

**1** Luke replaces Mark's *καλεσθησιν*, "calls to [him]," with *κατακληθησονται* μ, "having called together," perhaps because this verb suits better Luke's sequencing in which Peter and John and James are already with Jesus (8:51). More logically, Luke speaks of the commissioning before the sending (Mark probably uses the sending language to mean a directive to go, rather than an actual sending off; he has in mind a commissioning in pairs in which each pair was empowered and directed separately; his use of tenses allows for the authorization and the directive to depart to occur in the logical rather than the reported order). Luke adds "power and" to Mark's "authority." The immediate link here will be 8:46 (see there), but there may also be an anticipation of postresurrection empowering (cf. Acts 1:8). The Twelve will be carriers of Jesus' own power. Luke prefers "demons" to Mark's "unclean spirits" (see at 4:33 for Luke's use of language in relation to demons). Luke's added "all" will highlight the failure of the disciples which Luke will later report in 9:37–43. In Mark's account healing comes in as an afterthought at the point where the conduct of the mission is reported in 6:13. Luke makes this good by adding "and to heal diseases" to that for which the Twelve are empowered and authorized. This addition is grammatically awkward (cf. Fitzmyer, 753).

**2** Only now does Luke tell us that the Twelve are sent by Jesus. He drops Mark's mention of pairs (as does Matthew), but will use this pairing in 10:1. Unlike Mark, Luke makes explicit at this point what the Twelve are sent to do (once again Mark leaves the reader to discover later [in v 12] that preaching [as well as healing] and not only exorcism is involved in this sending). In contrast to Mark 6:12 the content of the preaching is not repentance, but now the kingdom of God (it is likely that Luke's other source spoke about the kingdom of God [cf. Matt 10:7; Luke 10:8, 11]). This has been Luke's favored designation for the preaching of Jesus (see 8:1; etc), and now it is this preaching which is understood to provide for the Twelve the content of their preaching. Luke uses *κατακληθησονται*, "to heal," regularly of Jesus' healing activity (most recently in 8:47), and in v 11 he will juxtapose this verb and "the kingdom of God" with reference to Jesus' ministry, as a reminder of the equivalence between Jesus' own ministry and that which the Twelve here undertake. Some have found difficult the fresh mention of healing here after v 1 (e.g., Fitzmyer, 753), but Luke quite reasonably separates the empowering and authorization from the actual sending.

**3** Luke softens Mark's "commanded" to "said," and moves the account into direct speech. Mark's general *κατακληθησονται*, "on a journey," becomes *κατακληθησονται* μ, "on the journey [which they are now about to make]." Mark has staff and sandals as specifically not subject to the general directive to take nothing with them as they travel. Luke drops the mention of sandals (carrying them [presumably a second pair] will be prohibited in 10:4, and they are proscribed in Matt 10:10) and prohibits the staff (not mentioned in Luke 10, and also prohibited in Matt 10:10). He is influenced here by his second source. Such variations demonstrate the way in which such an account straddles between reporting a unique event and providing a pattern for ongoing missionary endeavor. Luke is attempting to be more historically accurate here than Mark,

because he knows he will have the opportunity to qualify the continuing relevance of the injunctions later in the Gospel (see at 22:35–38). Concerning the hermeneutical issues raised by such variations, Legard (*ITS* 16 [1979] 214–19) has a helpful discussion.

, especially in company with the sandals of Mark 6:9, is likely to be a walking aid rather than a defensive weapon. could be a traveler’s knapsack or a beggar’s bag, and is probably the former here: this is where the bread and spare garment would have been. Luke’s “silver”/“money” is up-market from Mark’s “copper [money].” Luke’s added , “to have,” is difficult. Is it to be linked only with the two garments, or does it cover all the mentioned items? Does it do duty for an imperative (so: “do not have”) or does it express purpose (so: “take nothing ... so as not to have ...”)? If the link is to the garments, then it is more likely that Luke sees the second garment as a spare rather than as worn at the same time as the first (as Mark may intend).

Several suggestions have been made as to the point of these restrictions. Is the matter so urgent that there is no time to get properly equipped (contrast the standard picture of the equipped traveler in Josh 9:3–6)? The prohibitions seem to be more positively intended than this would allow. More likely and still somewhat along the same lines is the possibility that we have here a deliberately staged prophetic sign of eschatological urgency. Identification with the poor could also be involved: “Good News to the poor ... must be so in the very way of announcing it” (Legard, *ITS* 16 [1979] 210). Or is the point to express in the conduct of the mission an utter dependence on God, so that the Twelve may discover the amazing providential care of God as they live out in this unique context the directive of 12:31 (see Schürmann, 502)? Less likely suggestions are based on the rabbinic prohibition, recorded in *b. Ber.* 9.5b, of going onto the temple mount with staff, shoes, money-belt, or dust on the feet. It is then suggested that the Twelve are engaged in a sacred undertaking (Manson, *Sayings*, 181) or are on a pilgrimage (Grundmann, *Markus*, 123). The suggestion that the knapsack and staff are prohibited to distance the Christian mission from the wandering Hellenistic philosophers of the Cynic tradition is more attractive, until we see that the distinction then becomes obscured again in 22:35–38.

**4** Luke deletes Mark’s fresh introduction (“and he said to them”) and changes Mark’s syntax, partly under the influence of his second source, but probably without significant change in meaning. Both forms of the text are obscure until illumined by 10:7: the disciples should not try to upgrade on hospitality once accepted. Traveling without means, the Twelve will be totally dependent on hospitality extended to them by people they meet on the way. No matter how humble, each such provision is God’s provision for them, adequate to meet their needs.

**5** Luke clarifies Mark’s “whichever place” from his second source (10:10; Matt 10:11): the text is about coming and going from towns. Luke’s ( , “as many as,” is still under the influence of the Markan form of the text; the expression has become plural in anticipation of the population of the “town” about to be mentioned, and now it refers to people and not to places, but it has no proper antecedent. For Luke, receiving implies hearing/listening to the message (cf. 8:13), so he dispenses with Mark’s “and does not hear/listen to you.” Luke uses a different prepositional prefix for the verb “to shake off,” and repeats this preposition to give “from the

feet” in place of Mark’s “under the feet.” Luke changes Mark’s “witness to” to “witness upon” (μ ; cf. 1 Thess 1:10; Acts 14:3), with no clear change of meaning.

Luke envisages a whole town making a response corporately to the message. Acts provides various examples of corporate response to the missionaries. The fuller form in 10:8–11 deals specifically with the case of a town accepting the message (conversely the parallel to v 4 allows [implicitly] for hospitality not being extended). Shaking off the dust is a fairly transparent image for separation. It probably has no relationship to the rabbinic tradition of carefully removing the dust of foreign lands before returning to the Holy Land (see at Str-B, 1:571; criticized by Cadbury, “Dust and Garments,” 270–71). As emissaries of the kingdom of God, the apostles are to threaten unresponsive towns with exclusion from what God is now doing. The act is a final witness to the town of the seriousness of failing to respond to the message. We may take the account in Acts 13:50–51 as a gloss indicating the kind of thing Luke means by nonreception of the messengers.

6 Luke has spoken more expansively of the activity of the Twelve in prospect; here he is content with “announcing the good news and healing,” vocabulary which at once points to the parallel with Jesus’ own activity (8:1–2). Luke has only “from village to village” for the Twelve, whereas in Jesus’ case the wording had been “from town to town and from village to village,” but in view of the word “town” in v 5 we should not consider the difference as significant (against Grundmann, 185; cf. Schürmann, 504). The activity in 10:1 embraces towns. “Everywhere” balances “from village to village.” The former applies to the “healing” and the latter to the “announcing the good news.” The Twelve heal everywhere that they preach.

### *Explanation*

From 8:1 Luke has focused his readers’ attention on the fact that the Twelve are with Jesus, witnessing his exorcising, healing, and preaching of the kingdom of God; this has been a final readying for the task to which they had already been called in 5:1–6:16. While Luke is reporting here a relatively brief interlude during the ministry of Jesus (it began and ended and after it the ministry of Jesus continued), he constantly has in mind the mission of the post-Pentecost church, for which this earlier experience is foundational. We have here something of a dress rehearsal for the post-Pentecost role of the Twelve.

The Twelve have a special place in the mission of the church, but they do not have an exclusive claim upon Jesus’ call to take the good news out to the ends of the earth. Luke makes this clear by reporting in 10:1–20 a second mission, conducted by others on much the same terms as the present mission. The church’s need for mission continues in every generation, and in every generation these accounts inspire a fresh taking up of the missionary mandate.

Mission is carried out through emissaries of Jesus, authorized by him and bearing his power. It is, in effect, an extension of Jesus’ own ministry.

The Twelve are sent out entirely without resources. It is perhaps fitting that those who come with good news for the poor should be identified with the poor by being made vulnerable in this way. Their dependence can only be on God, who will in fact come through with the hospitality

they will need; they are learning on the job that “these things will be added to you” if you “seek his kingdom” (12:31).

The tension between responsible provision and trust in God alone is already evident when we turn in Luke to 22:35–38, where Jesus seems to abrogate these directives, at least somewhat. Both approaches have their place, but trust in God is much more straightforwardly exercised when the resources for life are not in our hands and must come to us from God.

V 4 is a little obscure until we compare the fuller form in 10:7. The mission is all-important. What comes to hand in the way of provision of hospitality is to be accepted as adequate for the need. It is God’s provision, and a better should not be sought.

Our text thinks in terms of people making a group response to Jesus, much in the way we see repeatedly in Acts. Not every town welcomes the news of God’s rule. Some will violently oppose the mission (Acts 13:50–51 gives us a good illustration of this teaching put into practice). These rejecters need to be shown graphically what they are doing to themselves in turning away the emissaries of the kingdom of God: they are separating themselves off from God’s new initiative; they will be left to God’s judgment. Not even the dust of their streets will move on with the plan and purpose of God.

Preaching and healing go hand in hand in the unfolding of the mission. Those who are healed experience in their own bodies the power and reality of the rule of God.

## ***Who Then Is This? (9:7–9)***

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### ***Translation***

<sup>7</sup>*Herod the tetrarch heard about all the things which were happening; and he was perplexed, because it was being said by some that John had been raised from the dead,* <sup>8</sup>*by others that Elijah had appeared, and others that a certain prophet of the ones from ancient times had risen.* <sup>9</sup>*Herod said, “John I beheaded; who is this, about whom I hear such things?” So he sought to see him.*

## *Notes*

There are no important textual variants.

## *Form/Structure/Setting*

The subsection 8:22–9:20 has a double thrust: that concerning the Twelve being with Jesus and being sent out by him has been particularly in focus in the most recent pericopes; now Luke uses this brief piece to refresh the motif introduced in the first pericope of the subsection by 8:25 (“who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water and they obey him?”). This motif, anticipated already in 7:49 at the end of the previous section, will now be dominant to the end of the section in 9:20. The connections, already in the Markan form, between the materials of vv 7–9 (Mark 6:14–15) and vv 18–19 (Mark 8:28) will have suggested to Luke this use of vv 7–9.

Subordinately, Luke makes a second use of the pericope by appending to v 9 “and he sought to see him.” With these words the reader is prepared for the role of Herod to come in 13:31–33 and 23:6–12.

Luke continues to follow the Markan sequence here, though his omission of Mark 6:17–29 and his editing of this pericope means that the material plays a considerably different role for Luke. Only Luke’s Markan source is evident here, with just a slight influence from the tradition in Luke 23:6–12.

There is no clear basis for deciding what traditional material Mark had available for the formation of this pericope. For Mark it is mainly a transition piece used to introduce his account of Herod’s arrest and execution of John in vv 15–29 to follow. The opinions expressed have no particular importance for Mark. Each in its own way simply underlines the fact that people found it necessary to offer some explanation for the unusual things that were happening in connection with Jesus: an ordinary man cannot do what Jesus clearly can do. In contrast to Mark 3:22 these are positive opinions of Jesus, but, nonetheless, Mark treats them as wrong opinions about him.

There does not seem to be any other instance in Jewish or Hellenistic sources of a belief that being raised from the dead can confer supernatural powers (cf. Goguel, *Life*, 352; Taylor, *Mark*, 309). It is, however, not intrinsically an unlikely idea to be found in the popular imagination. More difficult is the particular equation of John and Jesus. It is true that the ministry of the one only really got under way after the other was off the scene, but if both figures became as widely known as the tradition suggests, then we would need to invoke the idea of a return in another form (cf. Mark 16:12) to allow for any wide currency for such a view. The return of Elijah poses no difficulty. “A prophet like one of the prophets” (Moses, Elijah, Elisha) is also without problems. But if with D it should read in Mark simply “one of the prophets,” as Luke in effect does and as finds support in Mark 8:28, then this becomes a more difficult view (but in a vision, Jeremiah is a helper in 2 Macc 15:11–16, and he and Isaiah are to be sent to help in 4 Ezra 2.18). Herod may have been influenced by the popular views (and a bad conscience?); it is also possible that removed from its present context the view expressed means only that no sooner had he executed John than John’s place as a disturber of the peace had been taken by this newcomer.

Popular opinions of Jesus must have existed, and some will have been remembered, but it is difficult to find a specific setting for the formal oral transmission of such materials.

Luke follows the general Markan ordering of the material. He introduces, however, a distinction between Herod's hearing about the events pertaining to Jesus and his being told the various popular opinions about Jesus. And most importantly, he unifies the Markan materials by introducing in v 7 the idea of Herod's perplexity about Jesus' identity, which he then uses to control the unfolding of the pericope. Herod's comment, which in Mark is the expression of Herod's own opinion chosen out of the popular set, now becomes a reference back to those opinions followed by a direct statement of his own continuing uncertainty. Luke provides resolution for the pericope by adding the statement of Herod's desire to see Jesus (in order to resolve his uncertainty about Jesus' identity). Finally, Luke somewhat standardizes the way in which the three opinions are introduced (a single verb of saying followed by "by certain ones ... by certain ones ... and [by] others").

### *Comment*

Luke treats as especially significant keys to the identity of Jesus the stilling of the storm (8:22–25; see Comment above on v 25) and the feeding of the five thousand (9:12–17; Luke does not repeat Mark 8:14–21, but he is guided by it in the sequencing of 9:12–17, 18–20). To these the Twelve have an insiders' access not granted to Herod or to the masses. In the subsection 8:22–9:20 the question of Jesus' identity begins as a question of the Twelve (8:25) and reaches its (initial) resolution for the Twelve (9:20). Herod never successfully resolves his question (see further at 23:6–12), but the present pericope refocuses attention on this question, which is the question above all other questions.

7 Luke corrects Mark's "King Herod" to "Herod the tetrarch": this Herod never had rights to the royal title (see further at 3:1). Luke drops Mark's "his [i.e., Jesus'] name had become known" and in compensation expands Mark's vague "heard" with  $\mu$ , "all the things which were happening. This allows for a smoother transition from the mission of the Twelve, because it can embrace also this manifestation of the "Jesus movement." (In 24:18  $\mu$ , "the things that have happened," sums up the totality of Jesus' ministry, death, and [reported] resurrection, with a focus on the climax in Jerusalem.) Luke derives his "he was greatly perplexed" ( ) from Mark 6:20 ("he was perplexed" [ ]). (See Schürmann, 509, for other indications that Luke had access to Mark 6:17–29.) But he links it to opinions about Jesus rather than to the quandary Herod was in about dealing with John the Baptist. Luke may have omitted Mark's "and because of this these miraculous powers are at work in him" with the sequence from 9:1–6 still in mind. It is also the only opinion graced with an explanatory clause and may have been deleted in Luke's tidying up of the structure (see *Form/Structure/Setting* above). Despite the omission, the idea that this new "John" is all the more extraordinary for having come back from the realms beyond death is probably to be carried over into the Lukan text. For Luke this identification with John highlights the connections between John and Jesus (see the section 7:1–50, and esp. vv 29–30, 31–35). Only in this incidental way do we learn in Luke of the death of John (Herod's role is identified in stark terms in v 9).

8 Luke's "Elijah has appeared" alludes to the expectation of a coming of Elijah (Mal 3:21 cf. v 1; Sir 48:10). Elijah does make an appearance in quite another way in v 30. This view connects Jesus with current eschatological hopes. Luke aligns the third opinion with the other two and makes it too a view that Jesus is one who has returned from the realm of the beyond. There is just a slight possibility that the Qumran community expected their own Teacher of Righteousness to make such a return (Schnackenburg, SE 1 [1959] 633–36). Otherwise there is only a small amount of evidence for such beliefs (see above in *Form/Structure/Setting*).

9 Where Mark's Herod takes up the first of the listed opinions, Luke's alludes to the first with a (dismissive?) "John I beheaded," and proceeds to express his own continuing perplexity about Jesus' identity. He will try to see Jesus to make up his own mind.

### *Explanation*

The healing of the Gerasene demoniac (8:26–39) and the restoration of the woman with the flow of blood and Jairus' daughter (8:40–56) have prepared the Twelve by example for their mission in 9:1–6; but their being with Jesus (8:1) has its greater culmination in their realizing the true identity of Jesus in 9:20. This episode brings that question back sharply into focus: "Who then is this, concerning whom I hear such things?"

Herod can ask the question and the people can express their opinions, but only the Twelve are close enough to such crucial events as the stilling of the storm (8:22–25) and the feeding of the five thousand (9:10–17) to be able to come to the conviction that this Jesus is none other than the very Christ of God (9:20).

Word reaches Herod of all that is happening in connection with Jesus, and so do the various opinions about Jesus that were going the rounds. A similarity between John and Jesus was evident to people. The suggestion that John had been raised from the dead both "brings him back" and allows for him to be that much more a larger-than-life figure than was John: he comes back with something of the mystery of the realm of the dead still clinging to him.

Elijah was expected to appear in connection with the end times (Mal 3:1; 4:5). But in Luke's account, while both John and Jesus are Elijah-like figures, Elijah makes an appearance only in 9:30.

In Jewish tradition there was some expectation that other prophets, notably Isaiah and Jeremiah, might be sent again to the aid of this world. Each of the popular opinions connects Jesus with the realm beyond and links him to prophetic tradition. While Luke takes them all to be wrong, they all have elements of genuine insight into Jesus' nature and identity.

Luke's Herod is rather less confident than Mark's about the possibility of resurrections from the dead. He comments on the popular opinions only to the extent of implicating himself in the death of John. For him the question of the identity of Jesus remains unresolved. He wants to see for himself. Though he eventually does see for himself, his question remains unanswered (23:6–12). Herod lacks the disciples' privileged observation point, and in any case he is not open to the true answer to his own question.

## Feeding the Multitudes (9:10–17)

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### Translation

<sup>10</sup>When the apostles returned they related to Jesus<sup>a</sup> all they had done; and Jesus<sup>a</sup> took them [with him]<sup>b</sup> and retreated privately to a town called Bethsaida.<sup>c</sup> <sup>11</sup>The crowds, realizing<sup>d</sup> [what he was doing],<sup>e</sup> followed him. So Jesus<sup>a</sup> welcomed them and spoke to them concerning the kingdom of God and healed those who had need of healing.<sup>f</sup> <sup>12</sup>Now the day began to wear away, and the Twelve came and said to him, “Dismiss the crowd,<sup>g</sup> so that they

may go into the villages and the farms<sup>h</sup> around about and get a place to rest and find provisions, because we are in a wilderness place here.”<sup>13</sup> He said to them, “You<sup>i</sup> give them something to eat.” They said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all this People.”<sup>14</sup> For there were about five thousand men. He said to his disciples, “Sit them down in groups of about fifty each.”<sup>15</sup> So they did so and sat them all dour.<sup>16</sup> He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven,<sup>j</sup> he said the blessing over them and broke [them] and gave [them]<sup>k</sup> to the disciples to distribute to the crowd.<sup>17</sup> They ate and all were satisfied. What remained over to them was taken up: twelve baskets of fragments.

### Notes

a. The name “Jesus” is not expressed in the Greek text.

b. “With him” is added for sense.

c. The scribes were conscious of the difficulties created by reading “Bethsaida” here.

μ , “to a wilderness place,” is read by  $\aleph^{*2}$  (1241) sy<sup>c</sup>bo<sup>mss</sup> etc Many texts have some combination of the two readings (A C W<sup>mg</sup> r<sup>l</sup> etc). D has μ μ (“a village called Bethsaida” [a different verb for “called” is used]).

d. lit., “knowing.”

e. Supplied to complete the sense.

f. D adds (“his [healing],” “all”).

g. The plural is read here by P<sup>75</sup>  $\aleph^2$  28 565 lat etc (perhaps to agree with Matthew or more likely to agree with the other plural uses in Luke’s narrative).

h. lit., “fields.”

i. Most texts conform the word order here to the Markan, in which the “you” is not quite as emphatic.

j. D adds “prayed and” and thus a note that is conspicuously absent in accounts of Jesus’ miracles.

k. Added for sense.

### Form/Structure/Setting

Lukan omissions of Markan material cause the feeding episode to be framed by the question of Herod (vv 7–9) and the answer of Peter (vv 18–20). In this way the feeding becomes in a special way the key to Jesus' identity. (In this Luke is following a Markan impulse, which in Mark is especially evident in 8:14–21 and 6:45–52, part of the block of materials that Luke passes over in the “great omission” of Mark 6:45–8:26.) In the larger setting, the feeding now provides the culminating basis for the disciples to be able to formulate an answer to the question they themselves have put in 8:25: provoked to the question by the stilling of the storm, they are to be brought to the answer by the experience of the feeding of the five thousand.

There is no strong basis for thinking that Luke had a second source beyond his Markan source, but a series of overlapping minor agreements between Matthew, Luke, and John suggest that (oral) tradition variants may have had some influence on the form of the narrative (see Schramm, *Markus-Stoff*, 129–30; and cf. Buse, *ExpTim* 74 [1962–63] 167–69; against Stegner, *BR* 21 [1976] 19–28, who uses these agreements to argue for Lukan priority).

Luke has only one of the two feeding narratives reported by Mark (6:32–44; 8:1–10). Scholarship is almost unanimous that these two are variants of a single report. The general similarity of the accounts and the psychological difficulty of having disciples address the question of 8:4 after the experience of 6:32–44 are the main bases for this confident judgment. Knackstedt (*NTS* 10 [1963–74] 309–35) has, however, argued for two separate underlying episodes. He points to the use in Mark 8:1–10 of a number of words that are rare or used only here in the NT. This suggests that the accounts came to Mark as separate traditions, but takes us no further back. He also points to the parallel with the disciples' lack of perception in connection with the passion predictions (Gould, *Mark*, 142, had earlier suggested that Mark 8:4 was intruded into the second feeding account from the first; one could go further and attribute this intrusion to Mark on the basis of his interest in highlighting the disciples' uncomprehending response to Jesus). Given the degree of symbolism in the accounts, it may not be possible to come to a clear decision about whether the two accounts have ultimately a separate origin. In any case, a separate origin only has any kind of sense if the question of fundamental historicity is to be answered positively.

A range of views has been taken as to what kind of actual event might lie behind such an account. H. E. G. Paulus considered that Jesus had shared with the disciples his own meager supplies and so provided for the rich an example of hospitality (the view sits very loosely to the text and has had no continuing influence). Strauss objected that the text was inescapably concerned with the miraculous and should rather be understood in the light of the exodus feeding and that by Elisha in 2 Kgs 4:42–44 as a “mythological deduction”—that is, as an expression of early Christian ideas in the guise of a narration of events (this in outline is not far from many present scholarly views, but where modern views focus on Christology, eschatology, and sacramental theology, Strauss saw the early Christians as promoting an understanding of humanity).

C. H. Weiss, on the basis of the symbolic use of bread language in Matt 16:11, argues that the basis of the account is a parable of Jesus (the suggestion has nothing to commend it). J. Weiss (*Schriften* 1:131) is guilty of reductionism when he transmutes the event into a festive meal at which Jesus presided. Wellhausen (*Marci*, 50) deserves the same comment for his

restriction of the event to the sharing with a small crowd of food brought for Jesus and his disciples. A. Schweitzer considered that the meal was from the beginning a sacramental meal, designed not to satisfy hunger (the statement that all were sated is the one piece of the account which is not historical), but rather to consecrate those who participated in it to be future participants in the coming messianic banquet (this interpretation of the account, if not Schweitzer's reconstruction of the historical basis, continues to have a good deal of support; Stauffer, *ZNW* 46 [1955] 264–66, takes up Schweitzer's view in the form of a Passover meal celebrated by Jesus in Galilee in A.D. 31). Montefiore (*NTS* 8 [1961–62] 135–41), clearly influenced by the Johannine account (John 6:15), believed that Jesus came to the brink of leading an uprising in the desert on this occasion and that the men had gathered to foment revolt, not to listen to the teaching of Jesus (while Montefiore can point to details in the account which work well for his hypothesis, he does in the end entirely denature the story as told).

Heising (*Brotvermehrung*, 56 n. 71) helpfully lists the main views and may be consulted for bibliographical details not supplied above.

If there is anything of a more recent consensus, it is that the symbolism of the account and the degree to which it is concerned to affirm the present significance of Jesus are such that the tradition can actually provide no usable evidence as to what, if any, event in the life of Jesus lies behind the present narrative (e.g., Schürmann, 524; Schenke, *Brotvermehrung*, 90; Heising, *Brotvermehrung*, 56). Schürmann, 525, buttresses this view by maintaining that the difficulties posed for any attempt at an imaginative reconstruction of such an event would have been as obvious to the evangelists as to us, and that this shows that they did not understand the story in concrete terms, any more than we should so understand it. (Where could the five thousand have come from? How would the Twelve have managed to get the crowd so arranged? How much time would it have taken to distribute so much food? Could all this have been done in an evening? How many tons of bread would have been needed? How did they get the scraps from among the people?)

These questions, while certainly posing problems, are, however, not so difficult as Schürmann thinks. The accounts have not the slightest interest in answering them, but each could be provided with an adequate, even if quite speculative, answer. While it is quite true that the narratives are not at all interested in getting the details of the historical event as accurate as possible, it is only the aftereffects of Christian views one-sidedly dominated by existentialism that so easily allow for a radical disjunction between early Christian conviction about the present significance of Jesus for faith and their belief that in his lifetime he performed wonders that went beyond normal possibilities and expectations. No doubt we need to allow generously for the symbolism of the account and for that reason can no longer ascertain exactly what might have happened, but the core content of a feeding of a large number of people by Jesus with a very small quantity of food should not be understood to have been spun out of the symbolism or to be merely a vehicle for the expression of the early church's understanding of the significance of Jesus.

It is altogether more difficult to decide what significance such a feeding might have had for Jesus, for the disciples, or for the crowd. There is much that is quite attractive about suggestions of an anticipatory celebration of the messianic banquet, and one would like to correlate the

feeding with the general eschatological tone of Jesus' ministry. The synoptic accounts do, however, emphasize the ad hoc nature of the occasion, and perhaps the only firm connection with the kingdom of God that should be drawn is that it involves miraculous and abundant provision for people's needs.

The present form of the feeding narratives is clearly influenced (Luke 9:16) by the Last Supper narrative tradition and early church eucharistic practice. (Boobyer, *JTS* 3 [1952] 161–71, has argued that this is not so, on the basis that all the elements are part of normal Jewish meal patterns and also are to be found in the meal of Acts 27:35, which is clearly not eucharistic; but that meal is, in Luke's structure, a quite deliberate parallel to the Last Supper of the Gospel, and while Boobyer is quite right to identify the individual elements as part of Jewish practice, he cannot point to any Jewish text that assembles these elements into an actual account of a meal. For a Jewish meal they would be assumed; here they are reported because they parallel eucharistic practice.)

Van Iersel (*NovT* 7 [1964] 167–94) has argued that the awkward structure of Mark 6:41 (specifically the way in which the “and he shared out the two fish among [them] all” at the end seems to be tacked on as an afterthought—Luke and Matthew both drop it) points to the eucharistic interpretation being an addition to the text that originally ran “and taking the five loaves and two fish he shared [them] out among [them] all.” Originally there was simply a miracle story patterned on 2 Kgs 4:42–44.

Though some awkwardness of Mark 6:41 is not to be denied, there are difficulties in the way of van Iersel's explanation. (i) The “insertion” includes the mediating service of the disciples, which is a motif from 2 Kgs 4:42–44; (ii) the looking up into heaven is not part of any of the early eucharistic forms; (iii) v 43 also has an awkward placing of the mention of the fish (considerably more difficult than that in v 41), and this cannot be explained in any parallel manner (see especially Kertelge, *Wunder Jesu*, 136).

The text of Mark 6:41 evidently intends  $\mu$ , “he divided/shared out/distributed,” to cover for the fish a procedure that parallels that which has been spelled out for the bread (that is, it covers “broke,” “gave,” and “place before”). This is not unlike the  $\mu$ , “in the same way,” of the 1 Cor 11:25 Last Supper narrative (cf. the claim of Hiers and Kennedy, *PRS* 3 [1976] 32, that “structurally, in the Markan feedings fish have the same function that wine has in the Last Supper”). The eucharistic illusion would seem to have always been a feature of the account; the awkwardness simply reflects the fact that one does not break fish as one does bread and perhaps flows also from a desire not to detract from the eucharistic focus by supplying an elaboration for the fish which would find no parallel in the eucharistic tradition.

Does the awkwardness in v 43 require further explanation? Kertelge (*Wunder Jesu*, 136) thinks it is a piece of later interference with the text of Mark (therefore not known by Matthew and Luke). Van Cangh (*RB* 78 [1971] 72, 80–81) argues that it is (pre-)Markan editing to (once again) put the accent on the miracle of the feeding (after the displacement of accent to eucharistic concerns). Van Cangh tells us that this development was encouraged by the tradition that at the messianic banquet the flesh of Leviathan would be distributed to the elect and also by the traditions that expected a heightened reiteration of the exodus in the eschatological period (some

of these traditions made a connection between the quail provided in the wilderness and the fish of Egypt).

Kertelge's explanation of the failure of Matthew and Luke to reproduce Mark's reference to the fish seems less likely than the alternative that Matthew and Luke simply wanted to spare their readers the evident awkwardness of the Markan text. Van Cangh's suggestion needs to be subdivided into a view on the symbolic significance of the fish (this will be discussed in *Comment* below) and a view on the development of the Markan text form. In this latter aspect, van Cangh seems to be making altogether too much of four words that seem simply to want to say that fish was left over as well as bread.

The sentence does appear to have been originally formulated without reference to the fish. The addition completes the broad logic of the account with its emphasis on an overabundant provision. Abundant provision would hardly be recognized if the (more costly) fish was only just sufficient and people had had in effect to fill up on bread.

It is difficult to be sure what of Mark 6:30–33 was already attached to the feeding account when it reached Mark, and whether attached or not, what of it came to Mark from the tradition. V 30 only completes the logic of the mission and requires no separate traditional basis; the note of excessive busyness is prepared for in Mark by 3:20, which may be the basis in tradition for the present motif; the invitation to a wilderness retreat is less likely to be solely Markan (but cf. 1:35, 45 for the same expression, and the evident redactional interest of Mark). The explanation for the coming together of the crowd raises more questions than it answers. Mark is presumably saying that Jesus and the apostles had tried to make an unnoticed departure. Not only, however, had they been seen leaving, but seen by many who knew who they were. These ascertained the destination of the boat (contracted for the occasion or on a regular route?) and found for some reason that they could get there more quickly on foot than the boat could. (The coming from the *towns* is left entirely unmotivated by Mark.) Comparison with 1:37 is invited, but the very difficulties probably suggest that there is some traditional basis.

The place of Mark 5:34 in the tradition has also been questioned. Kertelge (*Wunder Jesu*, 130) points to Mark's propensity for speaking of Jesus as teaching in texts where no teaching content is identified and concludes that Mark is responsible here for this motif. If that is correct, then it becomes difficult to deny to the earlier tradition the remainder of the verse (as, e.g., Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 217).

Bultmann's categorization of the narrative as having the form of a miracle account (*Synoptic Tradition*, 217) has not generally been found convincing (but cf. Fitzmyer, 763), nor Dibelius' categorization as a "tale" (*Tradition*, 71, 73, 75; etc). Heising (*Brotvermehrung*, 20, 51) argues for kerygmatic miracle story and suggests that the story functions as an attestation wonder for Jesus as the new Moses of the eschatological period. This does better justice to the deeply theological nature of the account, but it involves overinterpretation and does not really escape the difficulties of the miracle-account view. Since it only really makes sense to speak of a form in cases where a number of items of the tradition share the features of the form, it may be better here to be content with inquiring rather into what may have been the context of use for which such an account could have been formulated. Answers here focus, with good reason, on the

potential usefulness of such an account at the eucharistic fellowship meal of the early church (cf. Schürmann, 524; Schenke, *Brotvermehrung*, 114–16; Heising, *Brotvermehrung*, 64; Kertelge, *Wunder Jesu*, 136).

Luke follows the main sweep of the Markan structuring of the account. He keeps the link between the mission of the Twelve and the feeding account, but since he drops Mark 6:31, the relationship is no longer based on the disciples' need for recuperation after the efforts of the mission. The withdrawal motif remains (cf. 5:16), but now alongside this (this motif is in effect delayed for 9:18–20) and perhaps more prominent because of the Lukan deletion, the connection is that Jesus is taking the Twelve with him into the next situation in which they will be called upon to act: they have been sent out to deal with people and have received from them hospitality; now they are to be confronted with people who have taken the initiative to come and will be challenged to extend hospitality.

Jesus welcomes the uninvited crowd and preaches the kingdom of God to them and heals the sick, just as he had sent the Twelve to do in 9:2 (Luke prefers this to Mark's much more Christologically focused v 34).

As the day spent in such activity stretches on, the disciples anticipate a crisis: hungry people too long without food and too far away from resources adequate for such a huge number. Their proposal that Jesus send the crowd off to fend for themselves is countered by Jesus' own proposal that they, the disciples, should feed the crowds. Luke does some reorganizing in the continuing dialogue between Jesus and the disciples: the perhaps disrespectful suggestion of Mark 6:37b disappears, to be used in a different way in v 13b; with it goes the investigation into how much food is available (Luke keeps only the quantities, which he makes use of in his reformulation in v 13b). Luke's disciples respond to Jesus' suggestion by pointing out how little food they have unless they go off and purchase for the crowd: "How are we to do what you have asked us to do?" Luke underlines the difficulties by bringing forward from its late position in the Markan account (6:44) the reference to the size of the crowd.

Instead of directly answering the implied question, Jesus gives directions for the disciples to organize the people for a meal. He then handles the food in a manner evocative of the Last Supper and therefore of eucharistic practice. (Luke handles differently from Mark the difficulty of paralleling the bread and the fish: he drops separate description of the distribution of the fish and of the fragments left over; at the same time he adds "them" to Mark's "blessed," probably intending that the following language, despite being better suited to the bread, should, nevertheless, be applied equally to the fish.) The role of the disciples in feeding the people turns out to be (i) organizing them for the meal and (ii) receiving the food from the hands of Jesus to distribute to the people.

All were satisfied and twelve baskets of fragments were gathered up.

### ***Comment***

Luke stresses the Christological importance of the feeding by means of the pericopes that frame it (vv 7–9, 18–20), which are artistically paralleled and focused on the putting and

answering of the question, “Who is Jesus?” Jesus can be recognized in the breaking of the bread (Luke 24:30–31; cf. Schenke, *Brotvermehrung*, 164). Thus far in this section (8:1–9:20) the disciples have observed Jesus preaching the kingdom (esp. 8:4–21) and bringing restoration (esp. 8:26–56), or they have themselves, as authorized and empowered by Jesus, preached the kingdom and brought restoration to the sick and demon-possessed (9:1–6). Only in this distinctive “joint activity” of feeding the multitude does it become dramatically clear how immediately dependent on Jesus the disciples are as they seek to act on his behalf and to do his bidding.

**10** Luke is particularly partial to the verb *epistrotō*, “to return,” which he uses in place of Mark’s *epagōgē*, “to gather together.” *epistrotō*, “to relate/narrate,” replaces *epangelō*, “to announce,” as in 8:39. Luke abbreviates Mark by deleting “to Jesus,” an “all,” and “and what they had taught.” Luke is concerned only to round off the mission account, to have the Twelve back with Jesus, and to allow for a link between their mission and a new activity which Jesus will now call on them to perform. Mark 6:31 is dropped completely (see comment above in *Form/Structure/Setting*). On “apostles” see at 6:12–16.

Only *epistrotō*, “alone,” survives of Mark 6:32 (no boat journey or wilderness place). The main thrust of its Markan purpose is represented by Luke’s use of *epistrotō* (“retreat/withdraw”; Matthew here has the related *epistrotō*, “go away/withdraw/retire/take refuge”) and is carried forward in v 18 (cf. 5:16). In the immediate context the privacy is only a foil for the arrival of the huge crowd. Jesus’ “taking [the disciples] along” is in anticipation of later putting them to work, but perhaps already also a preparation for their role in vv 18–20.

No really satisfactory explanation has yet been offered for Luke’s relocation of the feeding to Bethsaida. In Mark, Bethsaida is the boat’s next intended port of call (6:45; and cf. 8:22). Streeter (*Four Gospels*, 176) suggests that Luke makes a deduction from Mark 6:45 that Bethsaida was near where the feeding had taken place. Conzelmann (*Luke*, 55) tentatively suggested that the relocation lays the foundation for 10:13, and this has persuaded Schürmann, 512, for whom the healings of v 11 then become those implied by 10:13 (there is some tension in Schürmann’s view, since he also has Luke assume that Jesus was at that point unknown in Bethsaida, which suggests that the crowds are from elsewhere). Bethsaida was just inside Gaulanitis, and so would marginally qualify as being “opposite Galilee,” as was the district of the Gerasenes in 8:26. Luke should not be criticized for not saying so (as, e.g., Schürmann, 512), since he (quite rightly) thinks of Bethsaida as part of Jewish Palestine (cf. John 1:44; 12:21; there was some ancient tendency even to think of it as part of Galilee: John 12:21; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.23 cf. 18.4). Whatever Luke’s reason, the change of location has produced difficulties for his own account: getting food would presumably be much less of a problem in a town, but the suggestion in v 12 is to scatter the crowd through the countryside; that verse describes the location as a wilderness place (in language that seems to reflect an influence from the wording of the displaced Markan location).

**11** Luke totally reformulates here. He thinks in terms of the crowds that have been with Jesus since 8:4 (most recently 8:42, 45). The intrusiveness of the crowd has some parallel in 4:42. Without Mark’s boat journey they can only follow Jesus (Matthew has identically, but not in the

same word order “the crowds followed him”), who arrives, therefore, before them and consequently is there to welcome them (“as a friendly head of a household who extends hospitality” [Schenke, *Brotvermehrung*, 166]). Luke makes no use of Mark’s statement of Jesus’ compassion nor of the linked likening of the crowd to sheep without a shepherd (6:34). As Schürmann, 513, notes, Luke also loses a series of possible allusions in the continuing Markan text to Ps 23. Luke prefers, with his distinctive focus here on speaking about the kingdom of God and healing (Mark has a healing in Bethsaida in 8:22–26), to establish continuity with the central motif for this section (see 8:1) and to underline the continuity between Jesus’ ministry and that of the Twelve (see 9:2). Luke will concentrate the Christological focus of the pericope onto the feeding itself, and in particular onto its eucharistic connections. The imperfect form of the verbs for speaking and healing may point to the extended and intermingled carrying out of the teaching and healing.

**12** Luke changes the Markan time expression to  $\mu$  (lit., “the day had begun to decline”). When the day had fully “declined,” the people would need overnight hospitality and an evening meal (see 24:29–30, where Luke uses the same idiom). Luke uses “the Twelve” for Mark’s “the disciples,” probably in the interests of the link with 9:1 (and behind that 8:1). Luke saves for the end (in a slightly different form) the introductory part of Mark’s form of the disciples’ words: “This place is a wilderness and already the hour is late.” Mark’s “dismiss them” becomes the more specific “dismiss the crowd” (here singular, but it is extravagant [as Wanke, *Eucharistieverständnis*, 51] to make this a pointer to Jesus’ activity having formed this loose assembly into a community). To express coming and going, Luke prefers  $\epsilon$  and its compounds to Mark’s uses of  $\epsilon$  and its compounds (cf. Neiryneck, *Minor Agreements*, 256). Luke inverts Mark’s order in the mention of villages and fields, probably because he thinks of the farms attached to each village (cf. 8:34). Luke adds what is most easily taken as the need for overnight hospitality (cf. 24:29). Only he in the NT uses the verb found here to mean “to stay/rest/find a place of lodging” ( $\epsilon$ , here and 19:7). Possibly here, because any idea of overnight hospitality needs has no further place in the unfolding of the account, the verb only means to find a place to stay for a rest and a meal. Vv 14–17 would then be seen as meeting this need fully. Luke may, indeed, be trading on the ambiguity of the word for the sake of the link with 24:29–31. Commentators point out that it would be difficult (to call it impossible is to judge too much from a modern Western culture) for the surrounding villages to extend hospitality on such a scale. Unlike Mark, Luke restricts the language of buying to his (deferred) mention of the impracticality of the disciples so doing for the needs of such a huge crowd. His euphemism “find” is probably more polite than Mark’s “buy,” and his “provisions” is certainly more sophisticated than Mark’s “something to eat.”

**13** As he frequently does, Luke drops Mark’s  $\epsilon$ , “having answered”; the use of  $\epsilon$  in “said to” is also characteristically Lukan. Mark’s already emphatic “you” gains an even more emphatic position. Luke reorganizes and abbreviates the Markan pattern of interchange between Jesus and the disciples: sending the disciples off to see how much bread there is detracts from one’s seeing of Jesus as totally controlling the situation; the Markan form of the suggestion that the disciples themselves buy bread for the crowd can easily be read as sarcasm on their part (see further above at the end of *Form/Structure/Setting*). Luke drops Mark’s two hundred denarii

(does he realize that it would not be nearly enough, or is it rather that it belongs to the sarcasm Luke has wanted to avoid?). There are a number of similarities in Matthew's editing here.

"You give them something to eat" is the first of a series of links between this feeding account and 2 Kgs 4:42–44 where Elisha feeds one hundred men with an inadequate supply of bread and has some left over. See Heising, *Brotvermehrung*, 19–38, for an overelaborate interpretation of this link. Heising is probably correct, however, to see that account as something of a repetition or reactualization of God's promise and provision of food in the wilderness. But since Luke reduces the possible Moses connections of the account, this fact probably plays no part in Luke's understanding of the episode (against Schürmann, 520). Jesus challenges the disciples to return the favor of hospitality which has recently been extended to them while on their mission, but they do not know how to. Jesus is to show them how.

There has been extensive discussion of the significance of the fish in the feeding account (see especially Hiers and Kennedy, *PRS* 3[1976] 20–47; van Cangh, *RB* 78 [1971] 71–83). As discussed above, the prominence of the fish in the telling seems to have variously increased and decreased in the history of the transmission of the account.

