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# The Good Samaritan and the Hope for Kingdom Restoration (Luke 10:25-37)

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Abstract

This article considers the parable of the Good Samaritan within the framework of Luke's concern with the restoration of a united kingdom of Israel. This long-anticipated reintegration of North and South, Samaritan and Jew, through the exercise of God's compassion, parabolically demonstrated in the actions of a merciful Samaritan, and evidenced in the Samaritan responses to Jesus and the apostolic proclamation in Luke-Acts, is to be reflected in the brotherly compassion to which God's one people are called.

## 1. Introduction

The most familiar of all of Jesus's parables, the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30-35, is framed by a discussion Jesus has with a certain lawyer (νομικός τις, vv. 25-29,36-37) concerning what is needed to be done in order to inherit eternal life. As Sylvia Keesmaat observes, Luke's context is key to grasping the significance of the parable, though Keesmaat, along with most commentators, does not make full use of contextual issues in her ensuing discussion.[1]

1. Sylvia A. Keesmaat, 'Strange Neighbors and Risky Care', in *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Eerdmans, 2000), 276. I am aware that not all interpreters regard this as a parable, e.g. Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke*, 5th ed., ICC (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922), 285–286. While the general scenario of travellers on the Jerusalem–Jericho road being accosted by bandits was all too common, the story, with its narrative 'rule of three' and other details, seems highly crafted. Others see Luke as distorting Jesus's intention by adding the matrix of the discussion with the lawyer. See Mark Proctor, '"Who Is My

The parable is often taken as a simple lesson in good neighbourliness: the need to show kindness to strangers in need.[2] To others, particularly many Protestants who expect a more christologically focused response to the lawyer's question in terms of faith in Jesus, and considering the focus on faith in Jesus's Galilean ministry (Luke 5:20; 7:9,50; 8:12,13,25,48,50), the answer Jesus gives, in terms of doing the commandments and the illustrative parable, is surprising if not disturbing. What has not been fully explored in discussions of the parable is how our understanding might be enhanced by considering it within the context of Luke's interest in the eschatological hope for a reunion of Israel's divided kingdom under its Messiah. Luke's concern with the restoration of Israel has been well demonstrated by scholars such as David Ravens, Michael Fuller, and Isaac Oliver.[3] If, as N. T. Wright (among others) claims, Jesus's parables often deal with 'Israel's-story-in-miniature', does this parable fit that paradigm?[4]

## 2. The parable and eschatological Torah obedience

The parable is set within Luke's travel narrative (Luke 9:51–19:27), the account of the journey of Jesus with the twelve to Jerusalem, the Messiah's royal seat.[5] As Jesus is teaching, the reader's attention is focused (ἰδού) on the lawyer as he stands to address Jesus as 'teacher' and pose his question, 'What must I do to inherit eternal life?' (v. 25).[6] The lawyer takes his place in a sequence of

Neighbor?": Recontextualizing Luke's Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)', *JBL* 138 (2019): 203–204, https://doi.org.10.15699/jbl.1381.2019.486329.

2. Forbes, for example, writes, '[T]he parable teaches that being a neighbour is a willingness to show mercy to all and receive it from all, regardless of ethnic or social ties' (Greg W. Forbes, *The God of Old: The Role of the Lukan Parables in the Purpose of Luke's Gospel*, JSNTSup 198 (Sheffield Academic, 2000), 70). Bailey observes the 'tendency of the reader to ignore the dialogue' because the dialogue is brief in relation to the length of the parable: Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables of Luke* (Eerdmans, 1980), 33.

3. David Ravens, *Luke and the Restoration of Israel*, JSNTSup 119 (Sheffield Academic, 1995); Michael E. Fuller, *The Restoration of Israel: Israel's Regathering and the Fate of the Nations*, BZNW 138 (Walter de Gruyter, 2006), https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110926217; Isaac W. Oliver, *Luke's Jewish Eschatology: The National Restoration of Israel in Luke-Acts* (Oxford University Press, 2021), https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197530580.001.0001.

4. N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Fortress, 1996), 179.

5. On the significance of this, see Fuller, *Restoration*, 248–249.

6. Unless otherwise indicated, English translations of the Bible are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicised Edition, © 1989, 1995 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

unnamed individuals (τις, τινες – 'someone, a certain, some') whose interactions with Jesus punctuate Luke's travel narrative (9:57; 11:15,27,45; 12:13; 13:1,23,31; 14:2,15; 18:18,35) providing opportunities for Jesus to make observations about the character of the kingdom of God and its citizens.

While the lawyer's question was much in the air in Second Temple Judaism – a certain 'ruler' asks Jesus the identical question at Luke 18:18 – and Jesus takes the question seriously, from the outset we are told that this lawyer is not so much genuinely wanting to know what he himself needs to do. Rather, he is 'testing' (ἐκπειράζων) Jesus to see how he would handle the question (v. 25). While we should not assume the lawyer harbours a hostile attitude towards Jesus, Luke has previously signalled that the lawyers as a class, along with the Pharisees, have 'rejected (ἠθέτησαν – "ignored", "frustrated") God's purpose (βουλή) for themselves' (7:30). So the appearance of this lawyer at this point in Luke's narrative represents one stage along the trajectory of the suspicion regarding, and growing opposition towards, Jesus's teaching by the teachers of the law, or scribes, which will lead ultimately to them being involved in the plot (βουλή, 23:51) by Israel's leaders to have Jesus executed (cf. 5:21,30; 6:7; 9:22; 11:45-46,52-53; 14:3-4; 15:2; 19:47; 20:1-2,19; 22:2,66; 23:10).

First, we must consider what the lawyer means by 'eternal life' (ζωὴν αἰώνιον). The precise phrase is found in the LXX only once, at Daniel 12:2: 'Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life (ζωὴν αἰώνιον), and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' This passage is generally recognised as one of the clearest references in the OT to a growing belief in a future individual resurrection. Under the two-age structure that was widely accepted in Second Temple Judaism, the adjective αἰώνιος 'eternal' commonly refers to the age (αἰών) to come, the eschatological era of salvation and restoration.[7] In Luke 18:30 Jesus promises 'in the age to come eternal life' (ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ ζωὴν αἰώνιον) for those who make the kingdom of God their priority, while in Luke 20:35 Jesus identifies 'that age' with 'the resurrection from the dead'. To 'inherit' (κληρονομήσω, 10:25) such life did not, on this scheme, refer to the bestowal of immortality, a life beyond death for the 'soul', but to being bodily raised to life to enjoy the paradisal benefits of that anticipated stage of salvation history.[8] To 'inherit' (κληρονομεῖν) is the LXX term for the possession of the land promised to Abraham (Gen 15:7), an inheritance similarly conditional on national obedience (Deut 4:1; 1 Chr 28:8).[9]

