Christian (Luke/both – Godet, 1875:16; Creed, 1930:xiii and many older commentaries; Theophilus/Luke’s community – Fitzmyer, 1981:57-59; Brown, 1997:270-271; LaVerdiere, 1980:xiii-xviii; Carson & Moo, 2005:211) or Gentile God-fearer (Luke – Brown, 1997:268; Bovon, 2002:8-9; Carson & Moo, 2005:206; both – Bock, 1994:5-7; 15) to Jewish Christian (Goodenough, 1966:51-59; Jervell, 1972:17; 173-177; Ellis, 1983:51-53) to non-Jewish Semite (Luke – Fitzmyer, 1981:41-47).

The objectives of the present study do not require the identification of a specific ethnic-religious profile for either Luke as author or for Theophilus as original receiver (and likely representative of a faith community where both Luke and Acts would have been read, distributed and discussed). The present author therefore proposes to glean indications from the text about the “level of familiarity” with the Jewish Scriptures and interpretive tradition, as well as with early Christian teaching which Luke’s reader was likely to have possessed. Therefore, this study uses the term “Luke” as neutrally as possible to refer to the original author of both the gospel and Acts and “Theophilus/Luke’s reader” to refer to the original reader, without underlying presuppositions as to ethnic/religious identity.

1.6.3 The literary unity of Luke-Acts

In spite of objections (such as Parsons & Pervo, 1993), there is a remarkably strong consensus in favor of the literary unity of Luke and Acts (generally referred to as Luke-Acts) as the two volumes of a single literary project, directed to the same readership by the same author (Green, 2011:101-199; Bock, 2012:55-61). There is a remarkable unity to the two volumes, both in terms of literary style and theological themes. While the volumes deal with distinct topics (God's work of salvation through John and Jesus in the gospel and His expansion of this work through the Holy Spirit and the apostles in Acts) and there is a certain degree of tension between them (tensions also exists within each volume, as this study will demonstrate), a majority of recent voices agree that their unity far outweighs the tension.

Recent studies have argued in favor of a more nuanced understanding of the unitary hyphen in "Luke-Acts" (such as the essays in Gregory & Rowe, 2010) and an increasing number of authors speak of both Luke-Acts and Luke *and* Acts (Bock, 2012:60-61). The present author recognizes the enormous benefits of an increasingly nuanced understanding of the specific inter-volume relationships between Luke and Acts, while agreeing with the consensus that there is little reason to doubt the general literary and theological unity of Luke-Acts. This general unity is an underlying presupposition of the present study and, where justified, the term Luke-Acts will be applied to refer to it.

CHAPTER 2

FOUNDATIONS FOR CERTAINTY AND FRUSTRATION: THE DIVINE STIMULATION OF HUMAN EXPECTATION IN LUKE 1-2

2.1 INTRODUCTION

There are perhaps few better analogies for Luke's authorial activity in chapters 1 and 2 of the gospel than that of "laying foundations". Both the preface of 1:1-4 and the annunciation-conception-birth-confirmation narratives of John, Jesus and their families in 1:5-2:52 are of enormous importance to the rest of the gospel, particularly in terms of establishing rhetorical "proof" (both internal and external, c.f. Kennedy, 1984:12-16) for the legitimacy of Luke's gospel and its characters. As the well documented criticisms of Conzelmann's method (Minear, 1966:111-130; Tannehill, 1992:48-49; Strauss, 1995:77, among others) have established, any attempt to interpret Luke's gospel *without* paying due attention to these foundational chapters errs at the onset. This chapter, therefore, will investigate what sort of foundation Luke has laid in his preface and infancy narratives, particularly with regard to God's plan and agents, human reactions and the interpretation/presentation of events in light of Old Testament precedent.

As was noted in the previous chapter, enormous scholarly attention has been paid to Luke's presentation of God's plan, as evidenced by internal parallels between Luke's characters (O'Toole, 1983; Moessner, 1986; Edwards, 2017; Booth, 2018:50-52) and intertextual parallels with both the Old Testament (Mattill, Jr. 1975:15-17; Allison, Jr., 2016:820-822) and the Greco-Roman literary world (Johnson, 1989:252; Squires, 1993:22-23; Kochenash, 2018:323-324). Luke follows observable patterns to introduce key characters, to legitimate their words and actions as agents of God's plan and to establish expectations for the arc their narrative will follow in the gospel. These patterns are frequently accompanied by the typical "external proofs" of Hellenistic rhetoric, at least as evidenced in the writings of the New Testament: parallel with and/or citation of Old Testament Scripture, the performance of miracles and the witness of divine messengers such as prophets and angels (Kennedy, 1984:14). This chapter will, therefore, pay particular attention to these features of Luke's narrative.

Scholarly attention has also focused on human reactions to God's plan, both positive and negative. Positive responses such as joyful praise, acceptance, repentance, conversion and involvement in God's ongoing program in Luke-Acts set up to major events like the recruitment of the twelve and other disciples, the commissioning and establishment of the early Christian church and Paul's missionary activity (Green, 2015:2-4). Significant attention has also been paid

to negative responses, which are most visible in the violent episodes of conflict and persecution in Acts. As the present author argued in chapter 1 and as others have noted (Cunningham, 1997:42-43), mono-focal approaches that take Acts as their launching point tend to divorce the desired object of study from its narrative roots in the gospel of Luke. It is therefore essential to trace the origins of these conflicts to Luke's foundational presentation of God's plan and God's responses to the very first human reactions to His announcements and movements.

The literature review in 1.1.1 of the previous chapter cited a few of the many studies that have explored Luke's use of Old Testament echo, pattern and proclamation, both to shape the structure and interpretation of narrative episodes and as proof of the legitimacy of the Christian movement and its teachings. In this regard, Kennedy makes an important distinction between the argumentation of classical and Christian rhetoric: "In classical rhetoric logos is ordinarily regarded as probable argument, not logical certainty, but Christians came to regard the arguments of Scripture as divinely revealed and thus certain" (1984:15-16). Thus, in light of the evidence in Luke's preface that both he and his reader shared a common knowledge of Christian teachings and traditions, it is entirely logical to assume: if Luke-Acts were to successfully demonstrate that the activity of John, Jesus and the disciples was consistent with Scripture and the trademark characteristics of God's action in the past, then the result for Luke's reader would be precisely the type of certainty to which Kennedy refers and Luke's own preface alludes. It is worth noting that, by the same logic, if Luke-Acts were to demonstrate that the Christian arguments in the first-century's widening Jewish-Christian schism possessed greater consistency with Scripture and God's past activity than the objections of the Jews, then the degree of certainty provided to the reader would be even more emphatic.

The remainder of this chapter will trace Luke's foundations in chapters 1-2 by following the three currents outlined in the preceding paragraphs: God's announcement and presentation of His plan, the reactions of human characters and the presence of Old Testament pattern and precedent. As this chapter will seek to outline, by the time Luke's reader reached the beginning of John's ministry (which will be studied in Chapter 3 of the present study and corresponds to the opening of Luke 3), the dynamic, multi-dimensional foundation provided by the preface and Luke's infancy narratives had already "prepared the way" for a hermeneutic of certainty and frustration in the episodes that follow.

2.2 THE LUKAN PREFACE: LUKE 1:1-4

2.2.1 Hellenistic convention and the clarification of Luke's purposes

Luke's gospel opens with a preface (1:1-4); while encountering a brief dedication to the reader alongside a description of the content, the author's qualifications and the purpose of the work would be entirely normal to a reader familiar with Hellenistic literary convention, it is nonetheless

a unique feature among the canonical gospels. As several detailed studies have shown, Luke's preface is consistent with other prefaces from the Hellenistic-Roman period in both style and purpose (Alexander, 1993:210-212; Yamada, 1999:154-172). Luke's preface forms a single conditional sentence of elevated literary style (Fitzmyer, 1981:109; Alexander, 1993:107-108; Bock, 1994:54-55) which serves to legitimate the gospel's trustworthiness by demonstrating the author's suitability to undertake such a project and by outlining the impact it will have on issues of relevance to the reader (Bauer, 1960:265; Alexander, 1993: 201-202; Bock, 1994:52-53; Green, 1997:33-34; Moessner, 2008:301).

It is essential to note that Luke's preface represents far more than a cultural or literary formality; it is a key component of the author's two-volume effort to convincingly fill a lacuna. A thorough understanding of Luke's introductory sentence and its hermeneutical implications is, therefore, of foundational importance to the present study. While the particulars of Luke's preface will be analyzed in the following sections, it is important to outline at the outset how the conventions of Hellenistic preface writing ought to inform such analysis. Both Luke and his reader were well aware of such conventions and the present study would be poorly served by a tendentious reading of the preface in justification of a particular approach.

While there has been some disagreement over whether Luke's preface aligns more closely with the scientific (Alexander, 1993:42-142) or historical (Yamada, 1999:154-172; Moessner, 2008:289-302) tradition of Hellenistic preface writing, it is worth noting that all three authors are united in citing a need to go beyond the excessively critical historiographical approaches of previous generations of scholarship to read Luke and Acts as works of rhetoric designed to convince the reader in addition to being works that narrate historical events (Alexander, 1993:3-7; 210-212; Yamada, 1999:168-169; Moessner, 2008:298-302). Such an approach reflects the advice of numerous voices from the Hellenistic-Roman rhetorical tradition and explains several key features of Luke's preface.

Lucian, writing in the second century CE, advises aspiring historians:

> Whenever he [the historian] does use a preface, he will make two points only, not three like the orators. He will omit the appeal for a favourable hearing and give his audience what will interest and instruct them. For they will give him their attention if he shows that what he is going to say will be important, essential, personal, or useful. He will make what is to come easy to understand and quite clear, if he sets forth the causes and outlines the main events. The best historians have written prefaces of this sort... (1959:64-67 – brackets are mine for the sake of clarity)

Lucian's advice helps to explain the absence of an appeal to the reader for judgement or action in the Lukan preface, which was a common feature of Hellenistic rhetorical training (Kennedy,

1984:17). It also advises the writer to include a description of causes and an outline of the principal events, a feature that is lacking from the preface to Luke's gospel (but which is featured to some degree in Acts 1:1-3). Yamada (1999:162-164) explains this exclusion from the gospel and inclusion in Acts via a study of multi-volume Hellenistic histories, in which the first volumes (known by the typology προγραφή) generally lack such an outline of principal events and in which successive volumes (known by the typology ἀνακεφαλαίωσις) generally include a brief synopsis of events and causes.

The great utility of Lucian's advice, however, goes beyond explaining what Luke *did not include* in his preface; instead, it illuminates likely authorial criteria for selecting, arranging and presenting the narrative events Luke *did include* in his gospel. Contrary to the historiographical assumptions of many (Burrows, 1940:1-58; Fitzmyer, 1989:30-46; Felix, 1997:79-82; Robbins, 1999:83, etc.) who have attempted to use language like Ἐπειδήπερ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ("inasmuch as many have undertaken") and ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι ("having carefully followed all things from the first, to write it for you in orderly sequence") in the Lukan preface to justify notions of precise *historiography*, Lucian's criteria indicate a *rhetorical* objective: to interest and instruct. While Lucian also indicates that success in this regard depends on the clarity and comprehensibility of the historical narrative, such a description is far cry from the exacting and methodological claims made by many of Luke's interpreters and commentators.

This rhetorical objective of captivating the reader's attention and leading them to a useful or important conclusion is corroborated by other prominent voices from the period. Cicero, among the most famous Roman orators/rhetoricians of the first century BCE, links the use of rhetorical narrative to the formulation of foundations for belief: "the statement *[narratio]* is an explanation of the facts and as it were a base and foundation for the establishment of belief *[fundamentum constituendae fidei]*" (1942:334-335 – square brackets contain the original Latin). Quintilian, an approximate contemporary of the most likely dates for the writing of Luke-Acts (the second half of the first century CE), likewise affirms: "The *statement of facts [narratio]* consists in the persuasive exposition of that which either has been done, or is supposed to have been done..." (1921:66-67 – italics reflect the original typesetting, square brackets contain the original Latin).

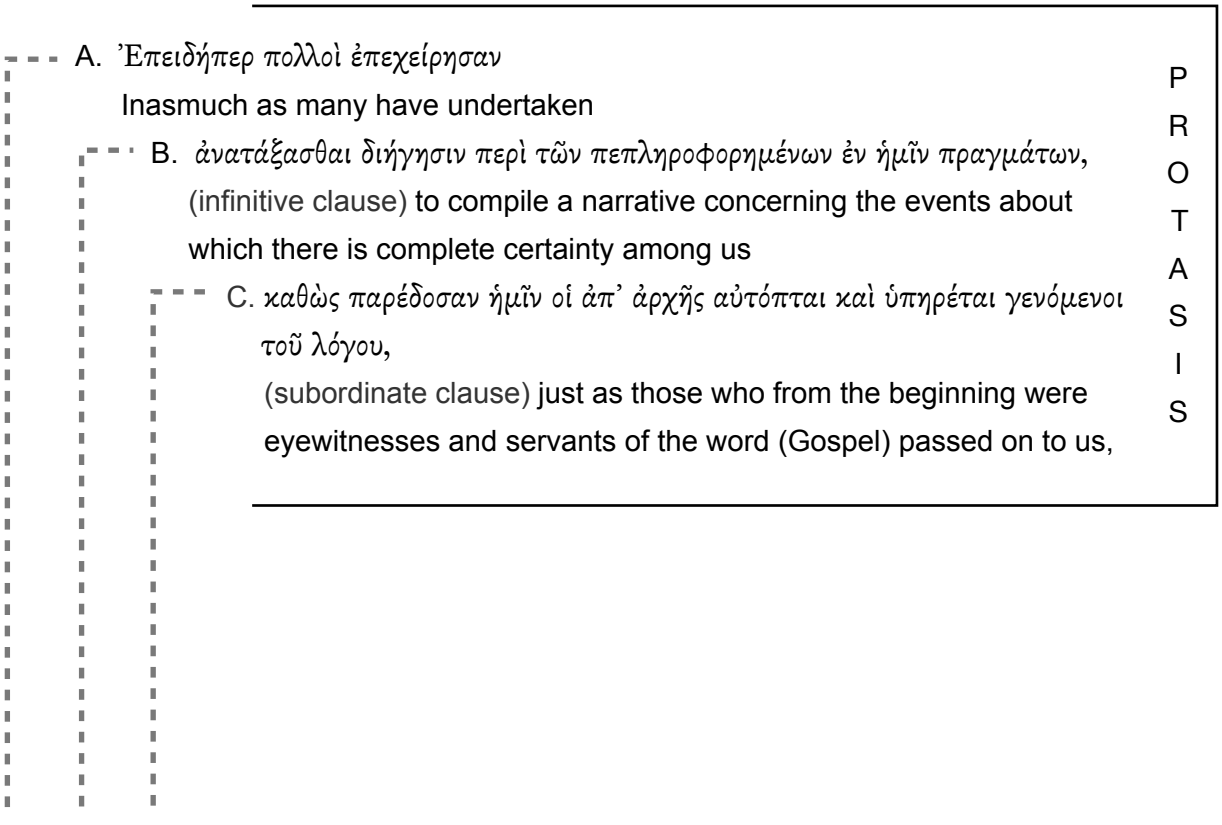
It is interesting to note that studies which take the time to go beyond the finer points of lexicology and grammar in Luke's preface and couch it's statements within the larger milieu of historial or scientific preface writing (like Alexander, 1993:13-209; Yamada, 1999:154-172; Moessner, 2008:298-302) are generally united in pointing to the need to ally a study of Luke's rhetoric *with* a study of his narrative as history and theology. Thus, while working within a primarily historiographical view of Luke's project, Yamada affirms that "the subject of the Lukan writings is 'the things that have been convinced' which can lead to 'belief' (πίστις) by way of 'persuasion' (πειθεῖν)" (1999:169). Upon comparing Luke's preface with the work of Dionysius of

Halicarnassus, Moessner likewise affirms Luke's "rhetorical management" (2008:289) through "good prose arrangement that unleashes the persuasive power of 'clear certainty'" (2008:301).

Moessner's formulation is particularly apt given its attention to the final clause of Luke's preface, which established a clear benchmark for measuring the rhetorical success of Luke's two-volume project: this clear and persuasive exposition of facts is designed to lead Theophilus to certainty/ security (ἀσφάλεια) about the subjects at hand. By establishing this relevant, reader-specific goal, Luke's preface takes significant steps toward building rhetorical *ethos* (Kennedy, 1984:15). On the basis of the academic studies and Hellenistic-Roman witnesses cited in this section, the present study will proceed to analyze the structure and language of Luke's preface, as well as of the narrative itself, with an eye to both rhetorical strategy and historical-theological narrative.

2.2.2 The structure of Luke's preface

In Greek, Luke 1:1-4 forms a single, conditional sentence in Greek, in which the protasis (1:1-2) describes other accounts of the gospel events and Luke's sources. The apodosis (1:3-4), or main clause, mirrors the syntactical structure of the protasis and outlines the characteristics and purposes of Luke's authorial undertaking. In light of the emphasis on building rhetorical *ethos* ("the credibility that the author or speaker is able to establish in his work" – Kennedy, 1984:15) in both classical and Hellenistic education, this brief presentation of Luke's qualifications, methods and aims is of critical importance. The parallel structure of these clauses has been noted by Tiede (1988:33) and Bock (1994:51) as outlined in the following figure:



(continued)

A'. ἔδοξε κἀμοὶ παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς
it seemed good to me also, having carefully followed all things from the first,

B'. καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι, κράτιστε Θεόφιλε,
(infinitive clause) to write it for you in orderly sequence, most excellent Theophilus,

C'. ἵνα ἐπιγνῷς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν.
(subordinate clause) so that you may discern the certainty concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

APODOSIS

Figure 2.1: The parallel structure of Luke's preface (Luke 1:1-4)

This correspondence between clauses is both aesthetically pleasing and consistent with Hellenistic conventions of periodic, or "artistically developed prose" (Blass *et al.* 1961:239), style. While the *syntactical* arrangement of Figure 2.1 is largely agreed upon by scholars, there has also been significant study and debate dedicated to potential *semantic* parallelism at the level of individual words/phrases (Rengstorf, 1968:14; Green, 1997:36-37; Yamada, 1999:165; cf. Litwak, 2006:40). While some of these semantic parallels occur in corresponding syntactical lines (A.-A.', B.-B.', C.-C.') the most hotly debated items cross over this arrangement. As a result, the following figure uses color coding to locate each potential semantic parallel within the syntactic structure before proceeding to analyze them in detail:

A. Inasmuch as **many have undertaken**

B. **to compile a narrative** concerning **the events about which (*there is*) complete certainty among us**,

C. **just as** those who **from the beginning** were eyewitnesses and servants **of the word (Gospel*) passed on to us**,

PROTASIS

A'. **it seemed good to me also**, having carefully followed **all things from the first**,

B'. **to write (*it*) for you in orderly sequence**, **most excellent Theophilus**,

C'. **so that you may discern the certainty** concerning **the matters** about which you have been instructed.

APODOSIS

Figure 2.2: Color coded semantic parallels in Luke's preface (Luke 1:1-4)

PRO—APO

A. many have undertaken
πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν
B. among us
ἐν ἡμῖν
C. just as they passed on to us
καθὼς παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν

A'. it seemed good to me also
ἔδοξε κἀμοὶ
B'. for you... most excellent Theophilus
σοι... κράτιστε Θεόφιλε
C'. so that you may discern
ἵνα ἐπιγνῷς

The parallels in A.-A'. and C.-C'. were among those highlighted by Green (1997:36); however, it is possible to note that both parallels are part of a larger trend between the protasis and apodosis, with three plural nouns/ pronouns in the protasis corresponding with three singular pronouns in the apodosis (A. many – A'. me; B.+ C. us – B'. + C'. you). In this way, there is specific semantic correspondence between each syntactical clause and between the two halves of Luke's periodic sentence.

Figure 2.2.A: A detailed analysis of the color coded parallels from Figure 2.2 (red)

PRO—APO

B. to compile a narrative
ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν

B'. to write... in orderly sequence
καθεξῆς ... γράψαι

While the two infinitive clauses highlighted here have long been noted for their *syntactical* parallelism (Blass *et al.* 1961:242; Tiede, 1988:33; Bock, 1994:51; Papademetriou, 2016:386), little in-depth analysis seems to have been done regarding the remarkable *semantic* harmony between the terms used. In the protasis, ἀνατάσσομαι belongs to Louw and Nida's semantic domain 62B "Organize" (1989a:612), while διήγησις belongs to domain 33C "Discourse Types" (1989a:390). In the apodosis, καθεξῆς belongs to semantic domain 61 "Sequence" (1989a:610), while γράφω belongs to domain 33E "Written Language" (1989a:396). Luke's use of terms from similar semantic domains reinforces the syntactical structure and strengthens the trend of corresponding semantic terms between the protasis and apodosis.

Figure 2.2.B: A detailed analysis of the color coded parallels from Figure 2.2 (blue)

PROTASIS

B. (*things*) about which (*there is*) complete certainty
τῶν πεπληροφορημένων

C'. the certainty / assurance
τὴν ἀσφάλειαν

While there is no rhetorical/syntactical correspondence between these items, with the items coming from lines B. and C'., Rengstorf (1968:14) and Yamada (1999:165) have noted the remarkable semantic correspondence between them if the passive participle πεπληροφορημένων is interpreted according to the semantic domain modern lexicons attribute to the verb's *passive* form (Louw & Nida, 1989b:199; 1989b:371; Danker *et al*., 2000:827) rather than that associated with its *active* form. If the participle is interpreted in this way (a highly contentious subject as section 2.2.4 will explore), Louw and Nida place both terms within five entries of each other (ἀσφάλεια in 31.41 and πληροφορέομαι in 31.45) in the relatively small domain (15 total entries) 31F "Believe to be True" (1989a:370-372).

Figure 2.2.C: A detailed analysis of the color coded parallels from Figure 2.2 (green)

PROTASIS

B. events/happenings
πραγμάτων

A'. all things
πᾶσιν

OR

C'. matters/things
λόγων

As in the preceding case, there is no syntactical correspondence between the items highlighted. Green (1997:36) indicates correspondence between τῶν πεπληροφορημένων... πραγμάτων in B. and πᾶσιν in A'. The present author prefers to draw semantic correspondence between πραγμάτων by itself and λόγων in C'. While Louw and Nida indicate no overlap of domains between any of the items listed, both πραγμάτων and λόγων are the object of the preposition περὶ and occur in the same line as a term with semantic connections to certainty (see the preceding parallel). It is perfectly logical to assume that, whichever term (πᾶσιν or λόγων) is selected, the πραγμάτων in question in the protasis would have been an integral part of either the "things followed from the first" or the "matters you were taught".

* *Given the focus on semantic parallelism in this figure, an explanation is required for* ***not*** *drawing a semantic parallel between the two uses of* λόγος*, which, like the other items considered in this figure, bridge the protasis and apodosis. In 1:2, it has been widely recognized that the presence of the article and the pairing of* τοῦ λόγου *with* ὑπηρέτης *(a word linked with service to the gospel in Acts and Paul's writings) indicates a technical Christian meaning: "the gospel message" (Danker et al., 2000:599-600; Louw & Nida, 1989a:417). This specialized use serves to distance* τοῦ λόγου *in 1:2 from the more general (and anarthrous)* λόγων *of 1:4, indicating little semantic overlap between the two uses of* λόγος *in Luke 1:1-4.*

Figure 2.2.D: A detailed analysis of the color coded parallels from Figure 2.2 (purple)

PRO—APO	**C. from the beginning** ἀπ' ἀρχῆς **A'. from the first** ἄνωθεν	Both syntactical and semantic parallels here are well established among scholars (Bock, 1994:61; Green, 1997:36), despite the semantic ambiguity of ἄνωθεν. The parallel indicated here and a similar expression in Acts 26:4-5 (Büchsel, 1964:378; Alexander, 1993:146) have nonetheless contributed to a strong consensus.

Figure 2.2.E: A detailed analysis of the color coded parallels from Figure 2.2 (yellow)

While the interpretation and translation of individual words/phrases and the debate surrounding them will be discussed case by case in the following sections, Figure 2.2 demonstrates remarkable semantic balance between the protasis and apodosis in addition to the syntactical balance noted in Figure 2.1. Several of the semantic parallels (2.2.A and 2.2.B) follow and reinforce the syntactical parallelism; others, however, more simply reflect the general two part period of protasis-apodosis without strict correspondence to the lines laid out in Figure 2.1 (2.2.C, 2.2.D and 2.2.E). Taken together, the syntax and semantics of Luke's preface demonstrate a skillful balance and rhetorical prowess which almost certainly served to bolster Luke's credibility.

While the preface is invaluable in establishing Luke's credibility and in clarifying his rhetorical-historical aims, the apodosis' description of Luke's methods also offers invaluable hermeneutical clues for any study of Luke-Acts. The present author will attempt to consistently read Luke's writings "in orderly sequence", thus resisting the temptation to "back read" the full theological or thematic weight of a term or concept into earlier passages where it is likely the reader would not yet have arrived at such a conclusion. As has already been outlined, the preface's final ἵνα

clause provides an objective benchmark for Luke's literary undertaking: his research, historiography, theology and presentation of events are designed to give the reader certainty and security about the Christian message. Therefore, as this study explores the dynamic presentation of God's plan and human reactions to it, the present author will consistently attempt to "discern" how these threads illuminate and contribute to Luke's objective of providing the reader with certainty.

2.2.3 Interpreting the reference to "many who have attempted" (πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν) in Luke 1:1

Having sufficiently summarized the structure of Luke's preface and couched it in the world of Hellenistic literary convention, this study now turns its attention to the interpretation of the preface. The reader need only progress to the second and third words to uncover scholarly debate over the evangelist's intentions and to confront the long shadow of interpretive presuppositions. Some scholars have seen in the word πολλοὶ ("many") a Lukan "admission" that his work required the use of many written sources and thus necessitates both a late date and/or the interpretative assumption that Luke played a primarily redactional role in the transmission of the text (Meyer, 1921:9-10; Bauer, 1960:263-266; Dillon, 1981:219-224; Felix, 1997:66; Collins, 2010:451; Moles, 2011:482). This, however, seems an unduly specific and potentially speculative reading of a word with a relatively imprecise semantic domain (particularly in an anarthrous use such as in 1:1; cf. Danker *et al*., 2000:847-850).

Luke goes on to admit in the final clause of the protasis that both his undertaking and similar projects (the many who have undertaken to compile a narrative) depended on information transmitted by "eyewitnesses and servants of the message" (αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου). The very fact that Luke-Acts goes on to name a significant number and variety of characters who fit this description without giving any indication that the author was present until late in the progression of Acts (and even this possibility is the subject of a great deal of debate!) clearly implies the transmission of information from multiple sources. This implicit transmission is more than sufficient to satisfy the semantic constraints of πολύς; while further extrapolation might result in conclusions that better harmonize with the presuppositions of 20th and 21st century critics, it is the present author's conclusion that such conclusions owe more to speculation than literary context (Marshall, 1978:40-41). This conclusion is reinforced by examples of references to an undefined number of predecessors in both classical and Hellenistic prefaces whose contributions would seem to point to both oral and written transmission of information (Dillon, 1981:207; Alexander, 1993:109).

Others, including ancient commentators like Origen, see pejorative undertones in Luke's reference to the "attempts" (ἐπεχείρησαν) of these predecessors to "compile a narrative" (ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν). These authors argue that Luke's characterization of his own project as

being “in orderly sequence” (καθεξῆς) and resulting from having “closely followed all things carefully from the beginning” (παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς) indicates thinly veiled criticism of the inadequacies of previous undertakings (Klein, 1964:195-196; Fitzmyer, 1981:291-292; Bovon, 2002:19).

Yamada’s study (1999:161-163) of historical prefaces indicated that some degree of criticism of one’s predecessors was a standard feature of Hellenistic-Roman prefaces in the historical tradition. Such a feature makes sense in the literary climate contemptuously describes by Lucian: “every single person is writing history; nay more, they are all Thucydideses, Herodotuses, and Xenophons” (1959:5). If history writing were common enough in the Hellenistic period to justify such criticism, the need to justify yet another attempt becomes apparent. Other studies, while corroborating a tendency toward criticism, have noted that some prefaces aimed for *inclusion* among esteemed predecessors (Alexander, 1993:110-116; Bovon, 2002:19).

Should Luke have desired to distance himself from his predecessors, beginning the apodosis with “it seemed good *to me also*” (ἔδοξε κἀμοὶ) was a curiously inclusive choice of wording (formally so, per Moles, 2011:482). Indeed, Yamada notes Luke’s positive attitudes toward his predecessors (1999:166); the severity of the criticisms leveled at Thucydides by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in Moessner’s comparison (2008:290-291) corroborates Yamada’s conclusion. Thus, the fact that Luke named “many” predecessors and felt it necessary to set out “to write it all for you in orderly sequence” does not *necessarily* imply that he was disparaging the work of others as disorderly or inaccurate (Robbins, 1999:75; cf. Bovon, 2002:19), nor as insufficiently detailed (Yamada, 1999:165-166).

It seems wise to the present author to take a moderate view. It is necessary to admit that Luke’s project was born out of the inadequacy of existent accounts to meet the lacuna at hand (Plummer, 1896:4; Felix, 1997:66; Moessner, 2016:299-300). Indeed, it is entirely logical that if Luke had possessed another literary work which would adequately give Theophilus certainty regarding the message in question, then he would have copied or lent him this work and saved himself the trouble of composing a gospel account (and the longest of the canonical gospels at that!). This is of particular importance given the economic cost of both time and papyrus in the first century. However, in light of the overall neutrality and formality of the preface, reading excessive criticism into Luke’s language seems unwarranted (Bock, 1994:56; Green, 1997:37).

2.2.4 Interpreting the reference to "events/things that have been completed/assured/fulfilled among us" (τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων) in Luke 1:1

There has been particularly copious dispute over the prepositional phrase that follows: "concerning the events/things that have been completed/assured/fulfilled among us" (περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων). A substantial number of recent authors contend that "things/events fulfilled" supplies the best rendering of the verb in light of Luke's subsequent portrayal of gospel events as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (du Plessis, 1974:263-264; Marshall, 1978:41; Fitzmyer, 1981:293; Schweizer, 1984:11; Johnson, 1991:27; Sterling, 1992:334; Bock, 1994:56-57; 2012:99). This argument has largely supplanted earlier arguments in favor of the more straightforward reading "things completed" (Cadbury, 1922:495-496) or, in light of other Hellenistic and NT uses of πληροφορέω in the passive, "things about which there is full assurance/conviction" (Rengstorf, 1968:14).

The breadth of the semantic domain of πληροφορέω (especially when one distinguishes, as do Louw and Nida [1989b:199], between the semantic domains of active and middle/passive forms) and its semantic overlap with πληρόω (Danker *et al*., 2000:827) open multiple avenues of interpretation, at least two of which interact with the concerns of this study. If, as Rengstorf (1968:14) and Yamada (1999:165-166) have argued, it can be shown that Luke's communicative intention and the reader's likely comprehension point to τῶν πεπληροφορημένων as matters about which Luke and his associates had become "completely certain" (Louw & Nida, 1989b:199), then there is a direct semantic link to the end goal of "certainty" (ἀσφάλειαν) established in the apodosis (as outlined in Figure 2.2.C above). If, on the other hand, authorial intention and reader comprehension can be established for reading τῶν πεπληροφορημένων as matters/events that Luke plans to present as "fulfillments" of Old Testament expectation (as the majority of authors cited above argue), then the foundations for Luke's prophecy-fulfillment hermeneutic can be traced to the very first lines of the gospel. It must also be conceded, however, that it is equally possible that neither of these options presents the best rendering of τῶν πεπληροφορημένων; the following paragraphs will examine each possibility and its impact on the present study.

Reading τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων as "the things/events fulfilled among us" is tempting, especially given the support this rendering has garnered with the Lukan scholars cited above and among many well-regarded Bible translations (NET, NIV, NKJV, NRSV and LEB, among others) and its relevance to the themes of the present study. There is little doubt that such a reading is consistent with Luke's prophecy-fulfillment hermeneutic, which is well established in the gospel and Acts. It is, however, significantly less clear that the phrase as Luke recorded it would communicate such a complex concept to the reader without the benefit of the rest of the narrative. It is important to remember: while the debate surrounding this phrase may be familiar to students of Luke's gospel, its placement in the opening lines of the gospel meant

that the original reader encountered the phrase as written, without the benefit of the narratives that followed.

Greco-Roman narratives and speeches were organized sequentially (καθεξῆς – 1:3), making it unlikely a first-century reader would read a complex meaning into τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων without clear a justification for such an interpretation in the immediate context. Louw and Nida's classification of πληροφορέομαι (which they distinguish from πληροφορέω) would indicate that "things fulfilled" is a significant stretch of the verb's semantic domain. While Danker (2000:827) notes that πληροφορέω can sometime serve as a synonym for πληρόω (which possesses a semantic domain far more amenable to the "fulfillment" reading), this semantic approximation, at least with regard to Luke 1:1, has been contested as a significant semantic departure in both biblical and extra-biblical usage, in either the active or passive voice (Deissmann, 1978:86-87; Dillon, 1981:211; Alexander, 1993:112-115; Litwak, 2006:41).

While the reading of "things/events fulfilled" is compatible with Luke's authorial and theological program as revealed by the rest of the gospel, it must be admitted: it is highly improbable that any first-century reader would actively retain an unrepeated and relatively unremarkable phrase like τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων in their memory and retroactively revise their understanding of it upon discovering the gospel's proclivity for presenting narrative events as fulfillments of Jewish Scripture (Litwak, 2006:39). It is, in fact, hard to believe that any reader except a Biblical scholar or grammarian would apply such a reading strategy to the text. Unless it can reasonably shown or inferred that Theophilus already possessed such a hermeneutic (and would have associated it with a use of πληροφορέομαι), the fulfillment reading must be classified as theologically consistent with Luke-Acts but lacking in exegetical evidence, at least at such an early stage of the gospel.

BDAG's argument in favor of rendering the phrase "in view of Lk's thematic emphasis on God's βουλή... the idea of accomplishment of things planned" (Danker *et al*., 2000:827) falls into a similar reliance on "back-reading" the themes of the gospel as a whole into an ambiguous opening phrase which lacks sufficient lexical and semantic specificity to justify such a narrow reading. While "accomplishment" falls much more squarely into the typical semantic domain of πληροφορέω (though not necessarily πληροφορέομαι) than does "fulfillment", the inclusion of "things planned" relies entirely on posterior development. It seems to the present author that stripping the notion of "things planned" from BDAG's "accomplishment" reading would roughly approximate it to Cadbury's preference for "completed" (1922:495-496).

"Completed" or "accomplished" as a reading is consistent with the semantic domains of πληροφορέω in the active voice (and some of the overlapping senses of its semantic cousin πληρόω) and is likewise featured by some of the most widely used contemporary Bible translations (ESV, NASB). As was noted in the preceding paragraph, this rendering avoids the

disadvantages of “back-reading”; however, its suitability depends on the degree to which Luke and his reader would have drawn distinctions in meaning between active (πληροφορέω) and passive (πληροφορέομαι) forms of the verb. While issues of meaning and voice in Greek have generated no small degree of consternation over recent decades (for a summary of recent debate: Campbell, 2015:91-103), the following paragraphs will present concrete evidence from the NT corpus that indicate it is likely that Luke and his reader would in fact have drawn a distinction in sense between πληροφορέω and πληροφορέομαι.

While “accomplished/completed” does the most justice to the active form πληροφορέω, it is Rengstorf’s proposed reading of “things about which there is full assurance/conviction among us” (1968:14) which most emphasizes a distinct passive sense for Luke’s τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων. The various contexts of Paul’s uses of the passive πληροφορέομαι in Romans 4:21, 14:5 and Colossians 4:12 clearly point toward a sense of “fully assured/convicted” (Col 4:12 is a perfect passive participle, like Luke 1:1). The fact that Paul’s use of the active πληροφορέω in 2 Timothy 4:5 clearly carries overtones of “accomplishment/completion” in contrast with his uses of the passive πληροφορέομαι in the verses noted above provides concrete evidence from the NT corpus for Louw and Nida’s semantic distinction between active and passive forms, favoring Rengstorf’s reading.

Yamada (1999:165) seems to have been among the few recent scholars to seriously consider Rengstorf’s reading, noting that “full assurance/conviction” provides semantic harmonization with Luke’s end goal in the apodosis: helping Theophilus “come to know the certainty concerning the things you have been taught” (ἐπιγνῷς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν). It also has a semantic relationship with the rhetorical term πληροφολία (Yamada, 1999:165), reinforcing that Luke’s narrative project depends on convincing the reader. Litwak has disputed this reading, noting: “πληροφορέω only means "confirm" when used with people, not with inanimate objects” (2006:40).

While this observation is borne out by Paul’s use of the verb as explored above and by BDAG’s entry (Danker *et al*., 2000:827) for the *active* voice, it neglects to observe that no such distinctions are made for the *passive*. This is logical, given that the relationship of between verb and object is significantly altered by active/passive construction. It also seems to have escaped Litwak that Yamada’s footnotes (1999:165) contemplated precisely this objection, presenting a contrary example from Ignatius. It should also be noted that the presence of the article in τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ought to influence the reading of the participle (Wallace, 1996:616-617), pulling it toward an adjectival function in relation to πραγμάτων.

The arguments outlined above lead the present author to support the minority reading of περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων as “concerning the events about which there is complete certainty among us”. While formal features like alliteration with π (“p”) (Alexander, 1993:12-14,

113) and the high concentration of hapax-legomenon (Papademetriou, 2016:365) in Luke's preface caution against placing excessive interpretational weight on the author's word choices, the consistency of the parallels presented in Figures 2.1 and 2.2 (which, in the case of 2.2.C, only function when τῶν πεπληροφορημένων is read as "complete certainty/full conviction") justify the position outlined here. Adopting such a reading offers the additional benefit of strengthening the rhetorical bond between author and reader. Just as the author and those in whose company he places himself (the "us" of the protasis as noted in Figure 2.2.A) have come to believe in the "full certainty" of the interpretation of events that will be presented in the gospel, so Luke posits from the outset that his presentation of the facts is designed to lead Theophilus to a similar conclusion (ἐπιγνῷς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν – 1:4).

2.2.5 Interpreting the reference to "eyewitnesses and servants of the Gospel" (αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου) and "having carefully followed all things from the first" (παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς) in Luke 1:2-3

Luke finishes the protasis with further description of the tradition that preceded his project: "just as those who were eyewitnesses and servants of the message from the beginning passed on to us". Some, particularly in the mid-20th century, read into Luke's references to "eyewitnesses" (αὐτόπται – 1:2) and to a "careful investigation" (παρηκολουθηκότι... ἀκριβῶς – 1:3) the sort of historiographical and forensic language valued by those attempting to construct historically accurate timelines of both Jesus' ministry and the transmission of tradition in the early church (Dibelius, 1935:15; Conzelmann, 1960:11). The Greek terms, however, do not come close to carrying the forensic or historiographical force attributed to them by such approaches (Moessner, 2016:298-300).

A review of studies done on the preface supports interpreting "those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word/Gospel" (οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου – 1:2) as a reference to those who had spent time with Jesus and were among the first to recognize and proclaim the Christian message while safeguarding it against prevarication (those who know the facts at first-hand as per Alexander, 1993:122; guarantors of tradition as per Collins, 2010:451-452). This reading is consistent with the conventions of Hellenistic preface writing and dovetails nicely with the arguments outlined in the preceding section. Luke's use of καθώς ("just as") to link the "the events about which there is complete certainty" to the "delivery to us" (παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν – 1:3) by "those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word/Gospel" creates a chain of transmission and serves to illustrate the function the author aims to fulfill for the reader.

Luke gives no indication that his own "complete certainty" resulted from personal contact with John or Jesus; rather, he has arrived at his convictions by being "steeped in" (Moessner, 2016:262) the Christian traditions as handed down by these "eyewitnesses" and "guarantors of

tradition" (Collins, 2010:451-452). It is thus entirely natural that Luke concludes the protasis with "just as" (καθὼς) in reference to those who guided him to belief and certainty in order to open the apodosis with "it seemed good *to me also*" (ἔδοξε κἀμοὶ – 1:3) and conclude it with the goal of Theophilus coming to "discern the certainty concerning the things about which you have been instructed" (ἐπιγνῷς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν – 1:4). This conclusion is supported by Moessner's study of the perfect participle παρηκολουθηκότι ("having followed/accompanied"), which he argues paints Luke as "one trained in a tradition and not the judicious labors of an historian's research" (2016:259).

It seems certain from the context and from Luke's inclusion of himself in the transmission of the message that the reader was expected to view "those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the message/Gospel" positively. This view is supported by the arguments outlined in Figure 2.2 in favor of a technical reading of τοῦ λόγου as "the gospel message" (the asterisk portion of Figure 2.2.D in concordance with Danker *et al*., 2000:599-600; Louw & Nida, 1989a:417). Such a reading is supported by Luke's indication in the apodosis that Theophilus had received prior instruction (ὧν κατηχήθης – 1:4) and was therefore likely to grasp a peculiarly Christian use of the term λόγος. Whether "those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the Gospel" have in view one group which performed both functions (Dillon, 1981:214-215; Felix, 1997:73) or two groups performing complementary functions (Harris, 2018:6), is difficult to determine and of doubtful utility in determining Luke's authorial intentions.

2.2.6 Interpreting the reference to "orderly sequence" (καθεξῆς) in Luke 1:3 and its relation to Luke's historiography

Luke shifts his focus from the "many" in the protasis to his own project in the apodosis: "it seemed good to me also" (ἔδοξε κἀμοὶ – 1:3). As was noted above, Luke's choice of κἀμοὶ ("to me also") is *inclusive* rather than *exclusive* (Yamada, 1999:165-166) and his purposes are best understood as acknowledgement and passive legitimation in the Hellenistic mold (Alexander, 1993:110-116). Luke's indication of his own place in a "chain of transmission", as discussed above, has led him to make a unique literary contribution to fill the lacuna left by the "many": "to write it all for you in orderly sequence, most excellent Theophilus" (καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι, κράτιστε Θεόφιλε – 1:3). Much has been made of Luke's characterization of his project as "in orderly sequence" (καθεξῆς) with studies debating whether Luke's order is primarily chronological (Plummer, 1896:5; du Plessis, 1974:70; Marshall, 1978:43; Felix, 1997:77-78) or literary-logical (Fitzmyer, 1981:298-299; Dillon, 1981:219-224; Stein, 1992:65; via connection with ἀσφάλεια, Strelan, 2007:169-170).

Nearly the entirety of the debate revolves around the sort of theological "back reading" the present author has refrained from in this study, based on the belief that it is inconsistent with the

strategies and methods of Hellenistic rhetoric. The authors who engage in such reading seem to seize upon καθεξῆς without justifying whether such a word would stand out to a seasoned reader of Hellenistic prefaces. Does the term have a technical meaning within the Hellenistic milieu of history and rhetoric that justifies such a reading strategy? Are the semantics or syntax of καθεξῆς emphatic enough to reasonably cause Luke's reader to keep the organizational method of the narrative in mind throughout the gospel?

The present author's inability to discover rhetorical, semantic or syntactical justification for "back reading" into this term induces doubt as to whether Luke's reader would arrived at detailed distinctions about order in light of a literary work that is simultaneously broadly chronological, broadly geographical and literarily and logically consistent. Any of these systems would fall within the semantic domain of καθεξῆς ("according to one after another") and all three are distinguishable organizational trends in Luke-Acts. It is sufficient for the present author to note that Luke's project fulfills its methodological aims successfully enough to satisfy even the most demanding first-century reader.

Just as the present author has declined to literarily and theologically "back read" organizational systems into καθεξῆς, he even more emphatically refuses to press the term for indications of Luke's historiography or the historicity of the gospel, at least in the molds of 20th-21st century scholasticism. Luke is clearly attempting to legitimate his project's attempt to fill a lacuna for the reader. Likewise, Theophilus was obviously aware that there were other sources of information about what Jesus did and said available. It was therefore necessary for Luke to justify *why* his gospel was necessary in the first place and to describe *how* he came to be qualified enough to offer an "orderly sequence" to fill the lacuna left by other narratives. Just as it is unnecessary to over-read Luke's justification of his own project as the depreciation of other authors, it is likewise illegitimate to over-read καθεξῆς as a Lukan claim to absolute chronological and historical accuracy.

This is particularly true when such over-reading inevitably leads the interpreter to conclude that Luke's historicity is "problematic" in light of issues such as dates in the infancy narratives, stylistic similarities to the Septuagint and the existence of narrative features determined to indicate a late stage of textual transmission (Fitzmyer, 1989:30-46; Robbins, 1999:83). It is particularly egregious that much of the fault finding with Luke's historicity relies on Roman documents neither the author nor his reader would have had access to (Fitzmyer, 1981:400-406). If both Luke and Theophilus lacked access to the imperial documents in question (such as the Titulus Tiburtinus) and not even specialized Roman historians can agree on dating them correctly (Kokkinos, 1995:21-36; cf. Syme, 1973:585–601), is it really reasonable to cast aspersions on the historical reliability of the entire narrative section in question?

Over-pressing καθεξῆς to permit reading Luke as the sort of meticulous researcher 20th and 21st century scholars can take to task for historical and historiographical "discrepancies" amounts to little more than the creation of an academic straw man for the scholar to dismantle. While the present author will deal with particular difficulties as they become relevant to the goals of this study, it must be admitted in general terms that καθεξῆς provides little basis for the application of exacting historiographical methods. The present author must conclude: while such strategies might have been the norm in modern/post-modern scholasticism, applying such a hermeneutic to a first-century text seems highly anachronistic and inconsistent with first-century reading strategies.

It is obvious that Luke would have been discredited by his contemporaries if his presentation of the events of the lives and ministries of John, Jesus and the apostles were to clash with the tradition to which both he and Theophilus had access (Dibelius, 1956:70-73; Conzelmann, 1966:218; Alexander, 1993:4). The mere fact that Luke's gospel came to be included alongside the other synoptics in the canon of the early church, which left out other attempts at gospel writing, is itself a striking endorsement of Luke-Acts' harmony with both the oral and written traditions regarding the lives and ministries of John, Jesus and the apostles and with first century notions of "orderly writing" (καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι).

2.2.7 Interpreting the references to "discerning the certainty" (ἐπιγνῷς...τὴν ἀσφάλειαν) and "the things about which you have been instructed" (ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων) in Luke 1:4

Finally, Luke's apodosis arrives at its concluding purpose clause: "so that you may know/discern the certainty concerning the things about which you have been instructed" (ἵνα ἐπιγνῷς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν – 1:4). This ἵνα clause closes Luke's preface with a clear definition of purpose against which the entire project can be measured. His purpose hinges primarily on the use of the verb ἐπιγινώσκω ("to come to know/discern") and its link to the accusative τὴν ἀσφάλειαν ("certainty/assurance"), which has assumed the syntactically emphatic final position in the clause (Cadbury, 1922:509; Fitzmyer, 1981:300). The fact that this certainty is defined as περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων ("concerning the things about which you have been instructed") must also be taken into account, although it will be useful to examine the elements separately before suggesting a final conclusion.

Given the semantic range of ἐπιγινώσκω and its overlap with γινώσκω, it is little surprise that there is some disagreement over the precise meaning intended. Bovon argues in favor of reading the influence of ἐπί into the verb (and thus semantically distancing ἐπιγινώσκω from γινώσκω) to indicate "a conscious and acquired discernment, not complete knowledge" (2002:23). In contrast, BDAG (Danker *et al*., 2000:369) likewise reads the influence of ἐπί into the verb, but arrives at the conclusion that Luke is referring to precisely such exact or complete knowledge, citing a passage from Josephus using the same verb and an object with a similar semantic

domain (ἐπιγνῷ τὴν ἀλήθειαν – Flavius Josephus, 1892:298). While the context of judgement in a legal dispute in which Josephus used the construction would seem to favor a nuance of "knowing all the facts", Bovon's suggestion of "conscious discernment of the facts/truth" (2002:23) would likewise be appropriate in such a context.

While some have attempted to read pejorative undertones into Luke's references to other narrative undertakings (as was discussed in section 2.2.3), it would be a significant stretch to import the context of dispute into Luke's preface. Logically, there is some contextual distance between the position of authoritative decision-making occupied by the Roman official Ummidius Quadratus in Josephus' account and that occupied by Theophilus in the Lukan preface. The semantic difference between ἀλήθεια as object in Josephus and ἀσφάλεια as object in Luke's preface must also be taken into account. Thus, while the parallel construction is informative, the differing contexts render it indecisive in determining the exact meaning intended. It would seem that deciding decisively in favor of one meaning or the other depends on determining the *cause* of Theophilus' lack of certainty.

If the need to supply Theophilus with certainty were to stem from a "knowledge gap", with Luke's "orderly presentation" of that which he had "followed closely from the first" filling in the missing pieces, then BDAG's argument for "complete/thorough knowledge" presents the best reading. If, however, the root of Theophilus' problem did not derive from the *quantity/quality* of the information possessed, but instead resulted from faulty *interpretation*, then Bovon's indication that it is Luke's goal to help the reader arrive at the correct perception or discernment is correct. Given the economy of language and the ambiguity present in ἐπιγνῷς...τὴν ἀσφάλειαν and περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων, it is difficult to determine with a high degree of certainty which of these situations best reflects Theophilus' reality. The best outcome that can be hoped for is an informed preference for one reading over the other, while acknowledging that neither can be categorically excluded.

The ambiguity of a compact phrase like περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων makes it difficult to deduce a great deal about Theophilus' knowledge of the gospel message. While pressing ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων to depict Theophilus as an unbeliever (Caird, 1963:44) is untenable, it is difficult to conclude how much or little formal instruction the reader possessed (Marshall, 1978:43-44). What is certain is that Luke's audience already possessed some degree of information about the Christian message, as well as an uncommon degree of familiarity with the Septuagint. Luke's frequent citation of the Old Testament and subtle echoes of historical narrative and language from the Prophets and Psalms clearly attest a reader with a far greater degree of familiarity with the Jewish Scriptures than could be expected of the typical resident of the Roman empire toward the end of the first century. This conclusion is reinforced by the clear linguistic influence of Septuagint narrative style throughout the rest of Luke's gospel. These distinctive features of Luke-Acts bear out this study's working assumption that Old Testament

expectation played an important role in the reader's presuppositions and make it likely that Theophilus was aware of the tension between the nascent Christian community and more established authorities on the Jewish scriptures.

Suggestions that the need to supply certainty was occasioned by heretical teaching (Ellis, 1983:66) or by doubts regarding the accuracy and chronologies of other Jesus narratives (van Unnik, 1973:13-15; du Plessis, 1974:270; Bovon, 2002:24) reflect historiographical presupposition and a more negative view of Luke's predecessor's than that favored by this project. While Luke does not specify how Theophilus came to be "instructed" (κατηχήθης),it is not difficult to read whoever shared the message with him/them into the domain of meaning of "servant of the message" in the protasis. This triad between previous communicators of the message, Luke and his project and the reader rounds out the structure of the preface and reinforces the conclusion that Luke is building on precedent (Bock, 1994:54) to fill a lacuna rather than departing on a radical new venture to differentiate himself from other, ill-fated narrative attempts.

Such suggestions have perhaps unduly pushed some recent translations toward an understanding of ἐπιγνῷς...τὴν ἀσφάλειαν as "know the truth" (NRSV) or even "know the exact truth" (NASB, Marshall, 1971:38-39; Felix, 1997:64, 78). While this reading is not entirely inappropriate in light of the context, it approximates the semantic domain of ἀσφάλεια much closer to ἀλήθεια than the present author considers advisable (Bovon, 2002:24; Collins, 2010:452). This is especially true in light of the argument in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.4 in favor of reading a semantic link between τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ... πραγμάτων and τὴν ἀσφάλειαν.

The present author supports Bock's suggestion that the socio-religious context in which Luke wrote is the simplest and most literarily viable cause for Theophilus' uncertainty (1994:66). It would make sense that Luke the author-theologian would take pains to demonstrate how the tense environment of rejection and sporadic persecution described at the end of Acts (which was likely similar to the socio-religious context in which Luke wrote) was in fact the outworking of the divisive nature of God's plan and Jesus' ministry. While it is impossible to know with precision *why* Theophilus lacked certainty, the present author believes that competing interpretations of Old Testament tradition and Jesus' relation to it (themes that will be explored throughout this study) provide the most likely backdrop for interpreting ἐπιγνῷς...τὴν ἀσφάλειαν. The present author therefore prefers Bovon's reading of "conscious and acquired discernment" (2002:23), while readily acknowledging that BDAG's argument (Danker *et al*., 2000:369) in favor of "complete knowledge" cannot be excluded from consideration.

Regardless of the final position adopted with regard to the fine-tooth semantic distinctions discussed above, the final clause of Luke's preface supports three logical conclusions:

1. Theophilus already had some knowledge of the Christian message

2. there was some degree of doubt or uncertainty regarding this message, and

3. Luke was aware enough of Theophilus' presupposed narrative to feel confident that he could supply an "ordered" rhetorical-historical narrative which would supply reliability/certainty.

It is important to note: while the economy of Luke's language might leave the contemporary exegete grasping for clues as to the cause of Theophilus' uncertainty, the author and reader's shared context would have eliminated such misunderstanding, at least for the primary receptor of Luke's text. This vital final clause focuses Luke's descriptions of his methods and relation to previous tradition, funneling the matter at hand down to a single objective: getting his reader to discern the reliability and certainty of the message to be presented (du Plessis, 1974:270; Green, 1997:45; cf. the "safe style" of Strelan, 2007:169-170).

2.2.8 The impact of the Lukan preface: a focus on interpretation leading to certainty

This somewhat extensive analysis of the Lukan preface is justifiable in light of the methodological concerns of this study, as well as the enormous amount of literature these verses have produced. While the debate over the interpretation of individual terms is likely to continue, the preface as a whole confirms the working assumptions of the introduction. Luke was aware that both his account and his reader's understanding of the events in question did not exist in a vacuum, but were instead informed by tradition, precedent, expectation and context. It is clear that Theophilus possessed some level of Christian instruction and familiarity with the Jewish scriptures. Finally, it is of the utmost necessity that Luke-Acts be read against the author's declared aim of convincing the reader of the reliability of the Christian message.

This makes the key issue Luke-Acts seeks to address less a question of "simple history" and more a question of "rhetorical history" (Yamada, 1999:168-169), in which the author's primary concern is the historical, Scriptural and theological *interpretation* of events (Strelan, 2007:170; Moessner, 2008:299; cf. Robbins, 1999:83). As the following sections of this chapter will argue, Luke's presentation of expectations, episodes and reactions assumes the reader already possessed a basic *historical* familiarity with the times and events. The indication that Luke is not Theophilus' only source of information about Jesus makes the question of maintaining an accurate portrayal of events highly important. Luke's rhetorical purposes leave little room for careless handling of the facts (Dibelius, 1956:70-73; Conzelmann, 1966:218; Alexander, 1993:4); however, they also leave equally little room for modern and post-modern criticism based on precise notions of chronology.

It is also essential to note how distinctive elements of Luke's narrative provoke reader expectations and raise the stakes by suggesting that not all of the questions raised by the narrative will receive exhaustive answers. This key observation, which will be fleshed out in the following sections, indicates that for Luke, "coming to know the certainty" of these events is far more a question of *belief* in an interpretation of history, than it is a question of superior historiological detail or of complete and total knowledge of the facts.

> Luke's terminology here suggests "the convincing nature of his presentation" or "the certainty of these things." So, while the Christian message is inseparably tied to the historical events related to its origins and progression, and Luke must therefore necessarily be concerned with "what happened," it is the question of interpretation that is vital for him. Luke wants Theophilus to be assured about what he has heard, that these events lead to "this" interpretation — that is, the interpretation Luke will present in his narrative. (Green, 1997:45)

The interpretive enterprise suggested by the preface would inevitably lead Luke to construct the most convincing hermeneutical framework possible while preserving the fundamental historical integrity of the events as passed down by his sources. For the present author, there are no doubts: if Luke were able to present a narrative framework that convinced his reader of the certainty of the message *and* guaranteed an accurate, legitimate presentation of events, then the preface gives every indication that Luke would consider his literary and theological objective fulfilled. This study therefore wholeheartedly endorses Green's position cited above, which echoes Wright's outlook from the introduction: Luke's "events about which there is certainty among us" (1:1) are, in fact, "the ending you were waiting for, even though it doesn't look like you thought it would" (2013:193-194). These foundational concerns are the master lines against which any potential hermeneutic for Luke-Acts must be measured.

2.3 THE INFANCY NARRATIVES: LUKE 1:5-2:52

2.3.1 An overture to the gospel: Luke's infancy narratives and human expectation

The infancy narratives contain some of the most beloved portions of Scripture in the Western world; nearly every English speaking church member readily recognizes the opening verses of Luke 2 from countless Advent seasons. Even two millennia later, Luke clearly possesses the authorial ability to establish pathos and capture the attention of his reader. In a literary sense, the infancy narratives have long been recognized for far more than mere pathetic value; they are an overture to the rest of Luke-Acts.

This is especially relevant to the noted Lukan pattern of preview, parallel, legitimation, presentation, development and revision. In these opening chapters, Luke introduces the roles of

John and Jesus, the two most significant agents of God's plan in the gospel, and takes pains to legitimate their ministries while guiding the reader's expectations and provoking their curiosity. Tiede notes the following regarding the infancy narratives and their role in this progressive literary pattern:

> The literary coherence of Luke-Acts may be appreciated more thoroughly when it is recognized that these chapters [the infancy narratives] function like an overture to the Gospel, sounding the crucial themes in visions, oracles, and songs, alerting the reader to watch and listen for what is coming. … Then the speeches in Acts explicate Luke's distinctive version of the story of Jesus in terms which are highly consistent with the program announced in these opening chapters. If the visions, oracles, and songs of Luke 1:5-2:52 announce in poetry what the narrative is going to tell us, the body of Luke 3-21 then tells the story, and the final Chaps. 22-24 conclude the story, then the speeches in Acts will recapitulate, almost like a commentary, what the narrative has said. (1988:39)

It is with this programmatic literary pattern in mind that this study proceeds to analyze the activity of God and His agents as well as human responses to this activity in the infancy narratives. The study will pay particular attention to the sub-genres Tiede highlighted: visions, oracles and songs.

2.3.2 Guiding interpretation and expectation through literary precedent: Luke and the Septuagint

Before launching into the narrative itself, it is important to consider a key stylistic transition that takes place beginning in Luke 1:5. The periodic "artistically developed prose" style of the preface immediately gives way to a "monotonous" or "running style" (Blass *et al.* 1961:239) which would seem to take its stylistic cues from the translation Greek of the Septuagint rather than from the rhetorical conventions of the Hellenistic world (although Luke is careful to avoid terms which would have seemed vulgar to the educated reader – Bovon, 2002:4-5). The two chapters containing the Lukan infancy narratives contain a significant number of the Septuagintisms and Semitisms noted in the gospel (Fitzmyer, 1981:113-125), which manifest themselves in the first word (Ἐγένετο) that follows the preface.

The origin of Luke's Septuagintisms/Semitisms is both heavily debated and largely dependent on speculation regarding Luke's background and sources. While the present study's focus on the text and its interpretation seeks to minimize source critical speculation, it is nonetheless necessary to explore Luke's communicative motivations for this stylistic departure from Hellenistic convention. It is important to note that this stylistic shift reverberates through Luke's text on multiple levels. Luke's Septuaginstic style is notable at the word and sentence level in

the introduction and repetition of unusual discourse markers and lexical items of semitic origin and also extends to structural parallels with Septuagint narrative at the pericope-level. Indeed, Luke's varied echoes of the LXX are so pervasive that Burrows termed Luke's writing "imitative historiography" (1940:1-58).

While the present author has already contested the sort of excessively critical vision of Luke's historiography from which this term originated, Burrows' contribution to the understanding of the role the LXX played in Luke's communicative strategy was invaluable. He highlighted dozens of parallels with the birth narrative of Samuel (1940:6-27), which have been complemented by the presentation of other parallels with Genesis 11-21 and 2 Kings (Fitzmyer, 1981: 313-321; Green, 1997:55-58). Further approximations to Old Testament narrative structures have been noted in the birth annunciation of Samson and in the calling scenes of Moses and Gideon (Brown *et al*., 1978:112-113; Fitzmyer, 1989:46-47). Green proposes that the Septuagint provided Luke with a "second language" that allowed his story to echo older narratives his reader held as sacred (1997:57). Bovon, perhaps, suggests the most satisfying explanation of Luke's communicative motivation for this varied use of Scriptural language: to "emphasize continuity between the LXX and his work" (2002:3).

By way of analogy, Luke's use of the Septuagint would be akin to a contemporary author, who, upon concluding his dedication and clarifying his aims in journalistic prose, reverted to the antiquated language of the King James Bible for the narrative proper. Such a choice today would clearly indicate a specific target audience, for whom the peculiar language would likely have the "ring of Scriptural narrative" and subtly suggest that recent events recounted in this antique style should be read as the "next chapter" in the same story. It is likely that this is precisely Luke's strategy, a proposal which fits the nature of Luke's interaction with the Septuagint far better than Burrow's claims of "imitative historiography".

This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that Luke included numerous allusions and parallels without the wholesale appropriation of structures. Luke is strategically interacting with the presupposed narratives of his reader by "echoing" sacred tradition, while simultaneously working to legitimate an alternate conclusion that does *not* suggest that God is "repeating" past events. Thus, Luke's echoes of Samuel and Elijah in John's infancy narratives suggest implicit expectations for the role the Baptizer will play, without suggesting his narrative arc will follow an identical trajectory. Samuel, born of pious but childless parents, became a transitional prophetic character between the era of the judges and the establishment of the throne of David. In the pseudepigraphic literature of the intertestamental period, it is Elijah, more so than any other Old Testament character except perhaps Moses, who was associated with the prophetic and eschatological aspects of messianic expectation in Second Temple Judaism (Kee, 1987:191).

These echoes undergird and legitimate the narrative expectation that John, likewise born of pious but childless parents, will become a prophet and transitional character between the divine silence of previous centuries and the messianic and eschatological activity of Jesus, whose own birth annunciation links him to “the throne of his father David” (Luke 1:32). These expectations, however, need not suggest that entire episodes of Samuel’s or Elijah’s ministry will play out in John’s life; John will minister in the “mold” of the prophets of old, while simultaneously being relevant to his own generation as God’s agent of provocation and proclamation.