Fish can be tenuously connected with the tradition of the exodus feeding with manna and quail (Exod 16; Num 11). The Israelites' desire for the fish of Egypt provoked the sending of the substitute, quail meat (Num 11:4–5, and cf. v 22). An overliteral reading of Num 11:31 ("quail from the sea") produced speculation about the marine origin of these quail (Wis 19:10–12). *Sipre Num* 11:22 even has fish coming from the rock that accompanied the Israelites in the desert and from which the water flowed. Fish can also be connected with the eschatological banquet via the expectation of eating the flesh of Leviathan, or even perhaps of the two Leviathans (2 *Apoc. Bar.* 29.3–8; 4 *Ezra* 6.49–52; **b. B. Bat.** 74b–75a). A connection with any of these traditions is rather tenuous for any of the Gospel accounts and especially so for the Lukan text. Rather more likely is a connection between these traditions and the role of the fish in early Christian eucharistic art.

**14–15** Luke brings forward Mark's statement about the size of the crowd (and makes the count approximate, as does Matthew). Here it underlines the impracticality of the only way forward that the disciples can suggest. Having displaced "the disciples" from v 12 with "the Twelve," Luke now adds Mark's mode of reference. Mark's "them" was the crowd, who are seated by Jesus, but Luke is intent on following through on the initiative to be taken by the disciples in the feeding of the crowd: it is now the disciples who must seat the crowd. Luke softens Mark's "commanded" to "said," as part of a change from indirect to direct speech. He simplifies Mark's seating arrangements and places them all in the directive, rather than leaving details of the directive to be discovered only in the description of its execution. Luke's verb for "sit [them] down" ( ) is used only in Luke in the NT. It literally means "cause to lie down," with reference to the reclining posture used in festive meals with guests; something of this sense may be intended in the Lukan text, but we cannot be sure because such words gradually gained a wider currency and were applied to all kinds of sitting at all kinds of meals. His word for "groups" ( ) is found only here in the NT: it is used of groups gathered specifically for a meal (BAGD, 436). It is doubtful whether Luke sees any symbolic significance in the meal arrangements: the disciples are serving the needs of the people as Jesus directs them; the people's hospitality needs of refreshment and nourishment are to be met.

**16** Luke is here much more conservative in his redaction than at any other point in the account: here is the heart of the matter. The main Lukan changes and the reasons for them are noted above in the discussion of the Lukan structure at the end of *Form/Structure/Setting*. To these may be added Luke's change of Mark's "to them," this time to "to the crowd," and an infinitive rather than a clause to express Jesus' intention for the disciples to distribute the bread and the fish. Luke's introduction of an object "them" (i.e., the bread and the fish) for "blessed" seems to turn a blessing of God into a blessing of food (the same idiom is found in Mark 8:7 in Mark's second feeding account), and so into a consecration (which may be taken technically in a sacramental sense or nontechnically in connection with an understanding that food is sanctified by the saying of grace [see 1 Tim 4:4–5]; *Pseudo-Clement* 1.22.4 uses this idiom). It is just possible, however, that what we have is not an object, but an accusative of respect (so Marshall, 362): Luke wants to avoid handling the fish separately, because of the Markan awkwardness, and so he makes the blessing (and all that follows) refer to both bread and fish by specifying "he said the blessing with respect to them [both]."

The sequence of verbs here, "having taken," "he blessed," "he broke," "he gave" is to be compared with that at the Last Supper (22:19): "having taken," "he gave thanks," "he broke," "he gave" (the verb forms are not in every case identical: one verb is different, one is in a different Greek tense and one has a prefixed preposition in the feeding text). Comparison is also called for with the Emmaus meal (24:30): "taking," "he blessed," "having broken," "he gave" (again, some details are different). Schürmann, 517, notes the way that these verbs give a formality to the account which hides from sight the particular features of the occasion: Does Jesus take all the food up at once? Is the fish broken in the way the bread would traditionally be broken? The main purpose of the eucharistic link would seem to be, not to ground the later Eucharist, nor to suggest that Jesus celebrated a proto-Eucharist with this crowd, but rather to indicate that in this experience the disciples became aware of the identity of Jesus in much the same way that the Christian of Luke's day knew Jesus in the eucharistic meal (cf. 24:30–31).

There are two distinctive features of the present text. First, there is the looking up to heaven. This finds its closest and most helpful parallel in Job 22:26–27 (LXX: MT is not quite as close): "Then you shall have boldness before the Lord, looking up cheerfully to heaven. When you pray to him, he will hear you" (cf. also Sus 35; Isa 8:21; Luke 18:13). While this may seem to fit well with the Lukan emphasis on the praying Jesus, it is quite unique in comparison with any other of Luke's accounts of Jesus' performing of wonders (healings, exorcisms, stilling the storm). As discussed at 4:38–39, the significance of the wonders is eschatological and Christological; they are not a matter of piety and answered prayer. Why, then, this exception? We cannot be certain. He does simply take this over from Mark (though the pericope Mark 8:31–37, which uses the same expression, is not carried over, nor is 9:28–29 with its apparent implication that Jesus exorcised in that case by prayer). Since everything has encouraged us to find a Christological focus here, we should expect the answer to our question to be a Christological one. When the confession comes in Luke, it refers distinctly to "the Christ of God" (Mark has simply "the Christ"). Is it this reference back to God that Luke allows to be expressed with "looking into heaven"? In this case, it will not be exactly that the miraculous adequacy of the food is achieved in answer to prayer, but rather that Jesus embarks on this activity (as presumably all others) with reference to God, whom he represents as his Christ: "the looking up witnesses to the freedom and openness of the Son to the Father" (Grundmann, *Markusevangelium*, 182).

The second distinctive feature is the mediating role of the disciples (again reproduced from Mark, but as we have seen above in vv 14–15, attracting considerably more attention in the Lukan text). The feature in Acts corresponding to this is not that of a prominent role for the Twelve in the eucharistic breaking of bread, but rather in the poor-relief distributions to the widows of the Christian community (Acts 6:1–2). When Jesus gives the food to the disciples they are then able to do what he had challenged them to do in v 13.

The miraculous provision remains private to Jesus and the Twelve. There is no suggestion that the people have any awareness of where the food comes from, nor does the event have any impact upon them beyond satisfying their needs of the moment. Even for the disciples there is no interest in a “multiplication of the loaves,” only in the fact that despite the scanty resource base of five loaves and two fish, Jesus keeps on being able to provide food (the imperfect tense of *δίδωμι*, “was giving,” may underline this) that the disciples can in turn give to the people. The focus is on what Jesus can enable them to do.

As this narrative was used at the early church’s eucharistic breaking of bread the following faith perspective would be evoked: we recognize who Jesus is through what he makes possible in our midst; he is the ultimate host at our eucharistic meals; at the breaking of the bread we recognize him for who he is; there in a wonderful way we are nourished in our inner needs; there as well we are challenged about the meeting of the needs of others and made to recognize the resources that through Jesus we actually have.

The basis provided here for the Christological confession to come is much more personalized (left in a realm of distinctly religious experience?) and much less focused on possible identities than we might have expected from the sharp Christological focus provided by the setting of the pericope. Jesus is not identified as the eschatological prophet, nor as the new Moses; nor is he identified on the basis of an Elijah or Elisha typology, nor on the basis that he is the one who repeats the exodus wilderness feeding. He is not labeled as Messiah by anticipating the messianic banquet in the wilderness. Much more generally we may say something like this: the feeding experience enables the disciples to know that Jesus is the one in and through whom God has now decisively intervened in this world.

**17** Luke moves the “all” to a more emphatic position that puts stress on all being satisfied. He uses the passive verb to speak of the gathering of the fragments (Mark’s “they” is unclear as to its reference) and drops Mark’s separate mention of the fish fragments (cf. the similar change in v 16). Mark’s idiomatic “basketfuls” (lit., “fullnesses of baskets”) is given up for better Greek (with some similarity to the way Matthew introduces change here). Luke has already used the information about the size of the crowd and does not repeat it here.

The food left over has its antecedent in 2 Kgs 4:44, but there no amount is specified. The number twelve is probably symbolic: food for all Israel. Schenke (*Brotvermehrung*, 111) is right to see in the gathering of the fragments a pointing on into the future: “if from five loaves and two fish five thousand people can be nourished, how many people can be satisfied with the remainder that has been gathered up?”

### *Explanation*

The question of Jesus' identity is put by the disciples in 8:25. It is taken up afresh by the Herod episode in 9:7–9 and answered in a particularly important manner by Peter in 9:18–20. Framed as it is by Herod's puzzlement and Peter's confident assertion, the feeding account is intended by Luke to make a special contribution to the disciples' insight into the identity of Jesus. It is, however, not at all easy to work out precisely how it is meant to do this.

The disciples' ability to identify Jesus is not based only on this episode. It is rather the culmination of their being with Jesus from 8:1. They have watched him in action and have extended his ministry by means of their own mission. They have witnessed the stilling of the storm, but here the process culminates as they in this "joint activity" with Jesus experience their own immediate dependence on him as they seek to carry out his will.

There is much scepticism about the possible historicity of such an account. While it is true, however, that we need to make generous allowance for the symbolism involved in the telling of the story, we should not be content to think that the theology and the symbolism have created the account.

While we can no longer know exactly what happened, we can with good reason think in terms of Jesus feeding a large number of people with an impossibly small quantity of food.

The account is regularly linked with the exodus provision of the manna and the quail (Exod 16; Num 11), and this does seem to have affected some of the forms of the narrative (especially the account in John 6). We may have rather less confidence that the original event made such a connection explicit, and Luke seems to have removed features of the account that would naturally cause us to think of Moses and the Israelites in the wilderness.

The account is also frequently interpreted in connection with the idea of the messianic banquet of the end times. This approach once again has its most natural links with the Johannine form of the narrative. In the other Gospel forms of the narrative, however, the action of feeding is clearly something prompted by the needs of the occasion and in that sense "accidental" rather than something specifically arranged by Jesus. The crowds do not even seem to be aware that anything out of the ordinary is happening: Jesus (with his disciples) simply manages to be a rather good host to them in this wilderness setting. Only the disciples seem to be aware that something extraordinary is happening. As on other occasions, the disciples can see here that the preaching of the kingdom of God involves miraculous and abundant provision for people's needs, but they are presented as providers of food rather than as participants in a meal that is in any sense, or anticipates in some way, the messianic banquet.

The form of the narrative of the feeding is clearly based in part on the account in 2 Kgs 4:42–44 in which the challenge is given by Elisha to feed a large number of people with an inadequate supply of bread and in which there is also bread left over. Luke does not seem, however, to make anything of this link, so it probably should play no role in interpreting his account.

Luke seems to focus all the importance of the narrative on two things. First, he emphasizes that it is the disciples who, as challenged by Jesus, give the people something to eat (here the focus is on what they can achieve in immediate dependence on Jesus). Second, by stripping away

elements of the Markan account, Luke brings into special prominence the links between this feeding and the eucharistic activity of the church. Jesus' actions in v 16 are particularly to be compared with the meal scene that concludes the Emmaus road encounter with Jesus (24:29–31, 35), and both are to be compared with the Last Supper account (especially 22:19). Luke does not create this link, but he does accentuate it.

Even without the Lukan accentuation, the importance of the link with the Lord's Supper is such that it is quite likely that the narrative was first formulated to be used at the eucharistic meals of the early church. If this is so, such a setting provides important information of the story.

Luke seems to be suggesting that the disciples come to a conviction of Jesus' the way that in the eucharist the Lord Jesus is made known to the believer in the breaking of the bread (see 24:30–31, 35). The perspective of faith from which Luke speaks would involve the following. We recognize who Jesus is through what he makes possible in our midst. He is the ultimate host at our eucharistic meals. At the breaking of bread we recognize him for who he is. There in a wonderful way we find the nourishment that we need. There also we are challenged to meet the needs of others and to recognize the resources that through Jesus we actually have to meet needs. In our eucharistic meeting with the Lord we renew our conviction that he is indeed the one in whom God has decisively intervened in the world.

Luke rounds off the disciples' mission and has Jesus take them with him, ostensibly on retreat (this will happen in fact in vv 18–20), but in terms of the actual development, so that they will be there to do what Jesus will call upon them to do in the situation with which they will be confronted: this is in effect the next stage of their mission role. On their recent mission they had been the recipients of hospitality; now in a way that seems impossible to them Jesus will challenge them to be the ones who extend hospitality.

Jesus welcomes the uninvited and intrusive crowd and most graciously plays host to them. He does for them what he had sent the Twelve to do on their mission (which had been in turn modeled on his own activity).

The disciples anticipate a crisis at the end of the day when people will be hungry and tired and far from sources of provisions and hospitality. Their solution is to send the crowd off to "find" (a euphemism for "buy for themselves") food and a place to recuperate. Jesus' view is rather that the hospitality extended to them in the name of the kingdom of God should be complete. He challenges the disciples to be themselves the ones who feed the crowd.

The disciples do not see how this could be possible. They have only five loaves and two fish unless they go off and buy food for this huge crowd. Their laying of this before Jesus is a questioning of how they might do what Jesus has asked them to do. Luke underlines their concern by giving at this point the number of people in the crowd.

Instead of a direct answer, the disciples get directions for organizing the crowd into dinner parties of fifty apiece. Jesus then takes the food, and as he says the grace over the bread and the fish he looks up to God: what he does, he does with reference to God, whom he represents as his Christ (to put it in the terms in which Peter will soon confess it). "Taking ... he blessed ... and

broke and gave” deliberately evokes the action of the Last Supper. Now the disciples can feed the crowd with what Jesus gives them.

All eat and are satisfied, and twelve baskets of excess are gathered up. Twelve baskets is probably symbolically food for all Israel. It points into the future: if five loaves and two fishes go so far, what can now be done with twelve baskets of food?

## “[We Say You Are] the Christ of God” (9:18–20)

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### *Translation*

<sup>18</sup>When he was praying<sup>a</sup> alone, and the disciples were with<sup>b</sup> him, it transpired<sup>c</sup> that he asked them,<sup>d</sup> “Who do the crowds say that I am?” <sup>19</sup>They replied:<sup>e</sup> “ ‘John the Baptist’; others say,<sup>f</sup> ‘Elijah’; others, ‘That a certain prophet from among the ancient ones has risen.’ ” <sup>20</sup>He said to them, “Now<sup>g</sup> you, who do you say that I am?” Peter replied:<sup>h</sup> “The Christ<sup>i</sup> of God.”

### *Notes*

a. “Praying” is omitted by D A c E sy<sup>c</sup> (after having been included by D at v 16).

- b. B reads \_\_\_\_\_ , “they met.”
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ has generally be translated “happened.”
- d. lit., “asked them, saying.”
- e. lit., “having answered, said.”
- f. “Say” is added for sense.
- g. “Now” is added for sense.
- h. lit., “having answered, said.”
- i. “Son” is added here by D and some other texts, under the influence of the Matthean text.

### ***Form/Structure/Setting***

The climax and end of this section, 8:1–9:20, is reached when Peter voices the disciples’ recognition that Jesus is the Christ of God. This is the culmination of the being-with-Jesus motif of the section beginning in 8:1; more specifically it is the conclusion of a development which is first set in motion with 8:22–25 and which then comes to sharp focus in 9:7–9 (verses which with 9:18–20 enclose Luke’s account of the feeding of the five thousand and give his rendering of it its sharp Christological focus; see further at 8:1–3; 8:22–25; 9:7–9; 9:10–17).

To end the section at 9:20 demands some explanation and defense in light of the obvious continuation of the same scene in vv 21–22 and then the close connection between these verses and vv 23–26(27). 9:21–50 will be identified as a transitional section preparing the reader for the “Travel Narrative” which begins in 9:51. In 9:51 Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem; 9:21–22 is the beginning point for the explanation of what that involves. By contrast 9:18–20 represents a culmination, in the first instance a culmination of the section 8:1–9:20, but in a more general sense also of the sweep of Jesus’ ministry thus far from its beginnings in 4:14. Peter’s confession creates the necessary platform upon which are to be founded the startling developments that begin in 9:21–22. A threshold is to be found at this point, so that vv 18–20 have their natural connections with what has come before, while vv 21–27 clearly have a forward orientation.

A number of scholars have been impressed by the continuing Christological focus which unites what, here it is being suggested, we should separate. But we need also to notice (*i*) that it is “Son of Man” and not “Christ” which carries the new thrust beginning in 9:21–22 and (*ii*) that when in the transfiguration account we do get reinforcement of the identification as Christ (v 35: “This is my Son, the chosen one”), the thrust is toward his coming fate in Jerusalem (v 31) and the call is to “listen to him” (v 35) precisely as the one who is now insisting that although he is the Christ, he must go to suffering and rejection (before ever there is vindication and the glory of enthronement).

Nothing beyond Luke's Markan source is visible here. The historicity of the tradition behind the Markan account has been hotly disputed. A major sticking point has been the judgment that in the lifetime of Jesus such a confession could only have been understood in terms of the current Jewish political messianism with its expectation of a Davidic messiah who would restore the kingdom to Israel and rule over it in righteousness (e.g., Dinkler, "Jesus' Messiahship," 180, and the authors he cites). With good reason, it has been claimed that Jesus' ministry offers precious little to encourage any link with political messianism (see esp. Pesch, *BZ* 18 [1974] 24–25). Precisely this point is met by those who have taken Mark 8:33b ("Get behind me, Satan. For you think not the thoughts of God but of men") to be the original answer Jesus gives to Peter's proposal (Hahn, *Titles of Jesus*, 223–25; Dinkler, "Jesus' Messiahship"). This suggestion has, however, its own Achilles' heel, in that no feasible suggestion has come forward as to how such a tradition from the life of Jesus would have been transmitted in the early life of the church.

If the confession tradition were only to have emerged in the post-Easter setting, then the difficulty as to the meaning of "Christ" at once disappears, because in the life of the church the meaning to be given to the title is not the Jewish one, but the one that emerges in Christian reflection under the constraints imposed by the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is not surprising, then, that in various forms a post-Easter origin for the confession has been suggested, most notably the proposal made by Bultmann (*ZNW* 19 [1919–20] 165–74) to identify Mark 8:27b–29 coupled with the Matthean expansion (Matt 16:17–19) as an early church formulation of its conviction that its messianic faith was built upon the Easter experience of Peter. Bultmann's form analysis has not generally been found persuasive, even by those who share his main conviction that the confession is a post-Easter phenomenon.

Other reasons have been put forward as a basis for denying that Jesus in his lifetime saw himself as the messiah. (i) The focus of Jesus' message on the kingdom and not on his own special role in it is said to be incompatible with a Jesus who saw himself to be the messiah. There is, however, considerably more self-reference in Jesus traditions that can with some confidence be traced back to the historical ministry of Jesus than this suggestion really allows for. (ii) The early Christian struggle for adequate terms in which to understand and with which to identify Jesus is said not to make sense if Jesus had accepted the Christ title and simply imposed silence. But if Jesus' activity and teaching suggested links also with other strands of Jewish expectation, there need be no sense that Christ is the "authorized" title. And in any case Easter faith did inevitably mean that there was a larger reality now to be interpreted than what was fully manifest during the historical ministry of Jesus.

There are some positive difficulties in locating the origin of the confession in a post-Easter period. Prime among these is the question of whether the post-Easter commitment to Jesus' messianic identity can be adequately accounted for without some pre-Easter counterpart. If Jesus' execution as a messianic pretender had its basis only in political expediency, then nothing more than the inscription on the cross (Mark 15:26) remains as any preresurrection basis for the postresurrection confession (and this too is still part of the charade). It is a matter of judgment, but the present writer finds it difficult to believe that the deeply entrenched and variegated use of "Christ" in the NT can be adequately explained on this basis.

We come back finally to the initial difficulty: the need to understand the title in connection with Jewish political messianism. Is this in fact so clearly the case? Pesch (*BZ* 17 [1973] 178–195; 18 [1974] 20–31) has mounted an elaborate argument that the confession is not at all to be connected with royal messianism; it is rather to be understood in connection with prophetic anointing: Jesus is confessed during his ministry, by Peter, as the eschatological prophet anointed with the Holy Spirit.

Pesch's case is open to criticism on a number of fronts. (i) The contrast between popular opinion and the disciples' recognition of who Jesus is, is not adequately maintained by Pesch's view. (ii) Pesch too easily dismisses as later reflection all the other connections in the tradition suggesting a royal role for Jesus. (iii) Pesch fails to give sufficient weight to the connection in the Christian tradition between the "Christ" title and place of Jesus as Lord. Pesch's study does, however, identify an area of importance for investigation.

Pesch is able to mount his case because ("Christ"; the underlying Hebrew is משיח, *m šîa*) can also be used in connection with a prophetic anointing or a high-priestly anointing, and its force can be quite metaphorical, extending from the anointing with the Spirit for a preaching task which characterizes the figure of Isa 61:1–2 (here the verb, not the noun is used) to the role that the pagan king Cyrus plays as God's instrument for his own purposes in Isa 45:1 (see de Jonge, *NovT* 8 [1966] 132–48; Berger, *NTS* 17 [1970–71] 391–425—Pesch depends heavily on the latter).

The evidence base for the possibility that "the Christ," as a figure of expectation, could be other than the anticipated Davidic ruler is sparse. There is, however, a well-attested expectation at Qumran of a high-priestly messiah alongside the expectation of a Davidic messiah (see van der Woude, *TDNT* 9:517–20). As well, 11QMelch 18 appears to read והמבשר היאה מוואה משיח הרוח, *whmb r hw h mšy hrw* (lit., "and the herald, he [or this herald] [is] [the] one anointed of the Spirit"). The Qumran expectation of a high-priestly messiah is the expectation of another ruler and is to be seen in the light of the postexilic and Maccabean role of the high priest in the absence of a Davidic prince. A messiah who is the eschatological prophet would be something quite different. 11QMelch 18 in the first instance identifies the figure of Isa 52:7 (which is quoted) with the figure of Isa 61:1–2. Also, the linked "of the Spirit" gives a quasi-verbal force to "[the] one anointed." These two considerations make it doubtful whether we can deduce any titular use of the term from this text. Perhaps the most that can be said from this line of inquiry is that "Christ" does not immediately conjure up images of Davidic royalty.

A more promising related line of inquiry is the phenomenon of the merging of different strands of eschatological expectation, which was certainly widespread in the NT period and beyond. In contemporary Jewish speculation we know of competing messianic expectations and patterns of eschatological hope. Even within single documents these are often not in pure form. The early Christians could never have commended their totally apolitical belief in Jesus as messiah to their Jewish contemporaries if Jewish political messianism is all that such a claim could have meant to them. The merging of different strands of eschatological expectation in the development of early Christian views of Jesus is only a more elaborate case of what was also

true of Jewish eschatological thought of the day. We are increasingly aware of the degree to which the true diversity of first-century Judaism has been largely obscured to us both by the devastation of Palestine in the latter part of the first century and by the later rabbinic control of the Jewish tradition.

With the fact of this variety and merging in view, it may be best to say that the “Christ” confession points to an expectation that in this one the hopes associated with the Davidic dynasty will be put into effect, but with no specificity about the actual mode of implementation. The messianic program remains yet to be revealed. While one cannot demonstrate that Peter made such a confession in the lifetime of Jesus, such does seem to be the most likely point of origin for the present pericope.

The discussion of the form-critical category to which we should assign this pericope is clearly dependent in the first instance on what form the materials took in the pre-Markan tradition. Certain views have already been criticized above. The opening part of Mark 8:27, which deals with the location of the event, has been thought to be an addition, partly on the basis of general scepticism about place names in the gospel tradition, but also because of the awkwardness caused by the repetition of “his disciples.” Its presence or absence makes no difference to the form. Altogether more important is the view that v 30 is a Markan addition. Without this verse the story could function easily as a pattern for faith (cf. Luke 19:1–10). With the verse the story is much more tied to its preresurrection context and functions as what Pesch calls (*BZ* 17 [1973] 187) a nonindependent unit of the macrocontext “passion-story.” Beyond the specific arguments he offers for the retention of v 30 (183–84), Pesch argues convincingly that in relation to a reading of the story in connection with a Christological-didactic goal, there are just too many unnecessary elements in the narrative (188), and that we have here a narrative whose concern is to describe events and to provide information concerning factual opinions (186). These considerations in turn weigh in favor of retaining v 30 for the original narrative (and also in favor of the retention of v 27a). The form, then, fits no standard form-critical category.

Luke’s major changes to the Markan shape of the narrative are to replace the concern about location at the beginning of the Markan form with a notice of Jesus’ being engaged in prayer and to separate off the command to silence by linking it syntactically with the following introduction of the theme of the suffering of the Son of Man. In between the Markan shape is reproduced with changes of detail. There is a two-stage dialogue. An opening question is provided with a threefold answer in which each answer is syntactically dependent on the question: the first two as simple objects and the third as a (“that”) clause. The second question contrasts the varied opinions of the crowds with that of the disciples and attracts a single answer, again expressed in syntactical dependence on the grammar of the question.

### ***Comment***

With Peter’s confession we get, for the first time since the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, human participants in the story attaining to something like the levels of insight into the role and identity of Jesus that characterized the infancy gospel (1:4–2:52). The “who then is this” motif of the section reaches its culmination, and the foundation is established from which Jesus can begin

to elucidate the extraordinary messianic program to which he is committed. Every bit as much as in the Gospel of Mark, Peter's confession is a watershed in the Lukan narrative.

**18** Mark's indication of location is displaced by another statement of Jesus' being at prayer (cf. 3:21; 6:12; 9:28–29; 11:1; 22:41). With the disciples' confession, yet another threshold is crossed in the context of Jesus' prayer. The prayer notice may depend on Mark 6:46, which Luke has had no occasion to use (though 6:12 may have the stronger claim on such a source). The construction is similar to that in 11:1. Luke's verb "to be present" is found in the NT only here and at Acts 22:11. Mark's location on the way to the villages of Caesarea Philippi contributes nothing in the Lukan frame; but Luke does keep the implied privacy from the crowds. In effect the  $\mu$ , "alone," provides the change of scene from the feeding account: the aloneness anticipated in v 10, but disturbed by the crowds, is now achieved. Luke smooths out Mark's double mention of the disciples and changes Mark's verb from imperfect to aorist, as he often does. Mark's  $\tau$ , "the people," becomes  $\tau$ , "the crowds." This creates continuity with the crowd(s) who have been around Jesus throughout this section (and indeed earlier). In no way, however, should we see Jesus as here seeking to identify the crowds' response to the feeding miracle.

**19** Luke replaces Mark's pleonastic "saying" with the equally pleonastic "answered." Mark's  $\tau$  ("one of the prophets") becomes  $\tau$  (lit., "a certain prophet of the ancient ones has arisen"), which is identical to the form Luke created in v 8. While Luke keeps Mark's abbreviated form for the other two popular views, the changes he introduces here and earlier in vv 7–8 mean that, in contrast to the Markan account, exactly the same popular views are listed in the two episodes. This reinforces the bracketing role Luke gives to the accounts. See at 9:7–9 for a discussion of the views involved. Luke would not have us see the views as entirely wrong; each corresponds to something that has been validly perceived in the ministry of Jesus. Luke may even think that there is a happy anticipation of Jesus' own resurrection in the views (so Schürmann, 530). But at the same time the question that hangs over the questioning is whether the disciples will distinguish themselves from the crowds and make what is ultimately a radically different assessment of who Jesus is.

**20** Luke uses an  $\alpha$ , "he said," in place of Mark's repetition of the questioning verb used for the first question. The question itself is identically worded; but for the answer Luke conforms the syntax pattern used in the answer to the earlier question, and expands "Christ" to "Christ of God."

This question, as was the one before, is addressed to the disciples collectively. However, where in that case it is the collective "they" who answer, now Peter acts as spokesman and leader of the band. Luke consistently attributes a certain primacy to Peter (cf. esp. 22:31–34). The reader knows from the infancy gospel that Peter has now rightly intuited the identity of Jesus (see 1:32–33, 69; 2:11, 26): here there is a human response which for the first time corresponds to the presentation that God has made of his envoy (Corbin, *NRT* 99 [1977] 648), and from the infancy gospel we know as well that Davidic messianic categories are the correct ones for understanding this confession. At the same time, already there these categories are made use of in ways that do not fit neatly into a standard Jewish political messianism. Further, the dominance

of Isaianic categories of thought in the eschatology that emerges in the intervening chapters (rather than any development that depends upon Davidic messianic categories) prepares us for a surprising development of these primary Davidic categories.

“Christ of God” is closest to “Christ of the Lord” of 2:26 (cf. also Acts 3:18; 4:26). In the body of the Gospel Luke reserves “Lord” for Jesus. The exact form “Christ of God” may recur in 23:35, if 9:35 should be our guide in deciding whether to take “of God” there with “Christ” or with “the chosen one.” “Of God” places stress on the fulfillment of God’s purposes to be achieved by the Christ. Dietrich (*Petrusbild*, 99–102) is quite wrong to find already here included the suffering fate of the Messiah. Luke’s notes of noncomprehension in 9:45 and 18:34 make this quite clear. The most that can be said is that the “of God” here prepares for the role of the voice of God in the transfiguration account (vv 28–36), where the voice confirms that Jesus has correctly identified the place of suffering in his own messianic role.

### ***Explanation***

The section 8:1–9:20 now reaches its final goal: now at last for the first time there is a human response that corresponds to the presentation God has made of his envoy ahead of time in the infancy gospel (1:4–2:52). This is to be the platform on which Luke will erect the remainder of his narrative, with its new focus from this point on the coming suffering in Jerusalem.

In the section, the question of the identity of Jesus is particularly to be connected with two of his miraculous deeds: the stilling of the storm (8:22–25) and the feeding of the five thousand (9:10–17). The former raised the question; the latter, surrounded as it is by the two rehearsals of popular opinion about Jesus, makes a special contribution to the answer, as it bridges from the perplexity of Herod to the readiness of Peter to voice the confession of faith of the disciples.

Many questions have been raised about whether such a confession was ever made during Jesus’ lifetime. And there certainly are difficulties. Jesus would not have welcomed any suggestion that he was a Jewish political messiah who would liberate his people from Roman domination by military exploits surpassing those of King David. There existed, however, a range of Jewish hopes about the nature of God’s ultimate intervention on their behalf, and different views or fragments of views were often mingled together. To say that Jesus was the Christ would almost certainly have committed one to the view that when established as the Christ, he would rule as Lord in some way, but it need not have represented any particular commitment about the nature of Jesus’ messianic program.

If there is no place somewhere in the ministry of Jesus for the emergence of the view that he was the messiah, it is difficult to see how that title came to play such a basic role in the early church. It does not seem enough to build it out of the skulduggery of those who managed to have Jesus executed as a messianic pretender, purely as a political ploy.

As is a recurring feature of Luke’s telling of the story, here also an important threshold is crossed in the context of Jesus’ prayer. The recognition that now separates the disciples from popular opinion has not come without the intercession of Jesus.

The popular opinions that the disciples rehearse have been discussed at 9:7–9. They are not entirely wrong, in that each one of them responds to what can be genuinely observed in the ministry of Jesus. The idea of a resurrected prophet may even be for Luke a happy anticipation of the resurrection of Jesus to come. The views are, however, inadequate.

When it comes to their own opinion, it is not expressed by the vague “they” of all the disciples, but by Peter who speaks as their representative and leader. This role for Peter emerges repeatedly in Luke’s account (see especially 22:31–34). The Christ title links at once with the material in the opening chapters of the Gospel which connected the infant Jesus so closely with the Davidic expectations, with ideas of kingship and rule. These ideas are transformed by the total unfolding of the Gospel account. This has already occurred to a significant degree through the focus thus far in the body of the Gospel on materials from Isaiah in forming a picture of the end-time intervention of God. It will happen more dramatically in Jesus’ introduction from this point on of the place that suffering and death will play in his own role.

Luke has “Christ of God” as the actual form of the confession. The “of God” emphasizes that it is the purposes of God that come to fulfillment in the role of the Christ. This addition prepares for the role of the voice of God in the coming transfiguration narrative, in which the voice will confirm Jesus’ identification of the place of suffering in his role as Christ.

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## ***Making Ready for the Trip to Jerusalem (9:21–50)***

A broad-ranging ministry throughout Palestine gives way now to a focus upon Jesus’ coming fate in Jerusalem: this will be his pathway to full glory. The glorious one must suffer to achieve his proper glory and enter his proper sphere. Such a destiny maps out a pathway of discipleship along which the followers of Jesus must be prepared to give up their lives. This strange way to greatness also redefines human measures of greatness and achievement.

## ***Tell No One, Because the Son of Man Must Suffer (9:21–22)***

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JBL *Journal of Biblical Literature*

RSR *Recherches de science religieuse*

NovT *Novum Testamentum*

NTS *New Testament Studies*

esp. especially

RevThom *Revue thomiste*

ed. edited, edition(s), editor

Tr. translation, translator(s), translated by, transposed(s)

FS *Festschrift*, volume written in honor of

et al. *et alii*, and others

CBQ *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

SBB *Stuttgarter biblische Monographien*

*Begriff der Dahingabe im Neuen Testament.* ATANT 49. Zürich/ Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1967. 153–69, 216–39, 240–70, 271–73, 279–82. **Roloff, J.** “Anfänge der soteriologischen Deutung des Todes Jesu (Mk. x. 45 und Lk. xxii. 27).” *NTS* 19 (1972–73) 38–64. **Schaberg, J.** “Daniel 7, 12 and the New Testament Passion-Resurrection Predictions.” *NTS* 31 (1985) 208–22. **Schenke, L.** *Studien zur Passionsgeschichte des Markus: Tradition und Redaktion in Markus 14,1–42.* FB 4. Würzburg: Echter, 1971. 244–71. **Schürmann, H.** “Wie hat Jesus seinen Tod bestanden und verstanden? Eine methodenkritische Besinnung.” In *Orientierung an Jesus: Zur Theologie der Synoptiker.* FS J. Schmid, ed. P. Hoffmann et al. Freiburg im B.: Herder, 1973. 325–63. **Strecker, G.** “Die Leidens- und Auferstehungsvorausagen im Markusevangelium (Mk 8,31; 9,31; 10,32–24).” *ZTK* 64 (1967) 16–39. **Taylor, V.** “The Origin of the Markan Passion-Sayings.” *NTS* 1 (1954–55) 159–67. **Walker, N.** ““After Three Days.”” *NovT* 4 (1960) 261–62.

And see at 9:18–20 and the “Son of Man” excursus that follows this unit.

### **Translation**

<sup>21</sup> *With a rebuke, he commanded them to tell nobody this,* <sup>22</sup> *saying, “It is necessary for the Son of Man to suffer many things and to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and on the third day to be raised.”*

### **Notes**

There are no significant textual variants: a few texts align elements of the Lukan text with the Markan.

### **Form/Structure/Setting**

The section that begins here continues to v 50, after which Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem. It is a transition section that provides the basis in Jesus’ teaching for appreciating what Luke will do in structuring his material from 9:51 onwards: from 9:51 Luke will have Jesus on an elaborate and rather artificial journey to Jerusalem; the journeying motif there will function as a constant reiteration of the teaching here of the need for the Son of Man to suffer and be rejected before he enters into his glory. Luke continues here to follow the Markan sequence of material, with some abbreviation and editing to sharpen its focus in relation to his own concerns.

The single scene, 9:18–22, has been split into two because of the way in which vv 18–20 form the climax of a whole development and thus have their major links with what precedes, while vv 21–22 start a new development and should, therefore, be read primarily in connection with what is yet to come (for more detail see at 9:18–20). Though vv 18–22 describe a single scene, already in the Markan form there are two distinct episodes reported. The disciple’s hard-won recognition that Jesus is the Christ is silenced because it is not the end of the road, but only the place from which to begin.

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ATANT Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments

ZTK Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

At 9:18–20 it was argued (with Pesch [BZ 17 (1973) 186–88]) that we have there a narrative whose concern is to describe events and to provide information concerning factual opinions, and which therefore does not fit standard form-critical categories. If that is correct, then it is more likely that the following material (Mark 8:31–33), which in our narratives is closely connected, is more of the same (the question of the historicity of the passion predictions is discussed in some detail below). The connection between the Petrine confession and the beginning of Jesus' insistence that he must suffer and be rejected is likely to be not just editorially useful for Mark but an original feature of these traditions. At the very least Mark 8:31–33 requires a certain platform of recognition of the dignity of Jesus (in different ways, both on the part of Jesus himself and on the part of Peter) for its own internal dynamic to be successful.

Farmer (*NTS* 36 [1990] 559) draws attention to a series of minor agreements with Matt 16:21, but when his count of five agreements is reduced to the basic two (see *Comment* below), nothing more than an influence from common diction need be suspected: Luke's written source here is likely to be nothing more than his Markan source. Luke deletes the Petrine response (and with it the emphasis on the clarity of Jesus' teaching) and Jesus' counter-response (he may find it difficult for Peter to be both the one through whom Satanic trial comes and one of those who has continued with Jesus in his trials [22:28]; another possible motivation is the closer unity with vv 23–27 made possible by the deletion [cf. Marshall, 367]). Luke also re-sections the two Markan episodes so that the call to silence now belongs to the second and not, as in Mark, to the first: the call to silence about the Christ identity now has its explanation clearly in the need for the Son of Man to suffer.

We turn now to the question of historicity. Did Jesus in fact predict his own death? or are the Gospel texts that attribute such predictions to him only a reading back by the later church on the basis of the conviction that Jesus' death was indeed a necessary part of God's will for him and not merely some horrible accident? This issue has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention from both sides of the debate, and, alongside the vigorous defense of both views, a number of mediating positions have emerged.

A full review of all the issues and arguments cannot be offered here, but attention will be drawn to some of the main views and lines of argument. Much of the discussion is entwined with the discussion of the origin and meaning of the phrase "Son of Man," which so often accompanies the words attributed to Jesus that anticipate his coming passion. A consideration of this phrase has been deferred to an excursus to be found at the end of the treatment of this pericope. We will here assume that discussion. The material there, however, does not address the questions as to the historicity of different groups of Son of Man sayings, and so some attention to that matter will be included in the present discussion.

What, then are the main difficulties in the way of accepting the words of Mark 8:31 (and the other passion predictions) as straightforwardly reflecting the words of the historical Jesus? We begin with general consideration before moving to more textually based arguments.

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BZ *Biblische Zeitschrift*

cf. *confer*, compare

Those who most confidently deny these words to Jesus are the scholars who most rigorously impose the criterion of dissimilarity in forming their judgments as to what we may attribute to the historical Jesus. This criterion is based on the reasonable claim that we may be most confident that we have identified the views of the historical Jesus at those points where his views are neither those of the Jewish environment nor those of the early church. An extreme application of this criterion, however, requires that we deny to Jesus anything that would link him to his environment or to the early church. None of the scholars is consistently quite so extreme, but we do frequently get the assumption that if it may be shown that the early church *could* have formed a view along some other track and subsequently attributed it to Jesus, then this is in fact what must have happened (Hoffmann's study ["Herkunft und markinischen Rezeption"] provides examples of such assumptions). In my judgment it is inappropriate to use the criterion of dissimilarity to produce negative judgments concerning the historicity of items of the Gospel tradition. The early church certainly knew the outcome of Jesus' life, and its views on this matter go to the heart of its faith. It could have attributed its own knowledge and views to the historical Jesus, but that must be demonstrated and not assumed.

Studies frequently evaluate the passion predictions by correlating them with an existing understanding of the stages of development of early Christian views of Jesus and of the significance of his death. This is an entirely reasonable procedure if we have "assured" results to bring to bear upon the study of an individual item of the tradition. Within certain schools of thought in NT scholarship there is considerable confidence that this is the case. But I prefer to think that the individual item has as much right to place in question the prevailing view as the prevailing view has to place in question the historicity of the individual item.

The very possibility of prophetic prediction has had a bad reception in influential scholarly circles. Bultmann made a theological virtue out of the skepticism that Wrede (*Messianic Secret*) brought to the study of the Gospel sources and influenced a generation and more of Gospel scholars. It is not more scholarly to assume the impossibility of prediction. Both accurate prediction and a reading back must be considered as possible explanations of the Gospel texts.

It is frequently assumed that a decision about the correct background for the phrase "Son of Man" must necessarily eliminate from any claim to historicity one or more of the groups of Son of Man sayings. The sayings that anticipate Jesus' death and resurrection are generally considered to be the most vulnerable in this process. The view canvassed in the following excursus, concerning the fundamental sense for Son of Man in Jesus' diction, has no difficulties with any of the main groups of Son of Man sayings: the partially anonymous mysterious figure of dignity is claimed to be present as a person of significance; he experiences difficulties, and his rejection and even execution are anticipated, indeed insisted upon as his necessary coming fate, although such does not at all befit his dignity; his future vindication is, however, assured both as speedy resurrection from the dead and as installation with God and coming in glory. Those who are most confident that "Son of Man" is a piece of diction from apocalyptic circles, referring to an expected heavenly redeemer, have most difficulty with its use in connection with the announcement of a suffering fate. The evidence for such a use is, however, extremely sparse and problematic.

The close link between the rebuke of Mark 8:30 and the Petrine confession counts strongly in favor of the historicity of the confession (against, e.g., Strecker, *ZTK* 64 [1967] 32–33; see further at 9:18–20). The immediate context for Mark 8:31 in the exchange of rebukes between Peter and Jesus counts strongly in favor of historical authenticity (cf. Jeremias, *TDNT* 5:715), since none of the proposed settings in the early church for this exchange of rebukes is at all persuasive.

The apparent absence from the Q tradition of predictions of the Son of Man's coming suffering and resurrection is considered by some to be a strong argument against the authenticity of this strand of Son of Man sayings (e.g., Hoffmann, *Theologie des Logienquelle*, 141–42, 187–88). But Q is at best a hypothetically reconstructed document that needs to be used with caution. The extent of overlap with Markan tradition is evaluated quite variously (at one extreme, Bayer, *Jesus' Predictions*, 212, even considers that Luke 9:22 may stem from Q!). Further, on any reckoning, Q is an incomplete rendering of the Jesus tradition in a range of respects, and so its gaps are no strong argument against the historicity of the missing material.

Sometimes in connection with the Q discussion, the claim is made that the predictions of the passion and resurrection and those of the Parousia/future position of glory of the Son of Man come from separate strands of tradition and cannot both be original (e.g., Bultmann, *Theology*, 1:30–31; Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 285–86, and others would treat them as variants of a single tradition, but the time references and the intended roles are very different). Certainly, the only straightforward bridge between the two types of sayings is to be found in Luke 17:24–25, and this is generally not thought to be an original unity. Though not using Son of Man language, the Last Supper narrative provides something of a link between the two strands by bridging from the death of Jesus to the messianic banquet. Berger's investigation of Jewish traditions concerning the resurrection of prophetic figures (*Auferstehung des Propheten*) remains at many points speculative, but it is valuable in questioning the necessary link between the resurrection of the Son of Man and the general eschatological resurrection from the dead, and in showing how traditions of vindication by resurrection and of a future role in glory (judgment) may be naturally fitted together: resurrection is both vindication and availability for a subsequent role. While problems remain, it is perhaps no more difficult to reconcile suffering and resurrection Son of Man sayings with future role of glory Son of Man sayings, than it is to bring together traditions that affirm the authority of the Son of Man on the earth with those that anticipate suffering and rejection. Jesus' teaching is frequently somewhat cryptic and apparently designed to leave the hearer with most of the task of integration.

