Słowa kluczowe: Łukasz, Ewangelia Łukasza, Jezus, izajaszowy sługa Jahwe, prorok, Chrystus, męczeństwo, nowe przymierze

Keywords: Luke, Gospel of Luke, Jesus, Isaianic servant of Yahweh, prophet, Christ, martyrdom, new covenant

Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne
XXXVII/1/2024, 142-160

DOI: 10.30439/WST.2024.1.8

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LUKE'S DIVINE CALL OF JESUS. PART ONE

Introduction

The divine call[2] of Jesus emerges in five differentiable stages in Luke's narrative. The Gospel results in representing Jesus' death as the martyrdom of a prophet. M. Dibelius (1965, pp. 4, 201-3) has noted this in 1919. C.H. Talbert (1982, p. 212) adds, "Luke avoids any connection between Jesus' death and the forgiveness of sins." His death is "not an atonement for sin" (p. 209), "not an atoning sacrifice" (p. 224). F. Bovon (2012b, p. 340) more ambiguously insists, however, with reference to his earlier article (1973), "[T]he attitude of the people, changed by the extent of Jesus' agony and death, testifies not only to the exemplary character but also to the redemptive nature of the passion." The question is thus joined for this paper. Did Luke's passion have such a "redemptive nature"? Thence the title of the paper, making central Luke's representation of the divine call of Jesus for our answering the question.

We shall find no doubt about the bringing of salvation in God's plan for Jesus. We shall find equally that transformation brought by Jesus involved declaration of forgiveness of sins and liberation from bondage as well as acts of healing and deliverance from unclean spirits. All such exercises of authority Luke attributes to God's Holy Spirit. It is from this entity, impersonal in the Gospel, that Jesus the

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2 The baptism is sometimes considered Jesus' "'call' to his mission" (Liefeld, 1984, p. 859). This study considers that event, instead, the beginning, the first stage, of his call.

human is guided (Williams, 2024, pp. 101, 103), not by a divine nature associated with him subsequently. Scholars of queer historiography have in recent decades adopted the term "historical haunting" for spiritual influences of the past recorded in ancient texts (pp. 6-9, passim)[3].

It may come as a surprise that before Luke narrates Jesus' ministry, he telegraphs his concluding assessment by announcements that Jesus is destined to be the Davidic ruler (1:32-33; 1:69; 2:4, 11; 3:23-38) and Son of God (1:35; 2:49; 3:22), according to Talbert (1982, p. 15).

The author presents Jesus' call, however, as a progression, God's plans revealed to him on five occasions, times at prayer[4]. Luke thus accumulates "intertextual voices" (Green, 1997, p. 377) for the audience to comprehend Jesus' call. First, following baptism and while praying, he is divinely affirmed in language implying roles as Davidic king of God's people and as Isaianic servant of Yahweh (3:21b-22). Second, Jesus prays all night on a mountain and seems guided, suggestive of Moses, then to select twelve as "apostles" from his disciples and to minister to a large, diverse crowd primarily with a lengthy sermon (6:12-49), the "Sermon on the Plain." Later during his Galilean journeying he prays twice in close succession. In the first he is informed evidently of eventual suffering and death (9:18a). Then, on a mountain again during prayer, he undergoes a physical transformation in the presence of his three closest disciples, suggesting future glorification by God (vv. 28-29) and another passion prediction (v. 44)[5]. Later, his fifth prayer, taking place on the Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem, implies divine guidance leading to his surrendering to authorities (22:39-53)[6].

In this progression Luke makes clear that Jesus dies a martyr's death (Talbert, 1982, pp. 209, 212-13; Bovon, 2012b, p. 327) as a prophet (Talbert 1982, 212-13; Bovon, 2012b, p. 373). This study will reveal, however, that scholars are not of one

3 Williams finds evidence for similar "historical haunting" by spectral forces in Hellenistic "lives" generally.

4 L. Monloubou (1976, pp. 57-58) enumerates seven references to prayers: 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28; 11:1; 22:41. Of these 5:16, his withdrawing from a crowd, and 11:1, a disciple's request for his instruction in prayer, have no divine guidance implied and are not treated in this study. He adds three (or four) other instances reporting "Jesus in prayer": 10:21, "jubilation" to the Father; 22:41-44, on the Mount of Olives; and 23:34, 46, from the cross, of which only 21:41-44 is treated as divine guidance. I.H. Marshall (1978, 130) notes prayer as "the ideal situation for receiving divine revelation." J.B. Green (1995, p. 59) states, "It is in prayer that Jesus hears and embraces the will of God."

5 Luke records a third passion prediction subsequently, unrelated to further prayer, when Jesus alerts the twelve as they approach Jerusalem (18:31-34).

6 Jesus prays two more times, while nailed to the cross, both addressing God as "Father" but implying no further divine guidance, the first requesting forgiveness for "them," unspecified ones involved in his execution (23:34), and the second, acknowledging, "with a loud voice," his life slipping away (v. 46).

mind in so referring to Jesus, in light of the tradition of him as Christ[7]. To this diversity of opinion we shall attempt to do justice. Meanwhile, Talbert characterizes Jesus's death not as an "atoning sacrifice" (224). Contra Bovon (212b, p. 340) the death reveals no "redeeming nature."