Luke’s multifaceted echoes of the language and narratives of Scripture help to substantiate the argument that he is doing more than warping history around convenient archetypes, as Burrows “imitative historiography” (1940:1-58) might seem to suggest. Luke is perfectly aware he is not in a Hellenistic assembly seeking a favorable hearing, or outlining the idealistic virtues of a hero-type, or trying to craft a positive impression of his people with an influential politician. This explains why past attempts to attribute the genre of the gospel to the various conventions of Hellenistic rhetoric and Jewish apologetic found great difficulty in justifying Luke’s deliberate use of LXX imagery, prophecy and language.

Rather, a literary analysis of Luke’s text reveals the underlying thrust of the narrative to be the divine direction of human agents to fulfill God's plan for all peoples, beginning in Israel (Bock, 2012:121). By far the most adequate literary precedent in Greek for such an undertaking lay in the narratives of the Septuagint, where the God of Israel repeatedly directed human agents in fulfillment of His plan. Therefore, it is not at all surprising to see a notable approximation in literary style and narrative pattern between Luke and the Septuagint, just as it is natural to see Luke assume the use of linguistic peculiarities from the LXX. Given the nature of his narrative and the likely hermeneutical presuppositions of his reader, Septuagint narrative supplies a subtle, natural and effective way to fulfill the author’s rhetorical goals by emphasizing the continuity of God’s plan in the gospel narrative.

2.3.3 Unequal expectations: imbalanced parallels and foreshadowing in Luke 1:5-2:52

The overall structure of Luke 1:5-2:52 has long been recognized as a combination of parallel episodes presenting and legitimating the origins of John and Jesus as God’s agents. The imbalanced nature of these parallels, particularly in the quantity, length and details of the episodes, collaborate to create distinct and unequal expectations for the future ministries of these key characters (Fitzmyer, 1981:313-314; Tiede, 1988:40; Bock, 1994:68-69; Green, 1997:50; Bovon, 2002:29). The following figure presents an overview of the narrative parallelism that exists between John and Jesus in Luke 1-2, synthesizing diverse proposals from the scholars cited above with the present author’s own research:

1:5-25: Narrative focused on John

A. Annunciation

- a. Introduction of the parents (1:5-7)
- b. Angelic annunciation (1:8-22)
- c. The mother recognizes God at work (1:23-25)

1:26-38: Narrative focused on Jesus

A'. Annunciation

- a'. Introduction of the parents (1:26-27)
- b'. Angelic annunciation (1:28-37)
- c'. The mother recognizes God at work (1:38)

1:39-56: Narrative in common: an encounter between the mothers

B. Confirmation and Praise (1:39-56)

- a. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth and greets her (1:39-40)
- b. Elizabeth's prophetic praise response (1:41-45)
- b'. Mary's prophetic praise response (1:46-55)
- a'. Mary returns home to Nazareth (1:56)

1:57-80: Narratives focused on John

C. Birth, Reactions & Preview

- a. Birth & reactions (1:57-58)
- b. Circumcision & naming (1:59-66)
- c. Prophetic ministry preview (1:67-79)
- d. Note on the child's growth (1:80)

2:1-52: Narratives focused on Jesus

C'. Birth, Reactions & Preview

- a'. Birth & reactions (2:1-20)
- b'. Circumcision & naming (2:21)
- c'. Prophetic ministry preview (2:22-39)
- d'. Note on the child's growth (2:40-52)

Figure 2.3: An overview of the narrative parallelism between John and Jesus in Luke 1:5-2:52

As the figure above demonstrates, there is remarkable parallelism of narrative elements arranged in an A, A', B, C, C' pattern, with John's episodes consistently presented first, followed by those of Jesus. However, as the number of verses dedicated to each episode shows (particularly in episodes C and C'), it rapidly becomes apparent that the role Jesus will play in the narrative to follow is destined to eclipse John's. The following figures highlight detailed comparisons and contrasts within each narrative parallel presented in Figure 2.3 (A + A', B and C + C') to demonstrate how Jesus' "eclipse" of John is foreshadowed by the *quality* and *degree* of language used to described both individuals:

Key to Figure 2.4:  **parallel comparisons**  **parallel contrasts**

(Figure starts on the next page)

A . Annunciation of John (1:5-25)	A'. Annunciation of Jesus (1:26-38)
a. Introduction of the parents (1:5-7) - Not expecting a child but had prayed for one (barren) - Priestly family (both parents)	a'. Introduction of the parents (1:26-27) - Not expecting a child nor had she prayed for one (virgin) - Family of the house of David (only Joseph's lineage specified)
b. Angelic annunciation (1:8-22) - Unexpected appearance of an angel (The angel is initially unnamed – Gabriel names himself in response to Zechariah's doubt and clarifies he was sent (ἀπεστάλην). The angel enters the Temple and is seen before addressing Zechariah) - Zechariah's non-verbal reaction: troubled (ἐταράχθη) and fear falls upon him (φόβος ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ' αὐτόν) - Angel responds: "Do not fear" (Μὴ φοβοῦ) - Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son - Name given by angel – John - He shall be great (μέγας) before the Lord (ἐνώπιον [τοῦ] κυρίου) - Focus on prophetic role: spirit and power of Elijah (ἐν πνεύματι καὶ δυνάμει Ἠλίου), make ready a people prepared for the Lord (ἑτοιμάσαι κυρίῳ λαὸν κατεσκευασμένον) - Zechariah questions: "By what [sign] shall I know this?" Echoes LXX language for Abram and Sara – "old man" and "advanced in days" - Angel responds: I am Gabriel, sent (ἀπεστάλην) to speak to you - Present sign given to confirm the certainty of the future promise: Behold (ἰδοὺ) you will be mute - Reaction: the people marveled (ἐθαύμαζον) that Zechariah lingered - Immediate fulfillment of sign – Zechariah is mute and the people perceive that he had a vision.	b'. Angelic annunciation (1:28-37) - Unexpected appearance of the angel Gabriel (the angel is named by the narrator, who also clarifies he was sent (ἀπεστάλη). Upon entering an unspecified location in Nazareth, Gabriel addresses Mary) - Mary's non-verbal reaction: troubled (διεταράχθη) and contemplates the angel's greeting (διελογίζετο) - Angel responds: "Do not fear" (Μὴ φοβοῦ) - You will conceive and give birth to a son - Name given by angel – Jesus - He shall be Great (μέγας) - Focus on governmental role: throne of his father David (τὸν θρόνον Δαυὶδ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ), reign over the house of Israel (βασιλεύσει ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰακὼβ), kingdom (βασιλείας) - Mary questions: "How will this be?" - Angel responds: The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you - Present sign given to confirm the certainty of the future promise: Behold (ἰδοὺ) your relative Elizabeth is in the sixth month (of pregnancy) - The people are not present (no reaction) - No immediate fulfillment – Mary will receive confirmation in the following episode

(continued)

A . Annunciation of John (1:5-25)	A'. Annunciation of Jesus (1:26-38)
c. The mother recognizes God at work (1:23-25) - Zechariah departs (ἀπῆλθεν) to return home - Elizabeth conceives and acknowledges "The Lord has taken away my disgrace among men."	c'. The mother recognizes God at work (1:38) - Mary acknowledges "Behold (ἰδοὺ) the Lord's servant/slave." - Gabriel departs (ἀπῆλθεν) from Mary

Figure 2.4.A: A detailed analysis of the narrative parallelism between John and Jesus in Luke 1:5-38 (A and A')

B. Confirmation & Praise – an encounter between the mothers and the infants (1:39-56)

a. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth and greets her (1:39-40)

b. Elizabeth's prophetic praise response directed primarily toward Mary (1:41-45)
- John leaps in Elizabeth's womb in response to the greeting
- Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit – fulfillment of the angelic promise in 1:15
- She offers a prophetic blessing confirming:
  - Mary's pregnancy (fruit of your womb; mother of my Lord)
  - The child's identity (worthy of blessing (εὐλογημένος), Lord)
  - That there will be fulfillment (τελείωσις) of those things that the Lord told Mary

b'. Mary's psalmistic praise response directed primarily toward God (1:46-55)
- Praise for God's regard for Mary's lowly state (ταπείνωσιν) (1:46-49)
- Praise for God's mercy (ἔλεος) toward those who fear Him (τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν), characterized as putting the mighty down from their thrones (καθεῖλεν δυνάστας ἀπὸ θρόνων) and exalting the lowly (ὕψωσεν ταπεινούς) (1:50-53)
- Praise for God's help to His servant Israel, characterized as being in remembrance of mercy promised to our fathers (ἐλέους, καθὼς ἐλάλησεν πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν) (1:54-55)

a'. Mary returns home to Nazareth (1:56)

Figure 2.4.B: A detailed analysis of the narrative parallelism between John and Jesus in Luke 1:39-56 (B – Narrative in common)

C. The Birth, Reactions & Preview of John (1:57-80)	C'. The Birth. Reactions & Preview of Jesus (2:1-52)
a. Birth and reactions (1:57-58) - Elizabeth gives birth to a son - Neighbors and relatives rejoice over the birth – the Lord has shown great mercy (ἔλεος) to Elizabeth *(John's episode progresses directly to circumcision and naming, while Jesus' narrative has a far longer reaction & rejoicing sub-scene)*	a'. Birth and reactions (2:1-20) - Mary gives birth to a son - Angels and shepherds rejoice over the birth (separate scene) (2:8-14) **Separate scene: angels & shepherds rejoice** - Unexpected angelic appearance. The angel goes unnamed and is seen by the shepherds before addressing them - Shepherds non-verbal reaction: afraid with great fear (ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν) - Angel responds: Do not fear (Μὴ φοβεῖσθε) - Birth announcement: Behold (ἰδοὺ) I bring tidings of great joy: a Savior, Christ the Lord, is born. The sign of the babe in the manger is given to confirm the tidings. - A multitude of heavenly armies offer a praise response to God - Shepherds confirm the angelic sign of the manger and make the news widely known - All who head marveled (πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες ἐθαύμασαν) Mary pondered these things (τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα) in her heart (ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς); shepherds returned glorifying God *(Note: while the language of all who hear marvelling, pondering in the heart, etc. is parallel, it takes place in different sub-scenes due to the greater length of Jesus' birth and reaction section [a'] vs John's longer circumcision and naming scene [b.])*

(continued)

C. The Birth & Prophetic Preview of John (1:57-80)	C'. The Birth & Prophetic Preview of Jesus (2:1-52)
b. Circumcision and naming (1:59-66) - After eight days, circumcised and named John as the angel said in spite of protests - All marveled (ἐθαύμασαν πάντες) at parents' mutual resolve in spite of Zechariah's muteness. - Upon conferring the baby's name, Zechariah's tongue was loosed - Fear came on all who lived around them (ἐγένετο ἐπὶ πάντας φόβος τοὺς περιοικοῦντας αὐτούς) and all these things (πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα) became widely known - All those who heard (πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες) kept these things in their hearts (ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν) – expectation: what kind of child will this be?	b'. Circumcision and naming (2:21) - After eight days, circumcised and named Jesus as the angel said
c. Prophetic preview (1:67-79) - Zechariah is filled with the Holy Spirit and offers a psalmistic praise response which points to Jesus (1:67-75) followed by a prophetic preview of John's ministry (1:76-79): - Praise to the Lord God of Israel for redemption, salvation and deliverance (λύτρωσιν, σωτηρίας, σωτηρίαν, ῥυσθέντας) originating in the house of David (ἐν οἴκῳ Δαυὶδ). This salvation is characterized as mercy to our fathers (ἔλεος μετὰ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν) so that we might serve Him without fear (ἀφόβως ... λατρεύειν αὐτῷ)	c'. Prophetic previews (2:22-39) - Jesus is brought to the Temple (narrative notes emphasize care to observe the Law in all respects) - Simeon, who is with the Holy Spirit, offers a psalmistic thanks response (2:29-32) followed by a prophetic preview of the ministry of Jesus - Simeon's thanks response (2:29-32) and prophetic preview of Jesus's ministry (2:34-35): - Thanks to the Lord for seeing Your salvation (τὸ σωτήριόν σου) prepared before the face of all peoples (κατὰ πρόσωπον πάντων τῶν λαῶν). This salvation is characterized as a light for revelation to the Gentiles (φῶς εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν ἐθνῶν) and glory of Your people Israel (δόξαν λαοῦ σου Ἰσραήλ) - Jesus' parents marvel (θαυμάζοντες) at what is said - Preview of Jesus as a sign (behold – Ἰδοὺ) destined for the rising and falling of many in Israel (κεῖται εἰς πτῶσιν καὶ ἀνάστασιν πολλῶν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ) and to be spoken against (εἰς σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον) so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed (ὅπως ἂν ἀποκαλυφθῶσιν ἐκ πολλῶν καρδιῶν διαλογισμοί) - Anna the prophetess confirms the child with thanksgiving and proclamation to all those looking for the redemption (λύτρωσιν) of Jerusalem.

(continued)

C. The Birth & Prophetic Preview of John (1:57-80)

- Zechariah's prophetic preview of John's ministry (continued)
  - No reaction from parents (it is the father offering praise and the neighbors who have marveled)
  - Preview of John as prophet of the Most High commissioned to prepare the ways of the Lord and to give knowledge of salvation (γνῶσιν σωτηρίας) through remission of sins (ἐν ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν) and the tender mercy of our God (διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους θεοῦ ἡμῶν)

d. Note on the child's growth (1:80)

- The child was growing and becoming strong in the spirit (Τὸ δὲ παιδίον ηὔξανε καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο πνεύματι) and was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel (ἀναδείξεως αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸν Ἰσραήλ)

C'. The Birth & Prophetic Preview of Jesus (2:1-52)

d'. Notes on the child's growth (2:40-52)

- (d'a) The child was growing and becoming strong, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him (Τὸ δὲ παιδίον ηὔξανεν καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο πληρούμενον σοφίᾳ, καὶ χάρις θεοῦ ἦν ἐπ' αὐτό.)
- (d' b) Exemplification episode with the boy Jesus in Jerusalem – 2:41-50

↓

- Jesus stays behind in Temple, listening and asking questions of the teachers (μέσῳ τῶν διδασκάλων); all who heard him were amazed (ἐξίσταντο δὲ πάντες οἱ ἀκούοντες αὐτοῦ)
- Mary and Joseph search for him for days and are emphatically displeased with his behavior (ἰδοὺ ὁ πατήρ σου κἀγὼ ὀδυνώμενοι ἐζητοῦμέν σε).
- Jesus' enigmatic response: "Did you not know that I must be in the … of my Father" (οὐκ ᾔδειτε ὅτι ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου δεῖ εἶναί με;). The ellipsis has long been debated – The present author prefers "the [affairs] of my [*heavenly*] Father" in light of Mary's emphasis on Joseph as father figure in her rebuke (Sylva, 1987:135; Green, 1997:156-157; Bovon, 2002:114; cf. "house" as per Bock, 1994:269-270).
- Narrative note that Jesus' parents did not understand; the family returned to Nazareth
- His mother kept all these things in her heart (πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς)

- (d' a') Repetition of characteristics from 2:40: Jesus was advancing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men (Ἰησοῦς προέκοπτεν [ἐν τῇ] σοφίᾳ καὶ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ χάριτι παρὰ θεῷ καὶ ἀνθρώποις)

Figure 2.4.C: A detailed analysis of the narrative parallelism between John and Jesus in Luke 1:57-2:52 (C and C')

The figures highlight parallelism between John and Jesus down to the repetition of words and of narrative elements, while simultaneously contrasting how Jesus, initially presented after John and born in less promising conditions, came to eclipse his relative and fellow agent of God's plan. This eclipse is visible in the number of words/sub-scenes dedicated to each individual, as well as the superior degree of praise and preview given to Jesus.

Thus, while John is "called prophet of the Most High" (προφήτης ὑψίστου κληθήσῃ – 1:76), Jesus is conceived under the "power of the Most High" (δύναμις ὑψίστου – 1:35) and "called son of God" (κληθήσεται υἱὸς θεοῦ – 1:35). In a similar vein, at John's birth "neighbors and relatives... were rejoicing with her [Elizabeth]" (οἱ περίοικοι καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς... καὶ συνέχαιρον αὐτῇ – 1:58). Meanwhile, Jesus' shocking birth "with no place for them in the guest-room" (οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ καταλύματι – 2:7) caused angelic messengers to declare "declare to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people" (εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ – 2:10), reinforced by praise from "a multitude of the heavenly host" (πλῆθος στρατιᾶς οὐρανίου – 2:13). As the next chapter will highlight, the pattern outlined in these figures will continue in Luke 3:1-4:44, with a shorter overview of John's ministry outlined first, followed by a longer and more detailed overview of Jesus' initial ministry in Galilee.

2.3.4 Expecting the unexpected: God's plan and inverted socio-cultural conventions

It is important to note that this imbalanced parallelism, while expected by contemporary readers who are familiar with the gospel narrative, would have subtly but deliberately undermined first century social and religious expectations. An uninformed first-century reader who compared the social status of the families of John and Jesus at the outset of the gospel narrative would likely be surprised to see Jesus grow into the more prevalent figure. It is likely that Theophilus, having received some degree of previous instruction (ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων – 1:4), would have expected to see Jesus' ministry eclipse that of John; this fact was almost certainly reflected by early Christian teaching, as it is in recounted in every canonic gospel. It is, however, important not to lose sight of how Luke's unique portrayal of each annunciation, birth, reaction and preview subtly but deliberately serves to highlight how God's plan and action inverted the predominant socio-cultural conventions.

As the following sections and chapters will strive to outline, divine action in defiance of the prevailing currents of human expectation is a recurring theme in the opening chapters of Luke's gospel. Luke's unique decision to flesh out John's background in addition to that of Jesus allows the reader to note how an *expected* narrative development (i.e., Jesus' ministry eclipsing that of John) in fact represented an *inversion* of the trajectories suggested by the socio-cultural circumstances of each family. The uniquely Lukan details of the infancy narratives seem to collectively signal to the reader from the outset: prepare to be surprised by the narratives that follow, even the portions you think you know! The following paragraphs will attempt to trace how

the narrative episodes of Luke's infancy narratives subtly signal the divine inversion of human expectations.

By way of example, it is useful to consider Luke's parallel birth announcements (A and A'). In harmony with Old Testament birth announcements like those of Samson and Samuel, John's annunciation takes place at a religious site during a moment of worship. In John's case, the announcement is given before the altar of incense within the restricted confines of the Jewish Temple, at *the holiest* site in Israel! Luke takes care to note John's father could only enter this sacred space due to his priestly pedigree and selection by lot (in both Jewish tradition and Luke-Acts, a process associated with selection in accordance with God's will), in addition to noting Elizabeth's descent from the daughters of Aaron. In fact, a priest from this period would only be selected by lot to perform this offering *once* in a lifetime of ministry (Marshall, 1978:54; Bock, 1994:79)! Both Zechariah and Elizabeth are commended to the reader for exemplary righteousness and advanced age, echoing language used to describe Abraham and Sarah in the Septuagint. To the reader familiar with Old Testament precedent, Luke has deftly cast the mold of expectation with a handful of verses: John's birth announcement carries the trademarks of both awaited son of promise *and* prophetic judge.

By contrast, Jesus' birth is announced to a maiden who is not yet a "fully consummated wife/ woman" (Luke will continue to use μνηστεύω to refer to Mary as late as 2:5, which, in contrast with his use of γυνή to refer to Elizabeth, would seem to indicate a legally binding relationship that has not yet been sexually consummated) at an unspecified location in a Galilean village. There is no indication of the couple's noteworthy righteousness; indeed, by first-century standards, there is not yet even a "fully fledged" couple! Luke's most noteworthy observation about the woman who will give birth to the Christ is that she is "a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David" (παρθένον ἐμνηστευμένην ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὄνομα Ἰωσὴφ ἐξ οἴκου Δαυίδ – 1:27). This information, which is important for establishing links to Old Testament prophecy, even precedes the maiden's name: Mary. Thus, while John's birth announcement bears the marks of Scriptural precedent and divine announcement in a sacred space, Jesus' origins are, at least from the standpoint of social standing, significantly less portentous.

This observation is magnified when the political power of Levitical families in first-century Judea is considered alongside questions of social status. The political obscurity of Davidic families during this period would not have been lost on a reader to whom Luke gave such Palestine-specific time markers as "while Quirinius was governing Syria" (2:1) or "while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests" (3:2). While Zechariah did not descend from a particularly influential priestly family (Bock, 1994:76; Bovon, 2002:33), it is nonetheless clear that John's pedigree would offer a far clearer path to prominence and influence than that of a rural Galilean like Jesus. It is not difficult to imagine the reader's astonishment at discovering that Jesus,

whose divisive reputation would undoubtedly have been well known to Theophilus, spent his first night in a manger because no one in Bethlehem was willing to make room for his parents!

Luke's origin stories subtly undermine the predictability of various narrative events the reader was likely to have already known. While it was likely common knowledge that John had fulfilled the role of "wilderness prophet" (after all, four canonical gospels attest it), Luke's revelation of his background and pedigree adds an element of surprise to a narrative arc that is entirely devoid of priestly service and any noteworthy presence in Jerusalem or the Temple. While Jesus' origins were perhaps better known (Matthew also has knowledge of infancy material), it is nonetheless surprising to discover that by the end of Luke's second chapter, the son of an unassuming Galilean family is found seated in the Temple, dialoguing with Israel's teachers to the astonishment of all who heard him.

As captivating as these reversals are in a *literary* sense, they are even more important in a *hermeneutical* sense, serving the attentive reader with advanced notice that the plan God is setting in motion in these foundational infancy narratives builds on Old Testament precedent, but is *not* engineered to fulfill socio-cultural expectation. Indeed, a careful study of the angelophanies, responses and hymns of Zechariah, Elizabeth and Mary sound the opposite warning: the reader would do well to *expect* that God's unfolding plan will reverse fortunes and contradict human schemes and systems.

2.3.5 Zechariah-Elizabeth-Israel: parallels, inversions and conventions of "honor/shame" (Luke 1:5-25)

The inverted expectations pointed out at the structural level by the preceding section find further reinforcement in individual episodes, as is indicated by a certain degree of "role inversion" between Zechariah, Elizabeth and Mary. Green (1997:62-63) has highlighted how four elements of Zechariah and Elizabeth's *personal* situation at the beginning of the narrative can be seen to parallel Israel's *national* situation. When both situations are analyzed in light of of first-century conventions of "honor" and "shame", both for individuals and collective groups, the parallels become even more striking and offer fascinating insight into Luke's hermeneutical foundations for "providing certainty" through rhetorical narrative.

Green's first parallel notes that both Zechariah and Elizabeth and "faithful Israel" (1997:62) have a longstanding need only God can meet. The priestly couple are presented as righteous before God (δίκαιοι ἀμφότεροι ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ – 1:6), but are childless (καὶ οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τέκνον – 1:7a) and have now passed the threshold of human intervention (καθότι ἦν ἡ Ἐλισάβετ στεῖρα, καὶ ἀμφότεροι προβεβηκότες ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῶν ἦσαν – 1:7b). While Israel's need is not explicitly stated by the text, Luke and his reader were almost surely aware of Israel's anxious expectation of God's promised messianic deliverer. This parallel, which is not explicitly mentioned by Malina

and Neyrey's study of first-century social conventions of "honor" and "shame" (1991:25-66), is nonetheless reinforced by the realization (which would have been far more transparent to Luke and his reader than it is to contemporary interpreters living in a society with very different social conventions) that both Zechariah-Elizabeth's explicit need and Israel's implicit need would have represented a "stain" that diminished their honor.

In Zechariah and Elizabeth's case, Jewish interpretation of Deuteronomy equated righteousness with fertility (Fitzmyer, 1981:323, Bock, 1994:78; Green, 1997:64-66). Thus, if Zechariah and Elizabeth were as genuinely God-fearing as Luke has depicted, how could their childlessness be explained? In light of first-century hermeneutics, the couple's childlessness would very likely have been seen by their peers as evidence *against* their apparent righteousness. It is important to note that in both Luke's introduction of John's parents in 1:6-7 and in Zechariah's response in 1:18, specific language from the Septuagint is used to link the couple to Old Testament precedent. This use of Old Testament precedent is essential to explaining how Zechariah and Elizabeth could be *both* righteous *and* barren and sets up patterns of expectation for John as a special "child of divine intervention".

Both 1:7 and 1:18 use the curious expression προβαίνω + ἡμέρα ("advanced in days") to describe the couple's age; this peculiarly semitic idiom mirrors the LXX's descriptions of Abraham and Sarah's in Genesis 18:11 and 24:1. The parallel is further reinforced by Luke's use of the terms στεῖρα "barren" (Gen 11:31; Luke 1:7) and πρεσβύτερος "elder/old person" (Gen 18:11; Luke 1:18). While one or another of these expressions might be "curious" by itself, their combined effect, alongside the previously noted structural parallels to other Old Testament narratives like those of Moses, Sampson and Samuel (Burrows, 1940:6-27; Brown *et al*., 1978:112-113; Fitzmyer, 1989:46-47; Green, 1997:55-58), establishes strong Scriptural precedent for a righteous couple praying for and receiving a "son of promise" with a special calling. Luke's language echoes the sacred narratives of Israel's past to demonstrate how God has used human frustration to set the stage for His own action. In this case, Elizabeth's barrenness will result in the birth of a child who will be key to the fulfillment of God's promises to the nation.

In so far as Israel is concerned, Malina and Neyrey illustrate the importance of the figurehead to first-century notions of collective honor: "...the *head* of the group is responsible for the honor of the group with reference to outsiders, and symbolizes its honor as well. Hence members of the group owe loyalty, respect, and obedience of a kind that commits their individual honor without limit and without compromise" (1991:39). Thus, Israel's lack of a "head" who commanded the loyalty and respect of the people, especially with reference to outsiders, would have been seen as evidence *against* the nation's honor.

Luke subtly alludes to this fact with the time reference used in 1:5: "It happened in the days of Herod, King of Judea" (Ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἡρῴδου βασιλέως τῆς Ἰουδαίας). Again, the

Septuagintistic nature of Luke's language and the preface's indication that Theophilus already possesses some familiarity with the events justifies the relatively basic assumption that Luke's reader would have been aware of Herod's status as "client king" installed by the Romans. Thus, by opening the scene with a subtle reminder that Israel was "shamefully" governed by a Gentile subservient non-Jew and not by an "honorable" king who commanded genuine loyalty and respect from the Jews, Luke has established that both the priestly couple and the nation share the unenviable social status of "stained/incomplete honor" in a way that only God's intervention could rectify.

This fact is reinforced by Green's (1997:62-63) second parallel: Zechariah-Elizabeth and Israel have been united in prayer, presumably for precisely such intervention. Luke 1:10 mentions that the whole assembly of the people are praying *outside* the Temple (πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος ἦν τοῦ λαοῦ προσευχόμενον ἔξω) while Zechariah ministers and receives revelation *inside* the Temple. In delivering his divine message, Gabriel indicates that the priest's prayer has been heard (διότι εἰσηκούσθη ἡ δέησίς σου – 1:13). The angel's description of John's role quickly goes on to confirm that God has also heard Israel's prayer and is responding. As the third parallel will demonstrate, God's intervention in Zechariah and Elizabeth's lives also represents the first step in His invention on Israel's behalf.

Green's third parallel directly links Zechariah and Elizabeth's situation to that of the nation. Gabriel indicates that John will be the one to "prepare for the Lord a people made ready" (ἑτοιμάσαι κυρίῳ λαὸν κατεσκευασμένον – 1:17); this role is reinforced in Zechariah's own prophetic preview hymn in 1:68-79. Gabriel's message reveals that the barrenness and social dishonor of the priestly couple has served God's peculiar purposes and is being reversed in His way and His timing. This reversal is highlighted by Elizabeth's note in 1:25: "the Lord… looked on me, to take away my reproach among humankind" (Οὕτως μοι πεποίηκεν κύριος ἐν ἡμέραις αἷς ἐπεῖδεν ἀφελεῖν ὄνειδός μου ἐν ἀνθρώποις). Again, Luke's choice of language echoes the Septuagint and offers clues to the nature of God's action on Israel's behalf.

The construction of Elizabeth's phrase mirrors a similar phrase found in Rachel's mouth in the LXX's rendering of Genesis 30:23: Ἀφεῖλεν ὁ θεός μου τὸ ὄνειδος ("God has taken away/cut off my reproach"). Both phrases share a reference to God as subject and use the verb ἀφαιρέω + ὄνειδος as object to indicate that the source of shame has been removed. It is important to note that both women felt themselves dishonored within their social situations by their childlessness and that God's long awaited intervention reversed their diminished status and "restored" or "completed" their honorable status.

Elizabeth's use of ἄνθρωπος rather than λαός (which Luke often uses to refer specifically to the people of Israel, as in 1:10 and 1:21) indicates that Elizabeth does not merely feel that her barrenness was an embarrassment among those of her own village or nation. Hers was a

human shame only God could lift, just as Herod's "shameful" headship emphasized Jewish embarrassment among other human nations. As Gabriel's words in John's annunciation indicate and as the annunciation to Mary in the following episode makes explicitly clear, God is already acting to fulfill His promises and to remove Israel's reproach in His own time and according to His own plan.

Green formulates the fourth and final parallel in the form of a question: "How will Israel respond?" (1997:63). The present author posits that, as far as Luke and his reader are concerned, there is little room for such a query (other than as a rhetorical question). The present study's analysis has already established Theophilus' familiarity with at least some aspects of the Christian message and with the content and language of Jewish scripture (according to the LXX). It would be extremely unlikely that a reader familiar enough with these realities to capture the subtleties of Luke's writing (which might easily escape the "uninformed" reader) would be unaware of the first-century's growing rift between Judaism and Christianity (Acts traces the origins and outlines the growing animosity the apostles faced from Jewish authorities in the decades following Jesus' death).

This is reinforced by Luke's narrative, where Zechariah (a member of the priestly class which led the opposition to Jesus and his followers in Luke-Acts and were key figures in the Jewish-Christian schism of the first century) does not remain contemplative and undecided in the face of Gabriel's annunciation. He responds to Gabriel's good news with a question and a repetition of the couple's age (1:18) which is immediately condemned as lacking in faith (οὐκ ἐπίστευσας – 1:20). While it is impossible to cast Zechariah's response as a *rejection* of God's purposes, it is nonetheless a surprising and negative development, especially when John's annunciation narrative is compared with that of Jesus (A and A' in Figure 2.3). The following section will deal with this comparison in greater detail.

Zechariah's lack of faith results in the giving of a sign; in 1:20 the angel indicates that Zechariah can be sure the things announced will take place because from that moment until the moment of fulfillment, he will be silent: "And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things happen, for you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time" (καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔσῃ σιωπῶν καὶ μὴ δυνάμενος λαλῆσαι ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας γένηται ταῦτα, ἀνθ' ὧν οὐκ ἐπίστευσας τοῖς λόγοις μου, οἵτινες πληρωθήσονται εἰς τὸν καιρὸν αὐτῶν). Commentators debate whether Zechariah's silence should be seen primarily as a confirming sign (Green, 1997:79), as sign and judgement (Bock, 1994:93), as beneficent correction (Danker, 1988:32-33), or as retribution (Bovon, 2002:39). The present author believes the parallels with Mary's response discussed in the next section support viewing Zechariah's silence as *both* a confirmatory sign *and* correction.

It is important to note that Zechariah's inability to speak (and, according to some, to hear based on 1:61 – Bock, 1994:92; Fitzmyer, 1981:328) did more than merely limit his ability to give the

typical priestly blessing. It kept the people in the dark about God's specific intentions for a period of five months, which were key to the confirmatory sign given to Mary in the narrative that follows. Many rightly view this corrective and confirmatory sign as the outworking of God's plan and "kairos-timing" (Bock, 1994:93; Green 1997:79-80).

Zechariah's silence also contributes to a temporary "role reversal" with his wife, as it is the daughter of Aaron and not the priest who is filled with Holy Spirit in 1:41 to become a "mouthpiece of prophetic praise" alongside Mary in the narrative section common to both John and Jesus (1:39-56, marked as B in figure 2.3). While this reversal is temporary and Zechariah is the mouthpiece for the "Benedictus" preview hymn at the end of Luke 1, first-century notions of authority/submission and honor/shame nonetheless indicate that even a temporary role reversal was almost certainly a surprising and expectation-defying development. First-century Jewish society had strict definitions of gender roles, particularly within families and in religious contexts (Witherington, 1984:1-10; Malina & Neyrey, 1991:41-44).

It should be noted that Elizabeth's prophetic role does not *completely invert* the first-century "gender script"; her proclamation, for example, takes place in the domestic sphere, while Zechariah's prophetic proclamation occurs in the public sphere. Such a gender-based division of "male/female spheres" was highly typical of first-century Mediterranean societies (Malina & Neyrey, 1991:42). God's action within these spheres, however, does not diminish the fact that Zechariah's silence and "failure to respond adequately", especially when contrasted with Elizabeth and Mary's proclamation and "response of faith", almost certainly constituted an inversion of social and religious convention and cultural expectation. This "episode level" reversal confirms and reinforces the hermeneutical clues discussed in connection with the "structural level" reversal of John-Jesus: the reader would do well to *expect* that God's unfolding plan will reverse fortunes and contradict human expectations.

In light of the four parallels outlined by Green (1997:62-63), which the present study integrated with social conventions of "honor" and "shame", this hermeneutical "expectation of reversal" should be extended beyond *individual* characters to Israel as a *collective people*. The present author believes that such a hermeneutic must contemplate the strong likelihood that Theophilus was already familiar with the extent to which Israel, particularly Jewish leadership, had rejected John and Jesus as divine agents. If Luke's reader already possessed the troubling answers of rejection by Israel's leadership, then it is logical to phrase the question Luke is framing as "How could a plan that originated with God produce *this* response?" and not "How will Israel respond?".

The present author believes this underlying question helps to explain why it is key that the Lukan narrative begins with angelophanies and prophetic declarations (clear evidence of God's will and activity – Squires, 1993:31). Even before the two principal agents of God's plan in the

gospel have been born, Luke's narrative lays foundations for demonstrating that God's revealed plan was *both* consistent with Scriptural precedent while *also* shocking and unexpected enough to provoke an improper response from a righteous, religiously trained figure like Zechariah. In this way, the infancy narratives provide a brilliant "beginning" from which Luke can build a hermeneutical bridge to the reader's "troubling present". While it is (perhaps) speculative to draw such strong conclusions from less than one chapter of Luke's gospel, one of the advantages of interpreting Luke's infancy narratives as "overture" as Tiede suggested (1989:39) is that it allows for conclusions like those outlined in this section to be tested as the rest of the narrative unfolds. If similar patterns of "Scriptural consistency" alongside "inverted expectation and convention" continue through Luke's narrative and contribute to its overall shape and outcome, then the hermeneutic outlined here will become increasingly convincing.

It would have been natural for a first-century reader to assume that a trained priest, selected by lot to perform Temple service, would have been better equipped to react to the divine revelation of God's plan than his elderly wife or a humble Galilean maiden; as the following section will outline in detail, Luke's narrative shows precisely the opposite to have been true. In a similar vein, it might also be natural for a first-century reader familiar with the Jewish scriptures to assume that trained priests, scribes and Pharisees would have been better equipped to identify the forerunner and the messiah than a ragtag group of former tax collectors and Galilean fishermen. The present author believes that the foundations of Luke's rhetorical narrative work from the outset to allow the reader to "discern with certainty" that the opposite has, in fact, been true.

2.3.6 Zechariah vs Mary: conventions of "honor/shame" and the dynamics of "knowing" vs "believing" (Luke 1:18-25 vs 1:34-38)

At several points the previous section resisted the temptation to draw immediate parallels between Zechariah's reaction to Gabriel's annunciation and Mary's interactions with the same divine messenger in Luke 1:26-38. This section will now explore those parallels, which are amply justified, both by the structural parallels between the episodes (outlined as A. and A'. in Figures 2.3 and 2.4.A) and by the repetition of specific terms. Gabriel is again "sent" (ἀπεστάλη – 1:19, 26), his appearance causes "troubling" (ἐταράχθη in 1:12, διεταράχθη in 1:29) which is met with the encouragement "do not fear" (Μὴ φοβοῦ – 1:13, 30). In both cases, Gabriel announces the coming birth of child who will be "great" (μέγας – 1:15, 32) and is to receive a specific name (1:13, 31). The contents of each annunciation message differ based on the role each infant will play in God's plan (as the next section will explore); however, the parallelism and contrasts set up by the narrative surrounding each announcement further support the "inversion of social convention/expectation" outlined above.

As was noted in the preceding section, Zechariah's response to Gabriel's announcement was decried as "lacking in faith" and resulted in the imposition of an influential period of silence. It is surprising to note that Mary *also* responds to Gabriel's announcement with a question that emphasizes previously given information (in her case, her sexual inactivity is emphasized, while in Zechariah's case it is the couple's age), but unlike in Zechariah's case, no negative evaluation is given. While many explanations for these differing evaluations have been offered (see, for example, Danker, 1988:32-33; Bock, 1994:93; Green, 1997:79; Bovon, 2002:39), the present author believes that the presence/absence of Scriptural precedent for each individual's circumstances, the implications of God's action for the honor/shame of each individual and the particular wording of each question offer a robust explanation for Gabriel's evaluations.

The numerous linguistic and structural parallels between Zechariah-Elizabeth and Old Testament figures like Abraham-Sarah and the birth narratives of Moses, Sampson and Samuel have already been discussed. It is striking, however, that the only notable Scriptural parallel with Luke's description of "a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph from the house of David" (παρθένον ἐμνηστευμένην ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὄνομα Ἰωσὴφ ἐξ οἴκου Δαυίδ – 1:27) comes from messianic prophecy (Isa 7:14) rather than Septuagint narrative. Thus, while God had already performed miracles which were strikingly similar to the one Zechariah and Elizabeth had prayed for, there was no historical precedent for Mary's situation. It is likewise important to note the clear absence of any indication that Mary had prayed for a child; indeed, her unmarried social standing would have made such a request deeply shameful (Malina & Neyrey, 1991:41-42).

The lack of previous prayers for a child and of Scriptural precedent for such a situation can therefore be postulated to justify an "acceptable" degree of uncertainty in Mary's case when compared with that of Zechariah-Elizabeth. Mary's response – "How will this be, since I do not have sexual knowledge of a man?" (Πῶς ἔσται τοῦτο, ἐπεὶ ἄνδρα οὐ γεινώσκω; – 1:34) – is both a logical and honorable question given her unmarried status (ἄνδρα οὐ γεινώσκω, i.e., a virgin). The fact that both Mary and Zechariah's responses to Gabriel's initial announcement use the verb γινώσκω reinforces the parallel between the two, while the very different semantic senses in which each verb is used point to different responses.

Mary's use of γινώσκω in connection with ἀνήρ is clearly euphemistic (Danker *et al*., 2000:200); it emphasizes her *honorable status* as one who has complied with religious and social convention. Thus, Malina and Neyrey's discussion of honor and shame with regard to sex and gender roles (1991:41-44), is essential to understanding the profound "rightness" of Mary's question:

> The male is responsible for the maintenance of [female] sexual exclusiveness. When the exclusiveness is lost, the female is negatively labelled "shameless", indicating a loss of "shame", which is female honor. Hence the woman courts disaster by

> stepping out of socially acceptable boundaries... which makes the deceived husband or father the object of ridicule and dishonor... (1991:44)

Thus, for Mary to exhibit the visible marks of pregnancy while outside the "socially acceptable boundaries" of marital union would provoke disastrous and lasting damage to her own honor as well as result in enormous embarrassment to her betrothed husband and male relatives.

Conversely, as a married couple who had been praying for a child for years, *no dishonor* would befall Zechariah or Elizabeth as a result of pregnancy. Indeed, precisely the opposite is true; Elizabeth acknowledges that God's involvement in her pregnancy is a *removal* of a source of social shame (Οὕτως μοι πεποίηκεν κύριος ἐν ἡμέραις αἷς ἐπεῖδεν ἀφελεῖν ὄνειδός μου ἐν ἀνθρώποις – 1:25). Hence, Gabriel rightly labels his announcement to Zechariah as "good news" (εὐαγγελίσασθαί – 1:19) in light of the couple's circumstances; it is important that no such terminology is used by Gabriel in his conversation with Mary (the term "good news" in connection with Jesus' birth is reserved until 2:10 and is not proclaimed to Jesus' parents but to the shepherds with the indication that it is for "all the people" – εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ).

Indeed, in light of the social backdrop of honor/shame and the implications of God's imminent action for Mary's honor and social standing, her final response of "Behold, (*I am*) the Lord's bondmaid; let it be to me according to your word." (Ἰδοὺ ἡ δούλη κυρίου· γένοιτό μοι κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου – 1:38) is a profound and humble demonstration of faith and a willingness to endure a damaging loss of social honor in service to God's plan. This remarkable posture is recognized by Elizabeth just a few verses later with language that attributes to Mary the *exact characteristics* that Gabriel decried as lacking in Zechariah's question: "Blessed is she who *believed* that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord" (μακαρία ἡ πιστεύσασα ὅτι ἔσται τελείωσις τοῖς λελαλημένοις αὐτῇ παρὰ κυρίου – 1:45).

In light of the differences in terms of Scriptural precedent and social convention for Zechariah-Elizabeth and Mary, it is worth revisiting Luke's formulation of Zechariah's response to Gabriel. The Jewish priest who had long prayed for a child to complete his family's honor receives the good news that God is answering his prayer; it is therefore, perplexing that his immediate reaction is to demand *more* knowledge/certainty on the very grounds that strengthen the Scriptural precedence of the miracle! "By what shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in her days" (Κατὰ τί γνώσομαι τοῦτο; ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι πρεσβύτης καὶ ἡ γυνή μου προβεβηκυῖα ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῆς – 1:18).

It is clear that Zechariah's use of γινώσκω is *not* euphemistic (Danker *et al*., 2000:199) and represents a request for additional proof or confirmation. Thus, while Mary's question represented a *defense* of her honor, Zechariah's request lacked this context of defense. Thus,

Gabriel's chastisement in 1:19-20 makes sense, both in light of the immediate context (in which Gabriel reminds Zechariah of the miraculous nature of the angelophany – Ἐγώ εἰμι Γαβριὴλ ὁ παρεστηκὼς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ) and even more so when the reader encounters the contrast with Mary in the following episode.

Zechariah's doubt is especially surprising in light of its status as "good news" (καὶ ἀπεστάλην λαλῆσαι πρὸς σὲ καὶ εὐαγγελίσασθαί σοι ταῦτα εὐαγγελίσασθαί – 1:19). Luke's narrative makes it clear that this combination of miraculous good news in response to prayer and Scriptural precedent was itself enough "knowledge" to prompt the proper response: "believing my words" (ἐπίστευσας τοῖς λόγοις μου – 1:20). Elizabeth's confirmation that Mary had "believed" in 1:45 confirms an "inverse parallelism" that highlights the shocking contrast: it is the formally trained, male Judean priest inside Israel's holy space that misresponds to the angelic message while the simple Galilean maiden is highlighted as an example of proper reaction.

Where Zechariah demanded further confirmation, oblivious to the parallels between his own situation and Israel's Scriptural precent, Mary appears to have quickly grasped the uniqueness of her situation and the paradox at the heart of it: she could *affirm* her own honor before God through submission to His will, even though the *outward signs* of this submission would provoke irreparable social shame. It is therefore entirely fitting that a Spirit-filled Elizabeth acknowledges Mary as "blessed" and "fortunate/privileged" (εὐλογημένη in 1:42 and μακαρία in 1:45, on the latter see Danker *et al*., 2000:610-611) in the midst of her own husband's imposed silence due to "lack of faith". It is likewise fitting that Mary's is the first of three prophetic preview hymns (Mary's in 1:46-55, Zechariah's in 1:68-79 and Simeon's in 2:29-32; 34-35) to grace Luke's narrative and is the one that most clearly indicates how God's plan will bring about social inversion and the reversal of fortunes: "He [*the Lord*] has thrown the mighty down from thrones and lifted up the downtrodden" (καθεῖλεν δυνάστας ἀπὸ θρόνων καὶ ὕψωσεν ταπεινούς – 1:52).

Luke's contrast between the dynamics of "knowing" (γινώσκω) versus "believing" (πιστεύω – 1:20; 45) also enrich an unfolding understanding the nature of the certainty/assurance (ἀσφάλεια) referred to in the preface. It is worth recalling Cicero's description (1942:334-335) of rhetorical narrative as "a base and foundation for the establishment of belief" (fundamentum constituendae fidei). It is interesting to note that both πιστεύω ("to believe") and its nominal form πίστις ("faith") as well as several other terms derived from the same root are included in Louw and Nida's relatively small, fifteen item domain of 31F ("Believe to be true": 1989a:370-372), which featured heavily in the present author's discussion of the preface due to its connection to both πληροφορέομαι ("to be completely certain") and ἀσφάλεια ("certainty/assurance"). It is equally telling that neither γινώσκω nor any terms derived from its root are included in this semantic domain.

While Louw and Nida's semantic domains are far from an absolute indication of how Luke and his reader would have understood the semantic relationships between words, it is nonetheless significant that a study of the Lukan preface and the first two episodes of the infancy narratives have repeatedly highlighted a small grouping of semantically harmonious words. It is particularly significant that the repetitions of these terms in the narrative occur in the mouths of an angel sent by God (ἄγγελος κυρίου – 1:11; ὁ παρεστηκὼς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἀπεστάλην λαλῆσαι πρὸς σὲ – 1:19) and a Spirit-filled Elizabeth (ἐπλήσθη πνεύματος ἁγίου ἡ Ἐλισάβετ – 1:41). Comments from Tiede in section 2.3.1 highlighted the importance of "visions, oracles and songs" (1988:39), *precisely* the sub-genres that contrast Zechariah's request to know (instead of believe) with Mary's willingness to believe in spite of the implicit loss of social honor.

These speeches commend responses of *faith* (in Mary's case) and discourage responses seeking *further confirmation/knowledge* in circumstances where adequate evidence was already apparent (Zechariah's case). Thus, if Luke's narratives continue to commend and to discourage similar types of response, then the "programmatic" conclusions outlined in this chapter will be strengthened. Likewise, the arguments made in this section will be bolstered if the narratives of Luke 1-7 (the primary scope of the present study) can be shown to repeatedly emphasize that God's actions were *simultaneously* consistent with Scriptural precedent *while* confounding the social, cultural and religious expectations of the people and leaders of Israel.

2.3.7 John's annunciation preview: (re)turning and preparing the Lord's people (Luke 1:13-17)

The preceding sections explored the parallels and contrasts between Luke's annunciation narratives (A. and A'. in Figure 2.3) with particular attention to the human reactions of John and Jesus' parents and to underlying patterns of inverted expectation. It is equally important, however, to consider the annunciation messages themselves, which point toward the roles John and Jesus are destined to play in God's unfolding plan. Gabriel's "annunciation preview" of John's future ministry is laced with Scriptural language and is highlighted as the central element in the chiastic structure of the pericope as outlined by Green (1997:67):

A – Service, sanctuary, people (vv 8-10)
  B – The angel's appearance and Zechariah's non-verbal response (vv 11-12)
    C – The announcement of "Good News" (vv 13-17)
  B' – Zechariah's verbal response of objection and the angel's answer (vv 18-20)
A' – People, sanctuary, service (vv 21-23)

Figure 2.5: The chiastic structure John's annunciation in Luke 1:8-23, following Green (1997:67)

The central placement of 1:13-17 is corroborated by a singular focus on the Lord's action as motive for human joy. Thus, this declaration of "eschatological joy... [in] response to John's coming" (Bock, 1994:83 – brackets mine for clarity) is "fundamentally theocentric... this is *God's* story" (Green, 1997:76 – emphasis his). This theocentric focus is visible in a distinct shift in language as the annunciation unfolds. Verses 13 and 14 open the annunciation with the language of *personal* and *collective* joy (ἔσται χαρά σοι καὶ ἀγαλλίασις καὶ πολλοὶ... χαρήσονται – 1:14) in contrast with the priest's fear and tension in the preceding verse (Green, 1997: 74). The subjects of the first four clauses have an intimate connection to Zechariah: *your* prayer (ἡ δέησίς σου – 1:13), *your* wife (ἡ γυνή σου – 1:13), *you* shall call him (καλέσεις – 1:13), *you* will have *your* joy (ἔσται χαρά σοι – 1:14).

Verse 14b, on the other hand, maintains the theme of joy while beginning to transition beyond the priestly couple by indicating that "many will rejoice at his birth" (πολλοὶ ἐπὶ τῇ γενέσει αὐτοῦ). This indication that God's unfolding plan will benefit the couple as well as the people of Israel is consistent with the Zechariah-Elizabeth-Israel parallels suggested by Green (1997:62-63) and traced in section 2.3.5. The opening clause of verse 15 continues to expand the description of John's impact and introduces explicitly theocentric language; not only will this child bring joy to his parents and to many, "he will be great before the Lord" (ἔσται γὰρ μέγας ἐνώπιον [τοῦ] κυρίου – 1:15). While John is the subject of verses 15-17, the theocentric focus of his mission is clear in the instructions given and in the preview of his prophetic impact: he must not drink alcohol (οἶνον καὶ σίκερα οὐ μὴ πίῃ – 1:15), he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb (πνεύματος ἁγίου πλησθήσεται ἔτι ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς αὐτοῦ – 1:15), he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God (πολλοὺς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ἐπιστρέψει ἐπὶ κύριον τὸν θεὸν αὐτῶν – 1:16), he will go before Him (the Lord) in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn... (αὐτὸς προελεύσεται ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ δυνάμει Ἠλίου, ἐπιστρέψαι – 1:17).

The rich diversity of the Scriptural echoes in Gabriel's words is well attested in recent scholarship: connections have been noted with the priestly regulations of Leviticus, the titles and eschatological significance of Elijah, the prophecies of Malachi and the narratives of Samson and Samuel (Tiede, 1988:42-43; Bock 1994:86-87; Green, 1997:75-77; Bovon, 2002:36-37). As was noted in the preceding sections, the fact that Luke's use of Scriptural precedent is much more consistent with echoing the salvific actions of God in the past than with the wholesale assimilation of a single narrative structure indicates that while Luke is legitimating John's ministry as consistent with the distinctive characteristics of God's action, John's story will nonetheless follow a unique (and thus, potentially surprising) trajectory.

The theocentric language of verses 16 and 17 also reveals a particular focus on John's mission of turning/returning, with the verb ἐπιστρέφω serving (either explicitly or implicitly) as the principal verb in three of the five clauses. Green (1997:76) has helpfully laid out the verses according to

their grammatical classification, differentiating the final three infinitive clauses from the first two indicative clauses.

1:16 *He will turn* many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God
(ἐπιστρέψει – future indicative)
1:17 and *he will go before* Him in the spirit and power of Elijah
(προελεύσεται – future indicative)
to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children
(ἐπιστρέψαι – aorist infinitive)
and [*to turn*] the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous,
(implicit repetition of ἐπιστρέψαι)
to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.
(ἑτοιμάσαι – aorist infinitive)

Figure 2.6: A grammatical classification of the verb clauses in Luke 1:16-17, following Green (1997:76)

This classification highlights the emphatic role "turning/returning" will play in the prophet's future ministry, beginning with Israel, whose situation has been noted to mirror that of John's parents. The first and second infinitive clauses represent a "twofold turning" (Bovon, 2002:37-38) that echoes both Malachi and Jewish wisdom literature (Green, 1991:77-78) to identify this "turning" as heartfelt repentance (see Danker *et al*. [2000:382] on ἐπιστρέφω, particularly with regard to belief or course of conduct). The implication is that Israel is as yet unprepared to receive God's plan, much as Zechariah will prove himself to be unprepared to believe Gabriel's words in the following verse. The priest's imposed silence serves to "muffle" the immediate shockwave of the annunciation, placing Luke's reader in the privileged position of knowing more than the crowd outside. The God of Israel has earmarked His "forerunner" for great things, but more time must pass before the nation will be confronted with its need to repent.

There is some debate over Luke's use of the term κύριος in these verses. The referent in 1:16, which carries through into the ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ of verse 17, is clearly the God of Israel (Fitzmyer, 1981:326; Green, 1997:77-78). Rowe (2006:57-58) has argued that 1:17, in addition to referring to the God of Israel, should be viewed alongside parallel uses of ἑτοιμάζω with κύριος in reference to John in Luke 1:76 and 3:4. He posits that this use represents Luke's "stylized way of talking about John's role in relation to a coming Lord" (2006:57) as part of a larger pattern of Christological use of κύριος in Luke's gospel.

Again, the temptation to "back-read" the full Christological weight of the term κύριος into John's annunciation should be tempered by the early stage at which John's annunciation appears in the narrative. It should also be considered, however, that John's role as "forerunner" and

"preparer" in light of Isaiah 40 is common to the Synoptic Gospels and that association of the term κύριος with Jesus is attested in the earliest New Testament writings. Thus, it is entirely possible (but not certain) that Luke's "instructed reader" would have possessed sufficient nuance to distinguish between the κύριος of 1:16 as a reference to the Lord God of Israel and the coming κύριος for whom John prepares in 1:17 as an understated allusion to Jesus.

Gabriel's annunciation message clearly outlines John's prophetic role of "preparation by bringing many to repentance". This description, together with its theocentric focus and subtle indication that John's ministry will give way to that of the coming Lord, prepares the reader for the intensity of John's ministry overview in Luke 3. As the following section will explore, the relatively straightforward "preview-fulfillment" dynamic of John's annunciation will again contrast with the dynamic laid out for Jesus.

2.3.8 Jesus' annunciation preview: making sense of the "throne of David" and Jesus' "reign over Israel" (Luke 1:26-38)

The preceding section outlined how John's annunciation created expectations for the prophet's future ministry, which, as the third chapter of the present study will demonstrate, largely correspond with the narrative outcome in both Luke's gospel and the other Synoptics. While Gabriel's annunciation preview of Jesus' ministry follows a similar outline and is likewise laced with Scriptural references (2 Sam 7, Isa 9 and Dan 7, according to Bock, 1994:112-113; Green, 1997:88; Bovon, 2002:51), it also raises distinct questions, particularly when Luke's language is read in light of the socio-political situation in Palestine in the second half of the first-century.

While the general structural parallelism between John's episodes and those of Jesus has already been outlined in Figure 2.4, the parallels are particularly pronounced in the angelic annunciations, both in terms of sequence and purpose of each statement. These commonalities are outlined in the following figure:

Key: ☐ Commonalities ☐ Distinctive features

John's annunciation	Commonality	Jesus' annunciation
do not be afraid, Zechariah	instruction not to fear (μὴ φοβοῦ)	do not be afraid, Mary
your prayer has been heard	God's awareness of the situation	*you* have found favor with God
your wife Elizabeth will bear *you* a son	God's response: a son to be born	*you* will conceive in *your* womb and bear a son

John's annunciation	Commonality	Jesus' annunciation
you shall call his name John	the name of the child	*you* shall call his name Jesus
you will have joy and delight	none	x
many will rejoice at his birth	none	x
he will be great before the Lord	the child's greatness	*he* will be great
he must not drink alcohol	none	x
he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb	the child's unique relationship with God	*he* will be called Son of the Most High
he will turn *many* of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God	the child's role in the plan of the Lord God (κύριος ὁ θεὸς)	the Lord God will give *him* the throne of *his* father David
he will go before him: - to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children - and [to turn] the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, - to make ready for the Lord a people prepared	details regarding the child's role	*he* will reign over the house of Jacob forever
		of *his* kingdom there will be no end

Figure 2.7: Structural commonalities between John's annunciation (Luke 1:13-17) and Jesus' annunciation (Luke 1:30-33)

While John's annunciation contains more elements than that of Jesus, there is nonetheless remarkable commonality in the sequence, subjects and purposes of the statements (beginning with the parent before progressing to the child, use of κύριος ὁ θεὸς, etc.). While it is clear that the *contents* of the statements differ (after all, Jesus and John are different people with distinct roles to play in God's plan) the already notable *structural* parallelism of the John-Jesus infancy narratives is even more pronounced in the verses outlined above. This parallelism is reinforced by the rapid and literal fulfillment of the statements which were made to Mary, who like her relative Elizabeth, goes on to conceive and bear a son who is given the name specified by the angel within a short span of time.

This raises the question, then, of how Luke's reader is to make sense of the angel's Scripturally evocative description of Jesus' kingly role in Luke 1:32-33. In stark contrast with the literal and fairly straightforward fulfillments of Gabriel's words regarding Zechariah's silence, the pregnancies of Elizabeth and Mary and John's ministry (which may have inverted social

expectations as explored by section 2.3.4, but which does correspond to the angelic annunciation of 1:13-17), nowhere in Luke's gospel will Jesus be found enthroned as a Davidic king, reigning over the house of Jacob (at least, not in the literal, nationalistic terms such language was almost certain to have evoked in light of first-century messianic expectation). Gabriel's annunciation of the role Jesus is destined to play seems, in fact, to blatantly clash with the pattern of literal fulfillment of the angel's words established by preceding events.

The words of Luke 1:32-33 become even more jarring in light of the reader's situation as one who has been "instructed" (κατηχήθης – 1:4). It seems certain that virtually any resident of the Roman Empire in the second half of the first century would have been aware that Rome's dominion over Palestine remained unbroken. Thus, it would have been even more painfully obvious to Luke's informed reader that these words, spoken by a divine messenger in one of the gospel's opening scenes, had gone seemingly unfulfilled during the life and ministry of Jesus. In light of this study's attention to Luke's authorial goal of providing "certainty" (ἀσφάλεια) and to the gospel's masterful subtlety in echoing Scriptural precedent and establishing hermeneutical patterns as noted in the preceding sections, the disparity presented by Luke 1:32-33 requires further investigation.

It is obvious that the present author is not the first to note the difficulties posed by Gabriel's words in Luke 1:32-33. Green (1997:88) identifies the weight of expectation contained in the angelic message: "it is difficult to imagine that the anticipated redemption will be anything but a nationalistic restoration of Israel". While offering little explanation, he notes that "it behooves the reader to continue to listen to the narrative; how will Luke resolve the narrative needs introduced with these strong chords of eschatological anticipation?" (1997:88) In light of Luke's decision to include these provocative echoes of nationalistic hope *without* a note of explanation, Green has correctly identified the only option available to the reader at this early juncture of the narrative: to keep reading (in spite of, or perhaps even spurred on by, Luke's potentially bewildering statements).

Strauss' thorough analysis of the motif of the Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts notes with regard to these verses that "Luke *intentionally* stays close to the Old Testament 'promise' context he has established in the nativity as a whole" (1995:89-90 – italics reflect his emphasis) while also making a strategic inversion with regard to prevalent Jewish messianic expectation.

> While the Jewish conception considered the Davidic king to be Son of God by virtue of his *role* as God's representative, Luke grounds this sonship not in Jesus' role but in his *origin*. Luke seems to be consciously opposing the view that Jesus' divine sonship is merely 'functional'—a special relationship with God by virtue of his role as king. He is rather the Son of God from the point of conception, before he has taken on any of the functions of kingship. (1995:93 – italics are Strauss')

This important inversion is borne out by the order of Gabriel's statements; Jesus' divine sonship is established first and His rule is introduced only afterwards. Importantly, it is *the Lord God who gives Him the throne* (δώσει αὐτῷ κύριος ὁ θεὸς τὸν θρόνον – in contrast with human victory or conquest of the throne – 1:32). This represents an important inversion of the seventh commonality noted in Figure 2.7. In John's annunciation, *he* is the subject *who turns many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God* (πολλοὺς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ἐπιστρέψει ἐπὶ κύριον τὸν θεὸν αὐτῶν – 1:16) while the clause in question in 1:32b represents the only portion of either annunciation which features God (with the emphatic title κύριος ὁ θεὸς) as its subject.

While subtle, the distinction is incredibly important; it would seem that Luke is again signaling to the reader to *expect* inversion. It is as if Luke is whispering between the lines of the narrative: "Especially here, Theophilus, where the tension between God's ancient promises and recent events appears greatest, there is inversion. Many of the people are ready to acknowledge virtually anyone capable of delivering nationalistic restoration as the 'son of God'. God, meanwhile, opened His intervention by establishing the identity of 'the Son of the Most High' prior to beginning the work of redemption and restoration." By subtly interrupting the pattern established in the annunciations up to this point (as has been noted, swift and literal fulfillment) Luke again underscores a "hermeneutic of inversion" and opens the door for the phrases that follow to find other modes of fulfillment.

Both Strauss (1995:130-195) and Bock (1994:115-117) argue that it is not until Jesus' resurrection and ascension (the final events of Luke's gospel) that the promises of kingship introduced here find their fulfillment. Both see the speeches of Acts (rather than particular narratives or comments by Jesus within the gospel) as the clearest indicators of this fulfillment.

> The regal presentation of Jesus is foundational to what is said about the risen Lord and the message of the kingdom in Acts, a kingdom that has both present and future elements... Luke's kingdom portrait is a complex one that cannot be transformed merely by declaring that while Jesus spoke of a spiritual kingdom in the present, we are to await the outward manifestation of a new heaven and the new earth (Bock, 1994:115).

The indication that it is only in the final events of Jesus' ministry in the gospel (which explain the physical absence of Jesus on earth, thus providing important foundations for understanding the nature and location of Jesus' throne and rule) that Jesus is "enthroned" helps to explain why *this* portion of the annunciation is fulfilled differently than that of John and the portion which refers to Mary. Strauss echoes this idea in his conclusion on the theme of the Davidic Messiah in Luke's infancy narratives: "Jesus is *introduced and defined* as the one who will fulfill the Old Testament

promise made to David. At the same time, *how* Jesus will fulfill this promise is barely suggested" (1995:124).