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e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

TDNT G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., tr. G. W. Bromiley *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ET (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)

Q "Qumran", "Qere" Qere (To be "read." Masoretic suggested pronunciation for vocalized Hebrew text of the OT), or Quelle ("Sayings" source for the Gospels)

The response of the disciples to Jesus' revelation of his suffering fate, or for the most part the lack of response, has been found difficult to square with a claim to historicity for the passion predictions. However much what Jesus proposes may have been outside the disciples' expectations, the words preserved seem to be altogether too plain to have evoked from even the most simple-minded of the disciples the sequence of instances of incomprehension that Mark reports. The picture Mark presents is seen to be psychologically improbable (see especially 9:10 after 8:31; 9:32 and vv 33–34; and 10:35–37 after vv 33–34; and more generally the Gospel portrayal of the disciples' reaction to the passion and resurrection). To the present writer, this objection presents a much more serious challenge.

We may with relative ease deal with difficulties in connection with the passion part of the predictions. The refusal of Peter and the others to countenance the suffering and death of this uniquely great figure to whom they had attached themselves is intrinsically plausible and is presented with psychological credibility in 8:32–33. The verse 10:32 suggests that, at least in the context of the final trip to Jerusalem, a measure of ominous expectation had developed. The immediate juxtaposition of the passion predictions and the glory seeking of the disciples is most likely to be a piece of Markan artistry designed, in part, to explicate the content of Peter's activity in 8:32. Mark's theology of a suffering messiah is presented in sharp relief by means of such juxtapositions. The juxtaposition may not be historically plausible, but it is theologically profound.

Not the passion predictions, but the resurrection predictions pose the real difficulty. There is some cogency in the suggestion that resurrection has no place in the thought of those who are unprepared to anticipate a death. But one might have expected all this to come into clear focus on Good Friday. Bayer (*Jesus' Predictions*, 227–28, 255) may be on the right course when he speaks of a cluster of enigmatic vindication predictions, though he can hardly be right to locate this enigma in a range of possible contexts for a literal resurrection. It may be helpful to have in mind the way in which both at Qumran and in the NT the text form of quotations from the OT is affected by the terms in which it was believed to have found contemporary fulfillment (see for example the differences of the composite quotation in Mark 1:2–3 from both MT and LXX). Can the same have occurred with Jesus' predictions? In particular, has a more general term pointing to vindication been displaced by a specific term for resurrection, in light of the resurrection experience? The difficulties for a straightforward correlation with the passion narrative of the reference to "after three days" provide some confidence that the anticipation of resurrection has not been added *post eventum* to what was originally only a passion prediction. Other indications that Jesus was confident of divine vindication count in the same direction. (An equivalent imprecision for the resurrection component would be achieved without change of wording if, as is suggested as possible below, the specific references to death are a later precision in the passion predictions.)

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OT Old Testament

MT The Masoretic Text [of the Old Testament] (as published in BHS)

LXX The Septuagint, Greek translation of the OT

Syntactical difficulties and unevenness are regularly brought forward as arguments against the original integrity of the passion predictions as preserved in Mark. In 8:31, “to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes” falls under suspicion on various grounds. This item stands out syntactically because of its disproportionate length and the precision of its development. It is also difficult to identify the logic that would locate “to be rejected” after “to suffer” and before “to be put to death” and “to rise.” The rejection motif is also suspected of being drawn from the early Christian use of Ps. 118(117):22, some suggesting that Mark added this item at the same time as adding the reference to Ps. 118(117):22 in Mark 12:12. The three groups mentioned are those that feature in Mark’s passion account (though they are not introduced in the same sequence, and they are the obvious terms for identifying the Jewish leadership). The case is not decisive, but it is not unreasonable to treat this phrase as less secure in its claim to be an original part of the passion prediction. The arguments for its deletion are, however, considerably weakened if the direction of development of the passion predictions is toward making precise the mention of the actual death of the Son of Man (see below).

The older view championed by Lohmeyer (*Markus*, 165) that Luke 17:25 preserves the original short form is well answered by Strecker (*ZTK* 64 [1967] 19–23). Particularly, we should note Strecker’s point that no satisfactory setting in the early church can be proposed for the isolated transmission of Luke 17:25; and Mark 8:31 is much more securely anchored in its context than Luke 17:25 is in its context. The long form would naturally have been shortened to allow it to function in its new context.

Mark 9:31 also has its own share of problems. The verbs are present passive, future active, aorist passive participle, and finally a future middle. The move from present to future, the repetitive participle, and the moves between passive and active have each caused the original integrity of the text to be disputed. These difficulties have formed the basis for arguing that the text has developed from a short original along the lines of Mark 14:41 (and cf. Luke 9:44). There is a striking agreement of language, but the short form in Mark 14:41 is dictated by the context and is, therefore, best taken as a resume of a longer form, and most of the unevenness in 9:31 is not touched by this suggestion: in particular the repetition of reference to putting to death/being put to death does not coincide with the join between putative original and addition. A better suggestion might be to consider “and they will kill him” to be a (Markan?) expansion. The addition would be designed to lay greater stress on the fact that Jesus anticipated his own death, where the earlier form had been content to have the death initially implied in the handing over into the hands of men, and then resumed by the participle as link to the following resurrection statement. It is even possible, as has been intimated above, that a general tendency in the development of the wording of the passion predictions becomes visible here, and that even the participial reference is a development. The original form will have spoken of a delivering into the hands of men and a rising after three days. In a post-resurrection situation, when it is clear that the rising is a resurrection from death, the participle is added to clarify the logical link between the two clauses, now understood to refer to the death and resurrection of Jesus. On later reflection this form was thought not to do justice to the importance of Jesus’ having predicted his coming death, and the Markan form emerges.

The third main passion prediction is not so much uneven as filled with terms that are immediately those of the Markan passion account. Only the use of  $\mu$  , “scourge,”

in place of the passion account's use of \_\_\_\_\_, "scourged," saves the account from being totally composed of terms used in the passion narrative or the earlier passion predictions. There may be some value in pointing out that there is some difference in the sequence of terms between the prediction and the passion account. It is also possible to claim that there is reflected in the terms used a tissue of scriptural allusions for both the prediction and the passion narrative. It is not so clear to me (as argued by Feuillet [*RevThom* 67 (1967) 551] and others) that this prediction focuses the scandal contemplated on the handing over to the Gentiles, while the Markan passion narrative locates the supreme scandal in the cross. Although it seems quite clear to me that Mark inherited from the tradition more than one form of the passion prediction, it is quite unlikely that the tradition preserved a memory of a particular number of separate passion predictions whose individual wordings were separately preserved. Mark's point is really that Jesus kept up (and perhaps even intensified) his insistence on a coming suffering fate (note the "began" in 8:31). Mark may or may not have received from the tradition a third form of the passion prediction.

The more indirect indications in the Gospel material that Jesus anticipated his fate provide stronger positive argument for the authenticity of the direct passion predictions than these do for themselves. We may point in particular to the fire and baptism imagery of Luke 12:49–50 (cf. Mark 10:38); to the sequence leading to climax in Jesus' response to the threat of Herod (Luke 13:32), especially if the sequel in v 33 is original; with slightly less confidence, to the removal of the bridegroom (Mark 2:19–20 [see discussion at Luke 5:27–39]). The saying concerning the destruction and renewal of the temple may also be relevant here (Mark 14:58; John 2:19). With all its difficulties, the Last Supper narrative also offers strong support for Jesus, at least at that late stage, having anticipated his death and having integrated it into his sense of God's purpose for him.

Schürmann ("Wie hat Jesus," and cf. *Gottes Reich*) has argued forcefully that the investigation of this problem has been too narrowly focused on the words of Jesus about himself and needs to be expanded in two directions: there needs to be attention to his actions as much as to his words; and there needs to be a recognition that the religious and ethical demands with which he challenged his disciples are also relevant to how he viewed and conducted his own life. Along these lines, Schürmann has demonstrated that we may gain increased confidence in Jesus' expectation of his own suffering and vindication by God.

We do seem to have then a good basis for maintaining that Jesus anticipated his own suffering and rejection, and subsequent restoration by God. It is with less confidence that we trace back particular wording to Jesus.

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### *Comment*

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<sup>1</sup>Nolland, J. 2002. *Vol. 35B: Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 9:21-18:34*. Word Biblical Commentary . Word, Incorporated: Dallas

The difficult face of the gospel has been anticipated obliquely in earlier sections of the Gospel narrative (e.g., 4:16–30; 5:35), but the large shape of the story has been that of steady progress and of positive achievement, to a climax in Peter’s confession. The significance of the intimations of the arrival of the kingdom of God seems to fall into place with this disclosure of the identity of Jesus as messiah. But where Peter and the others would have wished to treat their recognition of Jesus as the all-illuminating conclusion to their journey of discovery, for the Lukan Jesus this is no more than the minimal foundation upon which an understanding of the shape of his ministry and its priorities is to be built.

**21–22** Where in Mark the principal verb is  $\mu$ , “to rebuke,” Luke uses the participle form to subordinate this idea. The command to silence comes to the fore, and here uses  $\epsilon$ , “to command,” which Luke has introduced in a similar linguistic context in 5:14. Mark’s  $\epsilon$ , “that,” clause becomes an infinitive construction (cf. 5:14 again). Mark’s less focused “about him” becomes “this.” Instead of having the break at this point, Luke runs the sentence on by linking the passion prediction here by using the participle  $\lambda$ , “saying.” Luke’s changes to the passion prediction itself are slight: he groups the elders, chief priests, and scribes more closely together by having the terms share a definite article; his use of  $\alpha$  (lit. “from”) for Mark’s  $\beta$ , “by,” illustrates the developing interchangeability of these terms; he replaces Mark’s “after three days” with “on the third day”; Mark’s  $\alpha$ , “to rise,” becomes  $\epsilon$ , “to be raised.” (The listed changes are also made by Matthew in 16:21, except that his use of  $\alpha$  is differently motivated [  $\alpha$  would not fit after “suffer”]. Both have followed common Christian idiom, and have wanted to see the leadership groups as a single entity here. No implications for source analysis should be drawn from the commonality.)

With Luke’s deletion of Mark 8:32–33 (Peter’s rebuke of Jesus and its consequence), it is more difficult to see what to make of the language of rebuke here. Probably the Markan force remains intact, if we may judge from the disciples’ incomprehension (9:44–45; 18:31–34) and preoccupation with concerns that are antithetical to those of the one whose path of service involves suffering and rejection (9:46–48, 49–50, 51–56 [note the use of “rebuked”]; 22:24–27). The disciples’ “Christ of God” is not easily squared with Jesus’ vision of this destiny.

The nature of the logic that makes the passion prediction the reason for silence about Jesus’ messianic identity is not immediately transparent, but it is almost certainly based on the inadequacy of Peter’s bare confession to the Christology that Luke is seeking to commend. Only along an elaborate track do we get to the point in 24:26 where it becomes possible to speak easily of a view that the Christ should suffer.

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e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

cf. *confer*, compare

lit. literally

For Luke the necessity of Jesus' suffering (cf. 13:33; 17:25; 24:7; Acts 17:3) is the necessity to fulfill the divine will and purpose. The influence of the language of apocalyptic is probably present here (cf. Dan 2:28 LXX). God's will and purpose are witnessed to in Scripture (18:31; 22:37; 24:25–27, 46). The necessity here is the moral necessity of obedience to God, not the inevitability of fate (though Luke can see the fulfillment of Scripture in a rather more fatalistic way [e.g., Acts 1:16]). Fitzmyer (179–80) rightly draws the link between the necessity here and Luke's sense that there is a well-mapped plan of salvation that must be unfolded through its stages.

For the interplay between "Christ" and "Son of Man" in Luke, see at 6:1–5. For the basic sense of "Son of Man" see the following excursus. For Luke there will be a deliberate switch of categories involved here, something akin to his move from Davidic messianic categories to Isaianic categories, which we have documented earlier (see e.g., 3:4–6; 4:17–19; 7:22). In Luke's narrative, "Son of Man" makes its appearance in an editorial comment as a mysterious designation of dignity and authority (5:24; see there).

It is best to give a wide reference to "to suffer many things." All that reflects the unwelcoming face of the reception given to Jesus' person, his message, and his ministry is here embraced (cf. 4:23–30; 6:11; 7:31–34, 44–46; 8:37, 53; 9:51–54, 58; 10:13–15; 13:31; 15:2; 16:14; 19:14, 27; 22:21, 45–47, 54–62; etc.). Official rejection is the culmination of the suffering of many things. Alternatively, at least for an earlier form that may have lacked the list of leadership groups, suffering and being rejected may be, as W. Michaelis (*TDNT* 5:914–15) has argued, an ancient two-membered expression referring on each side to a single reality, but with one term pointing to the divine meaning and purpose ("suffer many things") and the other term pointing to the human rejection of the Son of Man ("to be rejected"). To be rejected may involve the idea of failing to measure up to the necessary standard or test of authenticity.

Judaism had available a number of strands of tradition that could help to make sense out of the suffering of one who was close to God (see L. Rupert, *Jesus als der leidende Gerechte: Der Weg Jesu im Licht eines alt- und zwischentestamentlichen Motivs* [Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1972]). The suffering of the righteous is extensively recognized in Job and the Psalms (e.g., 34:19; cf. 118:22); it is the lot of the suffering servant (Isa 52:13–53:12), who has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; it is an important motif in Wisdom of Solomon (2:10–20; 3:1–9; 5:4–5); it becomes the basis of a martyr theology in 4 Macc 17:21–22, where the death of the righteous makes atonement for the sins of the nation. Important for the Gospel tradition, and for Luke in particular, is the tradition of the rejection of the prophets by those to whom they had been sent (see at 4:24; 13:33–34). Note also *T. Moses* 3:11, which speaks of Moses suffering many things in Egypt. Probably, almost all of these play a part in NT reflection

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LXX The Septuagint, Greek translation of the OT

TDNT G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., tr. G. W. Bromiley *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ET (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)

NT New Testament

on the death of Jesus, and there is no particular reason to think that Jesus would not have access to all of them in the formation of his own sense of destiny.

Luke makes it clear that he has in mind the Sanhedrin rejection of Jesus by making a single group out of “elders and chief priests and scribes.” Nonetheless, Luke does not in fact use this sequence of terms to designate the composition of the Sanhedrin. The three groups, mentioned in a different sequence, do approach Jesus in 20:1 to question him about his authority, but, as a designation of the Sanhedrin, the closest is 22:66, where the “eldership [council]” ( ) consists of the chief priests and the scribes. Elsewhere Luke makes a pair out of chief priests and elders (22:52; Acts 23:14; 25:15) and a triplet out of rulers, elders, and scribes. Fitzmyer (780–81) reports Josephus’ use of the triplets: leaders, chief priests, and the council; and leaders, chief priests, and learned Pharisees. On scribes see at 5:17; on elders cf. at 7:3, but note that the elders here (those of Jerusalem) have a significance for the wider Jewish community that would not be true of the elders of 7:3. The singular of the term translated here chief priests is used of the high priest. The plural term is used of the upper echelon of the priestly order: the captain of the temple, those who headed up the priestly courses (see at 1:8), the priest who had charge of the treasury, and other high-ranking priests (see Vermes, ed. in E. Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 2:275–91; Schrenk, *TDNT* 3:271–72; Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, 160–81), here those who had seats on the Sanhedrin.

It is suggested in *Form/Structure/Setting* above that “to be killed” may be a later precision added in the transmission of this tradition. That is not to say that to suffer and be rejected did not from the first embrace death, only that death was not specified. To be put to death is the final outworking of total rejection.

Mark’s “after three days” may be allowable in Semitic idiom as a designation of Jesus’ two nights in the grave (Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 285: “a short time”), but Luke prefers the more precise “on the third day.” The latter is sometimes claimed as the more original on the basis of Hos 6:2, but it is difficult to see how the passion narrative would allow for a move from the Lukan form to the Markan; and if the Lukan form is secondary it is hard to insist on a Hos 6:2 connection, when precision of agreement with the passion narrative is available as a motivation for the change. For a link to Hos 6:2, Luke has also moved in the wrong direction with his failure to reproduce the LXX verb in his reference to the raising up of Jesus. On the three-day tradition see J. B. Bauer, “Drei Tage,” *Bib* 39 (1958) 354–58; J. Dupont, “Ressuscité ‘le troisième jour,’” *Bib* 40 (1959) 753–55; H. Grass, *Ostergeschehen und Osterberichte*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962) 127–35; G. M. Landes, “The ‘Three Days and Three Nights’ Motif in Jonah 2.1,” *JBL* 86 (1967) 446–50; K. Lehmann, *Auferweckt am dritten Tag nach der Schrift*, *Quaestiones Disputatae* 38 (Freiburg: Herder, 1968);

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ed. edited, edition(s), editor

Bib *Biblica*

JBL *Journal of Biblical Literature*

J. Jeremias, "Die Drei-Tage-Worte der Evangelien," in *Tradition und Glaube*, FS K. G. Kuhn, ed. G. Jeremias et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971) 221–29; H. K. McArthur, "On the Third Day," *NTS* 18 (1972–73) 81–86; J. M. Perry, "The Three Days in the Synoptic Predictions," *CBQ* 48 (1986) 637–54.

The form of reference to the three days and the word used to speak of the resurrection are also to be found in Matthew, which may indicate (as Fitzmyer, 781) that Matthew and Luke are independently influenced by a common current confessional expression (cf. 1 Cor 15:4). A reference to resurrection from death would not have been as apparent if the original form spoke of suffering many things, being rejected and rising up after three days (a number of the psalms, some echoed in the passion narrative, reflect this move from suffering/rejection to restoration, without any thought of resurrection from death [e.g., Pss 22; 31; 41; 69]). In Luke's form with its divine passive for "to be raised" there is a clear intimation of his later contrast between the verdicts declared upon Jesus from the human side and from the divine side (Acts 2:23–24; 3:15; 10:39–40; 13:27–30).

### ***Explanation***

Luke's new section runs from 9:21 to 9:50. From the high point of Peter's confession of Jesus as the Christ of God, attention now turns in a quite somber way to Jesus' anticipation of his coming passion in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions would have liked to treat their hard-won insight as an all-illuminating conclusion to their journey of discovery. But such an attitude can only call forth Jesus' rebuke. The confession is the solid achievement of the first part of the Gospel, but as such it is no more than a basic foundation upon which one may begin to build an understanding of the goal of the ministry of Jesus. Luke will use the material of vv 21–50 to clarify for his readers what the journey to Jerusalem, which will occupy from 9:51 to 18:34, means for Jesus' ministry.

Instead of the glorious Christ language, Jesus chooses the mysterious Son of Man language, and announces suffering, rejection, and death, but then resurrection on the third day. Jesus is the Christ, but should only be announced as such by those who realize that the Christ must suffer and enter into his glory (24:26). The insistent necessity of the will of God presses upon Jesus this requirement. And that such is the case is witnessed to in the Scriptures (18:31; 24:25–27; etc.).

Jesus' suffering is not restricted to events right at the end: he was rejected in his home town (4:16–30); he was dismissed as glutton and drunkard by many (7:34); he was one who has nowhere to lay his head (9:58). Such suffering becomes official and final in his rejection by those groups that provide the highest levels of leadership for the Jews, as members of the

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FS Festschrift, volume written in honor of

et al. *et alii*, and others

*NTS New Testament Studies*

*CBQ Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

Sanhedrin, and this rejection results naturally in the death of the one who is tried and found wanting.

We are not told here why such a path of suffering and rejection should be necessary. There were, however, several strands of Jewish tradition that could be brought to bear on an attempt to understand the suffering of one who was near to God. It was recognized that the righteous do suffer at the hands of the unrighteous, but that God would put things right. There was a strong tradition that suggested that Israel had murdered most of the prophets sent by God. There was a late tradition suggesting that the death of the righteous might atone for the sins of the nation. Finally there was the enigmatic figure of the suffering servant in Isa 52–53. Each of these has probably played some role in NT reflection on the death of Jesus. Only the last makes suffering the clear will of God, but in the circles of Jesus' day that we refer to as apocalyptic circles, the language of divine necessity is also applied to the progressive stages in the unfolding of human history as it moves to its appointed end.

By way of interpretation, we may at least say from this text that a contrast is drawn between the human verdict on Jesus and the divine. Rejection from the human side is overturned by the affirmation of resurrection from the divine side (compare Acts 2:23–24; 3:15; etc.).

Critical scholarship has seriously questioned the historicity of Jesus' prediction of his own death and resurrection. It is certainly not unlikely that the particular form in which we have these predictions has been somewhat influenced by the course of events. We may even see this in the minor changes in Luke's form compared with the form in Mark on which he depended. But while this may make us reticent about tracing a particular wording back to Jesus himself, there is a good critical basis for maintaining that Jesus anticipated his own suffering and rejection, and subsequent restoration/vindication by God.

2

## Excursus: Son of Man

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<sup>2</sup>Nolland, J. 2002. *Vol. 35B: Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 9:21-18:34*. Word Biblical Commentary . Word, Incorporated: Dallas

*JSNT Journal for the Study of the New Testament*

*ExpTim The Expository Times*

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SCM Student Christian Movement

*JTS Journal of Theological Studies*

ed. edited, edition(s), editor

WUNT Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: Mohr)

SPCK Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge

*NTS New Testament Studies*

TDNT G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., tr. G. W. Bromiley *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ET (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)

ETL Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses

*CBQ Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

SBLMS Society of Biblical Literature [SBL] Monograph Series

MT The Masoretic Text [of the Old Testament] (as published in BHS)

*HBT Horizons in Biblical Theology*

SNTSMS Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series

UP University Press

Man Problem Really Insoluble?" In *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament*. FS M. Black, ed. E. Best and R. McL. Wilson. Cambridge: University Press, 1979. 155–68. **Horbury, W.** "The Messianic Association of the Son of Man." *JTS* 36 (1985) 34–55. **Jeremias, J.** *New Testament Theology: Part One. The Proclamation of Jesus*. Tr. J. Bowden. London: SCM, 1971. 257–76. **Kim, S.** "The 'Son of Man'" as the Son of God. *WUNT* 30. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1983. **Kingsbury, J. D.** "Observations on 'the Son of Man' in the Gospel according to Luke." *CurTM* 17 (1990) 283–90. **Leivestad, R.** "Exit the Apocalyptic Son of Man." *NTS* 18 (1972) 243–67. **Lindars, B.** *Jesus Son of Man: A Fresh Examination of the Son of Man Sayings in the Gospels in the Light of Recent Research*. London: SPCK, 1983. ———. "Re-enter the Apocalyptic Son of Man." *NTS* 22 (1975–76) 52–72. ———. "The New Look on the Son of Man." *BJRL* 63 (1981) 437–62. ———. "Response to Richard Bauckham: The Idiomatic Use of Bar Enasha." *JSNT* 23 (1985) 35–41. **Manson, T. W.** "The Son of Man in Daniel, Enoch and the Gospels." *BJRL* 32 (1950) 171–93. **Marshall, I. H.** "The Synoptic Son of Man Sayings in Recent Discussion." *NTS* 12 (1965–66) 327–51. **McNeil, B.** "The Son of Man and the Messiah: A Footnote." *NTS* 26 (1980) 419–21. **Moule, C. F. D.** "Neglected Features in the Problem of 'the Son of Man.'" In *Essays in New Testament Interpretation*. Cambridge: University Press, 1982. 79–90. **Müller, M.** "The Expression 'the Son of Man' as Used by Jesus." *ST* 38 (1984) 47–64. **Müller, U. B.** *Messias und Menschensohn in jüdischen Apokalypsen und in der Offenbarung des Johannes*. SNT 6. Gütersloh: Mohn, 1972. **Perrin, N.** *A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974. **Pesch, R.,** and **Schnackenburg, R.,** ed(s). *Jesus und der Menschensohn*. FS A. Vögtle. Freiburg/Basel/Vienna: Herder, 1975. **Schillebeeckx, E.** *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*. Tr. H. Hoskins. New York: Vantage Books, 1979. 459–72. **Tödt, H. E.** *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition*. Tr. D. M. Barton. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965. **Tuckett, C.** "Recent Work on the Son of Man." *ScrB* 12 (1981) 14–18. **Vermes, G.** "The Use of **בן נשא/בר נש** in Jewish Aramaic." Appendix E in Black, M. *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1967. 310–28. ———. "'The Son of Man' Debate." *JSNT* 1 (1978) 19–32. **Vielhauer, P.** "Gottesreich und Menschensohn in der Verkündigung Jesu." In *Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament*. *TBü* 33. Munich: Kaiser, 1965. 55–91. **Walker, W. O.** "The Son of Man: Some Recent Developments." *CBQ* 45 (1983) 584–607.

The extensive scholarly discussion of the phrase \_\_\_\_\_, "the Son of Man," has not produced any solid consensus about the background of, the development to be traced in,

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FS Festschrift, volume written in honor of

Tr. translation, translator(s), translated by, transpose(s)

CurTM *Currents in Theology and Mission*

BJRL *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*

ST *Studia theologica*

SNT *Studien zum Neuen Testament*

ed(s). editor(s), edited by; edition

ScrB *Scripture Bulletin*

TB *Theologische Beiträge*

or the sense to be given to the Gospel use of this phrase. For an overview of Luke's own use of the phrase, see at 6:1–5. The discussion here will concentrate on the pre-Lukan history of the phrase.

As a piece of unidiomatic Greek the phrase is universally recognized to be an over-literal translation of an underlying Semitic idiom. The indefinite Hebrew form בן־אדם, *ben d m*, “[a] son of man,” is used as God's address to Ezekiel the prophet (Ezek 2:1; etc.; cf. Dan 8:17). The same form in Pss 8:4 and 80:17 forms a poetic parallel to, in the former, the normal word for humankind (אדם, *d m*) and, in the latter, the normal word for man (איש, *sh*). Each of these has occasionally been claimed as the starting point for the Gospel usage, but this is quite unlikely.

A more profitable starting point is the corresponding Aramaic phrase בר אנש, *bar en sh*. This is the phrase that occurs in Dan 7:13, which is clearly echoed in the present form of a number of the Gospel Son of Man sayings, and this is the phrase that has been the subject of a number of recent studies of Aramaic idiom that have a potential for illuminating the Gospel usage. (The phrase occurs with some variations of form, the important ones being the dropping of the א, *e*, and/or the addition of a suffix א, *sh*.)

After documenting the use of our phrase to mean “a human being” and /also as an indefinite pronoun (“someone”), Vermes (“Use of בר אנש/בר נשא”) goes on to draw attention to a series of rabbinic texts in which he claims that the phrase functions as a circumlocution for “I.” He has certainly identified a use of the phrase in which the speaker intends the phrase to refer to himself, and since this appears to be what we have in the Gospel usage, such a discovery is potentially of great importance.

Jeremias (*New Testament Theology*, 261 n. 1) soon protested that Vermes had claimed too much. We do not have a true circumlocution for “I,” since in none of the texts does the expression have the sense “I (and no other).” A series of other scholars have raised essentially the same objection but have recognized in Vermes' study an important foundation for further work.

Fitzmyer (“The New Testament Title,” 152–53; *JSNT* 4 [1979] 58–64) has raised a quite different objection to Vermes' conclusion. Fitzmyer accepts Vermes' analysis of the idiom in the one case of Cairo Targum B to Gen 4:14, but he points to the absence of the initial א, *e*, in every instance cited by Vermes in support of the use as a surrogate for “I.” This contrasts with Fitzmyer's observation that in all the Aramaic evidence prior to the Second Revolt (that is before A.D. 131/2) the longer form is used. Fitzmyer warns against using what is, therefore, late evidence for identifying first-century Aramaic idiom. There is no such dating problem in the case of the use of the idiom to refer generally to “humanity (anyone)” or indefinitely to “someone” (see examples in Fitzmyer, 148).

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cf. *confer*, compare

n. note

Not everyone has been persuaded that, given the quite scant earlier Aramaic sources, we should rule out later sources for identifying likely first-century idiom. This relaxation of criteria seems more reasonable if it is not Vermes' unique idiom that is being claimed, but rather a use of one of the more widely established idioms (general or indefinite) in a context where self-reference is involved. Casey (*JSNT* 29 [1987] 22–23) has been able to support this relaxation by pointing to an eighth-century B.C. text (*Sepire* 3:14–17) in which an indefinite use of **בר אנש** involves self-reference (“anyone of us”). Casey, Lindars (*Jesus Son of Man*), and Bauckham (*JSNT* 23 [1985] 23–33) have each developed, on the basis of this sort of use of Vermes' results, an understanding of the Aramaic idiom reflected in the Gospel usages.

Casey's argument is that the authentic Son of Man statements are those in which Jesus makes a general statement about humanity, but in a way that invites a specific application of this general truth to himself. Lindars offers a more subtle analysis, and proposes to find a way between Vermes and Casey.

Lindars identifies an idiomatic use of the generic article as the key to Vermes' Aramaic texts and to Jesus' use of the Son of Man expression. To understand Lindars we need first to attend to the presence, as was mentioned above, of the suffix **ס**, ; in some of the texts adduced by Vermes. Originally this functioned much as the definite article (“the”) in English but gradually lost its force so that forms with and without this suffix came to be used interchangeably. Vermes and most other scholars have assumed that this interchangeability was already well advanced in the time of Jesus. Lindars thinks this is not the case, even in the later rabbinic period, at least with the particular idiomatic use of the generic article with “Son of Man,” which it is his concern to establish (Fitzmyer [154], also, thinks that there was still, in the first century, more life than is normally allowed in the distinction between the forms with and without suffix). By generic article Lindars means the use of the suffix to “denot[e] a particular but unspecified member or group of members of the class” identified by the word or phrase to which the suffix is attached (as clarified in *JSNT* 23 [1985] 35–36). The particular idiom that Lindars claims to have identified is the use of this generic article in speech as an indirect means for the speaker to refer to himself. The use of the suffix indicates that the speaker has a specific person in mind, and the context encourages the hearer to identify that person with the speaker himself.

Bauckham considers that Lindars has not successfully demonstrated the existence of this distinctive idiom, and opts for a much simpler suggestion. Unlike Casey, Bauckham shares Lindars' sensitivity to the presence of the suffix as potentially affecting meaning, though, as we will see, this creates difficulties for his own position. Casey saw Jesus as achieving self-reference by making a general statement about humanity; Bauckham sees Jesus as achieving self-reference by making indefinite statements (“someone”), which he invites his hearers to recognize as pertaining to himself. Bauckham thinks that Jesus will have needed to use the form without suffix to indicate the indefiniteness. The Gospel forms are of course all definite, and this is taken by Bauckham as reflecting the translator's wish specifically to avoid Jesus' original ambiguity (33 n. 23).

Both Casey and Bauckham offer us thoroughly believable Aramaic idioms, but neither idiom is automatically to be applied to the Gospel uses. The claims of the competing idioms need to be tested by their capacity to best account for the actual texts.

My own scrutiny of the Aramaic texts used in the discussion suggests that there may indeed be an idiomatic distinction between uses of the phrase with and without the suffix (as maintained

in different ways by Lindars and Bauckham, but denied by Casey). When a general truth is being expressed, the suffix seems to be uniformly present. When an indefinite statement is being made, that is, a statement about an unspecified “someone,” then the suffix is uniformly absent. Only one precision needs to be added. As in other languages, the use of “someone” in a negative statement produces a statement of general validity: that is, the statement is true of “nobody”; or, said another way, the negation is true of any and every person.

Bultmann (e.g., *Theology of the New Testament*, 1:5) made popular the view that there was in the Judaism of Jesus’ day an expectation of the coming of a supernatural apocalyptic Son of Man from heaven, and it is from this background that we must elucidate the Gospel usage of the phrase. This view has suffered steady erosion in more recent scholarship and has almost disappeared from English language scholarship. The view has played a more prominent role in German language scholarship, and has been more persistent there (e.g., Müller, *Messias und Menschensohn*; and the essays in Pesch and Schnackenburg, ed(s), *Jesus und der Menschensohn*).

There are certainly no examples of an Aramaic use of “Son of Man” as a title (e.g., Vermes, “Use of **בֶּר נְשָׂא/בֶּר נֶשׂ**,” 327). The claim that it was used as a title is based on more indirect evidence. (i) Three similar phrases are used in *1 Enoch* (46:1–4; 48:2; 60:10; 62:5–9, 13, 14; 63:11; 69:27–29; 70:1–4; 71:14), and are applied to a figure who, having been established by God in heaven, is, in due course, revealed by God as eschatological judge and deliverer. While other parts of this composite work are represented by fragmentary texts at Qumran, this section of *1 Enoch* (The Similitudes) has survived only in late Ethiopic manuscripts. The absence from Qumran has led some to consider this section of *1 Enoch* as originating only in a later period (J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1976], has argued that The Similitudes are actually a Christian work composed in Greek). The arguments here are not decisive, and it is certainly possible to adopt the view that The Similitudes give us a window onto ideas that would have been quite possible in Jesus’ environment. The more fundamental question is that of whether this text reflects a titular use of “Son of Man.” The starting point in 46:1–4 with its clear allusions to [Dan 7:13](#) and the consistent use of the demonstrative (“this”) with the Son of Man references show that the use is not titular (see the argument presented by Casey, *Son of Man*, 99–112). This is now generally recognized. What we do have is an apocalyptic form of eschatological hope that makes use of [Dan 7:13](#) (but is certainly not based on that text); but we do not have a Son of Man title.

(ii) *4 Ezra* is a Jewish text generally dated around A.D. 100. It is known mostly from a Latin translation of a Greek translation, of what is probably a Hebrew original (cf. B. Metzger, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. Charlesworth, 1:519–20). Chap 13 introduces a dream figure of a man who comes up out of the sea and flies with the clouds of heaven (an obvious link with [Dan 13:7](#), and more clearly so when set in connection with other dependences on Daniel in [chaps. 11 and 12](#)). “Son of Man” is not impossible as a Semitic original, but is hardly necessary, and may not even be likely (cf. Casey’s argument [124–26] based on the change in term for man in Latin between the vision and the interpretation). Even if “Son of Man” were in the original, the translators have not seen this as a technical use, and, therefore, have not made any attempt to reproduce the idiom in translation. In original or in translation we have an image, based partly on

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e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

chaps. chapter(s)

[Dan 7:13](#), and not a title. This image is interpreted with reference to the messiah who has been referred to earlier in the book.

(iii) The third main line of argument for an apocalyptic Son of Man is the claim that only such a Jewish tradition can make sense of the Son of Man references that we find in the Gospel texts (see esp. Colpe, *TDNT* 8:429, 433–37). Most of the more recent interpreters do not seem to find a compelling need to postulate such a background (but see Higgins, *The Son of Man*).

The case for a titular use of Son of Man in the period of Jesus is far from compelling. But what is quite likely is the existence of a tradition of using the Daniel text, interpreted of an individual figure, as an ingredient in eschatological reflection. Given such a setting, the questions we must ask of the Gospel texts are: How much context would be needed to make a Son of Man statement a clear or even a veiled allusion to [Dan 7:13](#)? Do we need more because the possibility of indirect self-reference is also idiomatically to hand? Or do we need less, because the text was playing an active role in contemporary eschatological reflection? We can go no further without attention to the Gospel texts themselves.

As we turn to the Gospel texts, it may be in order to register the concern that too often the reconstructed Aramaic idiom or Jewish apocalyptic background has become an infallible determinant of the authenticity of the particular Son of Man texts.

The synoptic Gospel data have traditionally been organized into three groups of texts: first, texts that refer to the time of the earthly ministry of Jesus ([Mark 2:10, 28](#); [Luke 7:34; 9:58; 11:30\[?\]; 12:10; 19:10](#); [Matt 10:23\[?\]](#)); second, texts that focus on the coming suffering of the Son of Man ([Mark 8:31; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 14:21, 41](#); [Luke 11:30\[?\]; 22:48; Matt 12:40](#)); and, finally, texts that refer to a future role of glory for the Son of Man ([Mark 8:38; 13:26; 14:62](#); [Luke 12:8, 40; 17:22, 24, 26, 30, 18:8; 21:36; Matt 10:23\[?\]; 13:41; 19:28; 24:30, 37; 25:31](#)). (This listing is not complete. It does not list parallels; nor does it include some of the more obvious Matthean insertions of the idiom; and there are texts that do not fit the scheme, such as [Luke 6:22](#).)

Hooker (“Son of Man Problem,” 159–60; *Son of Man*, 80) has rightly warned that this very classification and even the particular headings used to identify the categories run the danger of influencing the subsequent study of the texts. For example, all the texts that certainly belong in the second category, except for those set in the immediate context of Jesus’ betrayal, actually anticipate, in themselves or in their immediate context, resurrection or glory; that is they all anticipate both suffering *and* vindication, and so have more in common with the third category than is at first evident. Similarly, Hooker has pointed out that each of the Markan texts in the third category anticipates future glory against a background of present difficulty, rejection, or persecution, and rightly uses the term “vindication” in connection with them. With more or less appropriateness the same term may be used in connection with a good number of the other texts in the third group.

Other categorizations may shed useful light upon the Son of Man sayings. We may divide among those sayings in which allusion to [Dan 7:13](#) is clearly present, those in which it is clearly absent and in which the thought expressed does not immediately cohere with the circle of ideas in the first group, and those which, though they do not have a clear allusion to [Dan 7:13](#), would

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esp. especially

cohere well with the texts that do have such a definite allusion. Alternatively, we may distinguish sayings that involve a vindication of the Son of Man, from those that involve his vindication or (non-vindication) of others. We could, further, distinguish between sayings that affirm the authority and dignity of the Son of Man and those that speak of his humiliation. Finally, we might want to distinguish texts in which self-reference is unambiguous from those in which this is not the case (and here we could distinguish between texts in which “Son of Man” is clearly an individual and those in which corporate reference of some kind needs to be considered as a possibility).

How well do the suggested Aramaic idioms fit the actual Son of Man sayings? Once the texts are isolated from their present context, Casey’s view is effective for [Luke 12:10](#); [Mark 2:27–28](#); and [14:21](#). It is possible for [Luke 22:48](#). For the passion predictions it is attractive, but depends heavily on a quite speculative reconstruction. His handling of [Mark 8:38](#); [Luke 7:34](#); and [9:58](#) is much less convincing. Bauckham’s “someone” is most effective for [Mark 2:10](#); [Luke 7:34](#); [11:30](#); and [12:8–9](#). Despite his desire to include some of the texts that allude to [Dan 7](#), the presence of such allusion seems at once to give a different role to the “Son of Man” expression. In other cases the actual idiom would seem to need to be able to carry more significance in itself, than provided for by Bauckham’s approach.

Do the “Son of Man” sayings that involve a future coming or role of glory presuppose a Jewish apocalyptic titular use of “Son of Man”? In some of the texts it is certainly true that “Son of Man” is meant to evoke thoughts of an eschatological figure of glory. In most cases there is, however, an evocation of [Dan 7](#) imagery to facilitate this. What is clear is that the “Son of Man” of [Dan 7](#) is to be understood in a way reminiscent of the eschatological views associated with the use of the [Dan 7](#) material in *1 Enoch* and *4 Ezra* (as discussed above). One particular point to note is the way that *4 Ezra* [13:1–4](#) has the same application of the Daniel imagery of a coming with the clouds of heaven to a role upon the earth as is found in the Gospel tradition (in Daniel the coming is to God; though the transition is eased by the likelihood that the imagery of [Dan 7](#) involves the human figure coming to an earthly location where temporary thrones have been set up [[7:9](#)] in order for God to make a visit and establish the order of affairs that he has in mind). Notably absent in the Gospel texts is the emphasis in *1 Enoch* on the prior presence of the human figure in heaven, before being revealed for his earthly role. It seems fair to claim for the Gospel texts a setting in the kind of Jewish thought exemplified in these texts, but not to claim that the Gospel texts reflect a fixed set of well defined expectations, or a titular use of “Son of Man.”

Is it possible to bring together some kind of indirect self-reference and allusion to [Dan 7](#)? One can certainly do this with much greater confidence in the flow of a Gospel text than when each of the component texts must be constantly under scrutiny as to its authenticity and each must be treated largely in isolation from its present Gospel context. Nonetheless, a pattern may commend itself as being more fundamental to the texts than can be attributed only to a later redactor.

I start from Bauckham’s “somebody,” by noting that if the “somebody” is both somebody with whom Jesus is potentially to be identified, and at the same time a “somebody” of significance, whose precise identity remains yet unspecified, then considerably more of the texts begin to fit neatly into an approach like Bauckham’s. To modernize, we might think of something like “the Man of destiny.” This would do justice to the way in which the “Son of Man” seems regularly to be assumed to be a figure of authority and dignity, without being identified as any specific dignitary. This would also allow for the possibility of an added precision being offered at a certain point or in certain contexts: this figure is, whatever else he may also be, the man of [Dan](#)

7. Prior to that further explication, the usage would remain somewhat mysterious, and even with the further explication we are not to understand that the contours of the phrase are exhaustively given in the **Dan 7** imagery or the traditions associated with it in its contemporary usage. At times there could be real doubt as to the application to Jesus himself. If he were to be taken as referring to himself, then the claim of the idiom would be no more precise than to be a figure of importance. But all the time the idiom would be open to the precision to come with the eschatological role identified in the link to **Dan 7**, but not in the sense that “Son of Man” is now recognized to have been all along a cryptic reference to **Dan 7:13**. As is not the case with Bauckham, who needed to find an underlying form without the suffix, the usage suggested here would be better expressed with the form that uses the suffix. This is not exactly any existing Aramaic idiom. It would be a distinct coinage remembered by the early church as a characteristic diction of Jesus, in much the way that the anticipatory amen was remembered or the use of Abba.