7. See further on αἰώνιος, Hermann Sasse, 'αἰών, αἰώνιος', *TDNT* 1:197–209.

8. So, e.g. John Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, WBC 35a (Word, 1993), 585.

9. There are no grounds for taking the lawyer's question regarding 'doing' in order to 'inherit' as being misguided, as does Garland: David E. Garland, *Luke*, Zondervan

A psalmist declares, 'The righteous shall inherit (LXX κληρονομήσουσι) the land (γῆν) and live in it forever (εἰς αἰῶνα αἰῶνος)' (Ps 37:29; LXX 36:29). Such language came to be interpreted (m. Sanh. 10:1) of possession by Israel of the salvation of the age to come.[10] As well as an emerging belief in personal resurrection, there was the prophetic hope of the metaphorical resurrection of the nation as graphically portrayed in Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones which take on flesh and are reanimated and endowed with God's spirit and returned to their land following a period of exile (Ezek 37:1-14).

Because the lawyer (νομικός, Luke 10:25) was specifically versed in the Torah (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ, v. 26), he would have been aware of the first mention in Scripture of the concept of living 'to the age'. Following the first humans' disobedience in the Garden we read, 'Then the LORD God said, "See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"' (LXX ζήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα; Gen 3:22). The symbolism here indicates that, for the moment, the paradisal life the primal couple enjoyed with God is no longer on offer due to their failure to heed the divine command, and their exile from his presence (a form of death) ensues.[11] This exile serves as a paradigm for the subsequent exiles of Israel and Judah. Thus, right at the outset of the human story, a nexus between the life God intends and obedience to his commands is established. This is reiterated in any number of OT passages. Leviticus 18:5, for example, reads, 'You shall keep my statutes and my ordinances; by doing so one shall live: I am the LORD' (cf. Lev 25:18; Deut 6:16-25; Prov 4:4; 7:2; 19:16; Ezek 18:21).[12]

Is eternal life then to be gained by Torah obedience? Because the lawyer's question involved 'doing' (ποιήσας – v. 25), Leon Morris observes that the lawyer 'was thinking of some form of salvation by works and had no understanding

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Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Zondervan, 2011), 447. Doing the law so as to inherit or possess the land is standard Deuteronomic language, e.g. Deut 6:18 LXX: ποιήσεις ... ἵνα ... κληρονομήσῃς.

10. See Gustaf Dalman, *The Words of Jesus. I. Introduction and Fundamental Ideas*, trans. D. M. Kay (T&T Clark, 1902), 126.

11. For the theme of exile as death, see D. E. Gowan, *Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death and Resurrection of Israel* (Westminster John Knox, 1998); K. J. Turner, *The Death of Deaths in the Death of Israel: Deuteronomy's Theology of Exile* (Wipf & Stock, 2011), 2; M. A. Halvorson-Taylor, *Enduring Exile: The Metaphorization of Exile in the Hebrew Bible*, VTSup 141 (Brill, 2011), 22–25, 82, 127–135, https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004160972.i-230.

12. For OT conceptions of 'life', see Rudolf Bultmann, 'The Concept of Life in the OT', *TDOT* 2, 849–851.

of divine grace'.[13] Yet Jesus takes up the lawyer's word when he challenges him to 'do (ποίει)' the commandments (v. 37), which then forms an *inclusio* around the pericope, and there is no hint in the narrative to suggest that Jesus is deliberately setting an impossible task for the lawyer in order to drive him to grace. If the lawyer has 'no understanding of divine grace' it would be difficult to escape the conclusion that Jesus is similarly misguided. But 'doing (עשׂה – '*SH;* LXX ποιεῖν) the law/commandments' is a standard OT expression for that which God expects of his people within the covenant relationship. Joshua reminds Israel,

> Take good care to observe (LXX ποιεῖν) the commandment and instruction that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, and to hold fast to him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul. (Josh 22:5; cf. Lev 26:15; Num 15:40; Deut 17:11; 28:58; 2 Kgs 17:37; 2 Chr 14:3 (ET 4); Ezra 7:10; Neh 9:34)

This Torah obedience is the prerequisite for the life God intends for his people with him. In Moses's farewell discourse, we read,

> If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live (LXX ζήσεσθε) and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess (LXX κληρονομῆσαι). (Deut 30:16; cf. Deut 5:33; 8:1; 1 Kgs 3:14; Prov 4:4; 7:2; 19:16)

While the life of which Moses speaks is clearly conditional on heartfelt obedience, this verse follows a section (vv. 11-15) which is best understood as prophetic. Steven Coxhead among others has demonstrated the eschatological nature of the envisaged Torah obedience and the life that is its reward.[14] All this will come about as a result of divine heart-circumcision (30:6). It is important to note that this divine undertaking applies to a united people of Israel. This section of Deuteronomy is then the Torah's counterpart to prophetic passages

13. Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, rev. ed., TNTC (Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 206.

14. Steven R. Coxhead, 'Deuteronomy 30:11-14 as a Prophecy of the New Covenant in Christ', *WTJ* 68 (2006): 305–320. McConville outlines the Deuteronomic restoration agenda as a prelude to the expectations in the Deuteronomistic History: J. Gordon McConville, 'Restoration in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic Literature', in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. James M. Scott (Brill, 2001), 11–40, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004493636_005.

both urging obedience and promising a divinely granted new heart inclined towards obedience, or a new covenant where repentance and forgiveness and return from exile are effected by divine initiative (Jer 29:14; 30:3; 31:31-34; 32:37; Ezek 18:31; 36:26; 14:5-8 (ET 14:4-7)).

Speaking of the king, a psalmist declares, 'He asked you for life (LXX ζωήν); you gave it to him – length of days forever and ever (LXX εἰς αἰῶνα αἰῶνος)' (Ps 21:4 (LXX 20:5)). On the surface, this echoes a royal court formula, 'May ... the king ... live forever! (LXX ζήτω ... ὁ βασιλεύς ... εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα)' (1 Kgs 1:31), or, more briefly, 'long live the king (LXX ζήτω ὁ βασιλεύς)' (1 Sam 10:24), though in its canonical setting the psalm may have come to be understood in terms of the prospect of life beyond death. Another psalm, one of the Songs of Ascent, speaks of the blessing God grants his people of living in community in the place of his rule: 'It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion. For there the LORD ordained his blessing, life forevermore (LXX ζωὴν ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος)' (Ps 133:3 (LXX 132:3)).