Salvation from God is, instead, mediated by Jesus while alive, first at points on earth (Lk 5:29-32; 19:7-9) and then after resurrection, exalted (Ac 3:28; 4:11; 5:31)[8]. At the same time, Luke is equally clear that Jesus' death initiates the new covenant. It is a "sacrifice" which is "the seal of the new covenant" (Talbert, 1982, pp. 208-9). Luke's point then is not that the death is a sacrifice atoning for sins (Mk 10:45; Mt 20:28), but that it brings a new covenant (Lk 22:20; Mk 14:24; Mt 26:28). On these distinctions we shall elaborate below. We proceed now to the first four stages of God's call.

The study will be published in two parts, the first extending through the four occasions of guidance and an interlude, the "Travel Narrative." Part two begins with the fifth instance.

Prayer with Divine Affirmation after Baptism

Luke relates that as Jesus is praying (Monloubou, 1976, p. 57; Liefeld, 1984, p. 859) after his baptism he experiences twin heavenly phenomena, seeing descent of the Holy Spirit in bodily form and hearing a voice with two affirmations, "You are my beloved son; with you I am well pleased" (3:21-22)[9]. This event is found in all the Gospels. Luke is the only one to narrate that Jesus was praying when the experience occurred (cf. Mt 3:16-17, Mk 1:10-11, Jn 1:32-33). Visible arrival of the Holy Spirit suggests commencement of divine authorization and empowerment in Jesus' life. The pair of observations identify Jesus with Yahweh's anointed king of Ps 2:6-7, "You are my beloved son," and with his servant of Is 42:1, "with you I am well pleased," on whom he has placed his Spirit (Bovon, 2002, pp. 128-30). This servant,

7 Liefeld (1984, p. 810) terms Jesus "prophet" in parentheses; Green (1997, p. 23) acknowledges Luke's popular portrayal "as a prophet, but more than a prophet"; D.L. Bock (2012, pp. 189-91); M.B. Dinkler (2023, p. 1831) states, "While on earth, Jesus is depicted as a prophet."

8 Talbert (1982, pp. 212, 224).

9 Marshall (1978, pp. 135-36) sees the saying as referring to "that personal relationship to God which is basic for the self-understanding of Jesus"; cf. Lk 2:49; Green (1995, p. 59) notes, "Jesus receives his divine commission while in prayer."

endued with Yahweh's Spirit, may be legitimately considered a prophet[10] but is not so termed in Luke. Instead, the person addressed is Yahweh's son. O. Cullmann (1965, pp. 283-84; see pp. 66-67) relates son to servant from the fact that the Hebrew *ebed* means both, "servant and son." From G. Schrenk he notes that the "beloved" identifies the figure as son, "indeed, in the sense of an *only* Son" (1964, Vol. 2, p. 738; see W. Bauer, 1957, p. 6). Cullmann further specifies that "during Jesus' life his *baptism* is the beginning point for the twofold consciousness that he must fulfil the *ebed Yahweh* role and that he stands in a unique Son-Father relationship with God" (1965, pp. 283-84; see pp. 66-67). Luke thus records Jesus' first haunting and the guidance he senses attendant to it.

The Lukan Jesus then begins to live out the identity as servant without, however, being oblivious to that as king. Luke, with the other synoptists, report the devil's referring to Jesus as Son of God, perhaps reminiscent of the kingship in Ps 2 but conceivably of a divine status.[11] Following Jesus' temptations, however, Luke narrates Jesus' activity not in terms of the anointed king of Ps 2 but as the servant of Is 42 endowed with the Spirit. In this way Luke conveys how Jesus understood the celestial direction. He teaches in synagogues of Galilee with great effectiveness from "the power of the Spirit" (4:14-15).

In particular, he appears in his hometown synagogue and reads from Is 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," claiming it as a self-reference, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:16-21). With haunting evident now, Jesus' claim of fulfilling the Isaianic passage constitutes Luke's first reference to Jesus as a prophet[12]. Marshall (1988, p. 119) adds that this makes it possible to identify Jesus with the servant of Yahweh and to consider his activity "eschatological"[13]. Is 61:1 indicates further that he sees himself tasked with disseminating "good news" to the "poor," a word of hope from Yahweh. Such may be understood as involving particularly those incarcerated, "release of the captives," but also the infirm, "recovery of sight to the blind," and from Is 58:6, regarding the disadvantaged in society, "setting free the oppressed," (Lk 4:18). The reading then concludes with

10 Micah, contemporary with Isaiah in the late 8th c. BC, claims a filling with the spirit of Yahweh (3:8). Ezekiel in the early 6th c. refers to the spirit of Yahweh inspiring him (2:2, 3:34, 11:5; cf. "the hand of Yahweh," 8:1) with prophetic messages. C. Bowman (2004) adds that the spirit of Yahweh, though unnamed, is evinced with Elijah and Elisha in the 9th c., Hosea and Isaiah in the 8th, and Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk in the 6th.

11 The devil envisions that as Son of God Jesus could turn a stone into bread (Lk 4:3) and be rescued by angels from falling to his death if he threw himself from the pinnacle of the temple (vv. 9-11).

12 Luke has, however, already recorded "in you I am well pleased" (3:22b), alluding to Jesus as the *ebed Yahweh* of Is 42:1. Brawley (2016, p. 224) observes that the audience rejection "confirms Jesus' prophetic mandate," citing earlier work (1987, pp. 6-27); Marshall (1978, pp. 183, 186).