## *To Follow Me, You Must Give Away Your Life to Gain It (9:23–27)*

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Par Paraleipomenon: Septuagint of Chronicles

et al. *et alii*, and others

*JAAR* *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*

**BEvT** Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie

**BETL** Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium (Leuven/Gembloux: Leuven UP/Peeters)

**SANT** Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament

**BZNW** Beihefte zur *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* [ZNW]

*RSR* *Recherches de science religieuse*

**E.** “Der unendliche Wert der Menschenseele: Zur Auslegung von Mark. 8,36.” In *Forschung und Erfahrung im Dienste der Seelsorge*, ed. O. Söhngen et al. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961. 46–57. **Fletcher, D. R.** “Condemned to Die: The Logion on Cross-Bearing: What Does It Mean?” *Int* 18 (1964) 156–64. **Fridrichsen, A.** “Sich selbst verleugnen.” *ConNT* 2 (1936) 1–8. **Fuller, R. H.** “The Clue to Jesus’ Self-understanding.” *SE* 3 (1964) 58–66. **George, A.** “Qui veut sauver sa vie la perdra; qui perd sa vie la sauvera.” *BVC* 83 (1968) 11–24. **Glombitza, O.** “Das Kreuz: Eine neutestamentliche Studie.” In *Domine dirige me in verbo tuo: Herr leite mich nach deinem Wort*. FS M. Mitzenheim, ed. E. Mauersberger et al. Berlin: Ev. Luth. Kirche in Thuringen, 1961. 60–67. **Green, M. P.** “The Meaning of Cross-Bearing.” *BSac* 140 (1983) 117–33. **Griffiths, J. G.** “The Disciples’s Cross.” *NTS* 16 (1969–70) 358–64. **Holman, C. L.** “The Idea of an Imminent Parousia in the Synoptic Gospels.” *StBibT* 3 (1973) 15–31. **Kattenbusch, F.** “Das Wort vom unersetzlichen Wert der Seele.” *ZNW* 10 (1909) 329–31. **Koolmeister, R.** “Selbstverleugnung, Kreuzaufnahme und Nachfolge: eine historische Studie über Mt xvi. 24.” In *Charisteria Iohanni Kopp*. Papers of the Estonian Theological Society in Exile 7. Stockholm: ETSE, 1954. 64–94. **Kümmel, W. G.** *Promise and Fulfilment*. 25–29. ———. “Das Verhalten Jesus gegenüber und das Verhalten der Menschensohns: Markus 8,38 par und Lukas 12,3f par. Mattäus 10,32f.” In *Jesus und der Menschensohn*. FS A. Vögtle, ed. R. Pesch et al. Freiburg/Basel/Wien: Herder, 1975. 210–24. **Lambrecht, J.** “Q-Influence on Mark 8,34–9,1.” In *Logia: Les paroles de Jésus—The Sayings of Jesus*. FS J. Coppins, ed. J. Delobel. Leuven: UP, 1982. 277–304. **McDermott, J. M.** “Luke, XII, 8–9: Stone of Scandal.” *RB* 84 (1977) 523–37. **Michaelis, W.** “Zeichen, Siegel, Kreuz.” *TZ* 12 (1956) 505–25. **Moore, A. L.** *The Parousia in the New Testament*. *NovTSup* 13. Leiden: Brill, 1966. 125–31, 175–77. **Perrin, N.** “The Composition of Mark ix 1.” *NovT* 11 (1969) 67–70. **Pesch, R.** “Über die Autorität Jesu

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Int *Interpretation*

ConNT *Coniectanea neotestamentica*

SE *Studia Evangelica* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (= TU 73 [1959], 87 [1964], 88 [1964], 102 [1968], 103 [1968], 112 [1973])

BVC *Bible et vie chrétienne*

BSac *Bibliotheca Sacra*

StBibT *Studia biblica et theologica*

ZNW *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*

par. parallel or paragraph

Q “Qumran”, “Qere” Qere (To be “read.” Masoretic suggested pronunciation for vocalized Hebrew text of the OT), or Quelle (“Sayings” source for the Gospels)

RB *Revue biblique*

TZ *Theologische Zeitschrift* (ThZ)

NovTSup Supplement(s) to *Novum Testamentum*

NovT *Novum Testamentum*

... ” In *Die Kirche des Anfangs*. FS H. Schürmann, ed. R. Schnackenburg et al. Leipzig: St. Benno, 1977. 25–55, esp. 26–39. **Rebell, W.** “‘Sein Leben verlieren’ (Mark 8.35 Par) als Strukturmoment vor- und nachösterlichen Glaubens.” *NTS* 35 (1989) 202–18. **Riesenfeld, H.** “The Meaning of the Verb ... ” *ConNT* 11 (1947) 23–27. **Schierse, F. J.** “Historische Kritik und theologische Exegese der synoptischen Evangelien, erläutert an Mk. 9,1.” *Scholastik* 29 (1954) 520–36. **Schlosser, J.** *Le règne de Dieu*. 323–71. **Schneider, J.** “ ... ” *TDNT* 7:572–80. **Schulz, A.** *Nachfolgen und Nachahmen: Studien über das Verhältnis der neutestamentlichen Jüngerschaft zur urchristlichen Vorbildethik*. SANT 6. Munich: Kösel, 1962. 82–90. **Schwarz, G.** “ ... ” *NovT* 17 (1975) 109–12. ———. “Der Nachfolgespruch Markus 8.34b.c Par: Emendation und Rückübersetzung.” *NTS* 33 (1987) 255–65. **Trocme, E.** “Marc 9, 1: prédication ou réprimand?” *SE* 2 (1964) 259–65. **Vögtle, A.** “Exegetische Erwägungen über das Wissen und Selbstbewusstsein Jesu.” In *Gott im Welt*. FS K. Rahner, ed. J. B. Metz et al. Freiburg: Herder, 1964. 1:608–67, esp. 642–47. **Wijngaards, J.** “Let Him Take up His Cross ... ” *Vidyajyoti* 47 (1983) 106–17. **Zimmermann, H.** “Christus nachfolgen: Eine Studie zu den Nachfolge-Worten der Synoptischen Evangelien.” *TGI* 53 (1963) 241–55.

See further at the “Son of Man” excursus preceding this section.

### Translation

<sup>23</sup>Then he said to all, “If someone wants to come after me, let him deny<sup>a</sup> himself, and let him take up his cross daily,<sup>b, c</sup> and let him follow me. <sup>24</sup>For, whoever wants to save his life will lose it; whoever loses his life for my sake, this one will save it. <sup>25</sup>For, how is a person benefited, who has gained the whole world, but who has lost or forfeited his own self? <sup>26</sup>For, whoever is ashamed of me and of my words,<sup>d</sup> of this one will the Son of Man be ashamed, when he comes in his glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels. <sup>27</sup>In fact,<sup>e</sup> I tell you truly: There are some of those who are standing here<sup>f</sup> who will certainly not taste

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TGI *Theologie und Glaube*

a a. The compound form (same sense) is quite strongly attested (P<sup>75</sup> B C W etc.), but this probably represents conformity to Mark or Matthew.

b b. “And let him take up his cross daily” is missing from D a l, probably due to homoeoarcton.

c c. “Daily” is absent from **Σ**<sup>1</sup> C D etc. to conform it to the other Synoptics.

d d. “Words” is missing from D a e l sy<sup>c</sup> Or. This would give the sense “my [disciples],” but is certainly an accidental omission.

e e. Translating as indicating here a measure of contrast, but also climax.

f f. Quite a lot of texts (A C D W Q etc.) conform the wording here to Matthew, with no change of meaning. Luke’s text involves a slightly odd use of (“here”).

*death before they see the kingdom of God. who will certainly not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.*<sup>g</sup>

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### Notes

a. The compound form (same sense) is quite strongly attested (P<sup>75</sup> B C W etc.), but this probably represents conformity to Mark or Matthew.

b. “And let him take up his cross daily” is missing from D a l, probably due to homoeoarcton.

c. “Daily” is absent from  $\aleph^1$  C D etc. to conform it to the other Synoptics.

d. “Words” is missing from D a e l sy<sup>c</sup> Or. This would give the sense “my [disciples],” but is certainly an accidental omission.

e. Translating as indicating here a measure of contrast, but also climax.

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g g. D reads instead, “the Son of Man coming in his glory.” This is based on, but not identical to, the Matthean reading.

<sup>3</sup>Nolland, J. 2002. *Vol. 35B: Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 9:21-18:34*. Word Biblical Commentary . Word, Incorporated: Dallas

P Peshar (commentary)

B Codex Vaticanus or MT MS, edited by Jacob ben Chayim, Venice (1524/25)

C The Cairo Geniza

$\aleph^1$  Codex Sinaiticus

D Codex Bezae or Deuteronom(ist)ic

l *longum* (metrically long poetic line)

sy Syriac

Or *Orientalia* (Rome)

A Codex Alexandrinus

g. D reads instead, “the Son of Man coming in his glory.” This is based on, but not identical to, the Matthean reading.

### ***Form/Structure/Setting***

Luke connects vv 23–27 even more closely with vv 21–22 than does his Markan source. What Jesus announces for himself, is not for him alone. Despite all the horrors of the prospect, it is finally the way to life, and the values embodied must also be embraced by the would-be disciple of Jesus.

Luke uses only his Markan source, which has at this point a collection of isolated sayings of Jesus, which have been gathered by Mark, or before him, as mutually interpreting each other. In particular vv 24–27 are all offered in explanation of the primary statement to be found in v 23.

The presence of the word “cross” in v 23 (= Mark 8:34) has raised suspicions about whether this verse can be attributed to the historical Jesus. Despite the extensive skepticism that exists about the historicity of the passion predictions (see above at 9:21–22), at the end of all the discussion there is a surprising degree of consensus that the basic core of the material here should be traced back to Jesus himself. Beyond all the particular arguments, this is probably because the radical force of the verse seems to cohere so well with the distinctively radical nature of other teachings of Jesus.

Those who stand on the negative side of the argument consider that it is impossible to separate the reference to the cross from a Christian awareness of Jesus’ own passion (see, e.g., E. Haenchen, *NovT* 6 [1963] 92). The same concern also motivates those who would postulate an original lacking the reference to a cross (Arvedson, *Mysterium Christi: Eine Studie zu Mt 11, 25–30* [Uppsala: Lundquist, 1937]. Vorwort, iv: “cross” is derived ultimately from “yoke” in Matt 11:29a [Schwarz, *NTS* 33 (1987) 259–60, develops Arvedson’s view further by claiming that behind “cross” stands the Aramaic אגדי (gdy), which means a yoke or bar placed across the shoulders to facilitate the balancing of heavy loads]; Dinkler, “Jesu Wort”: “cross” is an interpretation in light of Jesus’ passion of “sign” [ μ ], which referred originally to a [metaphorical] sealing of oneself with the sign of belonging to God, and which would have taken the form of the old shape of the Hebrew letter ת [taw; see Ezek 9:4] which was in fact cross shaped [x or +]). A similar motivation may be detected in Glombitza’s attempt (“Das Kreuz”) to give the sense of one of the stakes from which a palisade is constructed. These attempts

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Q “Qumran”, “Qere” Qere (To be “read.” Masoretic suggested pronunciation for vocalized Hebrew text of the OT), or Quelle (“Sayings” source for the Gospels)

e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

NovT Novum Testamentum

NTS *New Testament Studies*

to unearth an obscured original range from the speculative to the fanciful, and we must ask whether there is not some other way of dealing with the need to separate pre- and post-resurrection perspectives here.

Apart from the word “cross” itself, there are two features of the text that bind closely the cross of Jesus and the cross of the disciple: (i) the Markan setting in closest proximity to the first passion prediction; (ii) the quasi-equivalence established between cross-carrying and following Jesus (in the rather specific sense of doing/being ready to do what he himself has done/will do). The first of these is clearly Markan or pre-Markan editing; the second, it has been suggested, is the result of development of the pericope from an original that spoke of coming after Jesus only in the sense of the idiom known to have been applied to students of Jewish rabbis (so, e.g.,

Laufen, *Doppelüberlieferung*, 309: הלך אחריו, *hlk ry*, “to go after” = “to be a disciple”).

Laufen’s view is supported by the way that the Markan form (reproduced by Luke, but contrast Matt 10:38; Luke 14:27) ends up having an awkward double reference to following Jesus, where Luke 14:27 can be understood to have “to be my disciple” as an equivalent for one of these. (Laufen argues effectively [305–8], against the more common view, which favors the negative form preserved in Luke 14:27, that the positive form reflected by Mark is likely to be original.) Does an original that said something like “He who would follow me [i.e., be my disciple] must take up his cross,” and that is removed from its Markan editorial context, still reflect a post-resurrection situation?

The Jews of Jesus’ day were quite familiar with crucifixion, dominantly as the Roman form of execution, but also with an awareness that crucifixion had been practiced in their own internal history (on crucifixion in Jesus’ day see M. Hengel, *The Cross of the Son of God*, tr. J. Bowden [London: SCM, 1986] 93–185; for the situation in Palestine see further J. A. Fitzmyer, “Crucifixion in Ancient Palestine, Qumran Literature, and the New Testament,” *CBQ* 40 [1978] 493–513). Nonetheless, there is said to be no surviving Semitic reference to carrying a cross, except in *Midr. Gen* 22:6, where Isaac bearing the wood for the burnt offering is likened to “one who carries his stake [cross] on his shoulder,” and which Dinkler takes as reflecting later Jewish response to Christian claims (“Jesu Wort,” 114; Schelkle, *Passion Jesu*, 219, cites from B Ber. 5c a reference to two men deemed to have been implicated in a murder: “They both go out laden with two beams,” but I have not been able to confirm this reference). How heavily should the lack of Semitic parallels weigh in making a judgment about whether Jesus could have spoken of

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i.e. *id est*, that is

tr. translation, translator(s), translated by, transpose(s)

SCM Student Christian Movement

CBQ *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

Midr. **Midraš**; (Midrash) cited with usual abbreviation for biblical book; but *Midr. Qoh.* = **Midr Qohelet**

Ber. **Berakot**

taking up one's cross? M. Hengel postulates a zealot idiom on the basis of the mortal danger from the Romans in which taking up the zealot cause in Jesus' day would have placed one (*Die Zealoten: Untersuchungen zur jüdischen Freiheitsbewegung in der Zeit von Herodes I. bis 70 nach Christi*, AGJU 1 [Leiden/Köln: Brill, 1961] 265–66), but such a borrowing would seem to leave too much room for misunderstanding, and suggests an unlikely degree of orientation to the Roman question on the part of Jesus. But do we need this to suggest that Jesus could have coined such an idiom for “putting one's head on the block”? There is certainly plenty of Greco-Roman material about execution by crucifixion, but only quite rarely does the victim's carrying of the cross get any specific mention. Yet, there would be no difficulty in proposing the emergence of such an idiom in a Greco-Roman context. Where there are far fewer references to crucifixion in Semitic texts, it is quite likely that there will be gaps in our evidence for mapping out the linguistic possibilities, but there is no strong reason for considering that these linguistic possibilities will be much different in Jesus' language field. Jesus' demand makes an interesting antithesis to Epictetus' recommendation (in connection with whether one should provoke an opponent in a legal dispute; *Diatribes* 2.2.20): “If you want to be crucified, wait, and the cross will come,” and compare also Cicero's attack on the Stoic thesis that pain is not really an evil (*de Finibus* 5.84): “Anyone who is put on a cross cannot be happy” (both cited from Hengel, *The Cross of the Son of God*, tr. J. Bowden [London: SCM, 1986] 159).

There seems to be no good reason for denying to Jesus the main core of Mark 8:34. It has the same character as other vivid and powerful, but less than precise, images by which Jesus' speech is marked. Luke may reflect the original thrust of Jesus' words when he sets his second version of this saying (14:27) alongside the call for hatred of family and even of self (v 26). As with other of Jesus' dramatic statements he would not have wanted this one to be taken in an unqualified manner. He would have wanted it to capture the attention and fire the imagination!

The saying in v 24 (= Mark 8:35) has been preserved in a number of forms in the Gospel tradition. It is also paired with versions of the saying in v 23 in Matt 10:38–39 (and cf. Luke 14:26–27 where “his own soul” in v 26 may betray the influence of a form of the 9:24 saying [as Schürmann, 544]). John 12:24–25 is also suggestive of the same combination. Luke also uses a form of the saying in 17:33.

Both Matt 10:39 (Laufen, *Doppelüberlieferung*, 322–25; Lambrecht, “Q-influence,” 283–85) and Mark 8:35 (Schürmann, 545; Dautzenberg, *Sein Leben bewahren*, 60–66) have been defended as reflecting the more original form of the saying. The arguments are not decisive. In the Markan form the “he will save” is easily understood as a development making use of the Christian vocabulary of salvation, but “wishes to save” stands in the way of this explanation. The Matthean form may have resulted from the tension with the normal Christian use of salvation language observed in the second half of the Markan form, but the more enigmatic nature of the Matthean form with its use of the language of finding and losing could be a pointer to its greater originality (but could we be dealing there with an idiom for “making it” in life?). Finding and losing form an easier antithesis than saving and losing, until we realize that the Markan form

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AGJU Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums (Leiden/Cologne: Brill)

cf. *confer*, compare

assumes a situation in which the possession of life is under threat. The loss of this context could have produced a shift to a “better” antithesis. The Johannine form relates more easily to the Matthean, but this tells us little about original forms. The sense of a critical situation that attaches to the Markan form finally inclines me to favor it as the more original.

Mark’s “and the gospel’s” is not found in any other form of the saying, and is likely to be a Markan development. His “for my sake” is not found in Luke 17:33, where it would not suit the context, or in the Johannine form. It may or may not have been part of the original, but it is at least an accurate gloss, pointing to the fact that we have here, not a timeless paradox of wisdom, but a challenge to respond to the situation created by the presence of the ministry of Jesus.

The historicity of this saying of Jesus is not normally questioned, but there is some measure of parallel to it in *b. Tamid* 32a; *The Sentences of the Syriac Menander*, lines 314–19 (and cf. *b. Ber.* 63b; 1Q27 1.3–4; *1 Enoch* 48:7; Epictetus 4.1.165), and this has occasionally brought suspicion on the saying (e.g., Braun, *Spätjüdisch-häretischer und früh christlicher Radikalismus*, BHT 24 [Tübingen: Mohr, 1957] 2:104 n. 5, 2:136 n. 1). There is a measure of genuine similarity, but it requires an unwarranted skepticism to turn this into dependence.

Luke continues to follow his Markan source for v 25 (= Mark 8:36), though he does not reproduce v 37, which in Mark forms a unit with it. The general form of the questions is akin to that of Jewish wisdom material (cf. esp. Eccl 1:3), but the specific link of the material is with Ps 49 (see Dautzenberg, *Sein Leben bewahren*, 69, 71–75). The link with Ps. 49 is no guarantee that the sayings go back to the historical Jesus, but it does demonstrate that Bultmann (*Synoptic Tradition*, 97, 102) is wrong to separate the sayings and trace them to secular proverbs that have been made into Dominical sayings. There is no sufficient reason for denying the sayings to the historical Jesus.

v 26 continues the sequence of Markan verses (= Mark 8:37). A second form of this saying is known to Matthew (10:33) and Luke (12:9). This second form uses the language of denial rather than that of being ashamed, and it occurs in conjunction with a positive counterpart that uses the language of confession of Jesus. There is general agreement that the juxtaposition of positive and negative forms has been abbreviated to the negative half in the Markan form. Mark’s “and of my words” is also regularly treated as a secondary Markan development (cf. Mark 8:35; 10:29), as is

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*b. breve* (metrically short poetic line), or before a tractate indicates Babylonian Talmud.

### Tamid Tamid

1Q Numbered caves of Qumran, yielding written material; followed by abbreviation of biblical or apocryphal book

BHT Beiträge zur historischen Theologie

n. note

esp. especially

“his Father” with its unparalleled idiom: “Father of the Son of Man,” which seems quite un-Jewish. Kümmel (“Verhalten Jesus”) stands against the consensus that the Markan form is secondary at every other point of difference as well, by maintaining the originality of the language of shame and the reference to the coming of the Son of Man with the holy angels. He argues persuasively that it is easier to explain, in a persecution context, a change from the less precise language of shame to the more precise language of denial, than it is to explain the opposite development (but note the explanation offered by Lambrecht [“Q-Influence,” 286] that Mark is avoiding the language of denial, which has been used in another way in v 34). He cannot, however, explain the loss of reference to the coming of the Son of Man in the alternative form. Lambrecht (285–87; also Schürmann, 549–50) explains all the differences as the immediate product of Markan redaction, in terms that are generally persuasive. Note particularly the Markan interest in Jesus’ future connection with glory (10:37; 13:26), the way that the mention of “his Father” prepares for the transfiguration declaration of sonship, and the way that the coming of the Son of Man echoes Mark 13:26–27. Some of the differences could equally be pre-Markan, as is often maintained.

With the exception of Matt 10:33, each of the forms of the saying either has a first person reference in the first clause, which gives way to a Son of Man reference in the second clause (Mark 8:34; Luke 9:26), or it betrays by its context that such was the original reading of its source (Matt 16:27; Luke 12:9—here the former only retains the second clause, while the latter has the me/Son of Man pattern in the positive form in 12:8, which probably gives way to a passive construction in v 9 to smooth the transition to v 10, which uses a passive construction). Because, however, there is a general tendency in the tradition to add Son of Man references (J. Jeremias, “Die älteste Schicht der Menschensohn-Logien,” *ZNW* 58 [1967] 159–72), C. Colpe (*TDNT* 8:442; “Der Begriff ‘Menschensohn’ und die Methode der Erforschung messianischer Prototypen,” *Kairos* 11 [1969] 241–63; 12 [1970] 81–122; 13 [1971] 1–17; 14 [1972] 241–57, here vol. 13, pp. 6–8) insists on an original form without Son of Man, finally settling on a form closely related to the Matt 10:33 wording (but with “before the angels”; in *TDNT* the form was developed out of Luke 12:8–9, but with “men” for Son of Man in v 8, and accepting the switch to the passive in v 9).

It seems, however, that Colpe does not reckon adequately with the oddness of a change that moves from a form in which there is personal reference to Jesus in both clauses to a Son of Man form, but introduces Son of Man in only one half of each statement (Kümmel, “Verhalten Jesus,” 215, makes a similar point in connection with a discussion of Matt 19:28). Further, McDermott (*RB* 84 [1977] 531–32, 533–36) successfully identifies redactional reasons why Matthew might here have gone against his normal trend, and deleted a Son of Man reference in 10:33

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*ZNW Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*

TDNT G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., tr. G. W. Bromiley *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ET (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)

vol. volume

RB *Revue biblique*

(McDermott argues, further, that where Matthew produces a me/Son of Man sequence in 19:28, his basis for comfort with the juxtaposition is precisely his awareness of this juxtaposition in his source for 10:32–33). It is best, then, with most scholars, to take as original a form that moves from a personal reference to Jesus in the first clause to a Son of Man form in the second clause.

It is hotly disputed whether such a saying could go back to the historical Jesus. On the assumption that the saying assumes confession before legal authorities, it has attracted suspicion because such only became the situation for the disciples at a later date (Vielhauer, “Gottesreich,” 78–80). It is, however, doubtful whether we have a straightforward court setting for either the scene in heaven or the scene on earth (see McDermott, *RB* 84 [1977] 530–31, who is interested in the scene on earth). Käsemann (“Sentences of Holy Law in the New Testament,” in *New Testament Questions of Today*, NTL, tr. W. J. Montague [London: SCM, 1969] 66–81, here 77) has relegated this text to the prophetic community’s activity, as one of its “sentences of Holy Law.” But this category is not without difficulties (see esp. K. Berger, “Zu den sogenannten Sätzen heiligen Rechts,” *NTS* 17 [1970–71] 10–40), and in any case our text has such unique features that it defies classification (McDermott, *RB* 84 [1977] 532–33).

Quite commonly the text is rescued, on the basis that Jesus makes a clear distinction between himself and the future Son of Man, as the one future Son of Man text to actually go back to the historical Jesus (following Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 128). In light of the preceding Son of Man excursus, an ambiguity of reference here is to be accepted. But of course, an ambiguity is quite different from a clear reference to another figure. The clear distinction view depends too heavily upon an apocalyptic Son of Man expectation, for which we have seen (excursus above) there is inadequate evidence. Via such an understanding of Son of Man, this view also fails to do justice to the degree of ultimacy attributed by Jesus to his own ministry (Luke 6:47; 7:23; 10:23–24; 11:20; 17:21; etc.): in no sense can he be viewed as seeing himself as only a preliminary figure, whose significance will give way to the ultimacy of the Son of Man at his appearance. The present text contains its own warning against this, in the way that the Son of Man, whoever he is, simply has the role of authenticating the ultimate significance that response to Jesus already has. Nonetheless, much of the weight of the argument for authenticity based on the distinction between Jesus and the Son of Man can still be appealed to on the view that Jesus here speaks in an ambiguous and mysterious manner. This is not how the early church will speak!

A final view to be considered is that the saying reflects a stage of development in the early church in which a distinction is being drawn between Jesus’ historical ministry and his future role as the Son of Man (see P. Hoffmann, *Logienquelle*, 142–58). The background understanding of Son of Man in relation to which this view is formulated has been criticized above. This view must also push all the present Son of Man texts to a yet later date. The view and the subsequent discussion have suggested such a complexity of development and a plurality of streams of thought as to undermine the thesis involved (cf. McDermott, *RB* 84 [1977] 526–27).

We may, then, with some confidence trace back to the historical Jesus a form of the saying close to that in Matt 10:32–33, but with Son of Man in each second clause and with “before the angels,” and just possibly with the language of shame rather than that of denial. Here Jesus

affirms the ultimate significance of response to his ministry and opens up a place for speculation about his relationship with the man of destiny who will endorse in heaven the significance of the responses made to Jesus upon earth.

Once again in v 27, Luke reproduces his Markan source (= Mark 9:1), but with a number of significant changes, none of which, however, point to any second source. The origin of the Markan verse has been quite variously evaluated. Quite common is the view that it is a Markan creation, dependent on 8:38 and 13:26–27, 30 (J. Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse: Literarische Analyse und Strukturuntersuchung*, AnBib 28 [Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1967] 202–11, affirms the link with Mark 13:30, but considers that Mark 13:30 is actually based on 9:1; Schürmann, 549–50, sees, additionally, an influence from the Dominical logion on which Matt 10:23 is based). Unique features of the verse, however, make it more likely that Mark depends here on a traditional saying (note esp.  $\mu$ , “they will certainly not taste death,” and possibly  $\epsilon$ , “those standing here”). See the careful discussion of Chilton, *God in Strength*, 251–74 (whose conclusions, however, about the original sense of the pericope do not flow from his source analysis, and are not to be followed), who identifies  $\epsilon$ , “and he said to them,”  $\delta$ , indicating direct speech,  $\alpha$ , “certain ones here,” and  $\beta$ , “having come,” as the Markan contribution, with some Markan influence on the syntax of  $\gamma$ , “of the ones standing.” While these judgments are more precise than I would consider fully defensible, they do satisfactorily identify the shape of the pre-Markan logion, with two exceptions. Chilton’s case for the inclusion of  $\delta$ , “see,” does not persuade: if the Markan link is with the transfiguration, then this is precisely one of those “sporadic glimpses at the true nature of Jesus” that, Chilton reports W. H. Kelber as suggesting, are referred to with this verb in Markan locution; this verb could be Markan. Chilton’s case for the deletion of  $\beta$ , “having come,” is also weak, based as it is on taking the use of this verb in Mark 9:13 as referring to the transfiguration.

Detached from its present context, it is difficult to be sure of the pre-Markan sense of this verse. It seems to speak of an experience that, it is anticipated, will overtake people who are at present quite unaware, and who are not here being informed. It uses a time frame that is not immediate (contrast Luke 17:21) but is restricted to the present generation (as Mark 13:30). There is a domestically intimate note to the text, which separates it from apocalyptic texts to which it is otherwise closely related. This is a verse that could easily have been taken by the disciple band as intimating that the power of Rome would be broken in the lifetime of their contemporaries. Equally, it could be connected with a prophetic anticipation of God’s judgment in history upon his people (contrast 2 Kgs 20:16–19; and cf. Luke 11:50). The verse may anticipate some powerful authentication of Jesus’ ministry, but without being more precise about the nature of that authentication. There may be an implied contrast with the nature of the presence of the kingdom of God in Jesus’ own ministry (cf. Mark 4:30–32).

The very difficulty of giving precision to the sense of the pre-Markan saying is a good indication that this is no early church creation.

## Comment

Jesus announces a suffering fate not only for himself, but also as a necessary condition of discipleship for those who would be his followers. vv 23–27 are to be read closely with vv 21–22; vv 24–27 provide a degree of explanation for the harsh demand of v 23.

**23** Luke deletes Mark’s mention of the drawing in of the crowd: he may have been sensitive to the problem of the presence of a crowd after the solitude of v 18, or his concern may be rather to draw more tightly together the passion prediction and the call to cross bearing. Luke’s “all” still performs the function of the Markan crowd: it assures the reader that this is a general call for discipleship and not one that should be restricted to leaders or any group of special Christians. Mark’s aorist  $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$ , “said,” becomes  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$ , “was saying”: Luke is prone to adding the imperfect form of this verb. Luke softens the difficulty of Mark’s form of the saying in which *following* apparently becomes a condition for *following* by using a different verb the first time. Luke reduces Mark’s compound verb for “let him deny” to the simple form (more often the change is in the other direction, but both kinds of change are evident). Luke adds  $\mu$ , “daily,” to indicate that the call is to an ever renewed state of affairs; it is not a call to a one-time-only decision or a response only to some unique situation.

Taking up the cross refers to the Roman custom of requiring the condemned criminal to carry to the place of execution the cross-bar to be used in the execution (cf. Plutarch, *de sera num. vind.* 9.554b: “Every criminal who is executed carries his own cross”; for further references see Schelkle, *Passion Jesu*, 218–19).

In *Form/Structure/Setting* above, a brief original form of this saying is discussed whose sense might be represented by “If you wish to be my disciple, you must put your head on the chopping block.” Jesus’ call was to a radical denial of self-interest and concern for one’s own natural well-being. Jesus certainly anticipated that identification with himself would work itself out, on occasion, in social ostracism, persecution, and even martyrdom, and the disciple should be ready to meet this set of life-destroying responses head on. The call to “put the rope around one’s neck” stands on a par with that to hate one’s own family. The “let him deny himself” may be an early explanation, or it may come from the merging of two originally distinct sayings of Jesus (cf. Schulz, *Nachfolgen*, 84; despite all the psychological damage and narrowing of life that has been produced through a [mis]application of this saying, there is no good reason for positing with Schwarz, *NTS* 33 [1987] 257–59, a mistranslation of an Aramaic term, which should have been rendered “let him know [himself]”).

In light of Jesus’ own passion, at the very least a fresh poignancy and challenge is added to this Dominical saying, and the saying becomes clearly oriented to Jesus’ own experience of rejection and death (thus the present link to the passion prediction). Now the call to be a disciple becomes a call to follow Jesus in the way of the cross. Now “to follow him” is not just a Jewish way of talking about being a disciple of a master, but a challenge to have one’s whole existence determined by and patterned after a crucified messiah. Now the double reference to following gains its sense: to follow him (i.e., be his disciple) involves following him in the path to death

that he chose (this is better than with Fridrichsen, *ConNT* 2 [1936] 1–8; Schulz, *Nachfolgen*, 83, to deny imperatival force to the final verb). One is now called to share in the fate of Jesus.

It is likely that in Mark we should understand that the metaphorical taking up of the cross should have led on naturally to the disciples' sharing with Jesus his fate in Jerusalem, something for which they were not yet ready. This perspective is no longer as evident in the rendering of Luke, who focuses the saying with his added "daily" as identifying a principle of Christian life, to be freshly appropriated each day. This may have the effect of weakening somewhat the degree of orientation to Jesus' own passion, but the closer connection that Luke achieves between vv 21–22 and vv 23–27 and the "daily" fact of continuing to head toward Jerusalem, which will mark the Gospel account from 9:51 onwards, more than counterbalance the loss of precision caused by the addition. Luke has certainly not reduced the demand to an inner spiritual condition: in view is a practical denial of the claims of the inner drive to self-preservation and care for one's own interests, and a readiness for the loss of one's life.

**24** Luke drops Mark's "and the gospel": this looks Markan, and is not in Luke's other form of the saying. He adds an emphatic *αὐτός*, "this one," to the final clause.

In attempting to understand Jesus' original formulation of the saying, Bauer ("Wer sein Leben retten will") suggests that we should liken it to the exhortation of a field commander who cautions his troops to recognize that the one who turns his back to run for his life is the one who gets killed in battle, while the one who stands his ground and faces the danger head on lives to tell the tale (cf. Xenophon, *Anabasis* 3.1.43). Despite obvious attractions, this view does no justice to the real loss of which Jesus speaks.

Dautzenberg (*Sein Leben bewahren*, 57) and Schürmann (543) suggest a context in which external threat to Jesus and his disciple band calls forth a challenge to be ready for martyrdom. This may indeed be correct, given the sense of threat to life that lies behind the fashioning of the antitheses. We should also, however, consider the possibility that the threat to life is not from outside, but is represented by the very challenge of Jesus' teaching itself (Beardslee [*JAAR* 47 (1979) 67] speaks helpfully of the "saying [as] extremely revealing of the interweaving of self-concern and self-transcendence which has characterized Christian existence from the beginning"). In each case the threat reaches to the very fabric of life itself and may embrace martyrdom. In each case the challenge is to be true to Jesus and to his proclamation of the kingdom of God.

is not "the soul" as would be possible in Greek thought, but rather "life" (as in 6:9). For Luke, as for Jesus, life is not bounded by death, because there are resurrection and judgment beyond (cf. Matt 10:28). At the same time, the paradox of the verse is not to be resolved by a simple contrasting of this life and life beyond the grave (as Laufen, *Doppelüberlieferung*, 328–29). E. Schweizer (*TDNT* 9:642) catches something of the thrust with his comment "Jesus is thus

telling man that he will achieve full life only when he no longer clings to it but finds it in loss or sacrifice.” Grundmann (*Markus*, 228) says, “The one who trusts God, who gives life and saves through death, gains for his life freedom and eternity.”

The rest of the verses of this section all link back to v 23 via a series of , “for,” clauses. Here, wishing to save one’s life is the opposite of taking up one’s cross. The verse assumes a situation in which the possession of life is under threat. In the immediate literary context the threat is the call to cross-bearing. In normal circumstances it is commendable to save life (6:9), but here a choice of fundamental loyalty (“for my sake”) is involved, which takes us beyond expediency. In light of v 26 to come, to seek to save one’s life is likely to take the form of refusing to be identified with Jesus under the harsh glare of the spotlight of the world’s scrutiny (cf. George, *BVC* 83 [1968] 16).

**25** Luke retains most of Mark’s vocabulary, but entirely changes the syntax: the impersonal construction , “it profits/benefits,” is replaced by the passive , “is benefited”; participles replace Mark’s infinitives in the continuation of the verse; , “himself,” replaces , “his life/soul” (the use of “life” has become quite complex in v 24, so the change of terms here makes it quite clear that the link is to the first and not the second reference to loss of life in v 24); to express the loss, Luke adds a second alternative verb, , “having lost” (this creates an immediate link with v 24). Luke does not reproduce Mark 8:37, the closely linked verse that follows in the Markan text. This helps to draw v 25 more immediately into the judgment/answerability framework of v 26 to come. (Matthew is almost as severe in his reformulation, but shares with Luke only the first of the listed changes [and there, Matthew uses a different tense]).

Dautzenberg (*Sein Leben bewahren*, 71–75) has shown that the original unit here, Mark 8:36–37, is to be read in connection with Ps 49 and, thus, is to be understood in terms of a critique of the pursuit of, and confidence in, riches. With the loss of v 37, the connection is no longer as clear, but this understanding fits so appropriately into Luke’s interest elsewhere in the snare of riches (see at 6:20, 24) that we may assume that Luke does still have the connection in mind. The Psalm connection also encourages the setting of the loss of self into the context of death, understood in connection with God’s judgment (cf. Luke 12:16–21; 16:19–31). To the one who has been secure in his riches, death is a loss of self. A totally different face of death has already surfaced in v 24.

The imagery of gain and loss is from the world of commercial transactions: the true measure of one’s situation is determined when the gains and losses have been reckoned. To make the point, the entries on each side of the ledger in this case are taken to the absolute extremes. Wealth creates the illusion of security in life, but the horizon of death reveals the illusory nature of this security.

Once again this verse is linked to the preceding by  $\mu$ , “for.” Jesus’ call to “put the rope around one’s own neck” becomes intelligible both as to its content and as to its good sense from the explanatory clauses in vv 24–26. Looking to one’s own well-being and security in the world turns out not to be so important after all. Jesus’ call to self-denial leads to life; the accumulation of the good things of this world cannot secure us against its loss.

There is no basis for finding (with Schürmann, 546–47) a distinction between  $\mu$ , “having lost/ruined,” and  $\mu$ , “having forfeited/suffered loss,” as referring, respectively, to condemnation and to suffering loss but being ultimately saved. Luke has simply added the synonym to make the link to v 24 explicit.

**26** Luke changes his Markan source little: he drops Mark’s “in this adulterous and sinful generation,” compensating, perhaps, with his addition of an emphatic resumptive “this”; “the glory” is now the Son of Man’s as well (cf. 24:26), and not just that “of the Father” (Luke has “the Father” and not Mark’s “his Father”; he may be conscious of the difficulty of the idiom “Father of the Son of Man,” or he may simply feel he has used Mark’s “his” already in “his glory”); the angels do not now accompany the Son of Man (cf. the change from Mark 13:27), rather they, as the Father does, contribute their glory to his coming.

The warning here is against being so influenced by an environment that is hostile to Jesus and what he stands for (Luke deletes Mark’s delineation of this environment in order to generalize and to allow the reader to supply for himself his own version of the environmental pressure; the language of shame ensures that we will think in terms of pressure created by others around us) that one shrinks from being identified with him or his teaching (cf. 22:54–62 for Peter as case in point, but Peter moves on from this failure). Induced by whatever crisis, such a disowning of Jesus will have its counterpart at the time of final crisis, when the Man of destiny comes in his glory. Such a figure of glory cannot identify himself with any who have failed to stand for the Jesus who goes to suffering and rejection, and who calls his followers also to place their necks in the noose. The glorious figure will be as embarrassed then by the claim to be linked as ever the erstwhile follower of Jesus could be in face of his human environment (cf. Rom 1:16; 2 Tim 1:8; 2:12).

Luke assumes an identity between Jesus and the Son of Man but preserves the ambiguity of Jesus’ reference to this mysterious figure of authority and dignity (see excursus above and *Form/Structure/Setting*). A unique sense of self-importance for Jesus is reflected in the way that identification with his person and teaching is seen as eschatologically decisive. No precise future role is predicated here of the Son of Man. It is enough that as a figure of glory, indeed as the bearer of the glory of God and of the heavenly realm (the glory of the angels), he will be the figure of supreme dignity whose goodwill will be all important (cf. the importance of “glory” in Mark 10:35–37). In 21:27–28, 36, the Son of Man comes in glory as the bringer of redemption: to have made it through the crisis of the end period, to stand before the Son of man, is to have reached final deliverance. In terms of source, that the Son of Man “comes” is almost certainly to be linked back to Dan 7:13. But while Mark was probably aware of, if not responsible for, this development (see *Form/Structure/Setting* above), Luke simply followed his Markan source, and, since “comes” is a very narrow basis on which to build a link with Dan 7:13, we should probably

not make any appeal to Dan 7:13 for the Lukan text at this point (there is, similarly no Dan 7:13 link for the more original form of the pericope reflected in Luke 12:8–9).

As with vv 24 and 25 this verse is linked back to v 23 with *καὶ*, “for.” This final verse in the list indicates the final outcome of failing to take up one’s cross and follow Jesus.

**27** Luke omits Mark’s linking “and he said to them,” and so makes the link to the preceding closer; “amen” is the one Hebrew word that Luke at times retains (see at 4:24), but here it becomes its translation equivalent “truly”; the awkwardly placed *ἐν*, “here,” is relocated between the participle and its definite article and becomes the alternative *ἐκεῖ* (more often “there,” but now “here” [as in Matt 26:36]); the whole phrase “having come in power” is deleted; other minor changes are also made.

For Mark already 8:38 and 9:1 point to the events outlined in Mark 13 (note on v 26 the linking of *ἐξουσία*, “power,” of 9:1 and the *δοξασθε*, “glory,” of 8:38), but with an anticipation in the transfiguration (“glory,” “Father”/“Son,” and “seeing” are all taken up there). Luke accepts this basic sense (note his inclusion of kingdom language in 21:31 [in connection with the language of seeing] and its link via v 28 to the Son of Man language of v 27 [note the similar Lukan linking of kingdom of God and the language of seeing in 13:28]; the language of seeing the kingdom of God may be related to the reference in 19:11 to the kingdom of God as about to appear [ *ἐπιφανῆσθαι* ]; Luke adds to the transfiguration account a reference to “his glory,” which is also a distinctive of his rendering of v 26). The deletion of “having come in power” may be to facilitate the double reference. It is just possible that it also opens up a wider reference for “see[ing] the kingdom of God,” but this is far from certain. For discussion of the kingdom of God, see at 4:43; 10:9; 11:2, 20; 17:21; 19:11.

(Not unattractive is Schürmann’s view [550–51] that the reference is to the fact that some of the crowd, who at present remain outside the circle of discipleship, will respond to the early church preaching after the decisive Easter events. However, the contrast that Schürmann needs would be better supplied if there was in fact a rejecting crowd, but, when he has a crowd, Luke has a very positive crowd, and he probably does not have a crowd here at all.)

The link of v 27 to the set of linked vv 23–26 would seem to be that the time of full realization of the gains and losses flowing from the choices made in life under the challenge of Jesus is not in some remote uncertain future, but is within a single life span. Those who are not called upon to give up their lives for the sake of Jesus may even expect to live to see it. The difficulties that this creates for later generations, and perhaps even for Luke’s own generation, will be discussed at chap 21.

### ***Explanation***

What Jesus had announced for himself in vv 21–22 is not for him alone. Despite all the horrors of the prospect, the disciple too must secure his future by repeating in his own life the radical commitment that took Jesus to his death in Jerusalem.

The verses make separate but related points and were probably originally quite independent in the teaching of Jesus. Linked together they are now able mutually to interpret one another. After the passion of Jesus became a historical reality, these words of challenge would have gained fresh poignancy and challenge, and a clear focus on Jesus' own path of suffering. At various points the historicity of these verses has been challenged, but we may with some confidence trace the core of each of these sayings back to the historical Jesus.

The challenge of these verse is to all, and not to some rank of special saints or of Christian leaders. The one who would be a disciple of Jesus (as one might have become a disciple of a rabbi in Jesus' day) is called to a radical denial of self-interest and concern for his or her own natural well-being. Jesus anticipated that loyalty to himself would at times provoke a whole set of life-destroying processes (ostracism, persecution, martyrdom). The disciple needs to be ready to meet these head on; he is, as it were, to place his neck on the chopping block, or to put the rope around his own neck. (The image is from the Roman practice of having condemned criminals carry the cross-bar for their execution to the execution site.) This is rather like his talk of the need to hate one's own family (14:26). Such a radical commitment is not one that is called for only in some crisis situation, but one that needs to be renewed daily, and one that needs to undergird all that happens in our daily lives. The call is to a practical denial of our natural inner drive to self-preservation and care for our own interests. Only this is a following of Jesus to the cross.

v 24 opens up for us something of the inner logic of Jesus' call. Clinging onto life is not the way to achieve full life. Life is bounded neither by material well-being, nor by death, though it is easy to approach life as if it were bounded by both. The disciple's life is under threat from the challenge of Jesus' call to give up the security of a bounded view of that life. His life may also be quite literally under threat. It is a matter of faith to nail our colors to the mast, and to be ready for any loss for Jesus. This is the way to life. Loyalty to Jesus takes us beyond expediency and on into risk.