In Second Temple and later Jewish texts, the life envisaged as a reward for Torah obedience begins to be framed in terms of eternal life or the life of the age to come. In a long poem in praise of wisdom in Baruch 3:9–4:4, wisdom is closely identified with 'the book of the commandments of God' (4:1). This law endures forever (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) and 'all who hold her fast will live (εἰς ζωήν)'. More explicitly, in a pericope in 2 Maccabees 7, seven brothers face torture at the hands of a Gentile king for their refusal to break the Jewish law. With his final breath one brother declares, 'You accursed wretch, you dismiss us from this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life (εἰς αἰώνιον ἀναβίωσιν ζωῆς), because we have died for his laws' (v. 9). Another brother in turn declares, 'One cannot but choose to die at the hands of mortals and to cherish the hope God gives of being raised again (πάλιν ἀναστήσεσθαι) by him. But for you there will be no resurrection to life (ἀνάστασις εἰς ζωήν)!' (v. 14).

The Targums have a tendency to inject 'eternal life' or 'the world (or age) to come' into passages where such eschatological notions may seem not to be to the fore in the Hebrew text of the OT that they are paraphrasing. The Targum to the Song has it that 'the reward for keeping his commandments is for the world to come' (Tg. Song 2:3;[15] cf. Tg. Ps 63:4). Of all the unlikely places, the Targum to Ecclesiastes repeatedly stresses the reward in the age to come for Torah obedience: 'For who is the man who commits himself to all the words of the Torah and has hope of acquiring the life of the world to come?' (Tg. Eccl

15. Translation: Christopher Dorst, Accordance Targums module.

9:4;[16] cf. 1:3; 2:11,26; 5:11,18; 7:12; 8:5,12; 9:4). The rabbinic text m. 'Abot 6:7 shares this approach: 'Great is the Law, for it gives life to them that practice it, both in this world and in the world to come.'[17]

As often, Jesus masterfully returns the lawyer's question with a question of his own. Since his interlocutor is an expert in the law (Torah), he should be able to give an answer himself from that law. This he does, citing a section of the Shema from Deuteronomy 6:5 linked with Leviticus 19:18: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour (πλησίον) as yourself' (Luke 10:27). The double commandment of love for God and for neighbour (tightly linked by the lawyer through having both 'the Lord your God' and 'your neighbour' as objects of a single verb) may not have been a novelty at the time of Jesus's ministry. The pairing is found, for example, in T. Iss. 5:2: 'Love the Lord and the neighbour (πλησίον), show mercy (ἐλεήσατε) to the needy and the ill' (cf. T. Dan 5:3; 7:6).[18] However, we cannot be certain that the text-form of these passages predates the time of this discussion, and it is even possible that the lawyer is quoting what he is aware Jesus has taught (Mark 12:29-31).[19] Jesus accepts the answer: 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live' (v. 28).[20] Given the eschatological character of the lawyer's question we should expect Jesus's response with its allusion to Leviticus 18:5 also to assume an eschatological character. The Targum to Leviticus 18:5 (cf. the translation of the Hebrew text cited on p. 156) reads 'You shall keep my covenants and my statutes that, if a person does them, he shall live by them in eternal life through them. I am the Lord' (cf. Tg. Isa 4:3; Tg. Ezek 20:11,13,21; Tg. Hos 14:10). Craig Evans is surely correct to observe that Jesus's use of Leviticus 18:5 'may very well reflect acquaintance with the targumic tradition in its early state'.[21]

16. Author's own translation.

17. Translation from Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (Oxford University Press, 1933).

18. Translations from the Pseudepigrapha are from *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols., ed. James H. Charlesworth (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983–1985).

19. There are minor textual differences among the various citations of Deut 6:5 in the NT. For discussion, see T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus as Recorded in the Gospels* (SCM, 1949), 259–263; I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Paternoster, 1978), 443.

20. Though as Leim observes, '"Correct answers" do not constitute correct (existential) understanding' (Joshua Eugene Leim, 'To Inherit Eternal Life: Jesus, the Lawyer, and Luke's Soteriological Grammar', *BBR* 31 (2021): 183, https://doi.org/10.5325/bullbiblrese.31.2.0167).

21. Craig A. Evans, '"Do This and You Will Live": Targumic Coherence in Luke 10:25-28', in *Jesus in Context: Temple, Purity, and Restoration*, by Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A.

### 3. Who is my neighbour?

The lawyer then issues his famous rejoinder – perhaps the question he had been aiming at from the outset – 'And who is my neighbour?' (Luke 10:29), which is what prompts Jesus to tell the story of the merciful Samaritan. The narrator's comment at v. 29 that the lawyer was 'wanting to justify himself (δικαιώσαι ἑαυτόν)' is perhaps a *double entendre*. The lawyer is pressing his case, wanting to meet with the approval of his audience with his follow-up question (since he could be perceived as losing face in the first round of the discussion), as well, perhaps, assuring himself as to his own conduct towards others. The issue of who constitutes a neighbour was a live topic.[22] How broadly or narrowly should one define it when reading those OT and Second Temple texts? Was it restricted to the lawyer's circle, or did it extend more broadly to all fellow Jews? It surely did not encompass heretics or Gentiles! Ben Sira would be typical of some Second Temple Jewish attitudes: 'Give to the devout, but do not help the sinner' (Sir 12:4). The readers of the Qumran Community Rule are urged to 'love all the sons of light' and 'detest all the sons of darkness' (1QS 1:9-10).[23] The context of Leviticus 19:18, where 'neighbour' (LXX πλησίον)[24] is parallel with 'any of your people', would suggest that (in the first instance at least) the whole company of the people of Israel is in view, though the mention of the 'resident alien' in v. 34 who is to be treated with the same love as an Israelite citizen alerts us not to be too restrictive about who might be owed neighbourly consideration.

As has long been observed, Jesus's parable has echoes of an episode recorded in 2 Chronicles 28:15, an unexpected climax of the narrative of vv. 1-15.[25] As a consequence of the apostasy of king Ahaz, Judah has been defeated in battle by

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Evans (Brill, 1997), 383, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004332478_023.

22. On contemporary or near-contemporary Jewish understandings of the term 'neighbour', see, e.g. John Lightfoot, *A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica: Matthew–1 Corinthians*. Volume 3: Luke–John (Oxford, 1859), 106–107; Proctor, '"Who Is My Neighbor?"'; Garland, *Luke*, 439–440; Kengo Akiyama, *The Love of Neighbour in Ancient Judaism: The Reception of Leviticus 19:18 in the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, the Book of Jubilees, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the New Testament*, AGJU 105 (Brill, 2018), esp. 40–42, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004366886.

23. Quotations of the Dead Sea Scrolls are from Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, 2nd ed., trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson (Brill, 1994).

