LUKE'S NARRATIVE AGENDA:
THE USE OF ΚΥΡΙΟΣ WITHIN LUKE-ACTS
TO PROCLAIM THE IDENTITY OF JESUS

A Dissertation
Submitted
to the Temple University Graduate Board

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

By
Steven J. Beardsley
May, 2012

Examining Committee Members:

Vasiliki M. Limberis, Advisory Chair, Religion
Khalid A. Y. Blankinship, Religion
Jane DeRose Evans, Art History
Robert A. Kraft, University of Pennsylvania, Religious Studies
Nelson Rivera, External Member, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines Luke's use of κύριος within his narratives of the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. Luke reached back into the common religious cultural context of the early Christians where he obtained his understanding of κύριος as *Yahweh* from the Greek Jewish Scriptures (Chapter 1). When Luke and his Jewish audience heard κύριος, they first understood it to mean *Yahweh*. Luke was also writing in the larger cultural context of the Greco-Roman world and the Roman Empire, which was pervasively informed by the imperial cult (Chapter 2). Luke and his Greco-Roman audience (including his Jewish audience) instinctively recognized that κύριος' most obvious Greco-Roman referent was the emperor. Based on these identities of κύριος, Luke used his Gospel as the narrative canvas on which to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus as *Yahweh* because he is κύριος (Chapter 3). Luke then took this established identity and made an overt political claim that Jesus is superior to the emperor as a god because he is Lord of all (Chapter 4). Luke's narrative agenda not only embraced the Jewish roots from which Christianity was born, it also challenged the environment in which it would thrive and ultimately triumph. For Luke, the identity of Jesus was profoundly clear. Jesus was *Yahweh*, the Lord God of Israel, born a human being and as such he explicitly replaced Caesar as Lord of all.

To my children: Vincent, Caleb, Marcus, Candace & Cassandra
"That you may know for certain the things you were taught"
Luke 1:4

PREFACE

This dissertation marks the end of a beginning.

I view my life in four 20-year phases: growing, preparing, doing, giving. I was privileged to grow in the home of James and Eleanora Beardsley. They were very imperfect people who perfectly loved their God and their son. They gave me all the necessary tools to succeed in life: education, discipline, love, and direction. It was during this phase of growing that I began to love their God. It was also during this phase that my purpose in life became clear. Unlike many of my peers who rushed off to begin life in their early twenties, I followed my father's advice and began preparing.

I was fortunate to receive a sound education at the University of Delaware and honored to continue that education at the Divinity School of Harvard University. There I met some of the keenest minds and kindest people. It was there that I first learned what true excellence in scholarship looks like. When I finished at Harvard, I erroneously thought that I had completed my preparation early. I married my beautiful wife Regina and settled down to fulfill my purpose in life as a pastor. I assumed the position of Assistant to the Pastor at Newark United Pentecostal Church, where I had grown up. Four years passed quickly with much church work, the birth of our first son Vincent and the purchase of our first (and current) home.

The beginning whose end is marked by this dissertation caught me by surprise. The United Pentecostal Church International, through which I hold ministerial credentials

as an ordained minister, took an unprecedented step. At the 1999 General Conference the ministerial body voted into existence Urshan Graduate School of Theology. From its inception UGST was to be established, structured and organized as an accredited seminary with the Association of Theological Schools. A call went out to all persons holding the relevant Ph.D.s or who would be willing to go back to school and earn a Ph.D. My initial response was unequivocal: "I am not interested." I knew how much work would be involved. I would have to turn my life upside down. My father, who was beginning the process of retiring as pastor of Newark UPC, would have to turn his life upside down. I was definitely not interested. But I was unable to ignore the voice of my parents' God. So, in January of 2000, I found myself inquiring at the office of the Graduate Studies Chair of the Religion Department of Temple University.

I was not unfamiliar with Temple or the Religion Department. I had applied to the program after UofD and been accepted. I had also interviewed at the University of Pennsylvania—even met with a Prof. Robert Kraft. But I had ultimately turned Temple down to go to Harvard. And that is exactly what I told Prof. Robert Wright when I met with him. I was late in applying. I had not recently taken the GREs, and the only academic thing I had done since my previous application was to go to Harvard and successfully graduate. Also, I was a full-time pastor. Would they accept me? He kindly encouraged me and promised that if I could get letters of reference from my professors at Harvard, he would recommend my admission. So in the fall of 2000, my wife (largely pregnant with our second son Caleb) and I found ourselves at the New Student Orientation on the 6th floor of Anderson Hall at Temple University. There I met Prof.

Vasiliki Limberis, my future advisor, Prof. Khalid Blankinship, department chair, Prof. Katie Canon, Prof. Rebecca Alpert, and many others.