Bock's indication above that there are *both* present and future elements to Luke's presentation of the kingdom is likewise an important counterbalance to proposals which have defended an exclusively present or future reading. While Brawley makes important contributions to the matter at hand, his discussion of these verses also seems to fall into some of the unnecessarily simplistic conclusions Bock warned against:

> ...the scandal of a crucified Messiah creates severe tension in Luke-Acts. The birth and infancy narratives carry heavy overtones of a nationalistic restoration of Israel. The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that her promised son, Jesus, will sit on the throne of David and rule over the house of Jacob forever (Luke 1:32-33)... But Jesus' claim to a ministry to the poor, captives, blind, and oppressed (4:18-21) nulls out the political overtones. The crucifixion is a final blow that devastates the hopes of Jesus' followers that he would be the Messiah (24:21). Luke-Acts transforms this potential disconfirmation of messianism into its confirmation. The scriptures, properly interpreted, anticipate that the Messiah must suffer (Luke 24:26-27, 45-47). Further, the restoration of Israel is not political. Rather, it is the gathering of believers first under Jesus and then the twelve apostles (Lohfink 1975). The messianic expectations of the early chapters of Luke are fulfilled only by means of an ironic reinterpretation of the redemption of Israel (see Tiede 1988, and Moessner 1988a). Messianic restoration has to do with gathering the people of God, but not with reestablishing the nation (1990:30).

While the present author certainly agrees that the reinterpretation of human expectation in light of the Scriptures and recent events is one of the principal tools used in Luke's quest to provide certainty, Brawley's final paragraph seems to frame the argument with excessive absolutism. After all, if the question at hand can *only* be fulfilled by reinterpretation and has *nothing* to do with reestablishing the nation, what sense is to be made of Jesus' cryptic answer in Acts 1:7 to the disciples' question about *precisely* this matter?

Upon being queried by the disciples "Lord, is it at this time that you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Κύριε, εἰ ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ ἀποκαθιστάνεις τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραήλ; – Acts 1:6), Jesus did, in fact, point to the activity of gathering people, which had long been his and was soon to become theirs. Importantly, however, he *did not* negate the disciples' nationalistic passion. Instead, the issue of *time* plays a key role in both the disciples' question and Jesus' cryptic answer, which points much more towards the "already-not yet" tension described by Bock (1994:115) rather than to Brawley's "apolitical restoration":

> It is not for you to know the *times* or *seasons* that the Father has appointed in His proper authority, but instead, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.
>
> (Οὐχ ὑμῶν ἐστιν γνῶναι χρόνους ἢ καιροὺς οὓς ὁ πατὴρ ἔθετο ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ, ἀλλὰ λήμψεσθε δύναμιν ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐφ᾽ ὑμᾶς καὶ ἔσεσθέ μου μάρτυρες ἔν τε Ἰερουσαλὴμ καὶ [ἐν] πάσῃ τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ Σαμαρείᾳ καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς. – Acts 1:7b-8; the English translation and italics are the present author's)

It is correct to note that Jesus highlights the activity of "being my witnesses" (an activity easily associated with Brawley's proposal of "gathering people") as being a more urgent and adequate concern "at this time" (ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ) than preoccupation with the state of the kingdom of Israel. This emphasis, however, does not necessitate the nullification of the "less temporally adequate" concern, particularly when articulating "already-not yet" eschatological concerns.

This unnecessary exclusivity, however, does not nullify numerous other contributions made by Brawley. The "severe tension" he describes is consistent with Wright's approach cited in the introduction of the present study: "This is the ending you were waiting for, even though it doesn't look like you thought it would" (2013:193-194). While the inversion of social expectations and notions of honor and shame discussed in the preceding sections have already outlined ways in which Luke's narrative may not have "looked like the reader thought it would", Gabriel's words in Luke 1:32-33 and the issue of Jewish nationalism represent a far more emotionally charged tension (and far more complex resolution) than those discussed in preceding sections.

Brawley's note on "severe tension" also relates to underlying reasons for the reader's *lack* of certainty (ἀσφάλεια), as was briefly discussed in section 2.2.7. In other words, it is entirely likely that a significant portion of the reader's uncertainty derives from the *apparent unfulfillment* of certain Scriptural expectations (likely prominent among them the nationalist restoration of Israel), together with *unexpected events* that Luke will portray as Scriptural fulfillment (prominent among them the crucifixion, as Brawley suggested). Such doubts cut to the heart of Jesus' identity as God's promised Messiah and agent of fulfillment in "Israel's story of promise to be a blessing to the world" (Bock, 2012:121). Strauss argues in a similar vein: "This suggests that the nature of Jesus' messiahship is an important concern for the Lukan community and may indicate a context within that community of apologetic dialogue with the Jews" (1995:125).

Brawley also draws important lines from these verses to Jesus' early ministry in Luke 4 (which will be discussed in chapter 3 of this study). It is important to note how Jesus' quotation of Isaiah and rejection in Nazareth shape the readers expectations of his activity as Davidic Messiah in light of the infancy narratives. Brawley likewise raises the issue of Scriptural interpretation by

indicating that “the Messiah must suffer”, a phrase which is repeated strategically throughout the gospel’s final chapter (analyzed in chapter 4). The importance of Luke 24 to the arguments presented by Strauss, Bock and Brawley confirms this study’s decision to confirm Luke’s “hermeneutical foundations” in this final chapter of the gospel and in the opening narrative of Acts.

2.3.9 Mary’s “Magnificat”: praise for God’s plan of inversion and blessing (Luke 1:39-56)

The preceding sections explored the parallels and contrasts between Luke’s annunciation episodes (A. and A’. in Figure 2.3) and helped to lay important “plumb lines” for Luke’s construction of a “hermeneutic of certainty” and for the reader’s expectations, both in terms of Messianic presupposition and the roles John and Jesus will play in the narratives to come. While these sections included brief notes on Elizabeth’s reception of the Holy Spirit and confirmation of Mary’s state of blessedness due to her willingness to believe (which take place in the central encounter between the mothers, labelled B. in Figure 2.3), it is important to consider the episode as a whole. It is especially important to consider how Mary’s hymnic praise response (widely known by its Latin title the “Magnificat”) explicitly reinforces the notion that God’s plan will bring about socio-political inversion as well as blessing and salvation.

The episode is set up by Gabriel’s response to Mary’s question (“How will this be, since I do not have sexual ‘knowledge’ of a man?”) in the preceding annunciation episode, in which he reveals Elizabeth’s pregnancy in spite of her previous status as “she who was called barren” (αὐτῇ τῇ καλουμένῃ στείρᾳ – 1:36). Zechariah’s imposed silence and Elizabeth’s withdrawal from public in 1:22-24 had shrouded God’s work in their lives in temporary mystery, which allows Mary’s visit in 1:39-40 to serve as a confirmatory sign, as will be explored futher in section 2.3.14. Upon hearing Mary’s greeting, the unborn prophet “leapt in Elizabeth’s womb” (ἐσκίρτησεν τὸ βρέφος ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ αὐτῆς – 1:41) and Elizabeth was immediately filled with the Holy Spirit. Spirit-filling is an important trademark of human mouthpieces of divine revelation in Luke’s gospel, particularly in the infancy narratives (Bock, 1994:135-136). Thus, Elizabeth’s confirmation of Mary’s state of blessedness and pregnancy (Εὐλογημένη σὺ ἐν γυναιξίν καὶ εὐλογημένος ὁ καρπὸς τῆς κοιλίας σου – 1:42) confirms that God’s plan is advancing and that his blessing follows those who have aligned themselves with it (Elizabeth’s divinely informed speech applies both the participle of εὐλογέω [2x in 1:42] and μακάριος [1:45] to Mary).

Both Elizabeth’s Spirit-filled confirmation in 1:42-45 and Mary’s hymnic praise response in 1:46-55 take important steps in introducing Christological titles and applying them to Jesus. As was discussed in section 2.3.7, Luke’s first uses of κύριος clearly point to the Lord God (1:6, 9, 11, 15, 16), while the final use of κύριος in 1:17 to refer to a “coming” Lord subtly opens the door to assigning this term to Jesus. Elizabeth’s declaration in 1:43 clearly assigns this title to the as

yet unborn Jesus for the first time: “And why is this (privilege) granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” (καὶ πόθεν μοι τοῦτο ἵνα ἔλθῃ ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ κυρίου μου πρὸς ἐμέ;).

There is significant debate over how much meaning to read into this first application of κύριος to Jesus. Bock (1994:137) cautions against overreading theological weight into the term this early in the gospel. It should nonetheless be noted that the application of κύριος to an unborn child by an elderly woman who was recently filled with the Holy Spirit calls significant attention to the title. Some see a messianic reference (Brown, 1977:344) or the anticipation of Jesus’ exaltation (Green, 1997:96). Rowe (2006:34-49), on the other hand, argues for a full Christological understanding of the term in light of his view of a likely liturgical-Christian context. It is likely that the significance of a well attested early Christian title for Jesus (κύριος), particularly in such an emphatic literary situation, would not have been lost on Luke’s reader. It is, however, unclear precisely how much Christological weight such an early use merits; in light of the clarity with which Luke’s Christology will go beyond titles to substantiate Jesus’ work as God’s authoritative agent of multifaceted salvation (Bock, 2012:175-209), the unfolding of the narrative itself makes the point rather moot.

In a similar vein, Mary refers to God as “my Savior” (τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου) in 1:47. Luke’s second use of the title clearly applies it to Jesus (ἐτέχθη ὑμῖν σήμερον σωτὴρ ὅς ἐστιν Χριστὸς κύριος), in the angelic birth announcement of 2:11. Interestingly, this birth announcement also features an application of the term κύριος to Jesus by a heavenly messenger and also represents the first use of the title Χριστὸς in Luke’s gospel. The consistency with which Luke takes well-attested titles for God from the LXX and eschatological literature (κύριος, σωτήρ) and applies them to Jesus underscores the deliberate establishment of Christological foundations on which future narratives will build.

As has already been noted, the fact that such important Christological declarations are found on the lips of the *mothers* of the infants and not the *fathers* (at this stage in the narrative Zechariah is still in his imposed silence, while Joseph does not play an active role in Luke’s gospel) represents a surprising inversion of “expected” gender roles. This inversion, which to this point has been limited to *familial* roles, will be expanded to the *collective* context of Israel as a nation by the declarations of Mary’s hymn. Green (1997:99) has noted similarities with the parallelism of Jewish poetry and the form of declarative psalms of praise (word of praise + reasons for praise). While Green’s parallels are based on a selection of phrases from the hymn, the present author has integrated them with his own observations in the following structure of the “Magnificat” in its entirety:

46b My soul magnifies the Lord
47 My spirit rejoices in God my Savior
— Parallel words of praise

(continued)

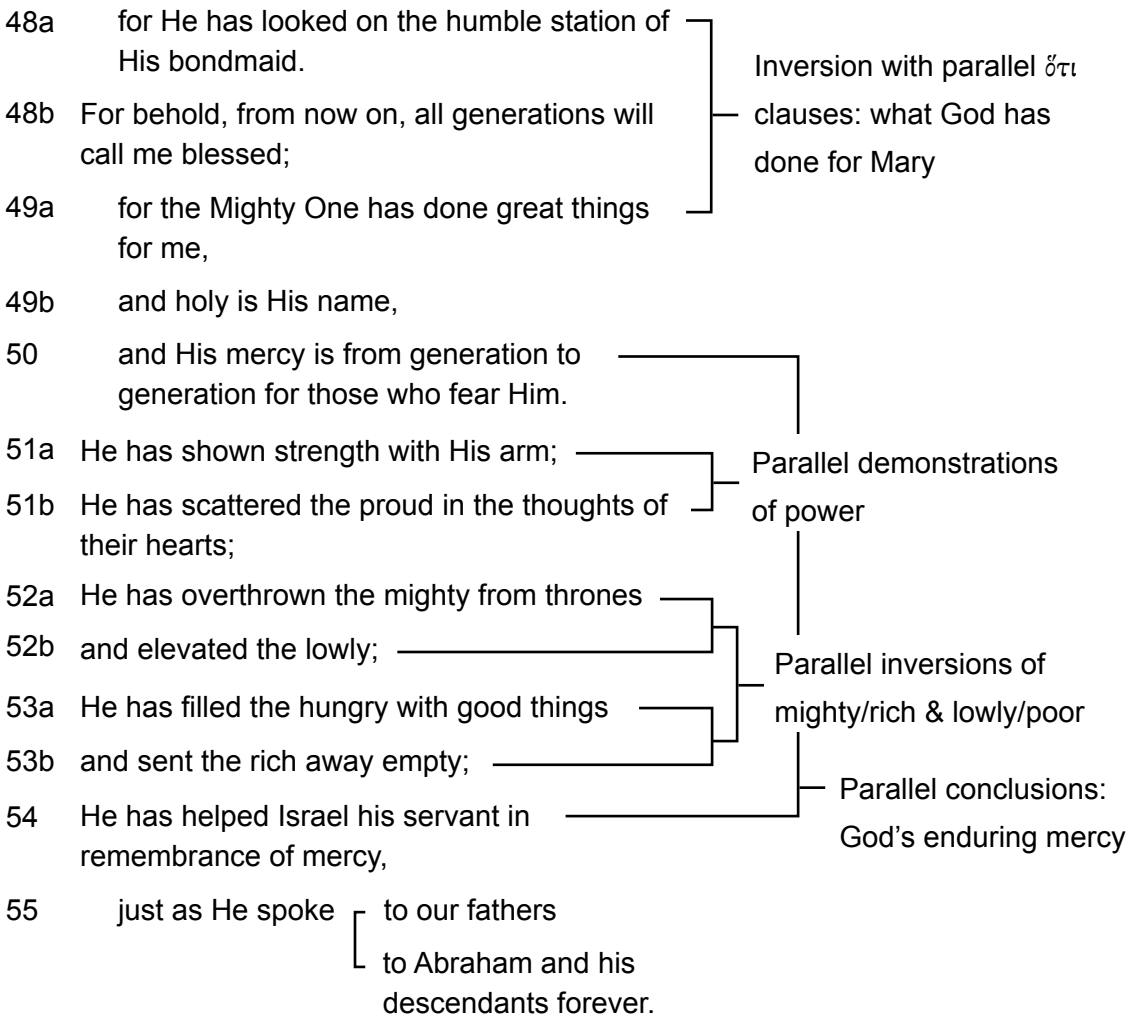


Figure 2.8: Structure and parallelism in Mary's "Magnificat" (Luke 1:46-55)

Structural and thematic parallels have long been noted between the Magnificat and Old Testament hymns of praise and victory, such as those of Moses (Ex. 15:1-18), Miriam (Ex. 15:19-21), Deborah (Jdg 5:1-31), Asaph (1 Chr 16:8-36), that of Judith in the Apocrypha (Jdt 16:1-17) and, particularly, that of Hannah (1 Sam 2:1-10) (see Brown, 1977:358-360; Green, 1997:101). Again, the echoes of Scriptural precedent confirm the consistent trademarks of God's activity without suggesting that there will be wholesale repetitions of Israel's past.

Mary's initial parallel "words of praise" in verses 46b and 47 are supported by two sections of "reasons for praise" centered on God's work of inversion, each of which concludes with a note on His mercy. The first section of "reasons for praise" in verses 48-49 focuses on God's work on Mary's behalf, which has inverted her "lowly station" (ταπείνωσιν – 1:48a) to one in which "all generations will call/consider her blessed" (μακαριοῦσίν με πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαὶ – 1:48b). The note on mercy in verse 50 focuses on God's enduring mercy "to those who fear Him" (τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν) and serves as a "hinge" from God's inversion on Mary's behalf to His work of inversion and reversal with socio-economic groups in verses 51-53.

Unlike in verses 48-49, which simply indicate positive change to Mary's "lowly station", the inversions in verses 52-53 feature both *positive* action on behalf of the oppressed as well as *negative* or *punitive* action on God's part toward those in positions of privilege. Thus, on the one hand, the hungry are filled to satisfaction (πεινῶντας ἐνέπλησεν – 1:53) and those of lowly station are exalted (ὕψωσεν ταπεινούς – the adjective form of the term Mary used to describe her own status in 1:48). On the other hand, the mighty are cast down from thrones (καθεῖλεν δυνάστας ἀπὸ θρόνων – 1:52, a powerful word choice given the likelihood that the "throne of David" from 1:32 was still fresh in the reader's memory) while the rich are sent away empty (πλουτοῦντας ἐξαπέστειλεν κενούς – 1:53). When "the proud" (ὑπερηφάνους) as objects of God's "scattering" (διεσκόρπισεν) in the parallel demonstrations of strength in verse 51 are also considered, it becomes clear to the reader that the plan God has set in motion is destined to produce results some will consider blessing, while still others are likely to prefer pejorative labels and to resist classifying the action as "God's work".

At the end of Mary's psalmic hymn, God's action is explicitly characterized as "help to Israel", in another link between God's unfolding actions in the lives of individual Jews (thus far in the narrative, Zechariah, Elizabeth and Mary – Green, 1997:101) and the impact it will soon have on the nation and Jewish society as a whole. The language of intertestamental Messianic texts like the Psalms of Solomon and psalmic texts from Qumran (Bovon, 2002:55-57) would suggest a Jewish tendency to read "Israel" into the statements of positive action and blessing and the nation's "enemies" into the statements of negative action and punishment (Strauss 1995:41-43; Atkinson, 1999:460). While the Magnificat does feature a weak linguistic link between Mary, "His bondmaid" (τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ – 1:48) and "Israel His servant" (Ἰσραὴλ παιδὸς αὐτοῦ – 1:54), it is important to note that nowhere does Mary's hymn specify that *only* Israel will be blessed, or that Jewish members of the socio-economic classes specified will be *exempted* from the negative action predicted.

As Simeon's praise hymn in Luke 2 will specify, Luke's reader should not expect to find such simplistic, nationalist readings borne out by the events of the narrative to come. In spite of currents to the contrary in Jewish intertestamental literature, it is possible to read both the indication of God's enduring mercy in 1:50 and the promise to Abraham in 1:55 in a universal, human sense, as noted by Green (1997:101). The "Magnificat's" emphasis on God's plan of inversion clearly signals to the reader that the coming "help to Israel" will not sit well with everyone affected; those with the most to lose (identified by the psalmistic hymn as the proud, the mighty and the rich) have already been earmarked as the most likely to resist. It will be important to note how this "work of inversion", which is already being fulfilled in Mary's life, will be borne out by the unfolding ministries of John and Jesus.

2.3.10 John's birth and Zechariah's "Benedictus": praise for God's mercy and salvation (Luke 1:57-80)

This study has examined the various hermeneutical patterns laid out in Luke's parallel annunciation episodes (A. and A'. in Figure 2.3) as well as the in the common encounter between the mothers (B. in Figure 2.3). The study's attention now turns to the longest of Luke's parallel episodes, which narrate the births, reactions to the birth and prophetic previews of John and Jesus (C. and C'. in Figure 2.3). As in the parallel annunciations, John's birth, reaction and preview narratives occur first (Luke 1:57-80), while those of Jesus occupy the entirety of Luke 2.

Green (1997:106) has outlined "birth + response (the present author has used the term 'reaction') + circumcision + naming + response" as the general pattern followed in John's narrative. As Figure 2.4 outlined, this pattern also holds true for Jesus' narrative in Luke 2. Luke advances rapidly through the birth, reaction and circumcision, ticking off the various fulfillments of Gabriel's annunciation: Elizabeth bears a son (ἐγέννησεν υἱόν – 1:57, in fulfillment of 1:13), resulting in the rejoicing (συνέχαιρον – 1:58, in fulfillment of 1:14) of her neighbors and relatives. Verses 59-63 narrate in greater detail how both parents insist on the name John (Elizabeth: Οὐχί, ἀλλὰ κληθήσεται Ἰωάννης – 1:60), in spite of Zechariah's imposed silence (ἔγραψεν λέγων, Ἰωάννης ἐστὶν ὄνομα αὐτοῦ – 1:63). It is this final fulfillment of Gabriel's words from 1:13 that breaks Zechariah's imposed silence, which "immediately" (παραχρῆμα) results in praise to God (ἐλάλει εὐλογῶν τὸν θεόν – 1:64).

The miraculous reversal of Zechariah's condition (together with the miraculous nature of the infant's conception and birth) provokes a new reaction from the "rejoicing" (συνέχαιρον – 1:58) and "marveling" (ἐθαύμασαν πάντες – 1:63) group of relatives and neighbors: "and fear came upon all who lived around them" (καὶ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ πάντας φόβος τοὺς περιοικοῦντας αὐτούς – 1:65). Luke's final notes prior to advancing to Zechariah's praise hymn emphasize the impact and expectation created by the events: "And in all the hill country of Judea all these matters were being discussed and all who heard them set them aside in their hearts, (an expression for profound emotional impact – Bock, 1994:170) saying: 'What then, will this child be?' For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him" (1:65b-66). It is clear to both Luke's reader and to a growing portion of the people that this child is earmarked for God's special purposes.

Prior to progressing to an analysis of Zechariah's praise hymn, it is important to draw a few conclusions on the archetypal role played by the priestly couple, who exit Luke's narrative at the end of chapter 1. Hidden toward the beginning of this narrative (and easy to miss in the flurry of fulfillment) is a fascinating description of God's action: "the Lord *amplified His mercy* to her (Elizabeth)" (ὅτι ἐμεγάλυνεν κύριος τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ μετ᾽ αὐτῆς – 1:58). There is a striking parallelism to the way Luke employs the word mercy (ἔλεος) in this chapter (which represent the only uses of the word in the scope of this study, i.e. Luke 1-7). The first two uses of ἔλεος occur in Mary's

“Magnificat”, where they serve to characterize God’s work of inversion as mercy shown to “those who fear Him” (1:50) and as the motive for his “help to Israel in remembrance” (1:54). The final two uses of ἔλεος occur in Zechariah’s “Benedictus”, where it is again linked to “our fathers and remembrance of His holy covenant” (1:72) and serves as a hinge between the ministries of John and Jesus in 1:78 (as will be explained in Figure 2.8).

This makes the demonstration of mercy in 1:58 the central element of Luke’s 5 uses of ἔλεος and the only use Luke refers to as “amplified” (ἐμεγάλυνεν). It is, additionally, the only use which is *fully realized* at the moment of declaration; John’s birth represents the completion of God’s action which Elizabeth referred to in 1:25 as “the removal of my shame among mankind” (ἀφελεῖν ὄνειδός μου ἐν ἀνθρώποις). The references to ἔλεος in the “Magnificat” and the “Benedictus”, in contrast, recall God’s past mercies to point toward His unfolding action in the present and its implications for the immediate future of Israel.

As has already been argued in section 2.3.5, this allows Elizabeth and Zechariah to serve as early archetypes of “faithful and expectant Israel” as a couple who have obeyed/feared God (1:6; 50), seen His amplified mercy (1:58) in the removal of their shame (1:25) and become mouthpieces of its joyful proclamation to others (Elizabeth in 1:42-45 and Zechariah in 1:68-79). Within this “archetypal couple”, Zechariah’s initial “unwillingness to believe” can be seen to serve a cautionary purpose, as was discussed in sections 2.3.5-2.3.6. Together, they signal to the attentive reader that God’s mercy toward Israel is on the move, in harmony with His action in the Scriptures. Elizabeth and Zechariah also signal, however, that God’s circumstances and timings are likely to contradict or even invert their presupposed expectations and that it is essential to believe in God’s revelation on the basis of His confirmed signs, even in the absence of complete knowledge and fulfillment.

Zechariah’s hymn of praise and prophetic preview (commonly known by the first word of its Latin translation, the “Benedictus”) lacks the poetic parallelism and straightforward identification with a single psalmic type/structure noted in Mary’s “Magnificat”. The full text of the hymn is reproduced below, together with notes on its general structure.

68a Blessed be the Lord God of Israel — *Opening declaration of praise*

68b for He has visited and realized redemption for His people,
69 and raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David, His servant,
70 just as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old:

God’s realized work that is worthy of praise

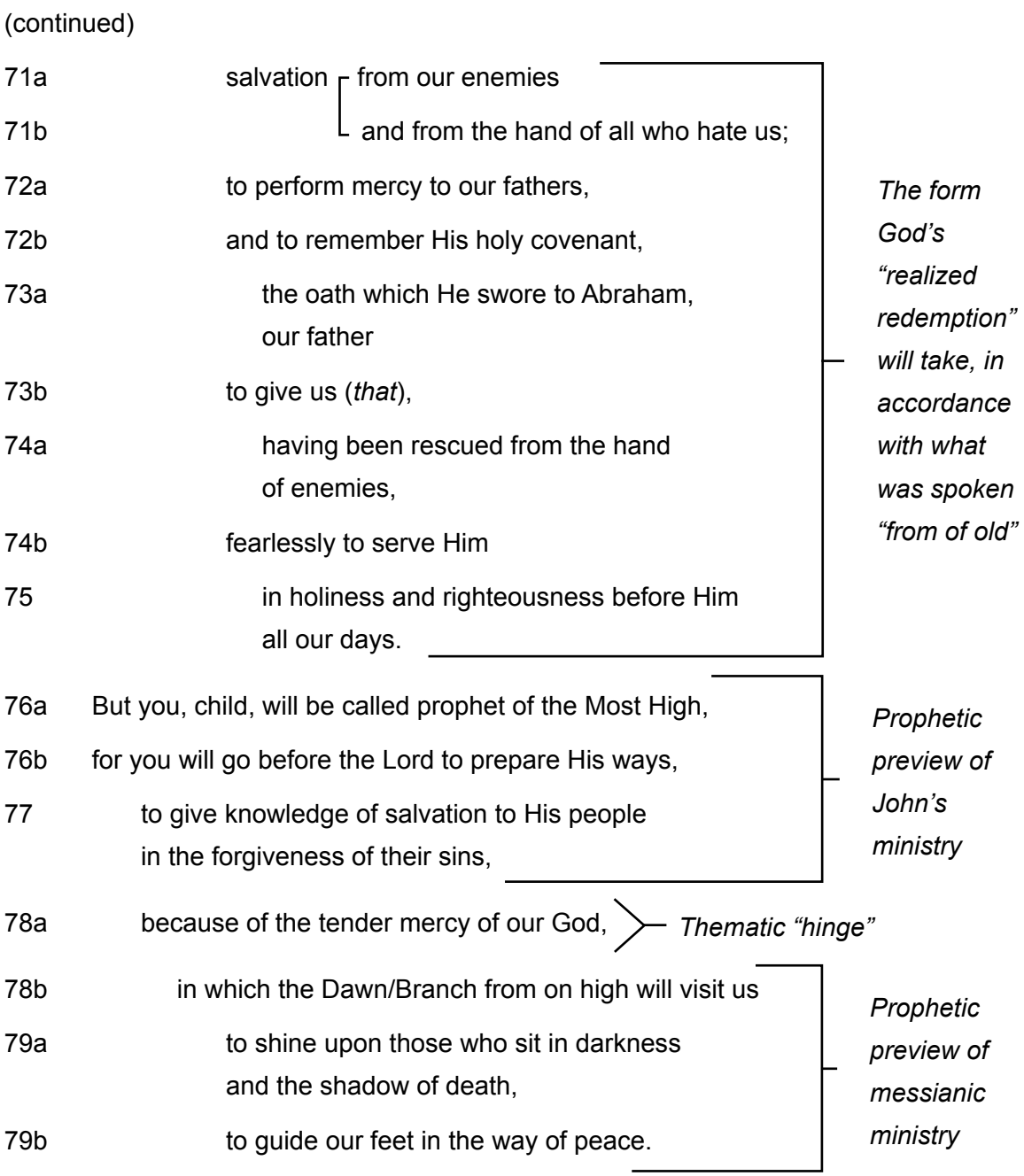


Figure 2.9: The structure of Zechariah's "Benedictus" (Luke 1:68-79)

The opening lines of the "Benedictus" intentionally mix psalmistic forms by opening with a formulation typical of praise songs (Εὐλογητὸς κύριος ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ – 1:68a), followed by a ὅτι clause (ὅτι ἐπεσκέψατο καὶ ἐποίησεν λύτρωσιν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ – 1:68b), which is typical of songs of thanksgiving (Bock, 1994:175; Bovon, 2002:72). Verses 68b-75 ground the initial formulation of praise in descriptions of God's work of redemption (λύτρωσιν – 1:68) and salvation (κέρας σωτηρίας – 1:69; σωτηρίαν – 1:71) on Israel's behalf, echoing language from the exodus tradition (Green, 1997:116; Bovon, 2002:72). The descriptions of God's work in 68b-70 favor aorist indicatives, presenting God's unfolding work as "already realized" from the perspective of divine/prophetic revelation (Bock, 1994:178).

While the theme of “God’s work on the people’s behalf” continues in verses 71-75, after the indication in 1:70 that this has been realized “just as” (καθώς) He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old, the language shifts from aorist indicatives to infinitives. Just as the hymn mixes psalmic forms, the language used to describe God’s work mixes Scriptural traditions, drawing on the language of the exodus (“salvation from our enemies and from out of the hand of all who hate us”; σωτηρίαν ἐξ ἐχθρῶν ἡμῶν καὶ ἐκ χειρὸς πάντων τῶν μεισούντων ἡμᾶς – 1:71) and that of the Davidic messiah (“raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David, His servant”; ἤγειρεν κέρας σωτηρίας ἡμῖν ἐν οἴκῳ Δαυὶδ παιδὸς αὐτοῦ – 1:69). To the attentive reader, these mixed forms and Scriptural echoes signal that God’s unfolding work of salvation will not be limited to a single facet of Jewish life. Just as Jesus’ annunciation strikes unmistakably political and nationalistic chords, Mary’s “Magnificat” emphasizes socio-economic inversion. The mix of exodus and Davidic traditions further reinforces this vision of wide-ranging impact.

There is a clear topical and structural division at the beginning of 1:76, when, after praising God for His work of deliverance, Zechariah abruptly transitions to the second person singular to address and prophetically preview the activity of his newborn son. The opening phrase of this section deliberately echoes language from Gabriel’s announcement in 1:17: “But you, child, will be called prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways” (προπορεύσῃ γὰρ ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἑτοιμάσαι ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ – 1:76b; αὐτὸς προελεύσεται ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ... ἑτοιμάσαι κυρίῳ λαὸν κατεσκευασμένον – 1:17). The indication that John “will be called prophet of the Most High” (προφήτης ὑψίστου κληθήσῃ – 1:76) contrasts with Gabriel’s use of the same verb and adjective in 1:32 to indicate that Jesus “will be called Son of the Most High” (υἱὸς ὑψίστου κληθήσεται) and points to the differing roles the two will play in God’s program of salvation.

The infinitive clause in 1:77 echoes the emphasis on “turning” in Gabriel’s annunciation and specifies that, in addition to political and socio-economic implications, there is a profound *spiritual* element to God’s work through John and Jesus: “to give knowledge of salvation to His people in the forgiveness of their sins” (τοῦ δοῦναι γνῶσιν σωτηρίας τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν). The language used is echoed in Luke’s summary of John’s ministry in 3:3 (βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν) and 3:6 (ὄψεται πᾶσα σὰρξ τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ). The correlation in Luke 1:77-78 between salvation, forgiveness and the tender mercy (σπλάγχνα ἐλέους) of God echoes the way redemption and forgiveness flow from the Lord’s lovingkindness (τὸ ἔλεος in the LXX) in Psalm 130:7-8. The emphasis on mercy provides the “literary hinge” which sets up the final movement of the hymn, pivoting away from John’s ministry and back toward that of the Davidic Messiah.

The identification of a Davidic Messiah figure in Luke 1:78-79 largely turns around the Old Testament symbolism associated with the term ἀνατολή. The term refers “that which rises up” and in Greek contexts is primarily connected to celestial bodies and the rising sun (Danker *et al.*, 2000:74); in Jewish contexts, however, the term was heavily colored by its association with

the Hebrew term צֶמַח (“sprout/branch”), as reflected by the LXX’s translation of Jeremiah 23:5 and Zechariah 3:8 and 6:12 (Bock, 1994:191-192). Given the frequency with which צֶמַח is connected to the Davidic messiah in Old Testament prophecy (in addition to the passages in listed above, see the Hebrew text of Jer 33:15) and to similar Hebrew word pictures (such as the “root of Jesse” in Isa 11), the Jewish meaning of “branch” must be considered alongside the more straightforward Greek association with “the dawn”. Strauss (1995:103-108) and Green (1997:119) argue that, in light of Luke’s use of semitsms and Septuagintisms (see section 2.3.2), it is likely that the reader would have been well enough acquainted with the language of Jewish Messianic expectation to detect the hymn’s return to the theme of the Davidic messiah.

The description ἀνατολὴ ἐξ ὕψους (dawn from on high) in 1:78 and the description of the messianic figure’s impact in 1:79a (ἐπιφᾶναι τοῖς ἐν σκότει καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου καθημένοις – “to shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death”) would seem to align with the sense of *dawn* more than with the sense of *branch.* Bock (1994:192) notes that both Philo and Justin Martyr use the term in a messianic sense in which the image of heavenly light predominates (rather than the Semitic “branch”) . This final emphasis on the coming of God’s Dawn to invert the domination of cosmic forces of “darkness and the shadow of death” reinforces that John’s prophetic role will contribute to God’s eschatological victory, which will result in an “eis-hodos” (εἰς ὁδὸν εἰρήνης – 1:79) leading to peace rather than simply another “exodus” (ἐξ ὁδός). The mixed forms and Scriptural echoes of the “Benedictus” end on a triumphant note: God is again on the move, using new agents (1:76) to “perform mercy” in accordance with the promises of old (1:72) and move closer to His final, decisive victory (1:79).

The “Benedictus”, especially when viewed alongside the “Magnificat”, raises grand expectations for God’s intervention on Israel’s behalf; the narrative archetype discussed above, however, warns that, for those who want to experience God’s “amplified mercy” (1:58), proper reactions are vital. As the contrasts between Mary and Zechariah explored in section 2.3.6 warn, it is often the humble and improbable characters in Luke’s narrative who are most prepared to *fully embrace* this mercy. Perhaps, together with its context, the “Benedictus” is subtly suggesting that it is those “sitting in darkness and the shadow of death” whose eyes will be best equipped to see beyond the dissonance of unexpected timings and unlikely fulfillments to recognize and embrace the Dawn from on high.

Luke concludes the birth, naming and reactions of John (C. in Figure 2.3) with a quick note in 1:80: “And the child was growing and was being strengthened in spirit and was in the wilderness up to the day of his public manifestation to Israel”. This short note brings John’s side of the inversion pattern between John and Jesus (see section 2.3.4) to a conclusion: this “miracle child” of priestly descent, whose birth was announced in the nation’s holiest space, does not enter Temple service. To the contrary, he is relegated to the “uninhabited regions” (ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις – 1:80) outside the realm of Jerusalem’s influence. In the wilderness tradition of the exodus and

Elijah (and in stark contrast with Samuel, whose birth narrative initially provided parallels for John's annunciation narrative), the young man matures in apparent obscurity, awaiting God's timing. As is typical of Luke's narratives, the stage has been cleared to focus on the birth + reactions and circumcision + naming + reactions (Green, 1997:106) of Jesus.

2.3.11 The birth of Jesus the Savior: great joy for all the people (Luke 2:1-20)

Luke opens his narrative of Jesus' birth by situating the events in light of local and imperial history (2:1-3), as he had done briefly prior to John's annunciation in Luke 1:5a and as he does again in 3:1-2a before giving an overview of John's ministry. Luke's brief description of the circumstances seems to assume that the reader would be familiar enough with Roman activity in Palestine to understand which of the registrations was "the first" (ἀπογραφὴ πρώτη – 2:1) under Quirinius, at least for a reader familiar with the chronological conventions of "a society not given to exact documentation" (Syme, 1973:600). The lack of overlap between events described by Luke and those documented by Josephus and Roman records, however, has produced significant historiological debate, leading many to identify Luke 2:1-3 as "the clearest example of historical error in Luke's gospel" (characterization by Bock, 1994:903, who goes on to argue in 1994:909 that this position is "premature and erroneous"; cf. Brown, 1977:547-556).

As the present author argued in section 2.2.6 with regard to justifying exacting historiography and chronologies on the basis of Luke's prologue, the issue largely turns on presuppositions and documents that would likely have been foreign to both the original author and reader. Even after decades of debate, the problem seems to lack a definitive answer (Bock, 1994:909) and would seem to offer only tangential insight into Luke's construction of a "rhetorical narrative leading to certainty" (the principal aim of the present study). Even critics of Luke's chronology admit that the key narrative contribution of Luke 2:1-3 is to explain how and why "Jesus of Nazareth" came to be born in Bethlehem, "the city of David" (Brown, 1977:555). Luke's frequent repetition of Jesus' connection to "the house and lineage" (ἐξ οἴκου καὶ πατριᾶς Δαυίδ – 2:4) and "city" of David (πόλις Δαυὶδ – 2:4; 2:11) makes this Scriptural and messianic association (which Luke's chronology works to set up) far more emphatic and relevant to the present study.

In fact, many have drawn attention to Luke's identification of Bethlehem rather than Jerusalem as "the city of David", as the text of the LXX tends to obscure the Bethlehem-David connection present in the Masoretic Text (Marshall, 1978:105; Fitzmyer, 1981:406; Bock, 1994:204-205). As was argued in section 2.3.2, Luke's use of an apparently "atypical" (and unexplained) identification, reinforces the notion of Theophilus as an "instructed reader" (and a well instructed one at that). As was true in Jesus' annunciation episode, Joseph's presence in the narrative is a "background role", serving primarily to emphasize Jesus' familial connection to the tradition of the Davidic messiah. Mary accompanies Joseph on the journey, with many noting that Luke's description of her as Joseph's "betrothed" (σὺν Μαριὰμ τῇ ἐμνηστευμένῃ – 2:5) rather than as his

“wife” (γυνή, as applied Elizabeth in 1:5) likely implies that the marriage has not yet been sexually consummated (as Matthew notes in 1:20, 24) rather than not yet legally consummated.

As with John’s birth narrative, Luke’s description of Jesus’ birth is remarkably straightforward and unadorned, with the only notable details being the care given to the infant and the humble conditions in which the birth occurred: “It came to pass that, while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth and she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guest room” (ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ ἐπλήσθησαν αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτήν, καὶ ἔτεκεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον, καὶ ἐσπαργάνωσεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀνέκλινεν αὐτὸν ἐν φάτνῃ, διότι οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ καταλύματι – 2:6-7). It would seem that Luke considers the crowded and disorganized context of the census to be sufficient explanation for why “there was no room” (οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος) and for the use of a feed trough (φάτνη) as a cradle. In fact, the curiosity of the manger becomes the key characteristic that allows the shepherds to identify the newborn in light of the angelic annunciation (2:12).

Again in harmony with John’s birth narrative, Luke dedicates attention to the reactions of those “in the region” (1:65; 2:8). As was noted in Figure 2.3.4, Jesus’ reaction and prophetic preview scenes are longer and more detailed, with the angelic proclamation of the infant’s birth and the shepherds’ reactions described in two sub-scenes in 2:8-20. Much has been made of the social status of Luke’s “shepherds”; it seems probable that, as the first recipients of the “good news” (εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν – 2:10) of the Savior’s birth, they represent God’s “uplifting of the lowly/ humble” (ὕψωσεν ταπεινούς in Mary’s “Magnificat” – 1:52), without the need for excessively pejorative overtones of “despised sinners” (Fitzmyer, 1981:408; Bock, 1994:213-214; cf. Hendriksen, 1978:149; Brown, 1977:420). Following the narrative sequence of Luke’s previous angelophanies, in 2:9-12 the divine messenger appears and is noticed (ἐπέστη αὐτοῖς καὶ δόξα κυρίου περιέλαμψεν αὐτούς – 2:9a), provoking fear (the descriptively redundant ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν – 2:9b) followed by the announcement proper: do not fear (Μὴ φοβεῖσθε – 2:10), delivery of the good news (ἰδοὺ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην... – 2:10-11) and a confirmatory sign (τοῦτο ὑμῖν τὸ σημεῖον, εὑρήσετε βρέφος ἐσπαργανωμένον καὶ κείμενον ἐν φάτνῃ – 2:12).

As was discussed briefly in section 2.3.9, the angelic announcement is rich in both messianic joy and Christological titles: “for behold, I announce to you good news of great joy which will be for all the people, for there has been born to you today a Savior, who is the Christ, the Lord!” (ἰδοὺ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, ὅτι ἐτέχθη ὑμῖν σήμερον σωτὴρ ὅς ἐστιν Χριστὸς κύριος ἐν πόλει Δαυίδ – 2:10b-11). The tone of eschatological joy at seeing God’s merciful intervention on Israel’s behalf reaches a peak in the angel’s words. This “good news”, which was present in Zechariah’s annunciation but absent from Mary’s (as was explored in section 2.3.6), is for “all the people” (παντὶ τῷ λαῷ – a term which, for Luke, is frequently used in

connection with the people of Israel – Bock, 1994:215-216) and is again explicitly connected with the Davidic-messianic tradition.

As perplexing as the regal terms used in Luke 1:32-33 may have been for a reader who was aware that they would not find literal fulfillment in the gospel (see section 2.3.8), Luke's birth narrative makes two points abundantly clear: firstly, what began with the invisible work of the Holy Spirit and the overshadowing of the power of the Most High (1:35) has now come to visible fruition, with the manger serving as the distinctive mark of confirmation (2:12). The hermeneutical importance of signs as confirmation in Luke's infancy narratives will be explored in more depth in section 2.3.14. Secondly, the *individual difficulties* of the story (Elizabeth's barrenness, Zechariah's silence, the social shame that almost certainly resulted from Mary's obedience) do not preclude an outcome of *collective joy*.

The pairing of the three titles used by the angel (Savior, Christ, Lord) and the syntactical preeminence given to the term Savior leaves no doubt as to the unique identity of the baby laying in the manger. Old Testament history was ripe with savior-figures in the judges, many of whom were evoked in the language of John's annunciation scene. This Savior, however, was unlike His literary predecessors; He was God's chosen Messiah (the Christ – Χριστὸς) and, in accordance with the pattern noted in section 2.3.9, was accorded the titles Luke previously applied to God Himself: both Savior (σωτὴρ) and Lord (κύριος). In this way, Luke is clearly legitimating Jesus' extraordinary status as God's commissioned agent and building toward his multifaceted Christology (Rowe, 2006:195-220; Bock, 2012:175-209).

In contrast with the previous angelophanies in Luke's infancy narratives, the sign (2:12) is given as part of the initial announcement rather than in response to a question, as occurred with Zechariah (1:18) and Mary (1:34). There is, however, harmony with John's birth episode in terms of narrative sequence; after a reaction of fear from those in the surrounding region (1:65; 2:8-9), there is a joyful declaration of praise to God for His work on behalf of Israel/mankind (1:67-79; 2:13-14). While praise for John's birth was marked by Zechariah's broken silence and Spirit-filling, Luke's account of praise for Jesus' birth is even more emphatic, with "a multitude of the heavenly host" (πλῆθος στρατιᾶς οὐρανίου – 2:13) taking the place of a human mouthpiece.

There is a subtle but deliberate contrast between the announcement of the individual angel, which emphasized "great joy that will be for all *the people*" (χαρὰν μεγάλην ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ – 2:10) using Luke's preferred term for the people of Israel (Bock, 1994:215-216) and the praise proclamation of the heavenly host, which emphasizes "on earth, peace to people of His good pleasure" (ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας – 2:14). The term ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας used in 2:14 had a technical force in Jewish contexts that referred to God's elect rather than to mankind as a whole (Marshall, 1978:112; Fitzmyer, 1981:411-412); however, it is important to note that the term which would allow for the inclusion of God-fearing non-Jews who respond favorably to

God's activity (Danker, 1988:60; Bock, 1994:220). Luke's gradual and subtle expansion of the "sphere of impact" of God's action and of the corresponding joy will be confirmed in Simeon's praise response, addressed in the next section.

Luke 2:15 marks a second sub-scene (marked by Καὶ ἐγένετο) focused on the shepherds confirmation of the sign given them by the angel. The shepherds emphatically decide amongst themselves to confirm "this matter" (ἐλάλουν πρὸς ἀλλήλους, Διέλθωμεν δὴ ἕως Βηθλεὲμ καὶ ἴδωμεν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο – 2:15) and find the infant in the manger and His parents "with haste" (ἦλθαν σπεύσαντες – 2:16). In contrast with John's narrative, in which the news is spread to reactions of "marveling" (ἐθαύμασαν πάντες – 1:63) and "setting things aside in their hearts" (ἔθεντο πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν – 1:66) at the occasion of his circumcision and naming, in Jesus' narrative these reactions are noted in response to the shepherds' proclamation of Jesus' birth (ἐγνώρισαν περὶ τοῦ ῥήματος τοῦ λαληθέντος αὐτοῖς περὶ τοῦ παιδίου τούτου – 2:17), which takes place prior to Jesus' circumcision and naming in 2:21. Luke again focuses more on Mary's reaction than on Joseph's, as she "was preserving the memory of all these matters, pondering in her heart" (πάντα συνετήρει τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα συμβάλλουσα ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς – 2:19), while "all those who heard marveled" (πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες ἐθαύμασαν – 2:18).

Luke ends Jesus' birth episode in Bethlehem with the shepherds assuming the role of "glorifying and praising God" (δοξάζοντες καὶ αἰνοῦντες τὸν θεὸν – 2:20) initially played by the heavenly host (πλῆθος στρατιᾶς οὐρανίου αἰνούντων τὸν θεὸν – 2:13; Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῷ – 2:14). This third angelophany in the Lukan infancy narratives thus follows the established general pattern: an individual/group is visited by a divine messenger in an isolated location, is initially fearful, receives supernatural revelation about God's unfolding intervention within Israel along with a confirmatory sign and, upon receiving confirmation/final fulfillment, ends with the receptor of the message becoming a mouthpiece of joyful praise to God. Although not an angelophany, Simeon's reception of a promise from God, reception of fulfillment and response of hymnic praise in Luke 2:29-35 fits a similar pattern that will be explored in section 2.3.14.

2.3.12 Simeon's prophetic previews: salvation in the presence of all peoples and expectations of conflict and opposition (Luke 2:21-39)

Whereas John's birth, reactions, circumcision, naming, reactions and prophetic preview occurred in one episode (with various sub-scenes) in Luke 1:57-80 dominated by the same characters and taking place in the same location, Jesus' birth and reactions take place in Bethlehem in 2:4-20 with the circumcision and naming serving as a "hinge" in 2:21 (presumably taking place in Bethlehem) before the reactions and prophetic previews of Simeon and Anna in the Temple in Jerusalem in 2:22-39a. Luke repeatedly emphasizes the obedience of Jesus' earthly parents: they circumcise Him on the eighth day (ὅτε ἐπλήσθησαν ἡμέραι ὀκτὼ τοῦ περιτεμεῖν αὐτόν – 2:21), give Him the angelic name from 1:31, bring Him to Jerusalem for dedication and

sacrifice (ἀνήγαγον αὐτὸν εἰς Ἰεροσόλυμα παραστῆσαι τῷ κυρίῳ, καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν νόμῳ κυρίου... καὶ τοῦ δοῦναι θυσίαν κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον ἐν τῷ νόμῳ κυρίου – 2:22-24) "to do for Him according to the requirements of the Law" (τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτοὺς κατὰ τὸ εἰθισμένον τοῦ νόμου περὶ αὐτοῦ – 2:27) and "fulfill everything according to the Law of the Lord" (ἐτέλεσαν πάντα τὰ κατὰ τὸν νόμον κυρίου – 2:39).

Luke's almost redundant emphasis on fulfilling the requirements of the Law is unique to Jesus' narrative and lacks parallel in John's narrative. It is possible that Luke felt that John's priestly descent made specifying fulfillment in his case unnecessary, or that he is merely legitimating the family's piety and care in observing the Law. As was the case with the circumstances of the census in 2:1-3 that brought the family to Bethlehem, the circumstances of "purification" in 2:22-24 that bring the family to the Temple have likewise drawn negative attention from some commentators (Bultmann, 1963:299; Fitzmyer, 1981:424). Much of this attention focuses on the presence of textual variants attempting to correct the "imprecision" of the most likely original pronoun αὐτῶν in 2:22 (these variants are not listed by the textual apparatus of the UBS 4 or 5; variants read αὐτῆς or αὐτοῦ; see Bock, 1994:235-236). Bock (1994:237) has rightly emphasized that the debate should not obscure Luke's emphasis: the piety and obedience of Jesus' parents.

Just as Luke's notes on the census in 2:1-3 served to explain the family's presence in Bethlehem for the birth and reactions, so the notes on carefully fulfilling the Law justify their presence in the Temple, where Jesus' extraordinary identity and role as God's agent of salvation is confirmed by two carefully legitimated figures representing "expectant Israel": Simeon, who prophesies "in the Spirit" (ἐν τῷ πνεύματι – 2:27) and Anna, a prophetess (ἦν Ἄννα προφῆτις – 2:36). Linguistic parallels abound between the descriptions and actions of Zechariah and Elizabeth in Luke 1 and the descriptions and actions of Simeon and Anna in Luke 2, emphasizing the structural parallels outlined in Figure 2.4. Like Zechariah and Elizabeth, Simeon is "righteous" (δίκαιος – 2:25; δίκαιοι ἀμφότεροι – 1:6) and "blesses" both God (εὐλόγησεν τὸν θεὸν – 2:28; εὐλογῶν τὸν θεόν – Zechariah in 1:64) and Jesus' parents (εὐλόγησεν αὐτοὺς – 2:34; εὐλογημένη σὺ ἐν γυναιξίν – Elizabeth to Mary in 1:42), while Anna's tribal relationships (θυγάτηρ Φανουήλ, ἐκ φυλῆς Ἀσήρ – 2:36) and "advancement in her many days" (προβεβηκυῖα ἐν ἡμέραις πολλαῖς – 2:36) mirror Elizabeth (ἐκ τῶν θυγατέρων Ἀαρὼν – 1:5; ἀμφότεροι προβεβηκότες ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῶν ἦσαν – 1:7).

Just as Luke carefully registered Elizabeth (1:41) and Zechariah's (1:67) Spirit-filling prior to their respective proclamations, his notes on the Holy Spirit's presence and direction of Simeon's actions border on redundancy (three mentions in 2:25-27). As was the case with Mary's "Magnificat" and Zechariah's "Benedictus", Luke makes it clear that Simeon's words carry the weight of divine revelation. Luke's repetitions are understandable, as Simeon's twin proclamations (the first a public, hymnic proclamation of praise in 2:29-32, the second a private aside to Mary in 2:34-35) significantly expand and modify the expectations for Jesus' ministry.

The overtones of salvation for all peoples and the predictions of conflict within Israel offer important and controversial counterbalance to the triumphant, nationalistic tones of previous proclamations. Luke's "rhetorical narrative" leaves the reader little room to attempt to minimize Simeon's words in comparison to those of Gabriel, Zechariah and Mary.

The Holy Spirit's promise to Simeon reaffirms Jesus identity as the "Lord's Christ" (μὴ ἰδεῖν θάνατον πρὶν [ἢ] ἂν ἴδῃ τὸν χριστὸν κυρίου – 2:26) and the legitimacy of the Spirit's presence in Simeon's life through the confirmed sign. In a similar vein to Mary's "Magnificat", the opening words of Simeon's first hymnic declaration (like the other hymnic proclamations in Luke's infancy narratives, it is generally referred to by its Latin title: the "Nunc Dimittis") offer praise/ thanks to God for His action in the speaker's life before describing God's action on behalf of the larger collective group.

> Now, You are releasing Your bondservant, Master, according to Your word in peace,
> for my eyes have seen Your salvation,
> which You have made ready in the presence of all peoples,
> a light – for revelation to the nations (Gentiles)
> and for glory to Your people Israel.

The first clause declares Simeon's "release" (ἀπολύεις – 2:29) from his post as Israel's sentinel of Messiah's imminent appearance (Hendriksen, 1978:167), which is then substantiated by the declaration of fulfillment in the second ὅτι clause. The context makes it clear that "Your salvation" (τὸ σωτήριόν σου – 2:30) does not refer to future actions God will perform, but is rather personified by the infant Simeon "welcomed into his arms" (αὐτὸς ἐδέξατο αὐτὸ εἰς τὰς ἀγκάλας – 2:28) a few verses earlier. "The idea that the person of Jesus is at the center of soteriology is a keystone of Lucan Christology" (Bock, 1994:242; cf. Fitzmyer, 1981:422).

The three remaining clauses refer back to the salvation of 2:30, with 2:31 referring to it as "made ready in the presence of all the peoples" (ὃ ἡτοίμασας κατὰ πρόσωπον πάντων τῶν λαῶν). The repetition of the verb ἑτοιμάζω, previously used by Gabriel (1:17) and Zechariah (1:76) to preview John's activity, represents an interesting inversion; while God's plan will use John to "make ready" within Israel "a people prepared for the Lord" (ἑτοιμάσαι κυρίῳ λαὸν κατεσκευασμένον – 1:17), God Himself is "making ready" in Jesus salvation for "all peoples". The use of λαός in the plural is seen by a majority of commentators as an explicit reference to the universal reach of God's salvation (so Brown, 1977:439-440; Fitzmyer, 1981:428; Schweizer, 1984:56; Bock, 1994:243; Green, 1997:148; cf. Kilpatrick, 1965:127); in light of parallels in Isaiah 40-66 and explicit references to Gentiles and to singular λαός as *Your people Israel* in the following verse, this appears to be the best understanding.

Luke 2:32 describes the the impact of this salvation on two distinct groups; a degree of interpretive nuance turns on a certain ambiguity in Luke's syntax. Should δόξα be interpreted in parallel with φῶς, both in apposition to τὸ σωτήριόν in 2:30 (resulting in the translation: "salvation... light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory for Your people Israel") as preferred by Bovon (2002:103) and the NASB and NKJV? Or did Luke intend for δόξα to parallel ἀποκάλυψις, with both in apposition to φῶς (resulting in the translation: "salvation... light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to Your people Israel"), as preferred by Brown (1977:440), Fitzmyer (1981:428), Bock (1994:244-245), Green (1997:148) and the ESV and NRSV? The present author prefers the second interpretation, as the pairs σωτήριόν-φῶς and ἀποκάλυψις-δόξα better reflect the hymnic style of the proclamation (as reflected in the translation given above).

Regardless of the syntactical nuance preferred, the combined effect of 2:31-32 contradicts prevalent Second Temple messianic expectations with extraordinary clarity. The indication that it is *God Himself* who has prepared salvation for all peoples, rather than salvation *for* Israel and *against* her enemies, is made shockingly explicit by the extension of God's light for revelation to the Gentile nations (ἐθνῶν – 2:32). Even more shockingly, this positive reference to the Gentiles is listed first, with glory for Israel listed second in the hymn's final clause. While Israel is referred to as "Your people" (λαοῦ σου – 2:32), it would likely have been little comfort to a reader familiar with Jewish eschatological-messianic expectations; these profoundly counter-cultural overtones justify Luke's insistence in noting the presence of the Holy Spirit in the opening lines of the episode.

There is clear antithesis between the tones of the "Nunc Dimittis" and the negative attitudes toward Gentile nations in eschatological and messianic texts of the intertestamental period. In analyzing Psalm of Solomon 17, Strauss notes: "…there is little universalism here. Foreigners are expelled from Israel (v. 28) and return only to pay tribute and to see God's glory (v. 31). Salvation and blessing belong to Israel" (1995:41). Broyles' comparative study of Psalm of Solomon 17 and Psalm 72 affirms this observation:

Psalms of Solomon	*Psalm 72*
"He will *judge* peoples and nations in the wisdom of his *righteousness*. Pause. And he will have gentile *nations serving* him under his yoke..." (17:29-30) "He shall be compassionate to all the nations (who) reverently (stand) before him." (17:34b)	"May he *judge* your people with *righteousness*" (72:2a) "So may he rule from sea to sea... all *nations* may they *serve* him." (72:8a, 11b)

Figure 2.10: Reproduction of a portion of Broyle's comparative study of Psalm of Solomon 17 and Psalm 72 (1997:34)

Broyle's comparison demonstrates how Psalm of Solomon 17 has narrowed and refocused the scope of divine judgement and strengthened the language of gentile servitude (compared with the older tradition of Psalm 72). It is interesting to note that the thought world of Mary's "Magnificat", in which God's mercy is extended to "those from generation to generation who fear Him" (τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ εἰς γενεὰς καὶ γενεὰς τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν – 1:50), harmonizes well with Psalm of Solomon 17. Simeon's "Nunc Dimittis", on the other hand, presents a distinct challenge to Psalm of Solomon 17's "harshening" and "narrowing" of a yoke over Gentile nations (interestingly, it presents little challenge to Psalm 72's language of righteous judgement of Israel and service from all nations). Other analyses of Jewish intertestamental texts and writings from Qumran suggests that this nationalistic "focusing" of Scriptural tradition and portrayal of Gentiles as the "others" destined for judgement was widespread within Second Temple Judaism, which expected the elimination of foreign influence and judgement of Gentile nations as an outcome of Davidic Messiahship (Atkinson, 1999:435-460; Theophilos, 2013:73-91).

Brawley (1990:55) argues that Luke's reader is unlikely to have grasped the full scope of God's intentions to expand salvation beyond Israel to the Gentiles at this early stage of the gospel. On the one hand, it is important not to engage in "back-reading" to transport the clarity of later episodes into earlier episodes; on the other hand, it is important to give due weight to the contradiction between Simeon's words and currents of Jewish expectation, as well as Theophilus' status as an "instructed reader" who was likely to be familiar with a growing Gentile presence within the Christian movement over the course of the first century. Positive interactions between Jesus and Gentiles in the gospel, consistent and crescendoing patterns of conflict between Jesus and Israel's priestly/scholarly leadership and patterns of Jewish rejection and turning to Gentiles in Acts confirm the universal overtures introduced in Simeon's "Nunc Dimittis" (Tannehill, 1988:145-165).

It is thus unsurprising that Joseph and Mary "marvel" at Simeon's words (ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ θαυμάζοντες ἐπὶ τοῖς λαλουμένοις περὶ αὐτοῦ – 2:33). As Green (1997:148) notes, "apart from a universalistic message having been made explicit in Simeon's Song, we are otherwise well within the thought world of Mary's Song". While Mary's "Magnificat" clearly envisions socio-economic inversion, as explored in section 2.3.9, Simeon's "Nunc Dimittis" clearly inverts aspects of Jewish nationalistic expectation (Bock, 1994:245-246: cf. Brown, 1977:440; Marshall, 1978:121, who indicate that such reactions are typical in revelatory scenes). The inverted expectations alluded to in the "Nunc Dimittis" will be expanded upon in Simeon's private aside to Mary in 2:34-35.

While shorter than the “Nunc Dimittis”, Simeon’s remarks to Mary are more ominous and again contain ambiguous syntax. The present author’s understanding (which follows most recent commentators and translations) is presented in the following figure:

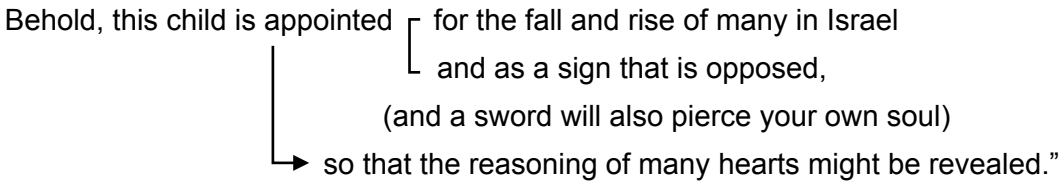


Figure 2.11: The structure of Simeon’s aside to Mary in Luke 2:34b-35

The first clause indicates Jesus’ “appointment” (κεῖται – 2:34b) for two controversial and divisive purposes (each expressed with an εἰς clause). In an image that seems to indirectly refer to Isaiah’s images of the “stumbling block” (8:14-15) and “secure cornerstone” (28:16), Simeon’s first εἰς clause indicates that Jesus’ ministry will produce diverse responses within Israel. The language echoes the inversions of Mary’s “Magnificat”; while lacking in the “Magnificat’s” socio-economic specificity, the striking indication that Jesus will be at the heart of this “rising and falling” (πτῶσιν καὶ ἀνάστασιν – 2:34b) sets an ominous tone that will be echoed by the clauses that follow.

The second εἰς clause reaffirms the controversial nature of Jesus’ future ministry by describing him as a “sign that is opposed” (σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον – 2:34b). The language should be interpreted in light of the confirmatory sign given earlier to the shepherds (2:11) and the general use of σημεῖον in episodes seeking miraculous/confirmatory signs, both later in the gospel (Luke 11:16-30; 21:7; 23:8) and in the other Synoptics. Thus, Simeon’s words indicate that if opposition and contradiction (the two senses of ἀντιλέγω, Danker *et al*., 2000:89) occur regularly in response to Jesus’ ministry in Israel, then Luke’s reader should counterintuitively interpret these responses as *confirmation* of Jesus’ status as God’s appointed agent, rather than view them as potential disproof. As Luke 4:16-30 and other episodes that will be analyzed in the next chapter demonstrate, Jesus will encounter both acceptance in faith and intense opposition from the earliest ministry episodes in Luke’s gospel.

Much of the syntactical ambiguity in Simeon’s personal aside derives from the central reference to Mary’s anguish (αὐτῆς τὴν ψυχὴν διελεύσεται ῥομφαία – 2:35a) and its relationship to the subordinated purpose clause that follows (ὅπως ἂν ἀποκαλυφθῶσιν ἐκ πολλῶν καρδιῶν διαλογισμοί – 2:35b). Does Mary’s distress at Jesus’ rejection somehow serve to help reveal unbelief in Israel (Godet, 1875:141-142)? Or should the remark, which is personal, be understood as a personal reference in the center of a structure which emphasizes the reactions of the many (πολλῶν) in both 2:34b and 2:35b (Brown, 1977:441; Fitzmyer, 1981:439-440; Bock, 1994:248; Bovon, 2002:105; cf. Danker, 1988:69)? As the structure above demonstrates, the present author

prefers the second reading, in which the parallelism of the references to the many prevail; while it is entirely possible to imagine the grief that scenes like Jesus' violent rejection in Nazareth (4:16-30) must have caused Mary, nowhere will Luke's narrative bring her back into the spotlight to highlight the *usefulness* of her pain to the manifestation of "the thoughts from many hearts" (as would be required by ὅπως in a non-parenthetical reading of 2:35a).

The precise meaning of the clause is somewhat cryptic and its lack of obvious fulfillment in Luke's gospel has resulted in at least ten distinct meaning-fulfillment proposals (Bock, 1994:248-250). It seems clear is that Jesus' ministry will result in personal anguish for His mother, a prediction that is at least partially fulfilled in the growth episode in Jerusalem (see Mary's comment to Jesus in 2:48). As the present author defended in the preceding paragraph, the final clause in 2:35b corresponds to 2:34b and closes Simeon's remarks with a final result of Jesus' ministry: to reveal (ἀποκαλυφθῶσιν) the internal reasonings from many hearts (ἐκ πολλῶν καρδιῶν διαλογισμοί). Many scholars have noted Luke's tendency to use διαλογισμός in a negative light (Marshall, 1978:123; Bock, 1994:250; Bovon, 2002:105), indicating the public exposure of what would otherwise be private obduracy.