24. See Johannes Fichtner, 'πλησίον in the LXX and the Neighbour in the OT', *TDNT* 6:312–315.

25. See, e.g. F. Scott Spencer, '2 Chronicles 28:5-15 and the Parable of the Good Samaritan', *WTJ* 46 (1984): 317–349.

Syria and Israel. However, due to the intervention of the prophet Oded and the actions of certain named Israelite leaders, the victorious Israelites are prevailed upon to exercise mercy and to desist from their intention of humiliating and enslaving the defeated Judahites:

> Then those who were mentioned by name got up and took the captives, and with the booty they clothed all that were naked among them; they clothed them, gave them sandals, provided them with food and drink, and anointed them; and carrying all the feeble among them on donkeys, they brought them to their kindred at Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.[26]

The parallels with Jesus's story are striking. The Chronicles account involves compassionate Samaritans (cf. Luke 10:33), who attend to naked wounded men (cf. Luke 10:30,34), anointing them with oil (cf. Luke 10:34), and carrying them on donkeys (cf. Luke 10:34) to Jericho (cf. Luke 10:30). We might also reasonably infer, as doubtless did Jesus's listeners, that the victim of Jesus's story is, like those in Chronicles, a Judaean.[27]

This restraint on the part of the northern tribes towards their southern neighbours has its counterpart in 1 Kings 12:24. There the threat of violence against the northern tribes for the rebellion of Jeroboam against the house of David is averted due to the prophetic intervention of Shemaiah:

> 'Thus says the LORD, You shall not go up or fight against your kindred the people of Israel. Let everyone go home, for this thing is from me.' So they heeded the word of the LORD and went home again, according to the word of the LORD.

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26. Knoppers stresses the Chronicler's focus on the kinship of Jews and Samaritans: Gary N. Knoppers, *Jews and Samaritans: The Origins and History of Their Early Relations* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 75–81, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195329544.001.0001. A further indication of the ideal unity of Israel in Chronicles is in the more elaborate account than Kings of the coming together of the twelve tribes to acknowledge David as king (1 Chr 12:23-40), where all twelve tribes are identified and where the concluding verse has points of resonance with Jesus's parable: 'And also their neighbours, from as far away as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, came bringing food on donkeys, camels, mules, and oxen – abundant provisions of meal, cakes of figs, clusters of raisins, wine, oil, oxen, and sheep, for there was joy in Israel' (v. 40).

27. As Scott notes, '[The victim] must be Jewish, for a Jewish audience would naturally assume that an anonymous person was Jewish unless other clues were given' (Bernard Brandon Scott, *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* (Fortress, 1989), 194).

These prophetic messages by Oded and Shemaiah are in the spirit of the verse the lawyer cites in part, 'You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour (LXX πλησίον) as yourself: I am the Lord' (Lev 19:18). This neighbourliness adumbrates the unity of God's people that is to characterise the age to come. It is in this eschatological era, inaugurated in Jesus's ministry, that the barriers which once divided Judaeans and Israelites are set to be broken down.

## 4. The Samaritans and the prophetic hope of Israelite unity

The issue of the history and identity of the Samaritans of Jesus's day is complex, and Jewish and Samaritan sources are at variance on this.[28] The breakup of the united kingdom of Israel after Solomon's reign in the tenth century remained a political reality with no evident prospect of a reunion of Israel and Judah. The Northern Kingdom, with its capital (from the time of Omri, 1 Kgs 16:24) in Samaria, was conquered by Assyria in the latter part of the eighth century, resulting in the exile of (some of) its citizens and its (partial) resettlement by foreigners (2 Kgs 17:6,24; 1 Chr 5:26).[29] This might seem to remove any hope of rapprochement between the two Israelite tribal groupings. But such a permanent loss remained unthinkable to those who held to God's covenant commitment to his people and to the Davidic covenant promises of an enduring dynasty over the nation (2 Sam 7:5-16; 1 Chr 17:1-15). National reunion remained a prophetic expectation, associated with return from exile and covenant renewal and (in some cases) a Davidic messiah over a united Israel.[30] Zechariah prophesies,

> I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph. I will bring them back because I have compassion on them, and they shall be as though I had not rejected them; for I am the Lord their God and I will answer them (Zech 10:6; cf. 9:10).

28. See Menachem Mor, 'Samaritan History: 1. The Persian, Hellenistic and Hasmonaean Period', in *The Samaritans*, ed. Alan D. Crown (Mohr Siebeck, 1989), 1–18; H. G. M. Williamson, 'Samaritans', in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green and Scot McKnight (InterVarsity Press, 1992), 724–728.

29. Traditionally the Assyrian conquest is dated to 722, though in reality there were several incursions with resulting deportations. We should be careful not to overread the Kings account in the light of evidence that substantial populations of the northern tribes remained. See Knoppers, *Jews and Samaritans*.

30. Staples considers the terms Jews, Israelites, and Hebrews, the status of the Samaritans as Israelites, and the expectations of a restoration of all Israel: Jason A. Staples, *The Idea of Israel in Second Temple Judaism: A New Theory of People, Exile, and Israelite Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 2021), https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108906524.

In a prophetic act, Ezekiel dramatises the future reunion of the two kingdoms by bringing together two sticks, representing Judah and Ephraim (Israel) (Ezek 37:15-28).[31] Ezekiel's vision immediately follows that of the corporate resurrection of God's people, so national revival and national unity are intrinsically bound together. The resurrection life (eternal life) of God's people cannot be envisaged without a coming together of Judah and Israel.

The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (second century BCE with later Christian interpolations) convey moral instruction to the Israelite tribes through the final testaments of each of the sons of Jacob and offers prophetic hope of a restored united Israel. While Levi and Judah are given prominence, a future is envisaged for the nation, comprised of all twelve tribes, with each testament typically containing encouragement to return to the Lord after a time of scattering, and/or a prophecy of restoration (e.g. T. Reub. 6:11; T. Jud. 23:5; T. Iss. 6:3-4; T. Zeb. 9:7; T. Naph. 8:2-3; T. Ash. 7:6-7). This future reunification of the people of God will be attributable to the mercy and compassion of God, e.g. ἐλεήμων, εὔσπλαγχνος (T. Zeb. 9:7); ἔλεος (T. Naph. 4:3); εὐσπλαγχνίας (T. Ash. 7:7). The Testament of Judah 25:1-2 lists the tribes and affirms 'You shall be one people of the Lord', linking this to the anticipated resurrection (25:3-5).