The imagery of v 25 is from the world of commercial transactions: we reckon up our gains and losses to determine our true situation. The background in Ps. 49 shows that the focus here is on wealth as worldly security. Wealth creates the illusion of security in life, but in the face of death the illusory nature of this security becomes clear (cf. 12:16–21; 16:19–31). Death represents a total loss of the self to the one whose identity and security have been in his possessions. v 24 has already offered us a very different face for death. Where Jesus' call to self-denial leads to life, the accumulation of the good things of life cannot secure us against the loss of our lives.

If material goods can be a trap, so can the opinion of others. We all want the approval of others. In an environment that is normally hostile, incredulous, or bored in connection with Jesus, the pressure is to disown such an embarrassing connection. Peter found himself in just such a situation (22:54–62), and for a time he fell foul of its temptations. But disowning Jesus means being disowned by him, when he appears as the glorious Son of Man. Such a figure of glory cannot identify himself with those who have failed to make their stand for the Jesus who goes to suffering and rejection. Here we meet the final outcome of following or not following Jesus.

Seeing the kingdom of God points ultimately to the sequence of events delineated in chap 23, but there may be a range of preliminary intimations of that final seeing, the first of which is about to come in the transfiguration account. The encouragement is that, for the disciple seeking to follow Jesus' in the way of the cross, the reaping of its ultimate benefits is not remote but within the scope of a human lifetime.

## *A Foretaste of Jesus' Future Glory (9:28–36)*

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*AJT American Journal of Theology*

*HTR Harvard Theological Review*

*JTS Journal of Theological Studies*

*ATANT Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments*

*JBL Journal of Biblical Literature*

*JETS Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*

*NTAbh Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen*

*CrQ Crozier Quarterly*

*ExpTim The Expository Times*

*AsSeign Assemblées du Seigneur*

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NRT La nouvelle revue théologique

ASB *Austin Seminary Bulletin*

Bib *Biblica*

VSpir *Vie spirituelle*

DR *Downside Review*

RevThom *Revue thomiste*

TPQ *Theologisch-Praktische Quartalschrift*

TZ *Theologische Zeitschrift* (ThZ)

KTR *King’s Theological Review* (London)

FS Festschrift, volume written in honor of

ed. edited, edition(s), editor

BSac *Bibliotheca Sacra*

*BulCRIMGU* 23 (1990) 23–48. **Kee, H. C.** “The Transfiguration in Mark: Epiphany or Apocalyptic Vision?” In *Understanding the Sacred Text*, ed. J. Reumann. Valley Forge: Judson, 1972. 137–52. **Kenney, A.** “The Transfiguration and the Agony in the Garden.” *CBQ* 19 (1957) 444–52. **Léon-Dufour, X.** *Études d’évangile*. 83–122. **Liefeld, W. L.** “Theological Motifs in the Transfiguration Narrative.” In *New Dimensions in New Testament Study*, ed. R. N. Longenecker and M. C. Tenney. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974. 162–79. **Lohmeyer, E.** “Die Verklärung Jesu nach dem Markus-Evangelium.” *ZNW* 21 (1922) 185–215. **Mánek, J.** “The New Exodus in the Books of Luke.” *NovT* 2 (1958) 8–23. **Masson, C.** “La transfiguration de Jésus (Marc 9,2–13).” *RTP* 3/14 (1964) 1–14. **Mauser, U. W.** *Christ in the Wilderness: The Wilderness Theme in the Second Gospel and Its Basis in the Biblical Tradition*. *SBT* 39. London: SCM, 1963. 110–19. **McCurley, F., Jr.** “‘And after Six Days’ (Mark 9:2): A Semitic Literary Device.” *JBL* 93 (1974) 67–81. **McGuckin, J. A.** *The Transfiguration of Christ in Scripture and Tradition*. Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 9. Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1986. ———. “Jesus Transfigured: A Question of Christology.” *ClerRev* 69 (1984) 271–79. **Moulton, W. J.** “The Significance of the Transfiguration.” In *Biblical and Semitic Studies*. New York: Scribner’s, 1901. 159–210. **Müller, H. P.** “Die Verklärung Jesu: Eine motivgeschichtliche Studie.” *ZNW* 51 (1960) 56–64. **Müller, U. B.** “Die christologische Absicht des Markusevangeliums und die Verklärungsgeschichte.” *ZNW* 64 (1973) 159–93. **Murphy-O’Connor, J.** “What Really Happened at the Transfiguration?” *BRev* 3 (1987) 8–21. **Neirynek, F.** “Minor Agreements Matthew-Luke in the Transfiguration Story.” In *Orientierung an Jesus: Zur Theologie der Synoptiker*. FS J. Schmid, ed. P. Hoffmann et al. Freiburg: Herder, 1973. 253–66. **Niemand, C.** *Studien zu den Minor Agreements der synoptischen Verklärungssperikopen: Eine Untersuchung der literarkritischen Relevanz der gemeinsamen Abweichungen des Matthäus und Lukas von Markus 9,2–10 für die synoptische Frage*. Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe 23: Theologie 352. Frankfurt am M./Bern/New York/Paris: Lang, 1989. **Nützel, J. M.** *Die Verklärungserzählung im Markusevangelium*. FB 6. Würzburg: Echter, 1973. **Pamment, M.** “Moses and Elijah in the Story of the Transfiguration.” *ExpTim* 92 (1980–81) 338–39. **Pedersen, S.** “Die Proklamation Jesu als des eschatologischen Offenbarungsträgers (Mt. XVII 1–13).” *NovT* 17 (1975) 341–65. **Ramsey, A. M.** *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949. **Reid, B. O.** “Voices and Angels: What Were They Talking about at the Transfiguration? A Redaction-Critical Study of Luke 9:28–36.” *BR* 34 (1989) 19–31. **Riesenfeld, H.** *Jésus transfiguré: L’Arrière-plan du récit évangélique de la transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur*. ASNU 16. Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1947. **Ringe, S. H.** “Luke 9:28–36: The Beginning of an Exodus.” *Semeia* 28 (1983) 83–99. **Roosen, A.** “‘... Quand il viendra dans la gloire des saints anges’ (Lk 9,26): Réflexions sur le rapport entre transfiguration et parousie dans le troisième évangile.” In *La Pâque du Christ*. FS F.-X. Durrwell, ed. M. Benzerath et al.

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*BulCRIMGU Bulletin of the Christian Research Institute Meiji Gakuin University (Tokyo)*

*RTP Revue de théologie et de philosophie*

*SBT Studies in Biblical Theology (London/Naperville, IL: SCM/Allenson) or Studia biblica et theologica*

*ClerRev Clergy Review*

*BRev Bible Review*

et al. *et alii*, and others

*BR Biblical Research*

*ASNU Acta seminarii neotestamentici upsaliensis*

LD 112. Paris: Cerf, 1982. 147–57. **Saabe, M.** “La rédaction du récit de la transfiguration.” In *La Venue du Messie: Messianisme et eschatologie*. RechBib 6. Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962. 65–100. **Schmithals, W.** “Der Markusschluss, die Verklärungsgeschichte und die Aussendung der Zwölf.” *ZTK* 69 (1972) 379–411. **Stein, R. H.** “Is the Transfiguration (Mark 9:2–8) a Misplaced Resurrection-Account?” *JBL* 95 (1976) 79–96. **Thrall, M. E.** “Elijah and Moses in Mark’s Account of the Transfiguration.” *NTS* 16 (1970) 305–17. **Torrance, T.** “The Transfiguration of Jesus.” *EvQ* 14 (1942) 214–29. **Trémel, B.** “Des recits apocalyptiques: Baptême et Transfiguration.” *LumVie* 23 (1974) 70–83. **Trites, A.** “The Transfiguration in the Theology of Luke: Some Redactional Links.” In *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology*. FS G. B. Caird, ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright. Oxford: Clarendon, 1987. 71–81. ———. “The Transfiguration of Jesus: The Gospel in Microcosm.” *EvQ* 51 (1979) 67–79. **Voss, G.** *Die Christologie der lukanischen Schriften in Grundzügen*. 160–70. **Weeden, T. J.** *Mark—Traditions in Conflict*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971. 118–24. **Williams, W. H.** “The Transfiguration—A New Approach?” *SE* 6 (1973) 635–50. **Yoder, J. D.** “The Exodus of Jerusalem.” *EvJ* 4 (1986) 51–69. **Ziesler, J. A.** “The Transfiguration Story and the Markan Soteriology.” *ExpTim* 81 (1970) 263–68.

### Translation

<sup>28</sup> *About a week after these words, it so happened<sup>a</sup> that he went up the mountain to pray, taking along Peter and John and James.<sup>b29</sup> As he prayed, the form of his face became different and his clothing turned<sup>c</sup> a dazzling white,<sup>30</sup> and<sup>d</sup> two men talked with him, who*

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LD Lectio divina (Paris: Cerf)

RechBib Recherches bibliques

ZTK Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

EvQ *The Evangelical Quarterly*

LumVie Lumière et Vie

SE *Studia Evangelica* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (= TU 73 [1959], 87 [1964], 88 [1964], 102 [1968], 103 [1968], 112 [1973])

EvJ *Evangelical Journal*

a a. Gr.                   ; translated elsewhere as “happened/became/transpired, etc.”

b b. The Markan order, “James and John,” is found in P<sup>45,75vid</sup> C<sup>3</sup> D L   etc.

c c. The verb here (                   ) is shared with “the form of his face,” in connection with which it is rendered “became.”

d d.                   (lit. “behold”) is here omitted in translation.

were Moses and Elijah,<sup>31</sup> who, having appeared in glory, spoke about his exodus, which he was soon<sup>e</sup> to accomplish in Jerusalem.

<sup>32</sup> Peter and those with him were weighed down with sleep, but they kept awake and saw his glory and the two men who were standing with him.<sup>33</sup> As these<sup>f</sup> were about to depart<sup>g</sup> from them, Peter said to Jesus, “Master,<sup>h</sup> it is good for us to be here. Shall we make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah?” (not knowing what he was saying).<sup>34</sup> As he was still saying these things, a cloud came and enveloped them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.<sup>35</sup> Then a voice came out of the cloud saying, “This is my Son, the Chosen one; listen to him!”<sup>36</sup> When the voice had been, Jesus was found to be alone. They were silent and told nobody in those days anything of what they had seen.

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### Notes

a. Gr.                   ; translated elsewhere as “happened/became/transpired, etc.”

b. The Markan order, “James and John,” is found in P<sup>45,75vid</sup> C<sup>3</sup> D L etc.

c. The verb here (                   ) is shared with “the form of his face,” in connection with which it is rendered “became.”

d.                   (lit. “behold”) is here omitted in translation.

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e e. Gr. μ                   .

f f. Gr. “they.”

g g. Representing a present infinitive.

h h. P<sup>45</sup> pc have                   , “teacher.”

<sup>4</sup>Nolland, J. 2002. *Vol. 35B: Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 9:21-18:34*. Word Biblical Commentary . Word, Incorporated: Dallas

Gr. Greek

P Peshet (commentary)

C The Cairo Geniza

D Codex Bezae or Deuteronom(ist)ic

L Leningrad Codes of MT (as published in BHS) or Codex Leningradensis, B19a

e. Gr. μ .

f. Gr. “they.”

g. Representing a present infinitive.

h. P<sup>45</sup> pc have , “teacher.”

### ***Form/Structure/Setting***

Within the section 9:21–50, vv 28–36 provide a preliminary fulfillment of Jesus’ promise in v 27, and impress upon the inner disciple band the need to hear Jesus when he outlines his own suffering path to glory and calls others to a life of bearing their crosses and coming after him. Beyond the immediate setting, the structural links for this unit are much more complex.

For the Markan account, Thrall (*NTS* 16 [1970] 310–11) has argued for a link with the resurrection morning account in 16:1–8. Saying nothing (or not knowing what to say) because of fear, seeing Jesus, (not) being here, white garments, and the central place of Peter are motifs that link the accounts (Thrall’s sabbath link is not a persuasive handling of Mark’s “after six days” [i.e., on the sabbath] and the difficult time expression in 16:2). Luke disturbs some of these links, but he adds two of his own: (“behold, two men”) is now found in both accounts; and the shining of garments is expressed using the same root in both accounts (the transfiguration account uses a more intensive form of the verb). Note also the way that Luke in 24:6–8 recalls the passion prediction in a form reminiscent partly of the form this takes prior to the transfiguration and partly of the form that follows after the transfiguration (following the cure of the paralytic on the way down from the mount of transfiguration). Perhaps, for Luke, the point is that just as the transfiguration had confirmed (to little avail) Jesus’ words about his journey through suffering and rejection to ultimate restoration, so now the empty tomb and these new supernatural visitors will provide further confirmation in the context of the actual fulfillment of Jesus’ words (still to little avail [v 11]!).

Following Mark, but with his own touches, Luke in 9:27 points on to the eschatological events of chap 21 (see at 9:27), and since he also agrees with Mark’s linking of the transfiguration to this promise, it is not surprising that the transfiguration has its own links with chap 21: “glory” is now connected to the transfigured Jesus (v 32) as well as to the returning Son of Man; the seeing of this glory (v 32) is echoed in the future seeing of the Son of Man; the cloud of Luke 21:27 is not Mark’s plural, but the singular cloud of the transfiguration. The ultimate fulfillment of 9:27, to which the transfiguration itself points is the eschatological coming of the

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lit. literally

*NTS New Testament Studies*

i.e. *id est*, that is

Son of Man in glory. The transfiguration reveals Jesus in terms of the ultimate destiny that is his beyond the anticipation of suffering and rejection that are the painful focus of this section.

Not unrelated is yet a further link, this time to the ascension (Acts 1:9–11). The phrase “behold, two men” occurs again (v 10); their garments are as white as Jesus’ had become (the whiteness and the shining have been distributed between the figures at the tomb [Luke 24:4] and at the ascension, while both share a common term for garment[s]); the cloud is once again present (v 9). We should note as well the link provided in v 11 between the ascension and the coming of the Son of Man (Luke 21:27). For Luke, Jesus does not only achieve glory on his return as Son of Man. He departs from his disciples to go to enthronement at God’s right hand (9:51; 19:12; 24:26; Acts 2:33–35). At the ascension Jesus is not revealed in glory but he is going to glory.

The final important link here is that with the scene of Jesus’ prayer about removing the cup, and submission to his Father’s will (22:39–46). Kenney (*CBQ* 19 [1957] 444–45) documents the importance of this link already from Mark. These links are not lost on Luke, and though he disturbs some of the Markan links, he forges new links of his own. We should note particularly the motif of prayer that Luke has introduced into the transfiguration narrative (9:28–29) and the problem with sleep, which again Luke has added to the transfiguration narrative (v 32; with his “having stayed awake” [ ] and with the imagery of being heavy with sleep, Luke actually anticipates the Markan rather than his own form of the Gethsemane scene). The shared mountain setting is clearer in Luke’s version of the Gethsemane scene. If the verses in 22:43–44 be judged original (I do not consider them so), they provide yet further linkage. The “exodus” to be accomplished in Jerusalem is not specifically a link to the Gethsemane scene, but its presence strengthens the force of the other links.

It is not at once so obvious what Luke is making of this link with the Gethsemane scene. What Jesus prays about there has its own link to Jesus’ announcement of his suffering fate, which is the context for the transfiguration. Are we to import the content of his prayer there for the unspecified praying in 9:2–3? By staying awake the disciples did see Jesus’ glory, as well as Moses and Elijah; in (Mark’s) Gethsemane they quite missed their opportunity. The Father’s will that Jesus should suffer emerges forcefully in both contexts. In 9:31 Moses and Elijah help to prepare Jesus for his coming fate; in 22:43–44 (if original) he also receives supernatural assistance as he anticipates the suffering that awaits him. With the baptism narrative added in, this would give three specific points in Luke where the divine guidance of Jesus’ life becomes visible as supernatural event.

A case has frequently been made for Luke’s use of a second source here (e.g., Schramm, *Markus-Stoff*, 136–39; Dietrich, *Petrusbild*, 105–9). There are some striking agreements between the Matthean and Lukan versions, but Neiryck (“Minor Agreements Matthew-Luke in the Transfiguration Story”) has demonstrated that these are not most naturally explained in terms of

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*CBQ Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

a second source, but in terms of redactional tendencies of the respective authors, which have incidentally produced a degree of coincidence. There is no good reason for thinking that Luke's distinctive additions and alterations reflect the use of any source beyond his main Markan source.

The Markan account does not have an easy unity, and many attempts have been made to identify an original core that manifests a greater unity, and which can be given a sense that easily takes its place within Jesus' historical ministry.

Baltensweiler (*Die Verklärung Jesu*) deletes vv 6 (the explanation of Peter's words) and 7b (the voice from heaven) and understands the event in the context of the final day of the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, seen in connection with the eschatological expectation of God's final tabernacling with his people forever. On the seventh and final day of the feast, in the context of messianic fervor stirred up by the feast, Jesus retreats to do battle with the temptation to political messiahship. The transfiguration is God's sign to Jesus, but it provokes Peter to believe that the eschatological fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles is underway, and so he wants to provide extra tabernacles for Elijah and Moses (tabernacles will have already been in place for Jesus and the three who have accompanied him). The dominant role given to the Feast of Tabernacles is less than persuasive.

Masson (*RTP* 3/14 [1964] 1–14) proposes an original that deletes vv 2c–3 (the transfiguration), 6b (the reference to the disciples' fear), and 7 (the cloud and voice from heaven), and offers an attractive reconstruction of Mark's motivation for the development of his final text. Masson takes the references to Moses as additions to the text, and suspects that probably only Peter was with Jesus in the original. The sense of Masson's original is not so self-evident as Masson seems to think, and despite his heavy-handed rewriting of the text, the transition to v 8 is far from smooth.

Müller (*ZNW* 51 [1960] 56–64) prefers to trace the account to the combination of two originals (neither of which is to be traced to the historical ministry of Jesus). One is reflected in the ascent of the mountain, the cloud and voice from heaven, and probably the descent from the mountain (vv 2ab, 7, 9). This account is built on the basis of the theophany on Mount Sinai (Exod 24; 33–34). The remainder of the account (vv 2c–6, 8) reflects a later Christology of the divine Christ (Müller's view is related to that proposed by Lohmeyer [*ZNW* 21 (1922) 185–215] but not repeated in his later commentary, which isolates v 3 as reflecting a later Hellenistic tradition from vv 4, 5, 7, and 8, which represent a Jewish Christian tradition). Saabe ("La rédaction du récit de la transfiguration," 83) notes that the radiance of the face of Moses in Exod 34:29 serves as an effective link between the two strands that Müller would seek to separate.

Nützel (*Verklärungserzählung*, 167–87, 236–52) allows as pre-Markan v 2 (without  $\mu$  ["apart by themselves"]), vv 3–4 (without reference to Moses), "[and] they were

afraid” from v 6, v 7a (no voice from heaven), and v 8. The resulting text has a nice unity, but the role of the cloud is finally unconvincing in this reconstruction.

These views all reflect the difficulty created for the account by the presence both of the transfiguration and of the voice from heaven (Masson removes both). This must be reckoned as the chief obstacle in the way of accepting the original unity of the account, and several of the studies dedicate a good part of their energies to seeking to establish a peaceful co-existence between these motifs that threaten to be competing centers for the account. Gerber (*TZ* 23 [1967] 385–95) uses Jewish eschatological and mystical texts to show the natural home in a Jewish context of the Gospel transfiguration, and treats the transfiguration as a condition for meeting with the heavenly world, which is represented both by Moses and Elijah and by the cloud and voice from heaven. Pedersen (*NovT* 17 [1975] 341–65) has the same view of the place of the transfiguration and goes on to coordinate the presence with the transfigured Jesus of Elijah and Moses (they are carriers of revelation whom Peter mistakenly puts on an equal footing with Jesus) and the designation of Jesus as Son (he is unique carrier of the eschatological revelation of God). A theological conception is reflected here according to which only God himself is able to make clear the true sense of what the disciples have seen (cf. also Trémel, *LumVie* 23 [1974] 70–83). Saabe (“La rédaction du récit de la transfiguration”) coordinates the transfiguration itself and the voice from heaven. He points to a technical device of apocalyptic literature, whereby a scene that is revealed to the apocalypticist and remains somewhat opaque as to its significance is subsequently interpreted by the voice of a heavenly (angelic) figure. For Léon-Dufour (*Études d'évangile*, 83–122), the point of the account is the celestial proclamation (as with the baptism scene), and the vision that precedes only illustrates and solemnizes what the divine voice announces.

It may be observed that though the particular explanations differ, there is a common tendency to be discerned, and a more than adequate basis is to be found for an original unity between the transfiguration and the voice from heaven.

The transfiguration account has often been identified as a misplaced resurrection account (for an extensive list of supporters of this view see Stein, *JBL* 95 [1976] 79 n. 2, to which we may add Coune, *AsSeign* 15 [1973] 50–51, 83). All the detailed argumentation cannot be repeated here. There are many details that can be marshalled on each side of the argument (Stein's essay

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*TZ Theologische Zeitschrift* (ThZ)

NovT *Novum Testamentum*

cf. *confer*, compare

LumVie *Lumière et Vie*

*JBL Journal of Biblical Literature*

n. note

AsSeign *Assemblées du Seigneur*

gives a good indication of the range of arguments presented, as well as offering a good case for the traditional view).

By any reckoning the transfiguration account is very different from the accounts of the resurrection appearances preserved in the Gospel records (C. H. Dodd's impressive list of differences between the form of the transfiguration narrative and of the resurrection appearances is well worth noting ["The Appearances of the Risen Christ: An Essay in Form Criticism of the Gospels," in *Studies in the Gospels*, ed. D. Nineham [Oxford: Blackwell, 1967] 9–35, here, 25]). For this reason, the plausibility of the displaced resurrection view depends finally on the isolation of a tradition of resurrection appearances that is quite different from that reflected in Matthew, Luke, and John. In this postulated tradition the resurrection appearances are understood to be appearances from heaven of the glorified Christ (this is assumed for example by Carlston, *JBL* 80 [1961] 234, and Thrall, *NTS* 16 [1970] 312, in their support of the displaced resurrection appearance view).

The appearances of Jesus in Acts 7:55; 9:3–7; 22:6–11; 26:13–19; Rev 1:12–20 are appealed to, but these all come chronologically well after the resurrection period. In the Lukan frame, the experiences of Paul are not to be classed as resurrection appearances at all, and Paul himself seems to hint at some categorical distinction to be drawn between his encounter with the risen Lord and the earlier encounters "at the proper time" (1 Cor 15:8; see discussion below). Rev 1:12–20 is not a visit from heaven to John (the figure is moving among the lampstands, which are the churches), but a vision of the cosmic role and significance of Christ. Stephen sees into heaven; Jesus does not come to him. Appeal is also made to Apoc. Pet 15–17 where a version of the transfiguration is used for a resurrection appearance on the Mount of Olives, which functions as a preliminary to the ascension. This is undoubtedly later than the Gospel accounts. In any case, it has in other respects the character of a pastiche and is, therefore, a dubious guide.

What remains is the possibility that Paul reflects a theological tradition in which the resurrection appearances are appearances of the Lord from heaven in his glory, and that this tradition may have known of, or produced, accounts along the lines of the transfiguration account. The direct information that Paul provides is extremely sparse (Gal 1:16; 1 Cor 9:1; 15:5–8), so the discussion must be based in part on broader features of Paul's theological understanding.

Does Paul understand Jesus to have been raised from death immediately to the presence of God? The idea that there is a distinct ascension, which separates the period of resurrection appearances from that of glory in heaven, is, in the NT, only to be found specifically in Luke/Acts (Luke 24:44–53; Acts 1:3, 6–11; etc.) and in John (20:17). Outside the Gospels and Acts (notably for Paul), resurrection appears to be the transition that bears all the weight (e.g., Rom 1:4; Phil 3:10; 1 Pet 1:3). And this could be taken to imply that Jesus' resurrection is

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ed. edited, edition(s), editor

Apoc. Apocalypse of, apocalyptic or Apocrypha

NT New Testament

understood to be resurrection immediately to God. Before we reach this conclusion, we do, however, need to explore the settings in which resurrection achieves this prominence. There are two main settings to be observed. The first is the eschatological significance of resurrection. With resurrection, Jesus achieves the eschatological state and opens up the same to others. This gives resurrection an important independence as a focus, which needs no completion by a complementary reference to ascension to glory. The second setting is the evidentiary role of the resurrection as the visible-in-this-world act of the power of God, which establishes for the believer the fact of salvation achieved in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Neither context encourages us to see resurrection as resurrection into the presence of God. Nowhere in the NT is resurrection understood as resurrection to God's presence, and to glory. Resurrection may bear the weight, but being raised does not itself take a person into the presence of God.

This is not to say that, for Paul, the natural sphere for Jesus' resurrected life is the Palestine in which he has lived. For Paul and other NT materials outside John, Matthew, and Luke/Acts, being raised has its natural sequel in moving on to the presence of God and, in Jesus' case, to glory at the right hand of God (Rom 8:34; 2 Cor 4:14; Eph 1:20; 2:6; 1 Pet 1:21; frequently, for the Christian, going to the presence of Christ takes the place of going to God). But in this respect, John and Luke/Acts are no different: there may be a chronological delay, but there is no thought that moving on from this world is anything other than the necessary sequel to Jesus' resurrection. The ascension is given no separate motivation or rationale. The present world is no longer the proper sphere for the one who has moved on into the resurrection life of the eschaton. A question may be asked about where the resurrected Jesus conducted his resurrected life between appearances. All the resurrection appearances are discrete happenings and leave us with no sense that the resurrected life of Jesus outside of these appearances had its own normal integrity and continuity in the present earthly sphere (this is especially the case for the Lukan and Johannine appearances). Jesus may, in the Gospel portrayal, stay for a while (but where is he between appearances?) for purposes in connection with his disciples, and certainly long enough for it to be clearly established that he is indeed risen, but there is never any doubt that from now on his place is to be elsewhere. Jesus has in the resurrection appearances already become something of a supramundane figure, who ultimately belongs elsewhere. Perhaps, for Paul, Jesus' resurrection puts him already in a sphere of "heavenly" existence (1 Cor 15:44–49), but this is not at once his glorification to the right hand of God.

Do we have any basis for determining whether Paul made any chronological distinction between the resurrection and glorification of Jesus? A conceptual distinction is not necessarily a chronological distinction. Clearly, for Paul, the period of resurrection appearances was a transitional period (1 Cor 15:1–8) in the aftermath of the resurrection itself. Resurrection appearances could not, in principle, continue forever (1 Cor 15:8: "last of all"). This fact alone creates a link between the resurrection appearances and the earthly life of Jesus. It is also clear that for all his need to claim his own experience as equivalent to that of the other apostles, Paul recognizes it to be categorically different by means of his bizarre imagery of an abortion or miscarriage (1 Cor 15:8:  $\mu$ ). In Luke's scheme of things, Paul certainly saw the glorified Lord and had an experience categorically different from that of the Twelve (Eleven). It would certainly be quite natural to read Paul in much the same way. But before we confidently do so, we should note that Matthew has no chronological distinction between Jesus' resurrection and God's bestowal upon him of all authority in heaven and earth (Matt 28:17–20). Jesus does not

appear in Matt 28 as a figure resplendent with glory, but he does already appear as the one who has freshly received all authority from God. We cannot finally be sure whether Paul thought in terms of any chronological distinction between resurrection and exaltation to glory.

We still need, however, to do justice to the distinction Paul sensed between his own experience with Jesus and that of those before him. This may still be best accounted for by a distinction between appearances that involve a strong sense of continuity between the pre-resurrection and post-resurrection Jesus and Paul's own experience of encounter, as one who had no experience as a disciple of the Jesus of history, with the transcendent Lord of glory. Wherever Jesus is understood to be appearing from, there is still the question of the form of his appearing and what is being said by such a form. It does not help us that Paul says precisely nothing about the form of Jesus' resurrection appearance either to himself or to those before him. How happy would Paul have been with strongly visual descriptions of at least his own experiences of the resurrected one? Is "seeing" in such a context for Paul already partly metaphorical, and, as a transcendental experience, at least as much an inward as an outward experience?

For Paul, we cannot categorically rule out a view that the earlier resurrection appearances were of a glorious Jesus, but we have found nothing that counts clearly in favor of such a view. This possibility seems to be a precarious basis for mounting an argument that the transfiguration is a misplaced resurrection account.

So far as I have been able to discover, in the literature, McCurley (*JBL* 93 [1974] 79) alone seems to have noticed that there is much more to commend a view that the transfiguration account is a misplaced ascension story (but note also the view of Weeden, *Traditions in Conflict*, 118–24, that the original story viewed resurrection, ascension, and exaltation as all one process). McCurley involves himself in extensive dislocation and alteration of the text, but the likeness to ascension traditions is clear without such elaborate transformations of the text. However, finally all such views involve highly speculative alterations to the existing texts, and the likeness to the ascension is adequately accounted for by the fact that the transfiguration account and the ascension traditions share a concern to point to the (coming) instatement of Jesus in glory with the Father. The transfiguration account *could* be a misplaced ascension account, but no compelling case has been offered for denying to the transfiguration a place within the pre-resurrection ministry of Jesus.

A number of studies have despaired of any historical core to the account and have offered various proposals for understanding the account as simply a literary formation from theological motifs. Bradley (*CrQ* 12 [1935] 57–76) finds reflected here the church's first bid at answering the question: When and how did Jesus first become Son of God? For Bernadine (*JBL* 52 [1933] 181–89), the account was created to bolster Jesus' messiahship in dispute with Jewish opponents. Müller (*ZNW* 51 [1960] 56–64) sees only narratives that reflect different theological motifs and that have been fashioned to make christological affirmations. Evely (*The Gospels without Myth*, 99–114) sees the whole episode as a mythologized form for expressing a high point of intimacy with Jesus experienced by the inner circle of his disciples through being with him for an extended period and through sharing in his intense prayer life. Though there are attractive

features to various of these suggestion, the very difficulties encountered in establishing the unity of the account (see above and further in *Comment*) and the elements of circumstantial detail within the account make these suggestions implausible.

It is often thought to be difficult to allow the Christology of the transfiguration account a place in the historical ministry of Jesus. The degree of difficulty depends in part on the Christology that one reads out of the account. The account itself does not demand that its christological terms have in their original setting the full post-resurrection confessional force that they easily acquire in Christian use of the account. In their present Gospel settings the account means more than it might be expected to have meant to Peter, James, and John in some original experience. By transfiguration Jesus is conditioned for his encounter with the heavenly world, while the voice from heaven affirms Jesus' unique significance in some way that has perhaps undergone Christian development to produce the present wording (note already the awareness of OT allusion reflected in the slight differences between the Synoptic forms of the words from heaven, and see discussion at 3:21–22 in connection with the baptismal voice). To find such an event in history is clearly beyond the scope of critical inquiry, but critical inquiry has not placed insuperable barriers in the way of considering that such an event may have occurred during the historical ministry of Jesus.

As an interaction with supra-mundane figures, this account shares features with the baptism account (3:21–22) and the account of Jesus' temptations (4:1–11). It also has a certain likeness to the ascension account in Acts 1:9–11. Without prejudice to its historicity, it should be identified in form-critical terms as a legend.

Luke basically follows the inherited Markan structure. The structure of the pericope is essentially provided by the sequence of actions of the episode. Luke does, however, distinguish much more sharply than Mark between the part of the narrative recounted from the perspective of the experience of Jesus (vv 28–31) and the part that is concerned with the experience of the disciples (vv 32–36). As well, the sense of logical development is much stronger in Luke's account than in Mark's: Jesus goes up the mountain to pray; Jesus' prayer leads to transfiguration; transfiguration prepares for and leads to the meeting with Moses and Elijah; the meeting occurs in order to discuss with Jesus his coming fate in Jerusalem (which has been the subject of his recent teaching and is that in relation to which the heavenly voice will soon challenge the disciples to listen to Jesus); the disciples, thus far kept out of view, apart from the initial mention of their accompanying of Jesus, are now grafted into the scene as having (barely) managed to be witnesses to the action to this point; with their re-introduction, the perspective moves from that of the experience of Jesus to that of the experience of the disciples; as the visitors prepare to leave, Peter tries to prevent the termination of the heavenly vision; he is answered not by Jesus, but by the enveloping cloud, signaling yet masking the arrival of God; the covering cloud puts on hold the scene of Jesus and his resplendent visitors, but also evokes fear in the presence of the awesome mystery of God; God, having arrived for the purpose, speaks in answer to Peter's suggestion; Jesus' suffering path to glory is not to be bypassed by any attempt to preserve the anticipation of it here vouchsafed to the three disciples. The action has now run its cycle; the episode has fulfilled its role. When the voice has spoken we return to a scene

identical to that before Jesus began his prayer; Jesus is quite alone (this suggests most obviously the departure of Moses and Elijah, but secondarily it is allowed to embrace as well the departure of the cloud, and even the loss of the glory that had transfigured Jesus' appearance). Not unnaturally, the stunned disciples keep what they have experienced to themselves.

### **Comment**

The transfiguration narrative confirms the importance of listening to Jesus, as he sets for himself and his followers a suffering fate; but it also confirms his anticipation of the glorious outcome of traveling this difficult road.

**28** Luke totally reformulates Mark 9:2. Without any great departure from Mark's sense, he manages to retain of Mark's language only the names (in a different order), the reference to a mountain (but "a high mountain" has become "the mountain"), Mark's verb for "taking along" (used in a different form), and the word "days" (but now "about eight days"). As often, Luke introduces an *ὡς*, "it happened," construction. He ties the account more closely with what precedes by his more specific "after these words." With his *περὶ* (lit. "about eight days"), Luke is probably abandoning Mark's six, which has no particular significance for him (Mark may have perceived a link with the period of preparation in Exod 24:16 before God spoke to Moses out of the cloud), and making the time frame about a week (cf. the French idiom; the idiom is not to my knowledge documented for Greek, but seems most likely here [and possibly in John 20:26]; it is too fanciful to find reference to the eighth day as the day of resurrection; see *Barn.* 15:9, "we too celebrate with gladness the eighth day when Jesus also rose from the dead ... and ascended into heaven"). The point is the link between 9:27 and the present episode.

Luke uses the names of his three companions in the order in which he has referred to the privileged inner group in 8:51. Peter and John are paired in 22:8; Acts 3:1, 3, 4, 11; 4:13, 19; 8:14. In Gal 2:9 Peter and John come together after James (not, this time, John's brother). The pairing will reflect a historical link between the two in the early life of the church. Luke makes the account much more an experience in the life of Jesus than did the Markan version (but nonetheless this and similar texts still have a strong christological and theological focus rather than so much a psychological interest). So here already, Luke has: Jesus "went up onto the mountain to pray" instead of Mark's "he took them onto a high mountain." The phrase "onto the mountain to pray" is to be found identically in 6:12. Important events for Jesus are linked to his prayer. In light of what is to come, the trip up the mountain here may be linked to Moses' meeting with God on Mount Sinai (Exod 24; 33–34). More speculative is a link between Jesus' three companions and Moses' close associates in Exod 24:9.

**29** Once again Mark's language is quite left behind. Only "became" ( *γενέσθαι* ), "his," and "white" betray his Markan source. The reference to prayer is repeated to make the link between transformation and prayer explicit. Luke takes Mark to be distinguishing between a transfiguration of Jesus himself and a transformation of the appearance of his dress. Luke represents the former in terms of an (unspecified) difference in the appearance of his face (in the

longer ending of Mark [16:12], the representation of the Emmaus episode envisages Jesus as in a different form and thus unrecognizable to the disciples, but this is not Luke's approach there [24:16]). The sense we should give to the difference is only to be discerned from the parallel change to his garments (and from the resumption of v 29 in v 32 with "they saw his glory"). Much more economically than Mark, Luke has Jesus' garments becoming

, "a white that flashes [like lightning]." The verb here is used in the LXX of Ezek 1:4, 7 in connection with outskirts of God's glory, as Ezekiel sees God upon his throne. It occurs also in the LXX of Dan 12:6, with reference to the splendid heavenly figure encountered by Daniel in a vision. Such a transformation of a human figure in connection with entry into the heavenly sphere is found in Jewish apocalyptic and mystical texts (*1 Enoch* 62:15; *Mart. Isa.* 9:9; *3 Enoch* 15; 48C; & 2ApocBar; 51:1–6 [here transformation in consequence of judgment day]; Gerber [*TZ* 23 (1967) 394] cites mystical texts and a late Hebrew midrash, which speaks of Moses being transformed to fit him for coming into the divine throne room with its angelic inhabitants). Not dissimilar is the effect upon Moses of speaking with God on Mount Sinai (Exod 33:29, 30, 35); but, for Luke, Jesus' own (future) glory is involved (v 32; cf. v 26). Jesus is destined to be enthroned in glory in the heavenly realm. In an anticipatory way, he here makes the trip to glory that lies beyond his suffering in Jerusalem. He goes up the mountain and in prayer finds himself to be in the sphere of the heavenly court attendants. Luke delays a mention of the disciples as witnesses to avoid any sense that it was for their sake. As with the baptismal descent, this is a private experience of Jesus.

**30** Rather more of Mark survives in this verse, but with a totally restructured syntax. Luke introduces the phrase "behold, two men," which he will use to bind the transfiguration together with the resurrection-morning scene (24:4) and the ascension (Acts 1:10). He changes to "Moses and Elijah" from Mark's striking "Elijah with Moses." Again, he keeps the disciples out of the way: the two figures do not now appear to them; they appear in glory (and by implication to Jesus with whom they are to converse [v 31]). It is immediately easier to understand why we find Elijah in the heavenly sphere here (2 Kgs 2:11), than it is to see why Moses should be. Both figures, however, do meet God on Mount Sinai/Horeb (Exod 24; 1 Kgs 19); and the reference to Exodus, to come in v 31, creates a natural link to Moses. J. Jeremias (*TDNT* 4:854–55) documents a (late?) Jewish tradition that, despite Deut 34:5, considered Moses to have been taken up alive to heaven. Given the proleptic nature of the event, it may be, however, that we should think rather of the eschatological place of glory for these figures (cf. Luke 13:28).

Why should Jesus meet with these two figures? Baltensweiler (*Die Verklärung Jesu*, 69–82) points to the eschatological role of Elijah as a peaceful religious one, and not one marked by the violent zeal of the historic prophet. His presence points Jesus away from the zealot ideal of messiahship. Elijah is, however, hardly an obvious symbol for this, and, as Thrall (*NTS* 16

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LXX The Septuagint, Greek translation of the OT

Mart. Isa. Martyrdom of Isaiah

TDNT G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., tr. G. W. Bromiley *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ET (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)

[1970] 307–8) notes, Elijah’s anticipated gentle role is in Israel, and makes no comment on the appropriate attitude to the occupying power. Elijah is certainly understood to have an eschatological role. Does his presence here (with Moses) signal the impending arrival of the eschaton (as Coune, *AsSeign* 28 [1973] 72; Rab. Deut 3:10 has Moses and Elijah both sent by God in the eschatological period)? Certainly at least for the earlier Markan form, this makes a poor fit with the identification elsewhere of this role with that of John the Baptist. Are we to find in the ministries of Moses and Elijah an antecedent to the sufferings of Jesus (e.g., Coune, *AsSeign* 28 [1973] 79)? Though not impossible, this is not at once what suggests itself from these two figures. Thrall (*NTS* 16 [1970] 308–17) has provided an elaborate argument for distinguishing between Moses and Elijah, on the one hand, and Jesus, on the other, as, respectively, figures who reached heaven by translation and a figure who reaches his glorious heavenly existence through death and resurrection. One difficulty here is that, in the most part of the Jewish tradition, Moses too died and was not translated to heaven. As we shall see below, it is not at all clear that the account is actually concerned to contrast Moses and Elijah with Jesus. The common view, offered with a number of variations, that Moses represents the law and Elijah the prophets finds difficulty with the initial Markan order, and with the need for Elijah to represent the writing prophets (Ziesler, *ExpTim* 81 [1970] 266, also notes that while Elijah is hardly a representative prophet, Moses could well be seen as a representative prophet [Deut 18:15]; in *Pesiq. R.* 4c Moses and Elijah are the two great prophets, members of the house of Levi, and men of God). More hopeful is the view of George (*BVC* 33 [1960] 22), which focuses on the roles of Moses and Elijah in forming and reforming the people of God. But, perhaps better, is the view that takes Moses and Elijah as respectively predecessor and precursor to Jesus (e.g., Ramsey, *The Glory of God*, 114; note the way in which Moses and Elijah come together in Mal 4:4–5, with one a figure of the relevant past and one a figure of the future; in Mark, the initial order may give Elijah prominence because as precursor he is more immediately to be brought into connection with Jesus). In both these last options, Moses and Elijah represent, in effect, the sweep of the unfolding of God’s purposes leading on to the role of Jesus.

**31** This verse is almost completely a Lukan formulation, with only the idea of the appearing itself and of the speaking with Jesus being carried over from Mark. These figures appear in glory because they appear from heaven. All the figures of the heavenly court have glory (cf. v 26).

, “exodus/departure,” is used in Jewish Greek of death (“departure [from life]”); see Wis 3:2; 7:6), but always with contextual clarification. v 22 is not close enough to allow a simple sense of death here, but that verse cannot be ignored in the search for the meaning of “exodus” here. For a sense of what it is that Jesus is to leave behind when he departs, we can in part look to v 41. There must also be an allusion here to the exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt under Moses’ leadership. It is surely, however, an excess to embrace in “exodus” the whole

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Rab. **Rabbah** (following abbreviation for biblical book: *Gen. Rab.* [with periods] = *Genesis Rabbah*)

*ExpTim* *The Expository Times*

*Pesiq. R.* **Pesiqta Rabbati**

*BVC* *Bible et vie chrétienne*

Mosaic saga of deliverance from Egypt through to possession of the promised land (Ringe [*Semeia* 28 (1983) 93 and n. 24] has noted how in the biblical tradition exodus language has its focus on the beginning of the process [out of Egypt] and not on its conclusion). Also, before we develop a whole typology of a new exodus forming a new people of God, we need to recognize that our text is concerned with “his exodus,” rather than an exodus of which he is moving force or leader. The link between Jesus’ exodus and that of others is specified in vv 23–27. In Acts 13:24 Luke uses the corresponding term *ἔλευσις*, “arrival,” to speak of Jesus’ arrival on the scene; “exodus” speaks correspondingly of his departure with task completed (note the use of *ἵνα πληρωθῆται*, “to fulfill/accomplish/fill up”; in some important sense the departure is the accomplishment; here vv 21–22 are illuminating). Ringe (94) rightly draws on the journey to Jerusalem to help understand “exodus” here, but goes too far in identifying the journey to Jerusalem as the exodus: the journey rather marks Jesus’ commitment to the (mode of) departure to which he has been summoned by God. Jesus’ exodus is his death as departure from this world in the context of his understanding that his journey to glory at God’s right hand has its beginning in an ignoble death in Jerusalem. Feuillet (*RevThom* 77 [1977] 191) helpfully correlates “exodus” here with *ἄρραβον*, “receiving up,” in 9:51. Both terms designate the end of the earthly career of Jesus; where the former puts the accent on his death (but in the context of what is to follow), the latter focuses on his ascension to glory. Discussion with Elijah and Moses serves to confirm the rightness of Jesus’ declared understanding of his future fate.