Bock succinctly ties together the controversial overtones and interpretive implications of Simeon's twin prophetic proclamations:

> ...the Promised One is variously perceived, and many in Israel will reject him. In the path the child takes, his mother will feel pain; but his ministry will expose who is hostile to God. The messianic Son will be a light to the world, but his shining will bring division as he shines forth. Many will be raised to the Light, but tragically others will fall in judgement, having missed the promise (1994:250).

It is also important to note Luke's inclusion of the prophetess Anna as a counterpart to Simeon. While she is not attributed direct speech in the narrative, the opening paragraphs of this section noted Luke's care to establish her credibility as a reliable witness to God's action. Like Simeon, she is drawn to the infant Jesus due to her closeness with God, "approaching at that very hour" (αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐπιστᾶσα – 2:38) to "recompense" God (ἀνθωμολογεῖτο τῷ θεῷ – 2:38) with due praise and thanksgiving (Godet, 1875:143; Hendriksen, 1978:177; Marshall, 1978:124; Bock, 1994:253). She then spreads the news of Jesus' connection to God's imminent messianic and eschatological "deliverance on Jerusalem's behalf" (ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν Ἰερουσαλήμ – 2:38) like Zechariah and the shepherds in the preceding narratives. The joyful and nationalistic tones of Anna's proclamation and the note regarding the "consolation of Israel" in Simeon's introduction (παράκλησιν τοῦ Ἰσραήλ in 2:25, also connected to the verb προσδέχομαι) provide an *inclusio* like counterweight to the ominous tone of Simeon's twin prophecies.

Taken together, these indications of national deliverance and internal controversy play a key role in balancing and tempering expectations without dampening the tone of joyful praise that permeates Luke's infancy narratives. God is on the move in consonance with Israel's Scriptural past and will realize His salvation through His appointed agents; meanwhile, though God's mercy is worthy of praise and acceptance in faith, the reader would do well to remember that the inversions and reversals it aims to bring about will inevitably provoke fierce opposition and rejection, particularly within Israel. The cryptic note in the center of Simeon's aside to Mary, partially fulfilled in the episode in the Temple in 2:41-51, also reinforces the notion that even those who have responded to God's revelation with faith and acceptance, as Mary did, are prone to misunderstanding God's priorities and being profoundly "pierced" (αὐτῆς τὴν ψυχὴν διελεύσεται ῥομφαία – 2:35) by "agony and miscomprehension" (ὁ πατήρ σου κἀγὼ ὀδυνώμενοι ἐζητοῦμέν σε – 2:48; αὐτοὶ οὐ συνῆκαν τὸ ῥῆμα ὃ ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς – 2:50).

2.3.13 Notes on Jesus' growth: the supreme importance of the Father's affairs (Luke 2:40-52)

In parallel with the note in 1:80 on John's growth in the wilderness (ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις – 1:80, and thus, far from the environment of Jerusalem and Temple service which were his priestly birthright) are two notes on Jesus' growth, set in *inclusio* around the illustrative episode that occurred in the Temple at age twelve (as outlined in Figure 2.4.C). The privileged position in which the boy Jesus is found within the Temple at the end of this episode brings full circle the inversion between John and Jesus discussed in section 2.3.4. The child of promise who was announced in the Temple becomes the "preparer of ways" (προπορεύσῃ γὰρ ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἑτοιμάσαι ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ – 1:76) and "turner of hearts" (ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίας – 1:17) as a "voice calling in the wilderness" (Φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ – 3:4). Meanwhile, the child whose birth had not been prayed for (and likely cost his mother her social honor, as explained in section 2.3.6) and was announced in a Galilean backwater becomes the "amazement of Israel's teachers" (ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καθεζόμενον ἐν μέσῳ τῶν διδασκάλων καὶ ἀκούοντα... ἐξίσταντο δὲ πάντες οἱ ἀκούοντες αὐτοῦ – 2:46-47) and "advocate of the Father's affairs" (οὐκ ᾔδειτε ὅτι ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου δεῖ εἶναί με – 2:49).

The illustrative episode in 2:41-51, however, does far more than merely round out the inverted narrative arcs of John and Jesus; in continuity with Luke's notes on observance of the Law in 2:22-24, 27 and 39, the episode reaffirms the piety of Jesus' family in making the yearly journey to Jerusalem for Passover (κατ᾽ ἔτος εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ τῇ ἑορτῇ τοῦ πάσχα – 2:41; κατὰ τὸ ἔθος – 2:42). The narrative takes a dramatic turn, however, when "Jesus remained in Jerusalem without his parents knowledge" (ὑπέμεινεν Ἰησοῦς ὁ παῖς ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ, καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ – 2:43); the stage is set for this "boy on the frontier of adulthood" (ὅτε ἐγένετο ἐτῶν δώδεκα in 2:42 in contrast with Ἰησοῦς ὁ παῖς in 2:43) to demonstrate his understanding of His own peculiar connection to God's unfolding plan (Bock, 1994:259).

Luke's description of Mary and Joseph's realization of Jesus' absence and, in particular, the repetition of ἀναζητέω ("to search") in verses 42 and 43 paints a picture of increasing distress as days passed without any sign of the boy. After three days, the afflicted parents find the boy in the Temple, "seated among the teachers" (καθεζόμενον ἐν μέσῳ τῶν διδασκάλων – 2:46). Many have called attention to Luke's use of διδασκάλων to describe Israel's teachers, as this term is usually reserved for John and Jesus (Luke typically uses νομικός and γραμματεύς to describe Jewish teachers during Jesus' ministry; see Brown, 1977:474, Bock, 1994:267). Danker goes further still, noting that while *the boy* Jesus sat among Israel's teachers, one day He would assume preeminence as *Israel's Teacher* and "his questions will pierce to the very core of the religious establishment, and he will give answers to his own questions (see, e.g., 11:19-20; 13:2-5)" (1988:75).

Luke's description of the reactions is even more extraordinary: "all who heard Him were amazed at His insight and His answers" (ἐξίσταντο δὲ πάντες οἱ ἀκούοντες αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῇ συνέσει καὶ ταῖς ἀποκρίσεσιν αὐτοῦ – 2:47) as Jesus sat "listening and asking them questions" (ἀκούοντα αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπερωτῶντα αὐτούς – 2:46). While Jesus' spiritual perception might have won the admiration of those in the Temple, His parents' reaction to the scene clearly reflects their worry and the frustration of days of searching: "when they saw Him, they were astounded and His mother said to Him: 'Son, why have you behaved toward us in this manner? Behold, your father and I, greatly distressed, have been seeking you!'" (ἰδόντες αὐτὸν ἐξεπλάγησαν, καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ, Τέκνον, τί ἐποίησας ἡμῖν οὕτως; ἰδοὺ ὁ πατήρ σου κἀγὼ ὀδυνώμενοι ἐζητοῦμέν σε – 2:48)

Mary's exasperated complaint sets up Jesus' first words in the gospel. Bovon has noted elements of both chiasmus and parallelism (2002:114), which the present author has attempted to represent visually, as it helps to clarify the emphasis of Jesus' reply:

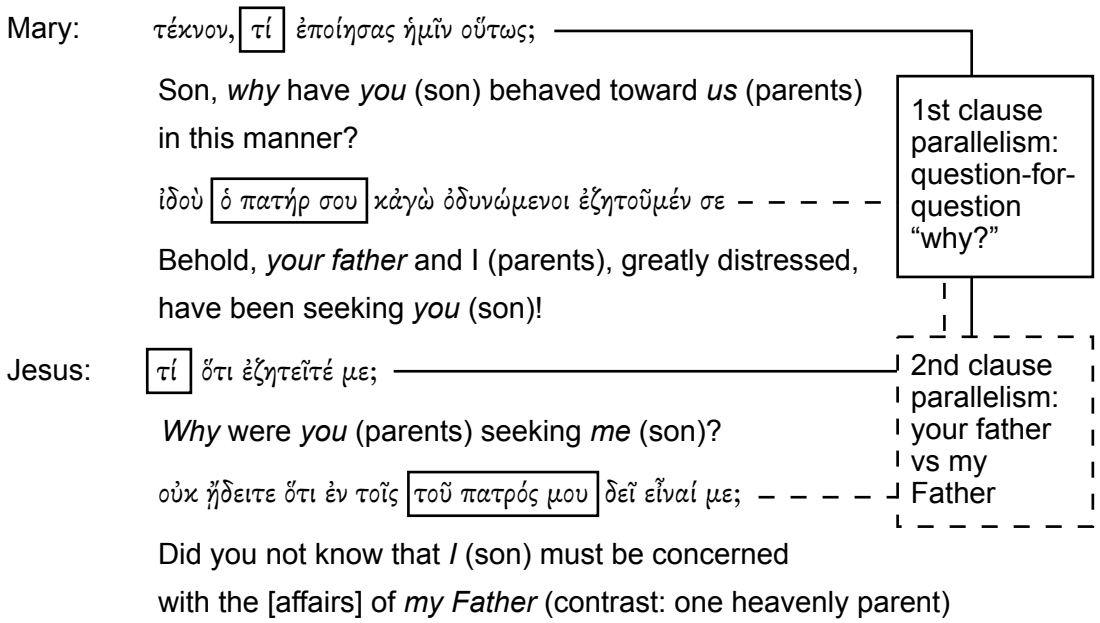


Figure 2.12: Chiasmus and parallelism in the dialogue between Mary and Jesus in Luke 2:48-49, following Bovon (2002:114)

In both the first and the second clause of Jesus' response, the respective subjects and objects (son/parents) are reversed in chiastic fashion. His response, however, also maintains a certain structural parallelism: the first clauses open with τί and the second clauses contrast the father figures (ὁ πατήρ σου vs τοῦ πατρός μου). This contrast has led many to point to Joseph's syntactical preeminence in Mary's statement as the context for Jesus' wordplay and emphasis on His connection to His *heavenly Father* (Green, 1997:156; Bovon, 2002:114).

As was noted in Figure 2.4.C, while the *precise* interpretation of Jesus' answer turns on an interpretation of the ellipsis in 2:49, the force of the structure above makes the point somewhat secondary. The present author prefers to interpret ἐν... εἶναί as "concerned with" (following Bovon, 2002:114; cf. Laurentin, 1966:54) and the ellipsis as "the affairs" of My Father (following Sylva, 1987:135; Green, 1997:156-157; cf. Brown, 1977:475-476; Bock, 1994:269-270; Danker, 1988:77). Regardless of whether a spatial or purposive referent is preferred, the commentators cited above agree in pointing to Jesus' overarching identification with the Father's plan, even when this highest priority leads Him to act in ways that confound and even distress those closest to Him. This is reinforced by the first use of the distinctive Lukan term δεῖ in the gospel, emphasizing the necessity of Jesus' unique connection to the Father's priorities (Bovon, 2002:114).

Luke's indication in 2:50 that Mary in particular did not understand Jesus' words (Luke specifies both parents: αὐτοὶ οὐ συνῆκαν, using the verbal cognate of σύνεσις, used in 2:47 to indicate how the boy's insight caused all who heard to marvel) has caused some consternation among commentators. Some feel that Mary's lack of understanding in this episode conflicts with the willingness to believe and submit demonstrated in the annunciation episode in 1:26-38 (Luce, 1933:106) and her proclamation of God's plan of inversion and redemption in the "Magnificat". This discomfort has prompted some particularly creative readings of the text, such as interpreting the verse to apply only to Joseph (Cajetan, 1540:218), attributing the "they" (αὐτοὶ) of 2:50 to the bystanders rather than the parents (Power, 1912:261-281; 444-459), reinterpreting Luke's aorists as pluperfects so that the statement applies to an implicit (but textually absent) communication of His intention to stay in Jerusalem prior to the group's journey toward Nazareth (Bover, 1951:205-15; Cortés & Gatti, 1970:404-418) or casting aspersions on the originality/historicity of the episode (Brown, 1977:482-484).

Such hermeneutical gymnastics, however, hold little water under the light of critical examination; the most natural understanding of Luke's words is that neither Mary nor Joseph understood Jesus' saying (τὸ ῥῆμα – 2:50). Other than Jesus Himself, virtually no character in the pages of Luke-Acts (even those legitimated as agents of God's plan) is depicted as being flawlessly in tune with God's purposes and immune to doubt (like John in Luke 7:18-20) or incomprehension

(like the disciples in Luke 9:45, 18:34, as chapter 4 of the present study will examine in some detail). There is, therefore, no inherent contradiction between Luke's positive presentation of Mary's faith in the narratives of Luke 1 and the note in 2:50 that she did not completely understand Jesus' unique identity or the counter-intuitive nature of God's priorities, to which she testified in the "Magnificat" (Tiede, 1988:82; Bock, 1994:272-273).

Ellis postulates that the strength of the royal and nationalistic overtones contained in Jesus' annunciation episode may, in fact, have contributed to her difficulty in understanding Jesus' insistence that the Temple and the Jewish teachers were His highest priority at that moment:

> Although realizing her son's miraculous birth and his messianic destiny, she remains ignorant of the true nature of his mission and of hIs designation, Son of God. Had not Elizabeth also conceived miraculously? Are not all Israel's kings 'Son of God' in a special way (2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7)? If Messiah is to be a great political leader, why is Jesus so absorbed with the scholars of the temple? Perhaps these questions and many more cause the perplexity which colours Luke's portrait of Mary. (1983:86)

Ellis' postulation, while impossible to prove conclusively, is consistent with the Lukan text and with human nature. After all, what interpreter, when faced with a complex and multifaceted text or situation, does not tend to emphasize those aspects which most resonate with his/her own experiences and expectations, even though it might detriment a holistic understanding? The present author underscores the hermeneutical importance of Mary's incomprehension in 2:50. Luke is drawing the infancy narratives to a close, clearing the stage of the parents and prophetic voices which have legitimated the actors who will soon take center stage: John and Jesus. Yet before Mary's exit from the stage of the gospel, Luke adds a very human counter-balance to the portrayal of this beloved character.

It would seem that Luke is deliberately signaling to the reader: even Mary, the unlikely protagonist of chapter 1 who responded properly where a Jewish priest stumbled, was surprised and even wounded by Jesus' words and choices. Does this misunderstanding invalidate her faith (highlighted by the repetition of the verbal form πιστεύω in 1:20 and 1:45)? No such indication is given. In the same way, Luke's reader should not assume that every aspect of Jesus' ministry will correspond to their expectation or even to their notion of "logic"; it is God's plan, after all! However, incomplete understanding does not make persistent belief impossible; to the contrary, in 2:51b Luke uses a description that echoes Mary's reaction to the shepherds' proclamation twelve years earlier: "His mother treasured up all these matters in her heart" (ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ διετήρει πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς).

The dramatic tension created by Mary's understandably exasperated complaint and Jesus' somewhat cryptic answer is resolved by Luke's indication in 2:51a that Jesus voluntarily

submitted to his parents (ἦν ὑποτασσόμενος αὐτοῖς) and returned with them to Nazareth (κατέβη μετ' αὐτῶν καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς Ναζαρὲθ). The episode closes with the second of the *inclusio* notes on Jesus' development, emphasizing His wisdom and grace/favor before God and people (σοφία, χάρις – 2:40, 52). The stage is finally set for the "narrative proper"; as the rich and complex echoes of Scriptural precedent, inversions of social convention and prophetic proclamations of Luke's infancy narratives have demonstrated, the reader will watch the curtain rise on the gospel's "principal act" with the benefit of a well-laid hermeneutical foundation.

2.3.14 Patterns of promise-confirmation-fulfillment-proclamation: foundations for responding to God's unfolding plan

The preceding sections have traced the development of Luke's hermeneutical foundations in narrative order, noting the repetition of thematic threads such as Scriptural precedent, messianic expectation and the inversion of social conventions and expectations. Before proceeding to the next chapter's analysis of the ministries of John and Jesus, however, it is important to clarify a macro-level pattern that was hinted at in various episodes, but not given adequate treatment in any single section. From the earliest narratives of the gospel, Luke has repeatedly emphasized that the *revelation* of God's plan inevitably requires a *response* from the receptor of the message. As has been noted throughout the preceding sections, the infancy narratives therefore lay foundations both for understanding and interpreting the episodes to come as well as for evaluating proper and improper responses to the revelation of God's plan.

Green has indicated how the hymns and annunciations work together to build an internal promise – evidence of fulfillment – praise pattern (1997:48). Taking this pattern as a starting point, the present author has confirmed its validity while detecting additional complexities and nuances, which are laid out in the following figure:

Stages	Zechariah	Mary	Simeon
Promise	"Your wife will bear you a son and you shall call his name John" (καὶ ἡ γυνή σου Ἐλισάβετ γεννήσει υἱόν σοι καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννην – 1:13b)	"You will conceive in your womb and will bear a son and you shall call his name Jesus" (καὶ ἰδοὺ συλλήμψῃ ἐν γαστρὶ καὶ τέξῃ υἱὸν καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν – 1:31)	"He had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (καὶ ἦν αὐτῷ κεχρηματισμένον ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου μὴ ἰδεῖν θάνατον πρὶν ἂν ἴδῃ τὸν χριστὸν κυρίου – 2:26)
Reaction (Question)	"By what shall I know this?"	"How will this be, since I do not have [sexual] knowledge of a man?	None recorded

Stages	Zechariah	Mary	Simeon
Reaction (continued)	(κατὰ τί γνώσομαι τοῦτο; – 1:18)	(πῶς ἔσται τοῦτο ἐπεὶ ἄνδρα οὐ γεινώσκω; – 1:34b)	(the promise was given in the past and not via angelophany)
Confirmation (Sign)	"Behold – you will be unable to speak until the day these things take place... and when he came out, he was unable to speak to them." (καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔσῃ σιωπῶν καὶ μὴ δυνάμενος λαλῆσαι ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας γένηται ταῦτα... ἐξελθὼν δὲ οὐκ ἐδύνατο λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς – 1:20;22)	"Behold – your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren... it happened that when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leapt in her womb and she exclaimed with a loud cry: 'Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb!'" (καὶ ἰδοὺ Ἐλισάβετ ἡ συγγενίς σου καὶ αὐτὴ συνείληφεν υἱὸν ἐν γήρει αὐτῆς, καὶ οὗτος μὴν ἕκτος ἐστὶν αὐτῇ τῇ καλουμένῃ στείρᾳ... Καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς ἤκουσεν τὸν ἀσπασμὸν τῆς Μαρίας ἡ Ἐλισάβετ, ἐσκίρτησεν τὸ βρέφος ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ αὐτῆς,... καὶ ἀνεφώνησεν κραυγῇ μεγάλῃ καὶ εἶπεν· εὐλογημένη σὺ ἐν γυναιξίν, καὶ εὐλογημένος ὁ καρπὸς τῆς κοιλίας σου – 1:36; 41a; 42)	None recorded
Reactions (Mixed)	"And the people were waiting for Zechariah and they were marveling at his delay in the Temple... and they recognized that he had seen a vision..."	The "Magnificat" (1:46-55) For detailed analysis, see section 2.3.9	None recorded

Stages	Zechariah	Mary	Simeon
Reactions (continued)	"...After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived... saying 'Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when He looked on me, to remove my shame"	(Καὶ ἦν ὁ λαὸς προσδοκῶν τὸν Ζαχαρίαν καὶ ἐθαύμαζον ἐν τῷ χρονίζειν ἐν τῷ ναῷ αὐτόν... καὶ ἐπέγνωσαν ὅτι ὀπτασίαν ἑώρακεν... Μετὰ δὲ ταύτας τὰς ἡμέρας συνέλαβεν Ἐλισάβετ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ... λέγουσα ὅτι οὕτως μοι πεποίηκεν κύριος ἐν ἡμέραις αἷς ἐπεῖδεν ἀφελεῖν ὄνειδός – 1:21;22; 24; 25)	
Final Fulfillment	"Then the time came for Elizabeth to give birth and she bore a son... and he (Zechariah) asked for a writing tablet and wrote 'His name is John'... and immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed and he spoke, blessing God" (Τῇ δὲ Ἐλισάβετ ἐπλήσθη ὁ χρόνος τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτὴν καὶ ἐγέννησεν υἱόν... καὶ αἰτήσας πινακίδιον ἔγραψεν λέγων· Ἰωάννης ἐστὶν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ... Ἀνεῴχθη δὲ τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ παραχρῆμα καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐλάλει εὐλογῶν τὸν θεόν – 1:24a; 57; 63; 64)	"Then it happened that, while they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to give birth and she bore her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger... and when eight days had been fulfilled for his circumcision, they called his name Jesus, as he was named by the angel before he was conceived in the womb." (Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ ἐπλήσθησαν αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτήν, καὶ ἔτεκεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον καὶ ἐσπαργάνωσεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀνέκλινεν αὐτὸν ἐν φάτνῃ... Καὶ ὅτε ἐπλήσθησαν ἡμέραι ὀκτὼ τοῦ περιτεμεῖν αὐτόν, καὶ ἐκλήθη τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦς, τὸ κληθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγγέλου πρὸ τοῦ συλλημφθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ – 2:6-7a; 21)	"And he came in the Spirit into the Temple and when the parents brought in the infant Jesus... he took him up in his arms and blessed God" (καὶ ἦλθεν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι εἰς τὸ ἱερόν· καὶ ἐν τῷ εἰσαγαγεῖν τοὺς γονεῖς τὸ παιδίον Ἰησοῦν... καὶ αὐτὸς ἐδέξατο αὐτὸ εἰς τὰς ἀγκάλας καὶ εὐλόγησεν τὸν θεὸν – 2:27a; 28a)
Reactions (Emphasis on joy)	"And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had amplified His mercy to her and they rejoiced with her"	Angelic annunciation to the shepherds: "Behold – I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people, ...	None recorded (reactions are reserved for the twin proclamations)

Stages	Zechariah	Mary	Simeon
Reactions (continued)	(καὶ ἤκουσαν οἱ περίοικοι καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς αὐτῆς ὅτι ἐμεγάλυνεν κύριος τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ μετ᾽ αὐτῆς, καὶ συνέχαιρον αὐτῇ – 1:58)	"...in that unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Christ, the Lord. And this will be a sign to you: you will find the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."	None recorded (reactions are reserved for the twin proclamations)
	(ἰδοὺ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ ὅτι ἐτέχθη ὑμῖν σήμερον σωτὴρ ὅς ἐστιν χριστὸς κύριος ἐν πόλει Δαυίδ. – 2:10-11) Proclamation of the multitude of the heavenly host: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among people of His good pleasure." (δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῷ, καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας – 2:14) The shepherds agree to go to Bethlehem and confirm the heavenly proclamation of the baby in the manger. (Καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς ἀπῆλθον ἀπ᾽ αὐτῶν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν οἱ ἄγγελοι, οἱ ποιμένες ἐλάλουν πρὸς ἀλλήλους· διέλθωμεν δὴ ἕως Βηθλεὲμ καὶ ἴδωμεν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο τὸ γεγονὸς ὃ ὁ κύριος ἐγνώρισεν ἡμῖν. Καὶ ἦλθαν σπεύσαντες καὶ ἀνεῦρον τήν τε Μαριὰμ καὶ τὸν Ἰωσὴφ καὶ τὸ βρέφος κείμενον ἐν τῇ φάτνῃ. – 2:15-16)		
Public Proclamation & Praise	The "Benedictus" (1:68-79) For detailed analysis, see section 2.3.10	"So when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child... and the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them." (ἰδόντες δὲ ἐγνώρισαν περὶ τοῦ ῥήματος τοῦ λαληθέντος αὐτοῖς περὶ τοῦ παιδίου τούτου...	The "Nunc Dimittis" + private aside to Mary (2:29-32; 34-35) For detailed analysis, see section 2.3.12

Stages	Zechariah	Mary	Simeon
Public Proclamation & Praise (continued)		(...καὶ ὑπέστρεψαν οἱ ποιμένες δοξάζοντες καὶ αἰνοῦντες τὸν θεὸν ἐπὶ πᾶσιν οἷς ἤκουσαν καὶ εἶδον καθὼς ἐλαλήθη πρὸς αὐτούς – 2:17; 20)	
Reactions (Marveling)	"And they all marveled... and fear came upon all their neighbors and all these matters were discussed throughout the hill country of Judea and all who heard them stored them up in their hearts..." (καὶ ἐθαύμασαν πάντες... καὶ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ πάντας φόβος τοὺς περιοικοῦντας αὐτούς· καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ὀρεινῇ τῆς Ἰουδαίας διελαλεῖτο πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα, καὶ ἔθεντο πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ – 1:63; 65-66a)	"And all who heard it marveled at what the shepherds told them. But Mary stored up all these matters, pondering them in her heart." (καὶ πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες ἐθαύμασαν περὶ τῶν λαληθέντων ὑπὸ τῶν ποιμένων πρὸς αὐτούς. Ἡ δὲ Μαρία πάντα συνετήρει τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα συμβάλλουσα ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς – 2:18-19)	"His father and mother marveled at what was said about Him" (Καὶ ἦν ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ θαυμάζοντες ἐπὶ τοῖς λαλουμένοις περὶ αὐτοῦ – 2:33)

Figure 2.13: Patterns of promise-confirmation-fulfillment-proclamation and reactions in Luke's infancy narratives (Luke 1:5-2:52)

As the figure above outlines, there is considerable correspondence between the patterns of Zechariah and Mary, as should be expected based on previous analysis, such as in Figures 2.3 and 2.4. The primary contrast between the two patterns is highlighted by Figure 2.13's division of Green's category of "evidence of fulfillment" (1997:48) into two stages: "confirmation" and "final fulfillment" (the present author's contribution). This resolves the inherent ambiguity in Green's term "evidence of fulfillment" (in Green's pattern, only Mary's pattern responds to *evidence* while the others respond to complete *fulfillment*). This division into two stages also allows the signs given in the angelophanies to be included in the pattern.

An apparent disadvantage of this more detailed presentation is highlighted by the absence of several initial stages in Simeon's pattern (specifically, reactions to the promise [question], confirmation [sign] and reactions [mixed], which makes sense given the angelophanic nature of Zechariah and Mary's promise). While this makes the figure "messier", it better reflects the

structure and sequence of Luke's narratives and has the added benefit of highlighting how the sequence of events in Simeon's pattern aligns more closely with those of Zechariah than those of Mary. Specifically, both Simeon and Zechariah's proclamations in hymnic form come *after* the final fulfillment and are proclaimed in a *public* context, while Mary's "Magnificat" is occasioned by the *confirmation* (rather than by the final fulfillment) and is uttered in a *private* context.

Malina and Neyrey's research on gender roles in first-century society helps to explain the differing contexts, as the public sphere was regarded as a *male* domain while the home (the context of Mary and Elizabeth's encounter) was regarded as a *female* domain (1991:43). Thus, while there is an almost undeniable inversion of typical gender expectations reflected in the contrast between Mary's success in responding in faith and Zechariah's failure to believe in the face of Gabriel's announcements, the *context* of each character's joyful hymn of proclamation and praise respect basic first-century assumptions regarding spheres of influence and authority. In contrast, Anna the prophetess' praise and proclamation of Jesus' arrival (which are not recorded in direct speech in the gospel) to those "awaiting the redemption of Israel" (ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν Ἰερουσαλήμ – 2:38) *does* take place in the public sphere of the Temple, underscoring the complex role gender plays in Luke-Acts (for an overview, see Bock, 2012:343-351)

While social convention helps to explain the differing contexts, the placement of Mary's hymnic proclamation after the confirmation (rather than after the final fulfillment as with Zechariah and Simeon) would initially seem to leave a curious hole in the pattern after the final fulfillment of Jesus' birth (2:6-7). As the figure outlines, however, there *is* a proclamation of praise to God with hymnic characteristics (Bovon, 2002:90-91) following the final fulfillment of Mary's promise. As is fitting given Jesus' extraordinary conception and unique relationship with the Father, it is the messengers of heaven itself who descend to proclaim praise to God and announce His birth to the shepherds, who then go on to proclaim the news to the wider public.

While not included in Figure 2.13, it is important to note that some of the elements from Figure 2.13 are present in Luke 2:8-20. The shepherds receive an angelic annunciation which contains a confirmatory sign (the baby in the manger) and play a role of proclamation and praise which elicits reactions from the wider public. The present author's decision not to include them in the figure, however, was largely based on the absence of two key elements from Green's pattern (1997:48): a divine promise and the attribution of direct speech in the form of hymnic proclamation (while 2:15 records the shepherds' decision to go to Bethlehem in direct speech, it is a narrative hinge rather than a hymn of praise or proclamation).

Unlike with Zechariah, Mary and Simeon, there is no indication in Luke's narrative that the shepherds were awaiting the fulfillment of a divine promise. The angel in 2:10-12 announces Jesus' birth, which has *already occurred* in the narrative; rather than rejoicing in the confirmation

of a future fulfillment, the shepherds are called to proclaim and rejoice in the future implications of a recent occurrence of eschatological and messianic import. While Luke 2:8-20 admittedly blurs the lines between birth reaction and public proclamation of praise in a way that is not present in the other patterns, the episode's emphasis on joy and the hymnic form of the praise from the multitude of the heavenly host are consistent with the wider pattern. Additionally, the fact that the shepherds' proclamation elicits reactions from the wider public (2:18) ensures that the episode fulfills its function while highlighting the extraordinary nature of Jesus' entrance into the world.

Structurally speaking, it is unsurprising to find that the middle pattern in a grouping of three should be richer in content than the others, contain peculiarities of sequence and point toward the gospel's central character. A double hymnic response to Jesus' confirmation and final fulfillment is consistent with a general pattern of one for John to two for Jesus, which is notable in Figure 2.4. While many of these hymns also contain elements of prophetic preview that create or temper expectations for John and Jesus as discussed in previous sections, it is important not to allow the complexity of these expectations to outweigh Luke's consistent portrayal of joyful praise as an important element of correct response to God's revealed plan. Chapter 4 of the present study will reinforce how Luke's gospel consistently presents rejoicing as an indication that characters have understood God's plan and chosen to actively align themselves with its fulfillment in faith.

These dual characteristics of *rejoicing* and of *active participation* are also visible in the infancy narratives, particularly through Elizabeth and Mary. They are the first characters in the gospel narrative to experience the Holy Spirit's presence (in Mary's case πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται in 1:35; and ἐπλήσθη πνεύματος ἁγίου in Elizabeth's case in 1:41) and their *anticipated rejoicing* at the confirmation episode (labelled B. in Figures 2.3 and 2.4) contrasts with other characters, who only rejoice after the final fulfillment. These distinctive characteristics identify them as archetypal examples of proper reaction (especially in contrast with Zechariah's less than proper reaction in the gospel's opening scene); it is also essential to note that both characters play a *participatory* role that is essential to setting up the final fulfillment that allows others to rejoice.

After all, it was *Elizabeth's* insistence on the name "John" in the circumcision and naming scene that sets up the restoration of Zechariah's speech and culminates in the proclamation of the "Benedictus" (interestingly, Zechariah demonstrates surprisingly little initiative in the scene in spite of having received angelic instruction regarding the infant's name; the anonymous "relatives" turn to him in 1:62 only *after* Elizabeth opposes their initial attempts to pass the father's name to the son in 1:60). As occurs with Elizabeth after her Spirit-filled proclamation in 1:42-45 (but unlike Simeon and Zechariah, for whom their hymnic proclamations signal their exit from the narrative), the "Magnificat" is not Mary's "swan song"; she must still make a second journey from Galilee to Judea, give birth to Jesus, lay Him in a manger, receive the shepherds'

visit and participate in Jesus' circumcision and naming before her role in the angelic promise given in 1:31 can be considered "fulfilled". It is hardly an accident that the two characters who *first rejoice* at God's confirmation go on to play key roles in the *final fulfillments and proclamations* that cause others to rejoice.

Also important for the purposes of this study is the underlying suggestion that the greatest blessings (for instance, εὐλογημένη and μακαρία ἡ πιστεύσασα are applied to Mary in 1:42, 43, but equivalent terms are not applied to Zechariah, even after the recovery of speech and his prophetic proclamation) are reserved for those who are willing to respond in faith and proclaim God's praise and program on the basis of His promise-revelation and confirmation, rather than waiting for the final fulfillment. Gabriel's refusal to supply Zechariah with more information (beyond the ironically confirmatory nature of his silence) will be mirrored by Jesus' own refusal to perform a sign or provide supernatural proof in the confrontation in the synagogue of Nazareth in Luke 4. Thus, this dynamic between the *blessings of believing* and the *frustration of incomplete knowledge* indicate that in Luke's gospel, God and His commissioned agents provide *sufficient evidence* to justify decision and participation, but often refuse to divulge all of the information desired.

As was discussed in section 2.3.6, Zechariah and Mary's differing reactions to the "sufficient evidence" of an angel appearing in front of them is reflected in the positive and negative signs given to each. As Figure 2.13 substantiates, there is also a significant difference in the *reactions* that follow the confirmation of each sign. Zechariah's sign of silence is imposed immediately, but eliminates the possibility of significant revelation or reaction from the people waiting outside the Temple (beyond the simple recognition that the priest had seen a vision – 1:22). While Elizabeth's recognition of God's work on her behalf (1:24-25) is positive and indicates that she will assume the active role "vacated" by Zechariah in his imposed silence, it is nonetheless somewhat muted in comparison to the celebratory joy of the proclamations that follow Mary's confirmation. Thus, the reactions to each confirmation underscore the importance of "believing" versus "knowing", as discussed in section 2.3.6.

As chapter 4 of this study will confirm, Jesus will maintain a similar posture with the disciples in the opening chapter of Acts, indicating that knowledge of "times and seasons" is fixed by the Father's authority and that the disciples' should instead focus on the task to which they have already been commissioned. This consistent refusal by God and His messengers to provide all of the information requested by human characters indicates that the decision to identify the plan presented *as God's* (rather than as, for example, deception, blasphemy, or human distraction) must be made based on the information God Himself has made available. Section 2.3.5 framed one of the questions posed to Luke's reader by the first-century's crescent interpretive rivalry between Judaism and nascent Christianity as: "How could a plan that originated with God produce *this* response?" In light of the pattern presented above, it would seem that Luke's

infancy narratives counter with a question of their own: “Rather than judging the origin of the plan based on responses and incomplete fulfillments, you must begin by discerning: is there *sufficient evidence* that this plan originated with God?”

It is also important to relate Mary’s incomprehension of Jesus’ identity and priorities in the episode in the Temple (discussed in section 2.3.13) with her archetypal role as “one who has reacted properly to God’s revelation”. As has already been noted with Mary and as will be noted with John in chapter 3 and Jesus’ disciples in chapter 4, virtually no character in Luke’s gospel (aside from Jesus) is immune to the human tendency to misapprehend and react improperly. As was defended in section 2.3.13, Mary represents a realistic, human archetype for reacting to divine revelation and for ongoing participation in God’s plan, which will inevitably include missteps.

It is here that Zechariah’s redemptive archetype becomes especially important. In spite of his failure to recognize the parallels between his own situation and Scriptural precedent and his improper insistence on “more revelation”, Zechariah does not become an outcast from God’s plan. The divine promises made through Gabriel are fulfilled in spite of Zechariah’s imposed silence and Elizabeth’s intervention in 1:59-60 sets up the priest’s non-verbal alignment with God’s plan, which reverses his “relegation to the background” and results in his filling with the Spirit (1:67) for the purposes of proclamation, praise and thanksgiving. In this way, Mary and Zechariah work together to demonstrate the importance of proper reaction (responding in faith to sufficient evidence) and of timely repentance (recognizing an initial lack of faith and choosing to align with God’s unfolding plan) in the infancy narratives’ “overture to the gospel”.

As this section has attempted to clarify, these two remarkable opening chapters of Luke’s gospel have used characters like Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary and Simeon, all of whom will fade from “center stage” after the close of Luke 2, to set patterns that allow the reader follow the progress of the “main characters” over longer and more complex narrative arcs. It is in precisely this sense that the present section has referred to aspects of these narratives as “archetypal” and as “overture”.

As the next section will strive to demonstrate, the infancy narratives provide Luke with ample space on which to construct his rhetorical narrative and the theological and literary infrastructure to supply Theophilus with certainty. The patterns and archetypes of proper and improper reaction presented in this section play an important role in the construction of this hermeneutical framework, both in terms of gauging character reactions and, potentially, the reader’s own response to God’s activity. As Luke’s “narrative proper” describes the impact of John and Jesus’s activity, it will be important to note which themes sounded in the “overture” of the infancy narrative are presented as “confirmation” and “sufficient evidence” of God’s action and which will fade into the tense background of “final fulfillment to come”.

2.4 CONCLUSION: FOUNDATIONS FOR CERTAINTY THROUGH CORRECT INTERPRETATION AND RESPONSE

As the various sections of this chapter have argued, the sensitive reader will have noted that in this unfolding plan of God, the promises are faithfully fulfilled, but both the outworking and the outcomes frequently (it could even be surmised, deliberately) defy the presupposed narratives of human convention and religious tradition. The consistency of this pattern across the angelophanies, journeys, births, reactions and prophetic proclamations of Luke's infancy narratives strongly suggests the rhetorical hand of the author, who, in accordance with the objectives described in section 2.2.1, has woven diverse expectations, traditions and narrative threads into patterns that have already begun to point out an alternative road to certainty. In accordance with the archetypes of reaction laid out in the preceding section, the infancy narratives would seem to suggest the presence of a *hermeneutical* pattern beneath the *literary* patterns and archetypes traced through the preceding section.

While it is inherently impossible to precisely locate Theophilus' social and religious situation, it *is* possible to note a series of curious parallels between the infancy narratives and the contentious socio-religious environment between Christians and Jews in the second half of the first century. The present author has, therefore, attempted to point out ways in which Luke's narratives might signal or suggest hermeneutical implications to a reader situated in such an environment. This conclusion will attempt to draw these signals together to trace how Luke's infancy narratives lay a foundation, both for interpreting the narrative itself and for suggesting how the reader ought and ought not to react to the divine revelation contained in the "events about which there is certainty among us" (1:1; see section 2.2.4).

On the basis of these hermeneutical implications, the present author would argue that Luke is writing a rhetorical narrative which consistently presents two facets of a single purpose: to convince the reader that "that these events lead to 'this' interpretation" (Green, 1997:45 – see section 2.2.8) *and also* to advise Theophilus that, just as the revelations of the infancy narratives require responses from the characters, arriving at "this interpretation" will require a particular type of response from the reader. This first facet was outlined in section 2.2.8 after analysis of Luke's declared purposes in the preface (1:1-4); the second, however, can only be deduced in hindsight from consistent patterns present by the narrative itself. It should, however, be noted that the inseparability of comprehension and reaction in Luke's infancy narratives would seem to indicate that, for the author at least, these two purposes are, in fact, distinct but inseparable facets of certainty (ἀσφάλεια).

It is, therefore, essential to relate both of these proposed facets of certainty (ἀσφάλεια) with the pattern presented in the preceding section. As section 2.2.7 argued, the first century's ongoing interpretive battle over the identity of Jesus of Nazareth and the interpretation of the Jewish

Scriptures provides the most likely backdrop for Theophilus' lack of certainty. It is likewise important to note Luke's inclusion of unmistakably nationalistic expectations (see section 2.3.8) that *will not* be fulfilled in the narrative, at least not in the literal terms common to Second Temple messianic expectation, alongside narrative elements that *do* find literal fulfillment in the narrative. As has already been argued, Luke makes little effort to invalidate these unfulfilled expectations or to "spiritualize" over or around them (contra Brawley, 1990:30).

These expectations almost certainly represent an important point of contact between author and reader. After all, why would an author with the literary mastery noted throughout this chapter deliberately stimulate expectations that would represent a significant challenge to his own rhetorical narrative, unless these expectations were *already* a key element in an ongoing debate that contributed to the reader's lack of certainty? It is here that the pattern in Figure 2.13 presents a subtle but noteworthy solution. Like Elizabeth and Mary, the reader's decision to believe must be informed by the confirmation of sufficient evidence, but also come in the face of (as yet) incomplete fulfillment. Thus, it would seem that Figure 2.13's division of "fulfillment" into two separate stages of "confirmation" and "final fulfillment" *might* suggest a way for Luke's reader to locate their own "time and season" in the stage between these two events (labelled Reactions [Mixed] in the fourth stage of Figure 2.13).

This fourth stage of Figure 2.13 is one of few stages in the figure that lacks cohesion across the columns; in other reaction sections Zechariah and Mary react to the angelic promise with a question (the second stage of Figure 2.13), there is a unanimous tone of joy in the reactions to the final fulfillment (the sixth stage of Figure 2.13) and there is widespread marveling from the public at the proclamations of prophecy and praise (the eighth stage of Figure 2.13). In contrast, in the fourth stage of the figure, Elizabeth and Mary recognize and rejoice at God's action while preparing themselves to participate in the final fulfillment; meanwhile, Zechariah is left silent and the crowd outside the Temple are left with limited information. As the rest of the narrative plays out (and as Simeon's words warn) these initially "mixed" reactions will grow increasingly polarized and result in the prophesied "falling and rising of many in Israel" (εἰς πτῶσιν καὶ ἀνάστασιν πολλῶν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ – 2:34).

Thus, if Theophilus were capable of reading beyond the *literary* pattern of Figure 2.13 to see a *hermeneutical* pattern, then the incomplete fulfillment and mixed reactions noted above would seem to provide a solution for the interpretive dilemma raised by the unfulfilled expectations discussed in section 2.3.8. By suggesting that the ongoing interpretational debate and the apparent lack of fulfillment are actually the counterintuitive characteristics of the *present stage* of God's unfolding plan, this pattern opens the door to seeing otherwise perplexing events with the certainty of confirmation and of faith. More importantly, this pattern permits the certainty of correct interpretation and response *without* requiring complete knowledge or final fulfillment

(which Luke and Acts point to as outside the realm of possibility, at least until the arrival of the Father's "appointed time and season" – see chapter 4's discussion of Acts 1:7).

Having clarified a potential path to the certainty of correct *interpretation*, this section now turns its attention to the second facet of Luke's purpose: properly *responding* to this interpretation. As was indicated above, this second purpose is not explicitly indicated in the preface; while this inherently makes this second purpose more difficult to substantiate, it has already been observed that Luke rarely separates *genuine comprehension* from *adequate reaction*. While the infancy narratives have laid foundations for several distinct archetypes of proper and improper response, it is essential to note that in each case, it is the final response of characters/collective groups which most clearly indicates their eventual arrival at or deliberate rejection of correct interpretation and genuine comprehension.

Luke's narrative depicts a multitude of characters who come face to face with the revelation of God's purposes through interaction with divine agents/messengers; some, like Mary and Elizabeth, will quickly arrive at the correct *interpretation* and a correct *initial response* (although, as the continuation of Mary's participation demonstrates in section 2.3.13, perfect track records of complete comprehension and universally adequate response are defied rather than borne out by Luke's narrative). Others, like Zechariah, will *initially falter*, but divine rebuke and God's redemptive purposes will eventually bring them to a *response of repentance and alignment*. Simeon's prophetic words (although, it should be noted, not his narrative arc) substantiate a far more negative third possibility: there will be those who *initially falter and also stubbornly insist on rejecting* God's rebuke and redemption through repentance, resulting in their own "fall" and "opposition" to His appointed signs.

If, as the present author has posited, Luke is suggesting that the certainty of correct interpretation is inseparable from correct response, then it is important to modify this study's working definition of "certainty" (ἀσφάλεια) to reflect both of these facets. Doing so on the basis of the infancy narratives, while consistent with the reader's progression through the narrative, carries some risk of confirmation bias; in other words, by revising the study's original definition at this point, there is the risk that further sections may unduly color the analysis of John and Jesus' ministries to favor this conclusion. On the other hand, if this definition can be shown from the outset to be at least minimally consistent with the "master lines" of Luke-Acts, then the present author would be remiss in ignoring the "overtures" this section set out to trace.

It can hardly be an accident that the two of the characters who most reflect the "received power of the Holy Spirit" (δύναμιν ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐφ' ὑμᾶς – Acts 1:8) and contribute to the church's focus on "witnessing in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" (μάρτυρες ἔν τε Ἰερουσαλὴμ καὶ ἐν πάσῃ τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ Σαμαρείᾳ καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς – Acts 1:8) closely correspond to the patterns of reactions outlined. Like Mary, Peter goes beyond

“marveling” (θάμβος – 5:9) and recognizes the “sufficient evidence” of Jesus’ identity in the miraculous calling episode in Luke 5:1-11, marking the beginning of his participation in God’s unfolding plan in spite of occasional misapprehension and errant action throughout both Luke’s gospel and Acts. Paul, on the other hand, seems to have more in common with Zechariah; his formal instruction within the religious traditions of Judaism seemingly presented an obstacle to correct initial reaction, as his persecution of the church in Acts 8-9 makes clear. However, also like Zechariah, his confrontation with a divine messenger (in his case, Jesus himself) and the temporary loss of one of his faculties became the “turning point” that eventually resulted in his participation in the plan of God.

It is worth noting that the third pattern outlined above (namely, of failure to react properly at the outset and to continually refuse to repent and arrive at correct comprehension and reaction), while indicated by Simeon’s prophetic words, is not represented by the arc of a specific character in the infancy narratives. Thus, persistent opposition in the face of sufficient evidence would seem to represent an *alternative* to certainty (ἀσφάλεια) rather than serving to illustrate alternate paths by which characters come to embrace God’s unfolding plan. Thus, while Peter and Paul would seem to confirm the validity of at least two of the patterns of reaction outlined throughout Luke-Acts, the next chapter will play a key role in confirming or challenging the presence of this third negative pattern. The present author’s effort to trace the validity of these archetypes of response through Luke-Acts has, therefore, demonstrated that Luke’s protagonists consistently arrive at correct interpretations of divine revelation and also (eventually) arrive at the correct responses of joyful praise and active participation.

Therefore, having arrived at the conclusion of Luke’s infancy narratives, it is important to (at least provisionally) revise this study’s “working definition” of the certainty (ἀσφάλεια) of Luke’s preface based on the consistent unity of correct interpretation and correct response in these two chapters. The infancy narratives would suggest that, for Luke, certainty does not merely consist of arriving at a proper interpretation of events, but *inherently requires* correct response to that interpretation as well. Therefore, as this study progresses through the ministries of John and of Jesus to note how the foundational expectations of the infancy narratives are confirmed and fulfilled, modified and/or relegated to the future, it is important to observe how correct interpretation *and* correct reaction work together to point toward rhetorical certainty. Such a procedure will allow for the validity of this revised definition and of the hermeneutical pattern suggested in this section to be confirmed or further revised.

The literary patterns, Scriptural precedents and hermeneutical foundations laid by Luke’s infancy narratives provide a rich framework from which the gospel’s multifaceted theological themes can develop. Echoing the terminology used by Tiede (1988:39) in the introduction to this section (see 2.3.1), Luke’s infancy narratives function much like a well written overture functions in an opera: key patterns have been suggested, important themes have been teased and

identifying motifs have been clarified to assist in following the characters and events as they unfold. As was suggested by Brawley (1990:30) and confirmed by the analysis of this chapter, many of the themes and motifs in these overtures exist in “severe tension”. Luke’s infancy narratives therefore attest to the inherent tension suggested by the approach this study has followed; namely that Luke-Acts presents the reader with “the ending you were waiting for, *even though* it doesn’t look like you thought it would” (Wright, 2013:193-194 – emphasis mine).

Thus, the reader’s task (if the present author’s definition of Luke’s notion of certainty is correct) is twofold. On the one hand, the reader must continue to trace these foundational expectations through the narratives to come, noting how they are fulfilled, modified and/or delegated to the trying eschatological category of “not yet, but also not invalid” in the episodes to come (Bock, 1994:115; Strauss, 1995:124). This is the task to which chapter 3 will devote its attention, at least through Luke 7. While Luke 3-7 will effective deal with a majority of the “narrative threads” Luke has introduced in the infancy narratives, some will only reemerge at the end of the gospel and in the opening episodes of Acts, necessitating an examination of these themes in chapter 4. On the other hand, the reader must also begin the more decisive task of evaluating whether this interpretation of events has presented sufficient evidence of coherence with Scriptural precedent and the characteristics of God’s action; if the reader’s answer is yes, then the “certainty” (ἀσφάλεια) Luke is outlining also demands a correct response: the reader’s own joyful praise for God’s unfolding salvation and active participation in bringing about the final fulfillment.

CHAPTER 3

THE OUTWORKING OF CERTAINTY
REVELATION, SALVATION AND REJECTION IN LUKE 3-7

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous section likened the authorial activity of Luke's infancy narratives to "laying foundations" for interpreting and reacting to the ministries of John and of Jesus, which dominate the gospel from chapter 3 onward. The detailed analysis presented in the preceding chapter was justified by the extraordinary density and complexity of the narratives, as well as by the enormous amount of scholarly attention they have attracted in recent decades. As the many critics of Conzelmann's watershed study *The Theology of St Luke* have ably demonstrated, Luke's infancy narratives are a foundational element that lay the master lines for the narratives and theology that follow (Minear, 1966:111-130; Tannehill, 1992:48-49; Strauss, 1995:77, among others). The present author also believes that the wealth of "anchor points" which were uncovered within these narratives will facilitate this chapter's task of "tracing the threads forward" as the framework of Luke's narrative proper and theology unfold.

As the conclusion of the previous chapter noted, this chapter's primary task is to note how the key themes sounded in the infancy narratives are fulfilled, modified and/or delegated to an epoch of future eschatological fulfillment. Given the Lukan emphasis on correct interpretation and correct response outlined in chapter 2, it is also important for this chapter to note fulfillment of the promises made in the prophetic previews and angelic annunciations as "sufficient evidence" for belief in spite of the inevitability of certain promises going "unfulfilled" in literal terms within the narrative arc of Luke-Acts (as was outlined in section 2.3.8). As the notes on opposition and conflict *as counterintuitive confirmation* of God's action from section 2.3.12 also made clear, it will be important for the sections of this chapter to highlight episodes of controversy and conflict alongside the promised activity of preparing paths, turning hearts (expectations created for John's ministry, see section 2.3.7), giving help to Israel in remembrance of mercy and bringing about God's salvation in the presence of all peoples (expectations created for Jesus' ministry, see sections 2.3.9, 2.3.10 and 2.3.12).

It is, therefore, entirely convenient that this chapter's methodology be *constructive* (building on the observations of chapter 2) and its scope *panoramic* (focused on the development of themes rather than on the minute exegetical details of each episode). Luke's foundations for a narrative of rhetorical certainty through inverted expectations, echoes of Old Testament promise and the language of the LXX and archetypes of proper/improper reactions to God's revelation have

been laid. It is now time to note how the framework of the "narrative proper" that begins to unfold in Luke 3 confirms, modifies and (in some cases) leaves undeveloped the foundations laid by the infancy narratives.

3.2 THE REVELATION OF THE SALVATION OF GOD: THE MINISTRY OVERVIEWS OF LUKE 3-4

3.2.1 Transition and structure

Luke 3 opens with clear indications that the narrative is being resumed after a lengthy temporal "interlude". As occurred in 1:5 and in 2:1-2 in setting up Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, Luke opens the "narrative proper" by locating events within the larger socio-political landscape (as in 2:1-2, Luke 3:1-2a traces the "chain of command" from Caesar [Τιβερίου Καίσαρος] to the complex division of geographic power between Pontius Pilate, Herod, Philip and Lysanias before adding a new detail: Jewish religious authorities [ἐπὶ ἀρχιερέως Ἄννα καὶ Καϊάφα]). The differences between the authorities listed in 1:5 and 2:1-2 and those in 3:1-2a reinforce the idea that a "generation" has passed between the announcements and births of the infancy narratives and the ministries of John and Jesus (Bovon, 2002:119).

The preceding chapter invested a significant amount of attention in outlining the structural parallelism between John's episodes and those of Jesus. While the description of John's ministry in 3:1-18 and the opening episodes of Jesus' ministry in 4:14-44 lack the same level of exact parallelism as was noted in Figures 2.3 and 2.4, there are nonetheless sufficient similarities between the episodes to merit considering them side by side (particularly for a reader who, in narrative order, encounters these characters and their ministry overviews directly after their parallel infancy narratives). While these similarities do not always occur in precisely the same sequence (particularly the quotation of Isaiah, see the second similarity in the following figure), they do follow a general pattern in terms of order and length. The following figure outlines these similarities and locates their occurrences within Luke 3:2b-4:44:

	Occurrence in John's ministry	Occurrence in Jesus' ministry
Similari	A short, general summary indicating where the ministry took place and characterizing its principal activity	
	Luke 3:2b-3	Luke 4:14-15
	A specific identification of the Scriptural role being fulfilled by means of a quotation from Isaiah	

	Occurrence in John's ministry	Occurrence in Jesus' ministry
Similarities	Luke 3:4-6 (citing Isa 40:3-5)	Luke 4:18-19 (citing Isa 61:1-2 with probable influence from 58:6, see Bock, 1994:404-411)
	Specific scenes involving prophetically provocative direct speech from the divine agent and responses from those present, including positive reception and opposition.	
	Luke 3:7-19	Luke 4:16-43
	A brief indication of the future direction the ministry (of John or of Jesus) will take in the following chapters	
	Luke 3:20	Luke 4:44

Figure 3.1 highlights general structural similarities between Luke 3:2b-20 and Luke 4:14-44: both begin with a short summary, include specific episodes of direct speech from the divine agent (John/Jesus), register both positive and negative responses and close with a short indication of what the character will do next (in John's case, his imprisonment conforms to Luke's preference for "clearing the stage" to focus on other characters; in Jesus' case, his refusal to remain in Capernaum reinforces His connection to the Father's purposes [δεῖ – Luke 4:43] and sets up the episodes of calling disciples and clarifying the nature of the Kingdom of God that follow). Both ministry overviews also contain a direct quotation from Isaiah, although the placement of each quotation differs slightly (in John's case, it concludes the initial account of his ministry; in Jesus' case, it occurs within the context of a specific ministry episode in his hometown synagogue).

The presence of these similarities and their general correspondence in terms of sequence has led the present author to divide the pericopes of Luke 3-7 differently than the majority of recent studies of Luke's gospel (discerning the structure of this section is notoriously difficult; most commentators divide the pericopes of Luke's gospel along geographical lines, grouping John's ministry and Jesus' preparations for ministry in the wilderness together in 3:1-4:13 and maintaining Jesus' ministry in Galilee as its own section from 4:14-9:50 followed by the journey to Jerusalem from 9:51 onwards [see Fitzmyer, 1981:136-137; Tiede, 1988:30; Bock, 1994:20-23; 2012:68-69; Green, 1997:25-26; Bovon, 2002:2]). The present author's methodological concern with narrative order, together with the strong John-Jesus parallelism noted in the previous chapter, leads him to posit that it would be more natural for Luke's reader to continue to note parallels between these characters than to suddenly shift to a mental division based on geography. It should be noted that while Luke traces various geographical transitions through the infancy narratives, they do not provide a "structural backbone" for the

episodes. As Figures 2.3 and 2.4 outlined, character-based parallelism provides this structure and therefore provides a better model for understanding these opening episodes.

This does not, however, mean that the present author completely rejects notions of geographical organization within Luke-Acts. The progression from the wilderness to the villages of Galilee to the heart of Judaism in Jerusalem and on to the epicenter of the empire in Rome provides a convincing "master template" for Luke-Acts as a whole. The present author rather posits that a reader who has noted character based parallelism as the primary structural guide in Luke 1-2 would continue to apply this guide until it became apparent that a new organizational method were needed (as John fades from the narrative in 3:20, parallelism does, in fact, languish as a convincing organizational guide after the conclusion of Luke 4). Therefore, without disparaging the utility of other divisions (and recognizing that excessive pedantry in such an exercise would likely be foreign to the literary sensibilities of both Luke and Theophilus, which the present author has thus far attempted to maintain at the fore), this study will work with the following division of Luke 3-4:

Setting the stage: socio-political context (3:1-2a)

A – John's ministry overview (3:2b-20)
- A.a – John's location and general activity (3:2b-3)
- A.b – Clarification of John's role: quotation from Isaiah 40:3-5 (3:4-6)
- A.c – John's prophetic provocation: produce then fruits that correspond with repentance! (3:7-9)
- A.c' – Positive responses to John's proclamation and provocation (3:10-14)
  - A.d.1 – The positive response of the crowds (3:10-11)
  - A.d.2 – The positive response of the tax collectors (3:12-13)
  - A.d.3 – The positive response of the soldiers (3:14)
- A.b' – Clarification of John's role: the coming of One who is mightier than I (3:15-18)
- A.a' + c'' – A new location and cessation of activity: Herod's negative response to John results in imprisonment (3:19-20)

B – Preparation and confirmation for Jesus' ministry (3:21-4:13)
- B.a – Jesus' baptism: confirmation from heaven (3:21-22)
- B.b – Jesus' genealogy: the "supposed" son of Joseph is Son of God (3:23-38)
- B.a' – Jesus' temptation: confirmation via victory over the Devil (4:1-13)
  - B.a'.1 – Setting: the Spirit's leading, 40 days of fasting (4:1-2)
  - B.a'.2 – The first temptation: wilderness hunger, "If you are the Son of God…" (4:3-4)
  - B.a'.3 – The second temptation: political authority, "If you prostrate yourself in worship/submission before me" (4:5-8)

B.a'.4 – The third temptation: Jerusalem protection, "If you are the Son of God…" (4:9-12)

(continued)

B.a'.5 – Conclusion: the Devil withdraws until an opportune time (4:13)

A' – Jesus' ministry overview (4:14-44)

A'.a – Jesus' location and general activity (4:14-15)

A'.b – Rejection in Nazareth: confirmation through opposition (4:16-30)

A'.b.1 – Setting the scene: Jesus' hometown synagogue (4:16)

A'.b.2 – Clarification of Jesus' role: quotation from Isaiah 61:1-2 and declaration of fulfillment (4:17-21)

A'.b.3 – Initially positive response: all speak well and marvel at "Joseph's son" (4:22)

A'.b.4 – Jesus' prophetic provocation: no prophet is acceptable in his hometown (4:23-27)

A'.b.5 – Definitive negative response: all are filled with rage and nearly kill Jesus, who departs (4:28-30)

A'.b' – Acceptance in Capernaum: confirmation through authority and the performance of deliverance (4:31-41)

A'.b'.1 – Setting the scene: teaching on the Sabbath (4:31)

A'.b'.2 – Initially positive response: all are astonished at the authority of Jesus' message (4:32)

A'.b'.3 – Clarification of Jesus' role: demonstration of authority over demons and the performance of deliverance (4:33-41)

A'a'. – The necessity (δεῖ) of new locations for the same activity: the will of the crowd vs the Father's purposes (4:42-44)

Figure 3.2: The proposed structure of Luke 3-4

This structure substantiates the observations made above: while the parallelism is not nearly as precise or pronounced as that in Figures 2.3, 2.4 and 2.7, the present author nonetheless sees enough similarity between the episodes (which highlight the unique roles played by John/Jesus) to justify such a division. As the structure outlines, the presence of the key Lukan term δεῖ ("it is necessary" – on its importance see Tiede, 1988:82; Bock, 2012:101, 111) toward the end of chapter 4 also highlights a second use of this term within the immediate vicinity of a significant structural transitions (at least, within the opening sections of Luke's gospel). This is particularly noteworthy due to the sparse use of this term in Luke's gospel prior to Jesus' decision to "set fast His face to travel to Jerusalem" (καὶ αὐτὸς τὸ πρόσωπον ἐστήρισεν τοῦ πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ) in 9:51. To illustrate this point, Figure 3.3 notes the distribution of the term in Luke gospel in

accordance with the structural divisions used in this study (or by the majority of commentators for portions of Luke not contemplated by the scope of this study).

Term	Distribution in the gospel of Luke:				
	1:5-2:52	3:1-4:44	5:1-9:50	9:51-19:44	19:45-24:53
δεῖ	2:49	4:43	9:22	11:42; 12:12; 13:14, 16, 33; 15:32; 17:25; 18:1; 19:5 (9 occurrences)	21:9; 22:7, 37; 24:7, 26; 24:44 (6 occurrences)

Figure 3.3: The distribution of the term δεῖ in Luke's gospel

The combination of these factors lead the present author to divide 4:44 from 5:1 (while acknowledging that the transition is far softer and more organic than that from 2:52 to 3:1) in accordance with traditional chapter divisions, in spite of the noted tendency among recent authors to divide 4:13 from 4:14 (Fitzmyer, 1981:136-137; Tiede, 1988:30; Bock, 1994:20-23; 2012:68-69; Green, 1997:25-26; Bovon, 2002:2, among others). The following sections will explore how each ministry overview and the central preparation and confirmation episodes (marked as B in Figure 3.2) work to fulfill and develop the expectations cast for each character in the infancy narratives. Green notes in relation to John's ministry that: "From Luke 1 to Luke 3 a narrative thread runs from *possibility* to *realization* and *response/results*" (1997:161 – emphasis his). It is precisely this thread that the following sections will attempt to trace, while recognizing that this thread runs beyond Luke 3 (as the structure above argues, it runs at least to 4:44 and, it could be argued, all the way to Jesus' review of John's ministry in Luke 7:24-35).

3.2.2 "All flesh shall see" vs "You brood of vipers": The polarizing preparations of John's ministry overview (Luke 3:1-20)

As the previous chapter outlined, the infancy narratives cast the expectations for John's ministry primarily in terms of turning/returning (ἐπιστρέφω – see 1:16, 17) many of those in Israel to God's unfolding purposes and preparing for the "coming Lord" (ἑτοιμάζω + κύριος – see 1:17, 76; 3:4). These prophetic and eschatological expectations will be borne out by the emphasis on "repentance" (μετάνοια – see 3:3, 8) in the overview of John's ministry, although the wilderness prophet's confrontational approach and a notable selectivity among the groups who respond to this revelation will help to set the stage for similarly "imbalanced" responses to Jesus' ministry. Thus, just as the infancy narratives indicated, it is no surprise to find in Figure 3.2 both positive responses "in conformity with repentance" (ἀξίους τῆς μετανοίας – 3:8) and negative responses which seek to silence John's provocative voice.