The Qumran texts likewise envisage a future for a regathered Israel. The pesher on Nahum has an eschatological rapprochement of the faithful from North and South: 'And when the glory of Judah is revealed, the simple people of Ephraim will flee from among their assembly and desert the ones who mistreated them and will join the [whole of Is]rael' (4QpNah frags. 3-4 col. 3:4-5). The War Scroll (1QM) envisages the future of Israel in terms of its twelve tribes (1QM col. 3:14-15; 5:1) who will be regathered and reunited in the eschatological era for the final conflict. In the Temple Scroll a primary responsibility of the king will be to appoint chiefs over the twelve tribes (11QT 19 col. 57:1-7).

How do the Samaritans of the NT and contemporary texts relate to this expectation? Are the Samaritans to be identified with the northern tribes, or specifically with the religiously compromised population following Assyrian resettlement? The name Samaria (שֹׁמְרוֹן – *shomeron* – LXX Σαμάρεια), originally referring to a town (2 Kgs 6:19), by extension refers to the surrounding region, the heartland of the Northern Kingdom, or to the Northern Kingdom as a whole (Isa 7:9; Hos 7:1; 13:16; Obad 19; 1 Macc 10:30; Jdt 4:4), while the term 'Samarians' (הַשֹּׁמְרֹנִים – *hashomeronim*) is used in 2 Kgs 17:29 for its citizenry. Like the term Jew/Judaean (Ἰουδαῖος) in the NT, the term Samaritan in the Hellenistic,

31. See also Isa 9:1-7; 11:11-12; 27:12-13; 49:6; Jer 23:3-4; 30:1-9; 31:31-34; Hos 2:1-2 (ET 1:10-11); Tob 14:4-5; Pss. Sol. 17:28-31; 4 Ezra 13:40-48; 2 Bar 78).

Hasmonaean, and Roman periods can potentially refer to (perceived) ancestry, to geographical provenance, to religious identity, or possibly to an amalgam or confusion of these.[32] The LXX rendering (4 Kgdms 17:29) of הַשֹּׁמְרֹנִים (*hashomeronim*) by οἱ Σαμαρῖται (not a straightforward transliteration of the Hebrew) is probably due to the translators' identification of the northerners with the Samaritan religious movement with which the translators would have been familiar. Using the pejorative term Cutheans, Josephus identifies the Samaritans of the first century CE with the resettled peoples of 2 Kings 17 (*Ant.* 9.288-291; 10.183-185). The main town of the Samaritan religious community was Shechem, but they occupied a number of other villages in the hill country of Samaria (cf. Acts 8:25), so it was natural for Jews to associate the Samaritans with the religiously compromised population following the Assyrian conquest. However, the Samaritan religious community (of whom Jesus's parabolic Samaritan is a representative) more likely diverged from Judaism in the second to first centuries BCE. There developed considerable antipathy between the two religious groupings, with some atrocities on both sides from Hasmonaean times fuelling this. Adhering to the Mosaic Torah, the Samaritans saw themselves as the true heirs of the Israelite tradition. Whether or not Luke shares Josephus's unflattering view of Samaritan origins, it is sufficient for our purposes to note that he associates Samaritans with the region of Samaria (Luke 9:51; Acts 8:25), a name evocative of the old Northern Kingdom, so they can serve his purpose as representing the northern tribes whatever the actual tribal affiliations of the members of the Samaritan religious community.[33]

## 5. Luke's interest in the Samaritans and national restoration

Luke shows particular interest in the Samaritans, with twelve of the twenty-two NT references to Samaria/Samaritan found in Luke-Acts. All but one of the other ten references are in John; the other Synoptics show little or no interest in Samaria. Luke's references to Samaria/Samaritans report the ministry of

32. The Samaritan religious community preferred the designation הַשֹּׁמְרִים (*hashomerim*) – 'the keepers [of the law]'. Some seek to distinguish Samarians (a geographical term) from Samaritans (a religious term), but there is a fluidity of terminology in the sources, and it is not a distinction Luke makes. See V. J. Samkutty, *The Samaritan Mission in Acts*, LNTS 328 (T&T Clark, 2006), 58–62.

33. From early in the monarchy, the old tribal structure had begun to break down with movements of people and the incorporation of non-tribal territory. Ephraim, the dominant northern tribe, becomes synonymous with (northern) Israel (Jer 31:20; Hos 5:3). Samaria (situated within Ephraimite territory (Judg 10:1)) can stand in parallelism with Ephraim to represent the entire Northern Kingdom (Hos 7:1).

Jesus and the apostles in the region between Judaea and Galilee (the Gospel references are part of the travel narrative), or to those in some way associated with the community based in that region, and (after the first visit mentioned in the Third Gospel) their glad acceptance of the gospel message with its associated ministry of healing.

The initial visit of Jesus and his disciples (Luke 9:51-56) is the exception, recounted in order to set the stage for the subsequent positive response to Jesus by Samaritans. In Luke's first recorded encounter, Jesus has his face set to go from Galilee to Jerusalem and sends messengers ahead to 'a village of the Samaritans' (κώμην Σαμαριτῶν) to make preparations for himself and his company to stay the night. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Jesus does not avoid going through Samaria *en route* from Galilee to Judaea. It is particularly because Jesus is preparing to go to Jerusalem that this Samaritan village does not welcome him. Not only is Jesus's party identifiable as Jewish, but their destination – the Jewish temple city – would presumably add to the ill will on the part of those who only recognised Mount Gerizim as the locus of legitimate YHWH worship (cf. John 4:20). Thus at his first mention of Samaritans, Luke associates them with Samaria, the geographical area between Galilee and Judaea. While the hostility of Jews and Samaritans has at times been overplayed, at least a measure of estrangement and tension was a given in Jesus's time (John 4:9) and is an assumption in the telling of the parable.[34] The initial hostile reception of Jesus and the response of James and John ('Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?' (Luke 9:54; cf. 2 Kgs 1:10,12,14)) then forms the backdrop for Luke's subsequent references to Samaria's positive responses to Jesus and the apostolic proclamation.

Luke 17:11-19 records Jesus's healing of ten lepers in a village in the region between Samaria and Galilee, suggesting it has a mixed Jewish and Samaritan population.[35] This mix is further indicated by the fact that of the ten who as a group approach Jesus, one is a Samaritan (v. 16), information which is withheld until late in the narrative. Jesus, doubtless with some irony (he does not *treat* him as a foreigner), identifies the Samaritan as a 'foreigner' (ἀλλογενής,

34. On Jewish–Samaritan relations, see Ingrid Hjelm, *The Samaritans and Early Judaism: A Literary Analysis*, JSOTSup 303 (Sheffield Academic, 2000), 13–75; Jonathan Bourgel, 'Brethren or Strangers? Samaritans in the Eyes of Second-Century B.C.E. Jews', *Bib* 98 (2017): 392–408, https://doi.org/10.2143/bib.98.3.3245513; Matthew Chalmers, 'Rethinking Luke 10: The Parable of the Good Samaritan Israelite', *JBL* 139 (2020): 543–566, https://doi.org/10.15699/jbl.1393.2020.6.