13 Liefeld, (1984, p. 867).

Is 61:2, proclaiming "the acceptable year of the Lord," (Lk 4:19), apparently a reference to announcing the forgiveness and liberations of a year of Jubilee (Green, 1997, pp. 212-13; Bovon, 2002, pp. 153-54).

Luke includes in the pericope too, forebodings for his Isaianic prophet. While "all" are impressed, they also express reservations, "Is not this Joseph's son?" (Lk 4:22). Jesus responds to their skepticism with aphorisms and scriptural instances, including the implied self-reference as a prophet (v. 24) and scriptural references to the prophets Elijah and Elisha, their encountering unresponsiveness in Israel's past (vv. 25-27) thus associating two further prophets with himself. Luke adds that at this the congregation becomes so angry that they intend to kill him (vv. 28-29) but then are mysteriously unable: "But passing through the midst of them, he went away" (v. 30; Bovon, 2002, p. 130)[14].

Prayer Followed by New Leadership and New Teaching

Luke records a second prayer[15] that lasts all night on "the mountain"[16] and is followed by Jesus' selection of the twelve as apostles. After descent to a level place, he ministers to a large, diverse crowd, with focus on a sizable body of instruction (6:12-49)[17]. The author's sequence suggests his sense of Jesus' divine guidance, presumably from the Holy Spirit. Certainly, his healings of diseases and of unclean spirits as "power came forth from him" (6:19) imply such.

Luke's record of prayer through the night on the mountain seems intended as reminiscent of Moses on Sinai, "the 'establishment' of Israel" (Bovon, 2002, p. 208)[18]. This is a reminder that "the purpose of God is coming to fruition" (Green,

14 He cautions, "The passion also does not enter the picture until after the transfiguration."

15 There is actually an intervening one, 5:16, at a withdrawal into a desolate place. There is little evidence of what role this may have played in his call. Green (1997, p. 238) understands the reference as part of a "summary statement that simply holds together two related phenomena: the growth of Jesus' reputation and his ongoing practice of retreating for prayer." Indeed, Luke here includes nothing about Jesus' accommodating the crowd's solicitations. Bovon (2002, pp. 176-77) makes note of the wilderness as "a region in which Jesus tends his relationship with God through prayer." See Monloubou (1976, p. 57); D.C. Allison, Jr. (1992, p. 565); Brawley (2016, p. 228) notes Jesus' dependence on "his relationship with God" in the two decisions.

16 The mountain is unspecified. Luke apparently refers to that of his source (Mk 6:46; cf. Jn 6:15).

17 This instruction "on a level place" (6:17), termed the Sermon on the Plain, is Luke's counterpart to Matthew's longer so-called Sermon on the Mount, chs. 5-7. Bovon (2002, p. 208) notes the parallel with Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities* (11-12, 15), where, perhaps in the first century CE, Israel's history was remembered with a first direct revelation of God's eternal law (11), then after apostasy Moses reascends the mountain for *prayer* for forgiveness and renewal of the nation (12), and shortly after the twelve spies are commissioned (15).

18 Cf. Allison (1992, p. 563); Green (1997, p. 258) notes that a mountain is "often associated in Jewish literature with theophanic episodes and divine revelation." See also Marshall (1978, p. 236) with reference to E.E. Ellis (1974, p. 113).

1997, p. 258). Ascending the mountain for the lengthy period of prayer, Jesus resembles Moses' earlier pattern (Ex 32:30; 34:2; Bovon, 2002, p. 208). Luke hereby represents Jesus as "a prophet like Moses" (cf. Ac 3:22), a fourth[19] prophetic figure in his narrative. The unique phrase ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ ("in prayer with God") Bovon understands as "communication . . . unit[ing] speaking and listening in a lively exchange." The lengthy session suggests "adaptation of Jesus' will to God's will," the plan which is gradually unfolding to him (2002, p. 208-9). Historical haunting continues to lead Jesus.

He has encountered opposition from Jewish leaders prior to this point, most recently from his Sabbath activity (5:17-6:11; Green, 1997, p. 259). These pressing circumstances (Liefeld, 1984, p. 888) incline Jesus to spend an entire night with God before subsequent actions. His marathon period with God brings him to a new day with "a daring resolve: Jesus does not hope for the sudden conversion of the Scripture experts and Pharisees" (Bovon, 2002, p. 208). The resolve will issue instead in two ways, new leadership and new teaching.

Choosing the Twelve

The first development Luke records alters leadership of Israel. From his own disciples Jesus appoints twelve, terming them "apostles," 6:13. If the darkness and extent of night arouses affects of dramatic suspense (Bovon, 2002, p. 208), light of day clarifies Jesus' next move, to summon twelve and designate them apostles (vv. 14-16). Green interprets the Lukan Jesus here, after the lengthy prayer, as acting on God's behalf, putting his purpose into action "discerned in prayer" (1995, p. 59). Luke implies two things with the appointment of the twelve. Green observes that the selection, first, "signals a judgment on Israel's leadership for their lack of insight into God's redemptive plan and compassionate care for those in need". This is incisive perspective. Luke follows this with, second, "establishing new leadership" (1997, p. 259) in appointment of the twelve from among "disciples," "learners," separating them more clearly than do Mark and Matthew (Bovon, 2002, p. 209), as "apostles," "authorized spokesmen" (Talbert, 1982, 68)[20], indicating, Bovon helpfully notes, "a function, not an honor; a service, not a position of power." Furthermore, looking back, as he is, Luke is picturing not so much "restoration of Israel" as "the coming into being of the people of God" (2002, pp. 209-10).