After locating the socio-political context in which John's activity will take place (3:1-2a), 3:2b locates it within the Scriptural tradition of the prophets: "the word of God came to John, the son

of Zechariah, in the wilderness" (ἐγένετο ῥῆμα θεοῦ ἐπὶ Ἰωάννην τὸν Ζαχαρίου υἱὸν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ – compare with the openings of OT prophetic books, for example Jon 1:1 or Hag 1:1 in the LXX). Green (1997:174) defends that, while John operates in the molds and traditions of OT prophecy and Greek aphoristic wisdom, there is a fundamental difference between these traditions and his message: "He insists that behavior of this sort (repentance that extends to even the most mundane activities) is not only, for example, 'activity arising out of the covenant' but, indeed, that one's relationship to the covenant *at all* is determined by engaging in behavior that brings the aim of God to expression within the human community" (1997:174, clarifying parenthesis mine, italics and quotation marks his).

While the present author perhaps sees a less radical break between "covenant" and "expression" than that suggested by Green, the inseparability of these realities in John's proclamation and provocation recalls the inseparability of "believing" based on sufficient evidence and "joyful participation" discussed in the preceding chapter. Once again, a holistic focus on patterns of proclamation *and* response point to Luke's vision of the essential unity that exists between the internal, personal realities of faith and its visible expression.

The geographic indications in 3:2b (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ) and 3:3a (εἰς πᾶσαν [τὴν] περίχωρον τοῦ Ἰορδάνου) help to substantiate the fulfillment of the portion of Isaiah 40 quoted (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ – Isa 40:3a [Luke 3:2b, 4a]). For a reader aware of the context of Isaiah 40, there are fascinating parallels with John's origins (announced in the Temple, prepared in the wilderness) and the geographic progression of Luke-Acts. Isaiah 40 makes it clear that, while the "crying voice" (Φωνὴ βοῶντος – 40:3 [LXX]; φωνὴ λέγοντος Βόησον – 40:6, [LXX]) and "coming Lord" (κύριος μετὰ ἰσχύος ἔρχεται – 40:10 [LXX]) are first made visible in the wilderness, their destination is Jerusalem (Ἰερουσαλήμ – 40:2, 9 [LXX]). It is, therefore, highly significant that Luke 3 and 4 locate John's ministry of preparation and Jesus' episodes of confirmation (discussed in section 3.2.3) in the wilderness before moving steadily toward Jerusalem.

Luke's quotation of Isaiah 40 also highlights two important themes evoked by the infancy narratives. As was discussed in section 2.3.7, it is difficult to discern how well Luke's reader would have been able to identify the term κύριος (associated with Yahweh in the LXX, but well attested in reference to Jesus in early Christian writings) with Jesus in the first appearances of the term in the gospel. Given that the angelic announcement of Luke 2:11 explicitly applied the term κύριος to Jesus, there is little doubt at this stage that the reader will be able to identify Jesus with the "Lord" whose paths are being prepared (Ἑτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου – 3:4). The final lines of the quotation from Isaiah 40 ("and all flesh shall see God's salvation"; καὶ ὄψεται πᾶσα σὰρξ τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ – Isa 40:5 [LXX]; Luke 3:6) also reinforce the universal scope of God's unfolding project of salvation (developed in Luke 1:55, 73; 2:14, 31-32).

John's prophetic proclamation, meanwhile, forms a sort of *inclusio* around the quotation of Isaiah. Luke 3:3b summarizes John's prophetic activity as "proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν), while 3:7-9 attributes provocative direct speech that illustrates the need for urgent change in light of the "coming wrath" (τῆς μελλούσης ὀργῆς – 3:7). In spite of significant scholarly interest in John's baptism and potential parallels to Jewish/Qumranic practice (see Pusey, 1984:141-145; Webb, 1991b:95-126; Dockery, 2001:4-16), Luke highlights John's *proclamation* far more than he describes the practice or significance of his *baptism* (perhaps assuming Theophilus already possessed a basic familiarity with the practice). The apocalyptic, earth-altering imagery of Isaiah 40:3-5 and its eschatological context reinforces the necessity of imminent repentance. Green argues that the presence of Annas' name in 3:2a and Herod's negative reaction reinforce this need for collective repentance: "Luke's synchronism in 3:1-2a provides, therefore, more than an historical setting for or local color to the narrative. Rather, they bespeak a particular, tension-filled, top-heavy, socio-historical milieu" (1997:169).

Thus, John's provocative imagery would seem to indicate that, without the sort of repentance and realignment with the purposes of God he is stimulating, this "coming wrath" is a foregone conclusion. The people's apparent complacency in light of their identity as "children of Abraham" (καὶ μὴ ἄρξησθε λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, Πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν Ἀβραάμ – 3:8b) pushes John toward a shocking reformulation of their identity as a "brood of vipers" (Γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν – 3:7). This provocative label will be justified in light of the instruction in 3:11 to express the basic principles of covenantal justice: "The one who has two tunics, share with the one who has none and the one who has food, do likewise" (Ὁ ἔχων δύο χιτῶνας μεταδότω τῷ μὴ ἔχοντι, καὶ ὁ ἔχων βρώματα ὁμοίως ποιείτω – 3:11). In this way, the barrenness of the wilderness serves as a striking visual metaphor for the "fruitlessness" of the people's current way of relating with each other and with the covenant (Green, 1997:176).

The response of the people to John's provocative proclamation confirms the angelic proclamation in 1:16 and begins to set in motion the "rising and falling" of Simeon's prophecy from 2:34. Green highlights how in Luke's gospel "redemptive visitation demands response" (1997:177) and notes that the repeated question "What should we do?" (Τί ποιήσωμεν; — question repeated in Luke 3:10, 12, 14, Acts 2:37; as τί ποιήσας in Luke 10:25, 18:18, as τί με δεῖ ποιεῖν in Acts 16:30; as Τί ποιήσω in Acts 22:10) frequently occurs in the context of divine revelation. In harmony with the "Magnificat", Luke highlights responses in accordance with repentance from specific groups on the fringes of Jewish society (τελῶναι in 3:12-13 and στρατευόμενοι in 3:14); meanwhile, the conspicuous absence/silence of religious authority figures, including the Pharisees, experts in the law, Sadducees and the priestly class, begins to set the stage for tense relationships between these elements of society and Jesus in the gospel and the apostles in Acts.

Luke 3:15 transitions away from John's proclamation and its immediate response to highlight how the heady eschatological environment described evoked popular messianic expectation: "and all were all deliberating in their hearts concerning John, as to whether he might be the Christ" (καὶ διαλογιζομένων πάντων ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν περὶ τοῦ Ἰωάννου, μήποτε αὐτὸς εἴη ὁ Χριστός). John's response again confirms his preparatory role in light of the patterns of expectation set up by the infancy narratives; by pointing to "One mightier than I" (ἔρχεται δὲ ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου – 3:16) who will exercise a superior baptism (αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρί – 3:16) John shapes the people's expectation. He has performed no miracles and his confrontational proclamation has done little more than stimulate the people to practice the principles that were always apparent in the Law. They should instead, look for a greater manifestation of God's presence and action.

John's metaphorical description of the Coming One's activity reinforces the language of division and judgement; while some have "returned to the Lord their God" in confirmation of 1:16 (presumably, to be identified with the wheat to be gathered), it is clear from the selective list of responses to in 3:10-14 that others have ignored the call to "change course" (and are, presumably, to be identified with the chaff destined for "unquenchable fire" πυρὶ ἀσβέστῳ – 3:17). Webb's analysis of the language used (1991a:101-11) suggests that the activity of "winnowing" corresponds to John's role as a necessary prerequisite for Jesus' activity of directing the separated groups to their final destinations (this analysis makes the most sense of 3:17's use of πτύον ["winnowing shovel/fork"] as a noun, with the principal actions being, in order, διακαθᾶραι τὴν ἅλωνα αὐτοῦ ["cleansing the threshing floor"], συναγαγεῖν τὸν σῖτον ["gathering the wheat"] and τὸ δὲ ἄχυρον κατακαύσει ["burning the chaff"]). This description adds a new nuance of expectation; it should not only be expected that Jesus' ministry will produce division within Israel (in accordance with Simeon's prophetic aside), but it should be expected that one of the groups will be "gathered" while the other is rejected and, ultimately, condemned.

Luke 3:18 indicates the nature of the pericope as an "overview" (John proclaimed the good news to the people with many other exhortations) before introducing a reaction from the "upper echelons" of Jewish society (although it is from a political rather than a religious authority). Tellingly, it is none other than Herod himself (as the "Magnificat" foreshadowed, one sitting on a throne who it seems is now destined to be "thrown down" – see Luke 1:52, section 2.3.9) who takes offense at John's confrontation and removes him from center stage of the narrative. Green draws an interesting and potentially archetypal parallel between John's imprisonment and the advancement of God's purposes: "In this way, these verses concerning John are themselves suggestive of the pattern of Jesus' experience (and, later, the experience of the church in Acts) – public ministry, attraction of opposing forces and imprisonment, but the continuation of God's purpose" (1997:162 – parentheses his).

John's ministry overview (3:2b-20) also returns to the language of "new exodus" noted in section 2.3.10. By requiring the people to leave behind their villages and towns to return to their "exodus roots" in the wilderness (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ – 3:2) and the region of the Jordan (εἰς πᾶσαν [τὴν] περίχωρον τοῦ Ἰορδάνου – 3:3), John's baptism offers an opportunity for the people to "re-enter" the land and their daily lives reoriented with God and their covenant responsibilities to one another. Even John's prophetic provocation contains reminders of the exodus with the mention of stones (which symbolically memorialized the tribes of Israel crossing of the Jordan in Jos 4, but which in 3:8 are used to remind the people that history and progeny are no substitute for covenant obedience) and vipers (a wilderness judgement in Num 21, but which 3:7 applies to the people themselves, who have more in common with the repentance stimulating scourge of old than with Abrahamic heritage). John's indication that the coming One will "gather" some from among the winnowed people and the continued use of exodus symbolism in Luke 4 point to God's unfolding project as a type of "new exodus" resulting in a "re-formation" of the people.

In this way, Luke's presentation of John's ministry demonstrates confirmation and development of the themes that emerged in the infancy narratives. John "winnows" Israel with his provocative stimulation of repentance and attracting opposition, all the while pointing toward the "coming Lord" who will galvanize the winnowed elements and direct them toward their eschatological destinations. Yet again, Luke has confirmed the validity of the foundations laid in the infancy narrative while developing expectations for Jesus' ministry and patterns that will guide the remainder of the gospel and Acts.

3.2.3 Baptism, genealogy, temptation: The preparation and confirmation of Jesus, the Son of God (Luke 3:21-4:13)

As was outlined in Figure 3.2, a central block of three episodes (labelled B in the figure) of preparation and confirmation precede Jesus' first public interactions with the people. The lack of such episodes prior to the launch of John's ministry at the beginning of Luke 3 points to Jesus' unique relationship to the Father (as highlighted in 2:49) and the unique role he will play in the unfolding of God's salvation "prepared in the presence of all peoples" (2:31) to be seen by "all flesh" (3:6). The title "Son of God" binds these three episodes together, with ὁ υἱός μου spoken by God in 3:22 and υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ used in 3:38 (υἱὸς is implicit and the referent is Adam), 4:3 and 4:9 (in these latter uses, the Devil questions/contests the title as part of Jesus' temptation). As the titles of Figure 3.2 summarized, these three episodes are rich in cosmic and historical significance; Jesus will be confirmed by the voice of God from heaven (3:22) at the occasion of his baptism, connected by genealogical lineage to such key figures as David (3:31), Abraham (3:34) and Adam the "son of God" (3:38) and, finally, in the temptation (4:1-13), he will prevail against the Devil, the enemy who bested the first "son of God".

In Luke 3:21 the story “backtracks” chronologically to locate Jesus’ baptism in the time of John’s ministry prior to the imprisonment of 3:20. Luke clearly prefers to keep a clear narrative spotlight on one character and conclude general descriptions of events and reactions before recounting details; thus in 1:64-66, when Zechariah’s ability to speak was restored, Luke preferred to register the “ripples” of impact throughout Judea first and then “backtrack” slightly to register the specific contents of Zechariah’s proclamation in 1:67-79. Green argues in favor of a similar “minor anachrony” in 1:56-58, noting Luke’s stylistic preference for focusing on one character (1997:162; as does Bovon, 2002:127). It is, thus, unsurprising to see Luke conclude John’s arc before using the point of contact between him and Jesus to clearly shift focus to the latter.

Just as Luke highlighted John’s prophetic proclamation over the practice and significance of baptism, in Jesus’ baptism narrative the predominant focus is on heaven’s confirmation of the “beloved Son” (ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός – 3:22) and the descent of the Holy Spirit, whose presence Luke continually notes throughout Jesus’ preparation and ministry episodes (3:22; 4:1, 14, 18). Thus, the first two clauses of 3:21 locate the scene temporally and summarily indicate “Jesus was baptized” (Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ βαπτισθῆναι ἅπαντα τὸν λαὸν καὶ Ἰησοῦ βαπτισθέντος) before emphasizing that it was during Jesus’ post-baptismal prayer that “the heaven was opened” (ἀνεῳχθῆναι τὸν οὐρανὸν) in preparation for the Father’s voice and the Spirit’s descent in 3:22. Both the opening of heaven and the disembodied heavenly voice evoke apocalyptic literature (see Eze 1:1, 25-2:1; Rev 4:1; 10:4; Baruch 22:1; Testament of Levi), reinforcing the cosmic significance of these preparation and confirmation episodes.

The apocalyptic precedent and the divine declaration leave little room for equivocation: “You are my Son, the Beloved; in you I am well pleased” (Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα – 3:22b). The first portion of the phrase evokes Psalm 2.7 (so much so, apparently, that manuscript D, multiple old Latin witnesses and several church fathers read Υἱός μου εἶ σύ, ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε after the LXX) while the second portion (or some combination of the two – see Bock, 1987:99-105; 1994:341-343; Green, 1997:187) has been seen to echo various texts from Genesis (22:2), Exodus (4:22-23) and Isaiah (41:8; 42:1; 44:2). While Luke’s infancy narratives have already clarified the unique relationship between Jesus the Son and God the Father, this declaration confirms Jesus’ role and identity with the highest possible stamp of approval.

Luke’s genealogy of Jesus, presented in 3:23-38, integrates this confirmed agent of God’s salvation into a lineage of covenant promise. It is interesting that Luke begins his list of seventy-seven names (for an exploration of the potential significance of this number and a division of the generations of Luke’s genealogy, see Bauckham, 1990:315-373; for an exploration of the text critical issues, see Bock, 1994:360-362; Omanson, 2006:113) with two comments. The first indicates that Jesus had reached the approximate age of thirty (Καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν Ἰησοῦς ἀρχόμενος ὡσεὶ ἐτῶν τριάκοντα – 3:23a), commonly identified in the OT as the “age of public service” (see Gen

41:46; Num 4:3, 23; 2 Sam 5:4; Bock, 1994:351-352; Green, 1997:188). The second indicates that what follows should not be viewed as a complete reflection of Jesus' identity (which was just confirmed by the voice of God from heaven), but rather represents a human vision of the lineage of His *supposed* father, Joseph (ὢν υἱός, ὡς ἐνομίζετο, Ἰωσὴφ – 3:23).

Luke uses the trailing genitive (τοῦ, with υἱός implicit after its first use in 3:23) to build the concatenate trail from Jesus to Adam. The final trailing genitive links Adam to God (Ἀδὰμ τοῦ θεοῦ – 3:38), an apparent Lukan innovation (cf. Mat 1:1-2, which begins with Abraham and descends to Joseph and Jesus) that links Jesus to all of humanity while simultaneously setting up his imminent confrontation with the Devil as Son of God (Bock [1994:360] notes a similarity in Philo, although it applies uniquely to Adam). Just as Simeon indicated in Luke 2:30-32, the embodiment of God's salvation is being prepared "in the presence of all peoples" who descended from Adam. Soon, Jesus will begin his ministry so that "all flesh" (3:6) will see God's salvation; first, however, he must overcome the Devil (the enemy against whom Adam failed) in the wilderness (where Israel repeatedly failed before entering the land).

As Figure 3.2 demonstrated, Jesus' temptation features a narrative dynamic lacking in the baptism and the genealogy, with a clear setting, three distinct temptation episodes and a conclusion. Jesus' dedication to "the Father's affairs" and mission (see Luke 2:49, section 2.3.13) will be put to the test in multiple ways, although it is essential to note that Luke opens the temptation narrative with the repetitive indications that Jesus "was full of the Holy Spirit" and was "led by the Spirit in the wilderness" (πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου... καὶ ἤγετο ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ – 4:1). Luke makes it clear from the outset that it is precisely Jesus' status as the confirmed Son of God and agent of heaven that requires him to confront heaven's opposition in the person of the Devil (διάβολος – 4:2, 3, 6, 13); both hell's *continued opposition* to His ministry (as is visible in the demonic manifestations in 4:33-36 and 4:41) and Jesus' *consistent victory* over the forces of darkness confirm his instrumental role in God's unfolding "new exodus".

Luke 4:2 describes Jesus' forty days of fasting (a number that surfaces multiple times in the exodus narratives: Israel ate manna for forty years – Exo 16:35; Moses spent forty days in the cloud of God's presence on Mount Sinai while receiving the Law – Exo 24:18; the forty days of spying out the land became forty years of wandering for a generation to pass – Num 14:34; Deut 8:2, 4) and harassment by the Devil (ἡμέρας τεσσεράκοντα πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου. καὶ οὐκ ἔφαγεν οὐδὲν ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις – 4:2) that sets up the climactic triad of temptations described in 4:3-12, particularly the first temptation which focuses on His physical hunger (καὶ συντελεσθεισῶν αὐτῶν ἐπείνασεν – 4:2). While some commentators have made much of the differing details and the order of the temptations in Matthew's (Mat 4:1-11) and Luke's versions of the event (Ellis, 1983:94, Hendriksen, 1978:232; Fitzmyer, 1981:507-508; Bock, 1994:364-366, among others), both narratives utilize a consistent internal logic (Green, 1997:190-193). Luke's presentation uses the conditional "If you are the Son of God…" in the

first and third temptations in an *inclusio* like pattern. The final temptation is also by far the most climactic of the three; the Devil innovates by citing Psalm 91 and takes Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem, the epicenter of Jesus' eventual passion and the birthplace of the church. Jesus victory over His enemy's distortion of divine promise in the gospel's climactic locale prompts the Devil's withdrawal, at least until "an opportune time" (ἀπέστη ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἄχρι καιροῦ – 4:13).´

The Devil's withdrawal in Luke 4:13 confirms Jesus' unique connection to the Father's purposes, the Spirit's leading and ability to correctly interpret and respond to the Scriptures, even when confronted with a combination of the enemy (the Devil) and the circumstances (40 days of testing in the wilderness) that saw Adam (the first "son of God" from 3:38) and the generation of the original Israelite exodus succumb to disobedience and rebellion. Jesus' quotation of key texts from Deuteronomy emphasize His ability to overcome the tests the people failed during their wilderness testing. Israel's unwillingness to submit to the lessons of hunger and their proclivity for prostrating themselves in worship before competing deities and putting God to the test stand in stark contrast to Jesus' quotation of (and obedience to) Deuteronomy 8:3, 6:13 and 6:16. This key section of preparation and confirmation (Figure 3.2's section B – Luke 3:21-4:13) presents more than sufficient evidence of His worthiness for the task at hand; Jesus has symbolically overcome the failures of the nation of Israel and of all the nations descended from Adam (all flesh as per 3:6). He is now ready to "enter the land" and set about God's work of salvation in earnest.

3.2.4 "The epoch of the Lord's favor" vs "No prophet finds favor in his hometown": The first episode of Jesus' ministry overview in Nazareth (Luke 4:14-30)

As was argued in section 3.2.1, the opening summary of Jesus' ministry in 4:14-15 parallels the that of John in 3:2b-3, with both summaries followed by texts from Isaiah and specific episodes of provocation and response. Just as Luke highlighted the Spirit's presence in the setting of Jesus' wilderness testing and temptation, the Spirit's presence is highlighted again in 4:14 as Jesus enters Galilee, this time with an emphasis on the "power of the Spirit" (ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν). Although Luke does not specify in this summary how Jesus manifested this power, the indication in 14b that "a report went out through all the surrounding country concerning Him" (φήμη ἐξῆλθεν καθ' ὅλης τῆς περιχώρου περὶ αὐτοῦ) and the emphasis on "teaching in their synagogues" (αὐτὸς ἐδίδασκεν ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν) is consistent with the contents of the specific episodes that follow. In contrast with John's summary in 3:2-3, Luke also includes a note on the public's response: "He was being praised by all" (δοξαζόμενος ὑπὸ πάντων – 4:15b).

Jesus' use of Isaiah and ultimate rejection in His hometown synagogue in the first specific episode of the overview in 4:16-30 is widely seen as programmatic for His ministry in the rest of the gospel (Brawley, 1987:6; Tiede, 1988:101-102; Green, 1997:207-208), which is reinforced by references back to this narrative in 7:21-22 (see section 3.3.4). The narrative both mirrors

and inverts the sequence of events from John's ministry overview (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2). It keeps the quotation from Isaiah near the beginning of the ministry overview while highlighting negative responses (which emerged at the end of John's overview in 3:19-20) prior to positive responses. As Herod's opposition to John is a key factor in Luke's "character change" to Jesus, the imprecision of the parallels favors logical narrative progression and highlights Luke's literary sensibilities; the needs of the narrative clearly trump niceties of style.

While many scholars have made much of Luke's "chronological anticipation" of the episode in Nazareth in comparison to Matthew and Mark (see the proposals and discussions of Luce, 1933:279-280; Leaney, 1958:50-54; Carson, 1984:335; Evans, 1990:266-267; Bock, 1994:394-398, among others), the present author's proposal that 4:14-44 represents a ministry overview that parallels John's ministry in 3:2b-20 (rather than the "beginning" of a largely chronological account of Galilean ministry stretching from 4:14 to 9:50) lessens the necessity of assuming that Jesus' rejection in Nazareth and acceptance in Capernaum represent Luke's "chronological starting point" for Jesus' ministry. Rather, just as Luke chose to highlight certain aspects of John's proclamation in 3:7-17 before indicating in 3:18 that there were "many other exhortations", so Luke's summary in 4:14-15 leaves chronological room around the specific episodes in Nazareth and Capernaum for other events. As section 3.2.3 pointed out, Luke does not appear averse to "minor anachronies" in favor of basing his narrative blocks around particular characters and themes, a strategy which seems to irk contemporary commentators but is consistent with first-century notions of narrative progression.

The episode of Jesus' proclamation and rejection in Nazareth is far more dynamic than the parallel episodes in the other Synoptics. The episode's structure unfolds around cycles of address from Jesus and response from the crowd (Bock, 1994:399; Green, 1997:208) with a chiasmus centered on the quotation from Isaiah dominating the first cycle (Tiede, 1988:103). Both structures emphasize key narrative foci; Jesus' application of Isaiah 58-61 to his own ministry casts the miraculous signs that follow as confirmation of his Scriptural role as God's eschatological agent. Likewise, it is entirely likely that the episode's startlingly violent terminus would only make sense to an "informed reader" (see sections 2.2.7 and 2.3.2) familiar with Jewish habits of interpretation who would be able to detect the provocation in Jesus' final address, which is itself prompted by the crowd's response to his initial proclamation.

The setting of the episode echoes language from the growth episodes at the end of Luke 2; Jesus "comes to Nazareth, where he was raised" (ἦλθεν εἰς Ναζαρὰ οὗ ἦν τεθραμμένος – 4:16; ἦλθεν εἰς Ναζαρὲθ is used in 2:51 to describe the return from Jerusalem) and enters the synagogue "according to custom" (κατὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς – 4:16; κατὰ τὸ ἔθος is used in 2:42 to set up the journey to Jerusalem). The attentive reader will recall the emphasis on Jesus' connection to the affairs of his Heavenly Father over and above the expectations of his earthly family in the growth episode in Jerusalem; a similar dynamic will play out to an even greater degree in the narrative that

unfolds in Luke 4. Luke omits many of the details of a typical Jewish Sabbath ceremony, focusing on the didactic second portion of the service and its relevance to the reading and interpretation of a passage from the prophets (Bovon, 2002:153).

The setting of the Sabbath service (the Sabbath will become the setting for multiple polemics over the course of Jesus' ministry) sets up the quotation from Isaiah in Jesus' ministry overview. The quotation appears to be a "mixed text" with "to send forth the oppressed in liberty" from Isaiah 58:6 (ἀπόστελλε τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει in the LXX, ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει in Luke 4:18) taking the place of "to heal the broken in heart" (ἰάσασθαι τοὺς συντετριμμένους τῇ καρδίᾳ in the LXX) from a passage which otherwise follows Isaiah 61:1-2a (while there are textual witnesses which include the missing phrase from Isa 61:1, the more difficult reading is highly probable). Even more significant for the gospel narrative as a whole and for the responses of the audience is the deliberate inclusion of "to proclaim the year/epoch of the Lord's favor" (κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν – 4:19) from Isaiah 61:2 while excluding the second object of the verb according to the LXX's rendering of the text "and the day of retribution" (the complete clause in the LXX reads: καλέσαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν καὶ ἡμέραν ἀνταποδόσεως).

As was discussed in sections 2.3.8 and 2.3.12, Second Temple Jewish messianic expectation clearly anticipated a linear eschatological division of "mercy to Israel" and "retribution to the nations". J. Sanders (1975:92-100) defends that this hermeneutic is so intrinsically tied to the text of Isaiah 61 that Jesus' challenge to it provides the primary impetus for his rejection at the end of the episode (a point the present author believes only partially explains the crowd's final response). As the proclamations of Luke's infancy narratives and the larger narrative arc of Luke-Acts work to legitimate Gentile inclusion in God's project of salvation, it is clear why Luke's narrative spotlight leaves this problematic contemporary interpretation in the shadows (and thus, potentially, in the nebulous eschatological classification of "not yet but not categorically invalid").

While the mixed composition and notable absences of Luke's quotation of Isaiah are important, it is equally important to note the programmatic importance of the text as Luke has presented it. Green has noted how the triple repetition of "me" at the end of the first three lines of the quoted text set help to set up the three infinitive phrases that follow (1997:210). While Green also highlighted the double repetition of "release" (ἄφεσις), it is unclear why he did not highlight the double repetitions of "send" (ἀποστέλλω) or the infinitive "to proclaim" (κηρύξαι), which further bind the three infinitive phrases together and underline their connection to the final "me" clause. The following figure reproduces Green's English translation (adding "the" at the beginning) and emphasis on "me" and "release" (1997:210). It has departed from Green's presentation by adding the Greek text (exceptionally, the UBS 5's punctuation has been removed as it conflicts with Green's division of the clauses), by highlighting the noted repetitions of "send" and "to

proclaim” and by clarifying the relation between “the release of captives” and “sight to the blind” in relation to the infinitive κηρύξαι (“to proclaim”).

(The) Spirit of the Lord is upon *me*,
Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ’ ἐμέ
For he has anointed *me*;
οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με
To preach good news to the poor he has sent *me*:
εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς ἀπέσταλκέν με
To proclaim — for the captives release,
κηρύξαι — αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν
and to the blind sight;
καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν
To send forth the oppressed in release;
ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει
To proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.
κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν.

Figure 3.4: Repetition and emphasis in the quotation from Isaiah in Luke 4:18-19, based on Green (1997:210)

As Green argued (and the present author agrees) the first two clauses ending with “me” clarify Jesus’ extraordinary status as the Spirit filled and divinely anointed agent of God’s purposes. The third clause, meanwhile, highlights the main purpose for which he has been anointed and filled with the Spirit: to preach the good news to the poor (εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς – 4:18). The three infinitive clauses that follow, which are bound together and to the purpose clause by the repetitions of “send”, “release” and “to proclaim”, offer concrete examples of what this “good news” will look like in diverse social situations. The Isaianic focus on the “captives” (αἰχμάλωτος), “blind” (τυφλός) and “oppressed” (via the participle of θραύω) hearkens back to the “exaltation of the lowly” (ὕψωσεν ταπεινούς – 1:52) in Mary’s “Magnificat”.

In the narrative of Luke 4, verse 20 records the silent but influential response of those present: “and the eyes of all in the synagogue were looking at him intently” (καὶ πάντων οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ ἦσαν ἀτενίζοντες αὐτῷ). It is clear to both the reader and those present that the stage has been set for further development. Jesus’ declaration in 4:21 does not disappoint, as he declares that “today” (σήμερον, in the syntactically emphatic first position) the Scripture he had just read and its Jubilee-like “epoch of the Lord’s favor” (ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν – 4:19) and of “release” (ἄφεσις – 4:18) had passed from the category of “promise” to that of “fulfillment” (πεπλήρωται ἡ γραφὴ αὕτη ἐν τοῖς ὠσὶν ὑμῶν – 4:21). This, of course, does not mean that God’s unfolding project only became a reality “that day”; indeed, in Luke’s narrative, God has been active since before

Jesus' conception. Rather, as Green (1997:214) and others argue, Jesus' words signify that the day has arrived to "unveil" God's project to the public and begin the "gathering" and "cleansing" John had warned were imminent.

The residents of Nazareth initially react positively to Jesus' declaration, "marveling at the words of grace proceeding from his mouth" (καὶ ἐθαύμαζον ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος τοῖς ἐκπορευομένοις ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ – 4:22, echoing the LXX rendering of Deut 8:3 cited in the temptation as per Bock, 1994:414). Many see a negative contrast in the audience's surprised comment "Is this not Joseph's son?" (καὶ ἔλεγον, Οὐχὶ υἱός ἐστιν Ἰωσὴφ οὗτος; – 4:22), prompting suggestions of redaction (Luce, 1933:121) or anger at the omission of the "day of retribution" in the Isaianic quotation (Marshall, 1978:186; were this option the best explanation, it would be curious for this anger to be manifested in 4:22 and not in 4:20 at the end of the previous cycle of address-response). The present author agrees with Bock (1994:414-415) and Green (1997:215) that the comment enlightens the nature of the crowd's "amazement/marveling"; could "one of them" really be God's agent of fulfillment of this promise?

The fact that Jesus' next address dramatically shifts to multi-faceted provocation nonetheless signals the insufficiency of the synagogue's reaction. While "amazement/marveling" (θαυμάζω – used in response scenes in 1:21; 63; 2:18; 33) may have been an acceptable response for the crowds in the infancy narratives (who frequently witnessed only the final culmination of events), more is clearly to be expected from this group. After all, they have watched his growth, illustrated by the scene at the end of Luke 2, and have just been given revelation of God's imminent action by the "son of Joseph" who returned from his time in the wilderness notably empowered by God's Spirit (4:14-15).

The interpretive utility of the archetypes of reaction outlined by the infancy narratives (see section 2.3.13) help to clarify *why* Jesus, who began his Sabbath sermon with revelation, will rapidly shift to John-like provocation. While there is no need to read excessive negativity into the crowd's response, the patterns of response in the infancy narratives indicate that comprehension of God's revelation (such as that given by Jesus in 4:21) should result in joyful praise to God and active participation. The response described in 4:22 cannot be characterized as either and, therefore, requires stimulation toward a more decisive position.

Jesus' address in 4:23-27 takes a more confrontational approach with the quotation of a proverb that seems, on the surface, opaque to contemporary readers: "Physician, heal yourself!" (Ἰατρέ, θεράπευσον σεαυτόν – 4:23). Brawley (1987:8-9) and Green (1997:216) argue that Jesus' use of the future ἐρεῖτέ in setting up the parable (Πάντως ἐρεῖτέ μοι τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην...) does not predict future actions on the part of the Nazarene crowd, but is rather a diatribe-esque characterization of their present attitudes (and may well indicate that Jesus anticipates a negative response to this address). Nolland's exploration of the figure of the "sick doctor" in

rabbinic and classical contexts demonstrates the widespread use of the metaphor in Greco-Roman literature (although it appears less frequently and alongside other metaphors in Jewish writings) to caution against or to point the finger at ridiculous, contradictory, or hypocritical behavior (1979:193-209).

The classical use of the proverb thus seems nearly identical to the contemporary Portuguese proverb "casa de ferreiro, espeto de pau" (in the house of the blacksmith, a wooden spit [for roasting meat]) and illuminates the phrase that follows: "just as we heard you did in Capernaum, perform also here in your hometown" (ὅσα ἠκούσαμεν γενόμενα εἰς τὴν Καφαρναούμ ποίησον καὶ ὧδε ἐν τῇ πατρίδι σου – 4:23). The address in 4:23-24 clearly presupposes the environment described by 4:14-15, in which Jesus has manifested the power of the Spirit elsewhere (as the specific episode in Capernaum that follows will demonstrate) and in which the report of this power has circulated and, logically, arrived in Nazareth as well (φήμη ἐξῆλθεν καθ' ὅλης τῆς περιχώρου περὶ αὐτοῦ – 4:14). Thus, Jesus' use of the proverb anticipates the crowd's expectation that if the Spirit's power is available for "other folks" then surely Jesus would take care of "his own" and prove that he was, in fact, the fulfillment of Isaiah.

There is a subtle but informative parallel between the attitude Jesus is confronting and that exhibited by Zechariah in Luke 1:18 (see section 2.3.6). In both cases, the underlying doubt is understandable in purely human terms, but unacceptable in light of the knowledge possessed and the revelation given. Just as Zechariah knows that his age and especially that of his wife are an enormous impediment to the promise that has been made (humanly speaking), so the residents of Nazareth know that it would be entirely natural for someone imbued with the type of power or skill that the report has attributed to Jesus to apply this ability for the benefit of people who played an important role in his life (again, in terms of human logic; Luke clearly views the Spirit as being a driving force [e.g. ἤγετο ἐν τῷ πνεύματι in 4:1] and not merely a "power source"). Indeed, it is not hard to understand that, for the residents of Nazareth at least, a refusal on Jesus' part to apply his power for their benefit would arouse suspicions of exaggeration or provoke accusations of inconsistency with the report that has reached them.

Nonetheless, Jesus' words contain an implicit refusal to do for "his relatives and neighbors" that which he seems disposed to do for "everyone else", justifying the second aphorism in 4:24: "Truly I say to you that no prophet is acceptable/finds favor in his hometown" (Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ). Just as Gabriel pointed to his supernatural appearance in having come from the presence of God as "sufficient evidence for belief" (1:19), so Jesus' emphasis that this is his "hometown" (πατρίς, repeated in both 4:23 and 4:24) would seem to suggest that his origins (the supernatural nature of which is absent from the people's wonder at the "son of Joseph" in 4:22) and the thirty years he has spent with them (especially in light of his sudden ability to offer "words of grace" [also noted by the people in 4:22]) provides "sufficient evidence for belief" in the present situation.

Jesus' repetition of δεκτός from the final phrase of the quotation from Isaiah 61 is hardly coincidental and illustrates the tragic irony of his imminent rejection; the Anointed One (ἔχρισέν με – 4:18) who has come to proclaim the epoch of the Lord's favor will himself find no favor among those who know him best (Brawley, 1987:14-15; Green, 1997:217; cf. Bajard's "active" reading, i.e. Jesus is withholding divine favor from those in Nazareth – 1969:167-170). The narrative has reached a point of crisis not unlike that represented by Mary and Joseph's inability to understand Jesus' statement regarding the Father's affairs in 2:49-50. On that occasion, the twelve year old Jesus relented and "was submissive to them" (ἦν ὑποτασσόμενος αὐτοῖς – 2:51); on this occasion, however, his connection to the Father's mission will not allow him to accommodate the inflexible expectations of his family and neighbors.

In an effort to demonstrate the Scriptural precedent for his refusal to "perform in his hometown that which was done elsewhere", Jesus presents two striking (and provocative!) parallels from the ministries of Elijah and Elisha. Brawley (1987:10) has helpfully noted the way Luke's statements in 4:23-27 form a series of correlating analogies that justify Jesus' behavior, but which reflect poorly on the residents of Nazareth. The present author has adapted Brawley's arguments in the following figure by adding verse numbers, by separating the specific elements presented in relation to Elijah and Elisha (grouped together in a generalist way in Brawley's presentation) and by arranging the parallel elements vertically:

4:23	Jesus	—	Nazareth	:	Capernaum
	|		|		|
4:24	prophet	—	πατρίς	:	(outsiders)
	|		|		|
4:25-26	Elijah	—	widows of Israel	:	Zarephath of Sidon
	|		|		|
4:27	Elisha	—	lepers of Israel	:	Naaman the Syrian

Figure 3.5: The analogies of Jesus' address in Luke 4:23-27, following Brawley (1987:10)

Brawley uses this analogy to argue against the notion that the episode in Nazareth prefigures the rejection of the Jews as a necessary feature of Gentile inclusion in Luke-Acts (cf., for example, Haenchen, 1971:414-418, 724-730; J.T. Sanders, 1988:51-75). While the present author agrees strongly with Brawley that there is no program of Jewish rejection present, the issue of Gentile inclusion is more complex. Brawley has, on the one hand, correctly identified the analogies' function within the immediate context of the pericope (i.e., justifying Jesus' decision to perform in Capernaum that which he refuses to do in Nazareth); on the other hand, however, the wider context of the gospel makes it difficult to argue that Luke's reader would detect no hint of Gentile inclusion in the analogies presented (in fairness to Brawley's argument,

while he clearly aims to discredit Jewish exclusion, his position on Gentile inclusion is more nebulous).

Both Simeon's prophecy and the quotation of Isaiah in John's ministry overview have highlighted or reinforced the inclusion of Gentiles (in Simeon's case, with language that was likely to shock a reader with Jewish sympathies [see section 2.3.12] and, therefore, remain in the reader's memory). Thus, while the present author in no way sees the Lukan text as prefiguring an eventual rejection of the Jews, Jesus' words clearly add "insult to injury" by bringing up episodes where God's favor found Gentiles due to the spiritual hardness of Israel. In fact, Jesus' use of these episodes does far more than merely justify his own actions in light of prophetic precedent; it clearly equates the inadequate response of the crowd in the synagogue with the spiritual hardness of the "widows and lepers in Israel" in accordance with Figure 3.5 and Bock's explanation:

> The reference back to these prophets of old was a warning not to be like Israel of old, when God sent messengers but Israel missed blessing because of a hard heart. The crowd did not miss the point that the period of these prophets came at a spiritual low point in Israel's history. Their reaction to the warning shows their rejection of Jesus' assessment of their spiritual condition and points to a fissure that his teaching brought to Israel. (2012:283)

It is likely that only this combination of Jesus' provocative and negative spiritual evaluation (especially in light of his initially positive message) and his citation of Gentile-inclusive episodes from Scriptural history adequately explains the violence of the crowd's reaction in 4:28-29 (cf. J. Sanders [1975:92-100] as well as Brawley's verdict of the reaction as "insufficiently motivated" [1987:17]).

Luke is categorical in describing the audience's response to Jesus' final address: "all in the synagogue were filled with rage on hearing these things and they rose up and expelled him from the city and brought him to the edge of the elevation on which their city was built, so that they might throw him down the cliff" (καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες θυμοῦ ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ ἀκούοντες ταῦτα καὶ ἀναστάντες ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἤγαγον αὐτὸν ἕως ὀφρύος τοῦ ὄρους ἐφ' οὗ ἡ πόλις ᾠκοδόμητο αὐτῶν ὥστε κατακρημνίσαι αὐτόν – 4:28-29). Whether the crowd sees their response in light of Deuteronomy 13:5's provision for the stoning of false prophets (Blinzler, 1970:147-161; Bock, 1994:419; Green, 1997:218, among others) or whether this is simply the result of "blind rage" is unclear. Equally unclear is what prompted the crowd to stop short of their goal and allow Jesus to "pass through their midst" (αὐτὸς δὲ διελθὼν διὰ μέσου αὐτῶν – 4:30) unharmed (beyond the obvious reason that it is not yet time for Jesus' sacrificial death at the hands of those who reject him).

Talbert (1982:221-224, who speaks of it in regard to Jesus' death in Luke 23; applied to Luke 4 by Brawley, 1987:17-18) notes that the persecution and martyrdom of a prophet-philosopher in support of his message was viewed as convincing legitimation by both Jewish and Greco-Roman sources. Jesus demonstrates unwavering fidelity to His provocative message and the Father's purposes that occasioned it, even in the face of resistance from his own village and the imminent threat to his life. Ironically, the posture that should legitimate his actions as a prophetic agent of God drives a profound wedge between prophet and πατρίς, in fulfillment of Simeon's words from Luke 2 (see section 2.3.12). Jesus has become a "sign that is opposed/spoken against" (σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον – 2:34) in the presence of those who ought to have known him best, likely including Mary and family members who may well have heard the story of Simeon's surprising intervention at the event of Jesus' dedication.

It should be noted that Luke does not explicitly indicate Mary or Joseph's presence at the synagogue service in 4:16-30 (although the mention of Mary and of Jesus' brothers in Acts 1:14 make it clear that she is alive and may well have been in Nazareth for the episode), but it is not difficult to imagine the emotional impact of the rejection and excommunication (Luke will not record Jesus' presence in Nazareth after this episode) being like a "sword passing through Mary's soul" (τὴν ψυχὴν διελεύσεται ῥομφαία – 2:35). The fact that Jesus' final address swiftly transformed "amazement at words of grace" (ἐθαύμαζον ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος – 4:22) into "everyone being filled with rage" (ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες θυμοῦ – 4:28) also confirms the activity Simeon connected to Mary's pain in 2:35: "so that the reasonings/cogitations from (the interior of) many hearts might be revealed" (ὅπως ἂν ἀποκαλυφθῶσιν ἐκ πολλῶν καρδιῶν διαλογισμοί – 2:35).

Jesus' very first ministry episode in Luke's gospel has made the stakes of God's unfolding project of salvation for all peoples dramatically clear. In fulfillment of John's metaphorical language of "cleansing the threshing floor", Jesus has confronted those of his own village with their spiritual need and pushed them toward a more definitive identification of his identity and role. Both the prophet-Savior and the residents of Nazareth will suffer the consequences of this tragic episode for the remainder of the gospel. By standing his ground and insisting that belief come in response to "sufficient evidence" rather than as a response to signs and demonstrations of power, Jesus has reaffirmed the patterns of response noted in section 2.3.14. The tragic implication is that, at least for the time being, the residents of Nazareth now stand as a concrete representation of the stubborn rejection prefigured by Simeon's words.

It is, however, also essential to take note of the reader's location in revelation history (almost certainly in the second half of the first-century). As Acts 1:14 and mentions of Jesus' brothers in Pauline letters (Gal 1:19; 1 Cor 9:5) make clear, at least some of those likely to have been present in the synagogue in Luke 4 eventually followed the redemptive archetype laid out in connection with Zechariah in the preceding chapter and "came round" to embrace Jesus' identity as "Son of God". The fact that Jesus' family, who would seem to have initially rejected

His extraordinary claims, went on to become people of reference in the early Christian movement reinforces the present author's extreme hesitance to "over-read" definitive Jewish rejection in favor of Gentiles into this pericope.

This section has outlined numerous and diverse points of contact between this first narrative of Jesus' ministry and the infancy narratives. It is especially important to underline the significance of Luke's legitimation of Jesus *through* persecution and opposition (and not in spite of them). The numerous and diverse points of contact between this narrative and Simeon's prophetic proclamations in Luke 2, the patterns of human response to divine revelation from the infancy narrative and John's statements about the "coming One" confirm the programmatic importance of this episode. The sections that follow will note how Luke 4:16-30 contrasts with its "companion episode" in Capernaum in Luke 4:31-44 (section 3.2.5) and explore how both episodes highlight certain expectations from the infancy narratives while leaving other expectations "hanging" and unresolved (section 3.2.6).

3.2.5 "Sent to proclaim the good news": Jesus' favorable reception in Capernaum (Luke 4:31-44)

Luke presents Jesus' movement to Capernaum in connection with both his expulsion from Nazareth and the general activity described in 4:14-15: "And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbath" (Καὶ κατῆλθεν εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ πόλιν τῆς Γαλιλαίας. καὶ ἦν διδάσκων αὐτοὺς ἐν τοῖς σάββασιν – 4:31; the change of location and episode is marked by the simple conjunction *καί* rather than a more pronounced connective or syntactic device; for an in depth exploration see Runge, 2010:23-27). However, as 4:32 notes, this new audience seems willing to acknowledge aspects of Jesus' identity that the residents of Nazareth were unable or unwilling to affirm: "and they were astonished at His teaching, since His word was with authority" (καὶ ἐξεπλήσσοντο ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ ἦν ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ). The parallel activity (teaching) and locations (a Sabbath synagogue service) of the two episodes suggests natural comparison.

Jesus' exorcism of the demoniac in 4:33-35 will prove his power and authority (recognized by the crowd in 4:36 – συνελάλουν πρὸς ἀλλήλους λέγοντες, Τίς ὁ λόγος οὗτος ὅτι ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ καὶ δυνάμει ἐπιτάσσει τοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις πνεύμασιν καὶ ἐξέρχονται;). As Luke's structure of the temptation highlighted (see Figure 3.2), the authority promised by the Devil (σοὶ δώσω τὴν ἐξουσίαν – 4:6) in exchange for trading sides and "worshipping before him" (σὺ οὖν ἐὰν προσκυνήσῃς ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ, ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα – 4:7) is ironically confirmed in the eyes of the Jews by Jesus' victory over a representative of the forces of spiritual darkness, without forsaking the Holy Spirit's leading (Green, 1997:221). The fact that "astonishment because of his word with authority" in Capernaum is immediately followed by a block of exorcisms and healings (4:33-41) reinforces

the conclusion that “marveling at words of grace” was an insufficient (if positive) response from the crowd.

Even the Capernaum crowd’s acknowledgement, however, pales in comparison to the responses of the demons, who readily acknowledge Jesus’ identity in the context of the synagogue (4:33-35) and the public healings and exorcisms that occurred later in the day (4:40-41). The demon in the synagogue “cries out with a loud voice” (ἀνέκραξεν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ – 4:33) and emphatic language: “Ah! What have we to do with you, Jesus the Nazarene? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the Holy One of God!” (Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ – 4:34). Luke 4:35 indicates that Jesus limited the demon’s ability to speak further, a strategy He also applies in the second healing and exorcism episode where the declaration “You are the Son of God!” was apparently the only speech permitted (“Then demons were also coming out of many people, crying out and saying: ‘You are the Son of God!’ and, rebuking them, he was not allowing them to speak since they knew Him to be the Christ” [ἐξήρχετο δὲ καὶ δαιμόνια ἀπὸ πολλῶν κρ[αυγ]άζοντα καὶ λέγοντα ὅτι Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ. καὶ ἐπιτιμῶν οὐκ εἴα αὐτὰ λαλεῖν, ὅτι ᾔδεισαν τὸν Χριστὸν αὐτὸν εἶναι – 4:41]; one of *many* reasons few scholars defend the notion of a “Messianic secret” [like that proposed by Wrede in Mark] in Luke’s gospel).

There is a stark contrast between the knowledge of the forces of spiritual darkness (who are unable to prevail against Jesus but nonetheless express displease at his presence [Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί – 4:34; see, for example, Danker *et al.*, 2000:267]) and their willingness to acknowledge Jesus’ identity and the difficulty faced by pious and (at least outwardly) observant Jews in Nazareth and (to a somewhat lesser degree) in Capernaum in arriving at the same conclusion. This contrast reinforces the reader’s privileged position and the perils of human interpretation. Having been made privy to the voice from heaven in 3:22 and the victory over the Devil in 4:1-13, the reader is equipped to identify Jesus correctly while noting the difficulties faced by those who must adopt positions based on less clear (but nonetheless sufficient) information.

Jesus’ extraordinary display of power in the synagogue in 4:33-35 again provokes a response of “marveling/amazement” (ἐγένετο θάμβος ἐπὶ πάντας – 4:36) but this time the crowd apparently participates in “spreading the news” (καὶ ἐξεπορεύετο ἦχος περὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς πάντα τόπον τῆς περιχώρου – 4:37). The wording of 4:37 closely mirrors the dissemination of the report about Jesus in 4:14; both phrases feature a verb meaning “to go out” (ἐκπορεύω in 4:37; ἐξέρχομαι in 4:14), the prepositional phrase περὶ αὐτοῦ (“about Him”) and περίχωρος (“surrounding region”). Jesus’ extraordinary reputation immediately opens doors and draws crowds, as demonstrated by the healing of Simon’s mother-in-law in 4:38-39 and the gathering of the sick and demon possessed in 4:40-41.

Jesus' activity in 4:33-41 should be seen as "release" (ἄφεσις, which applies to both "release" from diverse forms of confinement or limitation and to the "forgiveness" of sins – Danker *et al.*, 2000:155) from demonic oppression and the constraints of illness, in accordance with the text of Isaiah 61 quoted in the preceding narrative (Schürmann speaks of a "cry of Jubilee", 1969:410; so does Green, 1997:221). There is a close connection between Jesus' salvific proclamation and healing or the performance of a similar miracle of "release" in Luke's gospel, suggesting that the miracles provide a visual picture and powerful confirmation of the claims Jesus makes and the revelation he dispenses (Bock, 2012:227-228). As occurred in the preparation and confirmation episodes of 3:21-4:13, Jesus' ministry overview in 4:14-44 features confirmation through affirmation and fulfillment, confirmation through Scriptural precedent and confirmation through opposition.

The affirmation of Jesus' authority in Capernaum, however, does not come without caveats. As the final verses of Luke 4 demonstrate, the people remain far from understanding Jesus' identity, mission and purposes, even after having seen clear signs of God's "epoch of favor". The people are clearly startled by Jesus' early morning departure after the previous day's demonstrations of power and spiritual victory. Luke notes that their desire to secure the benefits of Jesus' presence for themselves was such that "they were attempting to detain him so that he might not depart from them" (κατεῖχον αὐτὸν τοῦ μὴ πορεύεσθαι ἀπ' αὐτῶν – 4:42; the present author has interpreted κατεῖχον as a conative imperfect in light of the crowd's desire and unsuccessful attempt to keep Jesus with them – Wallace, 1996:550).

Green (1997:220) notes that, while the people of Capernaum are willing to affirm Jesus' authority (4:32), they "also make the mistake of their counterparts in Nazareth: Failing to understand who Jesus is and, therefore, the scale of his mission, they hope to limit his ministry to their own boundaries". The fact that Jesus clarifies His mission and insists on departing for "other cities" (ταῖς ἑτέραις πόλεσιν – 4:43) and even other regions (εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς τῆς Ἰουδαίας – while a significant number of textual witnesses read Γαλιλαίας in harmony with 4:31, the more difficult reading of Ἰουδαίας is also well supported and to be preferred) without the type of prophetic provocation displayed in the synagogue of Nazareth reinforces the present author's argument that the Nazarenes' unique familiarity with Jesus provided them with a sufficient basis for responding more adequately (see section 3.2.4).

Thus, while the crowd from Capernaum is not provoked like that in Nazareth, they are nonetheless rebuffed by Jesus: "It is necessary for me to preach the good news of the Kingdom of God to the other cities, for it was for this (purpose) I was sent" (ταῖς ἑτέραις πόλεσιν εὐαγγελίσασθαί με δεῖ τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι ἐπὶ τοῦτο ἀπεστάλην – 4:43). This short phrase is packed with important theological terms; the use of εὐαγγελίζομαι ("to preach good news"), ἀποστέλλω ("sent") and a repetition of με ("me") clearly evoke the quotation from Isaiah 61 in 4:18-19, while the second use of δεῖ in Luke's gospel (see Figure 3.3) again indicates that it is

the necessity of the Father's anointing and mission that moves Jesus away from Capernaum (for now). The phrase also contains the first mention of the Kingdom of God, a key term in Luke-Acts (31 uses in Luke and 6 in Acts, per Bock, 1994:440-441).

Much as he did with Jesus' δεῖ statement in the infancy narratives (2:49), Luke uses the theologically rich declaration in 4:43 as a "hinge" to close out the ministry overviews of Luke 3-4 and set the stage for the proclamation of the Kingdom, gathering of disciples and polarization of Jesus' opponents which will dominate Luke 5:1-9:50. The final summary statement in 4:44 that "he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea" (καὶ ἦν κηρύσσων εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς τῆς Ἰουδαίας) mirrors the summary statement regarding Galilee in 4:14 and provides both structural symmetry and a change of location which emphasizes that Jesus' ministry is for the Jewish people, and not just for the residents of Galilee or of a few select towns.

3.2.6 Conclusion: confirmation through fulfillment, opposition and omission

As the analysis of the preceding sections has demonstrated, there are diverse and numerous points of contact between the expectations of the infancy narratives and the ministry overviews of Luke 3-4. While the preceding sections have noted that both John and Jesus fulfill key expectations raised in the infancy narratives in their ministry overviews, it is important to note that in Jesus' case, not all of the expectations sounded find equal degrees of fulfillment. Thus, it is important to briefly pause and "take stock" of those elements from the infancy narratives which have been reinforced and which have faded from the narrative spotlight through omission (in the sense that they have not be reinforced and confirmed to the same degree as other expectations from the infancy narratives).

John's ministry overview confirmed the infancy narratives' emphasis on "turning hearts" (1:16, 17) through John's provocative proclamation of "a baptism of repentance" (3:3, 3:8) and "bearing good fruit" (3:8, 3:9) as well as his role of "preparing paths for the coming Lord" (1:17, 76) by introducing "new exodus" symbolism and pointing toward the ministry of the "One who is mightier than I" (3:16) as "cleansing the threshing floor" through "gathering wheat" and "burning chaff" (3:17). Luke 3:1-20 affirms the eschatological urgency of John's prophetic revelation and of correct response and realignment with God on Israel's part in light of Isaiah 40 and the "coming wrath" (3:7). The "Magnificat's" focus on God's "exaltation of the lowly" and "casting down those seated on thrones" (1:52) is affirmed by positive responses to John's message from those on the margins of Jewish society (3:12-14) and by Herod's removal of John from public ministry (3:19-20).

Jesus' angelophanic identification as one who would be "called Son of the Most High" (1:32) was confirmed in his preparation and confirmation episodes in 3:21-4:13, as he was proclaimed "Son of God" by heaven itself (3:22), through Luke's unique genealogy (3:38) and, via

temptation, by the Devil (4:3, 9). This title was further affirmed by the demons exorcised in Capernaum in 4:41, with the additional priestly title of “the Holy One of God” added by the demon in the synagogue in 4:43. Through his victory over the “tests of the wilderness” and “the serpent of old” in 4:1-13, Jesus emerges from these preparatory episodes as a “double hope” for both Jews and Gentiles as “new Adam” and “new Israel” ready to the enter the land and begin to “gather the people” beginning in 4:14.

The specific episodes of Jesus’ ministry overview in 4:14-44, meanwhile, immediately attest to the difficulty of the task before the Son of God. Just as John warned that overemphasis on ancestry and tradition had transformed “sons of Abraham” into a “brood of vipers” (3:7), so Jesus’ attempts to spur those of his hometown synagogue toward affirmation of his revealed identity and (in accordance with the patterns outlined in section 2.3.14) potential participation in his mission is met with murderous rage and rejection. It will important to note that, in the “gathering of disciples” discussed in the next section of this chapter, *none* of those appointed as “twelve apostles” are connected to Nazareth.

In a tragic turn of events, it is those who know Jesus best and to whom he first proclaims “the epoch of the Lord’s favor” (4:19) who find him “unfavorable” (4:24) and mark him as a “sign that is opposed” in accordance with Simeon’s words from 2:34. While the majority of those from Nazareth are to be identified with “many in Israel who fall” because of Jesus’ ministry (2:34) and who are unable to deal with the “internal cogitations from their hearts being revealed” (2:35), Luke’s inclusion of Mary and Jesus’ brothers in the initial nucleus of the Christian church in Acts 1:14 indicates that not all who were (presumably) present that day in Nazareth remained firm to the end in their rejection. This episode highlights multiple aspects of Simeon’s prophetic aside in 2:34-35, suggesting that Jesus’ identity and mission is confirmed through both acceptance and opposition.

In contrast with the rejection in Nazareth, Jesus finds a more favorable reception in Capernaum in 4:31-44. In this episode he manifests the power of the Spirit to effect the Jubilee “release” promised in the quotation of Isaiah 61 invoked in the preceding episode (4:18), exorcising demons (4:33-35, 41) and healing from fevers (4:38-39) and diverse diseases (4:40). This “release” begins to substantiate the title of “Savior” emphasized by the angelic proclamation in 2:11 and, alongside Jesus’ ministry of teaching (4:15, 16-21, 31-32, 44) and preaching good news (4:18, 4:43), to paint a picture of the diverse ways God’s salvation will become manifest in the ministry of Jesus and, later on, the apostles in Acts.

It is also worth highlighting the way Luke’s use of Isaiah 40 in John’s ministry overview again touches upon the universal scope of God’s unfolding project of salvation (3:6), echoing Simeon’s first prophetic proclamation in Luke 2:30-32. Jesus’ use of Scriptural precedent to justify his movement beyond Nazareth in 4:23-27 and his refusal to be “detained” by the

residents of Capernaum in 4:42-43 touch on the expanding scope of his ministry and again present Gentiles as recipients of God's mercy and favor.

In light of the diverse expectations created for Jesus by the infancy narratives, it is worth noting the way Simeon's prophecies have been highlighted again and again over the course of the preceding sections. It is also worth noting that, other than in Jesus' mention of the "Kingdom of God" in 4:43 (which offers little explanation beyond the necessity of proclamation), the language of kingship highlighted in the angelic proclamation of 1:30-33 is largely omitted from Jesus' ministry overview, preparation and from John's prophetic preparations. In light of the discussion of Jewish messianic expectation in section 2.3.8, this omission should also be highlighted as "programmatic" alongside Luke's resounding confirmations of fulfillment and opposition.

Just as the infancy narratives were likened to the musical metaphor of an "overture" (following Tiede, 1988:39), the ministry overviews and preparations of Luke 3-4 have "set the scene" and "kickstarted the plot" highlighting which themes from the overture will be developed in the gospel's opening chapters and which have been relegated "to the back burner" and will be developed later on (chapter 4 of the present study will attempt to trace how Luke 24 and Acts 1 make key contributions in relation to the "hermeneutical quandary" of Luke's kingship language). As the next section will explore, the language of "new exodus" and of "gathering disciples" and "polarizing opponents" which was reinforced or developed in Luke 3-4 has likewise set the stage for the episodes of Luke 5-7.

3.3 CULTIVATING REPUTATION, GATHERING DISCIPLES, POLARIZING OPPONENTS: "NEW EXODUS" ACTIVITY IN LUKE 5-7

3.3.1 Transition and structure

The transition from Jesus' ministry overview in 4:14-4:44 to his activity of gathering disciples and polarizing opponents in Galilee beginning in Luke 5:1 is far more subtle than the transition from the infancy narratives to the ministry overviews in 3:1. Nonetheless, the change of location from "the synagogues of Judea" (τὰς συναγωγὰς τῆς Ἰουδαίας – 4:44; as was mentioned above, τῆς Ἰουδαίας presents the more difficult reading and strong manuscript evidence versus τῆς Γαλιλαίας) back to Galilee in 5:1 (ἑστὼς παρὰ τὴν λίμνην Γεννησαρὲτ) indicates either the passage of an unspecified period of time or a shift from "overview" to "thematic arrangement". The presence of Ἐγένετο δὲ at the beginning of 5:1 also signals some degree of transition, although Luke's use of such Septuaginstic narrative markers is varied.

Multiple commentators have noted the difficulty of outlining a single structure for this large section of Lukan text (Marshall, 1978:175; Bock, 1994:387); most simply label 4:14-9:50 as Jesus' "Galilean ministry" and progress to the analysis and exegesis of individual episodes (see

the discussion of this topic in section 3.2.1). Bock notes a thematic focus on the identity of Jesus as well as the presence of disciple calling and miracles (1994:386). Green, meanwhile, highlights the importance of response in addition to the gathering of disciples and interactions with the Jewish people (1997:228).

The present author wholeheartedly endorses these observations while preferring to characterize Jesus' primary activity in this section as "new exodus activity" and the primary concern of the people in this section as "discerning and responding to Jesus' identity". Just as Jesus' victory over "wilderness testing" in 4:1-13 sets up his entry to "conquer the land" beginning in 4:14, it is also possible to detect "new exodus" parallels in his activity of gathering disciples and commissioning twelve apostles (5:1-11, 27-28; 6:13-16), of public teaching and healing (5:12-15; 6:17-49; 7:11-17, 24-35), in episodes of prayer in places with exodus associations (ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις in 5:16 and τὸ ὄρος in 6:12) and in episodes that provoke and polarize Jesus' opponents (5:17-26, 29-39; 6:1-11; 7:36-50). While the metaphor of "new exodus" does not provide a discernible Old Testament structure that organizes and orients the sequence of Luke's episodes (which is particularly complex for those applying source critical methods – Bock, 1994:387), it nonetheless provides a satisfactory thematic umbrella for Jesus' diverse activities in this section.