35. For mixed Samaritan–Jewish populations, see Jonathan Bourgel, 'John 4:4-42: Defining a Modus Vivendi between Jews and the Samaritans', *JTS* 69 (2018): 39–65, https://doi.org/10/1039/jts/flx215.

v. 18), that is, from a typically Jewish perspective, a non-Jew. The temple in Jerusalem bore signs warning 'No foreigner is to enter' (ΜΗΔΕΝΑ ΑΛΛΟΓΕΝΗ ΕΙΣΠΟΡΕΥΕΣΘΑΙ).[36] Only the Samaritan, on 'seeing (ἰδών)' (v. 15) he had been healed, returns to Jesus, glorifying God and prostrating himself at Jesus's feet in what might be interpreted as a posture of worship. Jesus has responded to an appeal for 'mercy' (ἐλέησον) and brought physical healing to both Jew and Samaritan and has accepted the homage of the Samaritan. Reminiscent of the discussion with the Samaritan woman in John 4:21, Jesus effectively functions as the temple, the locus of worship, for this 'foreigner'. The Samaritan is evidently part of the kingdom of God, for as Dennis Hamm observes, noting Luke's use of vision language in connection with responses to Jesus's healing ministry, 'Throughout the Third Gospel – and Acts as well (see Acts 4:21; 11:18; 21:30) – people who glorify God for what they have seen are responding to nothing less than the inbreaking of the reign of God.'[37] In the case of the Samaritan leper, there would be the added grounds for his glorifying God in that his perceived status as a 'foreigner' has been overcome in a fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah 56:3: 'Do not let the foreigner (LXX ἀλλογενής) joined to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely separate me from his people."'

In Acts 1:8 the risen Jesus makes explicit mention of Samaria in his commission to his disciples: 'You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' Here Samaria is syntactically tightly coupled with Judaea. The expression 'to the ends of the earth (ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς)' is perhaps deliberately ambiguous, for it could be taken as a Semitism for 'to the end of the land (of Israel)' (as Jer 12:12; and for γῆ as meaning the land of Israel in Luke, see 4:25; 23:44).[38] Jesus's words are his response to the disciples' question, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore (ἀποκαθιστάνεις) the kingdom to Israel?' (v. 6; cf. 24:21). The word ἀποκαθιστάναι 'restore' is used in the LXX of Jeremiah for the restoration of the whole of Israel, north and south (Jer 16:15; 27:19 (ET 50:19)). However, if this is the reader's initial reading, the more fulsome quote from Isaiah in Acts 13:47 (Isa 49:6) would then invite her to go back and consider the wider implications of Jesus's commission. As

36. BDAG, s.v. ἀλλογενής.

37. Dennis Hamm, S. J., 'What the Samaritan Leper Sees: The Narrative Christology of Luke 17:11-19', *CBQ* 56 (1994): 283.

38. See Etienne Trocmé, *Le 'livre des Actes' et l'histoire* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1957), 206; Daniel R. Schwartz, 'The End of the Γη (Acts 1:8): Beginning or End of the Christian Vision?', *JBL* 105 (1986): 669–676, https://doi.org/10.2307/3261213. For the expression as having a more distant referent in terms of ancient geography, see E. Earle Ellis, 'The End of the Earth (Acts 1:8)', *BBR* 1 (1991): 123–132, https://doi.org/10.2307/26422211.

David Pao writes, 'This process of restoration is portrayed through the model of the Isaianic New Exodus in which the salvation of the Gentiles becomes part of the process of the reconstitution of Israel' (Isa 49:5-6,22; 56:8; 66:20).[39] An intimation of the fulfilment of Jesus's mandate to move out from Jerusalem comes in Acts 8:1 when, as a result of persecution of the church in Jerusalem, perhaps particularly those more closely associated with Stephen, 'all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria'. Samaria, far from being hostile to the Jesus group (cf. Luke 9:51-56), becomes now a place of safety for them.

Then in Acts 8:5-13 Philip visits a (or the) town of Samaria proclaiming the Messiah.[40] If the correct reading is 'the town of Samaria' (v. 5), Luke would seem to have deliberately used this ancient name to make the connection with the Northern Kingdom of Israel, for by the first century the rebuilt former capital had been renamed Sebaste. The crowds there pay close attention (προσεῖχον, v. 11) and respond positively to Philip's message, and observe the signs he performs, including healings and exorcisms. A magician called Simon (vv. 9-13) is one among many who are amazed at Philip's signs and who respond to the proclamation of 'the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ' (v. 12) and are baptised. The response was so widespread that it was reported to the apostles in Jerusalem that 'Samaria had accepted (δέδεκται) the word of God' (v. 14), thus effectively reversing the rejection of Jesus in Luke 9:53 (οὐκ ἐδέξαντο – 'did not receive'). The apostles Peter and John are sent to Samaria and impart the Spirit to the new believers, signalling apostolic and divine endorsement (v. 15), and, as they return to Jerusalem, proclaim the good news to many Samaritan villages (πολλάς τε κώμας τῶν Σαμαριτῶν, v. 25).[41] There could hardly be a clearer indication that, through gospel acceptance, Samaria and Jerusalem, North and South, Samaritans and Jews, have been reconciled.

In one of the Lukan summary statements recording the progress and reception of the word, we read in Acts 9:31, 'Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.' This statement concerning the areas that comprise the land of Israel enjoying

39. David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (Baker, 2002), 96, https://doi.org/10.1628/978-3-16-157216-6.

40. Manuscripts vary as to whether πόλιν 'town' (v. 5) is definite or indefinite. The inclusion of the article in P74 ℵ A B suggests this is a strong reading.

41. For an extensive treatment of the Samaritan mission, see Samkutty, *The Samaritan Mission*.

'peace' comes just prior to the commencement of the Gentile mission (Acts 10:1–11:18). This mission required a clear divine authorisation in a way that the Samaritan mission (a mission to Israel) did not. A further progress report (15:3) records the travel of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, again mentioning their transit through Phoenicia and Samaria, reporting on the conversion of the Gentiles, and bringing great joy to all the believers. An implication is that the believers in Samaria are not considered Gentiles, but as part of the ancient people of God. (The spread of the gospel to Jews in Phoenicia has already been reported, Acts 11:19.)

