REPRESENTATIVE ROLES OF THE PRIEST, LEVITE, AND SAMARITAN IN LUKE 10:30-35 IN THE CONTEXT OF LUKE'S TRAVEL NARRATIVE

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A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of Master of Arts
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DECLARATION

I declare that this document and the research that it describes are my original work and that they have not been presented in any other university for academic work.

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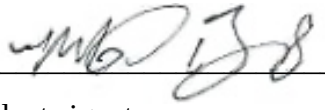

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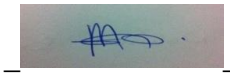

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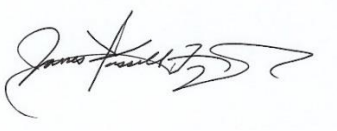

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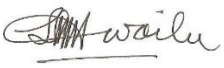

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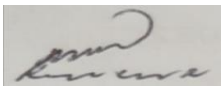

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ABSTRACT

This project employs a socio-historical and exegetical methodology that examines the context and meaning of the passage in Luke 10:25-37, exploring the author's intent in contrasting the roles of the priest and Levite as opposed to that of the Samaritan. The study's parameters situate these characters within Luke's literary context and within the socio-economic circumstances of first-century Palestine. The literature review establishes a current lack of substantial scholarly contributions regarding the priest's and Levite's representative qualities within the Lukan travel narrative (9:51-19:27). Addressing this research gap, this exegetical study identifies the socio-historical background, appraises Luke 10:25-37, and synthesizes the findings regarding the author's intent, utilizing the precedent for Lukan parabolic interpretation as a re-telling of Israel's history. Finally, this project applies its findings to the African context, considering various forms of banditry, specifically abuses of the clergy and implications for missiology.

The study contributes a key message conveyed by the Lukan author in this parable. It begins to fill the knowledge gap regarding Luke's intentional use of the priest and Levite as failed temple representatives contrasted with the Samaritan as a successful representative of the "new temple". This indictment of the Temple establishment occurs in the context of the overall theme of Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem and his eventual "cleansing of the Temple". Rather than simply expressing how to treat one another, the parable plays a role in reimagining Israel's story, relativizing the method of cult and sacrifice and re-focusing beyond Jerusalem to a broader view of God's kingdom, which is defined by a demonstration of love and compassion that exceeds socio-economic and geo-political boundaries. Just as the priest and Levite symbolized the Temple they served, made ineffective due to socio-economic and political abuses, so Christians today must consider whether today's religious representatives align with Jesus' standards of God's kingdom.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Context: In Kevin Gary Smith's exegetical methodology, context is defined in the following terms: "This part deals with all aspects relevant to the historical and the literary contexts of the book in which the selected passage is located. Most exegetical studies require a section devoted to the book in which the passage is located. This section should cover whichever of these elements are relevant to the research."[1] These elements are the general background, historical and literary context, and theological themes of the book.

Meaning: Smith defines meaning as "the heart of the exegetical study, consisting of an in-depth analysis of the text" using a preliminary analysis including first textual criticism and issues relating to translation. Secondly a contextual analysis consisting of the historical setting and literary context. Next a verbal analysis that Smith defines as an investigation of "the actual words in the passage, their meaning (lexical analysis) and relationships (grammatical analysis)." The fourth step of the meaning is a literary analysis, followed by an exegetical synthesis of the findings.[2]

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[1] Kevin Gary Smith, *Academic Writing and Theological Research: A Guide for Students* (Johannesburg: South African Theological Seminary Press, 2008), 178.

[2] Ibid.

Significance: According to Smith, "No exegetical thesis is complete until it addresses the contemporary significance of the passage, answering the question: What difference does it make? This section may explore two kinds of significance: (a) theology and/or (b) application."[3]

[3] Ibid.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

KNT: Kingdom New Testament

NASB: New American Standard Bible

NET: New English Translation

NJPS: New Jewish Publication Society

NRSV: New Revised Standard Version

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Parable of the Good Samaritan, one of the most familiar narratives in Scripture, is used in non-religious contexts, including ethics of medicine, law, and political policy.[4] This parable is replete with well-attested theological truths. On the one hand, it is a "feel-good story;" justice seems to ultimately prevail, and concepts of neighbourliness and even human dignity extend beyond ethnic boundaries.

However, the lesser-explored element is the indictment of the inactivity of the priest and Levite. Few acknowledge the representative potential of these characters. This stark omission requires treatment, especially when considering that these figures are commonly associated with Jerusalem, a city that Luke deliberately reminds his readers that Jesus is travelling toward with a prophetic rebuke. In addition, a consideration of the first-century economic factors and various anti-temple sectarian movements further substantiates an examination of how Jesus utilized the characters of the priest and Levite within his social-historical context to convey his intended truth. A review of relevant literature will demonstrate that current research neglects the priest and Levite as representative types of their broader classes in the literary context of the Lukan travel narrative.

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[4] Diane G. Chen, *Luke (New Covenant Commentary Series / NCCS)* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2017), loc. 3910, Kindle.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In what ways might an exegetical study of Luke 10:25-37 contribute to the research concerning the roles of the priest and Levite in contrast to the Samaritan, and as representatives within the Lukan travel narrative to Jerusalem? A void exists of research dedicated to uncovering these religious characters' roles in terms of Luke's travel narrative to Jerusalem as representatives of their broader class which Jesus will later confront. Subsidiary questions to consider include: (1) How might a literary analysis of Luke's travel narrative to Jerusalem in Luke 9:51 – 19:47 contribute to interpreting these characters' placement within the parable? (2) In what ways might the priest and Levite serve as contrasting figures to the Samaritan? (3) How might a survey of Luke's presentation of priests, Levites, and the Temple inform the primary research question? (4) In what ways might the socio-economic circumstance of first-century Jewish Palestine contribute to assessing these characters?

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the priest's and Levite's role in Jesus' in Luke 10:30-35 within the context of Luke's travel narrative (Lk. 9:51-19:27). The aim will be to discover if these characters represent their broader class within Jerusalem, along with potential implications.

1.3 Methodology of the Study

This task will utilize social-scientific, intertextual and exegetical hermeneutical approaches to assist in developing its main arguments, especially taking into account historical and socio-economic factors affecting the author and first audience.

This study will rely heavily historical and socio-economic factors in order to bring the author's intent and the first audience's reception of the message into clearer focus. The development of this methodology is traced in the work by editors Douglas Mangum and Amy Balough.[5]

In the context of this study, intertextuality is understood in the context of biblical studies, taking into consideration the approach proposed by Beetham who was in turn influenced by Richard Hays among others.[6] This view adapts intertextuality to a higher view of Scripture, allowing consideration of the work's historical setting and the author's intent as part of the interpretive process. In this context, this method enriches the complex interaction between biblical texts – for example, relationships of later writings to previous writings evoked through use of familiar, recognizable phrases, as well as terms associated with specific groups of people or individuals. These connections will be understood as echoes and allusions to previous texts.

This project will follow exegetical methodology as proposed by Kevin G. Smith as "an in-depth, inductive examination of scripture in which the exegete systematically applies established hermeneutic tools (exegetical methods) to discover the meaning and implications" of biblical text(s)."[7] Smith's four-step exegetical approach includes the introduction, context, meaning, and significance, further detailed in the subsequent section.

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[5] Douglas Mangum and Amy Balough, editors, *Social & Historical Approaches to the Bible (Lexham Methods Series)* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017).

[6] Christopher A. Beetham, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians (Biblical Interpretation)* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010).

[7] Smith, *Academic Writing and Theological Research*, 175.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

Section 1: The Introduction

Herein, the project's introduction, chapter one, presents a statement of the problem and the study's purpose. It will then establish research methodology and thesis structure. Next, chapter two will review the existing literature and knowledge gap and then formulate the desideratum.

Section 2: The Context

To ascertain the context of Luke 10:30-35, chapter three discusses authorship, date, audience, and the purpose and occasion of its writing. Following this, an overview of Luke's literary context will address structure and argument. Finally, this chapter will survey Lukan theological themes pertinent to the interpretation of the chosen text.

Section 3: The Meaning

Chapter four begins exegesis of the chosen pericope beginning with relevant textual criticism and translation issues. Subsequently, contextual analysis uncovers the chosen text's historical and literary settings, whereas verbal analysis identifies useful lexical and grammatical features within the Greek text. Then, a literary analysis will highlight genre, structure, composition, and rhetoric.

Particular attention will be given to intertextual and social-scientific hermeneutical approaches. Regarding the former, the specific parallels between Luke 10:30-35 and relevant Old Testament texts offer a compelling connection to the development of the priest and Levite within the parable. Secondly, a social-scientific methodology highlights pertinent social matters from the world of the text, including the concept of neighbor identification, the foundation to the parable of Luke 10:30-35. Furthermore, the social

implications of the various characters and represented groups of the parable are developed via this methodology. Additionally, the social-scientific approach will enhance the exegesis of the text when considering qualities such as honor and shame, as well as purity concerns. Finally, this method will be useful in detecting many of the economic scenarios that underly the text in relation to the ruling elite within Jerusalem, their agents, and conditions in Jewish Palestine.

Section 4: The Significance

Chapter five includes an exegetical synthesis pulling together the findings to address interpretation and will then situate these findings within the broader context of biblical theology. Then chapter six articulates practical significance, expounding on the text's timeless truths and making direct application to missiological implications for Christians in the African context.[8] To accomplish this, there will be a brief examination of literature written from the African perspective regarding the Good Samaritan, accordingly, the application will then move beyond current literature, bringing conditions in the African context into conversation with the principles of the parable as relayed in chapter five.

[8] Ibid., 182.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

To establish a knowledge gap in developing the implications of the priest's and Levite's broader role in Luke's travel narrative, this literature review will identify how the parable and these two characters have been addressed during the two primary interpretive periods of the parable, including the earlier allegorical approach and the modern historical-critical hermeneutical emphasis, and in relevant commentaries and resources over the most recent decades.

This literature review features some examples of allegorical interpretation preceding the 19th century and will then discuss the changes to parabolic interpretation during the development of the historical-critical methodology. The focus will turn to how commentators have engaged the priest and Levite in this parable, attempting to cover the bulk of recognizable works from the last half century. Furthermore, this review will feature a considerable amount of publications aimed at parabolic interpretation along with some dissertations, monographs, and journal articles that tend to example where critical attention has been frequently given to the Good Samaritan.

2.2 Allegorical Interpretation of Parables

The interpretive periods of Luke 10:25-37 pivot on the contributions of Adolf Jülicher in 1886.[9] Preceding this timeframe, throughout the early and medieval periods of

[9]Adolf Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* (1886; repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1976), 1:52-53. Jülicher published this first portion of his commentary in 1886 focusing on the nature and purpose of parables (Die Gleichnisreden Jesu in Allgemeinen). In 1899, he published the

the church, interpretations centred on an allegorical approach, however, following his work, they transitioned to a more literal and historical approach.[10]

In the early second century CE, evidence of allegorical interpretation of parables appears in the works of Marcion, Clement of Alexandria, and Irenaeus.[11] Origen's interpretation of this parable employs extensive allegory drawn from an anonymous contributor with the victim representing Adam, Jerusalem portraying Eden, and Jericho the fallen world. Furthermore, the bandits are present evils while the wounds connote Adam's sin; meanwhile, the priest and Levite symbolize the law and prophets, the Samaritan models Jesus, and the inn represents the church. The two-denarii payment signifies the Father and Son, and the Samaritan's commitment to return to pay the final tabulation takes on eschatological meaning.[12] However, Origen deviates from his source in considering the thieves as false prophets and does not believe that the story represents all humanity.[13]

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second part (*Auslegung der Gleichnisreden der drei ersten Evangelien*), which was organized as a systematic exposition of all of the parables classified into three categories. Both parts have been published in numerous editions, this study follows the single, compiled edition.

[10] Warren S. Kissinger, *The Parables of Jesus: A History of Interpretation and Bibliography (ATLA Bibliography Series 4)* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 1979). xiii. See also Charles W. Hedrick, *Many Things in Parables: Jesus and His Modern Critics* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004), xiv.

[11] Riemer Roukema, "The Good Samaritan in Ancient Christianity," *Vigiliae Christianae* 58, no. 1 (2004): 56-74. Accessed September 4, 2021. *http://www.jstor.org/stable/1584537*. See also Francois Bovon, *Luke Vol. 2: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27 (Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible)* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2013), 62.

[12] Origen, "Homily 34. Luke 10:25-37" in *Homilies on Luke, Fragments on Luke (Fathers of the Church Patristic Series, Vol. 94)*, trans. Joseph T. Lienhard, 137-141 (original manuscript ca. 185-254 C.E.; repr., Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 3.

[13] Ibid., 4-9.

Origen's early third-century interpretation would catalyse similar allegorical interaction from early church writers, including Gregory Thaumaturgus and Ambrose.[14]

Roughly 200 years after Origen, Augustine demonstrated fondness for this parable in his writings.[15] In his *Quaestiones Evangeliorum*, he details elements throughout the parable in which he finds allegorical meaning, including that the oil and wine applied to the wounds represent the sacraments.[16] Perhaps most noteworthy, he identifies the innkeeper as the Apostle Paul, an isolated position in historical interpretation.[17] To Augustine, the significance of the parable is the application of mercy and compassion.[18]

John Chrysostom believed the parable's purpose was to challenge Judaizers, viewing attackers on the road to Jericho as symbolic of Judaizers who combated early Christian practice.[19] The Samaritan serves as an example for Christians, highlighting personal sacrifice with benevolence as a core Christian duty.[20] While Chrysostom arrives at a practical application, he still implements allegorical tendencies.

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[14] Roukema, "The Good Samaritan in Ancient Christianity," 56-74.

[15] Roland Teske, "The Good Samaritan (Lk 10:29-37) in Augustine's Exegesis," in Frederick van Fleteren and Joseph C. Schnaubelt (eds.), *Augustine: Biblical Exegete* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 347-367.

[16] Arthur A. Just, Jr., ed., *Luke (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament III)* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 180.

[17] Augustine, *Quaestiones Evangeliorum*, II, 19, as cited in Robert H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teachings* (original manuscript 395-399 C.E.; repr., Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994).

[18] Augustine, "Ch. 30 - Whether Angels are to be Reckoned our Neighbors, Sect. 33" in *de doctrina Christiana (On Christian Doctrine) Book 1*, edited by Philip Schaff, translated by Marcus Dods, & J. F. Shaw (original manuscript ca. 396-397 C.E.; transl., 1887; repr., 2011), loc. 701.

[19] Ibid.

[20] John Chrysostom "Homily VIII" in *Saint John Chrysostom: Eight Homilies Against the Jews*, 119-137 (original manuscript 386-387 C.E.; repr., 2010), 124-126, Kindle.

Thomas Aquinas' *Catena Aurea*, which compiles writings of the Church Fathers, profiles early interpreters' various allegorical treatments of the parable.[21] Aquinas also confronts the parable in his *Commentary on the Master's Prologue to the Sentences*, considering the Samaritan to symbolize God. The man left for dead is sin-plagued humanity, while the two denarii used to secure lodging for the victim represent two covenants.[22]

Through medievalism, allegorical affirmations were usually constant in the view that the mugged traveller symbolizes humanity as a victim of the world's evils and that the Samaritan represents God or Christ showing concern for the wounded. Interpretations were also generally consistent in the application that Christians should practice compassion as did the Samaritan. During this period, interpreters made minimal effort toward developing this parable's meaning within historical or literary contexts. The allegorical tendencies of this period would continue to largely influence interpreters until Jülicher.

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[21] Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels, Collected out of the Works of the Fathers, Vol. III, St. Luke* (ca. 1261-1265; repr., London: Oxford, 1843, 2010), Kindle.

[22] Thomas P. Mandonnet and Marie F. Moos (eds.), *Thomae Aquinatis Scriptum Super Libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi Episcopi Prissiness* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1929), 1:20. Scanned copy accessible via https://thomistica.net/news/2011/10/28/mandonnet-moos-edition-of-sentences-commentary-on-line.html.

2.3 The Modern Era of Parable Interpretation

The Historical-Critical Approach

Adolf Jülicher's seminal work, first published in 1886, launched the contemporary era of parabolic interpretation. In reaction to previous scholarship, Jülicher aimed to eliminate allegorical treatment in favour of a historical-critical approach.[23] As literal meanings took on greater significance, historical methods opened the door for new hermeneutical perspectives. Within this early period of change, parables became part of this school's epicentre, with the Good Samaritan occupying much attention.

Jülicher asserted that parabolic teachings tend to have a single idea in contrast with the cryptic misrepresentation of allegorical interpreters.[24] He divides parabolic speech into simile and metaphor, the former comparing variables while the latter takes on definition and context other than its plain meaning.[25] Jülicher organizes the synoptic gospel parables into three categories – similitude, parable, and example[26] – contending that the Good Samaritan is an example story, straightforward in exposition and only needing further development through application.[27]

Jülicher determined that while this parable's ending is uncertain, not revealing whether the Samaritan returned to pay the bill or the extent of the financial damages, its

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[23] Kissinger, *The Parables of Jesus*, 72.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Adolf Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* (1886; repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1976), 1:52-53.

[26] Ibid., 2:1-3.

[27] Ibid., 1:114.

inconclusiveness does not detract from interpretation. He saw no purpose in expounding on the priest's and Levite's roles, instead concentrating on the single idea that the parable's ultimate point is that neighbourliness and mercy should coincide.[28]

Joachim Jeremias leaned on the contributions of Jülicher's historical-critical approach, maintaining some of his methods while furthering the development of the parable's interpretation.[29] His attention rests on the motive behind the inactivity of the priest and Levite – whether they were unconcerned with the wounded traveller, or duty prevented them.

C.H. Dodd, another early authority from the line of Jülicher, implementing an open-ended eschatological emphasis in parable interpretation. However, in his well-known *The Parables of the Kingdom*, Dodd engages the Good Samaritan only in terms of erroneous historic allegorical tendencies, electing not to interpret this particular parable through his eschatological approach.[30]

Expanding the Modern Approach

Robert Funk, continuing the historical-critical tradition, considered parables to be extended metaphors through which meaning is found by positioning contrasting objects to stimulate the imagination.[31] He further acknowledged the intention of metaphoric

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[28] Ibid., 2:586-588.

[29] Joachim Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus* (London: Pearson, 1972), 202-203.

[30] C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (London: Nisbet and Co., 1935), 13-14.

[31] Robert Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God: The Problem of Language in the New Testament and Contemporary Theology* (New York: Harper, 1966), 161-162.

language to be creative, rendering it incomplete until heard and understood by the listener. To Funk, listening is the crucial step, and each listener may encounter a unique meaning of the text. Leaning on Dodd's assessment of the open-ended interpretation of parables, Funk deduces that parables can never have a definite meaning. He deviates from his predecessors by rejecting the approach of the Good Samaritan parable as an example story, identifying it instead as an extended metaphor.

John Dominic Crossan's career spans fifty years treating parables, initially from the historical-critical approach.[32] While rejecting the allegorical interpretation of earlier ages, he does accept that parables contain "poetic metaphors and symbolic expressions."[33] Crossan usefully defines the parable as a metaphoric story that will point "externally beyond itself" toward a "much wider referent."[34] Crossan came to view parables as having many potential readings since they may be read in varying contexts.[35]

Kenneth Bailey advances that the dichotomy Jülicher poses between historical and allegorical readings, as well as his insistence on single meanings, has since been disproven by scholarship. Bailey's conclusion is that parables include three fundamental elements. The first involves symbols, which are "one or more points of contact within the real world

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[32] John Dominic Crossan, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge Press, 1992).

[33] John Dominic Crossan, "Parable and Example in the Teaching of Jesus" in *Semeia* 1 (1974), 62-104.

[34] John Dominic Crossan, *The Power of Parable: How Fiction by Jesus Became Fiction about Jesus* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012).

[35] John Dominic Crossan, *Cliffs of Fall: Paradox and Polyvalence in the Parables of Jesus* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980).

of the listener," the second element is the listener's response; and the third critical element is what he terms "theological clusters," which are combination of theological motifs.

Concerning the Good Samaritan, Bailey assesses the priest to be a victim of a rule-based system in which he might have weighed not only the need for ritual purity but also the unknown identity of the wounded traveller. In the latter case, the concern would be whether he should risk assisting someone morally unfit for help. Regardless, Bailey does see the priest as having the greatest culpability within the narrative.[36]

Craig Blomberg seeks to create a balanced approach between allegorical and historical interpretations, affirming that Jesus intended for some parables to be allegories in the manner of rabbinical tradition, although such interpretation requires strict parameters.[37] Blomberg challenges assessments of singular viewpoints in parabolic speech, demonstrating that multiple themes are at work in cases such as the Prodigal Son. However, he does limit each character of parables to a single point, diminishing the potential for the multiple meanings that his approach would have indicated are possible in each story.

In his treatment of the Good Samaritan, Blomberg remarks that the priest and Levite are representatives of the "location of worship and the nature of the cultic ritual" juxtaposed with the Samaritan, whose people espoused significant theological differences

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[36] Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes* (*Poet & Peasant and Through Peasant Eyes, Combined Edition: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke)*, 1-187 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983).

[37] Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, 2nd (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012).

from the beliefs of the Jews.[38] Blomberg further assesses that the priest's and Levite's lack of action was inexcusable, even when considering the specific purity standards. However, he does not develop further implications of the representative qualities of the priest and Levite, specifically in the context of Luke's travel narrative, and does not consider socio-historical aspects.

Leland Ryken offers another voice asserting the need for balance between the rampant allegorical tendencies of the past and the strict historical approach of the twentieth century.[39] Ryken framed the discussion of allegory as a complex false dichotomy.[40] Like Blomberg, Ryken challenges the historical-critical interpreters on their insistence of a single point for each parable and provides a strict method toward interpreting parables with allegorical tendencies.[41]

The movement toward historical methodology sprung by Jülicher and furthered by others provided much of the basic framework for modern endeavours. However, this group of scholars did not reach consensus as to the appropriate way to read and interpret parabolic speech. After this generation, scholars began to further critique Jülicher and his proponents' narrow limitations on parabolic interpretation.[42]

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[38] Ibid., 302.

[39] Leland Ryken, *How to Read the Bible as Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic: 1985), 145, Kindle.

[40] Ibid., 146.

[41] Ibid., 148-152.

[42] Examples of those who have resisted include J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 287; and Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, 155.

2.4 The Priest and Levite in Modern Commentaries

Introduction

For much of the period since Jülicher, Jeremias, and Dodd, commentators shifted to a broader approach, viewing the Good Samaritan variously through historical, grammatical, social, and literary emphases. Despite these changes, academia has still seen limited dialogue concerning the priest's and Levite's presence. Some scholars have considered the reasons for these characters' inactivity but have neglected effort toward discovering their purpose.

This review will focus on literature specifically to identify scholars' contributions (or lack thereof) as they add to this discussion regarding the priest and Levite, establishing that current offerings fall short of identifying the implications of these archetypal characters. First under consideration are commentaries published since Jeremias' work on parables in 1958, categorized into groups based on time of publication.

1964 to 1984

During these two decades, eight commentaries on Luke are considered. While Frederick Danker adopts the stance that the priest and Levite's motives are "irrelevant,"[43] G.B. Caird asserts that it is the Samaritan who fulfils the role of the great commandments

[43] Frederick W. Danker, *Jesus and the New Age According to St. Luke: A Commentary on the Third Gospel* (St. Louis, MO: Clayton Publishing House, 1972).

as opposed to the devout, law-keeping priest and Levite.[44] I.H. Marshall adds that there is an "anti-clerical point to the story" but does not elaborate on that significance.[45]

In the early 1980s, E. Earle Ellis aligns with Marshall, stating that this parable "stresses one thing: the religious ones, seeing the victim's need, passed by."[46] Charles H. Talbert likewise offers that the priest and Levite are the "villains" of the parable. However, each of these theologians fail to seek out the further import of these statements.

Joseph Fitzmyer contributes by placing the characters within a socio-economic circumstance, alerting the reader to notice the "crucial" information that these two characters are members of the privileged Jerusalem class,[47] but Fitzmyer does not address the symbolic potential of these characters. Meanwhile, Eduard Schweizer hardly mentions the priest and Levite.[48] Walter Liefeld balances between the allegorizing of the past and what he sees as the oversimplification of parables following the historical-critical era.[49] These eight scholars at most acknowledge these two characters' significance but offer only a modest contribution in expounding upon their roles.