Four years later I finished my coursework and began preparation for comprehensive examinations, which I completed two years later. In those six years I had studied Hebrew with Prof. Wright and Prof. Tom McDaniel of then Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. I had traveled twice to the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California to obtain reading-level knowledge of German and French. I had studied Greek with Prof. Limberis and her Greek Readings Group (how much that group contributed to my prayer life only God knows), as well as taken many classes. I had taken some classes with Prof. Robert Kraft (the kindest man who ever scared me) in the Religious Studies Department at the University of Pennsylvania. And I had survived two Art History classes with Prof. Jane Evans and a host of female Art History majors. Thankfully Prof. Evans liked a little testosterone in her class.

The schedule was frenetic. In that same time, I had advanced to Associate Pastor and then Senior Pastor of Newark UPC. My wife and I had somehow found time to give Vincent two little brothers (Caleb and Marcus) and two little sisters (Candace and Cassandra) who try to rule the world. I had also begun teaching one-third time at UGST as Adjunct Assistant Professor of New Testament and Early Church History. So this dissertation is much more than exciting research and a book (hopefully publishable). It is the end of a beginning. For I now know with confidence that my life of doing has only just begun, even as my preparation is drawing to a close. The next twenty years will be defined by doing all that is necessary to be a husband to Regina, father to Vincent, Caleb,

Marcus, Candace, and Cassandra, pastor to Newark United Pentecostal Church, a teacher, and a writer.

I could not have completed this past eleven years without the support of so many people. Time does not permit me to say about each of you all that I wish. Please allow these few words to serve as meager measures of my gratitude. First, all of my professors have been patient, encouraging, and challenging: Profs. Limberis, Wright, Blankinship, Kraft, and Evans. To each of you I offer my sincerest gratitude. Second, my church family at Newark UPC has been nothing but supportive during this very long process, even though most are unsure exactly what I am doing. Third, my father-in-law Roy Moss has spent countless hours editing my manuscripts. All remaining errors are my own and not due to his lack of effort. Fourth, my parents who truly sacrificed a portion of their retirement years to enable me to become prepared. Only God can repay you, but I thank you. Finally, my beloved wife and dear children: Words are not adequate to express my feelings toward you. So in the immortal words of the Lord whom we serve, "It is finished."

Soli Deo Gloria.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

THE GREEK JEWISH SCRIPTURES ("THE SEPTUAGINT")

Introduction

It is widely claimed that Luke makes use of the Greek Jewish Scriptures ("the Septuagint") as a source in writing Luke-Acts.[1] This chapter explores background issues and establishes assumptions related to these Scriptures so vital to all New Testament studies and the background for my thesis. The argument of the thesis is that Luke uses κύριος in the Gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus. The Greek Jewish Scriptures in which God is κύριος are the backdrop to both of Luke's narratives. Luke's use of κύριος within these narratives results in his own unique evangelistic formulation for promoting his view of Jesus in a new role.[2] For him, Jesus is God because he is the κύριος. This conclusion is dependent upon the backdrop of the Greek Jewish translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, and Luke's understanding of κύριος derived from these translations.

Specifically, this chapter will examine relevant issues related to "the Septuagint" and its use by Luke as a source for his understanding of κύριος. First, the story of "the

[1] See the section below, Terminology and the Story of the Septuagint, for explanation of "the Septuagint."

[2] The use of "evangelistic" is meant to refer to the unique message(s) of the early Jesus-believers that many within the Greco-Roman world would identify as a particular piece of propaganda among many competing messages of propaganda.

Septuagint" will be presented and terminology defined. Second, some of the earliest papyri and fragments of the LXX/OG, along with how they present the Tetragrammaton, will be presented. This will also include a discussion of *nomina sacra*. Third, a concise but thorough examination of κύριος within "the Septuagint" and its use as the appropriate Greek equivalent for the Hebrew Tetragrammaton will be presented.[3] Finally, this chapter will present a variety of reasons why Luke used "the Septuagint" as his Scriptures and why this is instrumental for understanding what he means by κύριος.

Terminology and the Story of "the Septuagint"

When discussing Scripture and what it meant to a writer such as Luke, care with regard to terminology is necessary. Perhaps the starting point is the Hebrew Scriptures. Scripture for the New Testament writers consisted of various writings that they inherited from the Hebrews—the children of Israel—during the Second Temple period. But these Hebrew Scriptures came to the early Christian Greek writers primarily through Greek translations. Further, these translations were not only of Hebrew texts but also of Aramaic texts, and at times included other texts authored in Greek. It should be noted that "the idea of 'the bible' as a single physical literary entity 'between two covers' that could be carried from place to place without too much effort or special equipment was the result of [the] 4th century technological advance" known as the "mega-codex".[4] At the time the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek, however, these Scriptures

[3] See below for LXX/OG terminology.