It would be hard to miss Luke's emphasis on the comprehensive nature of the enthusiastic Samaritan response to the proclamation of the good news of God's kingdom and his Messiah Jesus: 'the crowds with one accord' (οἱ ὄχλοι ... ὁμοθυμαδόν – Acts 8:6); 'great joy' (πολλὴ χαρά – v. 8); 'all of them, from the least to the greatest' (v. 10, the antecedent of those who 'believed' and 'were baptised, both men and women', v. 12); and the climactic note that 'Samaria had accepted the word of God' (v. 14). While the word ὁμοθυμαδόν (lit. 'of the same mind') is ambiguous, it probably indicates that the people of Samaria were united in their response, though it is possible to take it as referring to the commonality the Samaritans now have with the Jewish Christ-followers.

With the ministry of Jesus and his apostles, the age of restoration and the prospect of a united kingdom has been inaugurated. The angel Gabriel's message to Mary before Jesus's birth had indicated that Jesus would rule over this united kingdom: 'He will reign over the house of Jacob forever (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας), and of his kingdom there will be no end' (Luke 1:33; echoing 2 Sam 7:9,13,14,16). Luke consistently uses inclusive terms where possible for the covenant people – Jacob, Israel – rather than Jews. We therefore expect indications of the fulfilment of Gabriel's programmatic announcement.

Luke's indication that the prophet Anna is from the tribe of Asher (2:36) is in keeping with his pan-Israel perspective on the significance of Jesus's birth. While Jesus's choice of twelve as the number of his disciples/apostles in itself is suggestive of a reconstituted united kingdom, Jesus makes the link explicit when he identifies his future kingdom with the twelve tribes, over which he appoints his twelve disciples as judges (22:30) in what is effectively a restatement of Gabriel's prophecy (1:33). The number must be made up to twelve following the betrayal and death of Judas (Acts 1:15-26). In his defence before king Agrippa, the apostle Paul similarly affirms 'I stand here on trial on account of my hope in the promise made by God to our ancestors, a promise that our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship day and night' (Acts 26:6-7). Luke here may have coined the word δωδεκάφυλον for the

twelve-tribe entity. From the beginning to the end of his two-volume work, Luke maintains the hope that all twelve tribes will constitute the nucleus of a restored kingdom under Jesus.

## 6. The parable and national restoration

Has Jesus, then, chosen a Samaritan as protagonist of his story simply as an example of a benevolent 'outsider', one towards whom the lawyer might be expected to harbour antipathy? There would be any number of candidates to fill such a role – a tax collector, a leper, a prostitute, a Herodian, a Roman soldier or other Gentile, even a member of the *am haarets*, the common people who sat loosely to the observance of the law. With Luke's treatment of the Samaritans in mind, the Samaritan of the parable seems deliberately chosen as a representative of the North who, through his compassionate behaviour, exhibits the exemplary fulfilment of the law that was a prophetic expectation, and participates in the healing of the fractured people of God.[42] Jesus tells us the Samaritan was 'moved with pity' (ἐσπλαγχνίσθη) while the lawyer's word for the Samaritan's act is ἔλεος ('mercy' – v. 37), both words (or their cognates) occurring in the restoration passages such as those cited above. The only other persons said to exercise mercy in Luke-Acts (at least with this vocabulary) are God (or the father of the prodigal who would seem to exemplify God's compassion) and Jesus (ἔλεος: Luke 1:50,54,58,72,78; σπλαγχνίζεσθαι: 7:13; 15:20). Of particular note are the programmatic words of the Magnificat, 'He has helped (ἀντελάβετο) his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy (ἔλεος)' (1:54), where the aorist of the finite verb is more aspectual than temporal.[43] It refers to God's settled compassionate stance towards his people across the generations and has an implication that those benefitted are weak. It is the verb used in the LXX of the assistance given to the wounded men in 2 Chronicles 28:15.

42. For the Samaritan as a Torah-observant Israelite, see Jeannine K. Brown, 'The Parable of the Good Samaritan and the Narrative Portrayal of Samaritans in Luke-Acts', *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 15 (2021): 233–246, https://doi.org/10.5325/jtheointe.15.2.0233.

43. For Gunkel, the aorist is 'eschatological': Hermann Gunkel, 'Die Lieder in der Kindheitsgeschichte Jesu bei Lukas', in *Festgabe von Fachgenossen und Freunden A. von Harnack*, ed. Karl Holl (Mohr Siebeck, 1921), 43–60; see also R. C. Tannehill, 'The Magnificat as Poem,' *JBL* 93 (1974): 263–275, https://doi.org/10.2307/3263096; Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* (Peter Lang, 1993), 131–133, https://doi.org/10.3726/978-1-4539-0994-2.

The word ἔλεος has a rich history in the LXX as descriptive of the character, emotions, and actions of YHWH. Behind the Greek word ἔλεος in the LXX there often lies the Hebrew word חֶסֶד (*khesed*), the 'steadfast love' of God who has initiated a gracious covenant with his people (Exod 34:7) and who will be faithful to that covenant in restoring them following a time of humiliation and exile (Isa 16:5; Jer 33:11; Mic 7:18). ἔλεος is also an LXX rendering of רַחֲמִים (*rakhamim*, 'compassion', Isa 54:7; Jer 49:12 (ET 42:12)), again in contexts of national restoration. As in many languages, the verb σπλαγχνίζεσθαι utilises internal organs (σπλάγχνα) to convey emotions, in this case strong empathy, such as God might be envisaged as exercising with an equivalent Hebrew expression, 'the yearning of your heart (הֲמוֹן מֵעֶיךָ – *hamon me'eka*)', or literally 'the tumult of your intestines' // 'your compassion (רַחֲמֶיךָ – *rakhameka*)' (Isa 63:15), in this case in an appeal for national restoration.

It should also not escape our attention that the Samaritan is travelling either to or from Jerusalem, the temple city which to Jews should be the only legitimate YHWH sanctuary.[44] This is in contrast with the attitude of the Samaritan village in Luke 9:51-56 which sought to hinder the progress of Jesus and his disciples to Jerusalem. But, while we are unaware of the Samaritan's business in Jerusalem, his presence there could be seen to evoke 2 Chronicles 11:16 where 'those who had set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came after them [Israelite priests and Levites] from all the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD, the God of their ancestors'.