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[44] G. B. Caird, *The Gospel of St. Luke (New Testament Commentary)* (London: Penguin Books, 1964).

[45] I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke (The New International Greek Testament Commentary)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978).

[46] Edward Earle Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke (New Century Bible Commentary)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982).

[47] Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX: Introduction, Translation, and Notes (The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries, Vol. 28A)* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1982).

[48] Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Luke*, trans. David E. Green (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1984).

[49] Walter L. Liefeld, "Luke" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Vol. 8: Matthew, Mark, Luke,* ed. F. E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), 942.

1988 to 1993

Seven commentaries on Luke were published in the five-year period from 1988 to 1993. However, Fred Craddock,[50] David Gooding,[51] and Craig Evans[52] provide little to no contribution regarding this topic. Leon Morris merely notes that the only definitive is that the priest and Levite failed to help, submitting that the reasons are unknown.[53] David Tiede argues that the religious leaders failed in fulfilling the commandment of loving one's neighbour;[54] while Robert Stein finds the characters' motives irrelevant given their fictional status; however, he boldly asserts that their actions demonstrate that they "loved neither God, nor their neighbour."[55]

The seventh commentator, John Nolland, makes the most useful contribution to this study when he affirms that the inactivity of the priest and Levite, a "second-ranking figure" to the priest in Temple work, is the "story's focus" with the priest serving as the "prime representative" of religion. Herein, Nolland is the first to open the door to these

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[50] Fred B. Craddock, *Luke: Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1990), Kindle.

[51] David Gooding, *According to Luke: A new exposition of the Third Gospel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987).

[52] Craig A. Evans, *New International Biblical Commentary: Luke (New Testament Series)* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1990).

[53] Leon Morris, *Luke (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries Book 3)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), Kindle.

[54] David L. Tiede, *Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament: Luke* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1988).

[55] Robert H. Stein, *Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture (The New American Commentary)* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 1993).

characters' representative qualities; however, he does not engage in theory as to the more profound potential of their representation.[56]

This period built on the offerings of previous commentators insomuch that their assertions of the parable's implications regarding these figures became marginally more direct; however, none of these authors attempt to engage with these characters in the broader literary context.

1994 to 2008

Eleven notable Lukan commentaries emerged from 1994 to 2008, offering relevant progression from previous work. Robert Tannehill affirms that Jesus is pushing the limitations of religious leaders who failed to heed the commandment.[57] Darrell Bock carefully treats several considerations concerning why the priest and Levite remained inactive before claiming that the point is their inactivity rather than their reasons. Bock subtly admits these characters' representative qualities with his suggestion that "official, pious Judaism had two tries to respond and did not." However, he does not expound on further implications of their failure.[58]

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[56] John Nolland, *Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 35b, Luke 9:21-18:34* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1993).

[57] Robert C. Tannehill, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries: Luke* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996), Kindle.

[58] Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: 2 Volumes (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)* (Reprint, Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), Kindle.

Joel Green traces many of the motivational arguments of these characters' lack of response before concluding that no potential specific reason would be the story's point.[59] He does make the most substantial contribution to this study by firmly situating the parable within the broader travel narrative of Jesus to Jerusalem while also mentioning the priestly class's socio-economic positions. However, Green does not directly interact with these characters as potential representatives, nor does he expound on their literary placement in the travel narrative.[60]

Malina and Rohrbaugh attach a social-scientific element to the text. However, in the limited scope of their works, their intention is not to develop an interpretive characterization of the priest and Levite.[61] Malina and Rohrbaugh do interject the social purity map to the discussion which places priests and Levites at the top, well above the peasant class.[62] Luke Timothy Johnson adds to the discussion by firmly claiming that the priest and Levite were representatives of Jewish leadership; however, he is less clear concerning the significance of their representation.[63] While Richard Vinson's work does

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[59] Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke (The New International Commentary on the New Testament)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), Kindle.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Bruce J. Malina and Richard Rohrbaugh, *Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992).

[62] Ibid.

[63] Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke (Sacra Pagina)* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991).

not heavily contribute to the overall study, he starkly notes that the priest and Levite are assigned within this parable the same standing as the bandits.[64]

Michael Patella's work, while failing to add to the discussion regarding the priest and Levite, still includes a helpful theological point of view that this parable coincides with the eventual mission in Luke-Acts toward the Samaritans.[65] Meanwhile, Liefeld's updated commentary with David Pao fails to add substantially from the edition twenty-three years prior.[66] Finally, the contributions of Judith Lieu,[67] R. Alan Culpepper,[68] and David Balch are quite concise and contribute nothing remarkable to the aims of this study.[69]

This period of scholarship demonstrates progress in observations regarding these characters' motivations, representative value, and the socio-historical relevance, while Green meaningfully situates the parable within its literary context.[70] However, these commentators do not further develop or connect observations of these characters within the travel narrative.

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[64] Richard B. Vinson, *Luke (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary)*, ed. L. Andres & R. A. Culpepper (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2008).

[65] Michael F. Patella, *The Gospel According To Luke: Volume 3 (New Collegeville Bible Commentary: New Testament)* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005), loc. 972, Kindle.

[66] Walter L. Liefeld and David W. Pao, "Luke" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Revised Edition Vol. 10: Luke–Acts*, eds. Tremper Longman III & David E. Garland, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 199.

[67] Judith Lieu, *The Gospel of Luke* (London: Epworth Press, 1997).

[68] R. Alan Culpepper, "Luke," in *The New Interpreter's Bible Vol. IX - A Commentary in Twelve Volumes)*, ed. Leander E. Keck, 1-490 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995).

[69] David L. Balch, "Luke" in *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*, eds. James D. G. Dunn and John W. Rogerson (Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 2019), 101, Kindle.

[70] Green, *The Gospel of Luke (NICNT)*.

Recent Lukan Commentaries

The final section considers twenty-one Lukan recent commentaries as of the time of this writing. These works including offerings by Francois Bovon,[71] two contributions by Robert Brawley,[72] John Carroll,[73] David Jeffrey,[74] Richard France,[75] Mikeal Parsons,[76] Diane Chen,[77] Pablo Gadenz,[78] David Neale,[79] Robert Gundry,[80] R. Kent Hughes,[81] Grant

[71] Bovon, *Luke Vol. 2*.

[72] Robert L. Brawley, *Luke: A Social Identity Commentary* (New York: T&T Clark, 2020). See also Robert L. Brawley, "Luke" in *The New Testament Fortress Commentary on the Bible*, 217-264, eds. Margaret Aymer, Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, and David A. Sánchez (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 2196, Kindle.

[73] John T. Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary (The New Testament Library)* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2012), Kindle.

[74] David Lyle Jeffrey, *Luke (Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible)* (Ada, MI: Brazos Press, 2012), Kindle.

[75] R. T. France, *Luke (Teach the Text Commentary Series)* (Ada, MI: Baker Books, 2013), Kindle.

[76] Mikeal C. Parsons, *Luke (Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament)* (Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2015).

[77] Chen, *Luke*, loc. 3925.

[78] Pablo T. Gadenz, *The Gospel of Luke (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture)* (Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2018).

[79] David A. Neale, *Luke 9-24: A Commentary in the Wesleyan Tradition (New Beacon Bible Commentary)* (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 2018), Kindle.

[80] Robert H. Gundry, *Commentary on Luke (Commentary on the New Testament Book #3)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), Kindle.

[81] R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth (Preaching the Word: 2 volumes in 1 / ESV Edition)* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), locs. 7288-7289, Kindle.

Osborne,[82] Justo González,[83] Andrew Arterbury,[84] Barbara Reid with Shelly Matthews,[85] and two contributions by Thomas Schreiner.[86]

Of these, Neale makes the most useful contribution to this study, remarking that the priest and Levite "represent typical representatives of Judean Judaism" serving the portion of Judaism that had failed to comprehend human compassion.[87] In their co-written work, Amy Jill Levine and Ben Witherington raise an intriguing comparison of the word "robbers" (λῃστής), which Luke uses both in this parable and in Luke 19:46 concerning the temple authorities, whom Levine contends are the actual thieves.[88]

Michael Wolter dismisses interest in reasons for the characters' inactivity, promoting the indirect explanation that they had no compassion. However, he does assert that these two characters "personify Israel's distinct relationship to God, which was made visible in the Jerusalem temple cult."[89] Finally, in what is self-described as a theological

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[82] Grant R. Osborne, *Luke Verse by Verse (Osborne New Testament Commentaries)* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 284, Kindle.

[83] Justo L. González, *Luke (Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible)* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011), Kindle.

[84] Andrew Arterbury, *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary (Reading the New Testament: Second Series)* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2013), 94, Kindle.

[85] Barbara E. Reid and Shelly Matthews, *Luke 10-24: Volume 43 (Wisdom Commentary Series)*, ed. Barbara E. Reid (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2021), 21, Kindle.

[86] Thomas R. Schreiner, *Commentary on Luke: from The Baker Illustrated Bible Commentary*, eds. Gary M. Burge and Andrew E. Hill (Ada, MI: Baker, 2019), 4, Kindle.

[87] Neale, *Luke 9-24*, 69-71.

[88] Amy-Jill Levine and Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Luke (New Cambridge Bible Commentary)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[89] Michael Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke: Volume II (Luke 9:51–24) (Baylor-Mohr Siebeck Studies in Early Christianity)*, trans. Wayne Coppins, & Christoph Heilig (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017), Kindle.

commentary attempting to bridge the gap between exegesis with theology, F. Scott Spencer delivers the most substantial treatment of this parable among his contemporary counterparts; however, he still adds nothing directly applicable to this study of the priest and Levite.[90]

Commentators of this period frequently dialogue with scholars of previous decades. However, with regard to the role of the priest and Levite, these newer contributions fail to substantially move the conversation forward.

2.5 Monographs and Other Works to Consider

Having considered Lukan commentaries, this survey will now review relevant monographs, journals, dissertations, and other sources contributing toward this discussion. First, among works that specifically treat parables, Ruben Zimmerman acknowledges that the priest and Levite are representatives of the temple cult in Jerusalem. However, he shows little interest in drawing out this position's implications.[91]

Meanwhile, Lauri Thuren eliminates the priesthood's historical function from interpretation.[92] However, such a view fails to consider the automatic images and perceptions the initial audience would have had of these characters and how Jesus might

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[90] F. Scott Spencer, *Luke (The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019), Kindle.

[91] Ruben Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015).

[92] Lauri Thuren, *Parables Unplugged: Reading the Lukan Parables in their Rhetorical Context* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2014).

have inferred their social circumstance within the parable, even without using explicit language.

To Luise Schottroff, these characters' indictment is not associated with purity concerns but rather with their individual choice to look away from the wounded traveller. While Schottroff engages the socio-historical setting, she limits her interest to *halakhic* arguments and fails to engage in critical sources that analyse first-century views of the Temple establishment.[93]

Norman Perrin leans on Crossan's assessment of this parable considering the racial implications of a world in which Jew and Samaritans were divided.[94] While this aspect is essential to this parable's understanding, these scholars' assessments ignore other factors necessary to this project, including representative and broader literary contexts. Robert Capon makes an interesting observation in calling both the priest and the Levite representatives of atonement, but aside from the obvious connection to the temple, fails to unpack the statement.[95] Klyne Snodgrass does not see the temple as under indictment within the parable but acknowledges the shadow of the temple is cast over this parable.[96]

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[93] Luise Schottroff, *The Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2006).

[94] Norman Perrin, *Parable and Gospel (Fortress Classics in Biblical Studies)* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2009).

[95] Robert Farrar Capon, *Kingdom, Grace, Judgment: Paradox, Outrage, and Vindication in the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), loc. 2708, Kindle.

[96] Klyne R. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), Kindle.

Bernard Scott observes the placement of this parable in the travel narrative.[97] Still, although he applies his analysis to events recorded before this parable, he does not include how this parable relates to later sections of that context. However, Scott provides a critical remark concerning the "anticlericalism" of the audience towards the priestly "upper-class status." This marks a significant contribution, but Scott does not incorporate further representative elements in this view.[98]

John R. Donahue's recognition of this parable within the travel narrative is the most substantial among these authors.[99] However, while he is informative, he fails to examine theological implications for the literary placements except to say that this parable, in part, creates a "theological arch" for discipleship, a theme that shapes the entire travel narrative. Missing from Donahue's treatment are socio-historical elements, and no assessment is given of the representative characteristics of the priest and Levite.[100]

Charles Hedrick sees value in focusing on the wounded traveller while maintaining that the motive behind the priest and Levite's inaction is unknown. To Hedrick, if there is any indictment of these characters, it is at a fundamental human level rather than due to their position within the temple cult.[101] Other works that discuss a broad range of Jesus'

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[97] Bernard Brandon Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, rev. (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1989), Kindle.

[98] Ibid., loc. 2853, 2860.

[99] John R. Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1988), Kindle.

[100] Ibid., loc. 1603.

[101] Charles W. Hedrick, *Parables as Poetic Fictions: The Creative Voice of Jesus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994).

parables but fail to add substantial findings to this study include Sylvia Keesmat,[102] John Drury,[103] Mary Tolbert,[104] Arland Hultgren,[105] Douglas Webster,[106] and Michelle Lee-Barnewell.[107]

J. Ian H. McDonald recognizes the significance of the parable's literary placement within the travel narrative; however, he targets the other two encounters with Samaritans in this literary focus. He advances this study through his view that Jesus is intentionally critiquing the Temple. He briefly remarks concerning the priest and Levite's economic function as associated with the oppressive Temple. Where McDonald falls short is by failing to synthesize these various ideas.[108]

Thomas E. Philips deduces that the parable's inclusion of the priest and Levite represents Jesus' criticism of the Temple and synagogue in Jewish life. He endorses the view that the placement of these characters was an intentional rebuke of the system;

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[102] Sylvia C. Keesmaat, "Strange Neighbors and Risky Care (Matthew 18:21-35; Luke 14:7-14; Luke 10:25-37)" in *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables (McMaster New Testament Series)*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).

[103] John Drury, *The Parables in the Gospels: History and Allegory* (New York: Crossroad, 1989).

[104] Mary Ann Tolbert, *Perspectives on the Parables: An Approach to Multiple Interpretations* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979).

[105] Arland J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary (The Bible in its World)*, ed. David Noel Freedman and Astrid B. Beck (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).

[106] Douglas D. Webster, *The Parables: Jesus' Friendly Subversive Speech* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2021).

[107] Michelle Lee Barnewall, *Surprised by the Parables: Growing in Grace through the Stories of Jesus* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020), Kindle.

[108] J. Ian H. McDonald, "Alien Grace (Luke 10:30-36)" in *Jesus and His Parables: Interpreting the Parables of Jesus Today*, ed. V. George Shillington (Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1997), 35-51.

however, he does not situate the parable in its literary or socio-historical context and fails to identify the motives behind the rebuke.[109]

Piotr Blajer's dissertation focuses on this parable in the context of the travel narrative, recognizing the significance of its placement within that broader context.[110] However, Blajer's interests are soteriological; therefore, his focus is limited. Consequently, he does not significantly treat economic ethics, a crucial matter in the travel narrative, or how this parable functions within the socio-economic paradigm. In his narrative analysis of the parable, Blajer remarks that the audience would have expected a good priest to exercise benevolence toward the victim. While Blajer continuously and usefully attests that the first audience would have made multiple assumptions regarding the parable's characters, he never injects socio-economic theories into the discussion. Instead, he takes for granted a view that priests were highly regarded without engaging with arguments that suggest otherwise.[111]

Richard Bauckham asserts the parable's intention is not to indict the Temple and priesthood, nor to redefine categories of neighbours; instead, its purpose is to identify what actions constitute neighbourliness.[112] Therefore, the real point is Jesus' interpretation of

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[109] Thomas E. Phillips, "Subtlety as a Literary Technique in Luke's Characterization of Jews and Judaism," in *Literary Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays in Honor of Joseph B. Tyson*, eds. Richard P. Thompson & Thomas E. Phillips, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998), 313-326.

[110] Piotr Blajer, "The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37): Its Function and Purpose within the Lukan Journey Section," S.Th. diss., (The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., 2012). http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.467.9750&rep=rep1&type=pdf.

[111] Ibid., 166-173.

[112] Richard Bauckham, "The Scrupulous Priest and the Good Samaritan: Jesus' Parabolic Interpretation of the Law of Moses," *New Testament Studies* 44, no. 4 (October 1998): 475-489.

the Torah. Bauckham gives these conclusions without critically interacting with authors who derive other views of the parable's purposes; instead, his sole focus is on the *halakhic* arguments. Given this intentionally narrow scope, one might not be surprised that he espouses a limited range of purpose for the parable.

Philip Esler's attention is intentionally limited to the immediate context and focuses on intergroup conflict; therefore, he is more concerned with ethnicity, cultural law, and purity standards.[113] Meanwhile, Joshua Marshall Strahan intends to examine broader contexts, but restricts his work with this parable toward providing principles for interpreting Torah.[114] These last four resources – Blajer, Bauckham, Esler, and Strahan – represent authors of a dissertation, monograph, and two journal articles. Their value is not so much in what they convey to this study, but that these serve as an example of areas that receive widespread focus concerning this parable.

John A. Darr employs literary critical methods to develop characterization within Luke-Acts, describing the model that readers "build" characters, and critics "build" readers. Darr's application of his model is limited to prominent, named characters in Luke-Acts, and he fails to engage Luke 10:25-37 altogether.[115] Meanwhile, Eric Franklin's focus is on developing Luke's theology in terms of eschatological paradigms, and his attention

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[113] Philip Francis Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[114] Joshua Marshall Strahan, "Jesus Teaches Theological Interpretation of the Law: Reading the Good Samaritan in Its Literary Context," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* (Penn State University Press) 10, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 71-86.

[115] John A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts (Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation)* (Louisville, KY: Westminster / John Knox Press, 1992).

toward Luke 10:25-37 is limited. However, Franklin does remark on the contextual significance of the parable within Luke's travel narrative and sees representative qualities of the inquisitive lawyer as being symbolic of "Old Testament faith," but he fails to interact with the priest and Levite of the parable.[116] Frank Dicken and Julia Snyder's edited monograph focuses on developing characters and characterization in Luke-Acts, but they maintain a narrow scope that barely references Luke 10:25-37 or the priesthood.[117]

2.6 Knowledge Gap

Early contributions dominated by allegorical interpretation failed to deliver substantial understanding with consideration of the historical context. In this school, the priest and Levite were often viewed in roles that only served allegorical interpretation void of Luke's literary and social context. The modern period saw a strong emphasis toward recovering historical understanding. Commentators have now treated the ritualistic and purity elements of the parable and have drawn some attention, however lightly, to socio-economic and literary factors connected to these characters. A few scholars note the representative quality of these figures, and while none seek to provide a developed view considering this representation.

Naturally, commentators' broad scope limits the extent of detailed attention that may be given to a single pericope, so the task of considering the implications of what the

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[116] Eric Franklin, *Christ the Lord: A Study in the Purpose and Theology of Luke-Acts* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1975).

[117] Frank Dicken and Julia Snyder, *Characters and Characterization in Luke-Acts (The Library of New Testament Studies, 548)* (London: T&T Clark, 2016).

priest and Levite represent is better suited to monographic and journalistic material. However, surprisingly little attention to this topic exists in those formats; instead, many such works provide a broader treatment of parables in general rather than thoroughly exploring the elements of an individual parable. Of those publications that do focus entirely on the Good Samaritan, the aim is almost exclusively limited to Jesus' view of the Torah or the import of the other characters, the inquisitive lawyer and Samaritan. However, no resources are located that explain the priest and Levite as representatives, specifically in contrast to the actions and purpose of the Samaritan. This study will fill this gap by discovering how the less-focused-on priest's and Levite's representative roles fit within the literary and socio-historical contexts in synthesis with the Lukan travel narrative and are more deeply considered when juxtaposed to the Samaritan.

2.7 Formulation of Desiderata

Earlier commentators under the shadow of Jülicher's influence exhibit a tendency toward a reserved reading, interpreting the Good Samaritan as an example story with a narrow, single meaning without further examination of the characters. However, beginning the late 1980s following the period of Funk, Crossan, and Bailey, who offer more flexible readings, commentators gradually begin to delve deeper into the parable's characteristics. Accompanied by Blomberg's contribution to restoring an element of allegorical reading, scholarship in the 1990s advances the intention to explore the characters' purpose and reasons for their inclusion in the narrative.

Several contributors stand out in their contribution toward this end. John Nolland and Luke Timothy Johnson both clearly affirm the representative qualities of the priest and Levite. Equally beneficial, Joel Green associates the parable within the broader travel

narrative and connects socio-economic concerns to the priest and Levite. In addition, Phillips offers that the placement of priest and Levite is a rebuke of the temple institution. These prior contributions have touched on representation, literary placement, and socio-economic factors connected to these characters, but this study will offer a synthesis and expansion of these prior efforts to draw out the implication of these characters' representational qualities in the broader narrative.

CHAPTER THREE: EXEGETICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction: Backdrop of the Gospel of Luke

The framework of Luke 10:25-37 includes the gospel's background, structure, themes and theology, and the textual setting, situated in the travel narrative on the road to Jerusalem between two other parables. The broader context of Luke includes authorship, Luke's identity, influences, personality and style of writings, dating, recipients, early readers, key themes, and motifs.

Authorship

The authorship of Luke's Gospel is uncertain, as the writer does not disclose identity.[118] However, omission of authorial details does not preclude knowledge of authorship by the first recipients and subsequent readers;[119] rather, tradition and textual indications give clues regarding the writer's identity.[120] The masculine participle in Luke 1:3 identifies the author as male,[121] and the oldest extant manuscript attributing the Gospel to a person named Luke dates from 175-225 CE.[122] Shared authorship of Luke-Acts is a

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[118] Francois Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50 (Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible)*, ed. H. Koester, transl. D. S. Deer (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2002), 8.

[119] Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2012), 25.

[120] Parsons, *Luke (Paideia)*, 5.

[121] Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1*, 8.

[122] David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles (The Pillar New Testament Commentary)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 1-3.

considered a "closed" discussion and assists in ascertaining details regarding the author.[123] The "we" sections of Acts are consistent with other portions, giving credence to a single author who lived in the first century CE, was an eyewitness to some of the events, and had access to key leaders of the early church.[124]

Edwards remarks that in Jewish synagogues, readings customarily included the names of authors to verify the authority and authenticity of the readings; therefore, an anonymous text would have been uncategorical.[125] Scholars speculate that early readers received oral tradition from the first recipients who personally knew the author, attesting to its originality, and that the author's identity was later inserted into written manuscripts.[126]

Irenaeus is the earliest source to discuss the gospel's authorship in 180 CE, attesting single authorship of Luke and Acts by a man named Luke referenced in Col. 4:14 and 2 Tim. 4:11.[127] By 200 CE, Lukan authorship of Luke-Acts was widely circulated, maintained by Justin Martyr, Clement and Tertullian.[128] The tradition was well established by the fourth century when Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome each affirmed Luke's authorship,

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[123] Joseph Verheyden, ed., *The Unity of Luke-Acts* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 6-7. See also Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary, Vol. 1* (Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 402.

[124] Parsons, *Luke (Paideia)*, 5-7.

[125] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 4.

[126] Vinson, *Luke*, 2.

[127] Michael Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke: Volume I (Luke 1:1–9:50) (Baylor-Mohr Siebeck Studies in Early Christianity)*, transl. Wayne Coppins & Christoph Heilig (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 5. See also Richard I. Pervo, "Hermeneia," in *Acts: A Commentary - A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Harold W. Attridge (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), 5-7.