[4] Kraft, *Scroll, Codex, and Canons: the Relationship of Ancient Book Formats to Larger Collections and Anthologies (with Special Reference to Jewish and Christian Scriptures)* 2008 [cited November 12, 2011]); available from http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rak//publics/formats/.

were contained in individual scrolls. While "the limits of technology did not stop people from conceptualizing such a collection as Jewish or Christian scriptures, or their relevant subunits," it was a concept achieved by either lists or the physical collection of the individual scrolls in cabinets, or similar storage spaces.[5] Because the various scripture scrolls were not a single physical unit and were not always kept together, there is great diversity in what was translated and/or transmitted. Thus there resulted some important differences such as the number of texts and even content found within the Greek translations that do not agree with the later canon preserved in the Hebrew and Aramaic texts of the Masoretic Text.[6] So how does one proceed? The story begins with "the Septuagint."

When the Septuagint is spoken of, it is impossible to escape a tangled history that complicates even its name. "What began, when the translation started on its long road, as an unusually creative product of a period of cultural flowering at the dawn of Hellenistic civilization, and as the foundation text for a new Jewish diaspora, has ended up as the Septuagint, a part of Christianity."[7] The Septuagint anthology that has reached the modern world through the manuscripts contains texts that have been altered many times over a long period of time.[8] These alterations were not always unintentional, but rather sometimes were the conscious, intentional decisions of people who highly respected the

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[5] Kraft.

[6] McLay, "The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research," (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003).

[7] Rajak, *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 4.

[8] Rajak, 16.

various texts but definitely emerged from divergent traditions.[9] This picture is further obscured by the paucity of physical remains from pre-Christian days. Rajak claims the very earliest remains from the second century BCE are minute scraps of papyrus or leather while the late first century BCE or first century CE only offer a handful of texts, and the first un-fragmentary manuscripts of any substantial continuous length are found in the Chester Beatty collection, dated to the third century CE.[10] Rajak is perhaps overstating the case given the Fouad materials dating to the first century BCE, which are relatively extensive though still quite fragmentary.[11]

Not only does the Septuagint present a great textual web complicated by the paucity of early manuscripts, but also it is unclear what was translated when. It must be remembered that at the time of the origin of the translation of the Jewish Scriptures into Greek, these writings were written on individual scrolls and there was not an established, physical canon or "Bible."[12] The *Letter of Aristeas* presents a genesis of the translation of the Hebrew "law" into Greek; however, "from the outset, it will be apparent that none of the versions we have of the translation story could possibly be entirely true."[13] The *Letter* tells the story of how King Ptolemy II of Egypt (280-246 BCE) discovers the

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[9] Rajak, 17.

[10] Rajak, 2.

[11] Aly and Koenen, *Three Rolls of the Early Septuagint: Genesis and Deuteronomy: A Photographic Edition* (Bd 27; Bonn: R. Habelt, 1980). See also Kraft, *The Problem: How to Identify Unambiguous Remnants of Jewish Greek Literary Activity?* [cited November 12, 2011]); available from http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rak//earlylxx/jewishpap.html#jewishmss.

[12] Kraft.

[13] Rajak, 28.

existence of the Jewish Law from the head of his library, Demetrius of Phaleron. The *Letter*, however, is not specific about what was contained in the Jewish Law. It is impossible to determine with certainty whether it contained the five books of Moses (each on individual scrolls), a portion of these books, namely only the law itself, or some other non-scriptural text like Jubilees. Upon learning of this Jewish Law Ptolemy II sent Aristeas, the narrator of the *Letter*, and another man named Andreas to the Jewish High Priest in Jerusalem. The purpose of their visit was to obtain the most accurate version of the texts available. These texts would then be added to the King's library in Alexandria, which boasted of containing half a million volumes. In demonstration of his goodwill, Ptolemy II follows the request of Aristeas and releases 100,000 Jewish prisoners of war. Upon the exchange of letters and gifts, the holy scrolls and seventy-two translators are sent from the High Priest to Ptolemy II. After being wined and dined for a week, the translators are given workspace on an island (most likely the island of Pharos). They work expeditiously and produce the translation, which is presented both to Ptolemy and the Jews of Alexandria. It was received with great acclaim.[14]

While some scholars have attempted to argue for its historicity and others have outright rejected its usefulness, the *Letter* is probably best characterized as an historical myth in which "echoes of history reverberate in the myth."[15] Tessa Rajak persuasively argues, "the *Letter* is an embodiment of Alexandrian Jewish identity, a literary vehicle precisely for its collective memory."[16] The *Letter* is best left somewhere between fact

[14] Rajak, 30.