19 The first three, Isaiah, Elijah, and Elisha, surface in the pericope at the Nazareth synagogue (4:17, 25-27).

20 He notes that the passage thus "functions to establish an apostolic guarantee of the tradition which follows (6:20-49)."

Proclaiming a New Constitution

Next Luke records the new teaching that the new leaders will propagate after being taught (Bovon, 2002, p. 210)[21]. Before Jesus teaches, however, Luke inserts notice of the size and diversity of the crowd (6:17-20), implying as well its receptiveness, in contrast to the earlier onlookers, which include hostile ones repeatedly referenced (5:21, 30, 33; 6:2, 7, 11), preceding the time of prayer. The gathering is comprised of three groups, "a great crowd of his disciples" as well as "a great multitude" from two more farflung areas, Jewish "Judea and Jerusalem," and Gentile regions, "the coast of Tyre and Sidon" (6:17; Bovon, 2002, p. 216). Their desires are twofold, to hear him and to be healed. He fulfills both, in reverse order (6:18-20). Bovon observes that Luke is here bringing together physician and prophet, those gathered "first made capable of hearing by the healing of all (v. 19)" (p. 214). Specifying the two roles serves as transition to Jesus' "discourse on the constitution of the new community" (Green, 1997, p. 264), the Sermon on the Plain.

Luke composes this presentation (6:20-49)[22] reflecting Jesus' rejection of the Jewish leaders' "view of the world and the practices it generates" (Green, 1997, p. 260). From P. Bourdieu (1990; 1991) Green configures Jesus' message in two parts, "Rejecting their *view of the world*, he undercuts the *dispositions* that orient the actions and inclinations that make up their daily lives." The two italicized terms come to the fore in Jesus' teaching that follows. Green states that the teaching "redefin[es] the world" on the basis of "the OT affirmation of the merciful Father" and "erecting on this foundation a new set of dispositions" is to result in "new practices, perceptions, and attitudes" (p. 261).

Luke's Jesus makes pronouncements on the kingdom of God. In continuity with the jubilaic fulfillment he has proclaimed in the Nazareth synagogue, Jesus now elaborates in blessings and woes (vv. 20-26) on an eschatological reversal of fortunes (Talbert, 1982, p. 70; Green, 1997, pp. 264-66; Bovon, 2002, p. 217) he envisions, indeed sees as already inaugurated, in the afterglow of his night with God. He follows this, declaring as God's prophet, "new conditions of existence in Jesus' community" (Green, 1997, p. 269). Talbert summarizes the topic as "the life of love"

21 For now "Jesus alone is the envoy of God, the one anointed by the Spirit of God (4:18), who can announce the year of God's favor and initiate it," though delegating such to them on two occasions. Then at Pentecost, Ac 2, they will receive from him in his ascended state, that "promise of the Father."

22 Luke's Sermon on the Plain of thirty verses is much shorter than Matthew's Sermon on the Mount of 110. Talbert (1982, pp. 68-69), observes that the bodies of teaching are similar in structure, "four blocks of similar material in the same relative order" but Luke's "has a perspective of its own," with Talbert acknowledging influence on his analysis from R. Morgenthaler (1948, 1:81-83); Bovon (2002, pp. 216-17) notes the differing perspectives of the two evangelists, Luke's as a "missionary effect," understandable in view of his diverse audience, and Matthew's as "anti-Pharisaic," each tailored to its *Sitz im Leben*.

(1982, p. 69), ἀγάπη. Socioanalytically, however, they consist of generalized reciprocity (Green, 1997, pp. 270-75; Talbert, 1982, pp. 73-75), (6:27-38) including the Golden Rule (v. 31), no longer balanced reciprocity, and including, perhaps more provocatively, loving one's enemies, indeed stated twice (vv. 27, 35)[23]. Luke concludes with "a parable," four stories (vv. 39-49) on the principle of "Christian influence" (Talbert, 1982, p. 75; similarly, Bovon, 2002, p. 248)[24]. Green (1997, p. 276) considers the purpose here "plain," "a clarion call to add obedience to the hearing of Jesus' message." In a structure Talbert finds chiastic in the first three stories (vv. 39-45), disciples are to be self-critical in order to "to illumine the way of the new converts" (1997, p. 76, citing D.E. Carlston, 1975, p. 91). The concluding story then (vv. 46-49), exhorts the hearers to do as they have heard, to prepare for stability in crises (Talbert, 1982, p. 77). Bovon sees that "Jesus' words should help [believers] to choose the right path. But the nature of a believer discloses itself only in practical life" (2002, p. 256). In eschatological dimensions, Green surmises, however, "The issue is one of lordship, commitment, the offer of allegiance and fidelity." He continues, "Such doing, rooted in Jesus' message, manifests the true nature of a person in a way that is relevant in the final judgment" (1997, pp. 280-81). Such may capture a more subtle meaning of Jesus' message.