[128] Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1*, 8-10. See also Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 3.

with the latter two adding that Paul's "gospel" was a reference to the Lukan writings.[129] The evidence from the earliest manuscripts as well as the unchallenged support of early tradition creates a substantial argument supporting Lukan origin of the Gospel and Acts.[130]

Luke's Education, Language, and Style

Luke's familiarity of the Greek Septuagint is widely affirmed.[131] In addition, he expresses Semitisms and demonstrates familiarity with Jewish exegetical methods.[132] His sophisticated use of language indicates he was highly educated in Hellenistic Greek, which was likely his native dialect.[133]

Luke wrote in middle Greek, a style between the spoken dialect and ancient prose, while also incorporating language similar to that of the LXX.[134] His writing style allowed a smoother reading intended for educated audiences, providing for more polished presentation of early Christianity. [135]

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[129] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 5-8. See Rom. 2:15, 16:25, and 2 Tim. 2:8.

[130] Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (New Testament Commentary Series)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 56-57.

[131] Vinson, *Luke*, 1-3. The gospel author references, alludes to, and directly borrows from the style of the LXX.

[132] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 1-3. See also Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1*, 8-10.

[133] Chen, *Luke*, loc. 285. See also Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 1-3; and Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, 2-3. However, Pervo, "Hermeneia," 5-7, points out the limits of Luke's education in terms of stylistic presentation.

[134] Martin M. Culy and Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), xxiv. See also Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1*, 4; and Pervo, "Hermeneia," 7.

[135] Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1*, 4.

Dating

The Gospel of Luke itself offers no direct reference to time of writing.[136] While the dating of the Lukan writings remains inconclusive, its dating potential ranges from 70 – 150 CE.[137] However, since scholarly consensus dates Mark from 65-70 CE while concluding that Luke's writing follows Mark, perhaps by several years,[138] the most appropriate dating window for Luke is no earlier than the late 60s and not later than 80 CE.[139]

Audience

Luke writes in the awareness that Christianity had spread through the Mediterranean region for some decades.[140] The Gospel utilizes Hellenistic Greek in a style that appeals to higher educated readers, both Jewish and Gentile, with cultural and geographic knowledge of the Mediterranean world, as well as with the LXX, gospel traditions, and Second Temple Judaism.[141] Vinson argues that given Luke's concern over money and possessions, likely a substantial portion of his audience were among the wealthy.[142]

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[136] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 11.

[137] Vinson, *Luke*, 6.

[138] Spencer, *Luke (Two Horizons NTC)*, 22.

[139] Ibid., 12.

[140] Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke: Volume I*, 29.

[141] Craig S. Keener, *Acts (New Cambridge Bible Commentary)* (Cambridge University Press: 2020), 52. See also Parsons, *Luke (Paideia)*, 18.

[142] Vinson, *Luke*, 4.

Luke's intention was certainly for his writings to spread to a wider community within the Roman Empire.[143] Theophilus, and presumably Luke's wider audience, was expected to have some familiarity with the LXX from which Luke quotes freely, as well as with Hellenistic Judaism.[144]

Purpose and Genre

Attempting to isolate Luke's purpose into a simple statement is what Spencer calls a "fool's errand."[145] Luke's failure to state a clear and direct purpose of his writings has created a lack of consensus among scholars; however, the Gospel author seems to have had multiple purposes and a broad vision for the writings.[146]

It is pertinent to consider both Luke and Acts when considering Luke's purpose, aims, goals, and genre.[147] Many scholars assess the unity of Luke-Acts as well as the question of dating to be imbedded within determining the purposes.[148] To state that the purpose was to evangelize hardly fits the scope and aim of the Lukan writings.[149] Some view Luke's work as apologetic, reinforcing and developing group identity, or formulated

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[143] Keener, *Acts (NCBC)*, 2020, 52. See also Parsons, *Acts (Paideia)*, 19-20; and Cho and Park, *Acts*, 13.

[144] Cho and Park, *Acts*, 13.

[145] Spencer, *Luke (Two Horizons NTC)*, 23.

[146] L. Scott Kellum, *Acts (Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament)*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger & Robert W. Yarbrough (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2020), 710, Kindle. See also Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, 5.

[147] David Garland, *Luke (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on The New Testament Series Book 3)*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2011), 34, Kindle.

[148] Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 36. See also Keener, *Acts (NCBC)*, 2020, 52.

[149] Keener, *Acts (NCBC)*, 2020, 52. See also Chen, *Luke*, loc. 322.

as an external apology appealing to Rome.[150] Craig Keener argues that Luke wrote for insiders more than outsiders, lending weight to the formation of group identity.[151] As Luke's motivation were complex, it is best to keep an open view of his purposes.[152]

Defining the genre of Luke is similarly problematic to attempting to narrow down its purpose.[153] The Gospel prologue articulates an interest in historical aspects; however, the preface does not meet the norms of Greek historiography.[154] Some argue that Luke correlated with the genre of ancient biography, which was the predominant theory until Rudolf Bultmann contended otherwise.[155] However, recent scholars have reaffirmed biography to be at least a sub-genre.[156] Luke's Gospel parallels Hellenistic biography insomuch as the narrative contains a central character, stories from youth attesting to a rising prodigy, and a remarkable teaching ability that withstands accusers.[157]

James Morgan has developed and applied to Luke-Acts the genre of prophetic historiography, a category which is helpful in placement of the Lukan writings. Morgan defines this blending of the prophetic with historiography as not necessarily predictive, but

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[150] Pervo, "Hermeneia," 21. See also Keener, *Acts* (NCBC), 2020, 52-58.

[151] Ibid., 52.

[152] Spencer, *Luke (Two Horizons NTC)*, 5.

[153] Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1*, 5. See also Chen, *Luke*, loc. 352.

[154] Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1*, 5. See also Schnabel, *Acts*, 33.

[155] Chen, *Luke*, loc. 369.

[156] Parsons, *Luke (Paideia)*, 13. See also Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, 5.

[157] N. T. Wright and Michael F. Bird, *The New Testament in Its World: An Introduction to the History, Literature, and Theology of the First Christians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 1176-1177.

retrospective and interpretive of past events.[158] Similar features are noted by both Keener and Bock, who view Luke's preface as sharing characteristics of a historical monograph rather than those of a biography proper, but correlating to the Jewish historiographical style as opposed to the Greek.[159] Considered these possibilities, viewing Luke's two volumes as a historical monograph in the genre of prophetic historiography is the most appropriate delimitation.

Textual Integrity

While several textual variants exist, consensus is that the text of Luke's Gospel has been maintained well.[160] The primary three manuscript sources are the Alexandrian text from the second century; in close time proximity, the Western text was cited by the church fathers; and the Byzantine text used by Erasmus in the *textus receptus*.[161] Variants between these three primary sources are mostly attributed to copyist error, the impact of oral tradition from other Gospel material, and potential theological development.[162] There are no significant findings in terms of textual criticism in this pericope to address within this study.

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[158] Simon Butticaz, et al., *Le corpus lucanien (Luc-Actes) et l'historiographie ancienne: Quels rapports?* (Münster, Germany: LIT Verlag, 2019), 77.

[159] Bock, *Luke, 2 Volumes*, 3. See also Craig S. Keener, *Christobiography: Memory, History, and the Reliability of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019), 455, e-book, Scribd.

[160] Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1*, 1.

[161] Chance, *Acts*, 6.

[162] Ibid.

3.2 Structure

Luke's Gospel may be divided into three literary sections. The first (1:1-9:50) includes the birth of Jesus and the beginnings of his ministry in Galilee, which provides the initial themes of Jesus' ministry including teaching, practice, and healing.[163] The second section (9:51-19:27), known as the travel narrative to Jerusalem, is the longest, consisting mostly of teachings and parables, many concerning discipleship.[164] While there are constant reminders that Jesus is on his way toward Jerusalem during this section, few navigational clues are given.[165] The final division of Luke (19:28-24:53) marks Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem where he engages in daily teachings, largely via eschatological parables. However, Luke omits Mark's chronology of that Passover week as Jesus moves toward the cross and resurrection.[166]

3.3 Theology and Themes

Concise identification of Lukan themes is a challenge given the rich and vibrant motifs he incorporates. Three scholarly works provide helpful assessments giving a broad, though hardly complete, overview of these themes. N. T. Wright and Michael Bird rightly state that if Luke-Acts had to be reduced to a singular central theme, it would be salvation wherein the character of the Saviour is revealed as well as the unfolding mission, with the various dimensions of salvation including "healing from physical afflictions, the removal

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[163] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 18.

[164] Ibid., 18-19.

[165] Ibid., 19.

[166] Vinson, *Luke*, 7-10.

of shame, status reversal, forgiveness of sins, and justification, as well as receiving life, peace, mercy, and grace. All this is accessed through faith and repentance."[167]

Meanwhile, Chen presents four primary themes of Luke. First, "…the story of Jesus … the centrepiece of the plan of salvation ordained by the sovereign God;" second, Luke's realized eschatology with God's future being viewed in the present; third, the theme of reversal; and fourth, the "journey motif" with the narrative seen in perpetual motion across both Luke and Acts.[168] Vinson alternatively labels the themes according to the kingdom of God, wealth and poverty, prophecy, repentance and forgiveness, apostles, disciples, crowds and witnesses, and women.[169] To some degree, each of the themes make their way into Luke 10:25-37, however, the four most relevant elements of the enumerated motifs include status reversal, wealth and poverty, journey motif, and discipleship, each of which will be further explored later in this project.

3.4 The Parable's Context within Luke

Luke's Travel Narrative (9:51-19:27)

The second primary division in Luke's gospel, the travel narrative, spans 9:51-19:27. This portion begins with Jesus departing Galilee toward Jerusalem, traveling for approximately eighty-five miles, and concludes with his entry into Jerusalem and his temple demonstration. Content in the travel narrative is largely Lukan-unique with

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[167] Wright and Bird, *The New Testament in Its World*, 1163.

[168] Chen, *Luke*, loc. 368-394.

[169] Vinson, *Luke*, 11-20.

emphasis shifting to Jesus' ethical teachings, often in parabolic form. As the narrative draws closer to Jerusalem, so the coming end is reflected in Jesus' parables and teachings.[170] While all the gospels prominently feature the events leading up to and including Jesus' death, Luke places a unique emphasis on the journey to Jerusalem, dedicating nearly half the gospel to this motif.[171] This provides not only the most significant structural basis for Luke's gospel, but also its primary theological theme.[172] Few geographic indicators appear in the core section; instead, organization is more theological.[173]

Further qualities identify this core section. This includes what Bock calls "mirror miracles" which are similar to those performed in Galilee but prompt more opportunity for response in the new locations Jesus encounters.[174] Additionally, the theme of economic ethics becomes magnified during this extensive narrative, as well as the national consequences for rejecting Jesus' visit to Jerusalem.[175]

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[170] David Crowther, "Luke," in *Lexham Context Commentary: New Testament*, ed. D. Mangum (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), e-book, Logos. See also Vinson, *Luke*, 304.

[171] Arthur A. Just, Jr., *Luke 9:51–24:53 (Concordia Commentary)* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1997), 419.

[172] Ibid., 420.

[173] John Nolland and William C. Robinson, "The Theological Context for Interpreting Luke's Travel Narrative (9:51 Ff.)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 79, no. 1 (1960): 27. doi:10.2307/3264496.

[174] Darrell L. Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts: God's Promised Program, Realized for All Nations (Biblical Theology of the New Testament Series)*, ed. A. J. Köstenberger (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 72, Kindle.

[175] Ibid.

Luke employs a great deal of Semitic personality when opening this section, supplying ample Hebraisms and idioms often reflective of a septuagintal style of writing.[176] He utilizes key elements of Jeremiah and Ezekiel which aid his readers contextually. Jeremiah pleads for the repentance of the covenant people; however, at their failure, he says, "I have set my face against this city [Jerusalem]" (Jer. 21:10). Ezekiel utilizes similar language, declaring the inhabitants of Jerusalem "…will know that I am the Lord, when I have set my face against them" (15:7). Ezekiel is instructed to "set your face" numerous times in his writings, most often in reference to Jerusalem. Furthermore, Jesus often refers to himself as "Son of Man," which is the most common designation for Ezekiel. The context of Jeremiah's prophecies is a warning over the siege and destruction of Jerusalem and its temple.[177] Additionally, scholars see Malachi 3:1 in this context in the phrase "and he sent messengers before his face." The context here also centres around a temple theme when the Lord will come to the temple and purify the sons of Levi (Mal. 3:1-3).[178]

As the narrative transitions toward Jerusalem, the author gives a crucial indication in the transfiguration scene, stating "They appeared in glorious splendour and spoke about his departure (ἔξοδος) that he was about to carry out at Jerusalem" (9:31 NET). The Greek ἔξοδος quite literally means "exodus," creating echoes not only of Moses in Egypt, but also of Isaiah's prophetic "new exodus," which is hallmarked by a royal messianic figure like

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[176] Evans, "'He Set His Face,'" 93-94.

[177] Ibid., 100-102.

[178] Ibid., 103-104.

David.[179] The first great exodus was a departure from Egypt and its tyrant ruler, logically raising questions concerning the nature of Luke's exodus motif.[180] In a world under the occupation of new tyrants, including Rome and its broker rulers in Palestine, one possibility is that this could have political implications. Another alternative is that in Lukan theology, Satan is the grantor of kingdoms; therefore, Luke's exodus might represent a freedom from all dark forces, as Jesus demonstrates when he cast out demons as evidence that the God's kingdom has come.[181]

However, the most direct, and perhaps least controversial, explanation comes from the first great exodus when Moses was told by YHWH to declare, "Let my people go that they may worship me" (Ex. 7:16 NJPS). Religious observance was made challenging by being in a strange land and serving Pharoah's agenda. Accordingly, the most fundamental need of the first exodus was the matter of worship, and in that framework, the necessity of Jesus' exodus in Luke comes to the forefront. This view of Lukan exodus is attested later in Acts where Stephen's speech "offers a tight connection" between the Moses' exodus and that of Jesus, and worship and the Jerusalem temple become focal points of that discourse.[182]

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[179] W. Gil Shin, "The 'Exodus' in Jerusalem (Luke 9:31): A Lukan Form of Israel's Restoration Hope," D. Phil. diss., (Fuller Theological Seminary, April 2016), 289-294.

[180] Bryan D. Estelle, *Echoes of Exodus: Tracing a Biblical Motif* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 250, Kindle.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Susan R. Garrett, "Exodus from Bondage: Luke 9:31 and Acts 12:1-24," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 52, no. 4 (October 1990): 656-680.

Likewise, at this Lukan exodus, Jesus' mission is to deal with bondage, making his way to Jerusalem surrounded by a peasant following from Galilee. Jesus' purpose is to restore, and perhaps reinstitute, the worship mandate, and his first stop in the city will be the temple.[183] The question, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" sandwiches the travel narrative; it meets Jesus at the front end of the narrative in Lk. 10:25, and then again at the back end when asked by the rich ruler (18:18), forming an inclusio.

Given Luke's clear indication to present the core travel narrative as a primary motif and as a means to the end, it becomes critical from a hermeneutical perspective for everything that occurs within it to be considered in light of that end. Simply put, Jesus' "setting his face to Jerusalem" becomes an essential lens for reading the travel narrative, including the content of 9:51-19:27. Furthermore, given Luke's construction of this narrative through the voice of the pre-exilic prophets who warned of the fate of Jerusalem and its temple, it is imperative that the content of this parable be considered in such a light.

Passages Surrounding the Parable (Luke 10:1-24 and Luke 10:38-42)

Luke 10:1-24

The road from Jerusalem with the participating priest and Levite, the setting of the "Good Samaritan" parable, serves as a reminder of the larger literary context of Jesus on his way to Jerusalem.[184] Blajer presents a compelling case for the connection between 10:25-37 and the preceding section, 10:1-24. In 10:21, the "wise and intelligent" have had

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[183] Grant R. Osborne, *Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Matthew* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Academic, 2010), 755-756.

[184] Green, *The Gospel of Luke (NICNT)*, 426.

truths hidden from them.[185] Then, in 10:25, the, lawyer, a character from the "wise and intelligent" class, asks Jesus to expound upon truth regarding eternal life, which closely relates to 10:20 where names are remarked to have been recorded in heaven.

Luke 10:38-42

Blajer continues by connecting 10:25-37 to the subsequent narrative of Martha and Mary in 10:38-42 where in typical Lukan fashion, the story of a woman follows one of a man.[186] Martha has been left alone (10:40), reminiscent of the wounded traveller (10:30) who went unassisted. Martha has busied herself with work and hospitality (10:40), not unlike the Samaritan in his attention to the victim (10:34). In 10:4-7, when Jesus sends out the seventy-two, they are to rely on but not abuse the hospitality of others. In the home of Martha and Mary, Jesus, and presumably others, have been welcomed, which is the sign of the kingdom of God.

Kyle Barrett proposes that 10:1-24 and 10:25-37 highlight an "eschatological contest between God and Satan and their respective kingdoms."[187] Jesus sends out the seventy-two as lambs among wolves (10:4), who assist in establishing the kingdom of God (10:10-16), resulting in judgement on Satan (10:18).

From this point onward, the contrasting kingdoms begins to take more obvious form, including the characters 10:25-37 who either reveal the kingdom of God, or present

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[185] Blajer, "The Parable of the Good Samaritan," 126-27.

[186] Ibid., 127-29.

[187] Kyle Scott Barrett, "Justification in Lukan Theology," PhD diss., (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, December 2012), 132.

themselves in juxtaposition to that kingdom's ideals. Having considered the relevant backdrop of the parable of the Good Samaritan, including origin, dating, audience, and themes, Luke's travel narrative, the immediate passages surrounding Luke 10, attention turns to the parable of the Good Samaritan itself.

CHAPTER FOUR: EXEGESIS OF LUKE 10:25-37

4.1 Introduction – Exegetical Methodology

This analysis introduces the text of Luke 10:25-37 and moves verse by verse through the pericope, examining pertinent linguistic, grammatical, socio-historical, political, and economic features. Old Testament echoes and allusions prompted by this passage will also be exegeted. These findings will then be synthesized to demonstrate the importance of developing the role of the priest and Levite and their function in this parable.

4.2 Luke 10:25-37 as One Pericope

Former scholarship tended to treat Luke 10:25-28 and 10:29-37 in two sections; however, more recent scholarship has observed the unity of the two parts.[188] The first three verses, 10:25-28, involve noted parallels to the synoptic traditions. In Mark 12:28-41 and Matthew 22:34-49, Jesus is asked which commandment is the greatest. In both cases, he is asked by a scribe or a lawyer (expert in religious law), and he answers by conjoining the commandments of the Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 texts.

The Lukan passage involves similarities to its synoptic counterparts in that a lawyer (religious expert) asks a question. However, Luke's contribution remains unique. It reverses the characters' questions and responses. Rather than asking about the greatest commandment, as in Mark 12:28 and Matthew 22:36, the lawyer asks instead about eternal life. In Luke 10:26, Jesus is the one who asks the lawyer about the commandment. In Luke

[188] Blajer, "Parable of the Good Samaritan," 57-58.

10:27, the lawyer, rather than Jesus, provides the Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18 formula in answer. Jesus responds that the lawyer is right, rather than the reverse in the Mark 12:32. The lawyer then questions further regarding one's neighbour, and rather than Jesus responding directly, he answers with this uniquely Lukan parable to illustrate the point of what the greatest commandment would look like. Thus, Luke 10:25-28 connects in a crucial way to the subsequent parable.

4.3 Examination of Luke 10:25-29

The Lawyer Questions Jesus – Luke 10:25

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said,
"what must I do to inherit eternal life?"[189]

Transition Words

The pericope begins with a transition phrase. Luke frequently employs, Καὶ ἰδοὺ ("just then" NRSV), as a segue into a new and significant topic.[190] Typically, this method of transition, which occurs twenty-seven times in Luke, creates a relationship between pericopes.[191] While a literary and theological relationship exists between these sections,

[189] NRSV. Subsequent verses heading sections are also NRSV unless otherwise noted.

[190] Just, *Luke 9:51-24:53 (Concordia)*, 446.

[191] Bock, *Luke: 2 Volumes*, loc. 19901-19905.

the author does not provide the time or place for the immediate context of this event. Simply put, this interaction happens "sometime later."[192]

The Lawyer

In verse twenty-five, the νομικός (lawyer or "expert in religious law" NET) is the subject. Luke synonymously uses the terms "lawyer," "teacher of the law," and "scribe", frequently attributing these words to the Pharisees.[193] The lawyer is a theologian with expertise in the Mosaic Law.[194] Beginning in Luke 4:24, lawyers and other religious experts have observed Jesus and have been singled out by him as being responsible for his forthcoming rejection.[195] However, Luke's audience has already been alerted to be suspicious of these characters. In Luke 7:30, lawyers and Pharisees are said to have rejected the mission of God and of his servant John the Baptist.

The Challenge

The lawyer ἐκπειράζων αὐτὸν ("stood up to test Jesus" NET). Here the lawyer's motives are made clear; his intention is to test. The language does not suggest he is standing to give respect, but merely indicates he approached Jesus while standing.[196] Although the

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[192] Bovon, *Luke Vol. 1*, 54.

[193] Vinson, *Luke*, 335.

[194] Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*, 160.

[195] Green, *The Gospel of Luke (NICNT)*, 427.

[196] Robert G. Bratcher, *A Translator's Guide to the Gospel of Luke (UBS Helps for Translators)* (New York; London: United Bible Societies, 1982), 183.

lawyer addresses Jesus as Διδάσκαλε, or "teacher," this does not necessarily imply reverent treatment.[197]

The test is the question τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω ("What must I do to inherit eternal life?" NET; rendered "life of the coming age" in the KNT). This question is not straightforward. The aorist form of the verb ποιήσας ("do") adds mystery to the question since the wording suggests a single isolated action, rather than a lifetime of keeping the law.[198] Bailey raises the question of how one can "do" something to inherit anything, as this feature is assigned at birth rather than able to be earned.[199] Meanwhile, others see a premise of covenantal nomism in the question; although Jews were given a birth right in Abraham, the question assumes that they must maintain their status with some action.[200] In addition, the meaning of the "coming age" was a matter of contention among first-century Jews, which will be revisited later in this section. Given these factors, the nuances of the lawyer's question remain in debate.

Outside of the theological content of the question, some discussion exists over what is indicated by the lawyer's "test" of Jesus. Jeremias rightly concludes that in this case, the only reason a religious expert would confront a layman like Jesus is to embarrass him.[201] Culpepper moves the conversation into more appropriate categories when he correctly sees

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[197] Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 83-84.

[198] Ibid., 84.

[199] Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 35.

[200] Spencer, *Luke (Two Horizons NTC)*, 280.

[201] Jeremias, Parables of Jesus, 202.

this encounter as an honour challenge.[202] At this point, it is useful to examine several aspects of this text from a social-scientific perspective, including honour challenges, limited good societies, and ideas behind the age to come.

Honour challenges

In the world of the text, honour and shame were social fundamentals used as instruments to reinforce the values of society.[203] Compliance to societal norms enabled one to maintain honour; meanwhile, virtuous behaviour was rewarded with enhanced honour.[204] Likewise, failure to meet cultural expectations would result in shame, which not only served to address social infractions, but also acted as a deterrent of deviant behaviour in others.[205]

Honour could come from more than one source. One way honour could be ascribed was by birth, a result of a genealogical record.[206] Meanwhile, acquired honour was achieved through deeds; the more virtuous, selfless, and effective the action, the greater the honour.[207] While the reader of Luke's gospel is given to know the theological backdrop of Jesus' birth through the genealogical record in 3:23-38, in the passage, this identity remains a mystery to many who encounter him, including in his home village of

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[202] Culpepper, "Luke," in *New Interpreter's Vol. IX*, 227.

[203] E. R. Richards and R. James, *Misreading Scripture with Individualist Eyes: Patronage, Honor, and Shame in the Biblical World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020), 134.

[204] Ibid., 175.

[205] Ibid.

[206] D. A. deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012), 28.

[207] Ibid.

Nazareth.[208] Accordingly, by all indications, Jesus's peasant status would mean he had very little socially ascribed honour.[209] However, Jesus did increase his honour through his many instances of healing.[210]

Another method to enhance honour was through public contests referred to as honour challenges. The victor in these occurrences would achieve enhanced honour, while the unsuccessful counterpart would suffer shame. The court of public opinion made the ruling. How one responded or elected not to respond was subject to scrutiny. For instance, it would be less likely for a person of higher status to accept a challenge from someone beneath their honour scale. Therefore, most honour challenges took place between people whose honour status somewhat paralleled.[211]

The ramifications of an honour challenge were serious, as "one's place in society, one's vocation, the family business, or a child's marriage options all could be at stake."[212] Nearly all social encounters afforded an opportunity to enhance honour or experience shame; therefore, any interaction had the potential to result in an honour challenge. Accordingly, a random public encounter, especially with strangers and critics, would

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[208] Michael J. Wilkens, "Peter's Declaration Concerning Jesus' Identity in Caesarea Philippi," in *Key Events in the Life of the Historical Jesus: A Collaborative Exploration of Context and Coherence*, ed. Darrell L. Bock & Robert L. Webb, (Reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 293-381.