[15] Rajak, 28.

and fiction, perhaps a charter myth in which the Jews of Alexandria (and over time, the Jews of the diasporas) expressed their collective memory of who they were in their dispersion.[17] The date of the composition of the *Letter* is uncertain at best: perhaps somewhere between *c.* 200 and *c.* 100 BCE. Thus the genesis story of the Septuagint provides very little concrete evidence. If it is allowed that "the Letter of Aristeas combines memory with story in its account of the making of the Septuagint," then perhaps the Septuagint can be described as a translation of portions of what came to be considered Hebrew Scriptures into Greek for the diaspora community of Jews sometime during the third or second centuries BCE.[18]

But these translations were of texts that had not yet reached "canonical" status: "the text of the Hebrew Bible was pluriform through the crucial period."[19] The Greek translations transmitted in the preserved manuscripts sometimes differ from their supposed Hebrew counterparts in textual details, and later when the LXX/OG collection was more or less standardized in fourth century Christianity, it differed from the standardized Hebrew/Aramaic collection in some areas such as order of books, book titles, extra books, additions to books, and the like.[20] As noted above, these translations of pluriform Hebrew scriptural collections were then revised with various agendas in mind and it is impossible now even to know what Hebrew texts were available to any

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[16] Rajak, 51.

[17] Rajak, 47, 50.

[18] Rajak, 64.

[19] Rajak, 19.

[20] Rajak, 21.

reviser or re-translator.[21] On the one hand, evidence points to Jewish revisers, in reaction against Hellenism, trying to clean up the Septuagint by "getting back closer to the Hebrew."[22] On the other hand, the early Christian church gradually adopted this "Septuagint" collection as its scriptures at least by the late second century in some communities. This textual history is "one of mind-bending difficulty."[23]

This dissertation is not attempting to unravel the tangled history of the Septuagint. The goal is to utilize the Septuagint in an honest manner, while acknowledging the crippling and paralyzing complications.[24] What is clear is that the Septuagint is really "a massive collection of translations, and a collection which had vague and variable limits in the Christian period."[25] At its earliest stages Septuagint should refer to the Pentateuch, those five books of Moses (or at least the law portion of them) translated in Alexandria. "The problem is that 'Septuagint' is a term which evolved in the usage of the early Church and refers to the corpus created there as we find it in the great biblical codices of the fourth century CE."[26] Thus Septuagint has two possible meanings, one more narrow, Jewish and historically early, and one more broad, Christian and historically later. To distinguish between these meanings, specialists refer to these earliest translations as LXX. Textual scholars use Old Greek (OG) to refer to the earliest stage of text that can be

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[21] Rajak, 19.

[22] Rajak, 17.

[23] Rajak, 19.

[24] Rajak, 19-20.

[25] Rajak, 1-2.

[26] Rajak, 14.

established.[27] OG also, in conjunction with LXX, refers to other scriptural translations in addition to the Pentateuch. For the purposes of this dissertation, Septuagint will be used to refer to those Jewish translations into Greek of the Hebrew Scriptures that are being adopted by the early Christian church. It is conceivable that Luke utilized some portions of this compilation within his narratives. LXX and LXX/OG will be used to refer to that earliest textual stage of the translation of the Pentateuch and other Hebrew scriptures. Finally, Greek Jewish Scriptures will refer to the entire group, including those scriptures originally written in Greek.

Early Jewish LXX/OG Papyri, Fragments, and *nomina sacra*

In the Hebrew Scriptures, when God revealed himself to Abram, he is identified as *Yahweh*.[28] When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and Moses asked what he should tell the people of Israel his name was, the answer was "I Am who I Am."[29] This name יהוה came to be the unutterable name of God and *Adonai* was typically spoken

[27] Rajak, 18.

[28] Genesis 12:1. The English rendering *Yahweh* is based upon the Hebrew four-letter word יהוה also known as the Tetragrammaton or Tetragram—"word" of four letters. No one knows exactly how the four consonants were actually vocalized because the pronunciation of Biblical Hebrew was conveyed through oral tradition, which is now lost. The original meaning of *Yahweh* is also unknown, though it clearly is used to identify God. It appears between 6000-7000 times within the Hebrew Scriptures depending upon textual variations. See Henry O. Thompson, "Yahweh (Deity)" in Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 6: 1010.

[29] Exodus 3:14. This answer forms an excellent paronomasia with the name. On the one hand, when God used the verb to express his name, he used this form saying, "I AM." When the people of Israel refer to him as *Yahweh*, which is the third person masculine singular form of the same verb, they are saying, "He is."

in its place.[30] In the third century BCE the Hebrew Scriptures began to be translated into the Greek language. These translations required a decision of how to render the unutterable name of God. The manuscript evidence does not present a unified picture of this decision and there seems to have been a diversity of solutions. There is evidence from the early Jewish LXX/OG papyri and fragments of special ways of representing the four lettered divine name יהוה. A brief survey of the various representations is appropriate.