Prayers Related to Jesus' Identity and Passion Predictions

The third and fourth sessions of prayer Luke associates with Jesus' physical transformation on the mountain, progress in the direction of clarifying his identity and his role as a prophet, now one destined to suffer and die in Jerusalem. This is reminiscent of his aphorism in the Nazareth synagogue, "no prophet is acceptable in his own country" (4:23) and recalls Luke's record of continuing hostile reception of Jesus (5:21-6:11) preceding his choice of the twelve (6:12-16).

After these developments, and relevant to events to follow on the mountain, Luke records inquiry from John the Baptist about Jesus' self-understanding. Jesus is acclaimed as a "great prophet" after raising a widow's son at Nain (7:11-16). Upon hearing this, John sends the question, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" (v. 19). Acclamation as a great prophet does not mean for John that Jesus is the one they are to "look for" as "he who is to come." Marshall asserts that "in John's preaching the coming one must be identified with the Messiah." The ac-

23 Bovon (2002, p. 231) proposes a formal chiastic structure.

24 Green (1997, pp. 277-78) considers the "parable" to refer only to the "proverbial instruction" of vv. 39-40.

counts of healing and good news with which Jesus answers, however, are not those of a bellicose figure but of a benevolent one[25]. Marshall notes that if the speaker of Is 61:1-2 is the servant of Yahweh restoring Israel, as specified in 42:1-7, the figure is a prophet like Moses, an "eschatological deliverer," one anticipated earlier by John the Baptist (Lk 7:19) and alluded to subsequently by the disciple on the road to Emmaus (24:21). He considers that "the identification between the Servant and the Messiah . . . were already made by Jesus, . . . though these titles (Servant and Messiah) are not applied to Jesus, or applied only with restraint, in the Gospel" (1988, pp. 126-27)[26].

The endeavor, meanwhile, is to determine Luke's view of Jesus' self-understanding at this point, as he concludes his Galilean activity. Accordingly, some nuance of Marshall's account is warranted. On the one hand, Luke's reader can envision association of servant and Messiah in Jesus' mind from the words following baptism (3:22). On the other hand, there are questions about what "identification" he is making between the terms at this point. He is, to this point, as servant or prophet, proclaiming good news and restoring people (4:16-6:11). He is, in a kingly direction, appointing an alternate leadership in the twelve and an alternate constitution in the Sermon on the Plain (6:12-49) but certainly suggesting no "eschatological deliverer" with connotations of violence. Indeed, while he has encountered opposition from established Jewish leadership (5:21, 6:6-11), he has not as yet, in Luke's narrative, received divine word of coming execution rather than coronation, though such will follow in his next session of prayer with his Father in heaven.

Prayer Preceding the First Passion Prediction

Before Jesus ascends the mountain (9:28), Luke records Jesus praying (9:18; Monloubou, 1976, p. 57). He has sent the twelve on their first journey "to preach the kingdom of God and to heal" (9:2). Then Luke inserts Herod's perplexity over what he was hearing (9:7-9). At the return of the "apostles" they and Jesus are approached by a large crowd, five thousand men (9:14), whom Jesus teaches and feeds (9:10-17).

25 Green (1997, p. 295) makes clear that Jesus' kindness is for John in sharp contrast to his harshness and that he expects to characterize the one "who is to come"; Bovon (2002, p. 282) observes that Jesus answers the legation with a collection of Isaianic verses, deemed "messianic," citing A. Strobel (1961, 274); See Talbert (1982, p. 81).

26 Bock (2012, p. 189) in a related way suggests that introducing discussion of Jesus as prophet with the phrase, "Still in the midst of the messianic Christology," makes the juxtaposition of prophet/servant and Messiah more complex and perhaps ambiguous. R. Schnackenburg (1959, pp. 622-39) has earlier revealed the complexity of popular Jewish expectations.

After praying "alone," though with the "disciples" (9:18)[27], referring evidently to the twelve, Jesus poses two questions regarding his identity, the people's opinions and theirs. "A prophetic identity" (Brawley, 2016, p. 237; see Green, 1995, pp. 61-62), John the Baptist, Elijah, or another of the old prophets, say the people (9:19). But for the first time, messianic, "the Christ[28] of God," Peter declares (9:20). To this Jesus responds with a command for silence (9:21)[29], and a third person explanation of four parts. It is a theological perspective of the highest order adopted from Mark (8:31; Bovon, 2002, p. 363) that the Son of Man must (Green, 1997, p. 371)[30] suffer, be rejected by Jewish leaders, be killed, and be raised (9:22). The preceding prayer seems to have clarified this eventuality for Jesus (Bovon, 2002, p. 363), or at least clarified it at an appropriate time for intimating it to his twelve[31]. Indeed, it is possible that between naming the twelve in 6:12-16 and this first passion prediction in 9:22 Jesus had come to realize, possibly from the prayer, that one of his own choosing, Judas Iscariot, would become a traitor, as Luke has already telegraphed to his audience (6:16; Green, 1997, p. 260). Bovon states the attendant tragic irony, "The highest authority in Judaism will be deceived and reject the divine message" (2002, p. 363).