[209] Brawley, *Luke: A Social Identity Commentary*, 66. Douglas Oakman also establishes Jesus' less honourable peasant status – see Douglas E. Oakman, "Was Jesus a Peasant?: Implications for Reading the Samaritan Story (Luke 10:30-35)," *Biblical Theology Bulletin: Journal of Bible and Culture* 22 (August 1992): 117-125, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/014610799202200303.

[210] deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 29.

[211] Ibid.

[212] Richards and James, *Misreading Scripture*, 159.

automatically engender caution. This is the type of engagement taking place between Jesus and the lawyer.

Words were the most prominent activity engendering an honour challenge. Questioning another person, especially in the public setting, automatically created this scenario. As stated by Rohrbaugh, "there was no such thing as an honest question" in this setting.[213] The lawyer was testing Jesus; however, in doing so, he was not engaging in unusual behaviour for anyone in the ancient Mediterranean region, but merely living out expected conduct according to cultural expectations.[214]

Dyadic and limited good society

Another factor that is essential to understanding the world of the text is the nature of society at the time. The world of the text was a dyadic society, meaning that one's identity is dependent upon the community.[215] Furthermore, indispensability was a highly valued asset. Challengers were to be repulsed. Therefore, if the lawyer assesses Jesus as posing a threat because Jesus is gaining disciples as a teacher of Scripture, then culturally,

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[213] Richard L. Rohrbaugh, "Honor and Shame: Core Values of the Biblical World," DVD lecture (Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2001).

[214] Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, "Chapter 2: Honor and Shame in Luke-Acts: Pivotal Values of the Mediterranean World," in *Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, ed. Jerome H. Neyrey, 25-67 (Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 1991), 51.

[215] Jerome Neyrey, "Dyadism," in *Handbook of Biblical Social Values, Third Edition (Matrix: The Bible in Mediterranean Context 10)*, ed. John J. Pilch & Bruce J. Malina, (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016), 46-48.

the lawyer would have felt the situation demanded that he challenge Jesus in a public honour duel.[216]

In addition, these characters existed in a limited good society where anything valued, including honour was seen as heading toward depletion.[217] Therefore, it was necessary for one to be jealous over his status. Zeal, which was seen as a virtue, meant that a man would pursue the means to defend his standing.[218] This serves to reinforce the necessity of the lawyer's actions within his cultural framework and answers the question regarding why he approaches and challenges Jesus, a lay rabbi, since his popularity is gaining traction.

The age to come

Some internal debates were taking place in first-century Judaism over qualifying the idea of the "new age." For example, the community at Qumran, which had very exclusive ideas, asserted that not all Jews were worthy of "eternal life."[219] Because of this, it is necessary to explore the background, meaning, and implications of the lawyer's question. Contemporary readers may be tempted to read the question, "What must I do to

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[216] Bruce J. Malina, *Windows on the World of Jesus: Time Travel to Ancient Judea* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 122, 130-131.

[217] Jerome Neyrey, "Limited Good," in *Handbook of Biblical Social Values, Third Edition (Matrix: The Bible in Mediterranean Context 10)*, ed. John J. Pilch & Bruce J. Malina, 103-106 (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016), 103.

[218] Chris Seeman, "Jealousy / Zeal," in *Handbook of Biblical Social Values, Third Edition (Matrix: The Bible in Mediterranean Context 10)*, ed. John J. Pilch & Bruce J. Malina, 179-181 (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016), 180.

[219] Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Third Gospel* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 1982), 121.

inherit eternal life?" as "What must I do to be saved?", imposing a modern paradigm on the ancient text, but it must be understood according to its meaning in the first century. While the question is soteriological, it is also eschatological.

This subject was routinely discussed with various accompanying questions in first-century Judaism.[220] The lawyer frames his question in terms of inheritance, which in the Old Testament often refers to as the covenant land of Israel. This immediately supports the implication that the "age to come" includes the full restoration of Israel.[221] Concepts of land, inheritance, and the prospects of a coming age were all the more potent in a political and economic circumstance whereby the land was under the authority of foreign governance, and the trajectory of real estate favoured the ownership of outsiders who became wealthy land patrons at the expense of the peasant populace. "Eternal life," in this context, is not primarily a measurement of time, but indicative of the two ages of Jewish belief, the current age and the eschatological age.[222] In short, the question is identified as regarding inheriting God's kingdom to come, which has broader implications than personal soteriology.[223]

N. T. Wright gives a considerable treatment of the topic, defining the "age to come" as a time when the socio-economic and political circumstances would reverse, signalling the true and final liberation of the land and its people, the overthrow of oppressors, and the

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[220] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 318.

[221] Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke (Sacra Pagina)*, 172.

[222] C. F. Evans, *Saint Luke* (London: SCM Press, 2008), 465.

[223] Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*, 160.

construction of the permanent temple when God would be king, ruling the world.[224] These circumstances would be the fulfilment of the Isaianic New Exodus whereby the true and lasting return from exile would occur.[225]

One primary marker differentiating the current and eschatological ages is that the first-century Jews believed that they were not keeping Torah perfectly, but that in the coming age, a new covenant and Torah would be perfectly maintained in the heart of the people.[226] Given these factors, it should be unsurprising that such a conversation be presented to Jesus by an expert, and for the ensuing response to incorporate theories of keeping Torah.

Jesus' Riposte – Luke 10:26

> *He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?"*

In verse twenty-six, Jesus responds to the lawyer's question with his own. The compound question, Ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τί γέγραπται, "What is written in the law?" (NET) and the adjacent πῶς ἀναγινώσκεις, "How does it read to you?" (NASB) are oft-found Semitic expressions in Jewish scholarly discussions.[227] If the lawyer is indeed trying to coax Jesus into public embarrassment, Jesus evades the tactic, redirecting the focus back on the

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[224] N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God: (Christian Origins and the Question of God, Vol. 1)* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992), 299, Kindle.

[225] Ibid.

[226] Ibid., 299-300.

[227] Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, loc. 7841. See also Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, Second (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 207. Keener remarks that it was standard practice to counter with a question.

questioner.[228] He has given the professional theologian an opportunity to display his knowledge in front of a crowd.[229] However, rather than validating the lawyer or his motives, Jesus is directing his opponent toward the law, indicating that the answer is contained therein.[230]

Since he is in an honour challenge, Jesus is expected to give some form of riposte. His redirection "How does it read to you?" is not merely a courtesy but what John Pilch calls part of the "art of insult." In this case Jesus outwits his opponent by uncovering that the lawyer has known the answer all along.[231]

Furthermore, Culpepper sees Jesus' counter-question in context of a more intense honour dialogue, whereby the intent of the response is to essentially question why a lawyer would not already have the answer to his own question.[232] The focus turns from questioning Jesus' interpretive ability to that of the lawyer.[233] Jesus knew that the lawyer must respond to the question and could not plead ignorance; that to do so would not only make him to appear not only vocationally inadequate, but would shame him, since it was considered

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[228] Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 87 Kindle.

[229] Ibid.

[230] Liefeld, "Luke" in *EBC Vol. 8*, 2007, 942. See also Evans, *Saint Luke*, 465.

[231] Pilch, *A Cultural Handbook to the Bible*, 161.

[232] Culpepper, "Luke," in *New Interpreter's Vol. IX*, 227.

[233] Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, 244.

shameful for men in the culture of the text to acknowledge ignorance in social occasions.[234]Jesus thereby gains the upper hand in this honour challenge.

Jesus' counter-question, "How do you read...?" also involves a subtle socio-economic component. Private life was close to non-existent in the world of the text; doubtless, the engagement between Jesus and the lawyer was on display either in a village or more urban public setting.[235] In a village, the lawyer would have likely held one of the highest honour seats in the community, and the setting would have been with a largely illiterate peasant audience. In a world where only 2% to 10% of the populace were literate, Jesus' use of the word "reads" may indirectly point out the educated, elitist status of the lawyer.[236] The literate few benefited through the ability to influence and control others, so those in these positions rarely taught their literacy skills to the public; otherwise, their skill would become dispensable.[237]

The Lawyer's Answer – Luke 10:27

> *He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."*

The lawyer responds by first quoting from the *Shema* (Deut. 6:5), which maintained a crucial role in Jewish religion and culture as part of daily liturgical practice.[238] However,

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[234] Malina, *Windows on the World of Jesus*, 117.

[235] Ibid., 33.

[236] Pilch, *A Cultural Handbook to the Bible*, 148-150.

[237] Ibid., 148-150.

[238] E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE – 66 CE* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1992), 196.

he also incorporates Lev. 19:18b, responding as if it were a single verse conjoined with Deut. 6:5.[239] In addition, the Hebrew text includes three terms, נֶפֶשׁ, לֵבָב, and מְאֹד; meanwhile, the quotation in Luke is drawn from the LXX and other manuscripts that substitute διάνοια (mind) for καρδία (heart), resulting in the addition of the fourth term within the Synoptic tradition.[240] This combination is found nowhere in the New Testament except in the synoptic Gospel material.[241]

In the Hebrew context, אָהֵב (love) is a relational quality that produces affection.[242] The Greek counterpart ἀγαπάω means to love and cherish.[243] The לֵבָב refers to the inner self, often translated "heart."[244] This metaphor is the "intellectual faculty" of the person.[245] The equivalent καρδία, the heart, also refers to the mind, the core of the inner self, including the emotions and will.[246] The נֶפֶשׁ is soul, denoting desire, passion, and appetite.[247] The word is also used for "throat," thus having a natural metaphoric association with desire and

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[239] Vinson, *Luke*, 337.

[240] Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 880.

[241] Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke: Volume II*, 75.

[242] J. Bergman, A. O. Haldar, & G. Wallis, אָהַב. in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (Revised Edition, Vol. 1)*, eds. G. J. Botterweck & H. Ringgren, transl. J. T. Willis (Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans, 1977), 101.

[243] M. Silva, ed., *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis (Second Edition, Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 103.

[244] Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), Logos e-book.

[245] John W. Rogerson and James D. G. Dunn, eds., *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible: Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 40, Kindle.

[246] M. Silva, ed., *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis (Second Edition, Vol. 2)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 622-623.

[247] Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*.

appetite.[248] This represents the core of emotional and spiritual life and when used in conjunction with heart, it includes the totality of a person's life, and in the context of 6:5 includes material possessions.[249] The ψυχή corresponds to mean the core of human self with all its implied aspects.[250] The final clause in Deut. 6:5 is the מְאֹד meaning force and abundance.[251] The comparable word is ἰσχύς meaning "strength, vigour, potency."[252] Finally, Luke has inserted the διανοίᾳ, likely in his copying of Mark's gospel.[253] The word means the "intellectual faculty…faculty of comprehension."[254]

The second portion of the lawyer's response comes from the Lev. 19:18 commandment. The immediate context deals with the prohibition from holding grudges and seeking revenge on others (19:17-18). The climax of the literary section is reached in the call of love toward neighbours.[255] In this immediate context, the meaning of neighbour is limited to fellow Israelites, as Lev. 19 later address relations toward aliens.[256]

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[248] Daniel I. Block, Deuteronomy (The NIV Application Commentary) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2012), 269, e-book.

[249] Rogerson and Dunn, eds., *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible: Deuteronomy*, 40.

[250] Walter Bauer, ed., "ψυχή" in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd, transl. Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, & F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 1099.

[251] Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*.

[252] Walter Bauer, ed., "ἰσχύς" in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd, transl. Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, & F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 484.

[253] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 319. See also Gadenz, *The Gospel of Luke*, 351.

[254] F. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, ed. M. Goh, & C. Schroeder (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2015).

[255] W. H. Bellinger, Jr., *Leviticus, Numbers (Understanding the Bible Commentary Series)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2001), 172, e-book, Scribd.

[256] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries)*, Vol. 3A, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 1654.

David Crowther observes that based on the lawyer's response, Jesus' question was essentially about the "essence of the whole law."[257] With the conjoining of these two commandments, the lawyer encapsulates the "heart and covenantal essence" of Torah by speaking to the issue of total dedication.[258] In this reply, the principles of the Ten Commandments, which deal with relationships with God and fellow humanity, are rightly summarized.[259] The commandment to love presents a dilemma; however, practical elements are involved, as not only emotion is engaged, but also tangible displays of affection whereby actions are taken.[260] Gundry remarks on the meaning of this dualistic commandment – that loving God from the heart means the innermost thoughts and feelings, while the soul speaks to all capabilities of the "physical and psychological life."[261] Meanwhile, strength speaks to materiality including property and wealth, while the mind is the intellectual service to God.[262]

Jesus' Affirmation – Luke 10:28

And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

Jesus' reply to the lawyer, "…right answer; do this, and live," at first appears to express fundamental agreement between Jesus, the lay rabbi, and the lawyer, a professional

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[257] Crowther, "Luke."

[258] Daniel I. Block, *The Triumph of Grace: Literary and Theological Studies in Deuteronomy and Deuteronomic Themes* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017) 151-152, Kindle.

[259] Crowther, "Luke."

[260] Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1653.

[261] Gundry, *Commentary on Luke*, loc. 3134, Kindle.

[262] Ibid.

theologian of Torah.[263] Neither party has expressed controversial ideas as of yet; Jesus has affirmed the lawyer to have his answer, the method for life in the "age to come." However, Jesus has caught the lawyer in a trick, forcing the expert to answer his own question, which meant that the lawyer has risked his standing. If this were not an honour challenge, then the conversation might otherwise have been over. However, given that this encounter entails the ingredients of such a challenge, the push and shove game must continue, and the lawyer will need to riposte in a way that requires Jesus to commit to an answer using his own interpretation.[264]

The Lawyer's Riposte – Luke 10:29

And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

Verse twenty-nine addresses the concepts of justification and neighbours. The lawyer then wants to δικαιῶσαι (justify himself). The word "justify" has some connotations of "vindication," and therefore could refer to the intention of the lawyer to win this honour challenge.[265] However, the word has many legal implications as well, including "conforming to the law."[266] Therefore, lexically, some doubt exists regarding his intention. If one concludes the idea of conforming to the law, then the intent of the question appears to be more sincere than his "test" would indicate. However, Luke's negative use of the

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[263] Schweizer, *The Good News According to Luke*, 186.

[264] Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 447. See also Culpepper, "Luke," 229.

[265] Silva, ed., *New International Dictionary of NT Theology and Exegesis Vol. 1*, 318-319.

[266] Ceslas Spicq and James D. Ernest, *Theological lexicon of the New Testament (Vol. 1)* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 318-319.

word later in Luke 16:15, when Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for wanting to justify themselves in the eyes of men, becomes a vital component to delimiting interpretive possibilities. Taking this into account, little evidence exists for the lawyer's sincerity.[267]

An additional help is found in 18:9-15 when the Pharisee and tax collector each go to the temple to pray. The Pharisee praises himself, while the tax collector is the one who walks away δικαιόω "justified." These other instances become helpful signposts to interpreting the motives of the lawyer in 10:25-37 since justification, while used in differing contexts, still tends to take on a negative connotation when applied to these characters. From this motive of self-justification, the lawyer asks, τίς ἐστίν μου πλησίον, "Who is my neighbour?" The push and shove game has continued, as an additional honour challenge has been presented to Jesus. Now the questioning has become more specific, drifting from "What must I do," to "Who is…."

A variety of scholarly responses have proceeded from the question "Who is my neighbour?" Norval Geldenhuys observes this to be a question rooted purely in academia, and the lawyer's motives to be aimed toward excluding the populace he does not like.[268] Caird agrees, interpreting the motives of the lawyer as wanting to limit his liabilities of kindness.[269] Recent works, including that of Barnewall, also assert that the lawyer wanted

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[267] Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 90.

[268] Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke: The English Text (The New International Commentary on the New Testament)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), 311.

[269] Caird, *The Gospel of St. Luke*, 148.

to delimit compassion and mercy.[270] Levine affirms the question as a polite way to restrict love and benevolence.[271]

While these assessments may be correct, they run the risk of reaching beyond social profiling into the field of psychoanalysis, which is well beyond the data provided by the text. One point of contention is that the Hebrew רֵעַ can be translated as neighbour or friend, which could potentially create even stricter interpretations.[272] However, the context in Leviticus is straightforward. The initial use in Lev. 19:18 refers to fellow Israelites, but later in the chapter, "resident aliens" are addressed as people not only not refrain from oppressing (because the Israelites were also aliens in Egypt), but also to love as self (Lev. 19:33-34).

Jesus' parables drew upon the everyday matters and concerns of peasant life in Palestine.[273] To really grasp the dynamics at work in this parable, one must "go deeper" and examine a variety of social paradigms at work.[274] The question, "Who is my neighbour?" was complex in first century Palestine.[275] Furthermore, as the region had become more socially integrated, this question was prominent and controversial.[276] The

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[270] Barnewall, *Surprised by the Parables*, 66.

[271] Levine, *Short Stories*, 93.

[272] D. Kellermann, "רֵעַ" in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, Vol. 13*, Rev., eds. G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, & H.-J. Fabry, transl. D. E. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 523.

[273] J. P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus: Probing the Authenticity of the Parables*, Vol. 5 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 42.

[274] N.T. Wright, *Luke for Everyone (The New Testament for Everyone)* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 51, e-book, Scribd.

[275] Vinson, *Luke*, 338.

[276] Nolland and Robinson, "Theological Context for Interpreting Luke's Travel Narrative," 584.

Romans, not unlike conquering forces before them, valued ethnic intermixing, because the more blended the social composite, the greater reminder it served of empires past and present.[277]

Accordingly, the limitations of who should be identified as a neighbour was not clearly defined.[278] It was often taught that "neighbours" were fellow Jews.[279] However, Torah interpretation was subject to many debates whereby various factions developed.[280] Some, including the sect at Qumran and some Pharisees, believed that even certain Jews were to be excluded from the command to be loved as a neighbour.[281] The lawyer's question may be influenced by this belief, pointing to a presupposition in his original question that not all Jews would automatically inherit the "age to come."

Specific dynamics were at work including but were not limited to the infiltration of Hellenism into parts of Palestine as well as a series of imperialistic impositions, including the Roman occupation at the time of the text. This coincided with wealthy land patrons from foreign places consuming the land while exploiting the poor, creating a dilemma ripe

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[277] Balch, "Luke," 101.

[278] Tiede, *Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament: Luke*, 209.

[279] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 207.

[280] Dennis Duling, "Torah Orientation," in *Handbook of Biblical Social Values, Third Edition (Matrix: The Bible in Mediterranean Context 10)*, ed. John J. Pilch & Bruce J. Malina, 167-173 (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016), 170.

[281] Bock, *Luke: 2 Volumes*, loc. 20172-20173.

for these types of social questions.[282] Additionally, even amongst the Jews, widespread divisions existed over cultural, religious, political, and socio-economic loyalties.[283]

4.4 Exegesis of The Parable - Luke 10:30-35

The Traveller and the Bandits – Luke 10:30

> *Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead.*

The Traveller

Jesus responds a second time to the lawyer's question by proceeding to tell the parable.[284] In verse thirty, Ἄνθρωπός ("a man") is the initial subject of this parable. The character's identity is anonymous, but Jesus' audience would likely presume this man to be Jewish, and even to be a Judean.[285] This man was κατέβαινεν ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλὴμ εἰς Ἰεριχὼ ("going down from Jerusalem to Jericho"). The difficulties of this road were well-known throughout the broader region in a time when travel was very cumbersome and slow.[286] This seventeen-mile journey involves a 3,500-foot drop in elevation from

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[282] J. Daniel Hays, *The Temple and the Tabernacle: A Study of God's Dwelling Places from Genesis to Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2016), 132-133, Kindle. This is also supported by Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*, transl. John Bowden, Vol. 1 (Eugene, OR, Wipf and Stock, 2003), 103; E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (Westminster, London: Penguin, 1995), 38, Kindle; and Richard A. Horsley, *Jesus and the Politics of Roman Palestine* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2014), 28, Kindle.

[283] Green, *The Gospel of Luke (NICNT)*, 429.

[284] The KNT accurately portrays the honour challenge on display v.30 with the translation "Jesus rose to the challenge."

[285] Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, loc. 2803-2804.

[286] Barnewall, *Surprised by the Parables*, 67.

Jerusalem, 2,700 feet above sea level, to Jericho, over 800 feet below sea level.[287] The road was desolate, rocky, steep, and void of vegetation.[288]

The Bandits

The man became a victim of λῃσταῖς περιέπεσεν ("bandits"). This was unsurprising since the road was notorious for thieves, as parts of the terrain left travellers exposed while providing places to conceal hiding bandits.[289] The term λῃσταῖς covers a range of violent criminals ranging from petty roadside bandits to political revolutionaries.[290] The harsh economic circumstances within first century Palestine generated an environment in which many resorted to deviant activity. Douglas Oakman contends that the likely peasant audience of Jesus would have assumed the victim was an urban elitist, potentially meaning the parable's first hearers would have sympathized with the bandits.[291] Jerusalem, which flourished and benefited from pilgrimages and building projects, would seem an opportune venue for such activity.[292]

These robbers ἐκδύσαντες and ἐπιθέντες ("stripped and beat"), the man, leaving him without any markers as to socio-economic class or ethnic identification.[293] All of his

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[287] Chen, *Luke*, loc. 3916.

[288] Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, loc. 7850

[289] Bock, *Luke: 2 Volumes*, loc. 20041. See also Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, loc. 7850.

[290] Ruben Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015), 307, Kindle.

[291] Douglas E. Oakman, *Jesus and the Peasants (Matrix: The Bible in Mediterranean Context Book 4)* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2008), 174, Kindle.

[292] Keesmaat, "Strange Neighbors and Risky Care," 278.

[293] Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, loc. 2806-2807.

possessions would have been ascertained by the bandits, including any creature he may have been riding on and any money he was carrying.[294] Furthermore, if the traveller's nakedness was at least partially exposed, this not only would have shamed him but to at least some extent would have presented a dilemma of ritual impurity for the later priest and Levite.[295]

Continuing in verse thirty, the ἀπῆλθον ("bandits") ἀφέντες ("went away"), leaving, the man ἡμιθανῆ ("half-dead"). The word ἡμιθανῆ is a hapax legomenon in the New Testament. The mystery is regarding the extent of this man's injuries; the word can indicate that the man appears to be dead.[296] The uncertainty as to the extent of damage creates a backdrop for the forthcoming scenes. In addition, in his state, the identity of his village and even the likely Judean accent would have been unrecognizable and therefore of no use in distinguishing his identity.[297]

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[294] R. C. Blight, *An Exegetical Summary of Luke 1–11*, 2nd ed. (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2008), 481, Kindle.

[295] Jerome Neyrey, "Nudity" in *Handbook of Biblical Social Values, Third Edition (Matrix: The Bible in Mediterranean Context 10)*, eds. John J. Pilch & Bruce J. Malina (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016), 120, Kindle.

[296] The NET footnotes this to be a state between life and death.

[297] Hedrick, *Parables as Poetic Fictions*, 104.

The Priest and Ritual Purity – Luke 10:31

> *Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.*

The Priest

In verse thirty-one, κατὰ συγκυρίαν ("by chance" NET or "by good fortune"), a priest was travelling down that road, ostensibly injecting "hope" into the story with his appearance.[298] A priest's presence would not be altogether unexpected, as many lived in Jericho.[299] While Luke has given some indicators to generate a suspicion of lawyers prior to this narrative, his mention of priests has been less conclusive to this point. However, these characters should grasp the attention of the reader since, in Luke 9:51, Jesus "set his face toward Jerusalem" where he will clearly intersect with the temple and its agents.