**32** Nothing corresponds to this verse in Mark, except that Luke now allows for the disciples’ degree of participation in the event, which he has earlier stripped from the Markan account. Luke has effectively divided the account into a first section, which focuses exclusively on Jesus (vv 28–31), and now a second section, which is concerned with the experience of the disciples (vv 32–36). As discussed above in *Form/Structure/Setting* (see there also for Luke’s intention), Luke is here partly drawing on the Markan form of the Gethsemane scene (14:32–42; Luke uses elements that he does not reproduce in his own account of that episode). For the three there is here a preliminary fulfillment of Jesus’ promise in v 27, which through human frailty they almost miss.

**33** Before he rejoins Mark, Luke here establishes as time frame for Peter’s offer the point at which the heavenly visitors are beginning to make their departure (cf. 24:29–29). For the remainder of the verse Luke follows Mark fairly closely, only deleting Mark’s use at this point of the fear of the disciples as an explanation of Peter’s befuddlement (he may find it difficult to correlate the fear with Peter’s evident gladness at being present; he will use the fear motif in v 34). On *ἡγεμόνα*, “Master,” which Luke inserts for Mark’s *κύριον* (lit. “rabbi”), see at 5:5. Peter clearly counts it a privilege to be in on what he has seen (we should reject the view of Lagrange, 273, and Loisy, 27, that Peter is suggesting that his presence is good for the three dignitaries whom he can serve by constructing shelters), and he would gladly prolong the experience. Also clear is his apparent setting of the three figures on the same footing, but this may be quite innocent of christological error: he may simply be thinking of capturing forever this scene, which represents the whole drama of the history of salvation from Exodus to eschaton.

Not clear is the context of thought in relation to which we should understand the reference to , “tents/booths/tabernacles/shelters,” or the nature of Peter’s failure. Any link with the OT tabernacle as the dwelling place of God seems to be totally discordant with the rude shelters that Peter might produce from the materials at hand on the mountain. There is also no clear reason for identifying the presence of God with these three figures. They participate in the glory of the heavenly court, but there is no reason to think of them as exhausting it. The attempts to link Peter’s action to the Feast of Tabernacles have a little more plausibility, but they generally require far too much reading into the text, and it is difficult to see why in that context Peter would not want tabernacles for himself and the other disciples as well as for the three figures of glory. Perhaps only the glorious three are thought to be participants yet in the eschatological fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles (cf. Hos 12:9; Zech 14:16–20)? However that may be, Peter wants to freeze the moment. The heavenly visitors have confirmed the place of the trip to Jerusalem to die, but Peter would arrest the action at this point of anticipatory presence of the glory that is to be Jesus’ beyond death. This is Peter’s version of the beatific vision and he does not want it to go away! He does not fully appreciate that he is here attempting to stand in the way of the divine purpose.

**34** Luke establishes a close link between Peter’s words and the coming of the cloud: the sequence of action here initiated is some kind of response to Peter’s words. Luke introduces here the fear motif and links it to the experience of being enveloped by the cloud, which becomes much more prominent in Luke’s telling. The cloud is the sign of God’s (hidden) presence (Ps 18:11; Exod 19:16; etc.) and the mode of his transportation (Isa 19:1; Pss 18:10–11; 104:3). Here the correlation of “cloud” and “voice” points uniquely to God’s speaking from Mount Sinai (Exod 19:16; Deut 5:22). Where in Mark it is probably more natural to understand that only the three great figures enter the cloud (or are they there only overshadowed by it [Mark uses the dative object; Luke the accusative]?), the Lukan text more naturally implies that the whole party is enveloped (otherwise there are complex and un signaled changes of subject and antecedents of pronouns in the latter part of the verse). The fear the disciples’ experience is fear of the divine presence. The same verb , “to overshadow/cover,” is used of the cloud that covered the tabernacle in Exod 40:35 and made it impossible for Moses to enter. The scene evokes the terror of the Israelites at Mount Sinai (Exod 20:19–20).

**35** Luke’s only significant change here is the use of μ , “chosen,” in place of Mark’s , “beloved.” This makes explicit the connection with the use of ידִּי, y yd, “chosen,” in Isa 42:1, which, it was suggested at 3:22, lay behind the use of there. The adjectival form, , “chosen [one],” is used at 23:35, but probably has a different function there. Jesus is here identified in the same terms as by the baptismal voice in 3:22 (see there), but here the voice is directed not to Jesus, but to the three disciples. The role of the voice is not particularly to take the disciples on to new christological heights. The reader is reminded of the Christology of the baptismal narrative, but the focus here is on the distinctive element, which is the call to hear Jesus.

The point is not to hear Jesus rather than Moses and Elijah: the disciples have not been party to their conversation with Jesus. The point is to hear what Jesus has been seeking to teach them.

This is the response to Peter's desire to preserve inviolate the scene of glory that the three have witnessed. The glory they have seen is the glory to which Jesus is destined as chosen Son, but what they have glimpsed in this anticipatory scene comes to its fulfillment only by way of the cross. God here throws his weight behind Jesus' words in vv 22–27. In that the words "hear him" echo Deut 18:15 (cf. Acts 3:22; 7:37) a further Mosaic link is here established, but should not be pressed in terms of a Moses typology. Everything serves the end of getting Jesus listened to!

**36** Luke returns to heavy reformulation here again. Nothing but the words "Jesus alone" is carried over from Mark. Luke makes use of, but totally refocuses, the Markan material on keeping silent about what they had seen. Luke tightens the link between the voice and the new scene in which Jesus is quite alone: the aloneness of Jesus is an aloneness that is divinely orchestrated and used to underline the thrust of the words spoken to the disciples. The cloud scene has been, in effect, a comment on the scene of the conversation of the three figures of splendor: it is not understood to have replaced that scene. We are presumably to understand that the cloud also disappeared, but that is not the point: having heard the voice we are now ready to return our attention to the scene that has been frozen momentarily to introduce this divine comment; but on our return we find that the scene no longer exists. Not yet literally, but figuratively, we have been dropped down to the bottom of the mountain. Just as no comment is made about the disappearance of the cloud, so there is no comment about the fading of Jesus' glory. The glory has been for the meeting with Elijah and Moses. The absence of the two companions indicates Jesus' return from the heavenly sphere (or the heavenly sphere's withdrawal from Jesus); there is no need to say that the glory has gone. The whole event has only been an anticipation; now the disciples are returned to the life of everyday realities in which Jesus calls for a taking up of one's cross.

Luke does not reproduce from Mark Jesus' call to silence. He is consistently less interested in the messianic secret. Nonetheless he reports their silence, but in a form that suggests the whole experience has been as much puzzling as illuminating. They have been overwhelmed by the experience, as well they might be. Only in the post-resurrection situation will the scriptural witness to Jesus' suffering path to glory be illuminated to them, and only with the coming of the Spirit will they be equipped to speak out (24:44–49).

### *Explanation*

A week after the assurance of v 27, a few privileged disciples get a precious glimpse of the glory that will be Jesus' in the kingdom of God. They also hear the voice of God insisting that they must, against all their natural inclinations, listen to Jesus as he insists on suffering as the way to glory, and as he calls on them to give up their own lives to gain them, indeed to take up their own crosses and to follow him.

The transfiguration account has frequently been thought to be a misplaced resurrection account, but there is very little basis for such a suggestion. If it were to be a displaced anything, then it would be a displaced ascension account, but even this would involve a considerable reshaping of the account. While certainly now reported in the light of Easter faith, it is best to take the account at face value as relating to an experience of Jesus' earthly ministry.

In Luke's telling, the transfiguration account has links to several other parts of his narrative. There is a link to the Easter morning account: just as this transfiguration episode has, so the heavenly visitors and the empty tomb in Luke 24 will offer divine confirmation of what Jesus had been insisting upon. There is also a link to be drawn with the ascension account in Acts 1:9–11: at the ascension Jesus departs from his disciples to the glory of enthronement at God's right hand; the transfiguration anticipates just this glory. There is yet a further link with the account in Luke 21:27 of the end-time coming of the Son of Man in glory: what happens here is an anticipation of the ultimate splendor of Jesus' coming as the glorious Son of Man. There is, finally, a curious, and hard to interpret, link to the Gethsemane scene of prayer (22:39–46): though on other grounds 22:43–44 is likely not to be an original part of Luke's text, its presence would link the baptism, the transfiguration, and the praying in Gethsemane as the three specific points in Luke where the divine guidance of Jesus' life becomes visible as supernatural event.

A whole series of links can be drawn between the transfiguration account and the experience of Moses on Mount Sinai in Exod 24 and 34–35. We should see this in connection with Luke's conviction that, in what God is now doing in Jesus, he acts in line with his ways of working in the past, but transcends them in every respect. Jesus is not specifically seen as a new Moses, yet Moses is his predecessor in the unfolding of the purposes of God.

The mountain is the place of withdrawal for meeting with God. In Luke, important thresholds are crossed in the context of Jesus' prayer. Here, Jesus is confirmed in the destiny he has announced for himself, and the core group of disciples is challenged to accept his radical vision.

As he prays, Jesus is prepared for his meeting with Moses and Elijah: he takes on a form of glory suitable for being in the heavenly sphere, a form of glory, which in his own case, anticipates that which will be his by right, the other side of his death and resurrection. Jesus, as though translated into heaven itself, is found to be in the presence of the glorified figures of Moses and Elijah.

Why does Jesus meet with just these two? They are the only two figures of Scripture associated with meeting with God on Mount Sinai/Horeb (Exod 24; 1 Kgs 19). As well, Elijah would be expected to be in heaven (2 Kgs 2:11), and there was a strand of Jewish teaching that thought the same had happened with Moses. But it might only be their presence at the end, at the time of Jesus' ultimate glory, that is here in view (cf. 13:28). It is probably best to take these figures as representing the sweep of the unfolding of the purposes of God that leads on to the role of Jesus. Moses is Jesus' great predecessor because of his role in the formation of the people of God. Elijah is historically the restorer of the people of God, and for the end-time, he is the one who is to be the immediate precursor of God's final intervention in this world. The two figures come together in Mal 4:4–5 in a context that anticipates God's final intervention.

Moses and Elijah speak to Jesus about his exodus, which is to be accomplished in Jerusalem. They mean his death, but they mean this in connection with death seen as the manner in which he will take his departure from this world in order to move on to the glory of heaven (cf. v 51). Jesus' journey to glory at God's right hand has its beginnings in an ignoble death in Jerusalem. Jesus' death will be a kind of "deliverance" (cf. v 41, and in a different way vv 24–25), which can be compared to the exodus from Egypt under Moses. With the coming journey to Jerusalem,

starting at 9:51 and dominating the remainder of the pre-passion account, Luke will mark Jesus' commitment to the mode of departure to which he has been summoned by God. Jesus' view of his own destiny is here confirmed by these heavenly visitors.

Thus far the account has been of Jesus' personal experience. Now Luke introduces the accompanying disciples, and from this point he will tell the story from the point of view of their experience. The three manage to see the scene of glory, but only just: they are heavy with sleep. Human frailty can so easily stand between believers and what God has for them.

The heavenly visitors look as if they are about to leave, but Peter sees represented here before him in this scene of glory the whole drama of the history of salvation from the exodus to the final glorification of the Jesus whom he has come to recognize as the Christ. He would much prefer to keep this scenario intact than return to the disturbing prospects about which Jesus has been speaking. This scene of glory accords rather better with Peter's version of the beatific vision than does Jesus' prospect of a blood-stained pathway to glory. It is just possible that Peter draws on a Jewish expectation of a special end-time fulfillment of the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles (cf. Hos 12:9; Zech 14:16–20) and sees himself as providing the necessary dwellings for these figures who have managed to reach that end-time state. Peter does not realize that he is totally in defiance here of the divine purpose, but his suggestion will have its answer in the divine voice from the cloud.

Jesus provides no answer, but immediately the cloud of the divine presence envelops them all. The awesome and fearful presence of God is both hidden and revealed by the presence of the cloud. Cloud and voice together call to mind God's speaking from Mount Sinai to Moses (Exod 19:16; Deut 5:21). There is a strong echo of the baptismal words from heaven, only *(i)* now the words address the disciples and not Jesus himself, *(ii)* "beloved" now becomes "chosen," which makes the allusion to Isa 42:1 clearer, and *(iii)* God's declaration of pleasure becomes a demand to hear Jesus (an echo of Deut 18:15). See at 3:21–22 for a discussion of Jesus as Son of God. Here, however, the main focus is on what is distinctive: the need to hear Jesus. Specifically the need is for Jesus to be heard in what he has begun to say about the way of the cross for himself and for his followers.

It is not possible—and it is not right—to freeze this moment of glory. The aftermath of the voice speaks as eloquently as had the voice itself. The moment of glory has vanished. Jesus is alone. The mountaintop experience has passed and what remains is the way of the cross as the way to permanence of glory. They have seen the glory that by right belongs to Jesus, but it belongs to him the other side of death and resurrection.

The three have been overwhelmed by their experience. They are still not in a position to understand the full significance of what they have witnessed. The experience has probably been as puzzling as it has been illuminating. Only in the post-resurrection situation will the scriptural witness to Jesus' suffering path to glory be illuminated to them, and only with the coming of the Spirit will they be equipped to speak out (24:44–49).

# *Jesus Heals a Possessed Boy When the Disciples Cannot (9:37–43a)*

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## **Translation**

<sup>37</sup>The next day,<sup>a</sup> it so happened<sup>b</sup> that, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him;<sup>38</sup> and<sup>c</sup> a man from the crowd called out, “Teacher, I beg you to look with pity on my son, because he is my only child;<sup>39</sup> and a spirit seizes him, and suddenly he cries out, and it convulses him and produces foaming,<sup>d</sup> and even after devastating him,<sup>e</sup> it can only

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par. parallel or paragraph

SNTU *Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt*

BEvT *Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie*

SBB *Stuttgarter biblische Monographien*

a a. [ ]  $\mu$  , “during the day,” is read by [P<sup>45</sup>] D it sy<sup>s</sup> sa<sup>ms</sup>, perhaps reflecting *Sem.* reckoning of the day from sunset to sunset.

b b. See at 9:28.

c c. , “behold,” has not been represented in translation here or at the beginning of v 39.

d d. Lit. “with foam.”

e e. “Even after devastating him” represents (lit. “crushing/breaking/bruising”).

with difficulty be got to leave<sup>f</sup> him. <sup>40</sup>I begged your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able to.”

<sup>41</sup>Jesus responded, “What an unbelieving and perverse generation! Until when must I be<sup>g</sup> with you and put up with you? Bring your son here.” <sup>42</sup>While he was still coming the demon threw him down and convulsed him. Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, <sup>h</sup>healed the child, and gave him to his father. <sup>43</sup>All were astonished at the magnificence of God.

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### Notes

a. [ ] μ , “during the day,” is read by [P<sup>45</sup>] D it sy<sup>s</sup> sa<sup>ms</sup>, perhaps reflecting *Sem.* reckoning of the day from sunset to sunset.

b. See at 9:28.

c. , “behold,” has not been represented in translation here or at the beginning of v 39.

d. Lit. “with foam.”

e. “Even after devastating him” represents (lit. “crushing/breaking/bruising”).

f. “It can be got to leave” represents (lit. “it separates [from]”). The verb has been treated as a quasi-passive following Marshall, 391.

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f f. “It can be got to leave” represents (lit. “it separates [from]”). The verb has been treated as a quasi-passive following Marshall, 391.

g g. The Gr. tense is a simple future.

h h. A connecting “and” is dropped here for a better flow of the English.

<sup>5</sup>Nolland, J. 2002. *Vol. 35B: Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 9:21-18:34*. Word Biblical Commentary . Word, Incorporated: Dallas

P Peshar (commentary)

D Codex Bezae or Deuteronom(ist)ic

sy Syriac

Sem. *Semitica* or Semitic

Lit. literally

g. The Gr. tense is a simple future.

h. A connecting “and” is dropped here for a better flow of the English.

### ***Form/Structure/Setting***

Luke continues to follow the Markan sequence, but first he deletes Mark 9:11–13. He may have found these verses convoluted; he may have considered that with their mention of Elijah they could create confusion after the role of Elijah in the transfiguration account, which is of a quite different kind. The link with the transfiguration account becomes closer because of the omission; and that Luke would have it so is indicated by his link in v 37 (“on the next day”; just possibly, the  $\mu\mu$  , “only,” which Luke adds to “my son” in v 38 may provide an echo of the heavenly voice in v 35 [cf. 3:21; 20:13]).

Luke also creates, with vv 42, 43, a link back to 7:11–17 (see: “he gave him to his mother” in v 15, and “They glorified God ... God has visited his people” in v 16; Aichinger [“Epileptiker-Perikope,” 143 n. 112] provides a full list of verbal agreements), which, in turn, prepares for 7:22, with its emphasis on the present as the time of fulfillment. After the future orientation of 9:27 (and vv 28–36; note the place of seeing in 7:22; 9:27, 32), is Luke concerned here to reinstate his emphasis on the presence of the kingdom of God in the ministry of Jesus? Does the presence of the majesty of God act as counterpoint to the glory of Jesus, which, as permanent possession, must await the journey through death and resurrection to the right hand of God?

Finally, Luke creates a close link between 9:37–43a and vv 43b–45. Both the proleptic glory of the transfiguration and the unparalleled power over the demonic must give way to the necessary suffering fate of the Son of Man.

There is quite a level of general agreement between Matthew and Luke in the strategy they have adopted in abbreviating the Markan version. This has suggested to some the existence of a second source here. Much of this agreement can be explained as obvious response to the difficulties of the Markan text and abbreviation of the sections where Mark is most wordy. At the level of vocabulary, there is just one striking agreement: that is the addition of

$\mu\mu$  , “and perverse,” to Mark’s “faithless” in v 41 (Matt 17:17). A link to Deut 32:5 is likely, but will this have independently suggested itself to Matthew and Luke? The agreement in v 40 (Matt 17:16) in the use of  $\mu\mu$  , “were [not] able,” is also to be noted, as is the use of the vocabulary of healing (different verbs) in v 42 (Matt 17:18). A second source is not proven, but may be suspected here.

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Gr. Greek

cf. *confer*, compare

n. note

Serious questions have been raised about the original unity of the Markan account. Among the difficulties of the narrative, the following questions about sources press to the fore. (i) There appears to be a doubling up of several features of the story: two dialogues with the father (vv 16–19; 21–24); two arrivals of the crowd (v 15; v 25); two presentations of the boy (vv 17–18; 21–22). (ii) The scribes appear at the beginning, but then play no further role in the story. (iii) v 19 is an odd answer to the father’s dilemma. (iv) The father’s need for faith and the failure of the disciples seem to be alternative claimants for a central place in the account: in vv 14–19, 28–29 the disciples have an important role; in vv 20–27 they fall from sight, and the action there turns on the father’s readiness to believe. (v) Is the affliction seen at different points as epilepsy and as that of being a deaf-mute (as Bornkamm, “ $\mu$ ,” 25)?

Bultmann (*Synoptic Tradition*, 211–12) has argued for the blending of two quite separate narratives, one represented in vv 14–20, the other in vv 21–27, both having been truncated by the merging and by the addition of vv 28–29. This suggestion has been widely followed, and has produced a series of slight variations (v 20 is at times included in the second tradition; vv 28–29 are sometimes allowed as belonging to the unit vv 14–19[20]). Roloff (*Kerygma*, 144) has, however, rightly protested that there does not appear to be any adequate motivation that can be suggested for producing such an artificially unified account out of two independent originals.

Kertelge (*Wunder*, 174–79) and others have settled for one original, represented in vv 20–27, with extensive Markan or pre-Markan development (for Kertelge, the development is Markan). Kertelge is certainly correct to find Markan interests reflected in the failure of the disciples and the call for (believing) prayer, and in identifying a certain amount of Markan language. But he does not finally produce a believable process of development.

For Roloff (*Kerygma*, 141–53, 205–7), the core consists rather of the materials that concentrate on the disciples’ failure, vv (14–17a?), 17b–19a, 19c–20, 25–27, with a post-Easter actualization in vv 28–29, and a further development in vv 21–24. Roloff seems to somewhat work against himself by noting that the application in vv 28–29 is in terms of elements that already find their place in the historical ministry of Jesus, and that vv 21–24 have features characteristic of Jesus’ healing ministry (the call for faith) but not of the post-Easter role of healing. Also difficult is his view that vv 21–24 serve as an interpretation of the disciples’ failure as a sign of the unbelief of this generation. Roloff’s work is the point of departure for Reploh (*Markus—Lehrer*, 211–21), who suggests that the Markan narrative, with its evident distinction between how Jesus healed and how the disciples should do so, is formed in the context of the dwindling of the charismatic gifts of the early church.

Schenk (*ZNW* 63 [1972] 76–94) has proposed an altogether more complex separation of original and development. For him the presence of the scribes is key. Originally the account was of their failure to heal the son of a man who subsequently turns to Jesus. Almost all of vv 14–16 is development, as is Jesus’ exclamation in v 19, his question in v 21, and all of vv 23–24 and vv 28–29. Going to the scribes as a group for exorcism does not convince, nor do the highly speculative excising and rewriting.

Schenke (*Wundererzählungen*, 314–49) takes as his point of departure the observation that the tensions and doublings of the story do in fact correspond to one another and harmonize with one another (Lohmeyer, *Markus*, 184–85, had earlier made the related observation that the repetitions serve the function of intensification). The problems are not in the content but, at least in some cases, in the location of the pieces. So, vv 21–22 run on easily from vv 17–18 (*contra* Bornkamm, the boy’s problems in vv 17–18 are not those of a deaf-mute [see v 18]; rather, the demon is not a speaking demon [contrast 1:23–24; 3:11; 5:6–12]). In the double bringing of the child to Jesus (vv 17, 20), the first bringing fails with the failure of Jesus’ representatives, the disciples. It is an established element of ancient miracle stories that the pupils fail to fully emulate the power of the master to perform miracles. Even v 19 and vv 23–24 are not incompatible competitors, linked as they are by the problem of unbelief. Only the twofold arrival of the crowd (vv 15, 25a) is a genuine tension. v 25a introduces a motivation for the healing that is unneeded at this point. It serves, says Schenke, to introduce here the idea that the healing is for the instruction of the disciples and not for the sake of the crowds. v 19 (apart from the last clause) is a Markan creation commenting on the failure of the disciples. vv 23–24 are also Markan, exhibiting tensions with the context and reflecting a Markan interest in faith. The first of these insertions has disturbed the logic of the original narrative, which ran vv 14–18, 21–22, 20, 25–28 (vv 27–28 are a pre-Markan development). v 19 could only be placed after v 18, but its presence disturbs the sequence to v 21. Mark compensates for this by means of the relocation of v 20, which in turn calls for a change at the start of v 25, since v 20 is no longer there to be what Jesus saw. This gives Mark the opportunity for the insertion discussed above.

Schenke’s explanation is certainly speculative, but it is by far the most coherent and satisfying of the many suggestions that have been offered. Perhaps a better alternative explanation for the change at the beginning of v 25, with its unparalleled use of *synagōgē*, “run together upon(?),” is to refer this verb to the prospect of a crush of people (cf. 3:8–9, and esp. 4:1). Schenke’s arguments for vv 19 and 23–24 as insertions in their present context is more persuasive than is his case for their being Markan compositions. At least in the case of vv 23–24, we should probably preserve the possibility that we have the main content of a pronouncement story, which has been secondarily drawn into this account. With Schenke, and many others, we should probably regard “scribes” in v 14 as Markan.

The original form is that of a miracle story designed to glorify Jesus and to display his power. Luke, by abbreviating the Markan account and adding a final chorus of glorification of God, has produced an account that more clearly exhibits the miracle story form.

Luke has greatly simplified the Markan account and its complex structure. Jesus and the three came down the mountain to be met by a large crowd. A man from the crowd appeals to the compassion of Jesus, explaining that he has an only child who is repeatedly thrown into epileptic seizures by a demon, and that the disciples of Jesus have been unable to help. Jesus expresses his exasperation at the unbelief by which he is surrounded (even in the disciples). He asks for the boy to be brought, and as the child comes he suffers one of his frequent seizures. Jesus rebukes

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contra in contrast to

esp. especially

the demon, heals the child, and restores him to his father. The scene concludes with all amazed at the evident presence of the majestic power of God.

### *Comment*

Jesus may need to go through death and resurrection to the full possession of his eschatological glory, but in his mighty works it is clear that God is present in his compassion and in his majesty.

**37** Luke moves the descent statement to after his report of the silence of the three disciples. Luke heavily abbreviates, simplifies, and re-expresses, and all that survives from Mark is the genitive absolute construction, “when they came down” (with a slight change of verb), “the mountain,” and the “great crowd.” As in the transfiguration account, Luke begins the pericope with  $\kappa\alpha\iota$ , “it [so] happened.” Luke locates the account on the following day (probably reflecting a night setting for the transfiguration, which the sleepiness of the disciples suggests). As with v 28 the specified time lapse ties the adjacent accounts closely together. Without the specifying  $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ , “day,”  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\epsilon$ , “the next [day],” is found in Acts 21:1; 25:17; 27:18. From the later flow of the narrative we should probably understand the disciple group to be in the crowd.

**38** Once again the formulation is mostly Luke’s: only “the crowd,” “teacher,” and “my son” survive of Mark’s formulation.  $\beta\omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon$ , “behold, a man,” is also found in 5:12; 19:2; Acts 8:27; 10:30 (and cf. Luke 7:37; 8:41; 13:11; etc.). Luke’s man makes a passionate and heart-rending appeal (“cried out”; “I beg you”;  $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ , meaning here “look with compassion upon” [cf. 1:48]; “an only child” [ $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon$  ]), where Mark’s gives a matter-of-fact explanation (but cf. Mark 9:22). For Luke’s use of “teacher,” see at 7:40. The usage here is closest to that at 8:49.

**39** Luke has here his only description of the affliction (in Mark the description is resumed in v 21–22). The Lukan description is almost entirely independent of the Markan, but not such that we would think of a different condition. The common ideas are episodic seizure, convulsions, and foaming (with the idea of being thrown down added in v 42). For Luke’s mention of the cries and of the extended nature of the attacks, compare from Mark’s account the details of the exorcism (v 26; not used by Luke). For the emphasis on suddenness, note the attack as the boy is being brought to Jesus. The symptoms are those of epilepsy, which in this case is understood to be brought on by a demon. For the Lukan vocabulary for referring to evil spirits, see at 4:33. In this episode Luke uses “spirit” (here), “de mon,” and “unclean spirit” (both in v 42).  $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ , “with difficulty,” and  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\epsilon$ , “foam,” are only here in the NT.  $\kappa\alpha\iota$ , “and behold,” is a Lukanism.

**40** Only slight changes to Mark’s wording occur in this verse: in place of Mark’s neutral “said,” “I begged” repeats the same verb of entreaty used in v 38; the verb used for “they were

not able” is now the one that Mark will use later in the discussion of whether Jesus is able to do anything in this case (a discussion that is deleted by Luke). With the disciples failure, Fitzmyer, 809, compares Gehazi’s inability apart from Elisha in 2 Kgs 4:31. This feature of the story is discussed further in *Form/Structure/Setting* above. The mission of the Twelve in 9:1–6 had involved power and authority over all demons. While it is clear that the mission there anticipates the post-Easter role of the Twelve, it is not so clear whether the mission role was to continue in the period of the ongoing ministry of Jesus. v 41 suggests that they should have been successful, while v 49 may imply that we should understand that, as part of Jesus’ band, the Twelve continued to play some part in Jesus’ exorcising ministry. The failure of the disciples will be a foil for Jesus’ success. Luke does not have Mark’s emphasis on the failure and misunderstanding of the disciples, but this feature is still to be found in his account (cf. v 45). On Luke’s use of the term “disciples,” see at 5:30.

**41** The Markan language is clearly visible in this verse. Luke introduces the name “Jesus” in place of Mark’s                    construction to indicate change of subject; the historic present verb becomes an aorist; “unbelieving” is glossed with “and perverse”; the rhetorical questions are combined by replacing Mark’s second “until when” with “and”; Mark’s                    , “carry” [pl.], becomes                    , “bring” [sing., addressed personally to the father]. The criticism would seem to be addressed to the failed disciples as representatives of the generation. The Markan text provides a broader basis for identifying the basis of criticism (see 9:14–16). The generation is already criticized in Luke 7:31, and will be further in 11:29–32, 50–51; and cf. 17:25; 21:32. Here there is an allusion to the historic failure of Israel in Deut 32:5 (cf. v 20), now repeated in the present generation. Allusion to Isa 46:4 (as Schürmann, 570) is unlikely, because the context there is positive and here negative. There is a possible link to Moses’ complaint about having to bear the people in the wilderness (Num 11:12; as Fitzmyer, 809). Clearly in mind is the exodus to come in Jerusalem (v 31), which will put an end to the present situation. Jesus appears here not as a “god,” who in temporary human form is at present on the earth but who will soon return to his proper domain (as many, following Dibelius, *Tradition*, 278). Rather, he is one who, faced with the repetition of the historic failure of Israel to respond faithfully to God, anticipates his departure to glory at the right hand of God and the outpouring of the Spirit with its power to transform the human situation.

**42** Luke deleted here the second conversation with the father and all the detail of the exorcism. Luke’s                    , “threw down,” echoes Mark’s use of this verb in v 18. He retains Mark’s                    , “convulsed,”                    μ                    , “rebuked,” and                    μ                    , “the unclean spirit.” The pressure of the crowd plays no role for Luke. The non-speaking nature of the demon has been lost earlier (v 39) and disappears here too; Luke may sense a tension with the crying out of the demon (v 39). For Luke the attack occurs while the child is still coming to Jesus. He probably understands this as simply one of the sudden attacks, not specifically as a response to the sight of Jesus as is the case in Mark. As in 4:31–37 all sense of struggle disappears from the account: the rebuke of Jesus is instantly effective. Corresponding to the

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pl. plate or plural

sing. singular

highly personal and heart-rending appeal of the father for his only child, Luke here speaks simply, but powerfully, of Jesus healing the child and handing him over to his father. The note of compassion comes strongly to the fore. Luke is happy to use the language of healing for exorcisms, but this does not mean that he confuses illness and exorcism (see discussion at 4:40; 6:18).

**43a** Nothing in Mark's account corresponds to Luke's addition here. This rounding off of the story displaces Mark 9:28–30, where the failure of the disciples is discussed privately with Jesus. Only here does Luke use either *ἐκθαμβέω*, “to astonish,” or *μνησθεῖν*, “majesty/magnificence,” in connection with a healing, but other words for astonishment are used. In Jesus' mighty works, God is at work (cf. 7:16); and whatever people will finally make of it, the tangible reality of what Jesus is able to do is apparent to all.

### *Explanation*

With his “on the next day” Luke links this exorcism account closely with the transfiguration account that precedes it: while it is true that Jesus' glory belongs to the other side of cross and resurrection, it is also true that in his works of power God is powerfully present in his compassion and his majestic splendor. While there is an important looking to the future, it is also true that the kingdom of God is present in the ministry of Jesus. Luke builds a link back to 7:11–17 (compare vv 42, 43 with 7:15, 16), an episode that leads on to 7:22, to underline this point. Luke also makes the link on to the next section (vv 43b–45) very tight: both the glory glimpsed in the transfiguration and the unparalleled power here demonstrated over the demonic must give way to the necessary suffering fate of the Son of Man.

The transfiguration is given a night setting by Luke, and it is the next day when the group descends the mountain. Upon his descent, a crowd comes to meet Jesus, which appears to have gathered around an unsuccessful attempt by Jesus' remaining disciples to exorcise a suffering boy. The father emerges from the crowd to make a heart-rending appeal to Jesus' compassion. A demon has caused the child to experience repeatedly sudden epileptic seizures, which are a great burden to his life. The man reports his earlier identical request to the disciples and their failure. The disciples do not succeed in sustaining the effective exercise of authority over all demons, which Jesus had made possible for their mission in 9:1–6. The failure of the disciples will be a foil to the success of Jesus. Jesus receives this report as just another indication of the unbelieving and perverse generation among which he finds himself. His words echo Deut 32:5. This generation fails in its response to God as had Israel in the OT story. Jesus' rhetorical question might echo Moses' words of complaint about having to bear with the difficult Israelites in the wilderness (Num 11:32). It certainly points us back to the language of exodus in v 31. In the face of this failure of even his disciples, Jesus anticipates his departure to glory at the right hand of God, and the outpouring of the Spirit with its power to transform the human situation.

Jesus asks the man to bring his son. As if to underline the man's despair, the boy experiences a seizure as he is being brought. But Jesus powerfully intervenes. He rebukes the spirit, heals the

boy, and restores him to his father. In the presence of Jesus, the spirit is powerless to resist. The father experiences in full measure the compassion he had sought. The transformation in his child is a public reality evident to all. It astonishes as one might expect of the presence of the working of God. In such an exorcism the magnificent splendor of God is apparent.

## *The Son of Man Is to Be Delivered Up (9:43b–45)*

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And see at 9:21–22 and the “Son of Man” excursus following that pericope.

### *Translation*

<sup>43b</sup>While all were still<sup>a</sup> marveling at everything which he<sup>b</sup> had been doing,<sup>c</sup> he said to his disciples,<sup>44</sup>“Put these words into your ears. For I want you to know that<sup>d</sup> the Son of Man is about to be delivered up into the hands of men.”<sup>e</sup><sup>45</sup>They did not understand this word.<sup>f</sup> It was

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NTS *New Testament Studies*

FS Festschrift, volume written in honor of

ed. edited, edition(s), editor

et al. *et alii*, and others

b b. Various texts make the reference to Jesus explicit here, some retaining the impf. verb (A C etc.), and others changing to an aorist (W 1006 1506 etc.).

a a. “Still” is added to clarify the force of the gen. absolute.

c c. Rendering an impf. here.

d d. “For I want you to know that” all renders a (lit. “for”), to make explicit the ellipse involved here (see *Comment*).

e e. Elsewhere translated “people.”

f f. The Gr. text has a linking , “and,” here.

*concealed from them, so that they could not comprehend it; and they were afraid to ask him about this word.*

### **Notes**

- a. “Still” is added to clarify the force of the gen. absolute.
- b. Various texts make the reference to Jesus explicit here, some retaining the impf. verb (A C etc.), and others changing to an aorist (W 1006 1506 etc.).
- c. Rendering an impf. here.
- d. “For I want you to know that” all renders a  $\mu$  (lit. “for”), to make explicit the ellipse involved here (see *Comment*).
- e. Elsewhere translated “people.”
- f. The Gr. text has a linking  $\kappa$ , “and,” here.

### **Form/Structure/Setting**

Luke continues to follow the Markan sequence. With the transition he forges in v 43b, he maximizes the contrast between the all-powerful exorcist of vv 37–43a and the soon-to-be-trapped Son of Man of vv 43b–45. A similar contrast is implicit already in the Son of Man language used in vv 21–22 to speak of Jesus’ coming suffering fate (see there and the Son of Man excursus), and becomes explicit in the juxtaposition of that passion prediction and the following transfiguration scene. Where in vv 21–22 Luke had spared the disciples (or at least Peter their spokesman) their inappropriate response to Jesus’ announcement of suffering (with the deletion of Mark 8:32–33), he here allows that motif to come into sharper focus than was the case in Mark, and will repeat the same forcefully in 18:34, where he will use Mark’s third passion prediction.

Luke’s short form here of the passion prediction is one of the claimants for being the most original form of the passion prediction. This possibility, along with the agreement between Matthew and Luke in replacing Mark’s present tense “is handed over” with  $\mu$

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gen. genitive

impf. imperfect

A Codex Alexandrinus

C The Cairo Geniza

Θ Theodotion

, “is about to be handed over” (but Matthew and Luke have a different word order), has been used to argue for a second source here. This view of the most original form is argued against at 9:21–22; and  $\mu$  , “to be about to be,” + infinitive is a construction favored by both Matthew and Luke. There is insufficient reason to postulate a second source.

The historicity of the passion predictions is discussed at length at 9:21–22. Mark received from his tradition both a form of the passion predictions beginning with a reference to the Son of Man suffering (and being rejected) and one beginning with a reference to the Son of Man being handed over ( ). Both forms share the reference to rising after three days (on the third day). It is not clear that one needs to choose between these for a single historical original; but if we were to, then, the greater generality of the reference to suffering, the prominence given to Judas’ betrayal (using the same verb) in early church tradition, and the possibility that the handing over echoes the uses of in the LXX of Isa 53 (vv 6 and 12; not paralleled in MT; see, however, in *Comment* below the closer fit with Dan 7:25, where the MT agrees), all point to giving preference to the former of the two patterns of wording. (It is not impossible that “rejected” in the second pattern is also a development and may be traced back to Christian reflection on Ps 118[117]:21, but Jesus was, himself, capable of such reflection.)

### ***Comment***

He who comes down from the mount of transfiguration to go on to his suffering destiny here sees beyond the impression he creates upon the crowds to the day that beckons when he will be handed over to the hostile wills of men. With solemn insistence he seeks to bring this home to disciples who are Satanically blinded by the anticipation of their share in the glory and success of the Christ.

**43b** Luke uses only “his disciples” from his Markan source here. He displaces Mark’s quite separate setting for this pericope (privately with the disciples) with a strong link to the preceding exorcism, or better to the whole string of Jesus’ mighty works (“all the things”), which seem to stand in such contrast to the coming powerlessness predicted here. The amazement of all is a statement about the sheer impressiveness of Jesus’s deeds, not a statement about any particular kind of personal response from the crowds (cf. at 4:22). Luke does not think that the Markan “taught” gives the right tone to such a communication (note similarly at v 22). If it is right to see a note of rejection in the “handed over” language of v 44, then the contrast with the amazement here may be paralleled by the juxtaposition in Acts 2:22–23 of the attestation by means of mighty deeds and, nevertheless, the handing over to crucifixion and death by the hands of lawless people. The address is to disciples, but there is no suggestion of privacy or exclusion (cf. 6:20 and 7:1).

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LXX The Septuagint, Greek translation of the OT

MT The Masoretic Text [of the Old Testament] (as published in BHS)

44 The opening clause here is entirely Lukan. Luke then reproduces the first clause of the Markan passion prediction with only minor changes, but does not continue with the remaining clauses of the Markan prediction with their words about death and resurrection. The absence of a resolution in resurrection allows the full force of the paradox to assert itself. , “into the ears,” is also found in 1:44 and Acts 11:22, in similar idioms (for the idiom, cf. Exod 17:14; Jer 9:20; Mal 2:2). The whole clause underlines the importance and solemnity of Jesus’ coming statement (it is quite unnatural to refer the clause to the preceding praise of the crowds as Lagrange, 279; Rengstorf, 124).

The use of the , “for,” is elliptical: the clause that follows both explains the solemnity of Jesus’ introduction and is what he has intended to introduce. On Son of Man, see at 6:1–5 and the excursus following 9:21–22. Caragounis (*Son of Man*, 199) has pointed out that Dan 7:25 offers the closest parallel to “handed over into the hands of.” There, the saints of the Most High (the equivalent to the “one like a son of man” of the vision of v 13) shall be delivered up (LXX uses the same verb, ) into the hand of the final king of the kingdom represented by the fourth beast of Daniel’s vision of 7:1–14. If this is the correct background for our text, then Son of Man here is already Danielic, and it is so precisely in its reference to suffering, rather than (as with other texts) in connection with vindication and glory. From Dan 7 is being drawn the view that the Man of Destiny, in his re-enactment of the decisive stages of the history of God’s people, must himself undergo his own version of their humiliation. Such a re-enactment motif is strongly evidenced in the temptation narrative (4:1–13; there in connection with the testing of the wilderness period). There is no adequate basis for determining whether this Dan 7 connection for the suffering of the Son of Man should be traced back to the historical Jesus. This present text is certainly no adequate basis for assessing the whole Son of Man discussion from the point of view of the identification of the Son of Man with the saints of the Most High. In his Christology, Mark shows a sustained interest in the problem of the relationship between the “one” (Jesus) and the “many” (those who fail, yet benefit from the coming of the one); so, we may more readily attribute an importance to the Dan 7 link for this text in Mark, than is likely to be the case either in the historical ministry of Jesus, or here in Luke.

It is difficult to be sure of the correct nuance to give to (lit. “to give over”) here. The core idea is simply that of transmission, but the term can carry quite a range of associations. Possible here would be betrayal (as with Judas [22:4, 6, 21, 22, 48]), being given up to a hostile group by the group to which one belongs (as 20:20; Acts 3:13; 21:11), being constrained and transmitted in legal custody (as Acts 8:3; 22:4), or the providential orchestration that, behind the scenes, allows one to gain power over another (as in Dan 7:25; Rom 8:32; cf. Luke 4:6). The divine purpose clearly attaches itself to each of the passion predictions and could be operative in this word (especially given a Dan 7:25 connection), but it is perhaps more likely that we should find expressed elements of the first two (closely related) suggestions, which may be extended slightly to include the giving up of Jesus to the will of the mob, which we find in 23:25. , “people/men,” has here a distinctly negative sense, almost as though the delivery is into the hands of a hostile mob (as 23:25). In 18:32 this becomes delivery to the Gentiles, and in 24:7 delivery into the hands of sinful people/men. If it is right to find a deliberate word-play with serious purpose in the juxtaposition of “Son of Man” and “men,” then

the handing over will need to be, after all, by God: he who should be welcomed by men is instead handed over (by God) to their destructive will.

**45** Here Luke reproduces all Mark's words but offers his own extensive expansion, which underlines the importance of this saying of Jesus and introduces a supernatural dimension to the disciples' incomprehension. The disciples' failure to understand puts them, for one half of the description, on the same footing as the Jewish people of Acts 13:27 (the same verb; and cf. 3:17): since the disciples do know, at least in part, who he is, they do not positively have a part in condemning him to death. The cross and resurrection and subsequent attention to the Scriptures will sweep away such ignorance (Luke 24:25–27, 44–46). Luke sees more here than a simple intellectual failure to understand. Here and in 18:34 (and cf. 24:16) he identifies a supernatural aspect to this failure to perceive. This is normally taken to refer to the divine purpose in the blinding, but it may be better to treat the failure of insight as Satanic. This seems to fit better the broad sweep of Luke's narrative in which he treats such ignorance as a general benightedness, which is dispelled on the one hand by the resurrected Lord and on the other hand by the Spirit-empowered preaching of the early church. A role for Satan also does better justice to the degree of personal responsibility that attaches to this blindness. Schürmann (573) sees a culpable blindness lying behind the fear that leads here to a failure to ask. The personal responsibility is clear enough in 24:25. It is unlikely that in 24:45 Jesus is opening minds that are to be understood as previously shut by God. The clearest analogy for such a Satanic activity is provided by 8:12. The disciples' fear is a mark of partial understanding: whatever it is that Jesus is saying, it disturbs acutely their sense of how things should be.