Luke narrates that about eight days later Jesus ascends the mountain to pray (Monloubou, 1976, p. 57), now with a select three, Peter, John, and James, from the twelve (9:28). Spiritual haunting continues to direct Jesus. This climb to pray, as Bovon observes, concludes the Galilean ministry which began with Jesus' prayer following baptism in the Jordan (3:21). At both points there comes a voice from heaven with virtually identical messages (3:22b, 9:35b), implying Jesus' kingship as son (Ps 2:7) and anointed servanthood, as well pleasing (Is 42:1). Bovon adds that the passion prediction and the transformation, "foreshadow, . . . indeed announce" (Bovon, 2002, p. 373) what is to come, each event preceded, as noted, by Jesus at prayer (9:18, 29).

We thus find accumulated a complex of "intertextual voices" associated with Jesus' call (Green, 1997, p. 377). Green perceives that Luke is interpreting the

27 Marshall (1978, p. 363); Talbert (1982, p. 104; Liefeld (1984, p. 922); Green (1997, p. 368); Bovon (2002, p. 362) proposes that Luke "found" this prayer in Mk 6:31-32.

28 The term "Christ," Χριστός, appears a dozen times in Lk (2:11, 26; 3:15; 4:41; 9:20; 20:41; 22:67; 23:2, 35, 39; 24:26, 46; then fourteen in Ac). The term, Greek for "anointed one," signifies one chosen by God for some special purpose and then recognized by human beings by ceremonial pouring of oil on the head. In Hebrew Scripture anointing is found for priests, prophets, and kings. Luke seems to understand the term to connote kingship, though we are here arguing for Luke's understanding Jesus as prophet, a role also involving anointing by God, in his earthly ministry.

29 Green (1997, p. 370) notes that Jesus' response shows Peter's identification to be partial, "perhaps even dangerous."

30 Δεῖ ("must") indicates the divine will, suggesting its revelation from God to Jesus in the prayer.

31 Talbert (1982, p. 104) understands that Jesus discerns his fate in the prayer.

events as "anticipations of the New Exodus in the prophets and especially in Isaiah" (p. 378)[32]. He notes further that the Christian historiographer considers that "historical events are divinely guided"[33]. The guidance to the top of this mountain has led Jesus, as an Isaianic servant of Yahweh empowered by the Holy Spirit, to inaugurate liberation of God's people, suggestive of an Isaianic Jubilee already at the Nazareth synagogue. This guidance is followed by appointment of new leadership for the nation, in light of opposition to his announcement, and new teaching, as with Moses descending from Sinai. It has now become apparent, however, from the latest guidance, that rejection and death lie ahead, though with the strange twist of vindication also anticipated. This takes on the contours not of a king to be crowned but of a prophet to be rejected in his own country (4:24) and to meet his demise in the capital (13:33).

Prayer Preceding Transformation on the Mountain

This brings us to the guidance Jesus receives on the mountain with his three closest while in prayer (9:28-36; Marshall, 1978, p. 383; Talbert, 1982, p. 103; Liefeld, 1984, p. 626). Divine forces are manifested first visually then melded with the audible. The visual focuses first on Jesus' being changed in appearance. His face becomes "different" (ἕτερον) and his clothing "dazzling white" (λευκὸς ἐξαστράπτων, v. 29b). Luke then notes the appearance of two "talking with him," identified chronologically, Moses and Elijah[34] "in glory," presumably some similarly extraordinary appearance (vv. 30-31a)[35]. For Bovon "they represent the Law and the Prophets, who had foreseen Christ's fate, above all his suffering" (2002, p. 376)[36]. The pair is speaking, only in Luke, of Jesus' "departure" (ἔξοδος) that will transpire in Jerusalem (v. 31b). These perspectives, however, need to be examined. The commentator so characterizes the mountaintop conversation – combining "Christ" with "suffering"[37] – and it is the evangelist from his post-resurrection timeframe who knows of Jesus

32 He cites S.B. Garrett (1990, pp. 656-80; 1992, pp. 11-12); M.L. Strauss (1995, pp. 285-305).

33 See G.W. Trompf (1979, p. 129); Williams (2024, pp. 6-9, passim) finds evidence for similar "historical haunting" by spectral forces in Hellenistic "lives" generally.

34 This is in the triple tradition (Mt 17:3, Mk 9:4) with the names in reverse order in Mark, an "odd formulation" (Bovon, 2002, p. 375).

35 É. Junod (1982, p. 39), cited by Bovon (2002, p. 371), considers the momentary visual anomaly "polymorphism," "simultaneous or serial appearances of the same being in various forms that are meant to be held in awe."

36 Cf. Lk 16:16, 29, 31; 24:27, though also Scripture may have three parts, 24:44.

37 Green (1995, 64) insists that "the notion of a 'suffering messsiah' is absent in the Old Testament and in Jewish literature prior to and contemporaneous with Luke-Acts." Contra R.T. France (1992, pp. 745-46).

as a suffering Christ and has chosen the term "departure," connoting death and/or ascension. Luke then adds that Peter and the others witness this spectacle (v. 32)[38]. There materializes then a cloud which arouses fear, followed by a voice to the witnesses, "This is my Son, my Chosen, listen to him" (vv. 34-35). The audible has revealed first talk of a journey to Jerusalem and then "departure," evidently reinforcement of his death recently made known (v. 22). Then Luke notes the voice from the cloud, reaffirming the pair of roles, kingship of Yahweh's people and servanthood for their liberation. Spiritual forces from Israel's past are making themselves known. The author has reminded us of a prophet like Moses (Marshall, 1978, p. 382; Liefeld, 1984, pp. 925-26) from his choice of new leaders and new teaching for reconstituting the people of God (6:12-49). Here "listen to him" (9:35b) emphasizes Jesus' prophetic character, as a prophet like Moses, in its allusion to Dt 18:15 (Bock, 2012, p. 191). Elijah is first noted in Luke's narrative for the prophet's spirit infusing John the Baptist for ministry (1:17). Then he is an example for Jesus at the Nazareth synagogue and in the immediate context, one with whom Jesus is identified in Galilee, known to Herod (9:8) and to the twelve (v. 19).