4Q120, Leviticus 2-5, a papyrus roll dated to the first century BCE, presents the divine name with the Greek letters IAΩ with spacing before and after.[31] PFouad 266b, Deutoronomy 17-33, a papyrus roll dated to the first century BCE, has frequent occurences of the Tetragrammaton in small square Aramaic/Hebrew letters that resemble the Greek letters ΠΙΠΠΙ. These letters are preceded but not followed by a high dot on left of tetragram and the whole occupying the space of 5-6 letter widths with blank space on either side. It seems "the first copyist left the dot marker and blank space, which was

[30] Because of the injunction of the Third Commandment found in Exodus 20:7 ("You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold guiltless anyone who takes his name in vain."), *Adonai* (אדון, "my lord") seems to have been generally spoken (and sometimes written) in place of Yahweh. See Waddell, "The Tetragrammaton in the LXX," *Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1944): 161.

[31] See "Representations of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (Hebrew YHWH)" below. 4Q120 = LXXLev/b [#802 = vh046 = AT22], Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem. Kraft, "The 'Textual Mechanics' of Early Jewish LXX/OG Papyri and Fragments," in *The Bible as Book: The Transmission of the Greek Text* (eds. McKendrick and O'Sullivan; New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press in association with The Scriptorium: Center for Christian Antiquities, 2003), 56. See also Shaw, "The Earliest Non-mystical Jewish Use of IAW" (University of Cincinnati, 2002).

filled in later presumably by another hand."[32] 4Q126, a parchment roll dated late first century BCE, in Fragment 2 seems to have *KYPIO*, preceded by a short space.[33] 8HevXIIgr, Nahal Hever Minor Prophets, possibly two parchment rolls dated to the turn of the Common Era, has two hands (not necessarily "sections") with a different rendering of the archaic Hebrew Tetragrammaton. It seems that hand A was written in continuity from left to right with the Greek (not after the Greek was completed).[34] POxy. 3522, Job 42, a papyrus roll dated to the first century CE, has the Tetragrammaton written consecutively from left to right in paleo-Hebrew by the original scribe.[35]

POxy. 656, Genesis 14-27, a papyrus codex dated to the second/third century CE, presents some interesting scenarios. At Genesis 15:8, there was a four letter width blank space. The space seems to have been left in order for someone else with a more expert hand to fill it in. It is presumed that it was being copied from a manuscript that represented the Tetragrammaton in non-Greek letters given the four-letter width space. It is filled in with *KYPIE* by another hand. There are also two other occurrences of some form of *KYPIOΣ*, both at the end of lines at Genesis 24:31 (line 122) and 24:42 (line 166). In each case the fragmentary state of the codex interferes with the evidence. At Genesis 24:31 only *K* survives before the fragment breaks off. At Genesis 24:42, only *KY*

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[32] See "Representations of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (Hebrew YHWH)" below. PFouad 266b [#848 = vh56 = AT27], Egyptian Papyrological Society, Cairo. Kraft, 57.

[33] 4Q126 unidentified Greek [no Göttingen #; unknown to vh], Rockefeller Museum, Jersusalem. Kraft, 58.

[34] See "Representations of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (Hebrew YHWH)" below. 8HevXIIgr [#943 = vh285], Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem. Kraft, 58-59.

[35] See "Representations of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (Hebrew YHWH)" below. POxy. 3522 [Göttingen #??; unknown to vh], Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Kraft, 59.

appears though there is additional space on the preserved blank surface. Kraft argues, "only the abbreviated *KY* (without any mark of abbreviation) was supplied in the second instance, and possibly in the first as well!"[36] POxy. 1007, Genesis 2-3, a parchment codex dated to the third century CE, represents the Tetragrammaton by paleo-Hebrew double yod (two yods with a line through them both). Also *ΘΕΟΣ* is presented in contracted form.[37] POxy. 1166, Genesis 16, a papyrus roll dated to the third century CE, as reconstructed presents *ΚΥΡΙΟΣ* and *ΘΕΟΣ* as contracted.[38] PVindob. 39777, Ps 68/69, 80/81, a parchment roll dated to the third/fourth century CE, represents the Tetragrammaton in the archaic Hebrew characters.[39] PAlex. 203, Isaiah 48, a papyrus roll dated to the third/fourth century CE, has probable contracted forms of *ΚΥΡΙΟΣ* and possibly also of *ΘΕΟΣ*.[40]

"The presence in many of the clearly Jewish fragments of a special way of representing the four lettered divine name יהוה, in contrast to the use of the Greek substitute term 'LORD' (*ΚΥΡΙΟΣ*) in most LXX/OG manuscripts, has led to discussions of the origins and history of such practices, including the relationship between this phenomenon and

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[36] POxy. 656 [#905(U4) = vh013 = AT8], Bodleian Library, Oxford. Kraft, 60-61.