Many of Luke's episodes articulate more than one type of activity at once, especially when Jesus' objectives and the people's concerns are both considered. In order to help identify these "thematic threads" and to simplify the analysis of the pericopes in this section, the following figure identifies activities which are repeated in this section and labels them with letters, which will then be applied to an outline of the pericopes in Figure 3.7:

A. Jesus' activity: gathering disciples and commissioning apostles

B. Jesus' activity: cultivating public reputation through healing and teaching

C. Jesus' activity: habits of prayer

D. Jesus' activity: provoking opponents and demonstrating authority

E. The activity of the people: discernment and response

F. The activity of the religious authorities: questioning and fault finding

Figure 3.6: Identification and labelling of key activities in Luke 5:1-7:50

The outline of the episodes in Luke 5:1-7:50 on the following page identifies which activities are present in each pericope (the activities are listed in the order of their prominence within the episode, with the first activity listed having more prominence than the second, etc.):

Activities (Fig 3.6)	Text	Summary
A, E, B	5:1-11	Jesus preaches to the crowd and performs a fishing miracle; Simon Peter discerns Jesus' identity and he and his colleagues follow him as disciples.
B, E	5:12-15	Jesus cleanses a leper who recognizes the importance of his will and orders him to follow the prescriptions of the Law; the news about Jesus spreads and draws large crowds.
C	5:16	Jesus has the habit of withdrawing to the wilderness to pray.
D, F, B	5:17-26	Luke notes that Pharisees and teachers of the Law are present for one of Jesus' teaching episodes; he provokes them by releasing a paralytic from his sins before confirming his authority by healing him from the paralysis as well. Those present are astonished, afraid and glorify God.
A, D, F	5:27-39	Jesus calls Levi the tax collector, who follows him and gives a banquet. The Pharisees and scribes grumble at Jesus' disciples; Jesus answers with various metaphors emphasizing his new exodus program.
D, F, B	6:1-11	Two sub-scenes describe provocation between Jesus and the Pharisees over observance of the Sabbath; he demonstrates his authority by healing a man on the Sabbath, filling his opponents with rage.
C	6:12	Jesus spends a night in prayer on the mountain.
A	6:13-16	Jesus names 12 apostles.
B, E	6:17-49	Jesus descends from the mountain with his apostles and heals before offering the "Sermon on the Plain".
E, B	7:1-10	A Roman centurion requests the healing of a highly regarded slave, but recognizes that Jesus' authority does not require physical proximity. Jesus marvels at a faith greater than any found in Israel.
B, E	7:11-17	Jesus resurrects the only son of a widow; those present are afraid and glorify God, recognizing a "great prophet" and "God's visitation", the news about Jesus spreads.
E, B	7:18-35	The news of Jesus' actions reaches John, who sends disciples of his own to ask Jesus for confirmation of his identity. Jesus performs numerous miracles in front of them and points to His acts as sufficient confirmation of his identity. Jesus then addresses the crowd and clarifies how John's activity has influenced the responses of "the men of this generation".
E, F, D	7:36-50	Jesus dines with Simon the Pharisee; the focus of the episode is the intrusion of a sinful woman. Jesus indicates that her repentant activities are a better response to his presence than Simon's neglect as host. Jesus again provokes his opponents by forgiving the woman's sins.

Figure 3.7: A structural outline of Luke 5:1-7:50 and its key activities

The outline above illustrates a higher degree of organization than might initially be apparent from a cursory reading of Luke's narratives (or from their exegesis as individual pericopes). The episodes preceding the Sermon on the Plain would appear to form an imperfect chiasmus centered around the calling of Levi and Jesus' programmatic responses to the criticism of the Pharisees in 5:27-39. Meanwhile, the Sermon on the Plain would seem to indicate a shift toward episodes dominated by Jesus' cultivation of public reputation and the public's efforts to discern His identity in 6:17-7:35. Although they will not be examined in this study, the episodes in Luke 8:1-9:50 feature Jesus' disciples more prominently than the episodes in 6:17-7:35. These episodes also emphasize the continued activity of teaching and healing (by both Jesus and his disciples) and thus demonstrate the continuation of several key activities outlined above.

Before proceeding to the examination of the text, it is important to outline the imperfect macro-level chiasmus in Luke's organization of 5:1-6:15, which is suggested by the recurrence of particular themes and is confirmed by the repetition of key linguistic features (highlighted in bold in the figure). In order to simplify the presentation of the chiasmus, the present author has only retained the principal activity noted above in Figure 3.7:

A – 5:1-11: After teaching from Simon's boat, Jesus performs a fishing miracle that causes **Simon Peter** (Σίμων Πέτρος – 5:8) to recognize himself as **a sinful man** (ἀνὴρ ἁμαρτωλός – 5:8). He and his colleagues **James and John** (Ἰάκωβον καὶ Ἰωάννην – 5:10) **leave everything and follow Jesus** (ἀφέντες πάντα ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ – 5:11).

B – 5:12-15: (episode without a clear parallel in the structure)
A leper implores Jesus: "Lord, if you so will, you are able to cleanse me." Jesus touches him saying "I will it; be cleansed" and orders him to tell no one but instead follow Mosaic protocol. This causes news about Jesus to spread and draws large crowds seeking to hear him and be healed.

C – 5:16: Luke notes Jesus' habit of withdrawing **to the wilderness to pray** (ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις καὶ προσευχόμενος).

D – 5:17-26: Luke notes the presence of the **Pharisees and teachers of the Law** (Φαρισαῖοι καὶ νομοδιδάσκαλοι – 5:17) at an episode of teaching and healing. A paralytic's friends lower him through the roof tiles on a stretcher to reach Jesus, who proclaims "your sins are forgiven (released)" (ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου – 5:20). The **scribes and Pharisees** (οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι – 5:21) presume blasphemy. Jesus perceives **their thoughts** (τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν – 5:22) and **asks them a question they do not answer**.

(continued)

He then declares "the **Son of Man** has **authority** on earth to forgive sins" (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας – 5:24) and **heals** the paralytic as proof. All are amazed, glorify God and are filled with fear.

A' – 5:27-39: Jesus calls a tax collector named Levi, who **leaves everything to follow him** (πάντα ἀναστὰς ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ – 5:28). Levi hosts a banquet for Jesus, where the **Pharisees and scribes** (οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν – 5:30) complain that he keeps company with **sinners** (ἁμαρτωλός – 5:30, 32), who Jesus indicates he came to call to repentance (rather than the righteous). In a sub-scene in 5:33-39 Jesus uses several metaphors to explain his disciples' actions and to allude to the interpretive difficulties his "new exodus program" poses for those accustomed to the "old".

D' – 6:1-11: Luke describes an accusation directed by **some of the Pharisees** (τινὲς δὲ τῶν Φαρισαίων – 6:2) towards Jesus' disciples regarding Sabbath activity. Jesus cites OT precedent and declares "the **Son of Man** is **Lord** of the Sabbath" (κύριός ἐστιν τοῦ σαββάτου ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου – 6:5). On another Sabbath the **scribes and Pharisees** (οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι – 6:7) watch to see if Jesus will heal, seeking to accuse him. Jesus perceives **their thoughts** (τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν – 6:8) and calls the man with a withered hand forward before **asking them a question they do not answer**. He **heals** the man's hand (with no visible "work" performed or touch involved) as proof. They (presumably, his opponents) are filled with senseless fury and begin to plot against Jesus.

C' – 6:12: Luke notes that Jesus spent a night **on the mountain in prayer** (εἰς τὸ ὄρος προσεύξασθαι).

A''– 6:13-16: Jesus names twelve apostles chosen from his disciples; the first apostle listed is **Simon** who he also named **Peter** (Σίμωνα ὃν καὶ ὠνόμασεν Πέτρον – 6:14) followed by his brother Andrew and **James and John** (καὶ Ἰάκωβον καὶ Ἰωάννην – 6:14). Matthew is included in the list but it is unknown whether Theophilus was aware of his (debated) connection to the Levi of 5:27-29.

Figure 3.8: The imperfect macro-level chiastic structure of Luke 5:1-6:16

As the figure outlines, Jesus' activity of calling and commissioning disciples crops up in the opening, closing and central episodes (labelled A, A' and A''), which serves to bring the interpretive implications of his parable of the "new garment and old garment" and of the "new wine and old wine" to a head. The structure also highlights Jesus' habit of prayer in locations with strong connections to exodus symbolism (labeled C and C') and the confirmation of Jesus' authority as the Son of Man through opposition and controversy (labeled D and D'; as was noted in Figure 3.7, the central episode A' also features opposition and controversy with Pharisees and scribes, making it an ideal "center" for the structure. It has been labelled A' and not D' due to the fact that the controversy is occasioned by Jesus' calling of Levi as a disciple and because the episode lacks of a "Son of Man" statement and several other linguistic parallels from episodes D and D').

The episode of the cleansing of the leper in 5:12-15 does not feature the calling or commissioning of disciples, opposition from Jesus' opponents or prayer, thus representing an "odd element" within 5:1-6:16 with no apparent parallel (although, as Figure 3.7 noted, it describes activities similar to those in 6:17-7:50). In order to streamline this section's efforts to trace forward the "hermeneutical threads" from the infancy narratives and the ministry summaries, the corresponding narratives from Figure 3.8 will be discussed together according to their predominant activity and resulting label in the figure (namely, the calling and commissioning of disciples and its interpretive difficulties in episodes A, A' and A'', the cultivation of reputation through healing in episode B, prayer in episodes C and C' and the confirmation of Jesus' authority and identity through opposition and provocation in episodes D and D').

3.3.2 "New wine, new wineskins": calling disciples and the interpretive difficulties of Jesus' "new exodus" activity (Luke 5:1-11, 5:27-39, 6:13-16)

As was noted in Figure 3.7, episode A (Luke 5:1-11) in which Jesus calls Simon and his colleagues to discipleship begins with a teaching episode. In order to escape the "crowded pressing of the multitude" (ἐν τῷ τὸν ὄχλον ἐπικεῖσθαι αὐτῷ – 5:1), Jesus uses Simon's boat to teach "at a short distance from the land" (ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἐπαναγαγεῖν ὀλίγον – 5:3). However, the lack of recorded content in the teaching portion and the immediate transition into the fishing miracle highlight the main purpose of the episode: the clarification of Jesus' identity through the fishing miracle and the resulting transformation of the Galilean fishermen into Jesus' disciples (cf. Berquist, 2004:62 – while the present author agrees that "discipleship is not an end in itself" it is nonetheless the primary activity of the episode and a key narrative event to set up a transition of Kingdom work from Jesus to the apostles).

Upon finishing his teaching, Jesus begins to indicate that Simon and his boat have a greater role to play in God's project than serving as a platform from which to speak; the man from

Nazareth enters the sphere of influence of the fisherman with a seemingly bizarre request: “Put out into the deep and lower your nets for a catch” (Ἐπανάγαγε εἰς τὸ βάθος καὶ χαλάσατε τὰ δίκτυα ὑμῶν εἰς ἄγραν – 5:4). The absurdity of the request is underlined by the vocabulary used (δίκτυον would seem to refer to nets used for deep water night fishing, as opposed to the shallow water day fishing associated with Mark and Matthew’s term ἀμφίβληστρον – Bishop 1951:401, van der Loos, 1965:671) as well as by Peter’s respectful attempt to temper expectations: “Master (ἐπιστάτης, a typically Lukan term of address – Danker, 1988: 116; Bock, 1994:456), all night long we labored, but took in nothing. But at Your word, I will lower the nets” (Ἐπιστάτα, δι’ ὅλης νυκτὸς κοπιάσαντες οὐδὲν ἐλάβομεν· ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ ῥήματί σου χαλάσω τὰ δίκτυα – 5:5). As was noted in section 2.3.14, Simon’s acquiescence and participation in spite of the apparent absurdity of the request are trademarks of positive response in Luke’s gospel, although it is unsure to what degree he is aware of Jesus’ identity at the beginning of the episode.

The miraculous haul of fish threatens to break the nets, but more importantly, drives home the uniqueness of Jesus’ identity, whose counter-intuitive request defied everything Simon knew about catching fish. Simon’s declaration in 5:8 (“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord!” [Ἔξελθε ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ, ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἁμαρτωλός εἰμι, κύριε]) echoes similar protests in light of epiphanic revelation from Isaiah, Moses and Gideon (Tiede, 1988:116-117; Green, 1997:223), further confirming the positivity of his response in going beyond the mere “amazement” (θάμβος – 5:9) of his colleagues. As was noted in Figure 3.8, the names used in the episode will be found again in the list of apostles in 6:13-16 (with the curious exception of Andrew, who is listed in 6:13-16 but not named in 5:1-11) and were likely names with which Theophilus would have had some familiarity.

Simon’s declaration and his colleagues’ amazement set up Jesus’ commission in 5:10, which begins with the “Do not fear” (Μὴ φοβοῦ) typical of epiphany scenes in Luke (see 1:13, 1:30; 2:10) and indicates the beginning of a distinct new epoch in the lives of the fishermen: “from now on you will be catching human beings (in contrast with fish)” (ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἀνθρώπους ἔσῃ ζωγρῶν – 5:10). This declaration will be fulfilled within the gospel in episodes like 9:1-11 (the ministry of the twelve, characterized in 5:2 as κηρύσσειν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ [“to proclaim the Kingdom of God”] and in which they are given δύναμις [“power”] and ἐξουσία [“authority”]) and in the apostolic activity of Acts. As was noted in Figure 3.8, at this offer the fishermen leave everything and follow him.

The calling of Levi in episode A’ shares key linguistic parallels with Luke 5:1-11, while also setting the stage for the subsequent opposition from the Pharisees and Jesus’ illustrative parable. In this episode, Jesus does not engage with Levi’s professional sphere (as he did with Simon and his colleagues), nor is there any indication of previous interaction between Jesus and Levi (Jesus’ healing of Simon’s mother-in-law in 4:38-39 would appear to precede the calling episode in 5:1-11, although issues of chronology in Luke’s gospel are not always

completely linear). Instead, Luke 5:27 portrays Jesus as "traveling" (Καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐξῆλθεν) when he notices "a tax collector seated in the tax booth" (καὶ ἐθεάσατο τελώνην ὀνόματι Λευεὶν καθήμενον ἐπὶ τὸ τελώνιον) and exhorts him to "Follow me" (Ἀκολούθει μοι). Jesus' willingness to number a "social outcast" among his disciples (Danker [1988:88-89, 125] presents evidence from Lucian that tax collectors were generally despised in the Hellenistic world, while also noting that they were particularly offensive to the conservative sensibilities of the Pharisees) seems to have been a sufficiently unique demonstration of his identity to prompt Levi to follow in the footsteps of Simon and the other Galilean fishermen: "leaving everything and standing up, he began to follow him" (καταλιπὼν πάντα ἀναστὰς ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ – 5:28). Green (2021:205) notes the motif of "trailblazer and guide" in this episode, which is consistent with the noted theme of a "new exodus" taking place under Jesus' leadership.

The impact of Jesus' willingness to call Levi is clear from the "great banquet" (ἐποίησεν δοχὴν μεγάλην Λευεὶς αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ – 5:29) given, setting up yet another episode of differentiation between Jesus and the religious authorities (explored in greater detail in episodes D and D' below). It would appear that elements of the delegation noted in 5:17 have continued to follow Jesus around and they make their displeasure (ἐγόγγυζον) known in 5:30, labelling "the crowd of tax collectors and 'others'" (ἦν ὄχλος πολὺς τελωνῶν καὶ ἄλλων – 5:29) as "tax collectors and sinners" (τῶν τελωνῶν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν – 5:30). It is interesting to note that after their public exposure in episode D (5:17-26) the Pharisees avoid confronting Jesus directly, instead aiming their criticism toward the disciples in 5:30 and 6:2.

The Pharisees' comment chides the disciples for inappropriate table fellowship, prompting Jesus' use of a clarifying metaphor that recalls his provocation at the rejection in Nazareth (see section 3.2.4): "The healthy have no need of a physician, but (it is) rather the badly off who have need (of a physician)" (Οὐ χρείαν ἔχουσιν οἱ ὑγιαίνοντες ἰατροῦ ἀλλὰ οἱ κακῶς ἔχοντες – 5:31). It is hardly coincidental to find two self-referential "physician sayings" in 4:16-30 and 5:27-39, both programmatic episodes that explain Jesus' patterns of activity (and the activities of his followers). This is made clear in 5:32 with the statement "I have not come to call the righteous, but rather sinners to repentance" (οὐκ ἐλήλυθα καλέσαι δικαίους ἀλλ' ἁμαρτωλοὺς εἰς μετάνοιαν), which provides the motivation for Jesus' "disreputable" table fellowship in light of his activity of "gathering wheat" and "burning chaff" (see 3:17 and section 3.22).

Having seen their criticism of Jesus' table company rebuffed, the Pharisees' stubborn creativity in fault finding is on full display in 5:32, as they follow up with a wily comparison to draw the disciples' "eating and drinking" into question (leading off, ironically, with the disciples of John in spite of Luke having mentioned "tax collectors" and not "Pharisees" in John's ministry overview). Jesus uses another accessible metaphor (a wedding feast) to clarify that this behavior is appropriate in light of the *current eschatological season*, but will not last forever ("You cannot make the bridegroom's attendants perform fasting while the bridegroom is with them, can you?

But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them and then they will fast in those days" [Μὴ δύνασθε τοὺς υἱοὺς τοῦ νυμφῶνος ἐν ᾧ ὁ νυμφίος μετ' αὐτῶν ἐστιν ποιῆσαι νηστεῦσαι; ἐλεύσονται δὲ ἡμέραι, καὶ ὅταν ἀπαρθῇ ἀπ' αὐτῶν ὁ νυμφίος, τότε νηστεύσουσιν ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις] – 5:34-35; interestingly, the use of ἀπαρθῇ ἀπ' αὐτῶν ["to be taken away from them"] would seem to metaphorically forewarn that Jesus' absence is not a remote possibility but rather a function of God's unfolding eschatological program). Having justified both the table company and the choice to feast rather than fast, Jesus cuts off any further fault finding by programmatically justifying his counter-cultural selection of disciples and of dinner companions with two short parables which point to the same conclusion:

> So he was also telling them a parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment to put on an old garment. If, then, someone were indeed to do so, that person would tear the new (garment) and the old (garment) would not match the patch from the new (garment). No one puts young wine into old wineskins. If, then, someone were indeed to do so, the young wine would burst the wineskins and it (the wine) would be spilled and the skins destroyed. Rather, young wine must be put into new wineskins. No one, after drinking old wine, desires young (wine), for that person says: 'The old is good'".
>
> (Ἔλεγεν δὲ καὶ παραβολὴν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὅτι Οὐδεὶς ἐπίβλημα ἀπὸ ἱματίου καινοῦ σχίσας ἐπιβάλλει ἐπὶ ἱμάτιον παλαιόν· εἰ δὲ μή γε, καὶ τὸ καινὸν σχίσει καὶ τῷ παλαιῷ οὐ συμφωνήσει τὸ ἐπίβλημα τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ καινοῦ. καὶ οὐδεὶς βάλλει οἶνον νέον εἰς ἀσκοὺς παλαιούς· εἰ δὲ μή γε, ῥήξει ὁ οἶνος ὁ νέος τοὺς ἀσκοὺς καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκχυθήσεται καὶ οἱ ἀσκοὶ ἀπολοῦνται· ἀλλ' οἶνον νέον εἰς ἀσκοὺς καινοὺς βλητέον. [καὶ] οὐδεὶς πιὼν παλαιὸν θέλει νέον· λέγει γάρ, Ὁ παλαιὸς χρηστός ἐστιν. – 5:36-39)

Luke's threefold repetition of "no one" (οὐδεὶς) marks the presence of three distinct metaphors, although the presence of only two hypothetical "if, then, someone were to do so" (εἰ δὲ μή γε) idioms and the repetition of terminology shows that the third metaphor of "drinking wine" is a logical extension of the second metaphor of "wine and wineskins". As the underlying language of a "new exodus" throughout this chapter suggests, Jesus' parable substantiates a strong degree of difference between the program of salvation God is initiating through John, Jesus and the apostles and the "threadbare but agreeable" traditions represented by the Pharisees' comments. The underlying suggestion that Galilean fishermen and tax collectors have the "newness" to become fitting recipients of God's mercy and participants in His plan where the "traditionalism and rigidity" of the Pharisees serves as an ironic impediment is consistent with the surprising inversions discussed in the previous chapter with regard to Zechariah, Elizabeth and Mary (see sections 2.3.5 and 2.3.6). Yet again, the choices of God's agents are moving contrary to human expectation and, as the arc of Luke-Acts will show, the inflexibility of those who "stubbornly resist" vindicates His plan.

Jesus' words bring to the fore the interpretive difficulties inherent in a "change of paradigm" like that God is initiating in the gospel. The tension between continuity and discontinuity will surface time and again in Luke-Acts (Bock, 1994:520), especially in episodes like Peter's mission to Cornelius in Acts 10 and the fierce debate over Gentile inclusion and circumcision in Acts 15. There is remarkable harmony between the thought-world of Mary's "Magnificat" and Jesus' parable; those privileged to know the taste of "old wine" are ironically the most poorly equipped to recognize the necessary renewal of the "young wine" and become increasingly hostile to Jesus and his disciples. It is therefore the "lowly", unaccustomed to luxuries like "old wine" who find "release" and newfound vigor by following Jesus' trailblazing steps (Green, 2021:205).

Episode A'' (Luke 6:13-16) rounds out the theme of calling and commissioning disciples with a brief note on Jesus' selection of twelve disciples who were "named apostles" (ἀποστόλους ὠνόμασεν – 6:13). As will be analyzed in episodes C and C' below, Jesus' spends a night dedicated to prayer on the mountain prior to choosing the twelve. Their function as "authoritative messengers" will be confirmed in 9:1-11, although the symbolism of the number twelve and the later sending of seventy/seventy-two messengers (on the textual problem regarding the number of disciples see Omanson, 2006:127-128) in 10:1-9 confirms that this "naming of apostles" implies *more* than the mere selection of a few envoys. Many commentators see the choice of twelve as tied to the notion of "twelve new tribes" (Hendriksen, 1978:327; Tiede, 1988:134) and as an inherent critique of Israel's leadership (Green, 1997:259), who have just been "filled with senseless fury" (αὐτοὶ δὲ ἐπλήσθησαν ἀνοίας – 6:11) rather than embracing Jesus' program of "young wine in new wineskins".

The list of names in 6:14-16 further amplifies the curious choice of disciples highlighted in 5:1-11 and 5:27-39; the absence of any members of the religious establishment underscores the difficulty of "old wineskins" adopting the patterns and values of the Kingdom of God that will be proclaimed immediately afterward in the Sermon on the Plain of 6:17-49. In addition to the Galilean fishermen from 5:1-11, Luke highlights "Simon, called Zealot" (Σίμωνα τὸν καλούμενον Ζηλωτὴν – 6:15) and Judas Iscariot "who became a betrayer" (ὃς ἐγένετο προδότης – 6:16). All told, God's "mountaintop revelation" resulting from the night of prayer has produced a "ragtag" and extraordinarily "unconventional" group to become the founders of the Christian movement. As Acts will confirm, however, these unlikely "new wineskins" will prove to be imperfect but highly impactful vessels to carry God's program of salvation "to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλήμ – 24:47).

3.3.3 "The authority of the Son of Man": the confirmation of Jesus' identity through cleansing, provocation, opposition and prayer (Luke 5:12-26, 6:1-12)

Having examined episodes A, A' and A'' from Figure 3.8, this section will examine the other episodes from the figure, namely B, C and C'', and D and D'' (in that order). As was noted in

connection with Figure 3.8, the cleansing of the leper in 5:12-15 does not feature the calling of disciples, prayer in an "exodus" location, or opposition from the Pharisees (the themes that dominate the imperfect chiasmus presented in Figure 3.8). As will be argued below, however, the episode plays an important role in the progression of the narrative, as it is likely that Jesus' instructions for the cleansed man to serve as a "witness" (μαρτύριον – 5:14) to the religious establishment helped occasion the presence of the delegation noted in 5:17. Not unlike Jesus' encounter with Levi in 5:27, the setting of the episode portrays Jesus as happening upon the leper "while he was in one of the cities" (Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτὸν ἐν μιᾷ τῶν πόλεων – 5:12), indicating continuation of the itinerant ministry described in 4:43-44.

The leper's response to recognizing Jesus demonstrates courage and humility and verifies that the "spreading news" of 4:14 and 4:37 has created hope among even the most ostracized elements of society (in accordance with both Mary's "Magnificat" and Isa 61 [cited in Luke 4:18-19]). Descriptions that he "fell on his face and implored" (πεσὼν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον ἐδεήθη αὐτοῦ – 5:12) reinforce the leper's state within the world of the "lowly" (ταπεινός – 1:48, 52; this is especially true in light of the disease's association with sin – Bock, 1994:473) and in need of "release" (Isa 61:1, Luke 4:18, see section 3.2.4). In spite of the leper's bleak social situation, he possesses the perception of faith (which in Luke's gospel seems far more abundant among the lowly than the mighty) in addressing Jesus as κύριε and indicating "if you so will, you are able to cleanse me". The leper's request recognizes that Jesus possessed the ability to produce the cleansing required by the religious authorities for readmission to society (as per Lev 14; Bovon, 2002:175 highlights the priests' role as those who determine exclusion and inclusion but who do not engage in treatment or cleansing), but that the more crucial question was one of "will" (θέλω – 5:12, 13).

Jesus' response bridges the "social distance" that had come to define the leper's existence: "he reached out his hand and touched him, saying: 'I will it; be cleansed!' And immediately the leprosy left him" (καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἥψατο αὐτοῦ λέγων, Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι· καὶ εὐθέως ἡ λέπρα ἀπῆλθεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ – 5:13). Jesus' instructions in 5:14 have attracted attention from commentators with regard to the command to "to tell no one" (μηδενὶ εἰπεῖν – the fact that instructions to keep silent are only present in *this* miracle contradicts the notion of a Wrede-esque "Messianic secret" in Luke [Bock, 1994:475]) and the ambiguity of *who* the leper is supposed to witness to (the αὐτοῖς at the end of 5:14 is generally interpreted as referring to the priestly class [Godet, 1875:262-263; Hendriksen, 1978:291; Danker, 1988:119] or the people as whole [Plummer, 1896:150; Schürmann, 1969:276-278; Nolland, 1989:228]). The presence of a Jewish religious delegation (including elements from Jerusalem) in 5:17 and Luke's note in 5:15 that "then the word regarding him spread even more" (διήρχετο δὲ μᾶλλον ὁ λόγος περὶ αὐτοῦ) reinforces the notion that, regardless of Jesus' instructions that the man tell no one prior to fulfilling the requirements of Mosaic Law, both the religious authorities and the people took note of the miracle.

Luke 5:16 contrasts with the “hullabaloo” of 5:15 and reminds the reader that notoriety has not compromised Jesus’ intimate connection and steadfast commitment to the Father’s purposes. Indeed, Luke’s construction of the phrase emphasizes the habitual nature of Jesus’ prayer in wilderness places (αὐτὸς δὲ ἦν ὑποχωρῶν ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις καὶ προσευχόμενος). Once more, Luke emphasizes how the “wilderness” the people of Israel were so eager to leave behind has become a training ground and refuge for God's agents (see Luke 1:80; 3:2-4; 4:1, 44).

As has already been noted, it can hardly be coincidental that both episodes of prayer in 5:16 (ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις) and 6:12 (εἰς τὸ ὄρος) take place in places with connections to the exodus. The exodus connection in 6:12 is particularly symbolic, as Luke is redundantly emphatic about Jesus’ connection to the Father (ἐξελθεῖν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ ὄρος προσεύξασθαι, καὶ ἦν διανυκτερεύων ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ) prior to selecting the twelve in 6:13-16 and descending the mountain (καταβὰς μετ’ αὐτῶν ἔστη ἐπὶ τόπου πεδινοῦ – 6:17) to give the precepts of the Kingdom in 6:17-49.

It is also worth noting the way both prayer episodes function as narrative “hinges” to or from episodes of opposition and polemic (D in 5:17-26 and D’ in 6:1-11), a theme that is also present in the central episode (A’ in 6:27-39). As was noted above, Jesus’ instruction in 5:14 that the cleansed leper serve as “witness to them” (εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς) produced an immediate reaction from the people in 5:15 and, in 5:17, from the religious authorities. Luke notes:

> “It happened that on one of those days, as he was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the Law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem, and power from the Lord was with him to heal”
>
> (Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν μιᾷ τῶν ἡμερῶν καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν διδάσκων, καὶ ἦσαν καθήμενοι Φαρισαῖοι καὶ νομοδιδάσκαλοι οἳ ἦσαν ἐληλυθότες ἐκ πάσης κώμης τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ Ἰουδαίας καὶ Ἰερουσαλήμ· καὶ δύναμις κυρίου ἦν εἰς τὸ ἰᾶσθαι αὐτόν).

While Luke does not explicitly tie the witness of the cleansed leper to the appearance of this delegation, the narrative proximity of one to the other is suggestive. Jesus’ itinerant ministry in the cities and synagogues of Galilee contrasts with the concentrated presence of identifiable members of the religious class. Green uses the following illustrative parallel to bring the scene to life for contemporary readers:

> Given the polarity of village and city life, the arrival of Pharisees and legal experts to monitor Jesus’ teaching – from Jerusalem, and not only from Galilean and Judean villages – is chilling. (We can almost imagine lawyers from a New York City law firm, with their fitted three-piece suits and stylish coiffures, showing up for a meeting in a small-town feedstore.) Significantly, Luke immediately counters the influential

> presence of these educated, urbane professionals by spotlighting Jesus' superiority… (2021:89)

Meanwhile, the arrival of yet another individual in need of "the Lord's favor" contrasts the multitude's oblivious lack of compassion ("behold, some men were carrying a man who was paralyzed on a bed and they were seeking to bring him in and place him before him [Jesus] and they were unable to find a way to bring him in because of the crowd" [ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες φέροντες ἐπὶ κλείνης ἄνθρωπον ὃς ἦν παραλελυμένος καὶ ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν εἰσενεγκεῖν καὶ θεῖναι [αὐτὸν] ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ. καὶ μὴ εὑρόντες ποίας εἰσενέγκωσιν αὐτὸν διὰ τὸν ὄχλον – 5:18-19a]) with the creativity and tenacity of the paralytic's friends ("they ascended to the housetop and let him down through the roof tiles with the bed into the center before Jesus" [ἀναβάντες ἐπὶ τὸ δῶμα διὰ τῶν κεράμων καθῆκαν αὐτὸν σὺν τῷ κλεινιδίῳ εἰς τὸ μέσον ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ – 5:19b]). The interruption caused by the paralytic's dramatic "descent" draws attention to Jesus and his response, an opportunity Jesus uses to provoke the religious delegation present: "perceiving their faith, he said: 'Man, your sins are forgiven you'" (ἰδὼν τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν εἶπεν, Ἄνθρωπε, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου – 5:20).

In a pattern not unlike the angelophanic declaration to Zechariah in the infancy narratives (1:13-17), these members of the Jewish religious elite are confronted with a bold declaration of divine intent to which they must respond. On the one hand, such a declaration is clearly within God's purview (and can be delegated to divine agents); on the other hand, the declaration is found on the lips of the very "upstart" they have come to investigate. Luke 5:21 reveals the delegation's comprehension and negative evaluation of the provocative declaration: "the scribes and Pharisees began to reason, saying 'Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who is able to forgive sins if not God alone?'" (ἤρξαντο διαλογίζεσθαι οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι λέγοντες, Τίς ἐστιν οὗτος ὃς λαλεῖ βλασφημίας; τίς δύναται ἁμαρτίας ἀφεῖναι εἰ μὴ μόνος ὁ θεός;). Once again, elements of the Jewish religious establishment have failed an initial test to discern God at work. Like Zechariah, they will shortly be given a confirmatory sign, but in this case, there will be no imposed silence or other impact on their personal lives. Tragically, they will continue to ignore Jesus' words (as in 5:31-39, discussed above) and more confirmatory signs (6:10), persisting in viewing Jesus as a "sign to be opposed/spoken against" (σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον – from Simeon's prophetic aside in 2:34).

While the use of διαλογίζομαι in 5:21 could imply argument or discussion among the delegation, both Luke's narrative note that Jesus "perceived their thoughts/reasonings" (ἐπιγνοὺς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν) and his reply in 5:22 characterize the delegation's activity as "reasoning in your hearts" (διαλογίζεσθε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν). This confrontation is followed up with a question to which the delegation does not respond ("Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you' or to say 'Get up and walk'?" [τί ἐστιν εὐκοπώτερον, εἰπεῖν, Ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου, ἢ εἰπεῖν, Ἔγειρε καὶ περιπάτει; – 5:23]) and a perfectly staged confirmation of God's approval. Jesus first declares the matter to be fundamentally a question of ***authority*** (ἐξουσία) before

making his first use of the title “the Son of Man” (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) in the gospel: “so that you may know, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” (ἵνα δὲ εἰδῆτε ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας – 5:24a). The subsequent order to the paralytic and its immediate (παραχρῆμα – 5:25) execution, along with the paralytic's response of “glorifying God” (δοξάζων τὸν θεόν – 5:25), irrefutably demonstrate God’s endorsement of Jesus’ declarations and identity.

The paralytic’s physical trajectory over the course of the episode demonstrates the sort of reversals that were predicted in the infancy narratives: the man who was lowered through the roof tiles on a bed walks out the door with the object under his arm (Green, 2021:103 notes his “arising” [ἀνίστημι] but not his dramatic descent). This dramatic reversal not only confirms the language of reversal of the “Magnificat” and that of Jubilee release in Isaiah 61 (cited in Luke 4:18-19), it also prefigures the great reversal of Jesus’ own descent into the grave and the empty tomb of Luke 24 (discussed in chapter 4). The reaction of those present (Luke’s use of ἅπαντας (“all”) in 5:26 would seem to include the previously skeptical religious figures – Danker, 1988:124) attests their understanding of Jesus’ Son of Man declaration and the proof the healing represents: “amazement took hold of all and they began glorifying God and were filled with fear, saying, ‘We have seen extraordinary things today’” (ἔκστασις ἔλαβεν ἅπαντας καὶ ἐδόξαζον τὸν θεὸν καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν φόβου λέγοντες ὅτι Εἴδομεν παράδοξα σήμερον – 5:26; παράδοξος is a significant term in the LXX, but is a hapax legomenon in the NT – Bock, 1994:487).

Like the crowds in the infancy narratives and ministry overviews, who also marvel (θαυμάζω – see 1:21, 63; 2:18, 33; 4:22) and are amazed (ἐξίστημι – 2:47) but apparently stop short of adopting a posture of faith and participation, it is important not to read too much into the crowd’s response in 5:26. As Jesus’ provocative choices of table company (5:30) and proof of an authoritative understanding of proper Sabbath keeping (6:1-10) demonstrate, some elements of the religious delegation from this episode will continue to search for “flaws” and will end up filled with mindless fury against Jesus in 6:11. As the patterns discussed in section 2.3.14 demonstrated, while those who respond with joyful praise and active participation are not immune to misinterpretation of Jesus’ mission, these responses nonetheless indicate alignment with God’s project. Those who merely marvel, however, can quickly change their mind, as proved by the episode of Jesus’ rejection in Nazareth in 4:16-30.

The antagonism of the scribes and Pharisees in both sub-scenes of episode D’ (6:1-11) should be viewed as a result of the crescent criticism and fault finding of 5:21, 5:30 and 5:33. In spite of Jesus’ miraculous proofs and explanations, the religious establishment seems increasingly intent on finding grounds for accusation (6:7) or on driving a wedge between Master and disciples (as their attacks on the latter in 5:30 and 6:2 might suggest). As the conflicts in episode D (5:17-26) turn around the Son of Man’s authority to forgive sins, the opposition in 6:1-11 turns around the Son of Man’s authority as “Lord of the Sabbath” (6:5). In this episode,

however, it is not Jesus who provokes the sensibilities of the establishment, but “some of the Pharisees” (τινὲς δὲ τῶν Φαρισαίων – 6:2) who take aim at the disciples’ apparent lack of “Sabbath fastidiousness” in spite of their apparent hunger.

The Pharisees go so far as to accuse the disciples of “doing that which is not permitted on Sabbath days” (Τί ποιεῖτε ὃ οὐκ ἔξεστιν τοῖς σάββασιν; – 6:2), although there seems to be no direct invocation of Scriptural precedent (Carson, 1984:280 goes so far as to demonstrate how later Jewish traditions would define activities like plucking and eating grain as acceptable so long as no tools were used; Danker, 1988:13 also notes how later Judaism noted the numerous rules and thin Scriptural support passed down to them from this era). Jesus, on the other hand, is swift (and pointedly ironic: Οὐδὲ τοῦτο ἀνέγνωτε – 6:3) in pointing to a concrete example in which the letter of the Law was violated by a highly regarded personage without either divine or human penalty:

> “that which David did when he was hungry, both he and those who were with him: how he entered into the house of God and, taking the showbread, ate and gave it to his companions also, which is not permitted to eat if not by the priests alone”
>
> (ὃ ἐποίησεν Δαυὶδ ὅτε ἐπείνασεν αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ μετ’ αὐτο [ὄντες], [ὡς] εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοὺς ἄρτους τῆς προθέσεως λαβὼν ἔφαγεν καὶ ἔδωκεν τοῖς μετ’ αὐτοῦ, οὓς οὐκ ἔξεστιν φαγεῖν εἰ μὴ μόνους τοὺς ἱερεῖς; – 6:3-4).

In a double dose of pointed irony, Jesus' formulation of the final portion of 6:4 mirrors the formulation of the doubts expressed by the religious authorities in 5:21 (compare: εἰ μὴ μόνος ὁ θεός – 5:21 vs εἰ μὴ μόνους τοὺς ἱερεῖ – 6:4). The Pharisees, whose doubts were proved to be unfounded in 5:17-26, are shown this time around to be inconsistent in their use of Scripture (a point of pride) by Jesus’ stingingly clever response. This retort is followed by Jesus’ declaration: “The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath” (Κύριός ἐστιν τοῦ σαββάτου ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου – 6:5). It is little wonder that after this salvo, the Pharisees (apparently) retreated and waited for a more opportune moment to attack!

The second Sabbath controversy sub-scene makes it clear that Jesus’ opponents have not given up on their fault finding mission, but have seemingly grown weary of constant rebuttal. After noting the presence of “a man whose right hand was shriveled” (ἦν ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖ καὶ ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ ἡ δεξιὰ ἦν ξηρά – 6:6) Luke notes that the “scribes and Pharisees were observing him (Jesus) closely, to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find grounds to accuse him” (παρετηροῦντο δὲ αὐτὸν οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι εἰ ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ θεραπεύσει, ἵνα εὕρωσιν κατηγορεῖν αὐτοῦ – 6:7). Again, Luke notes how Jesus “perceived their thoughts” (αὐτὸς δὲ ᾔδει τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν – 6:8) and proceeded to call the man with the shriveled hand to the

front of the synagogue (Luke again uses εἰς τὸ μέσον [5:19; 6:8] to demonstrate how all attention was focused on how Jesus would proceed).

Jesus once again poses a difficult question to which the Pharisees dare not risk a public response: "I ask you: 'Is it permitted on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save a soul or to destroy it?'" (Ἐπερωτῶ ὑμᾶς εἰ ἔξεστιν τῷ σαββάτῳ ἀγαθοποιῆσαι ἢ κακοποιῆσαι, ψυχὴν σῶσαι ἢ ἀπολέσαι; – 6:9). In asking about "what is permissible on the Sabbath" Jesus has again turned the Pharisees words against them (compare οὐκ ἔξεστιν τοῖς σάββασιν – 6:2 vs ἔξεστιν τῷ σαββάτῳ – 6:9). After a deafening silence in which Jesus locks eyes with his opponents (and anyone else who dared meet his gaze in the moment – περιβλεψάμενος πάντας αὐτοὺς – 6:10), he instructs them man to stretch out his (shriveled) hand. Without Jesus' touch or any visible expenditure of effort, the man's hand is restored and the Son of Man is confirmed to be, in fact, the Lord of the Sabbath.

While Luke does not specify who "they" (αὐτοὶ) is in 6:11, the impartiality of the synagogue goers leaves only the scribes and Pharisees as a sensible identification of those who are "filled with mindless fury" (ἐπλήσθησαν ἀνοίας), seemingly unable to stomach yet another inexplicable reversal at the hands of this itinerant upstart from Galilee. Their decision to "deal with Jesus" (Bock, 1994:531) suggests a turning point; those who initially came to verify circulating reports and (perhaps) the account of a cleansed leper now begin to plot the demise of this impertinently unorthodox (but decidedly innocent) prophet of Jubilee (διελάλουν πρὸς ἀλλήλους τί ἂν ποιήσαιεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ – 6:11). Luke's understated comment has begun to set the stage for the events of the passion week. It is also interesting to note that, aside from Luke's comments in connection with the baptism of John and the episode in the house of Simon the Pharisee in Luke 7:36-50, it is Jesus' disciples and not the Pharisees who will move the gospel account forward for several chapters beginning in Luke 8. Their decision to treat Jesus as "a sign to be opposed" will remove them from the spotlight for a spell, but their opposition will again make itself felt as the journey toward Jerusalem progresses.

3.3.4 "Great faith, a great prophet, great debts and great love": responding to Jesus' unorthodox ministry (Luke 6:17-7:50)

As was outlined in Figure 3.7, beginning in 6:17 Luke's emphasis shifts away from the themes of disciple calling and opposition from religious authorities to emphasize Jesus' proclamation of the precepts of the Kingdom of God and how growing his reputation opens doors for increasingly diverse (and pedagogical) interactions. These interactions allow Luke to paint a more complete picture of proper and improper response to Jesus' unorthodox "new exodus" and "declaration of jubilee" and to emphasize a growing awareness of the "greatness" that surrounds Jesus. John's question, however, demonstrates that Jesus' demonstrations of greatness are not without interpretive difficulties, particularly for those (like John) who are

struggling with the apparent absence of certain aspects of fulfillment. Has Jesus' proclamation of the "epoch of the Lord's favor" (Isa 61:2 [Luke 4:19]) and activity of "gathering" (3:17) somehow negated the "day of retribution" (Isa 61:2, not cited in Luke 4:19) and the activity of "burning with unquenchable fire" (likewise from 3:17)?

In a continuation of "new exodus" imagery (cf. Nolland, 1989:275), after a night of communion with God on the mountain in 6:12 and the selection of his "new twelve patriarchs" in 6:13-16, Jesus descends the mountain (καταβὰς μετ' αὐτῶν) to a great crowd of disciples and an even larger multitude in 6:17, including Luke's first mention of listeners from gentile lands (καὶ τῆς παραλίου Τύρου καὶ Σειδῶνος). As is typical of Lukan teaching scenes, 6:18-19 also notes healing from diseases (ἰαθῆναι ἀπὸ τῶν νόσων αὐτῶν – 6:18; δύναμις παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐξήρχετο καὶ ἴᾶτο πάντας – 6:19) as well as unclean spirits (οἱ ἐνοχλούμενοι ἀπὸ πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων ἐθεραπεύοντο – 6:18), emphasizing Jesus' concern with the holistic well-being of those present (spiritual-moral, mental-emotional, physical and social). Jesus' "lifting his eyes to his disciples" (Καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπάρας τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ εἰς τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ – 6:20) signals that the precepts that follow are directed toward them, although the larger crowd is clearly not being excluded.

A significant portion of the scholarly attention dedicated to this block of teaching has focused on unraveling the complex relationship between Luke's sermon and the longer discourse in Matthew 5-7. Writing before the beginning of the 20th century, Plummer suggested that the relationship between Matthew's Sermon on the Mount and Luke's Sermon on the Plain might never be completely resolved (1896:176); his observation remains valid more than a century later. The present author will, therefore, merely touch on elements of the sermon which are relevant to the hermeneutical discussion at hand, rather than attempting verse-by-verse exegesis or synoptic comparison. Jesus' sermon is composed of three distinct sections: the first in 6:20-26 is composed of four μακάριος blessing statements and four οὐαί woe statements; the second in 27-38 focuses on treatment of enemies and the measures used with others; meanwhile the third section in 39-49 focuses on fruitful obedience to the precepts outlined.

The opening statements of blessing and woe highlight the language of reversal, which has been highlighted throughout this study in connection with Mary's "Magnificat" and other texts, which is a consistent theme throughout Luke's gospel (York, 1991:92-93, 160-163). Luke's μακάριος statements highlight those in unfavorable positions, ranging from the "poor" (πτωχοί – 6:20) to "those who hunger now" (οἱ πεινῶντες νῦν – 6:21a) to "those who weep now" (οἱ κλαίοντες νῦν – 6:21b) and concludes with a shift to the second person plural, highlighting how Jesus' followers enter a paradoxical state of "blessedness/happiness/privilege" (μακάριος – see Danker, *et al.,* 2000:610-611) "whenever" (ὅταν – repeated twice in 6:22, although implicit in all four subjunctive verbs) they are mistreated "on account of the Son of Man" (ἕνεκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου – 6:22). The specificity of the language of mistreatment in the fourth statement contrasts strongly with the previous three and may indirectly reference the environment of tension between Jews and

Christians in which Theophilus is likely to have lived. In all four μακάριος statements, Jesus indicates that recompense or reversal of circumstance is in store.

The four οὐαί woe statements round out the language of reversal, indicating that God's program of salvation will not merely “elevate the lowly" but will also “cast the mighty down from positions of privilege” (see Luke 1:52). The descriptions of those in favorable positions inversely mirror the preceding μακάριος statements. Jesus’ formulation of the woe statements in the second person plural (frequently using the emphatic ὑμῖν) make his call for the privileged to repent even more piercing (like the religious authorities, the privileged are absent from the examples of repentance in John's ministry overview but are represented by Herod, who is clearly more inclined to silence dissent than to change his behavior). Jesus warns “you who are rich” (ὑμῖν τοῖς πλουσίοις – 6:24), “you who are full now” (ὑμῖν, οἱ ἐμπεπλησμένοι νῦν – 6:25), you “who laugh now” (οἱ γελῶντες νῦν – 6:25) and you “whenever all people speak well of you” (ὅταν ὑμᾶς καλῶς εἴπωσιν πάντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι – 6:26) to reconsider their values and conduct. Jesus’ pronouncements of blessing for the “unenviable” and of woe against those who “have it well” eschews a degree of popular wisdom, both Jewish and Greco-Roman (Guelich, 1982:67-72; Bock, 1994:573-574, 596-597), and helps to further justify his decision to call an unlikely group of disciples to serve as “new wineskins” for God’s unfolding program of salvation (the “young wine”).

Having put popular wisdom and the values of privilege squarely in the crosshairs, the middle section of Jesus’ sermon offers a contrasting set of values, highlighted by the opening clause of 6:27: “Rather, to you who hear I say…” (Ἀλλ’ ὑμῖν λέγω τοῖς ἀκούουσιν). By mirroring the construction of his first woe statement (compare: Πλὴν οὐαὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς πλουσίοις – 6:24 vs Ἀλλ’ ὑμῖν λέγω τοῖς ἀκούουσιν – 6:27), Jesus is leveraging the shock value of his pronouncements of inversion in the preceding section to highlight the values that should be cultivated in place of the standards of riches, security and material happiness. The values that follow highlight love (ἀγαπάω – 6:27, 32, 35), compassion/mercy (οἰκτίρμων – 6:36), doing good and being generous, especially to enemies and to those with nothing to offer in return (6:27-31, 33-35, 38). Jesus points out how these values are embodied by God’s actions (6:36) and that such behavior is therefore fitting for “sons/children of the Most High” (υἱοὶ ὑψίστου – 6:35; a title applied to Jesus in the angelic announcement in 1:32 and by a demon in 8:28).

Luke introduces a transition to the final portion of the sermon with the note in 6:39 that “Then he also told them a parable” (Εἶπεν δὲ καὶ παραβολὴν αὐτοῖς). Like the “parable” of 5:36-39, Jesus’ discourse in 6:39-49 uses a variety of metaphors to emphasize the necessity of obedience to His authoritative instruction and the importance of bearing fruit (also emphasized in John’s proclamation in 3:8-9). The verb ποιέω (“to do/perform”) is particularly prominent (it is also present in the preceding section, although used with less frequency) and highlights the importance of “putting Jesus’ words into practice” (6:47). The final illustration of the two houses built on rock and on the ground without a foundation bring balance to the sermon, illustrating the

blessings of obedience and the woes that come to those who ignore Jesus' instruction or, worse, "speak against" it (σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον – 2:34). It is interesting to note that Luke does not record a reaction from the crowd, leaving the weight of Jesus' teaching and warnings hanging in the air to be digested by the reader, without the distraction of narration to urge the story onward.

Luke 7 (described by Green [1997:281] as a "discreet section… bordered on each side by reports of Jesus' teaching") opens hot off the heels of Jesus' counter-cultural sermon. The values Jesus has just proclaimed will find a wealth of real-world illustration through the "great faith" of the "unworthy" centurion, through Jesus' confirmation as a "great prophet" in the molds of Elijah through the resurrection of the weeping of widow's son and through the dinner episode at the end of the chapter that emphasizes the "great love" of one whose "great debt" was forgiven. John's question and Jesus' reply in the center of the chapter are particularly key to this study's effort to trace "narrative threads" forward, and offer important characterizations of proper interpretation and response, of the opposition of the Jewish religious authorities and of the "people of this generation" (τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης – 7:31).

Luke 7:1 moves Jesus back to Capernaum "after he had completed all his sayings in the hearing of the people" (Ἐπειδὴ ἐπλήρωσεν πάντα τὰ ῥήματα αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς ἀκοὰς τοῦ λαοῦ), setting the stage for the request of the Roman centurion. There is a subtle but deliberate play on the diverse "evaluations" made by different characters throughout the episode. The centurion "highly regards" (ἔντιμος – 7:2) the slave at death's door, although no reasons for this evaluation are given. Meanwhile, the Jewish elders (who serve as intermediaries) urge Jesus that the centurion "is worthy that you should bring this thing about" (Ἄξιός ἐστιν ᾧ παρέξῃ τοῦτο – 7:4) on the basis of his "love for the nation" and his material generosity in "building the synagogue" (ἀγαπᾷ γὰρ τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν καὶ τὴν συναγωγὴν αὐτὸς ᾠκοδόμησεν ἡμῖν – 7:5). This example of an apparently positive use of material resources reinforces the notion that Jesus' sermon primarily targeted the *twisted values* of the rich and their *improper application* of wealth in accordance with the precepts of the covenant, rather than representing an absolutist attack on wealth itself (as parables such as Luke 16:19-31 will go on to confirm).

In contrast with the positive evaluation given by the Jewish elders, the centurion sent a second set of emissaries, judging himself "not deserving that you should come under my roof" (οὐ γὰρ ἱκανός εἰμι ἵνα ὑπὸ τὴν στέγην μου εἰσέλθῃς – 7:6) but expressing his faith that Jesus' word of authority was sufficient to perform the requested miracle. Jesus' evaluation of the centurion brings the episode toward a close, as it is his turn to "marvel" (ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐθαύμασεν αὐτόν – 7:9) before giving the highest possible evaluation in declaring to the crowd that "not even in Israel have I found so great a faith!" (οὐδὲ ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ τοσαύτην πίστιν εὗρον – 7:9). The irony of this declaration should not be lost on the reader; as chapter 4 will demonstrate, there is little overlap between Luke's treatment of "Israel" and the "Kingdom of God". Yet here, fresh from the conclusion of a sermon describing the precepts of the Kingdom, these same principles find their

proper application “outside Israel” in the mouth of a Roman centurion! The episode ends in 7:10 with the note that upon returning, the emissaries found the slave miraculously recovered.

In 7:11-17 Jesus changes locations again, this time going to Nain followed by his disciples and a large crowd. The group encountered a funeral procession near the city gate, with Luke’s description of the deceased as “the only son of his mother, who was a widow” (ἰδοὺ ἐξεκομίζετο τεθνηκὼς μονογενὴς υἱὸς τῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὴ ἦν χήρα – 7:12) painting a particularly tragic scene that evoked Jesus’ “tender mercy” (compare with 1:78 – διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους θεοῦ; it is also noteworthy that Luke refers to him as “the Lord” here [ἰδὼν αὐτὴν ὁ κύριος ἐσπλαγχνίσθη ἐπ’ αὐτῇ] 7:13). Jesus demonstrates his intention to reverse the situation by encouraging the widow not to weep (Μὴ κλαῖε – 7:13) and drawing near the body (προσέρχομαι often precedes Jesus’ authoritative action in Luke – Marshall, 1978:286). As in the case of the leper in 5:13, Jesus initiates a physical touch that could result in ceremonial uncleanliness (Danker, 1988:161, Bock, 1994:652-653), an act that attracts attention to his ensuing action.

Jesus’ instruction for the corpse to arise is immediately obeyed and accompanied by speech from the formerly deceased. The remarkable resurrection scene, which began with Jesus urging the inconsolable mother not to weep, is closed with the touching note: “and Jesus gave him to his mother” (καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὸν τῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ – 7:15). The symbolism of the miracle is not lost on the crowd, as “fear took hold of all and they glorified God” (ἔλαβεν δὲ φόβος πάντας καὶ ἐδόξαζον τὸν θεὸν – 7:16), before noting that “a great prophet has arisen among us” (Προφήτης μέγας ἠγέρθη ἐν ἡμῖν – 7:16) and that “God has visited his people” (Ἐπεσκέψατο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ – 7:16). These exclamations are clearly motivated by parallelism with the resurrection miracles (and the associated eschatological symbolism) of Elijah (1 Kings 17:21) and Elisha (2 Kings 4:31-35).

The crowd has not seemed to note, however, that Jesus’ resurrection had *surpassed* those of the prophets of old by being done in public and without the need to lay on the body, demonstrating that One greater than Elijah was present. As in 4:14, 4:37 and 5:15, Luke notes how this “great act” caused ripples of reputation to make their way throughout “the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country” (ἐξῆλθεν ὁ λόγος οὗτος ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ πάσῃ τῇ περιχώρῳ – 7:17). As Luke 7:18 notes, this “word” about Jesus even made its way into the prison where John had remained since his removal from center stage of the narrative in 3:19-20 and occasions the question that prompts Jesus’ challenging answer and “review discourse”.

Situated in the midst of (and occasioned by) miracles of compassion, John’s question is sobering and underscores how profoundly counter-expectational Jesus’ activity has been. While there has certainly been “gathering” (as illustrated in section 3.3.2), Jesus’ choice of “wheat” (συναγαγεῖν τὸν σῖτον εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην αὐτοῦ – 3:17) has been curious and the judgement on the “chaff” notoriously absent. While there has been verbal “sparring” between Jesus and the religious authorities, it has been a far cry from “an axe laid at the root of the tree” (ἡ ἀξίνη πρὸς

τὴν ῥίζαν τῶν δένδρων κεῖται – 3:9) or "unquenchable fire" (πυρὶ ἀσβέστῳ – 3:17). Where is the radical reformulation of the people and the eschatological reckoning required by his status as "Elias redivivus" (Fitzmyer, 1989:97-98) or as Messiah (Leaney, 1958:145, Marshall, 1978:292, Green, 1997:295)?

Thus, John's disciples arrive with the startling question: "Are you 'the Coming One', or should we expect another?" (Σὺ εἶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἢ ἄλλον προσδοκῶμεν; – 7:19). Clearly the report of two miracles with Elijah-Elisha parallels (for parallels between the healing of the centurion's servant and Elisha-Naaman, see Green, 1997:284-285) is interpreted by John as "sufficient evidence" that some degree of eschatological activity is underway, but his doubts persist. Nonplussed, Jesus proceeded to go about "business as usual", healing many from diseases and plagues and evil spirits and restoring sight to the blind (ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐθεράπευσεν πολλοὺς ἀπὸ νόσων καὶ μαστίγων καὶ πνευμάτων πονηρῶν καὶ τυφλοῖς πολλοῖς ἐχαρίσατο βλέπειν – 7:21). He then turns to John's disciples, instructing them to tell John "what you have seen and heard" (Πορευθέντες ἀπαγγείλατε Ἰωάννει ἃ εἴδετε καὶ ἠκούσατε – 7:22) before highlighting specific occurrences with language designed to evoke Isaiah 61: "the blind receive sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the good news is being preached" (τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπουσιν, χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσιν, λεπροὶ καθαρίζονται καὶ κωφοὶ ἀκούουσιν, νεκροὶ ἐγείρονται, πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται – 7:22).

Jesus' language deliberately hearkens back to the programmatic episode in Nazareth in Luke 4:16-30, where he cited Isaiah 61 but was nonetheless run out of town by those who knew him best. It is particularly important to recall his deliberate choice to end the reading with "to proclaim the epoch of the Lord's favor" while leaving out "and the day of retribution" that followed in Isaiah 61:2. John's proclamation from Luke 3 and the deliberate reuse of the term "the coming One" (ἔρχεται δὲ ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου – 3:16; ὁ ἐρχόμενος – 7:19) in his question would seem to indicate that it is the absence of "retribution" alongside the joy of the Jubilee that disturbs him. Jesus' activity of healing supplies John's disciples with conclusive evidence of his power and authority, but as his words in 7:23 show, John will not receive total satisfaction.

Jesus' pointed use of another μακάριός formulation in 7:23 reveals his awareness of the interpretive difficulties posed by his activity: "blessed is the one who is not made to fall/repelled by me" (καὶ μακάριός ἐστιν ὃς ἐὰν μὴ σκανδαλισθῇ ἐν ἐμοί – on σκανδαλίζω see Danker, ***et al***., 2000:926). Jesus' answer clearly points to his activity as sufficient evidence for steadfastness and belief (explored in section 2.3.14) without giving any indication that the promised retribution will take place. It is almost as if Jesus were saying: "The release and divine favor of the promised Jubilee are here for all to see, John. Is that enough for you to stay the course, or will your expectations of fiery judgement in the present induce you to join the ranks of the undecided and the opposition?"

John's question and Jesus' response form the starkest reminder up to this point in the gospel that not even great service and suffering for the cause are guarantees of a comprehensive or holistic understanding of God's plan. On the one hand, it is easy to comprehend John's difficulties; after all, his proclamation of imminent judgement resulted from Spirit-inspired ministry! On the other hand, Jesus' ministry clearly extends a "grace period" to maximize the "gathering of wheat" without invalidating the fulfillment of fiery judgement. Once again, the issue of "timing" would seem to lie at the heart of John's difficulties. While the promise of the "coming One" who would cleanse the threshing floor might have seemed to portray the gathering of wheat and burning of chaff side by side, John has clearly fallen into the error of wanting to see the final consummation before offering his "verdict of approval" through belief!

While 7:24 transitions into Jesus' review of John's role before the crowd, the gospel's lack of a reply from John leaves Jesus' answer hanging in the air. It is almost possible to imagine Luke's reader pausing to wonder at this junction: "If a legitimated agent of God's plan like John the Baptist had doubts because Jesus' ministry did not correspond to his expectations, then my uncertainties are unlikely to receive a more satisfying answer! Like John, then, the goal before me is 'not to be repelled/made to fall by Jesus' unorthodox activity'". Once again, Luke's rhetorical narrative is working with positive and negative reinforcement. While the "certainty" of confirmed fulfillment is highlighted at every turn, the gospel is also dogged in insisting that faith and participation cannot be made to hinge on the final fulfillment. To the contrary, insisting that God's plan follow a "presupposed human narrative" (with the presumptive response that otherwise, faith will be withheld) will be shown by Jesus' speech (and further arguments in chapter 4) to be a disastrous proposition!

Jesus' questions to the crowd in 7:24-26 presume their awareness of John's wilderness ministry and the necessity of "retracing the exodus path" out to the Jordan to hear him before "re-entering" the land. His indication in 7:26 that John was "more than a prophet" (περισσότερον προφήτου) forms an *inclusio* around the reference to Malachi 3:1 with the indication in 7:28a "among those born of women, none is greater than John" (μείζων ἐν γεννητοῖς γυναικῶν Ἰωάννου οὐδείς ἐστιν). Jesus clearly indicates that John's ministry initiated a transition from the era of promise and waiting to the eschatological fulfillment of the Jubilee and the Kingdom of God (even if the timing of different elements of this fulfillment was perplexing to John himself).

Luke 7:28b, meanwhile, draws an astounding comparison between the era John prepared the people to "exodus" out of and the era of eschatological fulfillment that is being unfurled: "but the one who is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he" (ὁ δὲ μεικρότερος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ μείζων αὐτοῦ ἐστιν – 7:28). This statement should not be taken to demean John or indicate possible distortion of Jesus' words (Creed, 1930:107), but is instead further demonstration of how radically different (and superior) God's program of "young wine" will be. As Jesus has warned, and as John's question has substantiated, only "new wineskins" will handle the strain of

adjustment, and many will decide “the old is good” (see section 3.3.2 and Luke 5:36-39). The benefits of this adaptation, however, are described as far outweighing even the greatest benefits of the "old system”.

Luke 7:26-28 highlight John’s “greatness” while 7:29-30 demonstrate the profound effects of his work of “preparing paths” and “turning hearts” (see section 2.3.7). On the one hand, “all the people and the tax collectors declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John” (πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἀκούσας καὶ οἱ τελῶναι ἐδικαίωσαν τὸν θεὸν βαπτισθέντες τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου – 7:29), while, on the other, “the Pharisees and the experts in the Law rejected God's purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by him (John)” (οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ οἱ νομικοὶ τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ἠθέτησαν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς μὴ βαπτισθέντες ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ – 7:30). Jesus’ words make it clear that willingness to “swallow the bitter pill” of John’s provocative message and recognize the need to adopt different values and practices in relation to both covenant and neighbor (see 3:10-14) had played an essential role in the “winnowing” of the people and the transformation of some from apparent “chaff” to “wheat”.

Many translators and commentators struggle with Luke’s use of the verb δικαιόω with God as object in 7:29 (understandably, from the standpoint of dogmatics/systematic theology). Many have weakened their renderings of the verb toward an “acknowledgement of God’s justice” (see the NASB, NIV, Bock, 1994:677 and Bovon, 2002:285, among others), working around the most straightforward reading of Luke’s phrase as written. While it is theologically inviable (on the basis of both Old and New Testament precedent) to declare that human beings can “declare God just” in *absolute* terms, some interpreters (including the present author) see the importance of giving Luke’s formulation of the phrase room to express *a degree* of human vindication through the discernment of God’s counter-expectational proceedings as being “more than fair” and requiring a human response (“a verdict of approval” as per Fitzmyer, 1981:676 and Green, 1997:301). Indeed, the varying degrees of opposition, indecision, doubt and joyful participation stressed by Luke’s narrative testify to the fact that people *are held responsible* for how they “judge” and respond to God’s action. This human responsibility points to an ability to (albeit incorrectly and with dire consequences) “declare” God’s activity through John and Jesus to be something else entirely, justifying a non-absolutist reading of ἐδικαίωσαν τὸν θεὸν in 7:29 without the necessity of “rewording” Luke's phrasing.

In 7:31 Luke resumes Jesus’ discourse to the public (7:29-30 are generally interpreted as a narrative aside – see the parentheses of the ESV, LEB, NET, NIV, NRSV, comments by Bock, 1994:676-677; cf. Hendriksen, 1978:399), this time focused on “the people of this generation” (τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης). Although there is some debate over how to interpret what Bock has aptly termed “the parable of the brats” (1994:680), the present author agrees with the majority position that the complaining children are to be associated with the Jewish people, particularly the religious leadership referred to in 7:30 (in agreement with Plummer, 1896:207;

Marshall, 1978:301; Tiede, 1988:158; Bock, 1994:681; Bovon, 2002:285-286; cf. Godet, 1875:354-355; Leaney, 1958:145; Fitzmyer, 1981:680), who find fault with John and Jesus because they refuse to "play along" to their choice of tune. The characterization is cutting, likening the "present generation" to petulant children who not only dare to attempt to impose their will on God's agents, but pout at their lack of success.