Luke seems to insist, finally, that this event, clearly apocalyptic[39], is a *theophany* particularly for the *closest*, Peter, John, and James. It is manifested to them for the first time and in threefold manner, the cloud, its overshadowing presence, and the voice from within it (9:34-35; Green, 1997, pp. 383-84). It signals, Bovon notes, "the place of God's presence," with "the same mighty significance for the life of Jesus that the resurrection has for his death" (2002, p. 379). He adds that "they suddenly understand the Son's true identity." [I]t is *they* who are transfigured" (p. 381). Luke records, "And they kept silence and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen" (v. 36b). In the spirit of historical haunting, the apostles have been "spooked" to silence.

The Interlude: The Travel Narrative

In preparation for the passion narrative Luke inserts a lengthy central section, the so-called travel narrative (9:51-19:27[48]; Bovon 2012a, p. iii; Green, 1997, p. 27). He includes a dozen references[40] by Jesus to prophets on his way to the capital. Among these we read his self-reference to the Son of man in "the sign of

38 We pass without comment on Peter's reaction, v. 33, since nothing more is evident regarding the divine guidance.

39 It is "apocalyptic" since it is a revelation. Bovon (2002, p. 371) lists five other somewhat overlapping genres proposed, enthronement scene, prophetic, vision, divine epiphany, and cult narrative.

40 10:24; 11:29, 47, 49-50; 13:28, 33-34; 16:16, 29, 31; 18:31.

Jonah[41]" (11:29). While Green notes that Jesus is making a connection with the sign of Jonah, he says nothing about Jesus's identification as a prophet (1997, pp. 463-64; cf. Marshall, 1978, p. 483). Bovon, however, sees that Jesus poses the figure of Jonah because Jesus too is a prophet, indeed a "prophet in exile," "an eschatological prophet who welcomed converts from among the Gentiles" (2012a, p. 142)[42], as did Jonah.

The self-referential manner seems to continue in subsequent pericopae. He criticizes the pious reverence lawyers show for their "tombs for the prophets," once they are dead, consenting to their fathers' actions (11:47-48). Then he notes that God's Wisdom will send prophets and apostles, some of whom will be "killed and persecuted" (v. 49), and indeed that "the blood of all the prophets" will be "required of this generation" (v. 50; cf. v. 51; Marshall, 1978, pp. 500-501). Such vehemence leads scribes and Pharisees to "provoke him, . . . lying in wait to catch him at something he might say" (vv. 53-54). Green again describes Jesus as speaking around the prophets of old and "envoys" of the past as well as his apostles of the present, without sensing any self-reference by Jesus (1997, pp. 474-76). Bovon largely follows suit, judging that "prophets" followed by "apostles" must refer to "sentries of the old order," though "there were also prophets in the early church"[43]. He notes, however, that in transmission of the tradition Christians "could not help but think of Jesus' martyrdom" (2012a, p. 165). Indeed, this third item is pertinent to our purposes, since we are speaking here specifically of the view of the Christian Luke, his sense of "prophets."

Third, in a parable during his journey Jesus speaks of prophets included in a worldwide banquet of the kingdom of God while others are excluded as "workers of iniquity" (13:22-30). Green may acknowledge Jesus' self-identification as a prophet at this point, but it is more plausibly God as the ultimate figure, apparently not represented in the parable. Prophets, he notes, are those in its present as well as its past. Opposing God's prophets is tantamount to not perceiving the nature of Jesus' divine mission and thereby "not children of Abraham after all" (Green, 1997, p. 533)[44].

Finally, a warning arises from Pharisees that Herod intends to kill him (13:31). To this the Lukan Jesus responds in the aftermath of John the Baptist's death, here clearly as a prophet and with concern rather for the capital, "to con-

41 Jonah brings our count of named ancient prophets in Luke to five.

42 Marshall (1978, p. 487) notes that Jesus is as well "the consummation of the OT series of prophets."

43 Marshall (1978, p. 504) discusses the identity of the prophets and apostles further.

44 Bovon (2012a, p. 314 n. 40) interprets "and all the prophets" as "an obvious addition by Luke," referring to those of the past. Cf. Marshall (1978, p. 567).

test Jerusalem's jurisdiction" (Brawley, 2016, p. 244). "It cannot[45] be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem," turning then to mourning the intransigence of the city (vv. 33-34). Marshall has sensed here a self-reference of the Lukan Jesus as a prophet (1978, p. 573)[46]. Green sees that Luke here applies "the destiny of the prophets and martyrdom" to Jesus (1997, p. 536). Bovon as well recognizes Jesus as "suffering prophet," both as witness and as martyr (2012a, p. 327).