## 7. The christological and eschatological framing of the pericope

Further, we should observe that the Good Samaritan pericope follows Jesus's declaration concerning his relationship to the Father and his eschatological role at Luke 10:22:

> All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Jesus indicates to his disciples that 'many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear

44. The reader naturally assumes all four travellers are travelling in the same downhill direction, or away from Jerusalem. While the κατ' (NRSV 'near', v. 33) does not of itself imply downward travel by the Samaritan, following κατέβαινεν ('was going down' – v. 31) and ὁμοίως ('likewise' – v. 32) it could be heard as suggesting it.

it' (v. 24).[45] In the light of this high Christology and eschatological framing, we are invited to see in Jesus's parable with a compassionate character as its protagonist an echo of his own YHWH-like compassionate stance towards his people needing rescue and tender care, and this as the fulfilment of OT expectations. For the man who had suffered blows (πληγάς, v. 30), the Samaritan 'bandaged (κατέδησεν) his wounds (τραύματα), having poured oil (ἔλαιον) and wine on them' (v. 34). This recalls Isaiah's description of the sorry state of Jerusalem and Judah:

> From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but bruises (LXX τραῦμα) and sores and bleeding wounds (πληγή); they have not been drained, or bound up (καταδέσμους), or softened with oil (ἔλαιον). (Isa 1:6)

The action of binding up wounds evokes the promised action of God at the restoration upon the return from exile: 'I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up (LXX καταδήσω) the injured, and I will strengthen the weak' (Ezek 34:16; cf. Isa 30:26; Jer 30:17; Hos 6:1-10), doing what the 'shepherds of Israel' have failed to do (Ezek 34:4). While the parable is not an allegory, and those who simply equate the Samaritan with Jesus have gone too far, there is sufficient in the story and its matrix that is evocative of God's programme of national reunion and revival which the ministry of Jesus inaugurates.[46] God's compassion is sometimes envisaged as being exercised through human agency (1 Kgs 8:50; Ps 106:46; Jer 42:12), so we are not unwarranted in seeing something of God's tender care being exhibited in the Samaritan's actions. In the context of Luke's project, the parable signals the beginning of the realisation of prophetic expectation of the healing of national divisions, a fulfilment which Luke makes clear is gaining momentum

45. The close connection of vv. 23-24 with v. 25 is evident in the use of the pronoun for Jesus in v. 25.

46. For the history of interpretation, see Werner Monselewski, *Der barmherzige Samariter: Eine auslegungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Lukas 10*, 25-37, BGBE 5 (Mohr Siebeck, 1967). For allegorical interpretations, see also C. E. B. Cranfield, 'The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)', *ThTo* 11 (1954): 371–372, https://doi.org/10.1177/004057365401100308; Birger Gerhardsson, *The Good Samaritan–The Good Shepherd* (Gleerup, 1958). Bovon provides a brief summary of the history of interpretation, including patristic (notably Irenaeus's and Origen's) allegorical identification of the Samaritan with Christ, and comments, 'I do not underestimate either the christological element, containing an especially exemplary Christology, or the theological rooting in a theology of the plan of salvation' (François Bovon, *Luke 2: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27*, Hermeneia (Fortress, 2013), 60–65 (quotation from p. 65)).

as his account unfolds of the turning of both Samaritans and Jews to Christ. It suggests the dawning of the age of Israel's eschatological Torah-obedience. Once a prophet castigated the people of Samaria for their indifference to the plight of their poor and needy neighbours and their repeated failure to repent of this (Amos 4:1-11). Now 'a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people' (Luke 24:19) portrays a representative of this people exhibiting the longed-for change of attitude. And surely, as Luke recorded not only the turning of the Samaritans, but also that 'a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith' (Acts 6:7), it brought a smile to his face as he recalled the parable with its priestly representative who failed the obedience test.

## 8. Ethical considerations

Of course, the pericope is not devoid of ethical concerns. In response to the lawyer's identification of the neighbour in the story as '[t]he one who showed him mercy', Jesus calls on him to '[g]o and do likewise' (Luke 10:37). But the ethics are now, in light of the foregoing, more sharply focused. They are the ethics of the implementation of God's restoration programme, of which Jesus is himself the primary agent. Jesus is summoning the lawyer to resist becoming (like the priest and the Levite of the parable who fail the kingdom ethic of the double commandment) one of the unfaithful shepherds of Ezekiel 34:4, and in emulating the Samaritan to get on board with God's eschatological mission of bringing healing to his fractured nation through his instilling in them of a heart to obey.[47] If the lawyer's question was effectively 'What are the limits

47. The actions of the priest and Levite have sometimes been attributed to concern with corpse impurity if they perceived the victim might be dead. See J. Duncan M. Derrett, 'Law in the New Testament: Fresh Light on the Parable of the Good Samaritan', *NTS* 11 (1964): 22–37, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0028688500002927; Richard Bauckham, 'The Scrupulous Priest and the Good Samaritan: Jesus' Parabolic Interpretation of the Law of Moses', *NTS* 44 (1998): 475–489, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0028688500016684; Steven M. Bryan, *Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgement and Restoration* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 177–185, https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511487866. Levine and Witherington argue against this, noting that the priest and Levite would actually be in breach of the law in not attending to a body: Amy Jill Levine and Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Luke* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 292. Green sees the priest and Levite as exemplifying positions of status related to their temple functions, while the Samaritan is a socio-religious outcast: Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, NICNT (Eerdmans, 1997), 430–431, https://doi.org/10.5040/bci-000t. Wolter is on safer ground in asserting 'The narrative is not interested in why priest and Levite pass by the wounded man, and this should also be respected': Michael Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Volume II (Luke 9:51–24); trans. Wayne Coppins and Christoph Heilig (Baylor University Press, 2017), 79. Their role in the story is as a foil for the compassionate Samaritan.

of the definition of neighbour?', Jesus has forced the lawyer to concede that, at least in the first instance, they encompass all of historic Israel, including Samaritans. In relating the encounter of the lawyer with Jesus, Luke offers the reader an insight, through Jesus's teaching ministry, exemplified in his healing actions, into the inauguration of the fulfilment of God's long-anticipated work of reconciliation and restoration of the divided kingdom, a work of Jesus which continues in the life of the church.

While our initial thought was to identify the victim of the parable as a Jew – as doubtless Jesus's first hearers would have done, and, as suggested here, was Jesus's primary intention – of course the unconscious ('half dead' – ἡμιθανῆ v. 30) victim is unable to be identified, deprived of clothing and speech, so, on further reflection, broadening the scope of the compassionate and reconciling ministry of Jesus and all who pay heed to his teaching.

## 9. Conclusion

Luke has a strong interest in the Samaritans, closely associating them with the region of Samaria, a name that functions in the OT as a designation of the peoples of the northern tribes. So Samaria's embrace of the gospel is, for Luke, the fulfilment of prophetic expectation. The parable of the Good Samaritan is to be seen as one of Jesus's many parables which relate to Israel's story and to God's gracious purposes to be realised in and through his people. While there may be no 'the kingdom of God is like' (13:18-21) or other explicit reference to the kingdom in the parable, it should be seen to take its place among the Lukan kingdom parables. The parable offers a glimpse of the eschatological restoration of the divided people of God who begin to reflect God's compassion towards them through Torah obedience.

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