Jesus justifies this characterization based on recent narrative events (especially the central feast episode in 5:29-39), pointing out inconsistent evaluations of John's behavior (7:33) and of his own (7:34). The unacceptability of both John's "wilderness asceticism" and Jesus' "small town sociability" underline the usurpation and illegitimate exercise of "authority" (precisely the point of contention in episodes D and D' – see section 3.3.3) that lies at the heart of "this generation's" rejection of God's agents. Luke again uses the verb δικαιόω in 7:35 in the conclusion of Jesus' recapitulation of John's ministry and the people's response, this time in a metaphor that is clearly parallel to Luke's narrative note in 7:29: "Wisdom is declared just by all her children" (ἐδικαιώθη ἡ σοφία ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς). As the present author argued above, the sense of the verb here would seem to be the "emission of a verdict of approval" with the real possibility that those who are not "children of wisdom" (i.e. fools, according to the Biblical wisdom tradition) will emit a different verdict (presumably, to their own demise in accordance with the context of Jesus' speech and the wisdom tradition).

Yet again, Jesus' words have cut to the heart of the interpretive quandary at the heart of Luke's enterprise of rhetorical certainty: to whom does the "choice of tune" in matters of promise and fulfillment belong – to God, or to petulant human interpreters? Underneath the piercing metaphor, one can almost hear Luke's appeal: "Indeed, Theophilus, God's choice of tune is surprising, but surely you can recognize in the actions of Jesus and John the same musical mastery of old! Is not God's unorthodox tune more convincing than the shrill tooting and pathetic wailing of the children in the marketplace?" The final note on wisdom, then, presents a Lukan appeal for Theophilus to properly "discern the certainty" (ἐπιγνῷς... τὴν ἀσφάλειαν – Luke 1:4; see section 2.2.7) and to emit the correct verdict.

Finally, the episode in the house of Simon the Pharisee (7:36-50) drives home the tendency toward obdurate insensibility on the part of the religious authorities (but does not put them beyond the reach of redemption or membership in the Christian movement – Gowler, 1991:298-305). In light of the Pharisees complaint over Jesus' table company in 5:30, Jesus' willingness to accept the invitation and "enter the house of the Pharisee and recline (at the table)" (εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Φαρισαίου κατεκλίθη – 7:36) demonstrates his fairness and further reinforces the "petulance" with which he has just characterized their evaluations in 7:32-34. Simon's judgmental internal dialogue in response to the lavish and emotional intrusion of the "woman in the city who was a sinner" (γυνὴ ἥτις ἦν ἐν τῇ πόλει ἁμαρτωλός – 7:37) further justifies Jesus' criticism of their value and criterion: "If this man were a prophet, he would know who and

what sort of woman is this one who touches him, for she is a sinner" (Οὗτος εἰ ἦν προφήτης, ἐγίνωσκεν ἂν τίς καὶ ποταπὴ ἡ γυνὴ ἥτις ἅπτεται αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἁμαρτωλός ἐστιν – 7:39).

Yet again, Luke highlights the Pharisaical tendency toward "stiff propriety" and "fussy fastidiousness", even when such attitudes compromise or even debilitate the restoration of a sinner to right relationship with God. As he did at Levi's banquet, Jesus offers Simon and the other guests an opportunity to reevaluate their internal dialogue through an illuminative parable of two debtors, one of whom is forgiven five hundred denarii and the other fifty (Bock [1994:699] notes that the amounts attest middle class wages, roughly corresponding to twenty-one months' wages and to two months' wages, respectively). Simon is left with little room to evade when Jesus ends with the question: "So then, which of them will love him (the forgiving moneylender) more?" (τίς οὖν αὐτῶν πλεῖον ἀγαπήσει αὐτόν; – 7:42).

His answer ("I suppose the one for whom he showed the greater grace/cancelled the larger debt" [Ὑπολαμβάνω ὅτι ᾧ τὸ πλεῖον ἐχαρίσατο – 7:43]) reveals caution (Arndt, 1956:219) and may well indicate he has already grasped Jesus' point (Marshall, 1978:311; Danker, 1988:170). After affirming the correctness of Simon's answer, Jesus proceeds to illustrate the correctness of the woman's behavior by associating her "great love" with the debtor who was shown "greater grace" (and demonstrate how Simon's "smaller debt" has induced "lesser love" and, perhaps, even ingratitude and arrogance). The comparison reflects poorly on Simon as a host but even more so as a judge of his own spiritual state before God (implying that he is likely *even less qualified* to judge the spiritual state of others).

Unlike Simon, the woman has correctly discerned God's offer of gracious restoration through Jesus and has responded to it with repentance and generous service. Jesus finishes his defense of the woman's actions by addressing her directly: "Your sins are forgiven" (Ἀφέωνταί σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι – 7:48). In yet another striking inversion, it is the city's notorious sinner who has correctly identified and responded to Jesus and found forgiveness. In spite of Jesus' parable and unfavorable comparison between Simon and the woman, the other dinner guests repeat the error of 5:21 and question Jesus' authority to make such a pronouncement: "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" (Τίς οὗτός ἐστιν ὃς καὶ ἁμαρτίας ἀφίησιν; – 7:49). While their formulation is less absolute than that of 5:21, it nonetheless highlights their stubborn resistance to Jesus' attempts to correct their attitudes and interpretations.

Rather than respond to the Pharisees, Jesus doubles down and clarifies in a second address to the woman in 7:50: "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." (Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε· πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην). As in 5:20, Luke has connected "faith" to "release from sins", a theme that will be repeated frequently in Acts (Bock, 1994:707; see, for example, 3:19, 26; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 22:16; 26:18). Unlike in the controversy episode in 5:17-26, however, there is no miraculous demonstration of God's power here to "prove" Jesus' point. The woman's circumstances

required spiritual “release” rather than “release” from disease or demonic oppression, and Jesus’ acts in the preceding episodes have more than demonstrated God’s continued “good pleasure” (εὐδοκία/εὐδοκέω, proclaimed to mankind from heaven at Jesus’ birth in 2:14 and proclaimed over Jesus himself by the voice from heaven at the outset of his ministry in 3:22) in his activity.

3.4 CONCLUSION: CONFIRMATION, DEVELOPMENT AND OMISSION

As was argued in the conclusion of the previous chapter (section 2.4), Luke 3-7 confirm Luke’s construction of an “alternate path” to certainty through the correct interpretation of events and correct response to this interpretation. The preceding sections have confirmed time and again the presence and narrative import of these two hermeneutical concerns. Nearly every narrative episode analyzed has featured characters who have either discerned the presence God’s activity of salvation through John and Jesus and responded with “verdicts of approval” (7:29) through repentance (3:2), discipleship and participation (5:1-11, 27-29; 6:13-16) and persistent faith (5:20; 7:1-10, 36-50) or else have failed to correctly interpret the identity of God’s agents and the telltale signs of His work and responded to them as “signs to be opposed” (2:34; 4:28-30; 5:21-26, 30-33; 6:1-11; 7:30, 49).

Luke’s rhetorical narrative has also introduced a new and complementary strategy that has been hinted at in preceding sections: undermining the opposition. As was argued throughout chapter 2, it is entirely likely that the first century’s divergence between Jewish interpretive traditions (in which the Pharisees played an influential role – Guttmann, 1950:452-473) and the emergent Christian tradition provided the backdrop for Theophilus’ lack of certainty. By painting a consistent portrait of the Pharisees’ “baseless fault finding” (5:20-26, 30-39; 6:1-11; 7:39-50) and “inconsistent evaluations” (7:30-35) that placed them in conflict with God’s redemptive purposes, Luke calls alternate systems of interpretation into question. While clearly aware of the interpretive difficulties posed by Jesus’ unorthodox and counter-expectational ministry (4:16-30; 7:18-35), Luke clearly views the hermeneutical foundations provided by the representatives of the “old wine” traditions of Judaism as providing unsatisfactory interpretations of “the events about which there is certainty among us” (1:1; see section 2.2.4).

Luke’s reintroduction of “doubt” or “misunderstanding” from a positive character who has been legitimated as an agent of God's plan (Mary in the infancy narratives in 2:40-52; John in this section in 7:18-35) reinforces the importance of correct interpretation and of persistent faith as a correct response. It also softens the shock of Luke’s criticisms of Jewish traditions toward which the reader may still harbor positive feelings. By creating “legitimate space” within the narrative for human difficulties and uncertainties without immediately categorizing every character as absolutely resolute in their acceptance or rejection of God's revelation and salvation, Luke has displayed remarkable empathy for the reader.

Nonetheless, Jesus' response to John in 7:21-23 indicates that while uncertainty is understandable, especially in light of the weight of messianic expectations which encounter unequal degrees of fulfillment in the narrative, uncertainty cannot endure *in aeternum*. Yet again, Luke's narrative reinforces notions of Scriptural precedent and of confirmatory signs as sufficient evidence for belief in spite of the reader's desire to see the "final fulfillment". This notion of belief on the basis of sufficient evidence will be further reinforced by chapter 4's analysis of Luke 24 and Acts 1, and represents a cornerstone of this study's identification of Luke's hermeneutical framework of certainty.

Luke's opening narratives in chapters 3-7 have also confirmed and developed numerous "threads" of expectation from the infancy narratives, while fleshing out new nuances and introducing the important theme of the Kingdom of God. Luke 7's key role in recapitulating John's role and in hammering home the interpretive difficulties presented by Jesus' unorthodox ministry and the importance of responding correctly to his identity has confirmed its suitability as a logical point at which to pause this study's examination in narrative order. Green notes how Luke 7 "ties up" numerous threads before proceeding with the gospel narrative:

> In an important sense, then, this section presents us with an interpretive recapitulation of Jesus' identity as God's agent of salvation. In performing this function, it credits Jesus' inaugural sermon with a paradigmatic role (7:18-23; cf. Acts 10:38), draws together numerous threads of the earlier Lukan narrative, portrays the mission of John and Jesus over against the conventional wisdom that has its sequel in the historic stubbornness of many of God's people, foregrounds the import of the response necessitated by that mission, and prepares for the climax of this larger section of Luke's Gospel, Luke 7, in the subsequent account of Jesus' encounter with a Pharisee and a sinful woman (7:36-50). (1997:294, parentheses his)

Luke 7, therefore, has made a excellent "tying off" point for many (but not all) of these narrative threads. Chapter 4 of this study will "leap forward" to Luke 24 and Acts 1 in order to tie off several "loose threads" from the infancy narratives which were not developed in Luke 3-7 (and which, indeed, emerge most clearly in the gospel's final chapter). It is worth, however, reviewing how the majority of the expectations created by Luke's infancy narratives have been confirmed and developed in this chapter's analysis of Luke 3-7.

As was explored in sections 2.3.7 and 2.3.10, both John's angelic annunciation and his father's praise hymn (the "Benedictus") cast prophetic expectations for the role he would play, using descriptions like "preparing paths for the coming Lord", "turning hearts" and "giving knowledge of salvation in the forgiveness' of sins". The indication in the "Benedictus" that the "Dawn from on high" would guide the people's feet "into the way of peace" as well as the note immediately

afterward that John spent his developmental years in the wilderness suggested “exodus” imagery. These expectations and the exodus imagery (discussed below) were confirmed or further developed in John’s ministry overview in Luke 3 and in Jesus’ recapitulation in light of the arrival of John’s disciples in Luke 7.

As was explored in section 3.2.2, John’s wilderness ministry did, in fact, bring “knowledge of salvation” to the people through his provocative proclamation of a “baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins”. As was indicated in the reactions of Luke 3 and explicitly confirmed by Jesus’ words and Luke’ narrative parentheses in Luke 7:24-35, not all of the people responded equally to John’s work of “preparation” and “turning hearts”. This “selective repentance”, apparently prevalent among social outcasts like tax collectors and soldiers, but regarded as “unnecessary” by many among the religious elite, paints the first confirmatory portrait of Simeon’s prediction of “rising and falling in Israel” (although Simeon’s words were spoken with regard to Jesus, the intimate connection between the two in the infancy narratives makes it logical that the first signs would appear in John’s ministry and reach a climax with Jesus).

Meanwhile, John’s own prophetic descriptions of Jesus created further expectations of division and conflict, especially in 3:16-17’s descriptions of the “coming One who is mightier than I” who would metaphorically “cleanse the threshing floor” of Israel. While John’s description of “gathering wheat” was borne out by Jesus activity of calling and commissioning disciples (see section 3.3.2), the predicted “burning of chaff with unquenchable fire” is significantly more difficult to reconcile with Jesus’ activity in Luke 3-7. This fact seems to have occasioned doubts from John himself, whose envoys in Luke 3:19-23 paint a stark picture of Jesus’ awareness of precisely how “unorthodox” his activity is in light of the expectations around him, as well as of the high stakes involved for those who must discern and “emit a verdict” with regard to his identity.

John's ministry also confirmed and developed the “new exodus” imagery by “calling the people out” to the wilderness around the Jordan to reconnect with God and “re-enter the land” reoriented to both the observation of the covenant and the conditions of their neighbors. This imagery was reinforced by Jesus’ narratives of preparation and confirmation, in which he was confirmed by wilderness testing as a sort of “new Israel” and by the temptations of the Devil as a “new Adam”. He then “entered the land” to “gather the people”, an exercise that quickly put him at odds with the “powers that be” and the old traditions of Jewish leadership. Jesus’ use of Isaiah 61 and the joyful proclamation of “Jubilee release” added a new theme that was developed in Luke 4-7, while simultaneously demonstrating that violent opposition could arise from even the most well-known sources.

The language of inversion and reversal, which was highlighted in relation to God’s unfolding action in Mary’s “Magnificat”, is ubiquitous in Luke 3-7. From the positive reactions of the tax

collectors and soldiers to John's message, to Jesus' healings, exorcisms and forgiveness of sins offered to those in need of "release" (a key Jubilee term repeated in Luke 4:18-19 – see section 3.2.4), to the calling and commissioning of unlikely disciples and the Sermon on the Plain, virtually every episode of Luke 3-7 has in some way seen "the exaltation of the lowly", frequently accompanied by rebuke of or proclamations against "the mighty on their thrones". Indeed, Jesus' characterization of "the people of this generation" and of Simon the Pharisee at the end of chapter 7 paint a picture of usurped and illegitimate power that does little or nothing to help reconcile sinners with God. It is little wonder, then, that God's project of salvation is oriented against such obstinate obstacles!

In light of the development of the theme of reversal, it is also unsurprising to see the legitimacy of God's agents frequently confirmed through opposition from those "favored by the present system". From Herod's imprisonment of John to the Pharisees dogged fault finding missions against Jesus and his disciples, those most familiar with the old system and best positioned to benefit from it are logically those most offended by Jesus' unorthodox activity. They also seem to be those most threatened by his power and authority, as the progression of Luke's narrative sees Jesus' reputation grow and the Pharisees descend towards "mindless rage" (6:11). Throughout Luke 4-7, Jesus serves as a "sign to be opposed/spoken against" in accordance with Simeon's prophecy.

Also in accordance with Simeon's words, numerous episodes in Luke 4-7 feature the "revelation of thoughts from many hearts", as Jesus' sublime ability to provoke elements of the audience (or in the case of the synagogue in Nazareth, the entire audience) to an imbalanced reaction in order to call attention to their misinterpretation of his own identity or Scripture (frequently, both). On the other hand, Jesus' defense of the sinful woman at the end of chapter 7, positive evaluation of the Roman centurion's faith and Jubilee activity of "release" work to confirm him as "God's salvation prepared in the presence of all peoples" in accordance with Simeon's first prophetic proclamation.

Luke 3-7 has also confirmed the validity of the patterns of interpretation and response outlined in section 2.3.14. Just as Mary responded in faith and active participation to the angelic message in Luke 1, so Peter and his companions recognize Jesus' identity in the fishing miracle of Luke 5 and become active participants in the narrative of Luke-Acts. Following in the footsteps of Mary's difficulty in understanding Jesus' counter-expectational response in the growth episode of Luke 2:40-52, Luke 7 reveals that John himself struggled to make sense of the reports that reached him. Once again, Luke's narrative seems to underscore the notion that not all of Theophilus' expectations will find fulfillment in the narrative, but that the recent confirmations provide the necessary certainty/security (ἀσφάλεια) to respond in faith, in joyful praise and in active participation in the proclamation of the Kingdom and its coming consummation.

As is inevitable in light of the notes of interpretive difficulty and incomplete fulfillment highlighted in this study thus far, *not all* of the expectations from Luke's infancy narratives have received equal amounts of attention and development. While the Kingdom of God has been introduced and Jesus' authority has been tested by Jewish religious figures and confirmed by the performance of multiple signs, Jesus' own promised kingship and political dominion over Israel has all but vanished from the gospel narrative. As section 2.3.8 outlined, these themes were a foundational element of Second Temple Jewish messianic expectation and therefore represent a significant "omission". The fact that these expectations arrived in no uncertain terms on the mouth of divine messenger makes them a difficult "loose end" to gloss over. It is to this subject that chapter 4 will turn its attention.

CHAPTER 4

THE HERMENEUTICS OF DISSONANCE AND CERTAINTY: DIVINE RESPONSES TO HUMAN EXPECTATION IN LUKE 24 AND ACTS 1

4.1 INTRODUCTION: "HANGING THREADS" OF EXPECTATION

The preceding chapters have reinforced the conclusion suggested by Wright at the outset of the project: "This is the ending you were waiting for, even though it doesn't look like you thought it would" (2013:193-194). This thread was first teased out in the joyful and Scripturally evocative announcements of the infancy narratives, which effectively laid the foundations for Luke's hermeneutic of certainty. John's provocative proclamation in the wilderness and the dynamic episodes of preparation, confirmation, rejection and acceptance that marked Jesus' early ministry in Galilee in Luke 3-4 swiftly made it clear, however, that not all of the expectations raised in the infancy narratives would find equal degrees of fulfillment within the opening chapters of Luke's gospel. This was further reinforced by Jesus' activity of gathering disciples and polarizing opponents in Luke 5-7, which continued to leave the thread of "the throne of David" (τὸν θρόνον Δαυὶδ – 1:32) and Jesus' "reign over the house of Jacob forever" (βασιλεύσει ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰακὼβ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας – 1:32) largely undeveloped.

In light of the connections between this language and the ardent socio-political component of the messianic expectations of Second Temple Judaism (see section 2.3.8), the promises from the angelic annunciation of Jesus' birth represent a "loose thread" for which this study's proposed scope of Luke 1-7 offers limited satisfaction. As was argued in chapter 2, it is entirely likely that these ardent expectations were an important component of the first-century's ongoing "interpretive battle" between Judaism and the nascent Christian movement, which is likely to have provided the context for Theophilus' lack of certainty. Leaving this interpretive thread "hanging" in a study focused on Luke's construction of a hermeneutic of certainty is undesirable and potentially compromising. The present chapter, therefore, aims to fill this lacuna by making a brief excursus to Luke 24 and Acts 1, where Luke again touches on important themes from the infancy narratives.

In both of these chapters, the risen Jesus offers authoritative (if not entirely crystalline) indications of how the disciples are to proceed with regard to the "fulfillment of the things written about Jesus in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms" (πληρωθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωϋσέως καὶ τοῖς προφήταις καὶ ψαλμοῖς περὶ ἐμοῦ – 24:44) and the "restoration of the kingdom to Israel" (ἀποκαθιστάνεις τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραήλ – Acts 1:6). Such a

jump forward in Luke's gospel and to the opening pericopes of Acts also offers the opportunity to test the conclusions of preceding chapters in light of the gospel's "finale" and the transition to the "sequel" account of the apostles' ministry in Acts. This decision is supported by numerous parallels and points of connection between the infancy narratives in Luke 1-2 and Luke 24.

It should be noted, however, that issues of kingship and the apparent "incomplete fulfillment" of messianic expectations which were raised by section 2.3.8 are not the only issues which are addressed in Luke 24. The structure of Luke's concluding episodes largely revolves around three δεῖ statements which offer correction for the disciples' incomprehension of the events of Jesus' passion, especially in light of Old Testament precedent and the explicit forewarnings offered over the course of the gospel narrative. In light of the patterns of response outlined in the infancy narratives (see section 2.3.), this incomprehension seems to point to a second eschatological pattern which offers resolution to issues of "unfulfilled expectation". In this way, the present chapter's contributions represent a "capstone" for the hermeneutical concerns of this study, finalizing key indications of how Luke's rhetorical narrative offers Theophilus an "alternative interpretive path" to certainty.

4.2 REVIVING THE THEME OF THE REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL IN LUKE 24

Luke's concluding chapter deliberately returns to familiar terms and narrative devices from the infancy narratives. The confession made by the disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24:21 "but we were hoping that he was the one destined to redeem Israel" (ἡμεῖς δὲ ἠλπίζομεν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ μέλλων λυτροῦσθαι τὸν Ἰσραήλ) would immediately have tickled the memories of attentive readers. The word group for "redeem" (λυτρόω) used here is rare in the New Testament, with nearly half of NT occurrences coming from Luke-Acts (Bock, 1996:1913). Words from this group have a very peculiar distribution within Luke's gospel, with the nominal form λύτρωσις occurring exclusively in the infancy narratives in Luke 1:68 and 2:38 and with the verbal form used exclusively here in Luke 24:21. In all three uses, the object of redemption is clearly Israel, a word which itself occurs with surprisingly sparsity in Luke's gospel (12 occurrences).

The revival of λυτρόω + Ἰσραήλ in 24:21, then, would very likely have been sufficient to pique the reader's memory and bring the "dormant theme" of messianic expectation back into play. It is interesting that there is little overlap between the key terms "Israel" (Ἰσραήλ) and "the Kingdom of God" (ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ) in Luke's gospel (which can hardly be a coincidence, especially given that Mark's gospel, for example, introduces the term ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ early in chapter 1 while Matthew introduces the ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν in connection with John's preaching in chapter 3). It would appear that Luke deliberately focuses on developing the characteristics of God's unfolding project of salvation, which begins in Israel (although as chapters 2 and 3 demonstrated, the universal scope of God's salvation is introduced and reinforced early on), and

develops the theme of the Kingdom later on through Jesus' ministry of proclamation, gathering and polarization.

The following figure demonstrates the distribution of the terms "Israel" and "the Kingdom of God" in Luke's gospel:

Term	Distribution in the gospel of Luke:				
	1:5-2:52	3:1-4:44	5:1-9:50	9:51-19:44	19:45-24:53
Ἰσραήλ	7 occurrences 1:16, 54, 68, 80; 2:25, 32, 34	2 occurrences 4:25, 27	1 occurrence 7:9	0 occurrences x	2 occurrences 22:30, 24:21
ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ	0 occurrences x	1 occurrence 4:43	7 occurrences 6:20; 7:28; 8:1, 10; 9:2, 11, 27	19 occurrences 9:60, 62; 10:9, 11; 11:20; 13:18, 20, 28, 29; 14:15; 16:16; 17:20, 21; 18:16, 17, 24, 25, 29; 19:11	4 occurrences 21:31, 22:16, 18; 23:51

Figure 4.1: Distribution of the terms "Israel" and "the Kingdom of God" in Luke's gospel

It is worth noting that the heaviest distribution of the term "Israel" in Luke occurs in the infancy narratives and that the only references to Israel in the culminating passion episodes in Jerusalem occur in the phrase cited above (24:21) and when Jesus tells the disciples at the Last Supper that they will eat and drink at His table in His kingdom (22:30 – one of a handful of uses of the term βασιλεία without τοῦ θεοῦ in Luke's gospel) and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

It is also worth noting that the last occurrence of "the Kingdom of God" in Luke occurs in 23:51, before Jesus' resurrection. It would thus appear that Luke shifts away from the language of "the Kingdom of God" and pivots back to "the redemption of Israel", substantiating a link between the infancy narratives and Luke 24 and vindicating the addition of this chapter. The current study would be incomplete in its analysis of Luke's hermeneutical foundations without following this "loose thread" through to the gospel's final chapter. It should also be noted that Luke 24 revives the use of supernatural messengers, who have largely been absent from the narrative since Luke 2 (in large part because Luke clearly considers John and Jesus to be divinely authoritative agents), in the angelophany at the empty tomb and in the speeches of the risen Jesus.

As the analysis of these episodes in the following sections will reveal, however, the divine revelation in this final chapter represents an inversion of focus from the revelation of the infancy narratives. While the angelophanies and prophecies of the infancy narratives look *forward*, raising expectations for the ministries of John and Jesus to come, the angelophanies and

epiphanies of Luke 24 look *backward* to clarify God's plan and the nature of Jesus' mission as the Christ. Just as the angelophanies and prophecies of the infancy narratives paralleled each other to create a dynamic web of expectations, so the divine messages of Luke 24 parallel one other to create a web of clarifying statements that help to explain why certain expectations from the infancy narratives have been "unequally fulfilled" in comparison to others.

4.3 THE STRUCTURE AND INTERNAL PARALLELS OF LUKE 23:55-24:53

The divine messages that announce Jesus' resurrection and clarify its implications take place over three back-to-back episodes, which the present author has labelled A, B and C in Figure 4.3 (starting on the next page). The compressed three verse ascension scene, which does not contain dialogue, has been included in episode C due to structural similarities with the Emmaus road dialogue. The resurrection episodes differ in length and the order of some events, but follow a roughly parallel progression, which take place in the following order:

1. **Setting the scene.** In episodes A and B this involves describing the journey of a plural group of unnamed disciples (neither episode features the apostles in this initial journey) away from Jerusalem. The conclusion of episode B provides the setting for C as the disciples who had traveled to Emmaus recount their experience.

2. **The appearance of the divine messenger.** In episodes A and B the first appearance is marked by the Septuagintism Καὶ ἐγένετο while in episode C only Jesus' final departure at the ascension receives the marker.

3. **The spoken revelation of the divine messenger.** In all three episodes (A, B and C) the divine message contains at least two components.

    3.a. **The divine messenger questions the actions of the disciples.** All three episodes indicate the actions, attitudes and expectations of the disciples are inappropriate in light of the information previously entrusted to them.

    3.b. **The divine messenger reveals the implications of the resurrection.** In all three episodes the messengers use a δεῖ clause to highlight the necessity of the events and suggest that previous revelation indicated this conclusion.

4. **The return to Jerusalem.** All three episodes end with information being relayed to the remaining apostles and disciples gathered together in Jerusalem.

Figure 4.2: Parallel elements in the episodes of divine revelation in Luke 24

The specific structure of each episode is outlined in the figure that follows, which also highlights the parallel elements outlined above:

A – Angelophany at the empty tomb

Lk 23:55-24:12

Luke 23:55-24:3: the women who had come from Galilee with
A1 Jesus, who had seen where and how Jesus was buried, prepare spices and ointments and rest on the Sabbath. Arriving at the tomb at dawn the following day, they find the tomb empty.

A2 Luke 24:4-5a: Καὶ ἐγένετο marker + ἰδοὺ – the women are perplexed by the empty tomb, two men in dazzling apparel appear and the women are afraid.

A3 Luke 24:5b-7: the angelophanic message:

A3.a "Why do you seek the one who lives among the dead? He is not here, but instead has risen!"

A3.b "Remember how he spoke to you while he was still in Galilee, saying how it was necessary (δεῖ) that the Son of Man be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and the third day rise."

A4 Luke 24:8-12: The women remember his words and report everything to the eleven and the rest. The women are named. The eleven consider their report to be "idle talk" but Peter runs to see the empty tomb. He returns home marveling (θαυμάζων).

B – Epiphany on the road to Emmaus

Lk 24:13-24:35

B1 Luke 24:13-14: That very day, "two of them" travel to Emmaus, discussing the morning's events.

B2 Luke 24:15-16: Καὶ ἐγένετο marker – Jesus himself (αὐτὸς Ἰησοῦς) begins traveling with them, but their eyes are prevented from recognizing him.

B3 Luke 24:17-27: the epiphanic conversation:

B3.a "What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you walk?"

(continued)

And they stopped, looking sad. Answering, one of them, named Cleopas, said to Him: “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know of the things which have happened here in these days?”

And He said to them: “What things?”

And they said to him: “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people (ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ), and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him to the sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he was the one destined to redeem Israel (ὁ μέλλων λυτροῦσθαι τὸν Ἰσραήλ). Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women among us amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning and when they did not find his body, they came, saying also that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women also had said, but him they did not see.”

B3.b And he said to them, “O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary (ἔδει) for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?”

And beginning with Moses and with all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

B1’ Luke 24:28-29: Jesus acts as if He were planning to journey farther, but the two urge Him to stay with them.

B2’ Luke 24:30-32: Καὶ ἐγένετο marker – Jesus breaks bread with them, their eyes are opened to His identity and Jesus vanishes.

The two recall how their hearts burned as Jesus explained the Scriptures to them on the road.

B4 Luke 24:33-35: That very hour, the two return to Jerusalem and confirm the resurrection to the eleven: “The Lord has risen indeed.” The previously unnamed disciple is named Simon.

(continued)

C – Appearance to and commissioning of the disciples

Lk 24:36-24:53

C1+C2 Luke 24:36-37: While the larger group of disciples is discussing the report of the two from Emmaus, Jesus appears in their midst with the simple greeting:

"Peace to you!"

C3 Luke 24:38-44: Jesus' 2nd epiphanic pronouncement

C3.a "Why are you troubled and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that I am myself. Touch me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."

Upon Jesus' demonstration of his hands and feet, the group disbelieves from joy and were marveling (θαυμαζόντων). Jesus asks for food and eats a piece of broiled fish in their presence before clarifying:

C3.b "These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that it is necessary to fulfill (δεῖ πληρωθῆναι) all things which are written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms."

C3' Luke 24:45-49: Commissioning and instruction

τότε – weak narrative time marker. Jesus opens their minds to understand the Scriptures before clarifying and commissioning:

"Thus it is written: for the Christ to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and for repentance and forgiveness of sins to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

You are witnesses of these things. I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

C1' Luke 24:50: Jesus leads the disciples out as far as Bethany and blesses them.

C2' Luke 24:51: Καὶ ἐγένετο marker – While Jesus is blessing the disciples, he ascends to heaven.

C4 Luke 24:52-53: The disciples return to Jerusalem with great joy and are continually in the Temple praising God.

Figure 4.3: Structure and parallels in the revelation episodes of Luke 23:55-24:53

This outline reveals clear structural parallels between the three appearance episodes, with the final post-resurrection commissioning episode combining aspects of the earlier encounters. While no episode is an exact carbon copy of another, all three share essential characteristics and repeatedly emphasize that the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus were part of God's plan and that both Old Testament precedent and Jesus' own warnings ought to have informed more adequate reactions on the disciples' part. The deliberate repetition of this pattern in all three episodes is an indication of its vital importance to the hermeneutic Luke is constructing. These similarities can be clearly noted in the figure below:

Episode	The Angelophany at the Empty Tomb – 23:55-24:12	Epiphany on the Road to Emmaus – 24:13-24:35	Appearance to the Disciples – 24:36-24:49
Divine messenger	Two men in dazzling apparel (angels)	The risen Jesus	The risen Jesus
Opening question	"Why do you seek the one who lives among the dead?" (Τί ζητεῖτε τὸν ζῶντα μετὰ τῶν νεκρῶν – 24:5)	"What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you walk?" (Τίνες οἱ λόγοι οὗτοι οὓς ἀντιβάλλετε πρὸς ἀλλήλους περιπατοῦντες; – 24:17)	"Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?" (Τί τεταραγμένοι ἐστὲ καὶ διὰ τί διαλογισμοὶ ἀναβαίνουσιν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν; – 24:38)
δεῖ **clause**	"…saying how it was necessary that the Son of Man be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise." (λέγων τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὅτι δεῖ παραδοθῆναι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων ἁμαρτωλῶν καὶ σταυρωθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστῆναι – 24:7)	"Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?" (οὐχὶ ταῦτα ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν καὶ εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ; – 24:26)	"…that it is necessary to fulfill all things which are written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms." (...ὅτι δεῖ πληρωθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωϋσέως καὶ τοῖς προφήταις καὶ ψαλμοῖς περὶ ἐμοῦ. – 24:44)

Previous information	"Remember how he spoke to you while he was still in Galilee…" (μνήσθητε ὡς ἐλάλησεν ὑμῖν ἔτι ὢν ἐν τῇ Γαλιλαίᾳ – 24:6)	"O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!" (Ὦ ἀνόητοι καὶ βραδεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ τοῦ πιστεύειν ἐπὶ πᾶσιν οἷς ἐλάλησαν οἱ προφῆται· – 24:25)	"These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you…" (Οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι μου οὓς ἐλάλησα πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἔτι ὢν σὺν ὑμῖν... – 24:44)

Figure 4.4: Side by side comparison of the parallel elements in Luke 23:55-24:49

The epiphany on the road to Emmaus is the most dynamic of the three episodes in terms of narrative and dialogue. It is nearly twice as long as the other episodes and the fact that Jesus is not immediately recognized creates a suspense that is missing from the other scenes. This is underscored by Jesus promptly vanishing upon being recognized, which confirms the supernatural nature of the revelation. In the other episodes, the sudden appearance of the messenger and immediate perception of their supernatural character confirms the legitimacy of their messages before they are uttered. The Emmaus road episode is also set apart by having dialogue, which, although condensed, adds important hermeneutical information by formulating the expectations of the disciples. This stands in contrast with the other episodes, in which the

women do not address the two men in dazzling apparel, and in which the disciples interact with Jesus but do not address him with direct speech in Luke's account.

It is also worth noting that the internal parallels between the angelophany of 23:55-24:12 and the epiphany of 24:13-35 help to explain the differences in form and function between this angelophany and those analyzed in the infancy narratives. In the infancy narratives, the divine messenger is always referred to with the term "angel" (ἄγγελος), while Luke 24:4 identifies the divine messengers as "two men in dazzling apparel" (ἄνδρες δύο ἐπέστησαν αὐταῖς ἐν ἐσθῆτι ἀστραπτούσῃ) who are only referred to as "angels" (ἀγγέλων) in 24:23 by the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Likewise, while the women were fearful (ἐμφόβων – 24:5) at the appearance of the messengers (as are the characters in the infancy narrative angelophanies), the instruction not to fear (ubiquitous in the infancy narrative angelophanies – see Figure 2.4) is entirely absent.

Perhaps most importantly, the primary function of the infancy narrative angelophanies was to establish expectations for the lives and ministries of John and Jesus. The divine revelation in Luke 24 looks backward to the passion episodes of the preceding chapter and to Jesus' forewarnings of his own suffering in order to correct errant expectations and prepare the disciples for the ministry which will follow in the perplexing and provocative steps of Jesus. Luke's focus in the angelophany of 24:4-7 is clearly not deigned to evoke the form or function of previous angelophanies, but rather to harmonize with other appearance episodes in the chapter to hammer home the focus of the triple δεῖ statements: that Jesus' perplexing sufferings were a necessary part of God's plan and ought to have been an integral part of the disciples' expectations, based on Jesus' own forewarnings and the witness of the Scriptures.

4.4 SCRIPTURE, FOREWARNING AND THE DISSONANCE OF HUMAN EXPECTATION

4.4.1 "Remember He said" and "It is written": Six forewarnings of Jesus' suffering and resurrection

The infancy narratives frequently featured divinely sent or divinely inspired messengers as mouthpieces of important information clearly aimed at informing the reader as well as recounting the narrative, a device that is revived in this final chapter of the gospel. The fact that the risen Jesus himself is the speaker in two of the three episodes is highly significant, as the resurrection places an indelible sign of God's approval on Jesus' activity (even more emphatic than the approval of the voice from heaven in 3:21 at the beginning of Jesus's ministry) in this chapter and, retroactively, on the entire gospel. The legitimating power of the resurrection is underscored by the fact that Luke rewinds the narrative slightly by beginning the book of Acts prior to Jesus' ascension, adding that his resurrected state was confirmed "by many convincing proofs" (ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις – Acts 1:3) over a period of forty days.

Unlike the messages delivered in the infancy narratives, all three messages in Luke 24 begin with a question, as the divine messenger indicates that the characters have misinterpreted and reacted incorrectly to the events that have taken place. In the angelophany at the empty tomb and in Jesus' final appearance to the disciples, this inappropriacy is apparent with the first word of the question: "why" (τί). It is also important to note that in both of these cases the messenger explicitly refers to episodes in which Jesus warned the disciples of his coming suffering and resurrection. It is important to analyze the way these passages ought to have shaped the disciples' expectations before proceeding to an analysis of the dialogues in Luke 24.

Tiede (1988:314) identifies six separate episodes in which Jesus implicitly signals or explicitly announces his imminent suffering, rejection, death and resurrection. The figure presented on the following pages will register Jesus' discourse in each warning and the disciples' response where one is recorded. While the six passages presented are based on Tiede's suggestions, the indication of whether a response from the disciples is recorded is the addition of the present author.

1st Announcement Luke 9:22	"It is necessary for the Son of Man to suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, chief priests and scribes, be killed, and be raised on the third day." (Δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν καὶ ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι.)
Disciples' Reaction	None recorded
2nd Announcement Luke 9:44	"Let these words sink into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men." (Θέσθε ὑμεῖς εἰς τὰ ὦτα ὑμῶν τοὺς λόγους τούτους· ὁ γὰρ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου μέλλει παραδίδοσθαι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων.)
Disciples' Reaction Luke 9:45	"But they did not understand this saying and it was being concealed from them so that they would not grasp it and they were afraid to ask him about this saying." (οἱ δὲ ἠγνόουν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο καὶ ἦν παρακεκαλυμμένον ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἵνα μὴ αἴσθωνται αὐτό, καὶ ἐφοβοῦντο ἐρωτῆσαι αὐτὸν περὶ τοῦ ῥήματος τούτου.)
3rd Announcement Luke 12:49-50	"I came to cast fire on the earth and how I wish that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptized with and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!" (Πῦρ ἦλθον βαλεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, καὶ τί θέλω εἰ ἤδη ἀνήφθη. βάπτισμα δὲ ἔχω βαπτισθῆναι, καὶ πῶς συνέχομαι ἕως ὅτου τελεσθῇ.)

Disciples' Reaction	None recorded
4th Announcement Luke 13:32-33	"Go and tell that fox: 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third I reach my goal.' Nevertheless, it is necessary for me to go on today and tomorrow and the next, for it is not possible for a prophet to perish outside Jerusalem." *(καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Πορευθέντες εἴπατε τῇ ἀλώπεκι ταύτῃ, Ἰδοὺ ἐκβάλλω δαιμόνια καὶ ἰάσεις ἀποτελῶ σήμερον καὶ αὔριον καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ τελειοῦμαι. πλὴν δεῖ με σήμερον καὶ αὔριον καὶ τῇ ἐχομένῃ πορεύεσθαι, ὅτι οὐκ ἐνδέχεται προφήτην ἀπολέσθαι ἔξω Ἰερουσαλήμ.)*
Disciples' Reaction	None recorded
5th Announcement Luke 17:25	"But first it is necessary that he suffer many things and be rejected by this generation." *(πρῶτον δὲ δεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ παθεῖν καὶ ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ἀπὸ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης.)*
Disciples' Reaction	None recorded
6th Announcement Luke 18:31-33	"Pay attention – we are going up to Jerusalem and all the things written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. For he will be handed over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit on, and after flogging him, they will kill him and on the third day he will rise." *(Ἰδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ, καὶ τελεσθήσεται πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα διὰ τῶν προφητῶν τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου· παραδοθήσεται γὰρ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν καὶ ἐμπαιχθήσεται καὶ ὑβρισθήσεται καὶ ἐμπτυσθήσεται καὶ μαστιγώσαντες ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ ἀναστήσεται.)*
Disciples' Reaction Luke 18:34	"But they understood none of these things and this saying was hidden from them and they did not understand the things that were said." *(καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐδὲν τούτων συνῆκαν, καὶ ἦν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο κεκρυμμένον ἀπ᾽ αὐτῶν, καὶ οὐκ ἐγίνωσκον τὰ λεγόμενα.)*

is about to be delivered into the hands of men." While all three Synoptic gospels recount a prophetic forewarning and a reaction from the disciples with similar language after the exorcism of the demoniac boy, each account contains distinct details that merit individual consideration. Luke's forewarning simply mentions Jesus being delivered into the hands of men, but lacks the specific mention of death and resurrection present in Matthew and Mark. It is worth noting that the narrative proximity of this second forewarning is much closer in Luke than in the other Synoptics, hence the reiteration in 9:44 is sufficiently close to 9:22 to make Jesus' point clear without mentioning death and resurrection a second time.

In fact, Jesus' point is so clear that Luke goes into greater detail than his Synoptic counterparts in describing the disciples' reaction: "But they did not understand this saying and it was being concealed from them so that they would not grasp it and they were afraid to ask him about this saying" (οἱ δὲ ἠγνόουν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο, καὶ ἦν παρακεκαλυμμένον ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἵνα μὴ αἴσθωνται αὐτό. καὶ ἐφοβοῦντο ἐρωτῆσαι αὐτὸν περὶ τοῦ ῥήματος τούτου – 9:45). Matthew mentions the disciples being deeply saddened, while Mark recounts the disciples' inability to understand and fear of inquiring further; only Luke states that the saying or matter "was being concealed from them".

The passive progressive construction of the Lukan detail of concealment leaves ambiguity as to *why* the disciples were unable to understand this warning. Most recent commentators agree that the message itself was sufficiently clear, thus Bock (1996:889-890) sees the passive as evidence that God or another spiritual force is behind the concealment. Nolland (1993:514) specifically mentions the possibility of Satanic intervention while Tiede (1988:193) sees this passive as deliberately ambiguous. Danker (1988:205) offers a different perspective: "Jesus' ministry transcends all normal patterns of human expectation, and it will take divine power, expressed through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, to open the minds of people for faith".

Danker's explanation most closely approximates this study's conclusion, which will be formulated after a complete analysis of all six announcements. It should, however, be observed that all three divine messages in Luke 24 question or rebuke the disciples' misunderstanding; this fact seems inconsistent with placing God or other spiritual forces behind the action. After all, why would God's messengers chastise people for a misunderstanding He caused, or that required divine power He (presumably) had not yet dispensed or that originated with demonic interference Jesus had done nothing to counteract (as he did in casting out the demon that resisted his disciples in 9:37-43)?

The only indication that interference is being counteracted comes in Luke 24:45 when Jesus opens the disciples' minds to understand the Scriptures. The language of this verse, however, leans far more heavily toward a sense of teaching or interpreting than it does to a removal of Satanic influence. The same verb διανοίγω ("open") and object γραφαί ("the Scriptures") are used in 24:32 in an episode that clearly indicates interpretation and instruction. Additionally, both episodes where Jesus "enlightens" the disciples with regard to the Scriptures come *after* the scenes of questioning and chastisement. Again, it must be asked: if the disciples were suffering from spiritual oppression, would it not be sensible to *first* remove the oppression and *then* indicate how their reactions had been affected?

The present author will, therefore, proceed along the general lines suggested by Danker: the unorthodox outworking of God's plan (which this study has documented at numerous points in the preceding chapters) constitutes an enormous challenge to the disciples' interpretive abilities and presupposed expectations, which in turn strongly condition their ability to react properly,

even in the face of revelation. At virtually every turn of the gospel, God's plan has moved contrary to Danker's aptly termed "patterns of human expectation" (1988:205). Many of these episodes include Luke's skillful demonstration of Scriptural precedent that the interpreters in question neglected to take into account. The diverse reactions explored in previous chapters, ranging from hymns of joy (Luke 1-2), to realignment with the covenant and participation in God's "new exodus" (3:1-20; 5:1-6:16), to murderous outrage (4:16-30), are all prompted by human confrontation with the unexpected contours of God's plan. Jesus' forewarnings, which repeatedly serve to advise his disciples of this plan, clearly defy human patterns of expectation in 9:45 and again in 18:34, where a similar passive verb is used.

The third and fourth "prophecies of the passion" proposed by Tiede (1988:314) are far more enigmatic than the double announcement and reaction in Luke 9. Luke 12:49-50 speaks more of judgement and the urgency of Jesus' prophetic mission than of the imminence of his suffering, death or resurrection. Luke 13:32-33 is easier to associate with Jesus' death due to his indication that Jerusalem is the place where prophets are killed and the Pharisees' indication in 13:31 that Herod desired to kill Jesus. However, the enigmatic progression of "today", "tomorrow" and "the third/next" without the use of "day" and the fact that the action associated with the clause is to "go on" (πορεύεσθαι – 13:33) to Jerusalem does not approach the clarity of other passion forewarnings. It is also important to note that the divine messengers in Luke 24 seem to be referring to the more explicit warnings in Luke 9 and 18 due to the mention of Galilee (exclusive to Luke 9) and the link to Old Testament precedent (exclusive to Luke 18).

Jesus' fifth forewarning in Luke 17:25 is far clearer than those in 12:50 and 13:32-33, but also occurs in a unique context. Unlike the forewarnings in Luke 9:22, 9:44 and 18:32-33, this forewarning is not cast as a private aside reserved for Jesus' disciples. Instead, it occurs in the midst of Jesus' eschatological discourse in Luke 17:20-37 with the indication that "first, it is necessary that he (the Son of Man – 17:24) suffer many things and be rejected by this generation" (πρῶτον δὲ δεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ παθεῖν καὶ ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ἀπὸ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης – 17:25). By opening with πρῶτον ("first", reinforced by the use of δὲ to mark a new development – Runge, 2010:31-36), Jesus places the forewarning in 17:25 in a different temporal setting that clearly antecedes the eschatological events described in the rest of the discourse. By echoing the first two of his forewarnings from 9:22, Jesus clearly envisions that his disciples will recall previous revelation and will thus be better equipped to discern the coming of the Kingdom in a context of evident confusion.

Read contextually in light of Jesus' eschatological discourse, Luke 17:25 is a clear indication to the disciples that the consummation of the Kingdom of God will not take place all at once. On the one hand, the Kingdom is emphatically pictured as "in the midst of you" (Ἐκεῖ, ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστιν – 17:21) while others confusedly look for observable signs. On the other hand, 17:26-32 use images of divine judgement from the Old Testament to depict a

final judgement that clearly belongs to a discernible future time. This discourse (among others) points to Luke's complex and multi-faceted presentation of the Kingdom of God, which clearly contains "already" and "not yet" elements (Bock, 1994:440-441; Ellis, 2014:121). The notions of temporal discernment and "already confirmed" versus "not yet consummated" raised by 17:25 will return to the fore in the opening scene of Acts 1 through the disciples' questions to Jesus about the "restoration of the kingdom to Israel".

Jesus' final forewarning to the disciples in Luke 18:31-34 is also his clearest, most urgent and most comprehensive. In the midst of series of public episodes, he pulls the twelve aside to tell them: "Pay attention – we are going up to Jerusalem and all the things written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished" (Παραλαβὼν δὲ τοὺς δώδεκα εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς, Ἰδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ, καὶ τελεσθήσεται πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα διὰ τῶν προφητῶν τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου – 18:31). The fact that Jesus does not specify *which* prophetic texts indicate these things is a clear indication that he expects the disciples' own familiarity with the Old Testament to be sufficient, just as Luke does not see the need to point particular texts out to the reader, as he does in other places in the gospel.

Jesus goes on to specify the actions that will take place in Jerusalem in accordance with Old Testament precedent: "For he will be handed over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit on and, having flogged him, they will kill him and on the third day, he will rise" (παραδοθήσεται γὰρ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν καὶ ἐμπαιχθήσεται καὶ ὑβρισθήσεται καὶ ἐμπτυσθήσεται καὶ μαστιγώσαντες ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ ἀναστήσεται – 18:32-33). It must be admitted that such a detailed, objectively verifiable list of actions that will take place in the near future, and which are consistent with the Scriptures, seems incredibly difficult for the disciples to misinterpret. Nonetheless, Jesus' clearest forewarning is followed by a second reference to a lack of understanding: "they understood none of these things and this saying was hidden from them and they did not understand the things that were said" (καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐδὲν τούτων συνῆκαν καὶ ἦν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο κεκρυμμένον ἀπ' αὐτῶν καὶ οὐκ ἐγίνωσκον τὰ λεγόμενα – 18:34).

As in the case of the "concealed saying" in 9:45, many commentators read κεκρυμμένον ("was hidden") as a theological passive, meaning that it is God who hides the meaning of this forewarning until the appropriate time (Danker, 1988:302; Tiede, 1988:316; Bock, 1996:1499). It seems somewhat peculiar that these commentators, who differed over how to interpret "concealment" (the perfect passive participle παρακεκαλυμμένον) in Luke 9:45, agree that the "hiding" (the perfect passive participle κεκρυμμένον) in 18:34 is a theological passive, in spite of Bock noting that the two verbs are virtually synonymous (1996:1499). As the present author argued above (summarily), the triple rebuke and references to Jesus' forewarnings in Luke 24 present a challenge to this view, as they clearly attribute a significant degree of responsibility for the misapprehension to the disciples themselves. Section 4.4.2 will formulate an alternative

explanation correlating human interpretation, Jesus' forewarning statements and the rebuke statements of Luke 24.

4.4.2 "It was necessary": dissonance between God's plan and the disciples' presupposed narratives in Luke 24

The impact of the rebuking episodes in Luke 24 on the interpretation of the disciples' inability to comprehend and respond to Jesus' repeated forewarnings seem to have been largely neglected by the authors cited. Given that the present author has taken pains to be cautious with the practice of "back-reading", a clearer meaning for a word or concept from a later portion of the narrative back into an earlier pericope makes it is important to justify the use of Luke 24 in clarifying the debated passives in 9:45 and 18:34. In this particular case, returning to these passages in light of Luke 24 is merited by the fact that the messengers at the empty tomb in Luke 24 *specifically* refer to the forewarning episodes of Luke 9 (which take place in Galilee as per 24:6) just as the resurrected Jesus refers to the Old Testament precedent invoked by his forewarning in Luke 18. These references direct the reader to recall Jesus' clearest forewarnings, which are (uncoincidentally) *also* the episodes that highlight the disciples' misapprehension.

It should also be noted that the present author is *not* positing that the interpretation outlined in this section would have been clear to Luke's reader on an initial reading of the passages noted. The ambiguity of Luke's language is attested by the diverse explanations outlined above in connection with 9:45. The present author also posits, however, that there is a decided "narrative tension" between the clarity of Jesus' warnings and the disciples' obdurate confusion, which was likely to pique the reader's curiosity. It must have been puzzling indeed for Luke's reader to note that, even when confronted with an empty tomb, the women only "remembered his (Jesus') words/sayings" (ἐμνήσθησαν τῶν ῥημάτων αὐτοῦ – 24:8; it is worth noting Luke's use of ῥημάτων, echoing 9:45 and 18:34) *after* having been instructed to do so by the angelic messengers.

Even after the women carry the news of the empty tomb, the angelophany and the instruction to *remember Jesus' words* back to the larger group of disciples, their obdurate incomprehension persists. While Peter runs to see the empty tomb and marvels (24:12), the lack of rejoicing (which only occurs in the final episode at 24:41) would seem to indicate that he still has not grasped the meaning of the event. The risen Jesus encounters errant expectation and misinterpretation on the disciples' lips on the road to Emmaus and in the reactions of the gathered disciples at His final appearance. Again and again the divine messengers in Luke 24 hammer home the point that the disciples had received sufficient instruction to put the pieces together, but failed to do so.

Thus, while the ambiguous use of the passive would seem to indicate that the disciples' incomprehension was at least permissible in accordance with God's plan at that stage of Jesus' ministry, and may even indicate some degree of divine involvement, the repeated rebukes of Luke 24 make it desirable to identify a *human* mechanism for the difficulties encountered by the disciples. Luke's language clearly holds the disciples responsible for their improper responses to Jesus' forewarnings. Therefore, a human mechanism of interpretation and expectation is necessary to adequately deal with the human focus of Luke's language (it should be noted that proposing a human mechanism does not negate the possibility of simultaneous influence from the spiritual realm).

This is especially true given that the present author will argue that Luke is emphasizing the disciples' interpretive difficulties in order to challenge potentially faulty presuppositions within Theophilus' own hermeneutical framework. By challenging these presuppositions, Luke is following in the "provocative mold" of the divine agents in the narrative (albeit with a subtler approach) to help resolve the reader's interpretive struggles and reinforce the security/certainty (ἀσφάλεια) of the gospel message as indicated in the prologue (see section 2.2.7). Indeed, such an authorial approach would be entirely consistent with the objectives of a "rhetorical narrative" as suggested by this study's exploration of Hellenistic literary convention in section 2.2.1.

The possibility that Luke is using the disciples' interpretive difficulties to subtly challenge similar difficulties on the part of the reader makes attributing the disciples' difficulties *exclusively* to interference from God or Satan undesirable. Nowhere does Luke indicate Theophilus' difficulties arise from spiritual interference and, if the present author's thesis is correct, such a reading would inhibit rather than aid Luke's authorial enterprise. It is therefore beneficial to propose a human mechanism that serves to explain the disciples' inability to react properly to Jesus' forewarnings and to Old Testament prophecy, as such a mechanism would have the potential to also aid with Theophilus' apparent difficulties in embracing the gospel message with certainty.

The ambiguity present in both passages leads the present author to lay aside the question of *who* is behind the concealment to explore *how* the disciples were able to witness the specific events described by Jesus without any apparent recall of either the Scriptures or Jesus' forewarnings, even when confronted with the empty tomb. It is here that Danker's note of "patterns of human expectation" (1988:205), initially presented in connection with Luke 9:45 (but apparently not considered in connection with 18:34) offers promise. It is entirely likely that the disciples' system of social, political and theological expectations and presuppositions created such strong "cognitive dissonance" with the information presented by Jesus in the prophetic forewarnings that they were simply unable to grasp Jesus' words in a way that had any visible effect on their actions in Luke 24. The fact that their system of expectations and presuppositions was primarily informed by first-century Jewish tradition which claimed to be based on Old Testament prophecy adds additional weight to the difficulty.

The disciples, in spite of their acceptance of Jesus as “the Christ of God” (Luke 9:20), were not more inherently immune to the influence of flawed or incomplete expectations than the Pharisees and other religious leaders who were so frequently scandalized by Jesus’ ministry and largely sided with those who rejected him. As sections 2.3.13 and 2.3.14 defended, the fact that Mary, who best exemplifies the proper responses of joyful praise and active participation in the infancy narratives, was unable to comprehend and respond to Jesus’ declaration of his unique relationship to the Father’s purposes in 2:49-50 demonstrates how even positive characters suffer from interpretive difficulties (a point Luke seems to emphasize early and often). This was precisely the point of Jesus’ parable of the garments and wineskins at the end of Luke 5 (see section 3.3.2); those who have drunk most deeply of the “old wine” are the most likely to reject that which is new.

Jesus’ parable appears to have been well ahead of its time, describing the phenomenon of “cognitive dissonance” long before social psychology coined the term. The theory of cognitive dissonance describes the mental discomfort caused by encountering information that contradicts or challenges a person’s existing beliefs and describes a series of possible coping mechanisms for reducing or resolving this inconsistency (Festinger, 1957:2-3). A wealth of empirical studies have described the diverse ways that individuals manifest such mental discomfort and attempt to resolve it.

Studies have highlighted negative responses such as anger, fear, insecurity, rejection of the speaker and their message and consciously acting in spite of the apparent factuality and reliability of the information (Moravec *et al*., 2019:1343–1360; Taddicken & Wolff, 2020:206–217). Such responses can easily be associated with Simeon’s prophecies in Luke 2:29-35 and dramatic episodes like John’s imprisonment in 3:19-29 and the violent rejection of Jesus in Nazareth in 4:16-30. Studies have also highlighted the ways cognitive dissonance can contribute to weakening what once appeared to be unassailable confidence in a belief system and even provoke deconversion from the belief system and/or conversion to another (Festinger, *et al.,* 2008:214-256; Inbari, 2018:127-149), offering insight into John’s proclamation of a baptism of repentance in 3:2b-18 and Jesus’ call of his first disciples as “fishers of men” in 5:1-11 (Green, 2015:87-99).

Jesus’ parables of the wineskins and garments in Luke 5 and the disciples’ inability to act in accordance with Jesus’ forewarnings in Luke 24 are consistent with the behaviors observed in these studies. Indeed, Matthew 17:23’s description of the disciples’ reaction to the second prophetic forewarning as “deeply saddened” (ἐλυπήθησαν σφόδρα) and Luke and Mark’s note that the disciples were “afraid to ask him” (ἐφοβοῦντο ἐρωτῆσαι αὐτὸν) would appear to be highly consistent with the responses to cognitive dissonance observed in the studies cited above. While the identification and study of “cognitive dissonance” might be a relatively recent phenomenon, the basic human difficulty of reconciling firmly entrenched values and patterns of

expectation with contradictory information is well documented throughout history and the Scriptures.

As has already been noted, classifying the disciples' incomprehension and misinformed action in the face of the resurrection as the result of poor management of strong cognitive dissonance is not incompatible with a theological reading of Luke's text. The current author is seeking to substantiate a human mechanism that works in consonance with the fact that the text of Luke 24 clearly holds the disciples responsible for their misapprehension (although, it should be noted, without any indication of judgement or penalization). Thus, the present author postulates that the two men at the empty tomb query "Why do you seek the one who lives among the dead?" because a different course of action was not only possible, but to be expected. Thus, the the women would have reacted more appropriately if the information Jesus "spoke to you while he was still in Galilee" had not created so much cognitive dissonance with their own presupposed narratives of how the Christ should act (or if they had managed that dissonance more successfully).

Inversely, it is Old Testament precedent and not Jesus' forewarnings that form the basis of his rebuke on the road to Emmaus. While Jesus' initial question to the two disciples ("What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you walk?") indicates misinterpretation less clearly than the question posed by the angels at the empty tomb, it is important to note that Jesus' identity was unknown to the disciples at this moment during the dialogue. This is evidenced by the fact that the two disciples interpret the question as an indication of the unknown traveller's unfamiliarity with the topic.

Their misinterpretation is made clear in an emphatic way, however, when Jesus responds to their characterization of his ministry, his identity and the news of the resurrection with: "O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!" (Ὦ ἀνόητοι καὶ βραδεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ τοῦ πιστεύειν ἐπὶ πᾶσιν οἷς ἐλάλησαν οἱ προφῆται – 24:25). The fact that the writings of the Old Testament provided sufficient foundation for correctly interpreting and reacting to "the things which have happened here in these days" (τὰ γενόμενα ἐν αὐτῇ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις – Luke 24:18) is underscored by the fact that Jesus proceeded by "beginning with Moses and with all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ Μωϋσέως καὶ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν προφητῶν διερμήνευσεν αὐτοῖς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς γραφαῖς τὰ περὶ ἑαυτοῦ – 24:27).

As in the previous episode, the disciples on the Emmaus road are only able to adequately grapple with their own presupposed systems of messianic expectation when confronted by the mysterious traveller. While the specific difficulties contained in their system of expectations will be analyzed in more detail later in this chapter, the disciples take significant steps toward identifying the primary culprit within their system of expectations and beliefs when they confess:

“But we were hoping that he was the one destined to redeem Israel” (ἡμεῖς δὲ ἠλπίζομεν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ μέλλων λυτροῦσθαι τὸν Ἰσραήλ – 24:21). It is fascinating to note that, although news of the empty tomb had already reached them (24:10-11), it made more sense to them to characterize the news as “an idle tale/nonsense” (λῆρος – 24:27) rather than an indication of genuine hope that God was in the midst of redemptive work.

The imperfect “we were hoping” (ἠλπίζομεν) does not eliminate the possible continuity of this hope (Bock, 1996:1913; Wallace, 1996:541), but does indicate that the disciples’ largely regard it as defeated. As Bock notes:

> In the pair’s view, the possibility of such a hope coming to fruition for Israel died with Jesus on the cross. What they did not know is that this hope would be realized in an unexpected way, as the message of Acts and the rest of the NT show. (1996:1914).

In spite of the present author’s objections to some of Brawley’s conclusions regarding the nature of kingship language and its fulfillment in Luke-Acts (see section 2.3.8), he correctly observes the tension (one could even posit, cognitive dissonance) created by the crucifixion and messianic expectations:

> The crucifixion is a final blow that devastates the hopes of Jesus’ followers that he would be the Messiah (24:21). Luke-Acts transforms this potential disconfirmation of messianism into its confirmation. The scriptures, properly interpreted, anticipate that the Messiah must suffer (Luke 24:26-27, 45-47). (1990:30)

The present author strongly endorses the argument that Luke seeks to turn “disconfirmation” into “confirmation” and that this transformation largely revolves around the proper interpretation of the Scriptures. Jesus’ final appearance to the disciples in 24:36-49 contains a rebuke of the disciples’ persistent misapprehensions on the basis of his own forewarnings and the revelation of the Scriptures:

> “Why are you troubled and why do doubts arise in your hearts?… These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you: that it is necessary to fulfill all the things which are written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms.”
>
> (Τί τεταραγμένοι ἐστὲ καὶ διὰ τί διαλογισμοὶ ἀναβαίνουσιν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ... οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι μου οὓς ἐλάλησα πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἔτι ὢν σὺν ὑμῖν ὅτι δεῖ πληρωθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωϋσέως καὶ τοῖς προφήταις καὶ ψαλμοῖς περὶ ἐμοῦ – 24:38, 44).

In this final rebuke, Jesus ties his own forewarnings to Old Testament precedent, which he indicated in 18:31 ought to have produced the expectation that suffering and resurrection would accompany his ministry. These three rebuking episodes produce a clear picture of the hermeneutic Luke is defending: as perplexing as Jesus' suffering and resurrection might have seemed to His disciples (and to any reader expecting the presupposed narrative of the messiah to necessarily end with political triumph), these events *were in fact* God's plan. The triple δεῖ statements in each episode hammer this point home over and over again:

> "It was necessary that the Son of Man be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day to rise" (τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὅτι δεῖ παραδοθῆναι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων ἁμαρτωλῶν καὶ σταυρωθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστῆναι – 24:7).

> "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?" (οὐχὶ ταῦτα ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν καὶ εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ; – 24:26)

> "It was necessary that all the things written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms be fulfilled" (δεῖ πληρωθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωϋσέως καὶ τοῖς προφήταις καὶ ψαλμοῖς περὶ ἐμοῦ – 24:44).