The priesthood involved a "closed status" of persons. Each order would serve in the temple for one week with the responsibilities of offering sacrifices.[300] Based on the wording τις κατέβαινεν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐκείνῃ ("was travelling the same road"), it appears that the priest had concluded his duties and was making his way home from Jerusalem, travelling in the same direction as the victim.[301] Priests and Levites frequently travelled in groups to Jerusalem to serve in the temple; however, traveling alone would be indicative

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[298] Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34 (Word Biblical Commentary)*, 593. "…[B]y good fortune" is translated by Nolland. NET footnote on Lk. 10:31.

[299] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 207, remarks, "wealthy priests" resided there.

[300] Schottroff, *The Parables of Jesus*, loc. 1988-1989. See also Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, loc. 1984.

[301] Alfred Plummer, *The International Critical Commentary: On the Gospel According to St. Luke*, 5th (1896, Reprint, New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 464, Kindle. See also Bovon, *Luke Vol. 2*, 57.

of a return home.[302] The priest, ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἀντιπαρῆλθεν ("when he saw the injured man he passed by on the other side" NET).[303] Bailey insists that the priest was of the upper class, and would have been riding an animal. If this was the case, the priest would have been able to perform the function as the later Samaritan.[304]

Ritual Purity

While the exact motives of the priest cannot be ascertained, various options can be adequately explored. Since it was uncertain whether the victim was alive, the first consideration related to the priest is ritual purity. Touching a corpse or even walking through a burial ground was a chief pollutant, called in rabbinic tradition "the father of the fathers of impurities" requiring an extensive cleansing process.[305] The Hebrew Scriptures indicate a number of purity restrictions which apply to the priesthood because they were viewed as the most holy sect.[306] Numbers 19:11-13 declares anyone who touches a human corpse to be unclean for seven days, requiring purification rituals. Baruch A. Levine contends this to be the most seriously regarded by priests, as without strict purification, the temple would be defiled.[307] Leviticus 21:1-2 gives specific instructions that priests should not defile themselves even for a dead relative except for a closest family member.

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[302] Liefeld, "Luke" in *EBC Vol. 8*, 2007, 943.

[303] NET footnote 10:31 denotes that the text indicates that the priest made an effort to avoid the man.

[304] Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 43.

[305] J. P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus: Law and Love*, Vol. 4 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 405-406.

[306] Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables of Jesus*, 308.

[307] Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries)*, Vol. 4 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 457.

Bailey notes a distinction in written and oral law. In the written law, touching a corpse was the primary defilement for priest; however, in the oral law, touching a foreigner was the primary purity marker.[308] Given this, it would have been difficult to determine the more polluted action – a priest touching a corpse, or a wounded traveller being touched by a Samaritan. Since the priest would have known neither the victim's ethnicity nor whether the wounded traveller was dead, intervention would be substantially risky. Additionally, the wave offering afforded to the priest could only be consumed in a state of purity, so the priest would have had extra incentive to retain ritual purification if he was indeed returning from priestly service in Jerusalem.[309]

While the Torah reading seems straightforward, the guidelines' enforcement remains uncertain and had been debated both before and after the first century. For instance, some considered corpse impurifications able to travel in the air as well as through soil, which would indicate that even standing over a corpse would mean defilement. The *Tobit* (4:17) and the *Sirach* (12:1-7) caution persons that in giving assistance to others, the concern is (perhaps most applicable to strangers) that the one extending aid does not know whether the other is a sinner, unworthy of help, and it would be detestable to give provision to the ungodly.[310] In addition, while the *Talmud* and *Mishnah* are of a later tradition than the New Testament, they largely represent earlier oral tradition within Judaism and so their

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[308] Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 44.

[309] Ibid.

[310] Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, loc. 7736.

perspective on treatment of corpses is worth mention.[311] One of the later passages from the *Talmud* states that uncleanliness from a corpse can be transmitted from four cubits' distance.[312] The *Mishnah*, however, records that a priest may contact uncleanliness in the case of a neglected corpse.[313] These examples reflect a continuity of concern among Jews over purity standards related to corpses.

Even in the case that the body was deceased, Jewish writings teach that dead bodies should be treated humanely with dignity. Examples include Tobit 1:16-20 where a hero of a story is one who risks his life to bury exposed corpses. Then, Philo's *Hypothetica* records that nobody should be deprived of proper burial. Again, Josephus, in his *Against Apion*, remarks that it is a theological necessity for common burial to be granted to all.[314] Even much later on, the *Mishnah* in Nazir 7.1 gives strong provisions for human burial; meanwhile, the *Talmud* instructs, "As long as there are no other people to look after the burial of a corpse, the duty is incumbent on the first Jew that passes by, without exception, to perform the burial."[315] Although the *Mishnah* and *Talmud* date to the third and sixth century, respectively, considerably later than the Lukan writings, weighed with the rest of these sources, they reflect a continuing thread of burial necessity in Hebrew thought.

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[311] J. C. Johnson, "Talmud" in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, eds. J. D. Barry et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

[312] Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 100.

[313] Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, loc. 2829-2832.

[314] Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 101-102.

[315] Ibid.

Clearly, the care of the dead is deeply rooted in Jewish tradition and extends to unattended bodies.

Other Purity Concerns

Other purity factors exist, not the least of which are sociological. As already argued, the threatened Jewish sub-culture likely instituted tighter purity markers as a means of preserving unstable body politic. If John Meier is correct, due to the prominence of death, many would have interacted with deceased bodies relatively routinely, and therefore were content to remain in ritual impurity for an extended time until they made their pilgrimage to Jerusalem. If so, it may be that in response to these types of social compromises, the priests devoted themselves to go well beyond routine measures in order to preserve their cleanliness as a social protest.[316] Therefore, in the same way that the premise of the lawyer's question was deeply rooted in social and political factors, so also could the priest's insistence on guarding purity boundaries be seen as a way to reinforce the integrity of this oppressed sub-society.

Priestly Inaction

Returning to the narrative of the parable, while the priest is likely uncertain whether the victim still lived, the audience knows that this injured man is not dead. Therefore, for those in listening to Jesus, the potential purity concerns diminish,[317] and the focus instead becomes the inaction of the priest, who was not exempt from showing concern for

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[316] Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Law and Love*, Vol. 4, 405–406.

[317] Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, loc. 2847-2849.

neighbours and strangers (Lev. 19:18, 34). In addition, since he was likely returning from temple service, purity was a lesser necessity than it would have been if he was travelling on his way to render temple service. His options could have been either to have personally checked on his welfare, or to get help for the man; and even if what he had encountered was a corpse, he would have had a lawful duty to secure his burial.[318]

Nolland is correct that the parable's intent is to demonstrate the priest's inaction without spelling out the reasons.[319] It is evidenced from the start of Jesus' interaction with the lawyer that this conversation, interpretation, and application are subject to multiple nuances. Thuren rightfully attests that Luke's readers were not scholars, nor did he add any clues to help them interpret the precise *halakhic* arguments. Also, it is equally unlikely that the majority peasant audience hearing the parable from Jesus would have been trained in these types of discussions.[320]

The Levite – Luke 10:32

> *So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him,*
> *passed by on the other side.*

In verse thirty-two, the third character is then introduced as ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ Λευίτης ("so too a Levite" NET). Levites were a group assigned specific designated tasks in the temple. Like the priests, they would conduct their service in weeklong increments. These

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[318] Paula Gooder, *The Parables (Biblical Explorations)*, (London: Canterbury Press, 2020), 309, e-book, Scribd. See also Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 100-101.

[319] Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34 (Word Biblical Commentary)*, 593.

[320] Lauri Thuren, *Parables Unplugged: Reading the Lukan Parables in their Rhetorical Context* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2014), 64-65.

tasks would include the singing of Psalms, guarding the gates, and teaching.[321] By all indications, the Levite, too, appears to be travelling home, returning from temple service, in the same direction as the victim and the priest.[322] The Levite ἰδὼν ἀντιπαρῆλθεν ("saw him and passed by on the other side" NET). Herein, the aorist active suggests that the Levite approached, looked, then decided to continue the journey.[323] However, to the hearer, if the priest should not be excused from this duty, then neither should the Levite be.

Some argue that the priest and Levite were also vulnerable travellers who would have been in fear of bandits awaiting in ambush. While such a concern is understandable, it disregards the Lev. 19:18b commandment to love neighbour as self. Furthermore, Jewish writings remark that saving a life would be such a priority that it overrides other concerns, including Sabbath-keeping.[324]

Whether they feared the victim was deceased or simply wounded and a source of impurity, the moral obligation of both the priest and the Levite would have been to extend decency to the victim. However, once more, the brief encounter of the Levite is suggestive of the brevity of his concern.[325] Again, a representative of Israel's relationship to God via the temple had passed by a needy victim.[326]

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[321] Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables of Jesus*, 308-309.

[322] Liefeld, "Luke" in *EBC Vol. 8*, 2007, 943.

[323] NET footnote on Lk. 10:32

[324] Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 101-102.

[325] Chen, *Luke*, loc. 3295.

[326] Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke: Volume II*, 79.

The Samaritan – Luke 10:33-34

> *But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.*

In verse thirty-three, the audience might expect the next to arrive to also be a member of a religious order like a scribe or Pharisee, or perhaps a layman.[327] However, instead, a Σαμαρίτης δέ ("A Samaritan, however") was ὁδεύων ("travelling") down this same road. To Jesus' hearers, this character is an unexpected contrast, with the story shifting from social positions that were sacred to a status so defiled that it is altogether excluded from the purity map of persons.[328] Furthermore, the road from Jerusalem to Jericho seems an unlikely passage point for a Samaritan.[329] Now, what appears to be a Samaritan merchant is travelling some distance away from that area.[330] Literarily and geographically, the Samaritan was a surprise character. As Jesus had embarked on this travel sequence, early on he was confronted by Samaritans who resisted him, refusing to show hospitality (9:51-56). His journey is now interrupted as he is confronted with the same problem on the part of the priest and Levite.

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[327] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 322.

[328] Jerome Neyrey, "The Idea of Purity in Mark in Social Scientific Criticism of the New Testament and its World," in *Social-Scientific Criticism of the New Testament and Its Social World (Semeia Studies, 35)*, ed. John H. Elliott (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), 95-96.

[329] Chris McKinny, "The Words and Teachings of Jesus in the Context of Judea." in *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels*, eds. Barry J. Beitzel, & Kristopher A. Lyle, 338-355 (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 342.

[330] Martin M. Culy, Mikeal C. Parsons, and Joshua J. Stigall, *Luke: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 365.

This Samaritan, presumably a keeper of the Torah, would himself also be bound to purity regulations, including those regarding touching a corpse.[331] Both the Samaritan's social status and his actions contrast with those of the priest and Levite. The narrative has been set up to draw out expectations of similar actions with the repetition of words ἦλθεν ("came") and ἰδὼν ("saw").[332] However, like his identity, his actions also present a plot twist.

The Samaritan's response is not to distance himself by moving to the other side of the road; rather, he has ἐσπλαγχνίσθη (which most commonly translates as "compassion," NET, NASB, or "pity," NRSV, NIV). Simply put, he emotionally engaged with the traveller. This word is used sparsely in the New Testament and is only found in the synoptic gospels. Levine remarks that in Luke, "…in all three cases, the reaction is a response to a presumed death or loss; it signals the drive to restore wholeness."[333] The word can also be used for human entrails, sexual organs, and the womb, because emotions are experienced in the abdomen, and in some contexts, it takes on the meaning of heart, the seat of emotions.[334]

In verse thirty-four, rather than crossing to the other side of the road, the Samaritan προσελθὼν ("came over to" NTE) the victim and in doing so, potentially risked his own

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[331] Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 100.

[332] Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable*, loc. 1641-1643.

[333] Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 104.

[334] M. Silva, ed., *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis, Second Edition, Vol. 4* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 351.

welfare to give attention to the wounded.[335] The Samaritan then κατέδησεν τὰ τραύματα ("bound up his wounds" NTE), perhaps even tearing his own clothes, including the head cloth and undergarments, for the bandages.[336] He ἐπιχέων ἔλαιον καὶ οἶνον ("poured oil and wine" NRSV) on the wounds, likely mixing them as a disinfectant.[337] Oakman maintains the audience would perceive this Samaritan as a trader of oil and wine. If he was seen as wealthy, this would further complicate his role, since financial elitism could have placed him in a position to potentially exploit or even oppress others.[338]

To some hardliners, and possibly to the lawyer and others in Jesus' audience, the idea of receiving oil and wine in addition to being touched by the Samaritan would be seen as sacrilegious.[339] A later statement from the *Mishnah* articulates an enduring scathing view toward Samaritans, saying, "He that eats the bread of the Samaritans is like to one what eats the flesh of swine."[340] If sharing the bread of a Samaritan would have been seen as a defilement, then receiving hospitality from such a one would have also been viewed with protest. Therefore, it is worth considering that the Samaritan may also be assuming the risk of dealing with an angry recipient of his compassion.[341]

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[335] Danker, *Jesus and the New Age According to St. Luke*, 132.

[336] Bock, *Luke: 2 Volumes*, loc. 20107-20108.

[337] Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 208.

[338] Oakman, *Jesus and the Peasants*, 175.

[339] Bock, *Luke: 2 Volumes*, loc. 20112.

[340] Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, loc. 2863-2864.

[341] See further elaboration on the history of Jewish interaction with the Samaritans in the Appendix.

In addition, it is significant that these items, oil and wine, were each key elements in the temple function. Here, the parallel and contrast between this Samaritan and the inactive priest and Levite becomes more pronounced.[342]

The Innkeeper – Luke 10:35

> *The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.'*

At the end of verse thirty-four, the wounded traveller is then placed on κτῆνος ("an animal") τὸ ἴδιον (belonging to the Samaritan / "his own" NRSV) and is ἤγαγε ("brought") to πανδοχεῖον ("an inn") and ἐπεμελήθη ("taken care of"). Then, in verse thirty-five, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν αὔριον ("the following day"), the Samaritan gave two denarii to the innkeeper.[343] With that, Ἐπιμελήθητι αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὅ τι ἂν προσδαπανήσῃς (instructions are given for the care of the wounded traveller to the innkeeper). In addition, the Samaritan ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ ἐπανέρχεσθαί με ἀποδώσω σοι (will pay whatever balance accrues more than the down payment). Chen notes the likelihood that an outsider Samaritan so near Jerusalem and Jericho in Judea would not have been welcomed; furthermore, his having an injured Jew with him would look very suspicious.[344]

Moreover, commercial inns, rather than being associated with hospitality, was culturally notorious as dishonourable since its proprietors profited rather than extending

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[342] Garland, *Luke*, 634.

[343] Oakman, *Jesus and the Peasants*, 44-45, Kindle. Oakman maintains this volume of currency to provide adequate care for twenty-four days.

[344] Chen, *Luke*, loc. 3976.

hospitality according to the requirements of the law.[345] This type of inn attracted lower classes of the populace who would have not had access to honourable hosts, and would likely have offered prostitution to the guests.[346] In some Jewish traditions, inns are presented so grotesquely, that people are even discouraged from taking livestock there as the gentile managers were accused of bestiality. Women were not to be left there alone, vulnerable to sexual abuse, and men would be threatened by murder.[347]

Likewise, the innkeeper's vocation was dishonourable, detested population as suspected of taking advantage of clients.[348] Accordingly, since the innkeeper's task is not motivated by the sacred character of hospitality but by economics, he is able to profit from the bandits' victim and the Samaritan's generosity.[349] Those who have taken care of the needs of the wounded are not the religious priest and Levite, but the Samaritan and despised innkeeper.[350] This is a scathing indictment of these religious figures. Furthermore, the Samaritan, who made himself vulnerable to thieves on the road to Jericho, now makes himself vulnerable to the innkeeper, viewed as a commercial thief, when he commits himself to paying for the welfare of the victim.[351] Accordingly, the Samaritan is

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[345] Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables of Jesus*, 310-311.

[346] Ibid., 311.

[347] Oakman, *Jesus and the Peasants*, 176.

[348] Ibid., 311.

[349] Ibid., 311-12.

[350] Ibid.

[351] Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, 296.

theoretically the most vulnerable character of the story, potentially subject to accusations, ostracization, attack by bandits, and dishonesty from the innkeeper.[352]

Keener is one of the few that contends his words to be a debt guarantee.[353] In undertaking these actions and subsequent commitment, the Samaritan is either taking on an unimaginable sacrifice in a world of subsistent living, or he is wealthy enough to be a merchant in the upper 10% economic strata, which to a peasant audience be a reason to despise him more.[354] The Samaritan not only made himself vulnerable by helping a stranger on a dangerous road, but also by committing financially toward his restoration. In taking on the debt obligation, the Samaritan became vulnerable to a system of exploitation, whereby, and being of a despised ethnicity in Judea, he likely had no means of fair mediation.

Joseph Giambrone rightly calls attention to the fact that few explore the Samaritan's sacrifice in terms of compliance with the overall Lukan ethic towards wealth and possessions.[355] A further hint of the Samaritan's benevolence is inferred in v.35, in that he is not on his way home, in contrast to the supposed status of the priest and Levite, but

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[352] Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, 198.

[353] Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 208.

[354] S. J. Friesen, "Injustice or God's Will? Early Christian Explanations of Poverty" in *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society: Holy Cross Studies in Patristic Theology and History*, ed. Susan R. Holman (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 19-20.

[355] Joseph Anthony Giambrone, "'The One Who Did Mercy': Sacramental Charity, Creditor Christology, and the Economy of Salvation in Luke's Gospel," D. Phil. diss. (University of Notre Dame, Indiana, November 2015), 251.

instead is conducting business obligations.[356] Instead he will pass the inn once more, and he is likely interrupting his business dealings in order to demonstrate this compassion to the traveller.

4.5 Examination of Luke 10:36-37

Jesus Questions the Lawyer – Luke 10:36

> *Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"*

The parable has now concluded, and Jesus, for the second time, responds to the lawyer's question with that of his own, reversing the responsibility of affirmation to that honour challenger. In verse thirty-six, Jesus delimits the question to the three primary characters of the story, saying, τίς τούτων τῶν τριῶν ("which of these three" NET) does the lawyer δοκεῖ ("think") was γεγονέναι τοῦ ἐμπεσόντος ("the neighbour") to the man who fell to εἰς τοὺς λῃστάς ("the robbers")? In doing so, the question has now transformed

[356] J. Reiling and J. L. Swellengrebel, *A Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of Luke* (Swindon, England: United Bible Societies, 1993).

from "Who is my neighbour?" to "Who is acting as a neighbour?"[357] Jesus once more forces the lawyer to answer his own question.[358]

The Lawyer Responds – Luke 10:37

He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him,
"Go and do likewise."

In verse thirty-seven, the lawyer responds, Ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔλεος μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ ("the one who showed mercy to him" NET). The lawyer eschews referring to him as the Samaritan, instead choosing to identify him by his action.[359] Jesus triumphs in this honour challenge as the lawyer is forced again to answer his own question.[360] Jesus' response, Πορεύου καὶ σὺ ποίει ὁμοίως ("go and do the same" NET), then ends this occasion. These final words of Jesus are intended to bring attention back to the first question "What must I do?"[361]

Accordingly, what becomes clear through this parable is that the Samaritan, an impure outsider, is the one who keeps the law.[362] Therefore, the answer is not based in a precise description of the law or definition of neighbour, but rather on an understanding of

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[357] Green, *The Gospel of Luke (NICNT)*, 432.

[358] Just, *Luke 9:51-24:53 (Concordia)*, 447.

[359] Commentators including, Chen, *Luke*, loc. 3986.

[360] Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 208.

[361] Green, *The Gospel of Luke (NICNT)*, 425.

[362] Craig A Evans, "Ch. 12 - Prophecy and Polemic: Jews in Luke's Scriptural Apologetic" in *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke-Acts*, 171-211 (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 178.

sacrificial love.[363] With that, what truly differentiates the Samaritan from the priest and Levite is not ethnicity or vocation, but compassion.[364] Vinson assesses the further questions of ethics that the lawyer must confront - namely, how he may fulfil the commandments when applied to non-Jews, which would include Roman soldiers living in Jewish towns.[365]

4.6 Old Testament Parallels

Echoes and Allusions

Richard Hays' defines Old Testament echoes as having complex parameters, but that "may involve the inclusion of only a word or phrase that evokes, for the alert reader, a reminiscence of an earlier text."[366] The terms echo and allusion may be used interchangeably with this in mind. Interpretation, especially of these echoes and allusions, is not an exact science, but incorporates the abilities of a literary artist.[367] Meier rightly states that Jesus, "who tells narrative parables, stands primarily not in the sapiential but in the prophetic tradition of the Jewish Scriptures."[368] While it would be well beyond the scope of this project to conduct the full nine-step hermeneutical process that Beale proposes for each Lukan allusion to Old Testament writings, the primary steps are to analyse the

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[363] Alan J. Thompson, *Luke (Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament)*, eds. Andreas J. Köstenberger & Robert W. Yarbrough (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2017), 414.

[364] Green, *The Gospel of Luke (NICNT)*, 431.

[365] Vinson, *Luke*, 338.

[366] R. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 10, Kindle.

[367] G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012) 47, Kindle.

[368] Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, Vol. 5, 40.

immediate and broader context of both the New Testament passage and the Old Testament allusion. This will be pertinent when approaching the echoes to Hebrew scripture found within Luke 10:30-35 as already established within scholarship, recalling passages in Hosea, Micah, and II Chronicles.

Hosea 6:1-10, in the Context of Hosea 4-6

In Luke 10:25-37, scholars observe an echo to Hosea 6:1-10. Bailey treats the parallels briefly, focusing on the mending of wounds in 6:1-3 and sacrifice in verse six.[369] In 6:4 and 6, the prophet remarks on the deficit of חֶסֶד of the people. This rich and complex word encompasses multiple concepts including loyalty, kindness, goodness, mercy, love, and grace.[370] Finally, the "fleeting faithfulness" and condemnation of priests in this passage are also directly relevant to this study.

However, the context of Hosea's tone regarding the priesthood begins two chapters previously, early in chapter 4. Hosea specifically accuses the priesthood of rebellion, and in a sense, the priests become representatives of the overall problem. Hosea 4:5 attests that because of the priesthood, all the people will suffer.[371] He blames the priests for neglecting Torah, therefore leaving the people more vulnerable to rebellion (4:6).[372] The prophet asserts that sin has multiplied as the priests have increased in number, status, and power

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[369] Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes,* 49.

[370] H.-J. Zobel, חָסַד. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (Revised Edition, Vol. 5)* eds. G. J. Botterweck & H. Ringgren, transl. D. E. Green, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 45.

[371] Gary V. Smith, *Hosea, Amos, Micah (The NIV Application Commentary)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 121, Kindle.

[372] James Limburg, *Hosea – Micah: Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 47, e-book, Scribd.

(4:7-8). They have not only become greedy and commercialized, exploiting and profiting from sin offerings, but also engage in sexual deviancy, drunkenness, and idolatry.[373]

Following this rebellion comes judgment in chapter five, and then hope in Hosea 6:1-6. The judgment takes place through the exile and YHWH's perceived withdrawal from the covenant people (5:15), due, in part, to the activity of the priesthood (5:1).[374] Then the themes of hope and return are brought out in chapter six, with a considerable number of links in 6:1-3 to the previous chapter, demonstrating the author's intention that this be understood within the previous context of the priests' corruption.[375] The prophet's concern here is orthopraxy – namely, that right conduct is limited not only to the cultic practices of sacrifice and offerings, but that God also expects more than these (6:1-6).[376]

The priesthood is indicted once more in 6:7 to 7:2 for its many injustices including murder and robbery.[377] Notably, the priests are referred to as a "gang of priests" and "band of robbers" at Shechem, the antecedent of Samaria.[378] It references "blood on the streets" and "murder on the road." The exact circumstance is not detailed; however, some heinous crime has been committed by multiple priests.

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[373] Lim and Castelo, *Hosea (Two Horizons OTC)*, 122.

[374] Lim and Castelo, *Hosea (Two Horizons OTC)*, 125. Interestingly, James Mays suspects this oracle was directed toward Samaria. See James L. Mays, *Hosea: A Commentary (The Old Testament Library)* (Philadelphia, PA, Westminster, 1969), 79.

[375] Lim and Castelo, *Hosea (Two Horizons OTC)*, 132.

[376] Ibid., 134.

[377] Andersen and Freedman, *Hosea*, 433.