[37] See "Representations of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (Hebrew YHWH)" below. POxy. 1007 = PLit.Lond. 199 [#907 = vh005], British Library, London. Kraft, 61.

[38] POxy. 1166 = PLit.Lond. 201 [#944 = vh014 = AT9], British Library, London. Kraft, 62.

[39] PVindob. 3977 = Stud.Pal. 11.114 = PWien Rainer 18 (Symmachus) [Göttingen #?? = vh167], Vienna. Kraft, 63-64.

[40] PAlex. 203 [Göttingen #?? = vh300], Alexandria Museum, Egypt. Kraft, 64.

the development of the 'nomina sacra.'"[41] The *nomina sacra* are a group of words that were written by Christian scribes in special abbreviated forms perhaps to signify their sacredness, though it is not clear how or why they originated. The four earliest attested and most consistently rendered *nomina sacra* are *'Ιησοῦς*, *Χριστός*, *Κύριος*, and *Θεός*.[42] What is surprising is that they are found in the earliest Christian manuscripts and remarkably standardized.[43] This has prompted scholars to inquire into their origin. There is no parallel within non-Christian Greek manuscripts, where abbreviations are utilized in order to abbreviate, not to communicate sacredness. This can be seen by the distinctiveness of the *nomina sacra* where the abbreviation is usually a contracted form, typically the first and last letter, with a horizontal stroke over the letters.[44] In contrast, the abbreviations of the non-Christian Greek manuscripts are arrived at by simply writing the first several letters and omitting the rest.[45]

The most probable parallel for the *nomina sacra* is the Jewish tradition of the special treatment of the divine name. The Jews were very careful in their oral and written treatment of the Tetragrammaton, יהוה. In both the Hebrew and Greek Jewish Scriptures the divine name was distinguished from the surrounding text by various means.

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[41] Kraft, 53.

[42] Hurtado, "The Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*: A Proposal," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117, no. 4 (1998): 655.

[43] Hurtado: 657-658.

[44] This statement must be tempered by remembering Hurtado's observation of the suspended form of Ιησους as Ιη and the conflated form of Ιης. Hurtado: 657.

[45] Hurtado: 658.

Figure 1: Representations of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (Hebrew YHWH)

[46] Kraft, *Representations of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (Hebrew YHWH)* [cited November 16, 2011]); available from http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rak//lxxjewpap/tetragram.jpg.

Qumran materials show that it could be represented by four or five dots, sometimes preceded by a colon, and sometimes presented in paleo-Hebrew characters.[47] As seen from the above early Jewish LXX/OG papyrus and fragments, this same care for the divine name was carried over into the Greek translations. The Jewish translators and scribes "had available a variety of devices, from paleo-Hebrew, to square Hebrew (thus Greek ΠΙΠΙ), to abbreviated Hebrew (ZZ), to semi-transliteration (also an abbreviation?) ΙΑΩ and the use of substitutes such as אדוי (ADONAI) and *KYPIOΣ* ('Lord'), or even to using dots and blank spacing."[48] Kraft even argues for the probability that the Jewish scribes used Greek abbreviated formations such as *KΣ* (see POxy 656 and 1007 above).[49]

Hurtado argues, "there is no indisputably Jewish manuscript in which any of the *nomina sacra* are written as we find them in undeniably Christian manuscripts."[50] Kraft remains skeptical, arguing that some of the above evidence from the early Jewish LXX/OG papyrus and fragments "suggests that Jewish scribes sometimes may have used contractions of *ΘΕΟΣ*, and perhaps a few other frequently used words, in the development of their scribal traditions."[51] Hurtado does admit that "it seems likely that Jewish reverence for the divine name, and particularly the Jewish practice of marking off the divine name reverentially in written forms, probably provides us with the key element in the religious background that early Christians adapted in accordance with their own

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[47] Hurtado: 661-662.

[48] Kraft, 66. The ZZ represents two paleo-Hebrew YODs.

[49] Kraft, 66-67.

[50] Hurtado: 662.