Luke is emphatic that the outworking of God's program of salvation, announced by the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms, necessitated the cross and the resurrection. While Luke is careful to indicate that the presupposed narrative of messianic victory and the restoration of the kingdom to Israel has not been *invalidated*, he categorically insists that the lack of fulfillment of these expectations *does not* represent disconfirmation of Jesus' status as the Christ. As will be indicated in the opening episodes of Acts (see section 4.6), the present confirmation of Jesus' identity through his ministry, suffering and resurrection requires a response of belief, joyful praise and active participation to bring about the final fulfillment. It would seem that Luke believes this final fulfillment will include *both* the restoration of the kingdom to Israel and the consummation of the Kingdom of God.

This repetitive pattern of underlining necessity and rebuking misapprehension seems to be a deliberate authorial attempt to draw Theophilus' own Christological presuppositions into question. If the insecurity or uncertainty Theophilus felt about the "instruction received" (περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων – 1:4) was due to a similar set of reductionistic expectations based on tradition and socio-political assumptions rather than on a holistic reading of the Old Testament or attention to Jesus' words, this narrative pattern would constitute a gentle but decisive attack on the reader's own hermeneutical framework. It should be noted that Luke's persuasive strategy is not predominantly negative; this is no diatribe against those who stubbornly insist on presupposed patterns of messianic expectation. Rather, Luke's construction of a convincing presentation of God's project of salvation realized for Israel and all peoples through John and

Jesus offers Theophilus a secure hermeneutical framework, which is reinforced by Luke's subtle but determined efforts to reveal the insecurities inherent in competing systems of interpretation, expectation and response.

This explains why Luke is intent on demonstrating how the forgiveness of sins made possible by the suffering and resurrection of Jesus was a fulfillment of both Old Testament expectation and of the divine announcements of the infancy narratives. On the other hand, he is not shy about addressing the unfulfilled expectations of kingship and restored political autonomy, which Luke is clearly aware are likewise undergirded by Old Testament prophecy and divine announcement. It is here that the temporal vision of Luke 17:25 and the hermeneutical pattern suggested in section 2.3.14 come into play. By demonstrating that Jesus' rejection, death and resurrection had to take place *before* the final consummation of the kingdom of God, Luke leaves continued space for future fulfillment to take place.

Thus, it would seem that Luke's authorial pursuit of providing certainty or security as laid out in the prologue comes to a head in this final chapter as a question of hermeneutics. Can the message of the gospel, portrayed as the necessary outworking of God's plan, convince Theophilus that "This is the ending you were waiting for, even though it doesn't look like you thought it would" (Wright, 2013:193-194)? Luke clearly desires for Theophilus to grasp onto the fulfillments of Scripture presented over the course of the gospel and to embrace the dissonance inducing "disconfirmation" of the crucifixion as *necessary* according to God's plan. He also takes pains to caution the reader against allowing the frustration and misapprehension shared by positive characters within the narrative to lead to stubborn resistance. Instead, Theophilus is encouraged to joyfully recognize the recent confirmation and accept the invitation to participate in God's promised project of salvation.

4.5 THE UNEXPECTED CONFIRMATION: SUFFERING, RESURRECTION AND GLORY

4.5.1 Beginnings and endings: patterns of praise, participation and confirmation

The preceding section examined the way the divine messengers in Luke 24 repeatedly pointed to the Scriptures and to Jesus' words as the correct basis for formulating expectations and reacting to God's unfolding program. The problematic area of "Israel's redemption" has already been highlighted as a point of connection to the infancy narratives and this source of unfulfilled expectation will be expanded on in section 4.6 through an analysis of Acts 1. The present section aims to explore how Luke's divine messengers take pains to portray the unexpected events of the passion, the resurrection and Jesus' ascension to glory as acts of confirmation and fulfillment of Scripture that merit acceptance and joyful celebration, regardless of any remaining doubts surrounding "Israel's redemption".

This study outlined a pattern of promise – confirmation – final fulfillment – public proclamation and praise in section 2.3.14, expanding on a more limited pattern first noted by Green (1997:48). In Zechariah and Mary's case, this pattern was initiated by the appearance of an unexpected divine messenger whose promise was designed to create human expectation. Questions from characters caused the divine messenger to give a sign that served to provide confirmation and certainty that the unlikely final fulfillment would come. Both characters responded with a hymn of praise, although it was noted that Mary's hymn was occasioned by the confirmation while Zechariah's only occurred in response to the final fulfillment.

It is worth revisiting patterns of promise, confirmation, fulfillment and praise in light of the return of unexpected divine messengers and of the language of joyful praise to Luke's narrative. As has already been noted in this chapter, Luke does not explicitly allude to Old Testament passages in this final chapter, as the Scriptural foundations for Jesus' actions were programmatically previewed in the infancy narratives and then pointed out in various echoes, quotations and parallels in the episodes of Luke 3-23 as Jesus fulfilled specific aspects of Scriptural promise. Luke clearly feels satisfied that sufficient evidence of such confirmatory fulfillment has been provided, with the implication that the gospel's final chapter simply refers to "the things written" about Jesus in the Scriptures. Having already built his case for specific cases of Scriptural fulfillment in the preceding narratives, Luke uses this final chapter to underline the necessity of Jesus' unexpected suffering and death in accordance with God's plan and promise while highlighting the importance of proper response.

While the divine messages of the angelophany at the empty tomb and of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances and their summary references to Old Testament promise and confirmation have been studied above, it is necessary to substantiate the way that Luke 24 revives the language of praise from Luke's infancy narratives before the pattern can be outlined. The infancy narratives frequently use the terms "to bless/praise God" (εὐλογέω + τὸν θεόν), "to bless/praise a person" (εὐλογέω + person), "great joy" (χαρά + μέγας) and "from on high" (ἐξ ὕψους) in setting up the hymnic declarations of praise which were analyzed in chapter 2. As the following figure demonstrates, all of these terms are used again in the final verses of Luke 24:

Language of praise	Uses in the Infancy Narratives	Uses in Luke 24
"to bless/praise God" εὐλογέω + τὸν θεόν Note: these are the only 3 occurrences of "εὐλογέω + θεός as object" in Luke's gospel.	**Context:** John's circumcision and naming, setting up Zechariah's praise hymn, the "Benedictus" **Luke 1:64:** "And instantly his mouth was opened and his tongue and he spoke blessing God" (εὐλογῶν τὸν θεόν)	**Context:** the final narrative in Luke's gospel, the disciples return to Jerusalem after the ascension. **Luke 24:53:** "…and were always in the temple blessing God. (εὐλογοῦντες τὸν θεόν)"

Language of praise	Uses in the Infancy Narratives	Uses in Luke 24
"to bless/praise God" (continued)	**Context:** Jesus' Temple dedication, setting up Simeon's praise hymn, the "Nunc Dimittis" **Luke 2:28:** "and he took him into his arms and blessed God (εὐλόγησεν τὸν θεὸν) and said…"	(only one use in Luke 24, see the previous page)
"to bless/praise a person" εὐλογέω + person Note: these are the only narrative occasions in Luke's gospel where one character blesses another/ others without quoting the Old Testament. Other occurrences of "εὐλογέω + person" in Luke's gospel are found in 6:28 as an imperative in Jesus' teaching and in quoting Psalm 118:26 in a separate prophecy-fulfillment pattern in 13:35 and 19:38.	**Context:** Elizabeth speaking to Mary upon being filled by the Holy Spirit (Mary's confirming sign episode) **Luke 1:42:** "…and she exclaimed with a loud cry and said: "Blessed [are] you (εὐλογημένη σὺ) among women and blessed [is] the fruit of your womb. (εὐλογημένος ὁ καρπὸς τῆς κοιλίας σου)" **Context:** the setting of Simeon's second prophetic pronouncement **Luke 2:34a:** "And Simeon blessed them (εὐλόγησεν αὐτοὺς) and said to Mary his mother…"	**Context:** the final narrative of Luke's gospel; the disciples return to Jerusalem after the ascension. **Luke 24:50-51:** "And he led them out as far as Bethany and he lifted his hands and blessed them (εὐλόγησεν αὐτούς). And it happened, in his blessing them (ἐν τῷ εὐλογεῖν αὐτὸν αὐτοὺς), that he parted from them and was carried up into heaven."
"great joy" χαρά + μέγας Note: these are the only occurrences of "χαρά + μέγας" in Luke's gospel.	**Context:** angelic announcement of Jesus' birth to the shepherds, sets up angelic praise proclamation in 2:14 **Luke 2:10:** "And the angel said to them, "Do not fear, for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy (εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην) that will be for all the people."	**Context:** the disciples have just watched Jesus ascend into heaven. **Luke 24:52:** "And they, having worshipped him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy (μετὰ χαρᾶς μεγάλης)"
"from on high" ἐξ ὕψους Note: these are the only 2 occurrences of "ὕψος" in Luke's gospel and both occur after the preposition ἐκ	**Context:** after months of divinely imposed silence, the Holy Spirit fills Zechariah and looses his tongue to praise and prophecy. In 1:78, his hymn transitions from previewing John's ministry to previewing that of the messianic "Dawn" **Luke 1:78:** "…because of the tender mercy of our God, in which the Dawn will visit us from on high." (ἐν οἷς ἐπισκέψεται ἡμᾶς ἀνατολὴ ἐξ ὕψους,)	**Context:** After commissioning his disciples to be "witnesses of these things" and proclaimers of "forgiveness of sins in his name", Jesus gives them previsionary instructions. **Luke 24:49:** "And I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But you – stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (ἐνδύσησθε ἐξ ὕψους δύναμιν)

Figure 4.6: Occurrences of the language of joyful praise in Luke's gospel

The figure demonstrates a highly specific and selective distribution of these terms in Luke's gospel: they are used to set up proclamations of praise in the infancy narratives (in 1:64, 2:28 and 2:34 the words that immediately follow *are* the opening lines of the praise hymn) and in the final pericope of Luke's gospel (24:50-53). In Luke 24:50-53, the disciples have just received Jesus' final blessing and watched him ascend to heaven. While the events of Acts will demonstrate that their understanding of God's plan is still far from complete, the disciples' joyous praise is evidence that they have finally grasped the idea at the heart of the divine messages: that the unexpected fulfillment of Jesus' suffering, death, resurrection and entry to glory are the indubitable manifestation of God's plan. Thus, the "suffering of the Christ", rather than being disconfirmation of Jesus' messiahship as was presumed by the disciples on the road to Emmaus in 24:19-24, is actually the confirmation that Jesus *was* "the Christ of God" (Τὸν χριστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ – an identification found on Peter's lips in Luke 9:20, just before the forewarning the disciples' did not understand).

The parallels between Luke 24 and the infancy narratives highlight the two principal characteristics of correct response to God's confirmation: joyful praise and involvement in the plan's expansion and continuation. This is explicitly confirmed in 24:46-47 when Jesus uses "thus it is written" (Οὕτως γέγραπται – 24:46) to set up two infinitive clauses. The first clause affirms Jesus' suffering and resurrection as confirmatory fulfillment (παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ ἀναστῆναι ἐκ νεκρῶν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ – 24:46). The second infinitive cause indicates that active participation on the disciples' part is needed to bring about further fulfillment (καὶ κηρυχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ μετάνοιαν εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη. ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλήμ ὑμεῖς ἐστε μάρτυρες τούτων – 24:47-48 [the THGNT punctuates the end of 24:47 and 48 differently than the UBS 5 and in a way the present author believes better reflects the thrust of Luke's thought: ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλήμ. ὑμεῖς ἐστε μάρτυρες τούτων, …]).

Therefore, unlike Zechariah, Simeon and the angelic hosts, who fade from the pages of Luke's narrative after their praise proclamations, the disciples continue to play an important role in the narrative thrust of Luke-Acts. As was explored in section 2.3.14, Mary provides the best archetype for the type of response of praise and active participation being asked of the disciples in Luke 24 (Paul will follow a unique path among the apostles in Acts and thus Zechariah's archetype provides a more fitting model for his narrative arc, as was noted in section 2.3.14). Before outlining the pattern from Luke 24, however, it is important to note that Mary's episode of misapprehension came *after* the final fulfillment of the angelic promise.

For Jesus' disciples, however, their misapprehension was noted in parallel with the forewarnings of suffering (see Figure 4.5), which is an entirely natural difference. As was noted in section 2.3.14, Mary's archetypal role serves to create reader awareness of the "best case" pattern, but does not necessitate that that other characters who follow in similar footsteps must strictly follow the same sequence of events. Therefore, in light of the disciples' experience in Luke's gospel,

the pattern that is finalized in Luke 24 is best labelled “forewarning of suffering” – “clarification of fulfillment” – “instruction for continuing involvement” – “praise response”. The present author has selected the forewarnings from Luke 9, 17 and 18, as these episodes were linked to the disciples’ lack of understanding and share the most linguistic commonality with Luke 24. Repeated terms are highlighted in italics, with the Greek text provided in parentheses, as laid out in the figure on the following pages:

Forewarning of Suffering (1)	**Made by:** Jesus **Made to:** Jesus’ disciples while geographically in Galilee (Luke 9:18) **Promise:** “It is necessary for *the Son of Man* (τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) *to suffer many things* (πολλὰ παθεῖν), *be rejected* (ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι) by the elders, *chief priests* (ἀρχιερέων) and scribes, *be killed* (ἀποκτανθῆναι), and *be raised on the third day*. (τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι)” (Luke 9:22) “…for *the Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men*.” (ὁ γὰρ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου μέλλει παραδίδοσθαι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων) (Luke 9:44b)
Forewarning of Suffering (2)	**Made by:** Jesus **Made to:** Jesus’ disciples during the movement toward Jerusalem (Luke 17:22) **Promise:** “But first it is necessary that he *suffer many things* (πολλὰ παθεῖν) and *be rejected* (ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι) by this generation.” (Luke 17:25)
Forewarning of Suffering (3)	**Made by:** Jesus **Made to:** The twelve as they near Jerusalem (Luke 18:31) **Promise:** “Pay attention – we are going up to Jerusalem and *all the things written through the prophets* (πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα διὰ τῶν προφητῶν) *about the Son of Man* (τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) will be accomplished. For *he will be handed over* (παραδοθήσεται) to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit on and, having flogged him, *they will kill him* (ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν) and *on the third day, he will rise* (τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ ἀναστήσεται).” (Luke 18:31-33)
Clarification of Fulfillment (1)	**Made by:** the angels at the empty tomb **Made to:** the women who came with him from Galilee, who in turn tell the larger group of disciples (Luke 23:55, 24:9) **Fulfillment:** “Remember how he spoke to you while he was still in Galilee, saying how it was necessary that *the Son of Man* (τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) *be delivered* (παραδοθῆναι) *into the hands of sinful men* (εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων ἁμαρτωλῶν) and *be crucified* (σταυρωθῆναι) and *the third day rise* (τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστῆναι).” (Luke 24:6b-7)

Clarification of Fulfillment (2)	**Made by:** the risen Jesus **Made to:** two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13) **Fulfillment:** "Was it not necessary for the Christ to *suffer these things* (ταῦτα... παθεῖν) and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26) "and how our *chief priests* (οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς) and rulers *delivered him to the sentence of death* (παρέδωκαν αὐτὸν... εἰς κρίμα θανάτου) and *crucified him* (ἐσταύρωσαν αὐτόν)." – contextual clarification of "these things" described by the disciples in Luke 24:20
Clarification of Fulfillment (3)	**Made by:** the risen Jesus **Made to:** the larger group of disciples, including the eleven (Luke 24:33) **Fulfillment:** "These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you that it is necessary *to fulfill all things which are written about me* (πληρωθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα... περὶ ἐμοῦ) in the Law of Moses and *the Prophets* (ἐν... τοῖς προφήταις) and the Psalms." (Luke 24:44) "*Thus it is written* (οὕτως γέγραπται): for the Christ *to suffer* (παθεῖν) and *rise from the dead on the third day*…(ἀναστῆναι ἐκ νεκρῶν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ)" (Luke 24:46)
Instruction for Continuing Involvement (1)	**Made by:** the risen Jesus **Made to:** the larger group of disciples, including all three groups addressed in the fulfillment episodes. (Luke 24:33) **Response:** "*Thus it is written* (οὕτως γέγραπται): … for repentance and forgiveness of sins to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (καὶ κηρυχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ μετάνοιαν καὶ ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλήμ. ὑμεῖς ἐστε μάρτυρες τούτων,κἀγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πατρός μου ἐφ' ὑμᾶς. ὑμεῖς δὲ καθίσατε ἐν τῇ πόλει ἕως οὗ ἐνδύσησθε ἐξ ὕψους δύναμιν.) (Luke 24:46a, 47-49)
Praise Response (1)	**Made by:** the disciples in the aftermath of Jesus' ascension near Bethany **Praise Response:** And they, having worshipped him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were always in the temple blessing/praising God. (καὶ αὐτοὶ προσκυνήσαντες αὐτὸν ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς Ἰερουσαλὴμ μετὰ χαρᾶς μεγάλης καὶ ἦσαν διὰ παντὸς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ εὐλογοῦντες τὸν θεόν) (Luke 24:52-53)

Figure 4.7: The "forewarning" – "fulfillment" – "involvement" – "praise" pattern in Luke's gospel

There is a great deal of common language between the "forewarning of suffering" and "clarification of fulfillment" scenes, as Luke emphatically declares these aspects of Old Testament precedent and God's plan for Jesus' ministry to be "fulfilled". Thus, the title "Son of Man", which in Luke's gospel typically occurs on Jesus' lips in self designation, is used by the divine messengers to help linguistically ground the fulfillment in the language of the forewarnings in Luke 9:22, 9:44 and 18:31. Interestingly, in the two fulfillment episodes in which Jesus speaks, he refers to himself as "the Christ" (24:26, 46) and not as "the Son of Man" as he did in the forewarnings, differentiating himself in light of the completion of his predicted suffering and preparedness "to enter into his glory" (Luke 24:26).

In contrast, there is little common language linking the instruction for continuing response to the forewarning and fulfillment episodes. The only link between Jesus' instruction to proclaim repentance and forgiveness/release from sins and the antecedent clarifications of fulfillment was discussed above; both the infinitive clause describing fulfillment in 24:46 and the infinitive clause describing proclamation are grammatically subordinated to Οὕτως γέγραπται ("thus it is written"). Similarly, there is no noteworthy common language between the disciples' praise response and the forewarning and clarification of fulfillment episodes (other than geographical references, as both episodes take place in Jerusalem), but there is a great deal of common language between these scenes and similar ones in the infancy narratives, as was explored in Figure 4.6. This makes sense given the placement and function of each stage of the pattern within Luke's gospel.

In the infancy narratives, the hymnic praise responses are designed to indicate human celebration of the fact that God had brought His promised fulfillment. It is therefore entirely logical to find similar language of praise at the end of Luke 24, after Jesus has "opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (διήνοιξεν αὐτῶν τὸν νοῦν τοῦ συνιέναι τὰς γραφὰς – 24:45). This brief detail, almost possible to pass over, is significant given that it has taken six forewarnings (at least three of them clear enough that their language bears repeating in Luke 24) and three clarifications to get the disciples to this point. Whether Luke has a teaching episode in mind (as would be supported by the preceding use of διανοίγω in connection with the Scriptures in Luke 24:32), or a more supernatural opening of the mind, or even both, is unclear.

As was outlined in section 4.4.2's discussion of cognitive dissonance and interpretive difficulties, the strength of the disciples' presupposed narratives (which, on the basis of the dialogue on the road to Emmaus, clearly did *not* include Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection) appears to have played a significant role in keeping them from grasping an otherwise readily understandable message. Only after confronting and resolving this dissonance (with Jesus' involvement in "opening their minds") was it possible for the disciples to experience the joyful praise that

permeated Luke's infancy narratives. Luke clearly intends for his own rhetorical narrative and hermeneutical framework to provide mechanisms to assist the reader in confronting and resolving their own cognitive dissonance to arrive at the same certain conclusion, characterized by the same joyful praise and active participation that was first exemplified by Mary and confirmed by Jesus' disciples.

4.5.2 Coming full circle: Luke's beginnings, endings and the authorial pursuit of certainty

The reappearance and reformulation of a repeating fulfillment pattern in Luke 24 strengthens numerous links between Luke's conclusion and the expectations he worked to create in the gospel's opening chapters. When viewed together, the larger thrust of Luke's undertaking becomes clearer: the disciples and, by extension, the reader of the gospel, can be certain that God will be faithful to bring His promises to full completion. The recent fulfillments hammered home by Luke 24 function much like the confirming signs in the infancy narratives by serving to inspire joyous praise, to stimulate active participation in God's plan and to give security about the future, in which God will bring His promises to consummation in the eschaton.

God's intervention in the history of Israel and, indeed, of humanity as a whole has resulted in the fulfillment of a portion of His promises and in "forgiveness of sins… in [Jesus'] name" (24:47). In this way, the events of Luke's gospel can be considered the certainty giving "sign" of a larger pattern spanning generations of revelation history, in which Luke cleverly situates himself and his reader to provide certainty regarding both recent fulfillments and future expectation. This pattern is outlined in Figure 4.8.

Promise	**God's intervention:**	Giving of promises throughout His interactions with Israel, in which the nation is depicted as the epicenter through which His program of blessing will flow (to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem – Luke 24:47)
	Scriptural Record:	The Law of Moses, the Prophets, the Psalms (Luke 24:44)
	Human response(s):	Expectation of fulfillment, which depends on holistic interpretation of the Scriptural record of the promises.
	Potential pitfall(s):	Erroneous or reductionistic interpretation resulting in misunderstanding and cognitive dissonance with the actual fulfillment

(continued)

Confirmation	**God's intervention:**	Announcement and intervention to bring about the births and ministries of John and Jesus, whose work will be carried on the by the apostles Jesus commissioned (Luke 24:46-49)
	Scriptural Record:	Luke-Acts (Luke is writing to argue that the "events completed among us" perform this confirmatory function – Luke 1:1,4; 24:44)
	Human response(s):	1. Joyous praise 2. Participation in the proclamation of salvation in Jesus' name 3. Expectation of the consummation according to the Scriptures
	Potential pitfall(s):	1. Continued cognitive dissonance resulting from an erroneous or reductionistic interpretation of the "events completed" (Luke 1:1) 2. Conflict and division resulting from erroneous or reductionistic understandings of the nature of God's program of salvation for all the nations (Luke 24:47; Acts 10-11;15) 3. Erroneous or reductionistic interpretation of the Scriptures resulting in misunderstanding and cognitive dissonance with the actual consummation
Consummation	**God's intervention:**	Complete fulfillment of the promises given throughout His interactions with Israel, in which the nation will become the epicenter of Jesus' rule over all the nations (Luke 1:32-33; Acts 1:7)
	Scriptural Record:	The Law of Moses, the Prophets, the Psalms (according to the sources of expectation to which Luke refers)
	Human response(s):	Joyous praise

Figure 4.8: Patterns of certainty: Promise – Confirmation – Consummation

As this table indicates, the unexpected confirmation witnessed by the disciples and the continuing response required by it occupies the principal focus of Luke-Acts. Luke sketches in vague strokes space for eschatological consummation, but has little concrete insight to offer. As the following section will show, such knowledge is the purview of God the Father. Luke's

emphatic focus, therefore, is to leave future consummation in God's hands and build on the sure foundation of recent fulfillment with joy and ongoing participation.

This pattern is a fitting final exclamation point on a project Luke defined from the beginning. As he proposed to do in the prologue, Luke has recounted the "events about which there is certainty among us" to his reader "in orderly sequence" to clarify their significance as fulfillment and thus, to give the reader "certainty concerning the things you have been taught." This certainty is furthered by the indication that the consummation should not be considered negated and that this expectation should continue, albeit tempered by the knowledge that it will come in "the times and epochs fixed by the Father's own authority" (Acts 1:7). The present study turns its attention to this phrase and the question of future expectation, Jewish nationalism and prophetic precedent.

4.6 THE EXPECTED BUT (AS YET) UNFULFILLED: THE DISCIPLES' TASK AND THE RESTORATION OF THE KINGDOM TO ISRAEL IN ACTS 1

While the events of the consummation do not occupy the place of primary concern in Luke's literary undertaking, they have clearly been on his mind since the beginning. As was explored in the infancy narratives (see section 2.3.8), the angelic messages raised expectations of literal political kingship that were not brought to consummation by Jesus' ministry. The disciples on the road to Emmaus underline this point and their assumption of defeat when they indicate: "we were hoping that he was the one destined to redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21).

These unfulfilled expectations were not satisfied (nor, it should be noted, were they negated) by the events of the resurrection, at least in the eyes of Jesus' disciples, as their question in the opening pericope of Acts 1 indicates. It is revealing that Luke revisits this theme of Israel's kingdom one last time in the opening of his second volume to clarify that, while the timing of the final consummation may be unknown, it *is certain* that Jesus will return to the narrative of human history from the clouds of heaven. This pericope begins in Acts 1:6 with the discourse marker οὖν:

> So then, when they (the apostles cf. 1:2) had come together, they were asking him, saying: "Lord, is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" But he said to them: "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority, but instead, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." And having said these things, he was lifted up while they were looking on and a cloud took him from their sight. And as they were staring into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes and they said: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way you saw him go into heaven."

Οἱ μὲν οὖν συνελθόντες ἠρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες, Κύριε, εἰ ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ ἀποκαθιστάνεις τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραήλ; εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτούς, Οὐχ ὑμῶν ἐστιν γνῶναι χρόνους ἢ καιροὺς οὓς ὁ πατὴρ ἔθετο ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ, ἀλλὰ λήμψεσθε δύναμιν ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐφ' ὑμᾶς καὶ ἔσεσθέ μου μάρτυρες ἔν τε Ἰερουσαλὴμ καὶ [ἐν] πάσῃ τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ Σαμαρείᾳ καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς. καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν βλεπόντων αὐτῶν ἐπήρθη καὶ νεφέλη ὑπέλαβεν αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν. καὶ ὡς ἀτενίζοντες ἦσαν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν πορευομένου αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες δύο παρειστήκεισαν αὐτοῖς ἐν ἐσθήσεσι λευκαῖς, οἳ καὶ εἶπαν, Ἄνδρες Γαλιλαῖοι, τί ἑστήκατε [ἐμ]βλέποντες εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; οὗτος ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὁ ἀναλημφθεὶς ἀφ' ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν οὕτως ἐλεύσεται ὃν τρόπον ἐθεάσασθε αὐτὸν πορευόμενον εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν. (Acts 1:6-11)

The use of τότε at the beginning of verse 12 indicates the apostles' return to Jerusalem and marks the beginning of a new pericope focused on the first actions of the early church in the lead up to Pentecost. This pericope also represents the most significant chunk of new material Luke has chosen to add to Acts' "retelling" of the post-resurrection account from Luke 24 and is primarily occasioned by the apostles' question about unfulfilled expectations. Whether by his own authorial evaluation or as a result of feedback from the reader, Luke seems to have concluded that it was strategic to "retrace his steps" slightly at the opening of Acts in order to offer a final treatment of the anxious expectation that God's plan seems to have so frustratingly "postponed": seeing a Messianic Christ-king assume the throne of David to bring fiery judgement and lasting justice.

It is significant to note that the disciples' question takes place *after* the "opening of their minds to understand the Scriptures" (Luke 24:45). Thus, even Jesus' intervention to help resolve the disciples' cognitive dissonance has not resulted in complete knowledge or absolute certainty (as also occurred with Mary and John). Interpretive difficulty seems to be ubiquitous among the human characters in Luke-Acts and will accompany the nascent church even after Pentecost and the reception of the by Holy Spirit, as demonstrated by Peter's resistance to the Spirit's leading over the issue of Gentile evangelism in Acts 10 and by the opposition his eventual obedience on this occasion provoked from other apostles and Jewish believers in Acts 11.

Thus, while it is important to recognize that Jesus' "opening of the disciples' minds to understand the Scriptures" did not eliminate all possibility of misapprehension, it is equally important to recognize that it did not invalidate or "explain away" the disciples' fervent political hopes. After all, if the activity of "gathering believers as the new people of God" was, in fact, destined to supersede the political restoration of Israel as Brawley (1990:30) argued (see section 2.3.8), then why did the disciples bother querying Jesus about this topic even after his interpretive intervention (which was immediately followed by the language of joyful praise that characterizes those who have grasped the essence of God's unfolding plan [insofar as it was discernible at that moment] and aligned themselves with it)? Furthermore, if this were the case,

why didn't Jesus words in Acts 1:6-11 invalidate this hope once and for all in order to ensure that the full force of the apostles' concentration would be brought to bear on the task at hand?

To the contrary, Luke is careful to avoid negating these expectations (Bock, 2012:80); after all, his narrative opened with an angelic message promising that Jesus would be given "the throne of his father David" and predicted his "reign over the house of Jacob forever" (Luke 1:32-33). Luke deliberately avoided spiritualizing or allegorizing these promises in their narration in the infancy narratives, setting up the expectations of Jesus' kingship alongside other expectations which are fulfilled literally in the course of the gospel. Thus, if John's activity of "turning hearts" and "giving knowledge of salvation in the forgiveness of their sins" and Jesus' activity of "exalting the lowly and casting down the mighty" and producing "the rising and falling of many in Israel" is fulfilled literally over the course of the gospel, how can Luke explain the "absent fulfillment" of fiery judgement and Davidic kingship?

As Figure 4.8 proposed and as the opening narrative pericope of Acts 1 makes clear, Luke resolves the problem by incorporating it into his primary thesis: while the unexpected fulfillments function as confirmation of God's action and Jesus' identity, this surprising lack of fulfillment with regards to Israel is presented as an *equally necessary part* of God's plan, which will be fully consummated in "the times and epochs fixed by the Father's own authority" (Acts 1:7). While it is likely that the lack of temporal precision in Jesus' answer represented a source of disappointment to the disciples (and to Theophilus as well), Luke seems to know there is little more he can offer.

After all, the most pressing issue left hanging in Luke 24, at least for a reader with expectations like those expressed by the disciples, is the question of "when". Indeed, this is the main thrust of the apostles' question; they do not ask "*if*" Jesus will restore the kingdom to Israel, but "if *this* is the time" of restoration. Jesus' answer recognizes this temporal thrust and indicates that these timings belong to the Father's authority and are thus beyond their purview (Bock, 2012:80). Jesus' use of the strong contrastive ἀλλά indicates that, instead, the apostles' focus ought to be on the task of proclamation to which they have been commissioned. An expanded version of Jesus' commission in Luke 24:47-48 adds a more specific geographical progression that many have used as a structural outline for the book of Acts (Bock, 2012:80), beginning in Jerusalem, proceeding through the regions of Judea and Samaria and extending to the most remote regions of the earth.

This notion that it is not a question of *if* restoration of the kingdom of Israel will come, but a matter of *when* the time of this restoration will come is reinforced by Peter's sermon to the people in Acts 3, particularly 3:18-21. After noting that both the Jewish people and their leaders had "acted in ignorance" (κατὰ ἄγνοιαν ἐπράξατε – 3:17) in putting Jesus to death, Peter states "that which God had previously announced through the mouth of all the prophets – for His Christ

to suffer – He has likewise fulfilled" (ὁ δὲ θεὸς, ἃ προκατήγγειλεν διὰ στόματος πάντων τῶν προφητῶν παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν αὐτοῦ, ἐπλήρωσεν οὕτως – 3:18), clearly evoking Jesus' statements from Luke 24. More importantly to this particular section, after calling the people to repent in 3:19, Peter motivates this repentance:

> "in order that there may come times of refreshment from the face (presence) of the Lord and that He may send the Appointed One to you: Christ Jesus, who it is necessary for heaven to receive until the time of restoration of all things God spoke through the mouth of His holy prophets from ages past."
>
> (ὅπως ἂν ἔλθωσιν καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἀποστείλῃ τὸν προκεχειρισμένον ὑμῖν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, ὃν δεῖ οὐρανὸν μὲν δέξασθαι ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων ὧν ἐλάλησεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ στόματος τῶν ἁγίων ἀπ' αἰῶνος αὐτοῦ προφητῶν – 3:20-21).

Both New Testament words for time (χρόνος and καιρός) are used in these verses. In fact, the only previous use of χρόνος and καιρός in such close proximity in Acts was in the disciples' question in Acts 1:6 and Jesus' answer in Acts 1:7. Peter's use of χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως (time of restoration) also has strong linguistic connections to Acts 1:6 (3:21 is the only use of ἀποκατάστασις in Acts, while 1:6 is the only use of ἀποκαθίστημι). The syntactically awkward (and thus distinctive) πάντων ὧν ἐλάλησεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ στόματος τῶν ἁγίων ἀπ' αἰῶνος αὐτοῦ προφητῶν ("all the things which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from ages past") in Acts 3:21 is an almost word for word citation of a line from Zechariah's Benedictus in Luke 1:70: καθὼς ἐλάλησεν διὰ στόματος τῶν ἁγίων ἀπ' αἰῶνος προφητῶν αὐτοῦ ("just as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from ages past").

For the attentive reader, Luke has traced a thread through salvation history "from ages past" and "the mouth of the holy prophets" to the recent past of Jesus' ministry and the dissonance of unfulfilled expectations in the present and has indicated the extension of this thread into the future: another "sending of the Appointed One to you: Christ Jesus" and the realization of complete eschatological fulfillment in God's time. Noting several of the linguistic features outlined, Tannehill argues:

> Jesus' answer to the disciples' question denies that they can know the time and probably corrects their supposition that the restoration may come immediately, but Jesus' reply is not meant to reject the possibility of a restoration of the kingdom to Israel. (1985:114)

Tannehill also takes pains to show that the narrative arc of Acts will demonstrate a pattern of frequent Jewish rejection and of widespread Gentile acceptance of Jesus as the Christ and of

the offer of salvation in His name (1985:114-124; 1999:125-144). Both Tannehill's arguments and the present author's conclusions with regard to Luke 24, Acts 1 and Acts 3 would seem to indicate that Luke's primary focus is the *present implications* of recent events, as these events serve as the basis for providing certainty that the final consummation will come. There is clearly an eschatological element to Luke's understanding of God's plan, but it would seem that his motivations are more pastoral than prophetic.

In light of the conclusions outlined here and indications in the preface of the gospel (Luke 1:1-4, see section 2.2), Luke's message to the reader seems to be: "You can have certainty and security in the message you have been taught, because, although it has defied the expectations of many, it bears all the trademarks of God's plan". Such a thesis is, in Luke's opinion, better served by a focus on recent fulfillment and present implication than by playing coy with eschatological information about which he has little to offer in the way of concrete facts. Rather, Luke's hermeneutical foundations stimulate the reader to discern the certainty of the message through God's confirmatory work in recent events and in Theophilus' own joyful participation in the Christian mission.

4.7 CONCLUSION: CERTAINTY THROUGH CONFIRMATION AND ACTION

The present chapter's "leap forward" to Luke 24 and Acts 1 has paid rich dividends, revealing numerous thematic and linguistic connections between the expectations of Luke's infancy narratives and these key transitional chapters of Luke-Acts. It has also clarified Luke's treatment of "expected but unfulfilled" elements that were clearly part of both Scriptural promise and his own narrative foundations. Luke's construction of Luke-Acts as a unified rhetorical narrative focused on the interpretation of recent events as confirmation and as foundation for response offers a basis for the reader's certainty, while also serving as the basis for sure hope that the "as yet unfulfilled fulfillments" will come in God's timing.

As Luke 24 and Acts 1 have shown, Luke's presentation does not suggest that this "alternate path" to certainty is either straightforward or simplistic. To the contrary, the disciples' difficulty in grasping Jesus' forewarnings (alongside previously noted episodes of interpretive difficulty in connection with Mary and John the Baptist) and the necessity of three separate δεῖ statements in Luke 24 to drive home the necessity of the jarring events of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection speak to the difficulty of understanding God's unorthodox and counter-expectational plan as the fulfillment of Scripture. Nonetheless, this is precisely the thesis Luke defends: the passion of Jesus is not disconfirmation but is itself fulfillment of Scripture and the realization of God's plan for "salvation prepared in the presence of all peoples" (Luke 2:31).

Again and again, Luke has used language that imitates the Septuagint and pointed toward Scriptural precedent to ground his claims of fulfillment. He has done so with particular clarity

when characters in the narrative made choices that “were necessary” (δεῖ) according to God’s plan but confounded many who witnessed or reacted to them. As preceding chapters have outlined in detail, Luke meticulously traced the fingerprints of God’s plan across the announcements, births and rejoicings of the infancy narratives and through the ministry preparations and summaries of chapters 3 and 4. The same has been shown through a significant portion of Jesus’ early ministry in Galilee and writings by others have shown it to be true of the portions of the gospel not examined in this study (Bock, 1987:114-154; Squires, 1993:137-153).

Luke is likewise aware that various elements of God’s announced plan have not yet been fulfilled. Jesus’ answer to the disciples’ questions about the timing of the restoration of Israel in Acts 1 confirm Luke’s awareness that there is still a “final ending” to come, but that speculation and frustration do little to serve his authorial purposes or to provide the reader with certainty. Thus, he seems to place the issue of future expectation in the reader’s lap, saying in effect: “Yes, reader, there is fulfillment yet to come, but I cannot tell you when or how the final consummation will arrive. Even Mary, John and the Lord’s disciples’ were led astray by errant expectation and the weight of presupposed narratives, but “complete knowledge” is an impossibility and there is no substitute for the “persistence of faith”. I have labored to lay before you that which is certain and secure enough to bring me joy and motivate my own involvement in the mission. Is it enough for you?”

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION: REVIEWING LUKE'S HERMENEUTIC OF CERTAINTY

5.1 A SYNTHESIS OF LUKE'S HERMENEUTIC OF CERTAINTY

The preceding chapters have outlined Luke's hermeneutical framework for interpreting the Scriptural promises of the past, the confirmation of recent events, the reader's own posture and response in the present and the consummative fulfillment of the future eschaton. These hermeneutical elements are masterfully woven into Luke's rhetorical narrative of the births and ministries of John and Jesus and the diverse human responses to their activities. As the chapters of this study have indicated, throughout the threads and strands of Luke's narrative tapestry are a series of repeating patterns and themes which point to an interpretation of events and a course of action to bring the reader the objective of "certainty/security" (ἀσφάλεια) outlined in the Lukan preface.

It is likewise essential that this rhetorical presentation of God's action and revelation be read in light of the first-century's environment of religious tension, persecution and increasing divergence between Jewish and Christian readings of Scripture and of Jesus' identity. It is therefore unsurprising to see Luke weave together such diverse threads as Old Testament reference and interpretation, human reaction (including the necessity of response on the part of the reader), the legitimation of God's agents and their actions and criticism of the postures and Scriptural interpretations of Jesus' opponents (who Acts typifies as opponents of the apostles as well). This study's analysis of Luke 1-7 in narrative order and of Luke 24-Acts 1 has detected consistent presentations of events and patterns of interpretation which work together to supply the reader with certainty and can be summarized by seven interrelated points:

1. The outcomes described in Luke-Acts represent the necessary outworking of God's plan through John, Jesus and the apostles.

2. The outworking of God's plan presented in Luke's gospel was frequently viewed as unorthodox and counter-expectational by characters in the narrative (and is, presumably, a contributing factor to Theophilus' lack of certainty), occasioning signs of cognitive dissonance even in positive, legitimated characters within the narrative.

3. Luke defends that these dissonance producing outcomes are, in fact, consistent with Scriptural precedent and serve to confirm God's salvific action in Israel's midst for the benefit of all peoples.

4. Luke likewise admits that many of the Scriptural fulfillments that were the most anxiously awaited within Second Temple Judaism were not realized in Jesus' ministry, representing a second potential source of interpretive dissonance.

5. Luke's gospel presents consistent literary and hermeneutical patterns which allow the reader to identify the eschatological epoch in which they are living as that of "mixed response" between the confirmation and final consummation, allowing Theophilus to discern the certainty in the Christian interpretation of Scripture and of recent events.

6. These same patterns highlight that characters who discern the certainty of God's fulfillment in accordance with Scriptural precedent respond favorably in faith by rejoicing and actively participating in the proclamation of the gospel message.

7. Alongside this positive hermeneutical framework, Luke's narrative works to "weaken the position of the opposition" by featuring negative representations of Jewish religious authorities (who represent a competing hermeneutical framework), highlighting the insufficiency of their interpretations of Scripture and their responses to the infirm and the socially marginalized.

These seven points represent the principal elements of Luke's hermeneutical framework, designed to combat interpretive dissonance and guide Theophilus to the "discernment of the certainty concerning the things you have been taught" (Luke 1:4) in accordance with the Lukan preface. The following section will briefly summarize each of these seven points before illustrating how they work to together to achieve the aims outlined in the introduction.

5.2 THE SEVEN ELEMENTS OF LUKE'S HERMENEUTIC OF CERTAINTY

5.2.1 The necessary outworking of God's unorthodox plan: the foundation for certainty

From the gospel's opening angelophanic annunciation to Jesus' final post-resurrection affirmations that it was necessary (δεῖ) for the Christ to suffer, the activities of God's agents in Luke-Acts are presented as being carried out in accordance with God's plan. From the miraculous conceptions of John (in spite of his parents' age) and Jesus (without the "knowledge of a man" – 1:34) to Luke's repetitions of the Holy Spirit's involvement in the ministries of John, Jesus and the apostles, the distinctive characteristics of God's sovereign and salvific action

pervade the narratives of Luke-Acts. While the mechanisms and outworking of this plan were often perceived by human characters within the narrative as unorthodox and even counter-expectational (indicating that Luke's reader was likely to share similar perceptions), Luke consistently legitimates characters at the outset and notes (often, to the point of redundancy) how the Spirit's leading and God's power confirm divine orientation. By demonstrating that it is God's direction that drives the narrative forward (and not human blasphemy, exaggeration or distortion, as the Pharisees often accuse in the gospel narrative), Luke has laid the foundations for the reader to discern the certainty of the confirmations and fulfillments contained in the events of the narrative.

5.2.2 Unorthodox and counter-expectational: human perception of God's plan

While Luke consistently presents God's plan and direction as the driving force behind the actions of John, Jesus and the disciples, the responses of other characters in the gospel (and, occasionally, even from these characters themselves) demonstrate that the outworking of this plan frequently contradicted or even deliberately inverted human conventions and expectations. These human perceptions are likewise emphasized from the first narrative, where Zechariah asks for more confirmation, to the final narratives of Luke 24, where Jesus rebukes the disciples' inability to act in accordance with his repeated forewarnings. The present author has proposed that cognitive dissonance (notable even in positive, legitimated characters like Mary, John and the disciples) represents a likely human mechanism for this curious inability to understand divine revelation (it has been noted that the present author does not posit that this dissonance is incompatible with the possibility of divine involvement).

It is entirely likely that Theophilus' need to "discern the certainty concerning the things taught" (ἐπιγνῷς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν – Luke 1:4) was significantly motivated by similar cognitive dissonance between expectations of what God's fulfillment of Scriptural promise (naturally, a byproduct of interpretive tradition and social convention) would look like and their surprising realization through the events presented in the gospel. By articulating God's direction of events and human interpretive difficulty side by side, Luke's characters attest to the human difficulties of understanding and reacting to divine revelation while also providing models that point toward resolution. These models and archetypes serve to reassure Theophilus that these difficulties are common, even among faithful servants of God's purposes, but that responses of faith, joyful praise and active participation founded on the confirmation of Scriptural promise and precedent provide a reliable and secure solution to this interpretive dissonance.

5.2.3 Consistency with Scriptural precedent: the gateway to certainty

Luke's frequent and subtle echoes of the language and structure of Old Testament narrative and his explicit quotations from and allusions to Moses/the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms confirm the key role Scripture plays in Luke's hermeneutical framework. The Old Testament provides Luke with an overarching narrative "beginning" and "middle" to influence the shape of his story, as well as a "familiar literary voice" that the gospel's language and style deliberately imitates. As was noted throughout chapters 3 and 4, Luke consistently introduces Scriptural precedent to justify provocative and dissonance inducing narrative actions, frequently utilizing comparisons that highlight Jesus' use of concrete Old Testament episodes to counter vague (and, ultimately, unfounded) Pharisaical accusations that he or his disciples violated the provisions of the Law.

While Luke uses diverse mechanisms to justify God's direction of events (such as angelophany, prophecy and the Spirit's direction, among others), his use of the Old Testament as a "shared foundation" with the reader is a particularly powerful rhetorical and theological tool for providing certainty. This desire to connect with the reader through the Scriptures is visible in Luke's deliberate imitation of Septuagint style to provide a "familiar and sacred voice" for his own narrative, as well as in the echoes, allusions and quotations outlined throughout the text. By suggesting that "the God of old" is using familiar patterns to create a "new exodus" through the work of Jesus as a type of "new Adam", "new Israel" and "new Moses" (among other possible typologies), Luke labors to provide the reader with the certainty that while God's plan has defied many of the most prevalent assumption about what the Christ's coming would look like, it is nonetheless profoundly Scriptural and entirely consistent with the divine narratives of Israel's past.

5.2.4 Awaited but unfulfilled: the obstacle to certainty

Luke's appeal to Scriptural precedent is, however, a potential "double edged sword"; while Luke can point to repeated echoes and patterns as well as fulfilled prophecies, his opponents are likewise capable to pointing to Old Testament prophecy that was decidedly *not* fulfilled through the ministries of John, Jesus and the work of the apostles in Acts. Thus, while Luke's appeal to God's direction of events and to Scriptural precedent represent important foundational elements and an "entrance" to the path of certainty, these "awaited but unfulfilled" expectations represent a hurdle with the potential to turn this path into a hermeneutical "dead end". It is with regard to this point that the present author believes this study has made its most significant contribution.

The patterns presented in the preceding chapters represent a solution to this interpretive hurdle. This study has argued that Luke's patterns break "fulfillment" into two stages, in which the first (and, in Luke's narrative, smaller of the two fulfillments) serves as "confirmation", providing the necessary certainty for characters to rejoice and to participate actively in God's plan, and in

which the second stage represents the “final consummation” of the promises made. It is significant that in Luke’s patterns, the period between the stages of confirmation and consummation is marked by “mixed reactions”, in which the greatest blessings come to those who respond to the confirmation while larger groups tend to affirm God’s action and receive its benefits only after the final consummation.

Luke’s awareness that Luke-Acts does not represent the final stage of God’s plan and that greater consummation is still to come provides him with the authorial security and boldness to evoke expectations in the infancy narratives that his narrative will not satisfy (see, for example, section 2.3.8). As this study has argued, in light of this pattern, it is likely that Luke stimulates these expectations at the outset because they are already present in the mind of the reader, and likely represent a source of dissonance and doubt. By promising Jesus’ “eternal reign over the house of Jacob” and by clarifying in Acts 1 that the “restoration of the kingdom to Israel” is not off the table, but simply reserved for the “Father’s appointed times and seasons”, Luke has “disarmed” the weightiest of his opponents’ counterarguments (whether real or simply representative of competing hermeneutical frameworks).

It is entirely likely that this solution to the “interpretive obstacle” in Luke’s path to certainty was not the answer Theophilus would have “wanted” in accordance with the prevalent expectations of Second Temple Judaism. It is here that the interpretive struggles of characters like Zechariah, Mary, John and Jesus’ own disciples demonstrates Luke’s profound empathy in providing reassurance to the reader that even legitimated, positive characters struggled to adequately understand and respond to God’s unorthodox plan. It should be noted, however, that Luke’s empathy is not mere sentimentality; while the characters of Luke-Acts struggle, they are also challenged to respond adequately and, in cases of less fortunate response, are rebuked and corrected toward more appropriate reactions.

5.2.5 Confirmation and consummation: the key to certainty

Luke’s presentation of eschatological fulfillment in two stages of “confirmation” and “final consummation” provides the key to overcoming the interpretive obstacles outlined in the preceding point (section 5.2.4). The fact that this study’s initial scope of Luke 1-7 did not provide adequate resolution of the infancy narratives’ expectations of “messianic kingship on the throne of David” (thus motivating the decision to include Luke 24 and Acts 1 in chapter 4) demonstrates the degree to which Luke’s focus in the gospel lies with the first stage of confirmation, rather than with the final consummation (a topic about which Luke seems to be well aware he has little to offer in the way of concrete data). By legitimating the ministries of John and Jesus in the infancy narratives, demonstrating their consistency with God’s purposes and Scriptural precedent in the ministry overviews of Luke 3 and 4 and noting Jesus’ development of a “new

exodus" gathering of those who respond positively while simultaneously confronting opposition from the well entrenched religious authorities, Luke points to confirmation after confirmation.

Luke 24's contribution aims to "close the deal" by demonstrating how the cognitively dissonant events of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection do not point to his disconfirmation as the Christ, but in fact offer the strongest possible confirmation of his fulfillment of prophecy and obedience to God's plan. Jesus' indication in Acts 1 that the disciples' present focus ought to be on their present mission rather than on future fulfillment emphasizes the role active participation plays in the practical outworking of certainty (opening 1:8 with ἀλλὰ emphasizes this notion of one focus rather than the other). Throughout Luke-Acts, proper discernment leads to certainty, but this certainty is itself only the initial stimulus for an ongoing journey of faith, joyful praise, and participation.

5.2.6 Joyful praise and active participation: responding with the certainty of faith

This study has presented Luke's incorporation of archetypes and patterns of response into the model of two-stage fulfillment discussed above. This integration of patterns of response *alongside* patterns of interpretation is (in the present author's estimation) a trademark of Luke-Acts and a brilliant contribution to Luke's authorial aims. Luke's constant stimulation away from "complete knowledge" and toward the "dynamic certainty of faith" removes the reader from the position of passive observer and evaluator of events by urging Theophilus to assume a position on the subject of Jesus' identity and the legitimacy of the nascent Christian community's interpretation of the Scriptures and recent events. Luke's patterns emphasize that this "discernment of the certainty concerning the things taught" will naturally result in a response of joyful praise and participation in the Christian mission of proclamation "beginning in Jerusalem" and proceeding "to the end of the earth".

Not only do these patterns stimulate Theophilus away from the position of passive observer/ evaluator, they allow the reader to gauge the appropriacy of their own response in the face of interpretive difficulty and cognitive dissonance. By comparing their own joy and willingness to be Jesus' witness to that of faithful (but humanly imperfect) characters like Mary and Peter and by suggesting that God is redemptively patient and corrective through characters like Zechariah and Paul, Luke's reader is able to evaluate their own progress on the "path to certainty" and help others who may be struggling with similar doubts and difficulties. At the same time, the crowd's eventual polarization over the course of Luke-Acts, Simeon's prophecies, Jesus' sobering response to John's question and Luke's negative characterization of the scribes, Pharisees and experts in the Law offer the warning that remaining in doubt and indecision "indefinitely" or, worse even, deciding against Jesus will result in the readers "fall" alongside the opponents of God's plan.

5.2.7 Undermining the opposition: the superiority of Luke's hermeneutical framework

While points 1-6 represent the positive, constructive elements of Luke's hermeneutical framework for providing certainty through rhetorical narrative, Luke is well-trained and knows that weakening the opponent(s)' position is an essential element of successful argumentation. While Luke avoids the frontal diatribe of other authors, he uses narrative representation to subtly but cleverly undermine the legitimacy of the interpretations, attitudes, and responses of the Jewish religious authorities. This "rhetorical savvy" uses episodes of interpretive conflict and opposition or of narrative evaluation like those in 5:17-26 and 29-39, 6:1-11 and 7:24-35 and 36-50 raise concerns about whether the scribes, Pharisees and experts in the Law represent a trustworthy source of Scriptural interpretation, especially in light of their inability to refute Jesus' justifications of his own activity in light of concrete Old Testament examples.

While Theophilus' ethnic and religious identity is hotly debated (as was discussed in section 1.6.2), Luke's deliberate imitation of the language of the Septuagint and his subtle echoes of Old Testament Scripture attest a reader far better versed in the Jewish Scriptures and interpretive tradition than it would be reasonable to expect of the "average reader" in the Mediterranean world of the first-century (see section 2.3.2). Luke's subtle aspersions against the "old guard" of Jewish tradition can, therefore, be seen as a complementary tactic to his presentation of convincing hermeneutical framework. As has been argued throughout, it is likely that these figures represent competing hermeneutical frameworks, complete with their own polemic arguments against the legitimacy of Jesus and the apostles based on contradictory interpretations of the Scriptures and events. By painting vivid scenes of confrontation between the agents of God's disruptively unorthodox plan of mercy and salvation (characterized by Jesus in Luke 5 as "young wine") and the inflexible, fastidious preoccupations of the "old wineskins" of Jewish tradition, Luke's narrative presents a subtle but distinct challenge to competing interpretations and points to the superior certainty provided by Luke's presentation of events in light of God's plan, Scriptural precedent and eschatological fulfillment.

5.3 THIS STUDY'S FULFILLMENT OF ITS AIMS

The aims outlined in the introduction to this study proposed three principal strands of hermeneutical exploration, each one highlighting diverse threads to trace through Luke's narrative. The first aim emphasized the role of human reactions to God's agents, with particular attention to responses of acceptance, opposition, rejection, conflict and persecution, while the third aim focused on Luke's construction of a hermeneutical framework to interpret these same responses. The second aim, meanwhile, highlighted the role Old Testament expectation and Luke's authorial objective of certainty play in this hermeneutical framework.

As was explained in the introduction, the interweaving of these three strands throughout Luke's gospel made it expedient for the study to proceed in narrative order in order to reduce the risk of selective use of particular texts or of inadvertent omission. The following paragraphs will attempt to separate each strand and justifying the way each aim has been fulfilled in the preceding chapters. As both the first and third aims deal with human reactions to God's plan, it is useful to consider them together before proceeding to an analysis of the second aim.

Chapter 2 highlighted how Luke's infancy narratives used echoes of Old Testament precedent and proclamation from divine messengers to create the expectation that the ministries of John and Jesus would produce diverse reactions. Luke's joyful language and illustration of positive outcomes like salvation and reversal of fortunes for the lowly prefigure acceptance, while Simeon's prophetic aside prefigures negative responses that will produce division in Israel and personal pain for Mary. Chapter 3 demonstrated the narrative outworking of these expectations and predictions, with John's prophetic ministry provoking both acceptance (particularly from the socially marginalized) and opposition (notably, from the political elite). Jesus' ministry, meanwhile, was immediately confirmed with acceptance from heaven and opposition from the Devil, prefiguring human responses in the narrative that followed. While Jesus found acceptance in places like Capernaum (4:31-41) and responses of faith and affirmation from those in need of Jubilee release (5:12-15, 17-26; 7:1-17, 36-50) and from those called to be disciples (5:1-11, 27-29), his activity also provoked violent rejection and persecution in Nazareth (4:16-30) as well as consistent opposition from Jewish religious figures (5:21-25, 30-39; 6:1-11; 7:36-50).

Chapter 4, meanwhile, primarily dealt with the disciples' interpretive difficulties due to what the present author has argued was likely to have been a form of cognitive dissonance resulting from differences between their presupposed messianic narratives and Jesus' forewarnings and eventual passion and resurrection. Thus, while chapters 2 and 3 describe narrative responses to Jesus, chapter 4 is particularly focused on this study's third aim: interpreting reactions, particularly in the case of those who accept God's revelation and participate in His mission but have difficulty reconciling their expectations with the reality unfolding around them. This third aim was also advanced by sections of chapter 2 that dealt with the development of archetypal patterns of response. These initial patterns gave the reader typologies with which to gauge the appropriacy of other reactions within the world of the narrative and, potentially, the reader's own context.

The second aim of this study, meanwhile, proposed tracing the role played by Old Testament expectation and by the rhetorical aim of providing the reader with certainty in Luke's construction of a convincing hermeneutical framework. This study has demonstrated that Wright's suggestion that the Old Testament serves as an implicit narrative "beginning" and "middle" which informs and shapes the gospel narratives' formulation of an "ending"

(2013:187-199) is highly applicable to studies in the gospel of Luke. The rich diversity of Old Testament themes in Luke's infancy narratives, the programmatic quotations of Isaiah in the ministry overviews of John and Jesus, the presence of a "new exodus" motif in Luke 3-7 and the indications in Luke 24 that "it was necessary" (δεῖ) for the Christ to suffer to bring about Scriptural fulfillment are examples of the way the contours of Luke's story suggest strong continuity between the "presently unfolding chapter" of salvation history presented in Luke-Acts and "previous chapters" of God's revelation.

This study's division of the fulfillment of Old Testament expectation into two distinct eschatological categories of "already confirmed" and "not yet fulfilled" would suggest that Luke's hermeneutical framework portrays his gospel (and Acts as its sequel) as less of an "ending" and as more of a "plot twist" that moves the narrative *closer* to its ending, but does not represent a *final conclusion*. There is a "severe tension" (Brawley, 1990:30) between Luke-Acts' confirmation of numerous Scriptural fulfillments on the one hand and, on the other, its relegation of other expectations (particularly, those that most seem to have been anticipated in Second Temple Judaism) to a vague eschatological future (the Father's appointed times and seasons – Acts 1:7-8). This tension points to the necessity of cultivating both hope and certainty in the eventuality of a true "ending" that will wrap up the threads Luke knows are beyond his authorial purview. These observations lead the present author to propose modifying Wright's phrase cited throughout this study, at least insofar as it applies to the study of Luke-Acts: "This is the [next chapter of God's unfolding narrative] you were waiting for, even though it doesn't look like you thought it would" (2013:193-194 – the present author's proposed modification is in brackets).

A simultaneous focus on Luke's declared authorial objective of providing the reader with "certainty/security" (ἀσφάλεια) occasioned this study's in-depth examination of Luke's preface in section 2.2. This analysis not only justified the introduction's inclusion of this distinctly Lukan concern alongside Wright's suggestion of Old Testament precedent, it also argued in favor of reading Luke-Acts as *rhetorical narrative* rather than merely as *history* or *historiography*. As was argued in section 2.2, the present author does not advocate divorcing Luke's narrative from historical events. While mistreatment of the facts would undoubtedly disqualify Luke's project, his preface makes it clear that *more* is at stake in his presentation than accurate chronology, interesting biography and/or theological development. Luke also aimed to *convince* his reader — an objective that belongs to the domain of rhetoric, particularly in the ancient world.

Luke clearly believes that the rhetorical narrative he has constructed offers a superior hermeneutical framework when compared with competing systems within the Greco-Roman milieu, especially the proposals and accusations from within Judaism. After all, Luke has "removed the sting" from the most serious accusation that could be leveled against the Christian interpretation of recent events and the Jewish Scriptures, namely, that Jesus hadn't fulfilled every Scriptural prophecy (at least not in literal terms). Luke himself makes it clear that this will

not take place in the opening episodes of the gospel, with the hermeneutical patterns outlined providing a convincing alternative reading that does not require exhaustive fulfillment.

These summaries of the principal contributions of each chapter to the aims outlined in the introduction indicate that this study has successfully reached its declared aims. This study has traced the introduction and development of human reactions to God's agents and has paid particular attention to responses of acceptance, opposition, rejection, conflict and persecution. It has also traced the essential role Old Testament expectation played in Luke's presentation, legitimation, symbolism and declarations of fulfillment, while simultaneously noting Luke's use of rhetorical narrative to construct a hermeneutical framework leading to certainty. Finally, this study has also indicated how Luke's framework equips the reader for interpreting and characterizing diverse human responses to God's agents in accordance with patterns presented.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The hermeneutical framework outlined in this study is by its very nature a proposal for the interpretation of Luke-Acts, which makes further testing and application of this framework within the Lukan corpus a virtual necessity. This is especially true given that the scope of this study only permitted an analysis of roughly one-third of the material in Luke's gospel and barely scratched the surface of Acts. The present author therefore sees considerable advantage in undertaking a study of Luke 8-23 and of Acts as a literary unit using similar methods and compatible presuppositions to those used in this study. As the speeches of Acts recapitulate and review Jesus' ministry and impact (Tiede, 1988:39) in a manner that is approximately parallel to Jesus' review of John's ministry presented in section 3.3.4, these portions of Luke-Acts represent a particularly promising "testing ground" for the proposals outlined in this study.

The present author also sees a need to flesh out potential "competing interpretive frameworks", particularly within first-century Judaism. While the work of other authors specialized in this field has provided invaluable insight to this study's formulation of Luke's position, it is obvious that a detailed examination of first-century sources as well as a more comprehensive interaction with academic literature on the subject would provide a much more adequate insight into the context of "interpretive debate" in which Luke and Theophilus lived. As this context clearly influenced Luke's formulation of his own hermeneutical framework, such insight would permit further refinement of the conclusions presented in this study.

5.5 THIS STUDY'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO READING LUKE-ACTS

The conclusions presented in this study clearly build on the observations of previous scholars (who the present author has striven to credit where due), but also include a significant number

of original elements resulting from the present study. The present author is unaware of another work which defends the presence of hermeneutical patterns beneath Luke's literary ones, nor of another study which has tested such patterns across multiple sections of the gospel. The transversal applicability of these patterns beyond the infancy narratives to Luke 3-7 as well as Luke 24 and Acts 1 lead the present author to believe that these patterns represent a significant tool for reading Luke-Acts as a whole and constitute an original contribution to the field of study.

The hermeneutical framework provided by this study allows for the reader of Luke-Acts to relate the themes and events of particular episodes to the rhetorical "master lines" of Luke's project as Luke himself laid them out in the preface (Luke 1:1-4) and in the infancy narratives (Luke 1:5-2:52). As this study's exploration of Luke 3-7 showed, Luke's ministry overviews and early episodes of Jesus' Galilean ministry evolve and develop these key ideas with remarkable consistency. The ability to relate the interwoven hermeneutical strands of Old Testament precedent, God's unfolding plan and the role agents like John, Jesus and the apostles play in its fulfillment and proclamation, as well as the diverse human responses to this plan and precedent, are key to making sense of Luke-Acts, both in terms of individual pericopes and as a literary and theological unit.

By demonstrating *how* Luke forges an alternative path to certainty, this study aims to equip the interpreter of Luke-Acts to follow in Theophilus' footsteps in accordance with the hermeneutical indications of the original author as contained in the preface. Luke's subtle but determinedly potent stimulation of the reader toward a posture of persistent faith, joyful praise, active participation in the Christian mission and hope in the surety of the eschaton and its fulfillment is as relevant today as when his words first made their way into Theopilus' hands. It is the present author's hope that the contributions of this study have shed a little more light on Luke's enterprise of providing reader certainty and might, perhaps, aid today's readers to discover for themselves the joyful security toward which the third gospel points.

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