[378] Ibid., 436-437.

Hosea's tone is important to this study because several overlapping characteristics connect the passages in Hosea with Luke 10:25-37. Bailey notes that the Samaritan traveller tending the wounds of the victim correlates to YHWH tending to his people. In addition, in Hosea 6:6, to maintain covenant ethics, sacrifice and offering alone are not enough. Likewise, one principle from Luke 10:25-37 is the concept of one's neighbour extending beyond legal considerations. Both Jesus and the lawyer affirm that love for God and neighbour is the foundational truth of the law, and Hosea is a picture of God's call to covenant love.

A less explored but crucial element is the parallel that in Hosea, the priests had robbed and murdered a man on a road near Samaria. Meanwhile, in the parable, a Samaritan comes to the aid of a man robbed and left for dead on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, the location of vocational service and residents of many priests. Finally, Hosea gives a clear indictment of the priests for being greedy, sinful, and neglecting the law. In the meantime, the Lukan parable, which at its basis is about the law, indirectly indicts the priest and Levite for failing to keep the law, with a possible motivation of greed. One more component is worthy of mention. Scholars are often conscious of Hosea's Exodus motif; at the same time, since this parable is situated in the Lukan travel narrative, a crucial literary and theological context is that Jesus is making an exodus to Jerusalem.[379]

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[379] Yair Hoffman, "A North Israelite Typological Myth and a Judaean Historical Tradition: The Exodus in Hosea and Amos," *Vetus Testamentum* 39, no. 2 (1989): 169-82. doi:10.2307/1519574.

Micah 6:7-8

Scholars also connect the parable of Luke 10:25-37 to Micah 6:7-8. The Hebrew texts provide a clear indication of the necessity for covenant participants to extend their actions beyond rituals and cultic practices. Bailey notes that these verses closely mirror Hosea 6:6, once again proclaiming that the covenant requires more than sacrifice and offerings; however, he does not explore the context any further.[380]

Micah 3:11 contains an oracle and rebuke against the priests for being greedy and profit-oriented. Judgement is associated with the Temple Mount and the destruction of Jerusalem (3:12). Zion has been built of "bloody crimes" (3:10) and Jerusalem from "unjust violence" (3:10). Juan I. Alfaro deduces that these crimes were in exploiting even the lives of the poor, requiring them to construct buildings, palaces, and even homes for the elites.[381] Elizabeth Achtemeier sees a parallel to this in the priests' corruption in Hosea (4:1, 6).[382] Furthermore, the priests, as well as judges, were in a position to be advocates for the poor, but instead they had become perpetuators of injustice.[383]

Micah 4:1-8 sees another round of remarks regarding salvation. While concise, the language is still highly potent, referring to a restored temple (4:1), resulting in a revival of law-keeping (4:2), just peace-making (4:3), security (4:4), and religious fidelity (4:5).

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[380] Bailey, 50.

[381] Juan I. Alfaro, *Justice and Loyalty: A Commentary on the Book of Micah (International Theological Commentary)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 38, e-book, Scribd.

[382] Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Minor Prophets I (Understanding the Bible Commentary Series)* (Ada, MI: Baker, 1996), 435, e-book, Scribd.

[383] Alfaro, *Justice and Loyalty: Micah*, 39.

Further descriptiveness includes a call to the lame and marginalized, as the former will become the "nucleus of a new nation" (4:6-7).

In the final judgement oracle (5:10-6:16), there is Exodus imagery (6:4-5) before attesting that God's primary requirements are "to carry out justice, to love faithfulness, and to live obediently" (6:8). This justice is juxtaposed with the proceeding section in which the wealthy unjustly resort to violence and lies (6:12). The final section, 7:1-20, expresses a mixture of lament, including over bloodshed (7:2) and bribery (7:3), before an affirmation of rebuilding ruins (7:11), a new exodus (7:15-16), and a promise of forgiveness (7:18-19).

Multiple elements relevant to Luke 10:25-37 are discovered in the rich language of Micah 6:7-8.[384] The cultic practices in relation to the temple were seen by the prophet as insufficient to meet God's standard. Namely, the sacrifices should be symbols of one's devotion and surrender to God, so without such an internal disposition, the rituals become meaningless.[385] Furthermore, after the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in 587 BCE engendered widespread uncertainty. Without a temple, the prescribed sacrifices ceased, and guilt increased. Accordingly, the prophet gives a roadmap for life in the exilic setting.[386]

Commenting on Micah, Limburg writes that the requirements begin with justice (מִשְׁפָּט); "Israel first, she must *act justly*, that is, when in a socially superior position, step

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[384] Bailey,

[385] Ibid., 66-69.

[386] Rogerson, "Micah," 49.

in and deliver the weaker and wronged party by punishing the oppressor." Bruce Waltke concurs, stating:

> Anyone who is in a weaker position due to some misfortune or other should be delivered not reluctantly, but with a spirit of generosity, grace and loyalty. Acts of justice and succor motivated by a spirit of mercy guarantee the solidarity of the righteous covenant.[387]

Alfaro adds strength to this observation:

> The practice of justice required of Israel, is more than a simple obedience of the social and ritual religious obligations derived from the Law. It implies a commitment and a responsibility for the defense of the poor and the powerless so that they will not be victimized by the more powerful groups of society.[388]

This contrasts with how the leaders, including the priest, have been presented in this prophetic book.[389]

The second mandate is (חֶסֶד אֹהֲבָה). Again, commentators view this trait as being juxtaposed to the posture of the leaders and priests whom Micah addresses, observing that this is a "generosity, grace, and loyalty" to those who are in a weaker circumstance.[390] Once again, חֶסֶד is a theologically full word that extends beyond mercy, kindness, and love, toward solidarity with God and humans. It is a "covenant love" expressing faithfulness and dedication to God's ways, and in this setting, applies to humans, both strong and weak.[391]

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[387] Bruce K. Waltke, *A Commentary on Micah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 195, Kindle.

[388] Alfaro, *Justice and Loyalty: Micah*, 66-69.

[389] Limburg, *Hosea – Micah: Interpretation*, 244.

[390] Ibid.

[391] Achtemeier, *Minor Prophets I*, 470.

When considering these aspects of Micah in connection to Luke 10:25-37, clearly the lawyer, the priest, and the Levite, each of whom focuses on the law, overlooked the greater good and service to fellow humanity. In Micah, the prophet's rebuttal of the priests is the climax of his prophetic indictments.[392] Likewise, in the parable, Garland attests that the priest and Levite have been exposed, insomuch that they appear "dysfunctional outside the temple without their props."[393] However, a primary distinction is that in Micah, the priests are rebuked because they have been oppressive toward the weak, while in the Lukan parable, the attention is given to the inaction of the priest concerning the weak.

2 Chronicles 28-29

Parallels – the Samaritan and wounded traveller

Scholarship has argued that Luke's parable of 10:30-35 was constructed from a template of 2 Chronicles 28:15, which reads:

> …they clothed all who were naked. They provided them with clothes and sandals, food and drink, and healing balm. All those who were weak they put on donkeys. So they took them back to their fellow Israelites at Jericho, the City of Palms, and returned to Samaria. (NET)[394]

The surface parallels between this Hebrew scripture and Luke 10:30-35 are apparent. Both Samaria and Jericho are referenced. Likewise, the vulnerable Judean captives in Samaria are treated with kindness by being given food, clothing, oil, and donkeys to ride on, just as

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[392] Alfaro, *Justice and Loyalty: Micah*, 38.

[393] Garland, *Luke*, 634.

[394] F. Scott Spencer, "2 Chronicles 28:5-15 and the Parable of the Good Samaritan," *Westminster Theological Journal* 46 (1984), 317-349.

the Samaritan of the parable cared for the victim's wounds with oil, placed him on his animal, presumably a donkey, and saw to his basic needs. Peter Leithart remarks that in this brief instance, the divided kingdoms displayed what it meant for them to be in a unified brotherhood of generosity, listening to the voice of YHWH through his prophets; that this was an image of what the covenant kingdom was supposed to be.[395]

Further allusions – priests, Levites, temple purity, and worship

Although scholars have acknowledged the parallels between 2 Chronicles 28:15 and the parable of the good Samaritan, they have fallen short of making the critical connection of the further relevant allusions to occupying powers, the temple, and the priests and Levites in the surrounding passage. The author of Luke would have absolutely expected his audience, upon hearing the unmistakable verbiage from 2 Chronicles 28:15 in the parable, to relate to the message of temple purity.

Martin Selman notes that worship is a primary feature of the message of Chronicles, and the temple, God's dwelling place, must be purged of all impurity.[396] To this, E.H. Merrill remarks that in order for the temple to be restored, "the priests and Levites must themselves undergo 'conversion,' as it were."[397] Leithart correctly assesses that Hezekiah directly links the dysfunction and dismantling of the Jerusalem temple to the unstable

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[395] Peter J. Leithart, *1 & 2 Chronicles (Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible)*, ed. R. Reno (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2019), 333, e-book, Scribd.

[396] Martin J. Selman, *2 Chronicles: An Introduction and Commentary (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries Book 11)* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016), 296, e-book, Scribd.

[397] Eugene H. Merrill, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Chronicles (Kregel Exegetical Library)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2015), 502.

political situation in Judah.[398] In the first month of Hezekiah's reign, he brings together the priests and Levites and has them consecrate themselves so they can in turn consecrate the temple by removing everything unclean (29:3-5). Hezekiah reverses Ahaz' policies concerning the temple, re-opening, repairing, and purifying it (29:3).

The parallels between 2 Chronicles 28:15 and Luke 10:30-35 are considerable. However, they become even more compelling when weighed with the remainder of events through the twenty-ninth chapter. Herein, the chronicler records the political collusion of a Jewish leader, Ahaz, with the occupying empire, whereby the temple wealth was transferred to the foreign powers and eventually the temple was shut down. Then, the priests and Levites were called to purify themselves and the temple under Hezekiah's reign. Given the engagement of the priest and Levite in the parable of Luke 10:30-35, as well as that parable's broader context of the travel narrative to Jerusalem, this allusion becomes another critical signpost toward the significance of the priestly class in determining the implications of the Lukan parable.

This chapter began with a comparison of Luke 10:25-29 within the Synoptic tradition before proceeding with an exegetical exposition of Luke 10:25-37. The final portion of this chapter provided three critical parallels read within the Hebrew Scriptures to the setting of this pericope. To further address the goals of this project, it will be necessary for the following chapter to synthesize some of the material while injecting further socio-economic data into the interpretation.

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[398] Leithart, 338.

CHAPTER FIVE: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PARABLE

5.1 Introduction to the Parable's Significance

Reading the parable of the Good Samaritan in the context of its ancient setting has profound implications. Leaning on a previous scholarly precedent, this chapter will examine Luke's parables, including Luke 10:30-35, as a re-telling of Israel's history.[399] With this as the broader context, the chapter will bring together exegetical findings, socio-economic considerations, and literary analysis to uncover the implications of this parable and its characters, and more specifically, the priest and Levite as contrasted with the Samaritan. These findings will then be applied to consider the complexity and depth of their import for the lawyer and Luke's broader audience.

Cryptic Messages

During the time of Jesus' ministry, Israel's story was reaching its "climax" as Jesus was addressing concerns about the identity of true Israel.[400] This view coincides significantly with the context of Luke 10:25-37, wherein the basis of the lawyer's question is rooted in the proper identification of those who will receive vindication in the coming age. Accordingly, as Wright describes, Jesus was "articulating a new way of understanding the fulfilment of Israel's hope," to the extent that to understand the parable was to realize that the coming age was being birthed in Christ.[401]

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[399] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*.

[400] Ibid., loc. 4983-4984.

[401] Ibid., loc. 3681-3684.

Jesus' concepts of the new Israel threatened many social institutions, including Rome, Herod, the Jerusalem Temple, Pharisees, zealous movements, and a host of others. Due to this risk, cryptic speech and parables became Jesus' primary instrument in conveying his message.[402]

Subversive Stories

In Wright's own summary, he determines parables are apocalyptic and often allegorical in nature, not limited to conveying God's return to "judge, redeem, and restore" Israel, but are also "agents" of that opportunity and hope, assigning the characteristics and features of what God's coming age will look like.[403] Therefore, the parables represent the crucial areas of Jesus' agenda by bringing the audience into the world of the parable, and when successfully determining the parable's point, means making a "judgement on oneself."[404] The parables are not intended to be "universal" teachings of "timeless truths," but subversive stories that demonstrate a "new way of being the people of God."[405] Given this, there is "secretive" aspect to be explored within Jesus' parabolic speech, ideas that could not be expressed openly and publicly but required "ears to hear" the content.[406]

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[402] Ibid., loc. 4920-4930.

[403] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, loc. 3772-3776.

[404] Ibid., loc. 3776-3788.

[405] Ibid.

[406] Ibid.

Significance of the Parable

The Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37) is crucial toward understanding Jesus' ministry. It rethinks purity standards, God's purpose, and the Temple establishment. N. T. Wright affirms its importance, describing the parable as a redefining God's kingdom, expanding Israel's boundaries, and relativizing the Temple system of cult and sacrifice."[407] The corporate aspects of the Good Samaritan emphasize the questions of "eternal life," one's neighbour's identity, and the implications of national identity, expanded in an eschatological redefinition. The Samaritan is essential as an agent used to stretch mental categories. The bandits are also relevant since they were seen by many as being, in part, answers to the problems faced by many first-century Jews. While Wright affirms that within the parable, the Temple is under suspicion, still, he avoids any direct engagement with the priest and Levite altogether, a stark omission when discussing the reconstitution of Israel.[408] What follows will be the parable of Luke 10:30-35 as a retelling of Israel's story, with a synthesis of material collected in this project, and a focus on the priest and Levite.

Eschatological Representations

Given this survey, nearly all Lukan parables can be expressed in terms of their apocalyptic, eschatological messages. This is key in deciphering Jesus' message, including the return from exile and the reformulation of Israel, a place where YHWH returns as king.

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[407] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, locs. 6260, 6299-6300. See also Wright, "The Parables Within Jesus' Ministry," MP3.

[408] Ibid.

Since these stories point toward the direction of the people of Israel corporately, many characters are used as archetypes of their broader collective. Meanwhile, Luke gives indications of what the kingdom is to look like as well as indicting contrasting forces that are in play. Thus, the parable of Luke 10:30-35 extends well beyond an example of ethics, deeply penetrating many veins of first-century life.

5.2 Literary Background of Luke 10:30-35

Purposeful Characters

The characters in the Good Samaritan parable are distinctive in that they are more narrowly defined than more broadly identified characters in other parables. Compared with the general categories of debtors, laborers, and servants found in other parables, the inclusion of priests and Levites is indicative of a very specific vocational designation. Also unusual is the ethnic qualification of the Samaritan. At the most, other parables leave Jesus' audience to infer the characters' ethnic identities. Finally, even the characters of the bandits and the innkeeper mark a unique inclusion in this parable. Considering the unexpected choice of characters as well as the uniqueness to the synoptic tradition, this parable stands out as uncommon in its design.

Luke's Crucial Character

The Samaritan in Jesus' story usually receives the bulk of scholars' attention as evidenced by the parable's traditional heading. Interpretation and application tend to focus on this character's good nature and the compelling potential motives of this outsider. However, each character is worthy of exploration and necessary to contrast and compare to the priest and Levite. Moreover, the perception of the questioning lawyer is absolutely critical. Luke uses this character to prompt the story, and the lawyer is the one challenged

to emulate those actions of the Samaritan. The perspective of this character, as well as a broader anonymous first-century Palestinian audience becomes crucial for a robust reading of this parable.

A Dubious Setting

Geography is mentioned at the forefront – Jerusalem and Jericho. The mention of Jerusalem prompts instant images of the purity centre, the socio-political, religious, and economic Jewish core of society. Jericho, while having a less robust role, is still in Palestine close to Judea, near the heart of Jewish culture, to the extent that it housed palaces during the Hasmonean period. It was also the site of the winter palace built by Herod the Great, in what amounted to "complex royal buildings" inspired by Roman architecture that displayed the excesses of royalty, serving as a second capital.[409] Furthermore, Jericho was known to house many Jewish priests.[410] While certainly not all of them were socio-economic elitists, given the unpopularity of the institution among peasants, Jericho would still have been subject to the stigma of association both with royalty and priesthood.[411] For instance,

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[409] R. A. Dodd, "Jericho" in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, eds. J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Logos e-book. See also Lawrence E. Toombs, "Jericho" in *HarperCollins Bible Dictionary, Revised and Updated*, ed. Mark Allan Powell, (New York: HarperOne, 2011), Kindle; and J. L. Kelso, "Jericho" in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, An Illustrated Encylopedia in Four Volumes, Vol. 2 E-J*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1962), 835-839.

[410] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 207, remarks, "wealthy priests" resided there.

[411] Herodian rule was the face of Rome in Jewish Palestine. Furthermore, the priesthood were often seen in collusion with Herod, an less directly to Rome. See Horsley, *Jesus and the Politics of Roman Palestine*, 32, 34. Furthermore, the Temple establishment had become quite wealthy, with the deduction that the institution essentially served as a bank. See Charlesworth, *Jesus and Temple*, 149.

Zacchaeus (Lk. 19:1-10), a "chief" tax collector, resides at that location, further reinforcing these stereotypes.

First Impressions

The first character of the parable is an anonymous traveller of uncertain socio-economic status, except, if it is fair to suggest that he is a Judean, a local, then it is equally valid to assume that this man belongs on that road.[412] Whether or not he was a person of means, the audience would have seen him as someone associated with both locations; he is a man traveling between the two points of Jerusalem and Jericho. Furthermore, this man was unlikely to have been traveling from a Jewish festival as there would have been more in his traveling party to offer group protection. Therefore, his solitary journey would ostensibly take place due to pertinent business between these tainted locations. With this clue, some audience members may initially assume him to be either a priest, Levite, or a character in a support role to Herod Antipas and the political establishment in Jerusalem.

Society Gone Wrong

If this is a re-telling, to some extent, of Israel's story, or, at the very least, an examination of the present conditions in the time of Jesus, then the scenario with the three initial variables, the traveller, Jerusalem, and Jericho, represents what has gone wrong in Jewish life. This is particularly true when considering what Jerusalem and, to a lesser extent Jericho symbolize, as well as those who would frequent between the two positions. More specifically, Jesus' audience would identify in the setting images of Roman authority,

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[412] Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, loc. 2803-2804.

illegitimate Herodian rule, and a polluted Temple with a historically corrupt priesthood, that, in economic terms, garnishes assets from the peasant populace toward Jerusalem and the governing powers.[413]

5.3 Literary Motifs in Luke 10:30-35

A Failed Economic System and A Wrong Response (The Bandits)

The traveller becomes a victim to bandits, again echoing the economic scene within first-century Jewish Palestine. Herein, a vibrant group is brought into the conversation – those who wish to target elitists who transact business between Jerusalem and Jericho. More simply put, these characters represent voices and actions of resistance, who challenge the injustice of political economics during their time by organizing violent and deadly protests against the powers.[414]

In many peasant villages, the audience would have sympathized with the bandits. They would not have seen the traveller as an innocent citizen trying to return home after a day's work; instead, they viewed him as representing what was wrong in society. These bandits were viewed as would-be "freedom fighters."[415] The activity of these bandits would

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[413] 90% of the populace lived at or near subsistent levels, however, the populace was exploited due to multiple layers of governance and taxation (Rome, Herod, Temple/priests). See Friesen, "Injustice or God's Will?.." pp. 19-20. The result, in part, was a massive debt problem, see Bruce Chilton, "Jesus and Jubilee." *Living Pulpit* 10, no. 2 (2001): 18-19. Meanwhile, Jerusalem was a vibrant political and economic hub, almost primarily due to the Temple which benefited from taxation as well as pilgrimages. See Martin Goodman, "Chapter 5: The Pilgrimage Economy of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period," in *Judaism and the Roman World: Collected Essays (Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity)* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 59. There were even instances where the priests sent the Temple guard to outlier communities to forceable collect monies. See Marty E. Stevens, Leadership Roles of the Old Testament: King, Prophet, Priest, Sage (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012), 66, Kindle.

[414] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, loc. 3286.

[415] Ibid., loc. 3285.

have resonated with many in a peasant populace who saw their aggressiveness as a worthy alternative to the more passive voices of resistance.

Again, throughout Luke's gospel, specifically in the travel narrative, Jesus is responding to the errors of those who find their vindication in raising up armaments and fighting the political powers.[416] To Jesus, within this parable, if the traveller from Jerusalem to Jericho serves as a model of what has gone wrong in the Israel story, then the bandits serve as the wrong response to the evils of society. Jesus' teachings infer that the path of the bandits will continue to lead the people in the wrong direction and toward more fruitless war and bloodshed.

An Unexpected Contrast in Neighbourliness

Before treating the priest and Levite, attention turns to the two final characters, the Samaritan and the innkeeper, who both play roles that are surprising and unexpected. The Samaritan, in contrast with the priest, the Levite, and even the bandits, is not on home soil.[417] A first audience, anticipating that neighbourliness would correspond to one's "home turf," would likely have ended up judging the priest, Levite, and even the bandits as bearing the greatest culpability of failing to act as neighbours, since each of these characters would have been on native soil. In contrast, the characters on the Samaritan and the innkeeper, neither of whom would have been on native soil, would be least expected to act as

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[416] Ibid., loc. 9240.

[417] N.T. Wright tends to focus on the narrative of exile and return. One may find a curious omission in Wright's work on the Samaritan being on foreign soil as possibly indicative of an exile motif.

neighbours. This contrast begins to highlight the comparison among the various characters' actions in even greater magnitude.

A Threatened Identity (The Samaritan)

In first-century Jewish Palestine, there was a concern over various forms of pollution. Matters of ethnic mixing, such as in the case of the Samaritans, were but one concern. Other focuses were on the spread of Hellenism within the region, brought by imperial rule, most recently Roman powers, which served to defile sacred space. Purity concerns highly correlated with the physical orifices which serve as a surrogate for the entry and exit points of the social body.[418] Not only were Rome and the Gentile king Herod seen as outside forces that had penetrated the Jewish social boundaries, but even the Temple and priesthood was under the patronage of these elements.[419]

In a binary world where persons, places, and things well into the category of either holy or profane, the Temple and its agents were viewed as the most inherently pure.[420] However, when an impurity comes into contact with the sacred, "the pollutant is stronger and ruins the pure object."[421] Eventually, by the time of Jesus, divisions between ritual and moral impurities began to overlap, likely a product of a threatened society.[422]

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[418] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 144.

[419] Richard A. Horsley, *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2003), loc. 500-502, Kindle. See also Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.403.

[420] Pilch, "Purity," 147. William R. Herzog II, *Jesus, Justice and the Reign of God: A Ministry of Liberation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 119.

[421] Peter Richardson, *Herod King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999), loc. 1581, 2496, Kindle.

[422] Wright and Bird, *The New Testament in Its World*, 211.

One problem was that in ancient Hebrew thought, land and its institutions became impure via the imposition of outside control and influence, including what Crossan calls "Roman imperial theology."[423] Furthermore, Herod, was not only the architect of the Jerusalem Temple, but he also had directed a construction project in Samaria, married a Samaritan woman, and had family living there.[424] All of this serves to establish how ethnic markers in terms of purity and pollution were reinforced in the first-century context. This helps establish the unlikeliness of the Samaritan character, and the likely repulsion with which a Jewish audience would have responded.

The Samaritan also serves to some degree as a representative of his people in this parable. His appearance would have conjured up historical associations of social protest and banditry, but in a wholly negative context. Not unlike the Pharisees, the previously described bandits, and host of other groups in first century Palestine, the Samaritans were opposed to the Jerusalem Temple establishment. However, unlike the Jewish anti-temple movements, Samaritans suffered a total withdrawal from the cultic practices associated with Jerusalem altogether.

Destruction Foreshadowed

An even more serious issue with Samaritans than withdrawal from worship and the denial of Jerusalem Temple access was that the Jews and Samaritans were historically

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[423] John Dominic Crossan, "Ch. 4 – Roman Imperial Theology" in *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, ed. Richard A. Horsley, 59-74 (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008), loc. 796, Kindle.