[51] Kraft, 67.

religious convictions and expressed in the *nomina sacra*."[52] Perhaps, if Kraft were correct, Traube's proposal that the initial *nomen sacrum* was *θεός* and the Greek-speaking Jews sought to imitate the Hebrew consonantal writing of the divine name by omitting the vowels of *θεός* would be accurate.[53] Hurtado, however, argues for *Ἰησοῦς* as the original *nomen sacrum*, with the initial intention of signaling the reader to the numerical value of Ιη (18).[54] He contends that the initial impulse was christological in what he terms "Christ-devotion."[55] His preferred hypothesis is "that the practice of writing Jesus' name in suspended form as ιη, with the horizontal stroke intended to signal the numerical value of the abbreviation, precedes the practice of sacred abbreviation by contraction" thus "explaining the origin of the horizontal stroke over the *nomina sacra*."[56]

Schuyler Brown, however, makes an important observation that the Greek-speaking Jews demonstrated a preference for *κύριος* as both the rendering and Greek vocalization of יהוה. Thus *κύριος*, not *θεός*, would be the original *nomen sacrum*.[57] Brown also suggests that, based on the Christian understanding of *κύριος* as referring to both God and Jesus, the practice of *nomina sacra* was "rapidly extended in one direction

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[52] Hurtado: 663.

[53] Traube, *Nomina Sacra: Versuch einer Geschichte der christlichen Kürzung* (Munich: Beck, 1907), 36.

[54] Hurtado: 666-668.

[55] Hurtado: 671-672.

[56] Hurtado: 670.

[57] Brown, "Concerning the Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*," *Studia Papyrologica* 9 (1970): 7-19.

to *θεός* and in the other direction to *Ἰησοῦς* and *χριστός*."[58] This allowed Christian scribes to give "graphic expression to the theological equation already present in the earliest apostolic preaching, in which *κύριος*, the name for the God of Israel, was used as a title for Jesus Christ."[59]

Again, this dissertation is not an attempt to solve the complex issue of the *nomina sacra*, nor does this brief survey deal with all of the involved issues. It is clear, however, that scribes, both Jewish and Christian, were careful in how they treated sacred names. Jewish scribes and translators gave particular care within the Greek Jewish Scriptures to how they rendered the divine name of the God of Israel. The evidence shows they had several options. Given the diversity of choices, did the translators choose κύριος as the appropriate Greek equivalent of the Hebrew יהוה? By the time of Luke's compositions in the late first/early second century CE, was κύριος established as the appropriate Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton within "the Septuagint"? Finally, was κύριος as the appropriate Greek equivalent of Yahweh a product of Greek Jewish translators and scribes or was it the result of Christian scribal activity? These questions will be addressed in the following section.

κύριος as the Greek equivalent of YHWH

By the first century in the so-called LXX/OG manuscripts the evidence seems overwhelming that *κύριος* was written as the appropriate Greek equivalent for *Yahweh*.[60]

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[58] Brown: 18.

[59] Brown: 19. This dissertation will argue that *κύριος* was much more than a title for Jesus. It was his actual identity as the Lord God of Israel born a human being.

The importance of the Greek translations to the Diaspora Jews of the Greco-Roman world and the first-century Jesus believers cannot be overstated. Because of this importance and the manuscript evidence of the Greek translations, many have concluded that Jewish scribes decided to render *Yahweh* as *κύριος*. This decision would have solved the question of both the *qere* and the *ketiv*—what is spoken in Greek in the place of the unutterable name of God and what is the appropriate written Greek equivalent for *Yahweh*. Further, with these translations in use in first-century Palestine, the use of *κύριος* for *Yahweh* is cited as evidence of a pre-Christian scribal decision.

This conclusion, however, is by no means certain and has been contested and debated for years. Serious arguments against the validity of the first-century "Septuagint" representing a pre-Christian scribal decision to render *Yahweh* as *κύριος* have been advanced. Hans Conzelmann presents them as follows: 1) *κύριος* as a substitute for *Yahweh* is uncommon in Judaism except in "the Septuagint"; 2) When we categorize the manuscripts of the Greek Jewish Scriptures according to whether they are Christian or Jewish, only the Christian manuscripts render *Yahweh* as *κύριος*; and 3) As presented above, substantial witness is found that within the Jewish LXX/OG manuscripts in which the Tetragrammaton is retained, it is transcribed as ΙΑΩ or represented in square Hebrew letters (which later Greek readers misread as Greek ΠΙΠΠ).[61]

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[60] Tim McLay uses the technical term "stereotyped equivalent." McLay.

[61] Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1969), 83-84. Waddell. Fitzmyer, "The Semitic Background of the New Testament *Kyrios*-Title," in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979), 120. Reason number two, however, is possibly unsustainable and reason number three affected because of the tenuous nature of

If these objections stand, then the rendering of *Yahweh* as *κύριος* in "the Septuagint" is evidence only that *Christian* scribes decided to use *κύριος* in place of *Yahweh*. These Christian scribes would then almost certainly have been influenced by the New Testament writers who used *κύριος* for God (*Yahweh*). But where then did the New Testament writers acquire this practice? Where, for example, did Luke acquire it when he quoted Deuteronomy 6:5 in Luke 10:27?[62] If Luke is to be taken seriously in his claim of using sources carefully, from where does this rendering of *Yahweh* as *κύριος* in Deuteronomy 6:5 come? The answers to these questions are singularly important to a subsequent question. What is the origin of using *κύριος* for Jesus? The New Testament writers' answer to this question is in some manner based upon their claims concerning the relationship of Jesus with *Yahweh*. So the question of the origin of using *κύριος* to refer to *Yahweh* must be answered in order to understand the use of *κύριος* to refer to Jesus.