### *Explanation*

Luke establishes a sharp contrast between the all-powerful exorcist of the previous episode and the Son of Man who is soon to find himself subject to the hostile wills of men. The contrast is much the same as that which we have seen between the glorified Christ of the transfiguration and the one who must be heard when he talks of going to suffering and death, and when he defines a discipleship path which leads to the same. The Man of Destiny goes to his destiny in a way that defies human comprehension. Here Jesus underlines the importance of this path of destiny and seeks in vain to make his disciples accept his teaching.

The amazement of the crowds is still expressing itself when Jesus takes up his somber subject. The full paradox of the suffering of the Man of Destiny is more starkly present in Jesus' words here than was the case in vv 21–22, because his prediction here speaks only of being delivered up, and not of what lies beyond. That which is most difficult to accept is what it is most needful to accept. Talk of resurrection would not have posed such problems.

The language of handing over into the hands of may evoke Dan 7:25, but it is not certain that Luke makes anything of this. The connection would fit with the idea expressed elsewhere, in, for example, the temptation account (4:1–13) and the exodus of 9:31, that Jesus goes through in his own life a personal version of the decisive stages of the history of Israel.

The word translated “to be delivered up” can have quite a range of different associations. Here the thought could be of God behind the scenes orchestrating his purposes for the Son of

Man, or it could operate much more at the level of the human actors and contemplate Jesus being betrayed and handed over by his own people to the occupying power, and then in turn by Pilate to the will of the mob (see 20:20; 22:4; 23:25; etc.). “Men” is normally a quite neutral expression for people in general, but here it has a distinctly negative force, almost as though Jesus is thinking in terms of being handed over to the will of a hostile mob (compare 23:25).

The Jewish people were involved in the death of Jesus because they were ignorant both of the identity of Jesus and of his destiny to suffer, witnessed to in Scripture (Acts 13:27). The disciples share one half of this ignorance, but are spared by at least a partial knowledge of Jesus’ identity (9:20) from being involved in condemning Jesus. At the same time, they are more to blame for their lack of knowledge, since Jesus has gone to such pains to make his suffering fate known to them. The disciples do not know, because they do not want to know: note how they are afraid to ask him about what they have not understood. But there is also a supernatural aspect to their blindness. They are caught up in a Satanic benightedness (see 8:12; 18:34; 24:16), which will only be dispelled the other side of the cross, when the resurrected Lord is able to open their minds (24:45). In a similar way the preaching in the power of the Spirit of the early church is able to move the Jewish people on from their ignorance (see Acts 3:17–19).

## ***Who Is the Greatest? (9:46–48)***

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*ExpTim* *The Expository Times*

*DR* *Downside Review*

*RechBib* *Recherches bibliques*

*CBQ* *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

*EBib* *Etudes bibliques*

*ST* *Studia theologica*

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### Translation

<sup>46</sup>A dispute arose among them over who might be the greatest<sup>a</sup> of them. <sup>47</sup>Being aware<sup>b</sup> of the contentious thoughts<sup>c</sup> of their hearts, Jesus took a child and placed him beside himself, <sup>48</sup>and said to them,<sup>d</sup> "Whoever receives this child as though he were me, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives the one who sent me. So,<sup>e</sup> the one who is least among you all is<sup>f</sup> a great one."<sup>g</sup>

### Notes

a. Comparative for superlative.

b. , "seeing," is read for , "being aware," by A C D L W etc.

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<sup>6</sup>Nolland, J. 2002. *Vol. 35B: Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 9:21-18:34*. Word Biblical Commentary . Word, Incorporated: Dallas

a a. Comparative for superlative.

b b. , "seeing," is read for , "being aware," by A C D L W etc.

c c. "Contentious thoughts" translates the same word as "dispute" in v 46.

d d. "Them" is omitted by P<sup>45</sup> D 2542 it sy<sup>s, c</sup>.

e e. Translating .

f f. "Will be" in A D W f<sup>13</sup> etc.

g g. "Great one" is omitted by P<sup>45</sup> co etc.

A Codex Alexandrinus

C The Cairo Geniza

D Codex Bezae or Deuteronom(ist)ic

c. “Contentious thoughts” translates the same word as “dispute” in v 46.

d. “Them” is omitted by P<sup>45</sup> D 2542 it sy<sup>s, c</sup>.

e. Translating .

f. “Will be” in A D W f<sup>13</sup> etc.

g. “Great one” is omitted by P<sup>45</sup> co etc.

### ***Form/Structure/Setting***

Mark has at this point (9:33–50) a string of short items, mostly connected by catchwords, but with no thread of sense connecting the discrete items. Luke has used only vv 33–40 and has forged a single unit out of vv 33–37, where in Mark there were three, if not four, freestanding units. vv 38–40 (with v 41) were already presented as a unit by Mark; Luke accepts this unit as exhibiting an adequate internal coherence, only dropping v 41, which seems not to be developing the same point.

Luke continues to want his readers to see a close link between this and the preceding pericopes. The disciples who need to learn the present lesson are the same disciples who, by their anticipation of their own share in the glory and success of Christ, were, in vv 43–45, Satanically blinded to what Jesus was saying.

Luke creates an enclosure around his large journey narrative (9:51–18:34), partly with the use of this episode and the echo it finds in 18:15–17. The preceding passion prediction (9:43b–45) is paralleled in 18:31–34, with which the journey narrative concludes (note the increased parallelism that Luke creates here with his addition of 18:34). Kodell (*CBQ* 49 [1987] 415–30) argues for a more elaborate pattern of parallelism, not all of which persuades (and does not perceive the role of the connections for the journey structure), but note as verbal links the  $\mu$  (“do not forbid”) common to 9:50 and 18:16, the  $\mu$  (“into Jerusalem”)

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L Leningrad Codes of MT (as published in BHS) or **Codex Leningradensis**, B19a

Θ Theodotion

P Peshier (commentary)

sy Syriac

f feminine

CBQ *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

of 9:51 and 18:31, and just possibly the use of  $\mu$  (“to rebuke”) in 9:55 and 18:15, and of (“to follow”) in 9:49 and 18:22, 28.

It has frequently been suggested that Luke had access to a second source here, but the basis is slight: Matt 18:4 and Luke 9:37 both have “this child,” but the word order is different, and so is the immediate context; both use “this is” in their rewrite of Mark 9:35b (which both displace to later in the account). Both Matthew and Luke omit Mark’s embrace of the child, but this has good independent motivation in their respective editing. There does seem, however, to be a better basis for suggesting that Matthew had access to a different version of catch word-linked sets of sayings with significant overlap with Mark 9:33–50. In particular a case can be made for a form that lacked vv 38–40 (see Wenham, *JSNT* 14 [1982] 113–18), but there is not sufficient evidence for confidence that Luke had access to this other form (the only piece of evidence that gives pause here is the presence at 10:16 in Luke’s mission charge of a version of Mark 9:37b, while Matthew has at the end of his mission charge in 10:40, 42 a version of Mark 9:37b, 41, which reflects [as does 18:1–9] a form of the Markan set of linked items lacking any equivalent to Mark 9:38–40; but this only makes it likely that there was a second mission charge form, available to Matthew and Luke, which contained a version of Mark 9:37b, and which Matthew will have expanded).

There has been considerable discussion about whether the catchword linkages of the Markan text reflect an earlier oral collection (as e.g., Légasse, *Jésus et l ’enfant*, 18) or whether Mark is the compiler here (as, e.g., Schnackenburg, “Mk 9, 33–50”). Schnackenburg can point to Gospel instances of editorial use of catchword linkage, but this is best taken as a continuation of a practice that had already an established place in the oral phase, rather than as a normal technique of literary composition. It is most likely that Mark worked from an existing collection here, but also quite possible that he may have added to this.

The discussion of original forms in connection with the materials of Luke 9:46–48 is convoluted and produces no certain results. Sayings about greatness are preserved in the Synoptic tradition in Mark 9:35b (par. Matt 18:4; Luke 9:48c); Mark 10:43–44 (par. Matt 20:26–27; Luke 22:26?); and Matt 23:11–12 (par. Luke 14:11; 18:14b), while there are related sayings about receiving the kingdom of God like a child in Matt 18:3; Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17; and compare finally the sayings about the first being last and the last first in Matt 20:16; Mark 10:31; Luke 13:30. Actions of Jesus involving a child (children) are reported in Mark 9:36 (par. Matt 18:2; Luke 9:47) and Mark 10:13–16 (par. Matt 19:13–15; Luke 18:15–17). More remotely related is Matt 21:14–16. Statements about receiving a child are restricted to the immediate parallels to Mark 9:37 (Matt 18:5; Luke 9:48; but note the similar statement with “you” for the child in Matt 10:40; Luke 10:16). The statement about the equivalence of receiving Jesus and the

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e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

par. parallel or paragraph

one who sent him are found not only in Mark 9:37b (par. Luke 8:48b; missing from Matt 18:5) but also in Matt 10:40; Luke 10:16.

There can be no serious doubt that Jesus commended humility and service as the way to greatness, but the present forms of these sayings exhibit various kinds of adaption to context and mutual influence, so that it is no longer possible to claim to identify original forms in original contexts. Robbins (*Semeia* 29 [1983] 43–74) has argued forcefully that Jesus' actions with children should not be relegated to the artificial framework generated for a pronouncement of Jesus as in the classical form-critical analysis of pronouncement stories; but in Mark 9:36 the independent importance of the action of Jesus is, in any case, evident from the poor fit in the present context. It is not unlikely that Jesus' setting up of a child in the midst of his chosen disciples was his cryptic answer to their questions about greatness, but of this we cannot be certain. We can, however, be sure that he did act in this way, and that in doing so he transgressed the sensibilities of his culture and in particular of his disciples, and left a lasting impression upon them. The equivalence of receiving a child and receiving Jesus clearly has some relationship to the sentiment of Matt 25:35–40 and also to that of Matt 10:42 (Mark 9:41). The present uses of the statement all envisage a post-Easter situation, but this is no basis for doubting that the saying itself goes back to the historical Jesus. In that original context any closer precision of sense can only be a matter of speculation. The equivalence of the reception given to Jesus and that given to God is pervasively present in the Jesus tradition, but once again present contexts for this saying reflect later church concerns, and obscure from us the precise force of this saying on the lips of Jesus.

Luke is not content to have, as Mark, a scattered set of items hooked together by catchwords. He forges a unified development out of his Markan materials. A dispute arises among the disciples about which of them is the greatest. Jesus senses what is on their minds and responds by placing a child beside himself. Then he claims an equivalence between receiving the child and himself (two polar opposites for the disciples). To make this polarity even more severe he goes on to assert, in turn, equivalence between receiving himself and receiving the one who sent him. On this basis, Jesus identifies as the great one among the disciples the one who swallows his pride and sets aside his dignity and is prepared to identify with the lowly and receive and care for them.

### *Comment*

The disciples who were intoxicated with the anticipation of the glory that was to be theirs through their link to the Christ of glory were as little ready to find glory in the service of the humble as they had been to see the point in Jesus' talk of the Son of Man's betrayal.

**46** Luke omits Mark's setting for this episode, making even more pointed the juxtaposition with vv 42–45, and reinforces its statement of the disciples' incapacity to understand. Luke's Jesus does not ask about the dispute, to be refused an answer. Only "who" and "greatest" survive of Mark's wording, along with a noun form of Mark's verb "dispute." The indirect reporting of the question with + subjunctive/optative is Lukan (cf. 1:62; 19:48; 22:2, 4, 23, 24; Acts 4:21;

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cf. *confer*, compare

22:30). It could be that the dispute has here become a matter of the private thoughts of each disciple (cf. v 47 where this is clearly the case), but it is probably better to stay with Mark's idea of a conversation, out of Jesus' earshot: they disputed, and while Jesus does not hear their words, he reads the content of the dispute from their hearts. The question of greatness may be linked back to the privilege of the three in being witnesses of the transfiguration: they played host (or tried to) to the figures of glory. More generally the questioning is to be linked to the sense of importance that the disciples are understood to have attached to their own special link to Jesus.

**47** Luke defers his version of the statement about greatness to later in the episode (v 48c). He introduces Jesus' interest in the disciples' dispute, not via an initial questioning but in terms of his awareness of their thoughts. This is implicit in the Markan account and has some importance for Luke (4:23; 5:22; 6:8). For the Lukan wording here, cf. also 2:35; 3:15; 24:38. Luke reproduces quite closely the Markan statement about bringing the child. The significant changes are that the child is now placed beside himself, and not in the midst of the disciples, and that the Markan embrace of the child disappears (as it does in the Matthew parallel, and as it does also in the parallels to Mark 10:16 in both Matthew and Luke). The child is not now to be compared with the disciples; he is to be compared with Jesus himself. Nor is the child here received by Jesus, as some kind of example for the receiving of children in what follows. In Luke's account we cannot yet know what Jesus is seeking to achieve with this action.

**48a** Luke follows Mark closely here: he smooths the awkwardness of "one of these kinds of children" (there is only one) to "this child," and changes the word order and morphology slightly. Jesus and the child beside him are treated as in some sense interchangeable. How does all this answer to the dispute about greatness? A key is to recognize that greatness is here thought of as able to be measured by the company one keeps: the great have dealings with the great and handle matters of great significance. A woman or one of the servant classes deals with children. The chosen three have recently (almost) received the figures of glory of the transfiguration scene. In 15:2, Jesus will offend by not practicing the social exclusion that would express his status (and cf. 14:12–14). Just as the disciples considered Jesus too important to receive children (18:15), so they thought the same for themselves. To give attention to children would detract from their exalted status. For the low status of children in the ancient world, see A. Oepke, *TDNT* 5:639–52.

To clarify the thought here we need also to understand the sense required for the phrase

μ ἰ (lit. "on/upon my name"). Possible senses would include "because he is my disciple," "for my sake," "because you are my disciple," "following my example," and "as my representative." A better thought flow for the pericope is, however, achieved if the sense is taken to be "as though he were I" (see detailed discussion in Nolland, "Luke's Readers," 315–21). The text speaks of honoring and respecting the humble child in the way one would honor and respect Jesus himself. Respect shown for the humble child turns out to be respect shown to Jesus.

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TDNT G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., tr. G. W. Bromiley *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ET (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)

lit. literally

Within the framework thus established, we may see that the pericope sets out to show that receiving and honoring the lowly does not mark one as inferior, but rather exalts one, because in doing so one receives Jesus and his Father: one plays host to God himself! This concept turns the pursuit of greatness on its head and shatters any thought of preserving one's self-importance. Greatness is not the possession of those who act out the part, but comes as gift to those who humbly serve the lowly.

Luke is formulating the context of the life of the church in which the Jesus member of the Jesus/child pair is no longer physically present. Jesus may not be received as was possible during his ministry. But what the child represents is always present. The high status that came to the disciples during Jesus' lifetime from their association with him is now to be found, paradoxically, in the company of the lowly.

**48b** Here also Luke follows the Markan text closely. His verbal changes are only to complete the parallelism between v 48a and v 48b. In its original sense "receive" may have meant something quite different from what is envisaged for the child, but in Luke's text this is not the case. The thought may usefully be compared with that of Heb. 13:2. The concern is with the sense of greatness bestowed by the privilege of extending (in a hidden way) hospitality to such great ones. Christologically, the text points to the unique significance of Jesus, and behind the imagery there must be some sense expressed of fellowship with both Jesus and the one who sent him, which is established when one extends caring hospitality to the lowly.

**48c** Luke has delayed his equivalent to Mark 9:35b for this final climax position: the theme of greatness becomes explicit here at the end as it was at the beginning. Luke's polarities are  $\mu\kappa\alpha\lambda\omega\varsigma$ , "great," and  $\mu\iota\kappa\rho\omega\varsigma$  (lit. "smaller/more humble"), where Mark's had been "first," and "last of all" and "servant of all." Several suggestions have been made about the identification of the  $\mu\iota\kappa\rho\omega\varsigma$ . Leaney (*ExpTim* 66 [1954–55] 91–92) takes the reference as being to Jesus himself as a junior to John the Baptist, but this hardly produces a good thought sequence. Alternatively the  $\mu\iota\kappa\rho\omega\varsigma$  may be the child, who in his humble circumstances carries, for the one who welcomes him, the hidden greatness of Jesus and the one who sent him (so Schürmann, 576–77). The problem here is that  $\mu\iota\kappa\rho\omega\varsigma$ , "among you all," could refer naturally to the child, if Luke had reproduced Mark's  $\mu\iota\kappa\rho\omega\varsigma$ , "in the midst of them," in v 47 for the phrase to refer back to. Luke instead has written  $\mu\iota\kappa\rho\omega\varsigma$ , "beside himself." The difficulties here would be eased if the  $\mu\iota\kappa\rho\omega\varsigma$  here is not the child but simply what is symbolized by the child: the most lowly. The humblest among the disciples is great as the hidden bearer of the greatness of Jesus. But even with this modification the flow of thought is not as good as for the following view. The third possibility is that the  $\mu\iota\kappa\rho\omega\varsigma$  represents that one among the disciples who is prepared to learn the lesson that Jesus is seeking to teach: the  $\mu\iota\kappa\rho\omega\varsigma$  is the one who does not stand upon his dignity but is prepared to be identified with the lowly and to

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Heb. Hebrew

receive them, knowing that in so doing he, hiddenly, keeps company with the greatest of the great.

### *Explanation*

Just as in 9:21–22, 23–27 a passion prediction had led on to a related challenge about the life of a disciple, so here a passion prediction leads on to a challenge about the nature of true greatness among the disciples of Jesus. The text does not specifically say so, but we may understand that this also fell upon deaf ears.

Those who were intimate disciples to the Christ thought of themselves as occupying the positions of great ones. For a privileged three, there had been recently the opportunity to (almost) play host to three figures of glory at the transfiguration. It helps to see more clearly the flow of the thought through this account to recognize that the measure of greatness uppermost in the disciples' minds has to do with the company one keeps and the high matters with which one is occupied. The disciples dispute over which of them is the greatest.

The disciples may have had their dispute privately, but Jesus is able to read the contentious thoughts of their hearts. This capacity is part of his distinctiveness from other men. Jesus responds at first, not verbally, but with an action: he sets a child up beside himself. The disciples are now facing a pair of figures, one of whom they value supremely and one of whom is a nobody in their eyes. In the ancient world children could eventually become something important, but had little of the intrinsic value that modern society sets, sometimes sentimentally, upon children.

Only now, with his visual aid in place, does Jesus speak. He suggests that, despite all appearances to the contrary, the two paired figures in front of them are somehow interchangeable. To receive the child “as though he were I” (literally “upon my name”) is to receive me. Respect shown for the humble child turns out to be respect shown to Jesus. Keeping company with the lowly child turns out to be, in a hidden way, an extending of hospitality to Jesus himself. This is a little like Heb 13:2, “some have entertained angels unawares.” Beyond the historical ministry, the possibility of honoring and receiving Jesus in the flesh is gone, but the humble people typified by the child are all around us to be received and honored. The stakes are even raised one step further: he who receives Jesus is in fact receiving the one who sent him; he is playing host to God himself.

On the basis of what Jesus is saying here, greatness is not the possession of the one who only pays attention to the great. Greatness is not for those who act out the part, but it is the gift of God to those who humbly serve the lowly. A fellowship with Jesus and with God himself is established when one extends caring hospitality to the lowly.

The one who is great in the circle of the disciples is the one who learns the lesson Jesus teaches here. His greatness comes from being the least, that is, from being prepared to identify with the most lowly. In terms of what is visible, the disciple identifies himself as one of the lowly, but hiddenly, in this activity he is keeping company with the greatest of the great.

# *The Exorcist Who Was Not Part of the Group (9:49–50)*

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## *Translation*

<sup>49</sup>John responded and said, “Master,<sup>a</sup> we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop<sup>a</sup> him, because he doesn’t follow you<sup>c</sup> with us.”<sup>50</sup>Jesus said to him, “Don’t try to stop<sup>d</sup> it.<sup>e</sup> For the one who is not against you<sup>f</sup> is for you.”

## *Notes*

a. P<sup>45</sup>  L X etc. read “teacher” with the Markan text.

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TZ *Theologische Zeitschrift* (ThZ)

RSR *Recherches de science religieuse*

ST *Studia theologica*

<sup>7</sup>Nolland, J. 2002. *Vol. 35B: Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 9:21-18:34.* Word Biblical Commentary . Word, Incorporated: Dallas

a a. P<sup>45</sup>  L X etc. read “teacher” with the Markan text.

a b. “Tried to” represents the force here of the impf. The aorist is read by A C D W etc.

c c. f<sup>1</sup> b. c q sy<sup>s,p,hmg</sup> etc. have a pl. “them,” which fits better the pl. imperative to come.

d d. “Try to” represents the force of the present imperative following the previous use of the impf. of the verb.

e e. Mark had “him” at this point; Luke has no expressed object.

f f.  $\mu$  , “for he is not against you,” is added here by P<sup>45</sup> L 33 892 etc. P<sup>45</sup> continues  $\mu$  , “nor for you.”

b. “Tried to” represents the force here of the impf. The aorist is read by A C D W etc.

c.  $\text{f}^1$  b. c q sy<sup>s,p,hmg</sup> etc. have a pl. “them,” which fits better the pl. imperative to come.

d. “Try to” represents the force of the present imperative following the previous use of the impf. of the verb.

e. Mark had “him” at this point; Luke has no expressed object.

f.  $\mu$  , “for he is not against you,” is added here by P<sup>45</sup> L 33 892  
etc. P<sup>45</sup> continues  $\mu$  , “nor for you.”

### ***Form/Structure/Setting***

vv 9:49–50 bring to a close the section 9:21–50 with its focus on preparing for the journey to Jerusalem. Right to the end the disciples exhibit little affinity with Jesus’ vision of the way of the cross. The present episode makes its own assault on their self-importance. Luke uses the opening

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P Peshier (commentary)

$\aleph$  Codex Sinaiticus

L Leningrad Codes of MT (as published in BHS) or **Codex Leningradensis**, B19a

impf. imperfect

A Codex Alexandrinus

C The Cairo Geniza

D Codex Bezae or Deuteronom(ist)ic

$\Theta$  Theodotion

f feminine

b. *breve* (metrically short poetic line), or before a tractate indicates Babylonian Talmud.

c common or correction by a later hand <sup>1</sup> first corrector <sup>2</sup> second corrector

sy Syriac

pl. plate or plural

(lit. “answered”) to bind this pericope closely to the preceding dispute about greatness.

Luke continues here to follow the Markan sequence. He abbreviates by deleting Mark 9:39b, and he will not reproduce Mark’s 9:41, which is yet another of the pieces linked by catchword rather than thematic development, but he reproduces Mark’s wording here with unusual exactness, so that there can be no question of any influence from another tradition. Having finished with this pericope his selection of suitable materials from Mark’s collection of catchword connected items in 9:33–50, Luke will leave his Markan source for the most part of the long journey section, which he will now begin. Luke will rejoin the Markan sequence at 18:15. Passing over the materials of Mark 10:1–12, he will pick up the Markan thread at 10:13.

The major difficulty to be faced in claiming historicity for this account is the language of casting out demons “in the name of” Jesus. While this practice is well attested for the early church, is it likely in the lifetime of Jesus himself? Josephus, *Ant.* 8.45–49, reports use of Solomon’s name in this way, but he was a great hero of the past and not a living contemporary, as Jesus was. There is, however, a feature of the Gospel presentation of Jesus’ exorcisms that may lie at the basis of a use of his name, even in his lifetime, as a power for exorcism. The interest in the Gospel presentation of Jesus’ exorcism is in his own immediate authority over the powers of the demonic world. There is no emphasis on technique or even on prayer. All the stress falls on the compelling authority of Jesus. (For general discussion of Jesus’ exorcisms, see at 4:31–37.) Despite the obvious role that this motif has in the life of the early church, there is good reason to consider that it is well grounded on historical memory. It is quite possible that even in Jesus’ own lifetime a recognition of intrinsic authority connected with this man became the basis for experiments in appealing to his name in exorcism.

The strongest argument in favor of the fundamental historicity of the account is the tension between its generosity of spirit and the generally exclusivist tenor of the early church. As with other traditions that are critical of the disciples, there must, on that ground also here, be a general presumption in favor of historicity. Other arguments are proposed by Wilhelms (*ST* 3 [1949] 168–69), Pesch (*Markusevangelium*, 2:109), and Schlosser (*RSR* 56 [1982] 237–38).

General historicity does not, however, deal with the separate parts that go to make up this brief account. Each of the three parts of the Markan pericope has been suspected of being an expansion. Mark 9:38 falls foul of the general form-critical suspicion that in pronouncement stories the narrative framework is a secondary development used merely to provide a framework for the saying that is the point of the story. The specific arguments here can be formulated to favor either historicity or (Markan) development and are indecisive, but it is a little difficult to imagine v 39 circulating without any narrative setting. Schlosser argues for an original that had for v 38 not a *report* by John of an earlier attempt to stop an exorcist but rather an account of the

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lit. literally

*ST Studia theologica*

*RSR Recherches de science religieuse*

actual attempt by the disciples to stop him (*RSR* 56 [1982] 231–33). Little is at stake since v 38 adds to v 39 only the role of John as spokesman for the disciples to Jesus and the specification that the wonder performed in Jesus' name was an exorcism.

The argument against v 39 consists mostly of skepticism about a pre-Easter use of Jesus' name as a basis for exorcism. This has been discussed above. It is in connection with v 40 that the claims for secondary development are strongest. One of the concerns has been with the context of persecution, which, it has been claimed, is the evident setting for the words of v 39–40. The move from the christological focus of v 39 to the ecclesiastical focus of v 40 has also raised suspicion. The saying in v 40 is obviously proverbial and is clearly paralleled in Cicero, *Pro Ligario* 33. While Jesus was quite capable of making use of the wisdom of a contemporary proverb, one must allow here for the possibility that the proverb is an early church development concerned to apply more generally in the life of the church the principle discerned in v 39.

The Lukan structure is quite simple. A report to Jesus is triggered by the previous episode. Jesus objects to what the disciples had done and gives a reason.

### *Comment*

Coming as it does after the dispute about greatness, this pericope represents a further assault on the self-importance of the privileged disciples. Those around Jesus must learn to understand their position not in terms of a circle of privilege but in terms of a call to follow Jesus in the path of suffering. The work of God is not restricted to their circle.

**49** Luke replaces Mark's , "said," with ... , "responded and said," because he wants this episode to be seen in the light of the previous dispute about greatness: this bid by the disciples for exclusive claim upon the powers of the new age is of a piece with their earlier preoccupation with greatness. Mark's "teacher" becomes the more significant , "master" (see at 5:5). For Mark's "was not following us" Luke has "does not follow [you] with us": this clarifies the christological focus and makes the issue one of being (permanently) part of the disciple band, and not only of whether the exorcist was traveling with the disciple band at the particular time. The role of John here bridges to his role (with James) in the opening pericope of the journey narrative (9:51–56). The success of this outsider may be contrasted with the failure of the disciple band in vv 40–41. Despite this failure, the disciples considered that the powers let loose by the presence of Jesus should be restricted to the disciple band (perhaps to the Twelve [cf. v 1]). An (unsuccessful) attempt by non-Christian exorcists to use the name of Jesus is reported in Acts 19:13–16. Sensitivity about the range of those who may dispense the power of the Spirit is reflected in Acts 8:14–24. In Acts in general there is an interplay between regularization and the sense that God is not bound by structures and standard channels. Whether we should think of this exorcist who uses the name of Jesus as "not far from the kingdom of God" (as Baltensweiler, *TZ* 40 [1984] 135) is not clear. What is clear is the recognition of the

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cf. *confer*, compare

*TZ Theologische Zeitschrift* (ThZ)

effective reality of the powers of the kingdom of God quite outside ecclesiastical structures. The exorcist does show a degree of confidence in the reality of the powers to be found in Jesus.

**50** Luke changes the word order, adds “to him,” which Mark had left to be supplied from context, and deletes the object (“him”) after “do not try to stop him.” The last change has the effect of generalizing in preparation for the general statement to come. Luke then omits the rest of Mark 9:39 before reproducing the proverb of Mark 9:40 in Mark’s words, except for a change from an “us” form to a “you” form of the proverb (this change supports the Lukan focus on the disciples’ concern about their own status).

The reasoning of Jesus’ reply totally inverts the thinking that lies behind the disciples’ stand. They would secure their own position by keeping others out of what they see as their own exclusive domain; Jesus suggests that, on the contrary, they should be grateful for the degree of recognition of their cause implied in the exorcist’s activity. Modesty rather than self-importance and self-assertion should mark the Twelve as followers of Jesus. Even a minimal recognition of the reality of what is happening in the Jesus movement should be encouraged and received with gratitude; it should not be despised because of its limitations.

Because the horizon of interest here is that of the disciples and their attitudes, we should not use the proverb in relation to contemporary discussion of the place of the non-practicing Christian (as Baltenswieler [TZ 40 (1984) 135] points out, the exorcist was certainly not passive), or of the possibility of the anonymous Christian. The status of the exorcist is not finally of interest in the pericope.

As Schürmann (580) has noted there is a certain parallel to be drawn with Num 11:24–30.

### *Explanation*

vv 49–50 bring to an end the section that Luke has devoted to preparing for the journey to Jerusalem. The focus has been on Jesus’ coming fate in Jerusalem and on the implications for discipleship of Jesus’ pathway to glory. Here the disciples would protect the boundaries of their powers and privileges, but Jesus suggests a more modest approach in which they will be grateful for the smallest degree of recognition of their cause. The marks of the presence of the kingdom are not, in any case, to be restricted to their own circle.

Jesus’ response to the dispute about greatness suggests to John that he and the other disciples may have got it wrong when they tried to stop an exorcist using the name of Jesus. So John reports the matter to Jesus for his adjudication. Despite their recent failure to successfully achieve an exorcism (vv 40–41), they would restrict to their own number the right to exorcise in Jesus’ name (compare v 1). Full of self-importance, they are out to protect their privileges as the inner circle of Jesus’ followers. They are affronted by this manifestation of the realities of the powers of the kingdom of God outside their own circle and sphere of influence.

Jesus, with his own generosity of spirit, in no way shares their concern. He turns their approach on its head. As those called to the way of the cross, the disciples should rather be grateful that there is any kind of recognition of their cause. They are really in no position to be

acting out of self-importance to secure their own domain of influence. No matter what the shortcomings, any place where God's power is found to be at work should be joyfully recognized. Note the parallel with Num 11:24–30.

## Excursus: The Journey to Jerusalem

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RB *Revue biblique*

BiTod *The Bible Today*

RevRel *Review for Religious*

FS Festschrift, volume written in honor of

ed. edited, edition(s), editor

JSOT *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* Biblical Studies

Exp *The Expositor*

ExpTim *The Expository Times*

SE *Studia Evangelica* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (= TU 73 [1959], 87 [1964], 88 [1964], 102 [1968], 103 [1968], 112 [1973])

PRS *Perspectives in Religious Studies*

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*HUCA Hebrew Union College Annual*

*TJ Trinity Journal*

*BVC Bible et vie chrétienne*

*ZNW Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*

*HTR Harvard Theological Review*

*BSac Bibliotheca Sacra*

esp. especially

*CBQ Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

*EglT Église et théologie*

*JBL Journal of Biblical Literature*

*NovT Novum Testamentum*

*AnBib Analecta biblica* (Rome: PBI)

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*AJBI Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute*

*Scr Scripture*

*NTS New Testament Studies*

*MilltownStud Milltown Studies* (Dublin)

*EvT Evangelische Theologie*

*StBibT Studia biblica et theologica*

*JETS Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*

*FV Foi et Vie*

*RevExp Review and Expositor*

*GuL Geist und Leben*

*RHPR Revue d’histoire et de philosophie religieuses*

The curious journey that dominates the whole central section of Luke has been the subject of extensive scholarly discussion, but with precious little agreement about major issues of the discussion.

Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem in 9:51, and the journey motif is reiterated in 13:22; 17:11; and 18:31; and perhaps also 9:57; 10:38; 11:53; 14:25. In 18:35 we find Jesus approaching Jericho, and so within about eighteen miles of his destination. The journey, however, makes no discernible progress by 17:11 (cf. 9:51–56; Conzelmann, *Luke*, 68–71, has argued from 17:11 that Luke thought of Samaria and Galilee as side by side [and in this way allows for the journey to have made progress], rather than one above the other, but the “between Samaria and Galilee” of v 11 is to explain the presence of a Samaritan among the group of lepers [v 16] and not to describe the progress of the journey [as, e.g., Grundmann, 336]). Furthermore, much of the material of the journey section does not easily fit into a journey setting and provides no sense that Jesus is a traveler.

Clearly Luke has from his Markan source information about a journey to Jerusalem and to death (see 8:31; 9:30; 10:1, 17, 32–33; and then consecutively from 10:46), though it is not absolutely clear until 10:32 that Jesus and the disciples are on a journey to *Jerusalem*. Already for Mark the content of this part of the Gospel is not consistently closely tied with the journeying motif. Luke chooses to make a major structural feature of his Gospel out of this journey motif. For him the journey becomes a major display case for a large part of the parables and teaching of Jesus that he has assembled. Luke appears to go to no pains to tie the particular material to the journeying motif. All that is important for him, it seems, is that this journey should provide the broad framework. Why should this be the case?

Many have examined the content of the materials in these chapters for the clue as to why these materials have been gathered into the journey section. McCown (*JBL* 57 [1938] 63–64) suggested that Luke did not want to interpolate the materials of this section into his account of the Galilean ministry because he sensed (*i*) that much of the material was of a somewhat different type, and (*ii*) that it pointed toward the approaching death of Jesus. The prominence of parables gives some mileage to the former suggestion, but the second is hardly obvious, and is most clear at points of Lukan intrusion. A number of scholars have drawn attention to the didactic and parenetic focus of the materials: here we have a manual for living out the life of discipleship in the later church. But is this more true of the travel narrative than of 6:20–49 or 8:4–15? Ultimately the whole Gospel has as its horizon of concern the post-Easter situation. Grundmann (*ZNW* 50 [1959] 252–70) relates the journey to the theme of Jesus as a wanderer on the earth, which he finds more broadly in Luke, but he does this (*i*) at the expense of relegating most of the materials of the journey section to excursions and (*ii*) by doing less than justice to the dominant role of the goal of the journey for this particular piece of “wandering.” Different studies have highlighted the importance in the journey materials of the themes of faith, obedience to the teaching of Jesus (Reicke, *SE* 1 [1959] 206–16, sees alternating blocks of instruction of disciples and discussion with opponents), love of God and neighbor, prayer, the openness to the divine revelation that comes through Jesus, the proper use of money and worldly goods, repentance, forgiveness, joy, following of Jesus as a way, the acceptance of suffering. Only the last two of these interlock at all closely with the journey theme; and these can hardly offer themselves as general descriptions of the contents of the journey narrative. Kodell (*CBQ* 49 [1987] 428) offers the rather complex “the lowliness and defenselessness of Jesus (and his true followers) as

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e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

expressed in an expectancy of God's action and a willingness to follow his way of salvation, dependent on him." By casting a fairly wide net this gathers in a lot but is not finally a convincing description of the contents of the journey section.

With some justification Davies (*SE* 2 [1964] 164–69), Gill (*HTR* 63 [1970] 199–221), and Osten-Sacken (*ET* 33 [1973] 476–96) give priority to the specifically journey-related verses and/or to the pericopes immediately connected with the travel notices. Gill finds challenge to the hard road of discipleship, as following the way that Christ himself took; and he finds challenge to (gentile) mission, including its anticipation in the ministry of Jesus. The former of these is more obvious than the gentile part of the latter (which is, however, not to be completely denied), but at the end of the day the presence of all the other materials in this travel section still remains unexplained. The same difficulty arises with Osten-Sacken's view that Christology is central to the journey section, and in particular the separation and setting in sequence of the different stages of the messiah's career: most of the material of the journey section are only christological in a remote sense, if at all. Davies is only really interested in the directly travel materials; he cuts the Gordian knot by declaring that "The journey sets the tone of the teaching ... not *vice versa*" (169 n. 1).

There does not seem, then, to be any way in which an analysis of the specific contents of the journey material can provide the key as to why these materials have been cast into the form of a journey. Sellin (*NovT* 20 [1978] 100–135) offers another approach. He accepts as his starting point this broadly recognized tension between the journey form and the wide-ranging teaching content of the section. Focusing attention on this journey as a journey to death, Sellin suggests that we should look to the Jewish testamentary literature for the clue that has been eluding us. As he goes to his death Jesus is here providing for his disciples a testament for the time of the church (134–35). This highly creative suggestion at one stroke allows for the diverse contents of the section, does justice to the church orientation of the materials, and provides a sensible reason for the journey setting. The ultimate weakness of the suggestion is finally the limited number of elements from the standard testament form that appear in the journey section. Almost none of the instruction is marked as instruction in view of Jesus' impending departure (as distinct from instruction *about* his impending departure); the material lacks the autobiographical tone of the testamentary genre; despite the large teaching content, the material is finally in narrative form, and this judgment is true even if we disregard the specifically journey aspect of the materials (the materials of *Luke 22*, in connection with the Last Supper do rather better at conforming to the testamentary genre). One can imagine that an account that presents itself as a report of what Jesus occupied himself with on his fateful journey to Jerusalem could be valued and related to as though it were a testament, and that such evaluation might take place under the influence of the knowledge of the testamentary genre; but Luke could have done much more to help the process along!

By casting the journey as he has, Luke has retained the focus of Mark's "passion narrative with an extended introduction" (the wording is that of Kähler, *Historic Biblical Christ*, 80 n. 11, who, however, expresses the sentiment in the plural of all of the Gospels), while introducing a huge amount of additional teaching of Jesus, most of which has no real bearing at all on the passion. Luke has expounded the purpose of the journey in his narrative, not primarily in any of

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ET English translation

n. note

the journey materials, but rather in the material of 9:21–50, the section in which he sets his reader up for the journey motif. The journey allows the relatively brief materials of that section to be assured a dominating importance for the remainder of the Gospel account. In the journey narrative itself, the materials that sustain the journey motif, especially 9:51; 13:31–35; 18:31–34, but also other materials, reiterate and, in some cases, develop further the thrust of 9:21–50 (e.g., Resseguie, *JETS* 25 [1982] 41–47, has examined 14:1–33 as bringing into sharp relief two opposing perspectives, that of Jesus teaching renunciation, expressed as humility and giving up of possessions, and an opposing perspective of those who practice self-assertion, which takes the form of self-exaltation and the treasuring of possessions). It is the Jesus who goes to suffering and calls to suffering, and whose glory is the other side of cross and resurrection, who is the dominating figure of the journey section. All the particular thrust of the materials is to be subordinated to, and seen in the light of, this supremely important perspective.

While there is a good scholarly consensus about where to begin the journey, there is a range of opinion about where to bring this large section to a conclusion. Suggestions include 18:14, 31, 34; 19:10, 27, 28, 44, 48; 20:18. The arguments supporting the different views cannot be reproduced here. In the section 9:46–48 above, reasons are offered for finding in the materials that end in 18:34 the second half of an enclosure surrounding the journey section. In addition to those considerations, an obvious change takes place in the form of the narrative from 18:35, where consecutive sequence of events moves from being a narrative fiction used for thematic ends to being intrinsic to the materials (with certain clear exceptions) and where geographical location becomes important in a way that it has consistently not been the case in the journey narrative (17:11 is the nearest thing to an exception). 18:34 is the end of the artificial journey structure; journeying continues, but now Luke is reporting the actual journeying from Jericho to Jerusalem which, unlike the journey narrative, involves making real geographical progress. From 18:35 on, Luke's perspective is that of preparing for the actual arrival in Jerusalem. The account of the journey itself has been driven from the materials of 9:21–50. From 18:35 the center of gravity shifts, and we are anticipating concretely events to come in Jerusalem (see especially the role of 19:11–27 in this).

An additional consideration that favors a terminus at 18:34 is the way in which themes from 9:22–50 recur in the units that, according to this understanding, begin to round off the journey narrative: the passion prediction of 18:31–34 echoes those of 9:21–22 and 9:43b–45 (as well as linking with 9:51); the call to self-denial and following of Jesus in 9:23–27 has a counterpart in 18:18–30 in the challenge to the ruler and the promise to Peter and the others who have followed; and the episode with a child in 9:46–48 is matched by the episode with infants in 18:15–17.

The internal organization of the travel narrative is yet another matter that has attracted a good measure of scholarly attention, but with no consensus. Beyond the various attempts to group materials into natural sections, there have been different attempts to find other kinds of motivation for Luke's ordering of his materials. Evans ("Central Section") has attempted to show detailed parallelism between the materials of the journey narrative and the unfolding of Deut 1–26 (excluding 14; 19; 21:1–14; 22:5–23:14). Despite some enthusiastic supporters, the view has been trenchantly criticized by, among others, Blomberg ("Central Section," 221–28): there are no real parallels in ancient literature to support such a procedure; the echoes of Deuteronomy appealed to are often not at all close; equally good parallels with Deuteronomy have been produced on quite a different basis; in many cases a parallel exists in Deuteronomy (but not in the correct sequence), which is better than the one proposed by Evans. Goulder (*Calendar*, 95–101) offers a lectionary explanation for Luke's procedure in the travel narrative. He has his own quite different set of parallels to Deuteronomy, but this time they are based on the Jewish lectionary

divisions, which Goulder believed were already in use when the Third Gospel was produced. Simply at the level of fit, the parallels, as a set, fail to convince, while the assumed antiquity of the particular lectionary cycles is far from proven.

More than one attempt has been made to establish Luke's use of a chiasmic structure (that is a structure in which a first set of items is paralleled in reverse order by a second set, sometimes with a central unparallelled item, which may be the stressed item) in the journey section (Morgenthaler, *Lukanische Geschichtsschreibung*, 1:156–57; Goulder, *SE* 2 [1964] 195–202; Talbert, *Patterns*, 51–52). While Morgenthaler and Goulder have not a single item of parallelism in common, Talbert builds on features of each of the earlier suggestions. Some of the alleged parallels are suggestive, but others are general or even forced, and this has led some subsequent students to look for the chiasm not in Luke's own work, but in a source that he has used in the central section of his Gospel. More recently again, Standaert ("L'art de composer," 336–45) has proposed a chiasmic structure for 9:51–17:12. This structure has no common elements with any of the previous suggestions. It seems to have its basis predominantly in the need to find a chiasmic structure also within each of the identified sections and is more imaginative than convincing.

Bailey (*Poet and Peasant*, 79–85) takes the journey through to 19:48 and offers a chiasmic structure with a center point in 13:22–35, which incorporates nearly 90 percent of Luke's final text form. His parallels are somewhat more consistently persuasive than the earlier suggestions, though still quite uneven. Blomberg ("Central Section," 238) finds it puzzling that we should have a source that has been so dominantly used but whose structure has been so obscured by Lukan addition. This procedure, one might say, is not so different at one level from Luke's approach to Mark earlier in the Gospel, but where Luke has obscured the Markan structure he has clearly imposed upon the materials his own replacement structure; further, items in the Markan structure could be taken or left on a one-by-one basis, while items in a chiasm cannot be so treated without destroying the whole of the structure. Blomberg's point needs answering.