[424] Peter Richardson, *Herod King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999), loc. 1581, 2496, Kindle.

engaged in a violent and militant feud, at times concerning temples. This conflict focused on the perceived pollution and even involved destruction of each other's sacred grounds.[425] The insertion of the character of the Samaritan would certainly call this to mind. This association is amazing, and perhaps functions as a backdrop for what is to come. As the Jews and Samaritan had struggled over legitimate temple identity, the Jews had destroyed the Samaritan Temple; meanwhile, the Samaritans had defiled the Jerusalem Temple by scattering bones on the premises.

Interestingly, Jesus is making his way to Jerusalem, where he will declare the Temple unclean while also pronouncing judgement upon it. There, the focal point of his demonstration is the Temple, wherein he will act out its destruction.[426] In its allusion to protest of the Jerusalem Temple, the parable highlights that the Samaritan, or other outsiders, would become the conduit of right conduct in the post-Temple age, in juxtaposition to the priest and Levite.

Sacred Land Polluted

The suspicions against and marginalization of the Samaritan extend beyond what scholarship generally addresses. The imagery of this Samaritan exceeds ethnic and religious history; it also serves as an active reminder to Jesus' audience of contemporary problems. First, this Samaritan, an outsider, is on sacred soil and very close to what should be the purest real estate in Jerusalem. This not only serves to remind Jesus' audience of the

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[425] Pilch, "Jesus and the Samaritans," 75.

[426] John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1994), 148, Kindle. See also Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, loc. 8482-8484.

heinous Temple desecration that Samaritans previously committed near that pure soil, but also of a broader level of increased vulnerability their sacred land had endured for several centuries.

In the period when Jesus tells the parable, Palestine was ruled by Rome and its agents, including the Herodian dynasty. Furthermore, the land had continued to be absorbed by Gentile patrons. In terms of purity, all of this served to defile the land in the eyes of many. Furthermore, in his prophetic oracles, Jesus is suggesting that even greater armies will be represented within the region, which will cause more bloodshed. If the concern within this parable is over a single corpse's impurity, it is nothing to the types of problems that will soon escalate when a host of decaying bodies will lie within the region, except they repent.[427]

Expectations Reversed

In the telling of this Jewish story, the Samaritan in part represents not only these unsettling reminders, but also other detestable things in society. The Samaritan's status is further unsettling as he appears to be a merchant of an upper class. This not only explains his placement within the region but also creates even greater disdain. He carries oil and wine, two primary agricultural products of the region. Herein, he would not only be despised based on ethnicity, but also distrusted because of his economic status, viewed as being representative of the exploitive powers that have controlled the economic products of the region.

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[427] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, loc. 5214.

This key feature heightens the surprise of the story when instead of acting in self-interest, he acts sacrificially in his treatment of the wounded traveller. The narrative is further compelling as the one who shows how to keep the commandment is of the outsider group and is not on his native soil. Therefore, the imperative for him to demonstrate neighbourliness is less, emphasizing his benevolent actions even more.

Injustice Corrected

In spite of the Samaritan's presumed status as a merchant, in part representing society's wrongs, the Samaritan's keeping of the Torah is instinctive. Meanwhile, the lawyer must solicit and debate its meaning, and the priest and Levite miss it altogether. This aspect is significant in the context of the honour duel: the lawyer is shamed by Jesus' indication that the Samaritan has a better grasp of the spirit of the law than the Jewish professional.

Jesus likely addressed many who were economically underprivileged; however, the author, Luke, likely also wrote to those of higher economic status, as argued previously based on his critical focus on material ethics. From this perspective, the Samaritan likely also is an example to those with wealth who had incorporated into the Jesus' discipleship. This is much like the contrast of Zacchaeus (Lk.19) to the rich ruler (Lk. 18). Simply put, the Samaritan represented both what was wrong with current society as well as what could go right in the new age. The potential for the exploitation of wealth could be reversed and made right; those of means could behave like this Samaritan neighbour, using their influence to help realize God's kingdom.

An Unexpected Refuge (The Inn)

The innkeeper is an oft-neglected character, but he plays a crucial role in the parable. As a representative in Israel's story, the innkeeper occupied a role representing the wrongs of society. Generally speaking, the function of the inn was to serve those who were socially detestable – either Jews who were exiled and could not be received into the hospitality and table fellowship, or non-Jews lingering on Jewish soil and corrupting it with Hellenistic culture, Roman Imperialism and theology, and economic exploitation. One might have expected such an inn to be called a den of bandits, a safe house where these types congregated at the conclusion of the exploits. These inns were rumoured to be full of thieves, and its attendance to be sexually exploitative to women and even animals. This was in addition to the prostitution that was made available in these locations. However, the inn in the parable is a literary foil of the temple, representing what the temple should have stood for – a place of refuge and healing. In contrast, the temple was a safe haven for thieves instead of what it should have been.[428]

Whether the innkeeper could be viewed as a type of the Jesus group is debatable. However, he is a member of the profaned who has assisted in representing the reign of God. If Israel was called to be a light to the nations (Is. 49:6), at this point she has not lived up to her calling. However, Jesus is constructing a new temple by gathering up the formerly

[428] The inn is a foil of the temple, representing what the temple should have stood for – a place of refuge and healing. Instead, the temple was a safe haven for thieves, a designation that would normally have been given to the detestable, defiled inn. Likewise, the Samaritan is a foil for the priest and Levite, exhibiting the response that should have been expected of them, while they, in turn, act as a "hated" Samaritan might be expected to. This reversal of expectations would have made the subtle indictment of the temple more shocking.

obscene, impure, and marginalized, who serve to defeat societal perceptions and represent the hope and refuge of God's eschatological work.

A System's Failure (The Priest and Levite)

Rather than exceeding expectations, the priest and Levite of the story, who are of the Temple vocation, disappoint the audience. The priesthood was to serve the needs of the people before God. However, these representatives see fit to leave the wounded beside the road. If the Samaritan is the story's protagonist, a heroic example, then clearly the characters who present an antithesis to the hero would be the antagonists, or villains.

These priests traverse the road between Jerusalem and Jericho, situated between two cities that embody the concerning trajectory of society. Furthermore, as Luke's Jesus represents the new Temple, so these priests represent the existing Temple and its agents and their unwillingness to aid a suffering society.[429]

The condition of their interaction represents the social disintegration of the roles of the actual priesthood at that time. Priests offer no functional assistance in settling matters between rival groups. Instead, by way of their Herodian patronage, alignment to Rome, and perpetuation of Roman economic policy (which enables the Temple to grow in power and wealth), the priests further perpetuated the general instability of their day.

Substantiation by the Prophets

The violation of the priests' intended function is also the concern of many of the Hebrew prophets. Many concur that Jesus is speaking according to this tradition by

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[429] Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, loc. 662-663.

directing his message significantly to the Jerusalem establishment, incorporating a message concerning injustice and abuse. The image of a defiled Temple is raised in Jesus' ceremonial "cleansing" when he reaches Jerusalem, whereby he utilizes oracles relating to Temple and judgement (Jer. 7, Is. 56).

Luke's literary design compels the reader to draw this out. He does this first in the introduction to the travel narrative by choosing to echo the prophets, notably Jeremiah, whose message intensely rebukes the Temple, and Ezekiel, who articulates YHWH's presence departing the Temple.

The indictment of the Temple is further substantiated by the additional Old Testament parallels contained within the parable, discussed at greater length in the previous chapter. Haggai and Micah offer rebukes of the priesthood and demand that true worship and ethics must extend beyond the Temple function. II Chronicles 28 offers an intriguing image of unity between kingdoms at Shechem, North and South, the antecedents of the Jews and Samaritans. Notably, Hezekiah's re-consecration of the Temple and its agents proceeds from this moment of cooperation and harmony. In a subtle but profound way, in the sequence of recorded events, the chronicler links the image of unity between the feuding groups with the cleansing of the Temple and priestly function. Likewise, Jesus employs this parable when speaking of God's coming age to illustrate unity as well as the necessity of the new Temple and priesthood.

New Leadership in God's Kingdom

David Brack declares that "the primary purpose of the Travel Narrative is to explain a new leadership structure in God's Kingdom."[430] The Good Samaritan addresses this structure. As Jesus represents the new Temple, in counterpoint, the inactive priestly figures represent the existing Temple, permitting a society of people lying wounded, shamed, and half dead. With this, the exodus imagery from the onset of the travel narrative becomes clearer. Jesus is traveling to Jerusalem and his first action will be to confront the Temple. Accordingly, the images of the priest and Levite are significant indicators of Jesus' message for the Temple.

This new exodus, as with the former, concerns worship. The distinction is that rather than needing to physically depart from or defeat an external oppressive regime as in Egypt, Jesus points to the necessity of an exodus from external as well as internal political forces that have defiled the Temple. Therefore, this parable expresses not only the new exodus travel theme, but also that of economic ethics, a primary factor in the Temple's corruption. The travel theme of "national failure" is inferred in Jesus' call to participate in this new way of doing God's kingdom, or otherwise the nation, its landmarks and people will become ruins.

Finally, the "great reversal" is one of the most obvious Lukan travel themes in the parable. Not only is the Samaritan celebrated, but in the most fundamental ways, he

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[430] David Brack, *Luke's Legato Historiography: Remembering the Continuity of Salvation History through Rhetorical Transitions* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2017) 78, Kindle.

performs the task intended to be carried out by the priesthood; thus, the outsider fulfils the supposed function of an insider, and vice versa. Likewise, the inn has become a refuge, while the temple has become a thieves' den. The temple institution is in danger of becoming obsolete with the Samaritan and bandits more closely representing God's reign than the priesthood.[431]

Purity and Compassion

An additional component regards purity concerns, something important to Jesus' ministry, is evidenced very early in his ethics of table fellowship.[432] Jesus' ministry illustrates the vital purpose of welcoming those into the new temple who had been denied by the former. Borg asserts that within the Hebrew tradition, two crucial paradigms were purity and compassion; however, by Jesus' time, the former was elevated. Jesus' ministry and the ethic expressed the inverse – the need for compassion over purity concerns, whether they were requirements for priests, concerns over corpse impurity, or even defiled lands and persons.[433] The priests used their placement on the purity scale for personal benefit.[434]

This corruption substantiated the greed that Jesus identified in his Temple rebuke. In addition to other considerations, Luke 10:30-35 suggests that operatives who were formally viewed as the purest of society have become unclean; in contrast, the most polluted have now been made clean. This indicates a restructuring of the purity scale. The

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[431] Oakman, *Jesus and the Peasants*, 179.

[432] Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again*, 70.

[433] Ibid., 61.

[434] Ibid., 66.

formerly profane personages who had essentially been in social "exile" – tax collectors, bandits, innkeepers, merchants, and outsiders – are called to participate in the ethics of the eschatological new age.

A Travel Theme

The Good Samaritan engages each of the travel narrative themes previously described. The priest and Levite, symbols of the Temple cult, are indicted for their inactivity, thus becoming symbols of the need for a great reversal. Meanwhile, shunned outsiders are commended for participation in this reversal. At the same time, subtle hints of new exodus and return-from-exile themes are present as the Samaritan and the innkeeper demonstrate neighbourliness while on non-native soil. This aspect is more muted than in other parables – for example, the Prodigal Son, in which the younger son goes into voluntary exile; and the Rich Man and Lazarus, in which the latter is presented as the outside of the gates. However, the sense of exile, especially on the desolate wilderness road between Jerusalem and Jericho, is present.[435] With Jesus' call and formation of a new Israel, he is demonstrating that the return from exile is happening, modelled by the roles of those like the Samaritans and innkeepers.

[435] Wright correctly assesses that there was a general feeling in the first century setting that the return from exile as articulated by the prophets, most prominently Isaiah, had not been fully realized. This view within second temple Judaism is in part because the remnants of the diaspora remained; meanwhile, the Jews were seemingly exiled within their own land which remained under foreign rule. See Michael F. Bird, "Jesus and the Continuing Exile of Israel in the Writings of N.T. Wright," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 13, 2-3 (May 5, 2015): 209-231, https://doi.org/10.1163/17455197-01302001.

5.4 Two Worlds Juxtaposed

Paradox of Power – The Lawyer

As described before, much emphasis has been placed on the Samaritan's perspective, and with good reason; but the lawyer who prompts the parable is uniquely juxtaposed between two worlds. Considering this character's dilemma significantly enhances the parable's reading.

The beauty and dilemma of this pericope is the opposing influences of status and power. As a lawyer, and evidently a leader, the character would have a higher honour position within a peasant village. With this position comes a great amount of influence, primarily religiously, since the largely illiterate population were dependent on his teaching abilities. This status means the lawyer would have been in a position to perpetuate the teaching of the marginalization of others (including Samaritans, tax collectors, and a host of others - those with health problems, physical deformities, women, and those who had suffered economically, thus becoming socially exiled from village life). Furthermore, fearing expendability, few people passed along their skills. Accordingly, being an educated member of society meant the lawyer was able to exploit the community in a number of ways, including economically. However, in spite of being in an influential position within his sub-culture, which would have enabled him to take advantage of others on a micro scale, the lawyer also experiences marginalization as a member of an occupied populace on a macro scale.

The lawyer, devout in Torah and a citizen of ethnic Israel, has had to process the religious, political, and socio-economic climate of his day. Presumably, he may have his own suspicions of and disappointments with the Temple and its priesthood based on both

history and contemporary circumstances. Furthermore, he suffers because foreign leaders, including the Romans and the Herodian dynasty, occupied sacred soil and have mismanaged its resources. On some level, he, like many villagers, would have suffered from personal economic circumstances, subject to the heavy weight of abundant taxes and possibly having to utilize a debt system that favoured those who extend debt while exploiting the recipients. A reader of Torah would be intensely aware that land was theological, a sacred gift from YWHW. This knowledge became catalyst for disappointment when foreign patrons had increasingly accumulated control over commercial interests in the land.

The Paradox of Neighbourliness

It is when this too-neglected paradox is understood that the parable's implications deepen. In terms of finding and loving neighbours, how is this lawyer to view and alter his treatment of those who are social inferiors within his own village life? Furthermore, how is he to approach those who may have directly or indirectly marginalized him, those with greater power and social status? This parable calls to attention the lawyer's treatment and attitude not only toward Samaritans, tax collectors, and sinners but also his view toward priests in and surrounding Jerusalem, Herod and his political forces, and Rome and its representatives in the region.

Two Worlds in Counterpoint – The Jewish People

In the same way that the lawyer is on the cusp of a decision of how to handle the opposing influences in his life, so the Jewish people are caught between two worlds – initially, their history as a covenant people, alongside their present reality as an occupied, marginalized group grasping to hold on to their identity. Both must make a choice whether

to choose reversal, reconsidering their prior views on those Jesus has defined as their neighbours. On a broader scale, not only the Jews but also the Gentiles are poised between the present age and the new age. As with the lawyer, they must choose whether to participate in the new Temple as Jesus intends.

The initial question that prompts the parable is about inheritance, which correlated to land in the first century, a concept that Wright states tends to be avoided in scholarship.[436] The lawyer must consider the indirect question of whom he is willing to share the inheritance with, as spiritual exiles are now returning home. Will he be like the bandits, priest, and Levite, as well as the Rich Fool, Rich Man, Elder Brother, or Rich Ruler, each denying a share to others? Or will he model himself after the father of Luke 15 or Zacchaeus at the conclusion of the travel narrative, both of whom display the virtues of the new age through their economic and material generosity?[437]

Initially, it was argued that this lawyer served an honour challenge as a test to Jesus. However, in conformity with the method of true challenge and riposte, Jesus has responded by offering this lawyer an ultimate honour challenge regarding the fullest sense of ethics.

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[436] Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 226.

[437] The travel narrative is bookended with similar stories. At the start, Luke 10:25-37 portrays a Jewish authority figure asking the question about ultimate vindication, and at the end, another authority poses the same query (18:18). In answer to both queries, Jesus establishes the requirement in terms of action. The reader is uncertain as to the lawyer's response in Luke 10, but it is certain that the character of the Samaritan is affirmed. Meanwhile, the questioner in Luke 18 clearly refuses the invitation; however, shortly after in Luke 19:1-10, Zacchaeus is affirmed for fulfilling the requirements of kingdom participation. Both Zacchaeus and the Samaritan are members of a marginalized class and are in a position to exploit others. Nevertheless, both serve as models of living out the Jesus model of economics. Another noteworthy feature of these bookend characters is that Jericho is featured prominently in both accounts.

5.5 Significance of the Parable

Previous scholarship has incorporated multiple other Lukan parables in the context of a re-telling of Israel's history, but it has neglected to incorporate Luke's parable of the Good Samaritan in this survey. This chapter moves the conversation forward by situating Luke 10:30-35 among other parables in the overall Lukan travel narrative as contributing to this theme. This study brings together exegetical findings, socio-economic factors, and literary analysis to uncover the implications of this parable and its characters, and more specifically, the priest and Levite as contrasted with the Samaritan; and it explores the complexity and depth of their import for the lawyer and Luke's broader audience. In the following chapter, these findings will then be applied to the modern Christian, specifically in the African context.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND APPLICATION TO THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

6.1 Introduction

Chapter six will provide a final outlook for this study. It will begin by briefly reviewing this study's findings thus far. This will be followed by identifying further potential for study regarding this topic. Finally, the bulk of the chapter will focus on the application of this stud to the African context.

6.2 Summary of Findings

This thesis began by noting the lack of resources that treat the priest and Levite within the parable of Luke 10:30-35 as representatives of their broader class, as well as of the organization they served. This is a noticeable omission among recent and historical scholarship.

This study has considered several factors of background, interpretation, and the implications of the Parable of the Good Samaritan. In doing so, it has been established that the priest and Levite, dominant religious figures in Judaism, were culprits of inactivity when passing by the wounded traveller. Furthermore, Jesus uses this parable to highlight broader socio-religious themes in first-century Jewish Palestine. In doing so, attention is placed on the representative function of the priest and Levite to the organization they served. By functioning as representatives within the parable, attention is placed on the misconduct by the Temple elite which resulted in the establishment becoming disassociated from the mainstream populace and ineffective in terms of establishing the messianic age of Israel's hope.

6.3 Opportunities for Further Study

Avenues of additional study include this parable's connection to the wider travel motifs in Luke-Acts. Not only do Luke's two volumes include a significant travel narrative to Jerusalem for both Jesus and Paul, but also a travel narrative of Paul's journey to Rome. Furthermore, the early church begins to branch outward from Jerusalem following the persecution wrought by Stephen's speech concerning the Temple. Likewise, the parable of Luke 10:30-35 depicts movement outwardly from Jerusalem. meanwhile Temple agents play a critical role in the narration. These common themes overlap creating opportunity for further study. Additionally, the concepts of new or replacement temple briefly raised in this thesis also merit deeper exploration. Specifically, the inn becoming a refuge, perhaps incorporating a temple theme, meanwhile the unclean Samaritan and innkeeper become the righteous alternatives to the priest and Levite.

Furthermore, this researcher was challenged to locate substantial exegetical treatments of Luke 10:25-37 from an African hermeneutical perspective. Many of the sources produced by Africans lean on Western scholarship. This calls attention to potential publication bias benefiting Western scholars. Given the complex nature of Luke's gospel, specifically themes of economic and social ethics, ministry to marginalized social groups, greed, and matters pertaining to money and material possessions, the African voice is not only useful to the broader world of Biblical Studies, but necessary. This researcher notes multiple African theologians who have written short commentaries on Luke and/or Acts within a single volume, whole Bible commentary. However, a specialized and robust commentary on Luke written from the African perspective will be a critical contribution in the future of Lukan studies.

6.4 Application to the African Context

As with any portion of the Biblical text, it is important to engage contemporary Christians with the dilemmas and challenges of this parable. The focus on this modern application will be in the African setting, focusing on the forms of banditry suffered on the continent, more specifically, that from the religious elite.

Even into the twenty-first century, African theological institutions have tended to utilize prior scholarship from the West that serves the interests of the West.[438] However, application to the African context requires reimagination and thinking beyond Western perspectives.[439] This chapter's goal is to move beyond the limitations of parabolic interpretation imposed by Western historical critical methodology in a way that engages the African setting.

Recent scholarship from the African continent has interacted in varying degrees with the parable of Luke 10:30-35, but the material largely mirrors existing Western scholarship. For example, Elizabeth Mburu's work *African Hermeneutics* addresses the Parable of the Good Samaritan solely by referencing Western scholars.[440] This is likely due to the extended colonial presence in Africa, which included the transference of the earlier wave of historical criticism. As observed in chapter two, historical-critical methodology

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[438] Grant LeMarquand, "African Biblical Interpretation" in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, eds. K. R. Vanhoozer, C. G. Bartholomew, D. J. Treier, and N. T. Wright (Ada, MI: Baker, 2005), 32, Logos e-book.

[439] Bungishabaku Katho, *Reading Jeremiah in Africa: Biblical Essays in Sociopolitical Imagination* (Bukuru, Nigeria; Carlisle, UK: HippoBooks, an imprint of ACTS and Langham, 2021), 11, Kindle.

[440] Elizabeth Mburu, *African Hermeneutics* (Bukuru, Nigeria; Carlisle, UK: HippoBooks, an imprint of ACTS and Langham, 2019), 89-95.

has its benefits, but it also tends to hinder creativity by limiting parable explication to a single example story. One matter that must be noted is the limitation of available resources from an African perspective, also likely due to the vast historical favouritism to Western scholarship.

While this study has acknowledged the errors of the former period of allegorical interpretation, still it also observed the limitations of the historical-critical perspective. The exegetical section was critical in supplying the socio-historic backgrounds, thereby enabling the parable to be explored in context. Then, the implications for the original audience were expounded upon, arguing that Jesus was utilizing the parabolic variables as a cryptic and subversive way demonstrating the composition of new Israel. Next, this parable must also speak to contemporary audiences. In making an application certain commonality will be located between the world of the text and modern Africa. To be clear, this does not propose an allegorical interpretation, but rather intends to produce relatable features to a modern audience, whereby the interpretation of this parable, rooted in the deep exegesis is not changed but mere communicated with imagery appropriate to a receiving group.

6.5 The Good Samaritan and Africa

In spite of the sparse availability of resources, some scholars have begun to extend an African perspective to this parable. Mbengu D. Nyiawung imaginatively utilizes The Good Samaritan to uniquely engage the African, offering a compelling view of the risk-taking aspect in the parable. He categorizes three types of risks therein: “(1) conflicts of ethnic interests (risk of egoism); (2) conflicts between personal interest and humanitarian

interest (risk of altruism); and (3) conflicts of innocence (risk of foolhardiness)."[441] Furthermore, his work is beneficial in addressing parallels between contemporary Africa to the ancient world of the text, addressing the great diversity of culture and the effects of colonial powers.[442]

Whereas in a previous chapter, Wright demonstrated the parabolic function as the telling of Israel's story, Nyiawung instead brings the conversation into Africa's story. His imagination challenges the continent to move beyond focusing on past glory to envision future prospects, which circles back to his idea of risks. His work moves the conversation forward in identifying the two types of robbers, the external sources, colonialism, and the internal sources.[443] This is a useful form of application as characters should be personalized to the audience.[444]

External Bandits

At the core of the parable from Luke 10:30-35 lies the response to the abuses of banditry; therefore, this chapter will focus this application to the African context. The abuses of internal and external bandits in Africa are well attested and largely obvious. This study will briefly examine a few examples of how external banditry in the parable

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[441] Mbengu D. Nyiawung, "In Search of a Samaritan: The Risk-Taking Motif in Luke 10:30–35 as a Paradigm for African Socio-Economic Development," *Neotestamentica* 52, no. 2 (Dec. 2018), 7. https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.10520/EJC-134d3b7779.

[442] Ibid., 11.

[443] Ibid., 11.

[444] Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart support this method of re-shaping the parabolic components into modern contexts with their presentation of Luke 10:30-35. See Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993), 147.

correlates to the conversation with current issues in Africa. Then the study will apply the idea of internal banditry in more detail.

External bandits are represented by the foreign powers that have imposed their will on the continent, causing devastating and lasting effects. One such issue is the current African migration crisis. This was prompted at least in part by problematic national boundaries drawn by Western powers.[445] The parable of Luke 10:30-35 offers the view of a Samaritan and possibly even the innkeeper, who may have been a Gentile, as operatives on non-native soil.