Conclusion

The first part of this study has shown evidence of two main features of Luke's Gospel in view of Jesus' divine call in five stages through prayer. Luke understands Jesus to function first as a prophet, the Isaianic suffering servant with the addition of the prophet of Is 61, starting with his baptism and extending through his journey to Jerusalem.

The first prayer, initiating his divine call, Luke records for his readers (3:21b-22), but those present with Jesus are left uninformed. The words from heaven come to Jesus alone, in the second person singular. Speaking to him in words that allude to Ps 2:7 and Is 42:1, the Father seems to address him in both regal and servant terms. The "inauguration of his ministry" in the Nazareth synagogue (4:16-30), however, makes clear that Jesus understands the word from his Father as guiding him in a prophetic ministry, reading Is 61:1, 58:6, and 61:2, words of liberation, then declaring, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:21). This occasion which is at first welcoming becomes hostile.

Next, Luke relates Jesus in prayer with the Father all night. In light of the words of liberation in the synagogue being rebuffed, Jesus decides from this second session to choose twelve as "apostles" (6:13). He thus prepares alternate leadership for Yahweh's people. In so doing, he makes the first move suggestive of taking leadership of the Jewish people (though without any hint of implementation by force). In addition, he presents to a large crowd a foundational set of teachings, the Sermon on the Plain (vv. 17-49). Reminiscent of Moses' law from Sinai, Jesus hereby proposes a new way of living for the people, as "power (still) came forth from him" (v. 19).

As the third and fourth times of prayer occur, Luke's Jesus is guided into difficult times. The third prayer leads Jesus to inquire of perception of his identity. He

45 Luke's Jesus indicates it as divine necessity, δεῖ, for prophets to meet their demise in the capital. See C.H. Cosgrove (1984, pp. 168-90).

46 Similarly, Liefeld (1984, p. 975) states, "Jesus expected to suffer as a 'prophet'"; he notes that Jeremias (1967, Vol. 5, p. 714) "says that to a great extent 'martyrdom was considered an integral part of the prophetic office' in those days," referring also to G. Friedrich (1968, Vol. 6, pp. 834-35).

has learned that John the Baptist seems to be expecting one coming with violence (7:19). Jesus' Sermon on the Plain has none of this. He is being led differently, and John seems to realize this. In response to Jesus' questions to the twelve, he is told that the populace takes him to be a prophet but the intimates, says Peter, consider him "the Christ of God" (9:18-20). Perhaps suspecting that their view was similar to John's, he commanded silence and explained that the "Son of man" must endure suffering, rejection, execution, and resurrection" (vv. 21-22). Luke is telling his readers what Jesus knows by this time, even though the disciples do not comprehend.

The fourth time, Jesus prays on a mountain as he undergoes visible transformation (9:28). The guidance for Jesus at this point may reflect more that he has learned in his recent time at prayer. In any case, Moses and Elijah speak of Jesus' coming "departure," death and/or ascension, in Jerusalem (v. 31). The three closest disciples are addressed from within a cloud by a voice which now refers to Jesus in the third person, "This is," and ending with a command, "Listen to him" (v. 35), reminiscent of Dt 18:15, and so suggesting Jesus as a "prophet like Moses." Luke in this way is reinforcing Jesus's prophetic identity. The three disciples, whom Bovon notes as the ones really transformed here, keep silent on these matters after that (v. 36b).

The lengthy Travel Narrative intervenes at this point (9:51-19:27[48]). Luke's Jesus refers to prophets in various connections in this journey a dozen times. Most notably he volunteers, when warned of the threat of Herod, "It cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem," (13:33-34). He betrays a prophetic self-consciousness in that situation.

The second part of this study, to be published in the following issue, takes up his death, the "martyrdom," following Jesus' final guidance in prayer and extends to Luke's consideration of Jesus' risen state as "the Christ" of God.

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LUKE'S DIVINE CALL OF JESUS. PART ONE

SUMMARY

Luke represents Jesus' death as the martyrdom of a prophet. M. Dibelius has noted this in 1919. C.H. Talbert adds in 1982 that Jesus' death "is not an atoning sacrifice." Such an assessment of Jesus and his death, for the "Christ" who "atones for sins," is anemic to some scholars. F. Bovon, prefers to say, "[T]he attitude of the people . . . testifies not only to the exemplary character but also to the redemptive nature of the passion." The question is thus joined for this paper. Was Jesus' passion in Luke "redemptive"? The answer is found in Luke's divine call of Jesus.

Luke finds that Jesus is informed progressively of God's plans for him on five occasions, evidently from time at prayer. The first, after his baptism (3:21b-22), reveals to him divine approval in royal and servant terminology. Next, after a night of prayer (6:12) he selects twelve as apostles and proclaims new teaching, the "Sermon on the Plain." Then come two times of prayer (9:18, 29), the first prior to and the second on the occasion of visible transformation on a mountain, the "transfiguration," regarding Jesus' prophetic role and his coming suffering.

After declaring at his final meal the beginning of a new covenant, but without reference to sacrifice for sins, he prays for guidance a final time on the Mount of Olives (22:41-44), preparing for anticipated suffering and vindication. We conclude that Jesus' death for Luke is the martyrdom of a prophet that does not atone for sins but does seal a new covenant (22:20).

The study will be published in two parts, the first extending through the four occasions above and the subsequent one in the issue to follow beginning with the fifth and final instance.

Article submitted: 09.06.2024; accepted: 13.07.2024.