Blomberg builds his own approach on the recognition by various scholars that parables in the journey section can be convincingly paired. The five most obvious pairs (10:25–37 par. 18:9–14; 11:5–8 par. 18:1–8; 12:13–21 par. 16:19–31; 12:35–38 par. 16:1–13; 13:1–9 par. 15:1–32) in fact line up in chiasmic order, and all belong to the travel-narrative materials distinctive to Luke 14:7–24 offers itself as a suitable center piece. Beyond this, by Blomberg's reckoning, the only parables peculiar to this section of the Gospel are Luke 14:5; 14:28–33; and 17:7–10. Each of these begins with  $\mu$ , "which of you," and two of the three (14:5 and 14:28–33) fit neatly into the chiasm structure, while if the third is paralleled with 11:11–13 (which begins with the same  $\mu$ ), it also finds a natural place in the chiasm. For the last, but only here, Blomberg moves outside the parables materials distinctive to the journey section of Luke (11:11–13 is paralleled in Matt 7:9–11), but can find support for the view that 11:11–13 formed an original unity with 11:5–8 and has not, therefore, been drawn in here by Luke from the materials he shares with Matthew. In the resulting chiasm the paralleled sections are in each case either both directed outside the disciple band in controversy, or they are both directed internally to the concerns of discipleship. One may express a slight uneasiness about Blomberg's failure to clarify the boundaries of what he will accept as parable, and one may want to delete some of the scope of certain of Blomberg's parable sections or even whole sections (14:7–24 could be divided and treated as a central pair; or we could accept only vv 15[16]–24 as part of this parable's source; or even delete this unit altogether on the basis of the parallel in Matt 22:1–10; perhaps 15:3–7 could

be deleted on the basis of its parallel in [Matt 18:10–14](#), but the detailed parallelism of [15:1–32](#) and [13:1–9](#) is against this; if [14:7–24](#) is deleted, we may want to exclude also the minisection [14:5](#) and treat [14:28–33](#) as the centerpiece, noting the way that its two parts form a close parallel with [15:3–7](#), [8–10](#) on the one side, and with their parallels in [13:2–3](#), [4–5](#) on the other side), while wanting to affirm that this study of Blomberg’s adds up to a very strong case for the view that Luke has used a parables source as core source for the construction of his journey narrative. He has retained the parables in the original chiasmic order of that source, but he has heavily expanded with other materials and seems to have made no attempt to use as his own the structure of his source (cf. on a microscale the residual indications of the earlier structure[s] of the genealogy in [3:23–28](#)).

If this analysis is correct, it still does not provide us with a Lukan structure, but it does identify for us a series of constraints in relation to which Luke has worked in forming the journey narrative. The parables do not provide the structure, but they do set up landmarks and have the potential to become growth points in relation to which Luke has added thematically similar material. With some significant modification, the structure that Blomberg develops on this basis is here adopted. Arguments for its adoption will not be presented here. Rather, as earlier in the commentary, discussion will be provided as each of the sections is introduced. The outline (with, for the most part, my own headings in place of Blomberg’s) is:

9:51–10:24	Accompanying Jesus to Jerusalem
10:25–42	Love of God and Love of Neighbor
11:1–13	Confident Prayer to the Father
11:14–54	Conflict and Contrast
12:1–13:9	Preparing for the Coming Judgment
13:10–14:35	Reversals Now and to Come
15:1–32	That Which Was Lost Is Found
16:1–31	Use and Abuse of Riches
17:1–19	Fitting Response to the Demand and Working of the Kingdom of God
17:20–18:8	Who Will Be Ready When the Son of Man Comes?
18:9–30	Entering the Kingdom Like a Child
18:31–34	Going to Jerusalem to Suffer (and Rise)

## ***Accompanying Jesus to Jerusalem (9:51–10:24)***

Now at the predetermined time in the plan of God, Jesus begins his fateful trip to Jerusalem. He goes to Jerusalem on a path of vulnerability and nonretaliation, and he calls would-be followers to face the challenge of being (with him) totally out of step with the normal values of the society of which they have hitherto been an integral part. As earlier, so on this journey he

will continue his mission of outreach, and he sends the Seventy ahead of him as his representatives to engage in this same task.

8

## *Rejection in a Village of the Samaritans (9:51–56)*

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<sup>8</sup>Nolland, J. 2002. *Vol. 35B: Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 9:21-18:34.* Word Biblical Commentary . Word, Incorporated: Dallas

OBO Orbis biblicus et orientalis (Freiburg [Sw]/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck)

BulSSul *Bulletin de Saint Sulpice* (Paris)

Bib *Biblica*

BVC *Bible et vie chrétienne*

JTS *Journal of Theological Studies*

ANRW *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, ed. H. Temporini and W. Haase, (Berlin/ New York: de Gruyter)

esp. especially

NRT *La nouvelle revue théologique*

FS *Festschrift*, volume written in honor of

ed. edited, edition(s), editor

N. “Die lukanischen Samaritanererzählungen in religionspädagogischer Sicht.” In *Wort in der Zeit*. FS K. H. Rengstorf, ed. W. Haubeck and M. Bachmann. Leiden: Brill, 1980. 275–87. **LaVerdiere, E.** “Calling Down Fire from Heaven.” *Emman* 95 (1989) 322–29. **Radl, W.** *Paulus und Jesus*. 103–26. **Ross, J. M.** “The Rejected Words in Luke 9, 54–46.” *ExpTim* 84 (1972–73) 85–88. **Starcky, J.** “Obfirmavit faciem suam ut iret Jerusalem: Sens et portée de Luc ix, 51.” *RSR* 39 (1951) 197–202. **Tiede, D. L.** *Prophecy and History in Luke-Acts*. 55–63.

And see further at the excursus above: “Journey to Jerusalem.”

### Translation

<sup>51</sup>When the days of [the period before]<sup>a</sup> his being taken up were drawing to a close, it happened that he set his face to go to Jerusalem. <sup>52</sup>He sent two messengers before his face. Having gone off, they went into a village<sup>a</sup> of the Samaritans, in order to<sup>c</sup> prepare for him. <sup>53</sup>But they would not receive him because his face was going to Jerusalem.<sup>d</sup> <sup>54</sup>Seeing this, the disciples James and John said, “Lord do you wish us to tell fire to come down from heaven and destroy them?”<sup>e</sup> <sup>55</sup>He turned and rebuked them;<sup>f</sup> <sup>56</sup> and they went into a different village.

### Notes

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et al. *et alii*, and others

ExpTim *The Expository Times*

RSR *Recherches de science religieuse*

a a. The part in square brackets is not represented in the Gr. text but is added in an attempt to render the ellipse involved in the use of  $\mu$  (lit. “to be fulfilled”).

a b. “Town” ( ) is read here by  $\aleph$  f<sup>13</sup> etc.

c c. The more usual is read here by  $\aleph$  A C D L W etc.

d d. This is idiomatically impossible in English but has been retained because of the role played in the account by the repetition of the word *face*.

e e. The expansion “as Moses also did” is found in A C D W etc.

f f.  $\mu$ , “He said, ‘You do not know of what spirit you are,’” is added by D d. geo; while a fuller form, which has for the and adds, “For the Son of Man did not come to destroy peoples’ lives but to save [them],” is read by f<sup>1,13</sup> lat sy<sup>c,p</sup> bo<sup>pt</sup> Marcion etc. There are minor variations in the readings.

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### ***Form/Structure/Setting***

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Gr. Greek

lit. literally

$\aleph$  Codex Sinaiticus

f feminine

A Codex Alexandrinus

C The Cairo Geniza

D Codex Bezae or Deuteronom(ist)ic

L Leningrad Codes of MT (as published in BHS) or Codex Leningradensis, B19a

Θ Theodotion

d. deceased

lat Latin

sy Syriac

The journey section of the Gospel now begins as Jesus resolutely turns his face toward Jerusalem. The rejection that awaits him is prefigured in the inhospitality of the village of the Samaritans (cf. 4:16–30), while his meekness in the face of rejection in Jerusalem has its own anticipation in Jesus’ response here.

The larger section is often taken to be 9:51–62: the units vv 51–56 and 57–62 both have to do with initiating disciples into the ways of Jesus. There is, however, a good case to be made for extending the section to include the mission of the Seventy (and with it the attached material to 10:24): ... , “he sent ... before his face,” occurs in 9:52 and 10:1; , “to receive,” is used with the negative in 9:53 and 10:10 in contexts that involve entering a village/town, not being received, and moving on to somewhere else (and note also the use of , “to enter in,” in 9:52; 10:5, 8, 10); and “the kingdom of God” occurs in 9:60, 62 and 10:9, 11 (9:60 provides a further link with its call to *proclaim* the kingdom of God). If the mission is thus to be included, then the particular viewing point for the mission here will be that of initiating the disciples into an imitation of Jesus’ own manner of engaging in mission. (The broader links between the mission and Jesus’ own practice in the journey section will be explored at 10:1–12.)

The materials of this pericope are unparalleled elsewhere in the Gospel tradition. This makes it much more difficult to estimate the Lukan contribution. The pervasive, and partly negative, Elijah motif does not seem likely to have been a Lukan contribution. Luke is almost certainly responsible for v 51 and, with it, at least in its present form, for the explanation in v 53 of the Samaritans’ behavior. He may be responsible for the reference in v 54 to “the disciples James and John” (the Elijah imagery works in a more integrated way if the messengers are the speakers here). v 56 may well be Lukan.

As in many places there is a clear affinity here with Johannine tradition (cf. John 4:4–42). There is also tension with the Matthean prohibition of mission among the Samaritans (10:5). Schmidt (*Rahmen*, 268–69) considered that the present tradition emerged as an explanation of the Matthean restriction (Goulder, 459, adopts this view but regards it as Luke’s speculative reconstruction of events as he tries to make sense of Mark and Matthew). It is perhaps best to see the Elijah motif as responsible for the mission emphasis of the account and to understand an original that involved only hospitality on the pilgrim journey to Jerusalem (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 20.118; *War* 2.232; *Life* 269). The mission emphasis of the account is in any case restrained. In form-critical terms we have here a story about Jesus.

### **Comment**

Jesus now sets out resolutely on the journey for which he has been preparing his disciples in 9:21–50. Luke tells of some in the party going ahead to prepare his way, in the pattern of the eschatological preparatory role of Elijah, but they meet rejection, and James and John suggest a further imitation of Elijah in calling fire down from heaven. Jesus categorically rejects such a

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cf. *confer*, compare

suggestion, and, in the spirit of the mission instructions to come in 10:1–12, they move on to a different village.

**51** Both the first and the second half of the verse are best taken as Lukan formulations. The first half uses one of Luke’s favored  $\epsilon\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\tau\omicron\iota$ , “it happened,” idioms; and it has a notable similarity to Acts 2:1 and cf. Luke 2:6, 21. In the second half, the use of  $\epsilon\iota\sigma\epsilon\lambda\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ , “to go,” to Jerusalem aligns with Luke’s use of this verb for the journey to Jerusalem (9:53; 13:33; and especially 17:11). Luke’s  $\epsilon\iota\sigma\epsilon\lambda\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  + infinitive is not quite LXX idiom, but is an easy development from Ezek 21:7 (ET 21:2, but the LXX is significantly different here from the MT; and cf. 4 Kgdms 12:18), and definitely close enough to fit Luke’s desire to write in “biblical Greek.”

The comparison with 2:6, 21 suggests that “the days” are best taken as days of Jesus’ earthly life or ministry and not as the days of death, resurrection, and ascension, as considered by many (In Acts 2:1 are we dealing with the ending of the day [at sundown], which marked the beginning of Pentecost?). When the days are finished, the time has arrived for the  $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  (lit. “taking up”). There is an ellipse here that makes translation difficult. The verb is used to express the idea of a divine timetable for the unfolding of the salvation-history to which Luke attests (cf. Gal 4:4, but here the focus is on the end and not the beginning of Jesus’ life).

$\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  has been taken to mean “death” (esp. Friedrich, “Entrückungschristologie,” 48–52) on the basis of *Pss. Sol.* 4:18, with possible support from *As. Mos.* 10:12; *Ps-Clem. Hom.* 3:47; &2ApocBar; 46:7; and a second-century Montanist Christian inscription (the last cited by BAGD, 57). But it is disputed whether *As. Mos.* 10:12 or &2ApocBar; 46:7 refers to death at all, while *Ps-Clem. Hom.* 3:47, and probably the Montanist inscription, do so in the context of the immortality of the soul, which is thought to be taken by God at death. This leaves only *Pss. Sol.* 4:18. The reference to death is clear, but almost certainly there is some metaphor of transference involved too. The most that can be said is that one may talk about death by using the term

$\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ , but that it is likely that some metaphor of transference is always involved in such language, whether seriously intended in some context of belief, or as a piece of pious convention, or as an imprecise reflection on the mystery of death.

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LXX The Septuagint, Greek translation of the OT

ET English translation

MT The Masoretic Text [of the Old Testament] (as published in BHS)

BAGD W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ET, ed. W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich; 2d ed. rev. F. W. Gingrich and F. W. Danker (University of Chicago, 1979)

Pss. Sol. Psalms of Solomon

The cognate verb is used in connection with the death of Moses in Philo, *Moses* 2.291. Here death is the threshold that sets Moses on the upward flight to heaven. The travel of the soul to heaven is the clear context in *T. Abr.* 15–20, as it is likely to be in another Montanist inscription (see BAGD, 56). The verb may, thus, be used in a manner quite parallel to the use explored above for the noun. But the verb is also used very clearly in connection with translation to heaven, as happened to Elijah (4 Kgdms 2:10–11; Sir 48:9; 49:14; 1 Macc 2:58; *T. Job* 39:12; Mark 16:19; Acts 1:2, 11; *Acts Pil.* A 15:1; 16:2). It is hard not to see this sort of background as pertaining also to the use of the noun in the present verse, and in particular not to see a reference to the ascension to come in Luke 24:50–51; Acts 1:9–11. At the same time it is probably right to appeal to the use of the noun in connection with death, along with the place of the passion predictions in setting the context for the present verse, and to understand the use of  $\mu$  in connection with Jesus' pathway through death to exaltation at the right hand of God. Davies (SE 2 [1964] 164–69) would also include the journey itself as the first stage of the  $\mu$ , but this is hardly convincing.

On the basis of OT idiom (esp. the uses with  $\mu$  in Ezekiel), some have detected hostility in the  $\mu$ , “set/fix firmly the face,” idiom; but this is not true for the source of the idiom suggested above (Ezek 21:7 [LXX]), nor for the words taken at face value, nor for the role of Jerusalem in the nearest context. Rather, Jesus sets out resolutely to make the trip to Jerusalem for which 9:21–50 have been a focused preparation. The specific mention of Jerusalem as the place of destiny has thus far been restricted to 9:31, but reference to the leadership group in v 22 has already implied a Jerusalem setting clearly enough.

**52** Luke uses to start the journey a tradition of Jesus' seeking hospitality in a Samaritan village and being refused it. The use of  $\mu$  + infinitive may be Lukan (cf. Acts 20:24). The verse strongly alludes to Mal 3:1 (not LXX): “I send my messenger to prepare the way before me.” These messengers are in some sense preparing for Jesus in the way that John the Baptist, as an Elijah figure, had been called to do. By means of the allusion back, which we will find in 10:1, Luke suggests that the messengers are messengers of the presence of the kingdom as are the Seventy in 10:1–12. At the same time, the mission emphasis here is extremely subdued: the event prefigures later mission to the Samaritans (Acts 8:4–25) rather than itself truly being an instance of mission to them (in much the same way that the Pentecost crowd [of Jews and proselytes from many lands] prefigures in Luke's handling the worldwide gentile mission to come; Lohse [“Missionarisches Handeln,” esp. 174–77] vastly exaggerates the indications of ministry to the Samaritans). The same connection with 10:1 will suggest that the mission there is to be seen as travel preparations for Jesus, as is the case here in 9:52–56.

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T. Abr. Testament of Abraham

SE *Studia Evangelica* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (= TU 73 [1959], 87 [1964], 88 [1964], 102 [1968], 103 [1968], 112 [1973])

OT Old Testament

The role of the Samaritan village is in the first instance to establish that Jesus is heading south for Jerusalem. The origin of the split between the Samaritans and the Jews is shrouded in mystery. Traditionally they have been taken to be the descendants of the mixed population settled in Israel after the Assyrian conquest of the Northern Kingdom (2 Kgs 17:24–41). Probably the breach of which the NT situation is the aftermath is to be dated to the late fourth century B.C., shortly before Alexander the Great. Manasseh, the brother of the high priest married the daughter of the Samaritan Sanballat and was expelled from Jerusalem. He responded by building a temple on Mount Gerizim. In 128 B.C. John Hyrcanus' destruction of the Gerizim temple created deep and lasting resentment. But it would seem that the Jewish Samaritan break was not complete until into the first century B.C. The Samaritans developed their own form of the Pentateuch (the extent of their canon), their own liturgy, and their own religious literature. The Samaritans were, however, never considered by the Jews simply as non-Jews: their affiliation to the congregation of Israel was never denied, only considered doubtful! (See J. Jeremias, *TDNT* 7:88–94; R. J. Coggins, *Samaritans and Jews: The Origins of the Samaritans Reconsidered* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1975]; J. D. Purvis, "Samaritans," In *The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*, supplementary vol. [Nashville: Abingdon, 1976] 776–77; W. A. Brindle, "The Origin and History of the Samaritans," *GTJ* 5 [1984] 47–75; R. Pummer, *The Samaritans* [Leiden: Brill, 1987].)

**53** The Samaritans do not receive Jesus. This is just what (10:10) Jesus anticipates will happen to some of his representatives in towns they will enter.

μ (lit. "his face was going to") sounds Semitic, but there is no true parallel to it in the LXX. Luke will have developed it out of v 51, perhaps displacing a simpler statement of the Jewish/Samaritan religious rivalry that lay at the basis of the present rejection (for the hostility that could be aroused by the traveling Jewish pilgrims, see Josephus, *Ant.* 20.118–23; *War* 2.232–33). It is hard to be sure whether Luke is to some degree excusing the Samaritans (cf. Acts 3:17), or whether the rejection and moving on should be connected closely with 10:10–12—probably the former (note Jesus' rebuke of James and John). For Luke, the restatement of Jesus' determined orientation to Jerusalem underlines the importance of this perspective for the conception of the travel narrative.

**54** The suggestion of James and John is clearly based on Elijah's action in 2 Kgs 1:10, 12. The LXX wording is followed closely except that "destroy" replaces "consume." Preparing the way for the one who is heading to Jerusalem to suffer is not appropriately done with fiery judgment. A time of judgment will come (10:12, 14; 13:1–9; etc.), but it is not now. Probably the original did not distinguish between the messengers and those suggesting this further Elijah-like

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NT New Testament

TDNT G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., tr. G. W. Bromiley *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ET (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)

vol. volume

GTJ *Grace Theological Journal*

act. The presence of “James and John” here may be a continuation from 9:49, where John is spokesperson for an equally rejected sentiment. There may also be an element of compensation for Luke’s elimination of Mark 10:35–45, where James and John are also concerned with the wielding of power. To have “the disciples” followed by names is unparalleled in the Gospel tradition. It may underline the failure here of James and John precisely as disciples. There is a certain parallel between the proposal of James and John here and that made by those with Jesus in 22:49, and a similarity in the response of Jesus.

**55** The language here is reminiscent of Mark 8:33, which Luke has not used, but some such language of rebuke must always have stood at this point in the story. There is a measure of anticlimax in the account, which is compensated for in some MSS (see textual note) by means of the addition, “You do not know of what kind of spirit you are. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy peoples’ lives but to save [them].” Despite the defense of the originality of this reading by Ross (*ExpTim* 84 [1972–73] 85–88), it seems best to treat it as a (quite fitting) scribal expansion. For Luke the account is dominated by the journey motif, and he does not sense any incompleteness. The journey in light of 9:21–50 is all the explanation necessary for Jesus’ rebuke of James and John.

**56** This verse is a Lukan formulation under the influence of (i) the journey motif: the journey continues; and (ii) the mission instructions to come in 10:10–12. There is no implication that Samaritan villages are henceforth to be avoided, nor is there any insistence that they went on (to mission) to further Samaritan villages.

### ***Explanation***

The journey to Jerusalem for which we have been prepared in 9:21–50 now commences. Jesus’ resolution is writ large in this episode, and there is a prefiguring of the fate that awaits him in Jerusalem, but also of the spirit in which he will receive that final rejection.

9:51–56 is part of 9:51–10:24 as a larger section in which the focus is on initiating the disciples into the ways of Jesus. Here there is the handling of rejection. In the following verses (9:57–62) the radical nature of following Jesus is in focus. 10:1–24 will initiate the disciples into Jesus’ own manner of engaging in mission. (We may note how much of the instruction there can be illustrated by Jesus’ own practice in the following chapters.)

Now in the divine plan the time is fast approaching for Jesus to be taken up. The word used is sometimes a pious way of talking about death, but here, while it embraces Jesus’ death in Jerusalem, its focus is clearly on his translation to glory. There is a certain analogy between this prospect for Jesus and what happened to Elijah (see 2 Kgs 2:10–11). Sensing that the time was fast coming, Jesus resolutely sets his face toward Jerusalem.

Jesus begins to head south and so toward a Samaritan village. With a play upon the words of Mal 3:1, Luke tells of messengers who go ahead to prepare for him. In a modest way they are

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mss manuscript(s)

doing what the Elijah of the end-time would do in preparation for the coming of the Lord. They are also doing what the Seventy will do in 10:1–20. In this way Luke hints at the mission to the Samaritans to come in Acts 8:4–25. Jesus is not, however, welcome in this Samaritan village.

Jewish pilgrims regularly passed through Samaria on their way to the Jerusalem feasts. Sometimes there was trouble that even led to massacre. The hostility between Jews and Samaritans at that time is well known. This village was not going to accept such a band of pilgrims destined for Jerusalem. They have no knowledge of the nature of Jesus' resolute orientation to Jerusalem. Samaritan rejection here acts as something of a foil for Jesus' positive presentation of Samaritans in 10:29–39 and 17:11–19.

James and John think that the Elijah ministry of preparation for the Lord should take on the fierce face of 2 Kgs 1:10, 12, 14. But this does not at all fit the tenor of the one who goes to Jerusalem to suffer. They earn only Jesus' rebuke. A similar interchange will come at the point of Jesus' arrest in Jerusalem (22:47–51).

Jesus is not at all daunted. His traveling band continues on its way to another village, which may or may not have been Samaritan. It makes no difference for Luke's telling. What is important is that the journeying continues.

## ***Following Jesus without Qualification (9:57–62)***

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SBL Society of Biblical Literature

WUNT Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: Mohr)

JSNT *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*

ETL *Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses*

ns new series

DR *Downside Review*

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ST *Studia theologica*

NovT *Novum Testamentum*

ZNW *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*

NTS *New Testament Studies*

BibLeb *Bibel und Leben*

BT *The Bible Translator*

HTR *Harvard Theological Review*

Luc *Lucian*

CBFV *Cahiers biblique de Foi et Vie*

SANT *Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament*

Q “Qumran”, “Qere” Qere (To be “read.” Masoretic suggested pronunciation for vocalized Hebrew text of the OT), or Quelle (“Sayings” source for the Gospels)

TPQ *Theologisch-Praktische Quartalschrift*

And see also at the excursus: “Journey to Jerusalem.”

### **Translation**

<sup>57</sup> As they were going<sup>a</sup> on their<sup>b</sup> way, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you are heading.”<sup>c</sup> <sup>58</sup> Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have places to settle, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” <sup>59</sup> He said to someone else, “Follow me!” He said, “Lord,<sup>d</sup> let me first go and bury my father.” <sup>60</sup> He said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead; and you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” <sup>61</sup> Someone else said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me say good-bye to the members of my household.” <sup>62</sup> Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back<sup>e</sup> is fit for<sup>f</sup> the kingdom of God.”

### **Notes**

a. A (D) W etc. and the majority text begin the verse with an (“it happened”) construction.

b. Gr. “the way.”

c. A C W etc. read , “Lord,” here. It could be original.

d. “Lord” is omitted here by B D sy<sup>s</sup> and a few other texts, but as its presence, if original, constitutes one of several deliberate links between v 61 and the preceding, it should probably be accepted.

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e e. There are a number of minor variants in this verse, the most significant of which is that of P<sup>45</sup> (fragmentary at this point) D it Cl, which puts the “look[ing] back” clause before the “putting [the] hand to the plough” clause.

f f. , “in,” is added here by P<sup>75</sup> 579 700 etc. , “into the kingdom,” is found in A C D W 0181 etc.

B Codex Vaticanus or MT MS, edited by Jacob ben Chayim, Venice (1524/25)

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f. , “in,” is added here by P<sup>75</sup> <sup>82</sup> 579 700 etc. , “into the kingdom,” is found in A C D W 0181 etc.

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### ***Form/Structure/Setting***

Luke has started the journey with an anticipation of the rejection that awaits Jesus in Jerusalem. Now he will stress that following the Jesus who goes the way of the cross makes radical demands upon all who would contemplate such a course.

For this section Luke draws on materials from a source that he shares with Matthew, at least for vv 57–60. Both the Matthean (8:18–22) and the Lukan forms bear the marks of the respective editor’s interests and style. Luke probably does not at any point of the material preserve a form more original than the Matthean form, but neither does he show dependence on those features of the Matthean account most likely to be a product of that writer’s own editing.

We have here three pronouncement stories drawn together into a set around the shared motif of the radical nature of discipleship. Each of the three pronouncements has greater need of its present narrative setting than is allowed for in standard form-critical orthodoxy. In particular the pronouncement in v 60 only makes sense as a response to something quite specific. The pronouncement of v 58 could have circulated alone. It makes best sense as a challenge about what is involved in desiring to throw in one’s lot with the Son of Man, but it could have been preserved as reflecting an aspect of the self-consciousness of Jesus.

v 62 could also have circulated independently as a general challenge to recognize the consistency of commitment to which the preaching of the kingdom of God calls Jesus’ hearers. Two considerations, however, make this unlikely. First, v 61 is not a colorless setting for the pronouncement to come: the permission requested is set in words that deliberately echo the words of Elisha as he is called by Elijah in 1 Kgs 19:20. Not only do we have a challenge to normal family decencies, but we have a dramatic heightening from even the exalted call to the prophetic office (cf. 10:23–24). As request and denial are seen together, the truly radical nature of Jesus’ challenge is expressed. The second consideration builds on the first. Not only the

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P Pesher (commentary)

<sup>9</sup>Nolland, J. 2002. *Vol. 35B: Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 9:21-18:34*. Word Biblical Commentary . Word, Incorporated: Dallas

cf. *confer*, compare

request, but probably also the response, has an allusion to the call of Elisha, since Elisha is ploughing when he asks to bid farewell to his family. Request and response have been conceived together as a single unit. The confidence with which we may trace these three scenes back into the time of the ministry of Jesus has been variously judged. The fortunes of the Son of Man saying (v 58) tend to rise or fall on the basis of the general evaluation of Son of Man sayings that refer to the present of Jesus' ministry (see excursus on Son of Man after 9:21–22, where such sayings are considered to have good claim to authenticity). Compared to the passion predictions (see at 9:21–22 for a defense of their basic historicity), there is not the same scope for considering this pronouncement to be prophecy after the event. While human rejection may be implied in the saying (see *Comment* below), the focus is on the humble lot of the Son of Man, so that it is hardly likely that the saying has been generated out of the myth of wisdom finding no home on the earth and returning to heaven (esp. *1 Enoch* 42:1–2). Bultmann has claimed proverbial origin for the saying (*Synoptic Tradition*, 28), but the statement is hardly an obvious proverb and has not been paralleled. The saying is much more at home on the lips of Jesus than as a community product (cf. Casey, *JSNT* 23 [1985] 12–13).

The call to leave the dead to bury their own dead (vv 59–60) is such a violation of all ancient versions of filial duty as to be hard to explain outside the context of Jesus' own sense of the compelling urgency of the claims of the kingdom of God. Scholarship is almost unanimous in attributing this logion to the historical Jesus (cf. Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, 6 n. 12).

There is considerably more dispute about the third of our pronouncement stories (vv 61–62), which is reported only by Luke. The relationship here with 1 Kgs 19:19–20, especially because it is reflected in the words both of Jesus and of the one who had addressed him, is suggestive of literary activity (oral or written) rather than the simple reporting of an event. Lukan creation is frequently suspected (e.g., Glombitza, *NovT* 13 [1971] 16; Fitzmyer, 837; Goulder, 460). Luke is certainly a practitioner of the kind of allusive use of Scripture evidenced here, but he is also, and more often, an heir to it. The radical break with family involved in responding to the call of Jesus, which is reflected here, is undoubtedly historically authentic (cf. 14:26; and for the rupture of normal greeting practice provoked by the urgency of the kingdom of God, see 10:4). It is not unlikely that a remembered call scene from the ministry does underlie the present verses, perhaps incorporating the pronouncement much as we have it, and that the mention of ploughing and the call scene itself have become the basis for exploiting the similarities and differences to the call of 1 Kgs 19:19–20. The idea of saying good-bye to family may have already played a part in the scene, or it may have at this point been drawn in from the known tradition of Jesus' call to radical detachment from family, in order to make a contrast with Elijah's greater flexibility.

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esp. especially

*JSNT Journal for the Study of the New Testament*

n. note

e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

NovT Novum Testamentum

Luke begins by reinforcing the Journey to Jerusalem context. Then he consciously organizes the items as a triplet. In the first and third instances, those who address Jesus make the proposal to follow him; in the central episode, Jesus is the one who calls to follow. Only in the central interchange is there a specific formulation of the task that those challenged to follow are called to share in (“proclaim the kingdom of God”). In the opening item Jesus raises the difficulties that stand before the one who would follow. For the remaining two items, it is the one speaking to Jesus who raises the difficulties. In both these last cases the claims of the kingdom of God also are the basis for disallowing the concessions sought.

### *Comment*

Luke sustains the sense of journeying as he now draws in a set of traditions that will highlight the fiercely radical nature of the call to follow Jesus, with its priorities that displace even the most solemn and sacred of filial obligations.

**57** Luke provides a more decisive setting for these materials than Matthew’s, in which Jesus takes leave of the crowds and crosses the lake of Galilee. Luke is still establishing for his readers the sense that the journeying to Jerusalem must not be lost sight of through all the central chapters of his Gospel account. The material of vv 21–50, in which the journeying motif is evoked makes an excellent setting for the teaching about the radical nature of Jesus’ call to follow, which is to emerge here. In Matthew it is “a certain [ ] scribe” who addresses Jesus, but Luke has the totally neutral , “a certain person/someone.” The Matthean scribe addresses Jesus as “teacher,” but no mode of address is found in the Lukan form. Both these, but especially the former, are likely to be Matthean additions. Luke uses his favored , “to him,” after the verb “said.” The man is proposing that he join the intimate group of Jesus’ followers as they make their way to Jerusalem.

**58** Apart from a “correction” of one historical present, this verse is identical with the Matthean rendering. As has been frequently noted, the Synoptists are more conservative in their rendering of Jesus’ words (and of important words addressed to him) than in their handling of narrative setting. Conservation here will have been further encouraged by the rhythmical nature of the wording of Jesus’ reply (to which Tannehill, *Sword of His Mouth*, 162, has drawn attention). The pathos of human homelessness has been expressed by means of a contrast with the lot of animals in Plutarch, *Life of Tib. Gracch.* 9 (928c). Homer, *Od.* 18.130–31, expresses the sentiment that the beast is more protected and persistent than the human creature. The latter has some similarity to the present text, if the sense is (with Casey, *JSNT* 23 [1985] 7–10) that, while nature provides shelters for the birds and the foxes in their (migratory) traveling, the Son of Man (or humanity in general) has no such automatic provision. The former is closer if we take the statement as in no way a general statement, but rather as a statement that is of a piece with the passion predictions: the Son of Man is ultimately a misfit in this world where the invasion of the kingdom of God is considered to be an intrusion. Either possibility could be related to the journey context, but the latter is finally more natural. The eager applicant is being told that he is offering to throw in his lot with a cause that is (quite soon) to prove to be an unpopular one.

As in each of the following encounters, there is no indication of the response of the individual. All the attention is concentrated on Jesus' powerful words (as Tannehill, *Sword of His Mouth*, 158), and it is finally the reader who is called upon to respond to the challenge.

**59** It is difficult to be sure whether Matthew or Luke has made the major changes here. Probably Luke has given the initiative to Jesus by bringing forward the "follow me" from Jesus' response to the beginning point of this encounter. This makes the episode recall the summons of Levi to follow Jesus (5:27–28). Luke provides a brief introduction that uses only \_\_\_\_\_, "a different [person]," of Matthew's introduction (Matthew's identification of this person as a disciple is probably his own addition). The address as \_\_\_\_\_, "sir/lord," is slightly insecure in the Lukan text here. The word often carries a rather stronger sense than "sir" in Luke's usage. (For the alternative reconstruction, which sees Matthew as making the main changes, see Miyoshi, *Anfang des Reiseberichts*, 39 [his appeal to \_\_\_\_\_, "first," as indicating derangement in the Matthean text may be answered by suggesting that in Matthew's source the pair of pronouncement stories already had a minimal narrative setting, which indicated that Jesus was on the point of traveling].) Luke improves Matthew's coordinated infinitives by making one a participle. Despite all attempts to soften the words of Jesus to come, we must assume that the father in this case is either dead or on the point of death. The one challenged had before him a solemn filial duty, which he seeks respite from his call to perform. In Jewish tradition, the burial of a dead relative was a prime religious duty, and in the case of the death of parents, responsibility rested particularly on the son of the family (the situation is well documented in Hengel [*Charismatic Leader*, 8–10]; *b. Ber.* 31a says "He who is confronted by a dead relative is freed from reciting the Shema, from the Eighteen Benedictions, and from all the commandments stated in the Torah"; a son who contemplates the possibility of his own imminent death is troubled in Tob. 6:15 that his parents "have no other son to bury them").

**60** Luke once again replaces a historic present reflected in the Matthean form of this verse. He has already used the call to follow at the opening; for this loss he compensates by adding at the end "and you go and proclaim the kingdom of God" ("proclaim the kingdom of God" is frequent in Luke but with different verbs: 4:43; 8:1; 16:16; 9:2; Acts 8:12; 28:31; the verb here, \_\_\_\_\_, is found [but not with "kingdom of God"] in Acts 21:26).

The words "leave the dead to bury their own dead" could be imagined on the lips of a Cynic philosopher, with his utter disregard for his body once it is dead, but the words would not, then, have any sense that could conceivably find its way into the synoptic Gospel tradition (see Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, 5–6, for texts). The various mistranslation theories are based solely on the desire to soften the words of Jesus, and should be rejected, as the psychologizing explanations of the man's request have been above. Jesus' words do not deny the normal claims of the pious duty to bury the dead; they simply insist that a more pressing duty is upon the one addressed. The urgent need for the man to bind himself to Jesus and to become a proclaimer of

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b. *breve* (metrically short poetic line), or before a tractate indicates Babylonian Talmud.

the kingdom of God takes precedence over other responsibilities in much the way that in Jewish thought the responsibility to bury a relative took precedence over one's normal obligations under the Torah (the attempt by Glombitza, *NovT* 13 [1971] 19–20, to relate the refusal of permission to bury the father to a priestly need to retain ceremonial purity involves the intrusion of a foreign idea and falls foul of Hengel's demonstration [*Charismatic Leader*, 10–11] that the NT period was seeing the relaxation, in the case of death of close family members, of the strict enforcement of such (high) priestly requirements; Hengel's own linking [11–12] of God's denial to Ezekiel of normal mourning for the death of his wife [24:15–24] is much more illuminating). The call to proclaim the kingdom of God anticipates the mission of 10:1–12, which will show how the apparent contradiction between the call to follow Jesus and the directive to go off and preach is to be resolved (the language of departure is actually borrowed from, and functions as an alternative to, the request of the man for permission to depart and bury his father). On preaching the kingdom of God, see at 4:43.

Though, as Fitzmyer (836) puts it, the view that the dead who are to do the burying are the physically dead has been “laughed off the exegetical stage,” it is actually the natural reading of the text, and it may be related to the Hellenistic view that the dead belong to a different realm (the underworld) from the realm of the living, which has its own dynamic (note the Scholion on Euripides, *Andromache* 849, which is cited by Hengel [*Charismatic Leader*, 6 n. 12] and earlier drawn attention to by Ehrhardt [*ST* 6 [1952] 130):

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, “For the dead are an object of care to the dead as the living [are] to the living”). We may compare also the Semitic view of going down to the shades, but this is considerably less developed. This understanding of Jesus' words is only absurd if taken literally. The force of the words is finally “let other arrangements be made; you have more pressing duties.” If we insist on a literal sense, we have to distinguish between the two references to the dead: let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead, but this seems less satisfactory, especially with the “their own” ( ) in the text, which binds the two uses together.

It is not likely that Luke's readers or the early church in general had to face any major problem over funerals of church members. The text functions, rather, as what Tannehill (*Sword of His Mouth*, 163) would call a “focal instance,” which because of its very extremity challenges any and every postponing of the demands of discipleship (cf. 14:15–24).

**61** vv 61–62 are not paralleled in the Synoptic tradition. The language that binds v 61 to the preceding is probably a Lukan contribution (“said,” “a different [person],” “I will follow you,” “Lord,” “first,” “allow me”). There may be further Lukan language as Miyoshi (*Anfang des Reiseberichts*, 42–43) suggests on the basis of a comparison with 14:33–35 and 17:31, but the case is not compelling.

The clash is not so violent as in the previous episode, but once more the would-be follower will propose the fulfilling of his filial responsibilities only to be denied by Jesus. The request

here parallels that by Elisha to Elijah when the latter has symbolized the call of the former to the prophetic office by casting his mantle upon the other.

62 Jesus implicitly refuses the man's request. A situation is present whose demands are more pressing and urgent than were those imposed upon Elisha by his call. Marshall (412) cites as nearest parallel words from Hesiod, *Works and Days* 443: "... one who will attend to his work and drive a straight furrow and is past the age for gaping after his fellows, but will keep his mind on his work." The concerns of the kingdom of God require the most diligent and unremitting care. Family ties in this setting can only represent a looking back. Fittingly, Miyoshi (*Anfang des Reiseberichts*, 56) draws attention to Elisha's later refusal to leave Elijah in the context of his impending assumption to heaven (2 Kgs 2:1–15). There might be some over-exegesis involved in making, as Miyoshi does, the further connection with Luke 9:51, but the thought follows the right lines.

### *Explanation*

Luke creates a strong bridge from the section 9:21–50 into the journey narrative for which it had been preparing. The rejection in a Samaritan village has given us an anticipation of what is to come in Jerusalem. Now these brief accounts of three men who considered following Jesus on the fateful journey to Jerusalem carry us forward from the challenging words of vv 23–27.

It is in connection with the journey to suffering in Jerusalem that the question of following Jesus is raised. The first man makes an eager and unconditional offer to follow Jesus anywhere. Do these words come too easily to him? Does he know what he is letting himself in for? One might fear that the attraction for him of joining the group of Jesus' most intimate followers might conform with what we have been seeing of the disciple band's own preoccupation with greatness and power. We will never know about the man, because his story is told for its challenge to us. We do not know how he responded to Jesus' words, but we do know what our own response is.

Jesus' words could be taken as applying a general truth pointedly to his own situation. Nature provides "housing" for the foxes and the birds, but not so for a human person. Human housing is built by human effort and is part of the fabric of human society. If you are a person in Jesus' situation, facing a journey to rejection by your society and your fellows, then this sense of the hostility of nature becomes acutely pressing.

One might better see Jesus' words as expressing a sentiment like that which stands behind the passion predictions. *Even* foxes and birds have a welcoming place to settle, but Jesus, though he is the Man of Destiny, has only the prospect of the hostile rejection that awaits him in Jerusalem. Of course in a literal sense, Jesus quite frequently found hospitality and for a time maintained a house in Capernaum. But at a deeper level, he had not found human society too welcoming, and the prospect of the cross was already casting its shadow.

The first man had made his own proposal to follow. The second is called to do so by Jesus. He is quite willing to rise to Jesus' challenge, despite the previous somber words about the Son of Man's lack of anywhere to lay his head. But the radical nature of the call is to bite yet deeper. The man's father is dead or on the point of dying. In Jewish tradition (and not only there!), as

son, he was considered to have prime responsibility for providing a decent burial. In Jewish tradition this obligation was so sacred as to override any other obligations of the OT law. Jesus' words do not deny the normal claims of the pious duty to bury the dead, but, in a way that is harsh and even shocking, they insist that this man has a more pressing duty. One might better see Jesus' words as expressing a sentiment like that which stands behind the passion predictions. *Even* foxes and birds have a welcoming place to settle, but Jesus, though he is the Man of Destiny, has only the prospect of the hostile rejection that awaits him in Jerusalem. Of course in a literal sense, Jesus quite frequently found hospitality and for a time maintained a house in Capernaum. But at a deeper level, he had not found human society too welcoming, and the prospect of the cross was already casting its shadow.

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In his words Jesus appeals to the common sentiment that the world of the dead and of the living are, for the most part, spheres sealed off from one another. The father has moved off into the embrace of that other world. Let those who are already there take responsibility as they receive this newcomer. Of course, taken literally as an answer to the man's dilemma it is a piece of nonsense. But it is not to be taken literally. The harsh words are simply to impress upon the man that he has more pressing responsibilities, and that some other arrangements will have to do for the burial of the father. No real concern is expressed about what these other arrangements might be.

No doubt we would all rather that Jesus not have spoken in this way. And while we feel the challenge of this episode in connection with any kind of postponing of the demands of discipleship, it is very difficult for us to fit this sort of challenge into the kind of society in which most of us believe our discipleship is to be performed. The prophet Ezekiel faced a not dissimilar challenge when he was denied by God the right to mourn the death of his own wife (Ezek 24:15–24). In such words we experience the ultimate contradiction between the kingdom of God and even the best and most Christian of our humanist values.

The third encounter is in many ways a milder rerun of the second. It is a play upon the call of Elisha to be a prophet alongside Elijah and, ultimately, to replace Elijah (1 Kgs 19:19–21). That was an exalted calling, but at that time there was scope for Elisha first to take his departure from his family. This calling, because of the presence of the kingdom of God, goes beyond anything that Elisha would experience (compare Luke 10:23–24). It is more important and it is also more

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urgent. There is no place here for any hesitation or delay. To do anything other than to move right into the calling would be to behave like the man at the plough who is ploughing his way forward, but looking behind him, and so, loses the line of the furrow. That is not good enough for the kingdom of God! When the demand of God presses upon us, it must take priority over all that belongs to good sense, good citizenship, and good family membership.