An additional ongoing problem is that Western developed nations continue to extend an unhealthy amount of debt to African governments. These are not easily managed and therefore non-African nations may exert power over African nations. A remission of this debt is a powerful way that Western nations might act as neighbours to those on foreign soil.[446] This complex challenge is further applicable to the agents of the West who serve the commercial and political interests of their native nations while residing in Africa. These must discover how they may conduct their operations with the highest moral fortitude, potentially choosing to stand in contrast to the interests of their organizations when that action represents the ethical choice.

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[445] Stelios Michalopoulos and Elias Papaioannou, "The Long-Run Effects of the Scramble for Africa," *American Economic Review* 106, no. 7 (2016): 1802-1848. This source establishes border disputes, economic exploitation, and that the spiral of violence from the colonial presence is not merely a thing of the past but remains ongoing.

[446] N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 289-290.

Another issue of external banditry in Africa stems from the cultural influence of Western missionaries. In some cases, these demanded African societies to abandon indigenous culture in the name of God and conform to Western ideas regarding matters that were purely cultural and not specific to religion.[447] Efforts along these lines contributed to robbing Africa of heritage and distorting the gospel. In addition, denominationally-specific Western mission organizations and networks which were divisive and refused cooperation have left a legacy that continues to hamper ecumenical efforts in Africa.[448]

These are a few broad examples of the many to which this parable can be applied to Africa. The parables' characters extend an example of how to operate as part of God's kingdom on non-native soil. Furthermore, the parable offers an inferred challenge to any in Jesus' audience who would have sided with the story's bandits by picturing the suffering of the oppressed by their oppressors. These dynamics correspond with the ethics of migration, land borders, foreign debt, and cultural imposition and should stimulate interaction with these topics in a uniquely African context.

Internal Bandits

While Africa's external banditry continues to generate instability and calls for continued dialogue, the parable also has tremendous relevance to Africa's internal banditry

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[447] Francisco A. Gallego and Robert Woodberry, "Christian Missionaries and Education in Former African Colonies: How Competition Mattered," *Journal of African Economies* 19, no. 3 (June 2010): 294–329.

[448] Graham Duncan and Anthony Egan, "The Ecumenical Struggle in South Africa: The Role of Ecumenical Movements and Liberation Organisations from 1966," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 45, no.1 (March 2019): 1-28. https://doi.org/10.25159/2412-4265/3936. Frederick Omollo, "A Major Ecumenical Challenge in Africa: The Mushrooming of Independent Churches," *Human Dignity Journal* 1 (2014): 1-12. The latter two resources demonstrate some of the issues prohibiting ecumenicalism in Africa.

and the suffering it causes. On the one hand, the continent's vast resources are intertwined with a variety of governmental and political factors which serve to exploit Africa's resources and her people from within. However, fewer resources, specifically of an academic nature, also identify the problems of the church in Africa and its clergy as part of the internal banditry.

Since this study is delimited to the import of the role of the religious figures in Luke 10:30-35, it is natural to discuss the most precise application with reference to the clergy. From the onset, it is important to clarify that abuses of clergy are not unique to Africa; this is also a problem that plagues the West. Therefore, this study's aim is merely to bring Africa into the conversation, rather than suggest the problem is more substantial in the continent.

African Christianity has enjoyed much success. However, the primary disadvantage has been the abuse and corruption that has stemmed from the church. The parable's message is that the Jerusalem Temple and its agents, the priests and Levites, failed to represent the majority class of persons in the first century. Instead, clerics were known to have gained wealth, exploited persons, and operated in collusion with other corrupt political establishments, including the Herodian and Roman rule. Stunningly, Vinson notes that in Luke 10:30-35, the religious leaders are given the same status as the bandits who exploited the traveller.

Africa suffers not only from the colonial remnants of military and political occupation, contemporary economic colonialism, governmental corruption, and other socio-economic factors, but it also faces an internal crisis within Christianity. Documentation demonstrates that corruption within the African church is widespread. For

example, Davide Casciano assesses that Nigerian Christianity, particularly the vast growth of the Pentecostal movement, has produced a faith corresponding to elevated socio-economic status in terms of wealth and materialism. This environment has created numerous pastors who enjoy celebrity status.[449]

In Nigeria, clergy, like the first-century Temple establishment, have failed to represent the people. The prosperity message in that nation has generated further economic inequality, separating the religious elites from the general populace.[450] In the same way that the priesthood of the text had become over-engaged with commercial interests, so too have many of the Nigerian clergy.[451] This has been so problematic that in 2006, The Nigeria Association for Biblical Studies (NABIS) met at a conference in Ibadan on the theme Biblical Studies and Corruption in Nigeria.

These issues are not limited to one country. Similar excesses of the clergy have been identified in Cameroon, by Michael Kpughe Lang;[452] in Kenya, by M. Muziga

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[449] Davide Casciano, "Popular Tales of Pastors, Luxury, Frauds and Corruption Pentecostalism, Conspicuous Consumption, and the Moral Economy of Corruption in Nigeria," *Journal of Extreme Anthropology* 5, no. 2 (2021): 64. https://doi.org/10.5617/jea.9008.

[450] D. Smith, "The Pentecostal Prosperity Gospel in Nigeria: Paradoxes of Corruption and Inequality," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 59, no. 1, (2021): 103-122. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X2000066X.

[451] John O. Enyinnaya, "Corruption in Church and Society: An African Theological Perspective," *Practical Theology Journal* no. 11 (2018): 1-19. See also D. Ayegboyin, "A Rethinking of Prosperity Teaching in the New Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria," *Black Theology* 4, no. 1 (2006): 81. https://doi.org/10.1558/blth. 2006.4.1.70 70–86.

[452] Michael Kpughe Lang, "The Patterns of Corruption in Christian Churches of Cameroon: The Case of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon," *Transformation* 31, no. 2 (2014): 132–44. http://www.jstor.org/stable/90008210.

Rurangwa;[453] in Malawi, by Qeko Jere;[454] and in South Africa, by Mookgo S. Kgatle and Thinandavha D. Mashau.[455] The latter two co-authors write that in their setting, "paparazzi pastors" have abused "poor" church members, having them drink petrol and do other detestable things to increase their faith and eventual giving.[456]

Much of this stems from prosperity teachings originating from the United States. Instead of reaching a necessary goal of human flourishing and equality, this unhealthy method has further established inequality and exploitation. Accordingly, this teaching from the individualistic and industrialized United States has served as a detrimental form of theological colonialism; and its missionaries, both internal and external, have created a situation that leaves the African church in a flux.

Kunhiyop assesses that in the African context, only part of the gospel has been presented, whereas the treatment of the poor requires a re-reading of the gospel in entirety.[457] Isaac Boaheng observes that the proliferation of the prosperity gospel, a reading of the Bible only in part, has been accelerated by poor economic conditions on the continent. Its teaching indicates that materialism and good health are equivalent to the

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[453] Meshack Rurangwa Muziga, "The Perception of the Church on Corruption: A Case Study of Good Shepherd Africa Gospel Church, Nairobi – Kenya," *Impact: Journal of Transformation* 4, no. 2 (2021): 45-54. https://journals.aiu.ac.ke/index.php/impact/article/view/99

[454] Qeko Jere, "Public Role of the Church in Anti-corruption: An Assessment of the CCAP Livingstonia Synod in Malawi from a kenōsis Perspective," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 39, no. 1 (July 26, 2018). https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v39i1.1776.

[455] Thinandavha D. Mashau and M. S. Kgatle, "Prosperity Gospel and The Culture of Greed in Post-Colonial Africa: Constructing an Alternative African Christian Theology of Ubuntu," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 40, no. 1 (April 11, 2019). https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v40i1.1901.

[456] Mashau and Kgatle, "Prosperity Gospel and the Culture of Greed…," 3-4.

[457] Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019), 157.

Christian life; however, its proponents have not identified and attempted to treat the injustices that create an improved economic environment. Instead, they perpetuate inequality.[458]

One of the primary ways the church has exploited the poor is by theologically marginalizing them. Prosperity teachings imply that the poor and infirm are to blame for their own status.[459]

A positive alternative that has been offered is a call to economic justice, as well as group solidarity, modelled in the African concept of Ubuntu, which more closely aligns the ethics found in the parable of Luke 10:30-35.[460] Among proponents of the Prosperity Gospel, absent is a call for neighbourliness, instead, the focus is on self-improvement, another common trait birthed by Western individualism.

The first-century Jewish Temple and priesthood perpetuated the inequitable economic system of Rome. The institution socially marginalized the people and engaged in corrupt political acts that generated disunity and factions in their society. These attributes echo internal voices that voice concern today regarding the African church. Jere notes that the antithesis to corruption and the prosperity emphasis is servanthood – a self-emptying

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[458] Isaac Boaheng, *Poverty, the Bible, and Africa: Contextual Foundations for Helping the Poor* (Bukuru, Nigeria; Carlisle, UK: HippoBooks, an imprint of ACTS and Langham, 2020), Kindle. See also Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 154.

[459] Boaheng, *Poverty, the Bible, and Africa*.

[460] Mashau and Kgatle, "Prosperity Gospel and the Culture of Greed…,".

humility – and sacrifice, a self-limitation and "volunteering in a public engagement."[461] These elements coincide quite well with the attributes of the Samaritan of Luke 10:30-35.

Kunhiyop adds that a public proclamation must acknowledge the failures of corrupt systems in Africa, and that this should include prosperity teachings.[462] Clearly, the church has an impact on societies and sub-cultures. As long as the priesthood of the church models corruption, Christians, especially those in influential roles, have less incentive to address the corruption toward which they contribute.[463]

Finally, this parable expresses a warning and an opportunity for future Africa and its agents of the faith toward neighbourliness to the rest of the world. In the United States where the prosperity teachings originated, Christianity is declining in terms of church membership and attendance as well as vocal affirmation.[464] The warning to Africa is a pragmatic one – that the rise of prosperity teachings coincided with a declining Christian demographic in the West. Simply put, the prosperity message has not caused prosperity in terms of church membership and attendance, and Africa would do well to avoid that trajectory.

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[461] Jere, "Public Role of the Church in Anti-corruption," 4-5.

[462] Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 171.

[463] Benito Khotseng and A. Roger Tucker, "'They Worship in Our Churches' – An Opportunity for the Church to Intervene in Order to Diminish the Corruption That Is Hindering Service Delivery in South Africa?," *HTS Theological Studies* 69, no. 2 (August 2013). http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v69i2.1933.

[464] Jeffrey M. Jones, "U.S. Church Membership Falls Below Majority for First Time" (March 29, 2021), https://news.gallup.com/poll/341963/church-membership-falls-below-majority-first-time.aspx. See also Pew Research Center, "In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace: An Update on America's Changing Religious Landscape," *Pew Research Center* (October 17, 2019), https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/.

6.6 Concluding Thoughts

Future Africa is extended a challenge and an opportunity in that, as Christianity continues to decline in the Western nations, Africa has enjoyed vibrant growth and has become a primary hub of the Christian faith.[465] To this, the call to the continent is to not forget the West, but to extend neighbourliness by way of missional efforts that will contribute to a rejuvenation of Christianity in North America, Europe, and other westernized regions – if not now, then in the future.

This chapter began by highlighting the need for African scholarship to approach scriptural texts with an indigenous perspective that moves beyond the limitations of Western-imposed historical criticism. When applying imagination to the text, The Parable of the Good Samaritan, specifically the idea of banditry, becomes a helpful lens of discovery for modern Africa. This discovery extends a call to the church and, more precisely to her clergy to live out God's ultimate age in the present in terms of social and economic justice.

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[465] Joey Marshall, "The World's Most Committed Christians Live in Africa, Latin America – and the U.S.," *Pew Research Center* (August 22, 2018), Pew Research article. See also Philip Jenkins, "How Africa Is Changing Faith Around the World," *Pew Trend Magazine* (July 5, 2016), https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/trend/archive/summer-2016/how-africa-is-changing-faith-around-the-world.

APPENDIX: THE SAMARITANS

The origin of the divide between Jews and Samaritans was the splitting of Israel into Northern and Southern kingdoms following the reign of Solomon, with the Northern establishing its capital in Samaria (1 Kings 12) where King Ahab, Jezebel's husband, erected an altar to Baal (1 Kings 16:32). In 722 BCE, the Northern Kingdom was conquered by the Assyrians and many of its people were deported to anonymous locations (2 Kings 17:1-16).

Nehemiah (4:1-8) and Ezra (4:4-11,17-23, 25) record that the Samaritans initially celebrated those returning from Babylonian captivity. However, once the returning captives rejected their help, the angry Samaritans mocked the Jews who returned to rebuild Jerusalem's walls, and as the project become successful, they engaged in conflict with the workers.

The reason for the rejection is that to many Jews, even returning exiles, the Samaritans were seen as a mixed people both ethnically and religiously, having

intermarried with those who were resettled in their region by the Assyrians.[466] Furthermore, the Persian ruler Sanballat's daughter was given in marriage to Manasseh, the brother to the high priest Jaddua in Jerusalem. Josephus states that the Samaritans descended from that union (11:302).[467] He chronicles that the Jerusalem elders feared this intermarriage and demanded that Manasseh either divorce her or no longer serve the altar; however, he was unwilling to do either and instead accepted Sanballat's offer to make him the high priest of a new temple.[468] Darius grants the Samaritans approval to build their own temple on Mount Gerizim in 388 BCE, and many priests and Israelites who had married foreigners followed Manasseh to the region of Samaria.[469]

Reinhard Pummer remarks on the Josephus' "founding myths" of the Samaritans. One such "myth" was that Jews who violated both the Sabbath and dietary restrictions fled from Jerusalem to Shechem (Samaria). This added to the association of the Samaritans with the profane, while also raising suspicion of Jews who associated with the Samaritans.[470] Josephus (Antiquities 18:29-30) also recounts a Samaritan infiltration of Judean pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem for Passover. At their arrival, they desecrated the temple by scattering human bones around the holy site, making it impure and requiring everyone, including the priests, to conduct ritual cleansing.[471] Josephus also writes that sometime in

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[466] Reinhard Pummer, *The Samaritans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 13, Kindle.

[467] Ibid., 59.

[468] Ibid.

[469] Pummer, *The Samaritans*, 59-60.

[470] Ibid., 60.

[471] Pilch, "Jesus and the Samaritans," 75.

48-50 CE, some Samaritans massacred a group of Galilean pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem, and in response, Galileans invaded Samaritan villages and were accused of setting some on fire.[472]

The *Sirach* (50:25-26) virulently describes Jewish resentment of Samaritans: "Two nations my soul detests, and the third is not even a people: Those who live in Seir, and the Philistines, and the foolish people that live in Shechem." Other resources note that during the Jewish rebellion of 165 BCE against Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the Jerusalem priesthood was resentful of the Samaritans for not assisting them; furthermore in 128 BCE, John Hyrcanus, the Jewish king, attacked Samaria, burning down their temple on Mt. Gerizim.[473]

The Samaritans, however, viewed themselves as the undefiled advocates of the Pentateuch,[474] descendants of the faithful of Israel who began to err during the time of Eli in the eleventh century BCE. Eli had moved the tabernacle from Gerizim to Shiloh before its eventual placement in Jerusalem. Therefore, the Samaritans viewed themselves not merely as the kingdom that split, but as the true Israel, with the Jews having departed from the sacred.[475] Accordingly, members of this group self-identified as the Shamerim, or true guardians of the Law, and saw themselves not only in contrast to the heretical priest Eli who moved the cultic centre to Shiloh, but also against Solomon who constructed the

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[472] Levine, Short Stories by Jesus, 108-109.

[473] Ibid., 106.

[474] H. G. M. Williamson and M. Kartveit, "Samaritans," in J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin, eds., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels,* Second, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 832.

[475] Ibid., 833.

Jerusalem temple. They viewed later traditions of the Pentateuch as redacted with Judean bias, along with the Prophets and Writings which they perceived as extra-canonical.[476]

This history serves to further elucidate why the Samaritan and his actions would have been so shocking and unexpected to Jesus' hearers. The inclusion of the Samaritan in a positive light versus the priest and Levite in a negative light represents an unprecedented shift from existing social positions of the sacred and the defiled, with the intention of redefining the boundaries of God's kingdom.

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[476] Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, 106-107.

GLOSSARY OF GREEK WORDS AND PHRASES

This section correlates to the interlinear Greek to English Bible using Strong's concordance reference numbers. The glossary does not include every word of Luke 10:25-37; however, it includes important words and phrases that are discussed in chapter four above.

Verse	Greek	Transliteration	Strong's	English
Luke 10:25	Καὶ ἰδοὺ	Kai idou	2532, 2400	"And behold," "Just then" (NRSV) (transition phrase)
	νομικός	nomikos	3544	"a lawyer", "expert in religious law" (NET)
	ἀνέστη	anestē	450	"stood up"
	ἐκπειράζων αὐτὸν	ekpeirazōn auton	1598, 846	"testing him"
	Διδάσκαλε	Didaskale	1320	"Teacher"
	τί ποιήσας	ti poiēsas	5101, 2532	"What having done" (the aorist active participle indicates simple past tense, a completed action)

	ζωὴν αἰώνιον	zōēn aiōnion	2222	“life eternal;” rendered “life of the coming age” in the KNT
	κληρονομήσω	Kleronomēsō	166, 2816	“will I inherit?”
Luke 10:26	Ἐν τῷ νόμῳ	En tō nomō	1722, 3588, 3551	“In the law”
	τί γέγραπται	ti gegraptai	5101, 1125	“what has been written?”
	πῶς ἀναγινώσκεις	pōs anaginōskeis	4459, 314	“How read you?”
Luke 10:27	Ἀγαπήσεις Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου	Agapēseis Kyrion ton Theon sou	25, 2962, 3588, 2316, 4771	“You shall love [the] Lord the God of you
	ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου	ex holēs tēs kardias sou	1537, 3650, 3588, 2588, 4771	With all the heart of you
	καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ σου	kai en holē tē psychē sou	2532, 1722, 3650, 3588, 5590, 4771	And with all the soul of you
	καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ἰσχύϊ σου	kai en holē tē ischui sou	2532, 1722, 3650, 3588, ,2479, 4771	And with all the strength of you
	καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ διανοίᾳ σου	kai en holē tē dianoia sou	2532, 1722, 3650, 3588, 1271, 4771	And with all the mind of you
	καὶ Τὸν πλησίον σου	kai Ton plēsion sou	2532, 3588, 4139, 4771	And the neighbor of you
	ὡς σεαυτόν	hōs seauton	5613, 4572	as yourself
Luke 10:28	Ὀρθῶς ἀπεκρίθης	Orthōs apekrithēs	3723, 611	Correctly you have answered
	τοῦτο ποίει καὶ ζήσῃ	Touto poiei kai zēsē	3778, 4160, 2532, 2198	This do and you will live

Luke 10:29	Ὁ δὲ θέλων δικαιῶσαι ἑαυτὸν	Ho de thelōn dikaiōsai heauton	3588, 1161, 2309, 1344, 1538	But desiring to justify himself
	εἶπεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν	eipen pros ton lēsoun	2036, 3414, 3588, 2424	He said to Jesus
	Καὶ τίς ἐστίν μου πλησίον	Kai tis estin mou plēsion	2532, 5101, 1510, 1473, 4139	And who is my neighbor?
Luke 10:30	Ἄνθρωπός	Anthrōpos	444	“A man”
	κατέβαινεν	katebainen	2597	“was going down”
	ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλὴμ εἰς Ἰεριχὼ	apo Ierousalēm eis Ierichō	575, 2419, 1519, 2410	“from Jerusalem to Jericho”
	περιέπεσεν	Periepesen	4045	“[he[fell among”
	λῃσταῖς	Lēstais	3027	“bandits”
	ἐκδύσαντες αὐτὸν	ekdysantes auton	1562, 846	“having stripped him”
	πληγὰς ἐπιθέντες	plēgas epithentes	4127, 2007	“having inflicted wounds”
	ἀπῆλθον	Apēlthon	565	“went away”
	ἡμιθανῆ	Hēmithanē	2253	“half dead”
Luke 10:31	Κατὰ συγκυρίαν	Kata synkyrian	2596, 4795	“by chance” or “by good fortune” NET
	ἱερεύς τις	hiereus tis	2409	“a certain priest”
	κατέβαινεν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐκείνῃ	katebainen en tē hodō ekeinē	2597, 1722, 3588, 3598, 1565	“was going down on that road,” or “was travelling the same road”
	καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν	kai idōn auton	2532, 3708, 846	“and having seen him”
	ἀντιπαρῆλθεν	antiparēlthen	492	“he passed by on the opposite side”

Luke 10:32	Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ Λευίτης	Homoiōs de kai Leuitēs	3668, 1161, 2532	“Likewise now also a Levite,” or “So too a Levite”
	ἐλθὼν	elthōn	2064	“having come”
	καὶ ἰδὼν	kai idōn	2532, 3708	“and having seen"
	ἀντιπαρῆλθεν	antiparēlthen	492	“passed by on the opposite side”
Luke 10:33	Σαμαρίτης δέ	Samaritēs de	4541, 1161	“A Samaritan, however”
	ὁδεύων	hodeuōn	3593	“journeying”
	ἦλθεν κατ’ αὐτὸν	ēlthen kat’ auton	2064, 2596, 846	“came to him”
	καὶ ἰδὼν	kai idōn	2532, 3708	“and having seen”
	ἐσπλαγχνίσθη	Esplanchnisthē	4697	“was moved with compassion,” or “pity,” NRSV, NIV
Luke 10:34	καὶ προσελθὼν	kai preselthōn	2532, 4334	“and having approached,” or “came over to” NTE
	κατέδησεν τὰ τραύματα αὐτοῦ	katedēsen ta traumata autou	2611, 3588, 5134, 846	“he bound up the wounds of him” NTE
	ἐπιχέων ἔλαιον καὶ οἶνον	epicheōn elaion kai oinon	2022, 1637, 2532, 3631	“pouring oil and wine”
	ἐπιβιβάσας δὲ αὐτὸν	epibibasas de auton	1913, 1161, 846	“having put then him”
	ἐπὶ τὸ ἴδιον κτῆνος	epi to idiom ktēnos	1909, 3588, 2398, 2934	“on [his] own beast,” or “animal”
	ἤγαγε αὐτὸν	ēgagen auton	71, 846	“he brought him”
	εἰς πανδοχεῖον	eis pandocheion	1519, 3829	“to an inn”

	καὶ ἐπεμελήθη	kai epemelēthē autou	2532, 1959, 846	“and took care of him”
Luke 10:35	καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν αὔριον	Kai epi tēn aurion	2532, 1909, 3588, 839	“And on the next day”
	Ἐπιμελήθητι αὐτοῦ,	Epimelēthēti autou	1959, 846	Take care of him
	καὶ ὅ τι ἂν προσδαπανήσῃς	kai ho ti an prosdapanēsēs	2532, 3739, 5100, 302, 4325	and whatever more you might expend
	ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ ἐπανέρχεσθαί	egō en tō epanerchestahi	1473, 1722, 3588, 1880	of me on returning
	με ἀποδώσω σοι	me apodōsō soi	1473, 591, 4771	I will repay you
Luke 10:36	τίς τούτων τῶν τριῶν	Tis toutōn tōn triōn	5101, 3778, 3588	“Which of these three” NET
	πλησίον δοκεῖ σοι γεγονέναι	plēsion dokei soi gegonenai	4139, 1380, 4771, 1096	“a neighbor seems to you to have been”
	τοῦ ἐμπεσόντος εἰς τοὺς λῃστάς	tou empesontos eis tous lēstas	3588, 1706, 1519, 3588, 3027	“of the one having fallen among the robbers”
Luke 10:37	Ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔλεος μετ’ αὐτοῦ	Ho poiēsas to eleos met’ autou	3588, 4160, 3588, 1656, 3326, 846	“The [one] having shown compassion toward him” or “the one who showed mercy to him” NET
	Πορεύου καὶ σὺ ποίει ὁμοίως	Poreuou kai sy poiei homoiōs	4198, 2532, 4771, 4160, 3668	“Go and you do likewise” or “go and do the same” NET

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