Since the use of *κύριος* for *Yahweh* and the use of *κύριος* for Jesus share an intertwined and complex relationship of origin, it is important to keep both questions in focus. In understanding the background of *κύριος* and consequently its use for *Yahweh* and then Jesus, there are four primary possibilities.[63] First, *κύριος* developed from a Palestinian Semitic *secular* background. The vocative or suffixal forms of either the Hebrew אדון or the Aramaic מרא , meaning "my lord" from אדני and/or מראי, resulted in a

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distinguishing between Jewish and Christian copies of the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. See R.A. Kraft's comment in n. 44 of Fitzmyer, 138.

[62] ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου. See Fitzmyer, 121.

[63] Fitzmyer, 115-116.

"secular mode of address" that came to be applied to *Yahweh* and to Jesus.[64] These vocative or suffixal forms of *Maranatha* and *Adonai* meant that "sir" or "lord" became appropriate ways to refer to God and Jesus. Second, *κύριος* developed from a Palestinian Semitic or Jewish *religious* background. This retains the features of the first scenario but with the additional element of religious application and connotation. This explanation requires the conclusion that Palestinian Jews had already begun to use *κύριος* with a religious sense to refer to *Yahweh*. The post-Easter Jewish-Christian community, used to calling Jesus either אדון or מרא (perhaps in a more secular or respectful sense), then began to call him *κύριος* in a religious sense. This is seen as a natural progression on the part of the Jesus believers who were already familiar with using suffixal forms of מרא for *Yahweh* and Jesus. The use of *κύριος* would have originated from this Jewish religious context.

In the third instance, *κύριος* developed from a Hellenistic Jewish (perhaps religious) background. This development resulted from Greek-speaking Jewish-Christians using the equivalent Greek term of *κύριος* for either the Hebrew אדון or Aramaic מרא already used for *Yahweh*. It meant that they simply rendered the Hebrew or Aramaic term with the most obvious Greek equivalent. Perhaps this process was already done for them in the Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures. As in the previous scenario, *κύριος* was then naturally extended to Jesus. This scenario is many times combined with the preceding one. This combination presents an explanation of the transition from the Palestinian Jewish-Christian community to a Hellenistic Jewish-Christian community. This Hellenistic community would ultimately become a non-

[64] Fitzmyer, 115.

Palestinian Christian community located in the Jewish Diaspora. Fourth, and finally, *κύριος* developed from a Hellenistic pagan background. This development proceeds from the missionary efforts of the early Jesus believers into the Greco-Roman world. The original preaching of the first Jesus believers would have included the practice of calling Jesus either אדון or מרא. With the missionary efforts the preaching of Jesus came in contact with the eastern Hellenistic pagan concept of *κύριος* referring to the gods and also human rulers. This led to the concept being used to refer to Jesus and these additional aspects were then absorbed and utilized in the preaching of these early missionaries.

None of these scenarios is perfect, neither are they mutually exclusive. In fact, perhaps a mixture best accounts for the evidence. The Hellenistic pagan background of *κύριος* cannot be ignored. The use of *κύριος* to refer to the gods and human rulers seems to evoke both a political and a religious connotation.[65] These connotations must have influenced the use of *κύριος* for Jesus and even *Yahweh*. But to say that this use of *κύριος* derives solely from the Hellenistic pagan background is to ignore other factors. For example, Philippians 2:6-11, which culminates in the conferral of the title *κύριος* upon Jesus, has been persuasively argued by Ernst Lohmeyer and Pierre Grelot to originate in a Christian Aramaic context.[66] There is also Punic evidence of the use of מרן for the gods (such as *Ba'al Hammon*). While this does not represent the direct pagan background for the use of *κύριος*, it shows that the Hellenistic pagan background is not the sole source of using "Lord" to refer to the gods. In fact, the interplay of both Semitic and Hellenistic

[65] See Chapter 2: The Imperial Cult.

[66] Fitzmyer, 118.

pagan backgrounds may well inform the Jewish world of Palestine.[67] Even though it may not be the sole source, the Hellenistic pagan context of *κύριος* would continue to be evoked when applied to either *Yahweh* or Jesus. Whether the audience is Jewish or Gentile, all would hear the term in both its political and religious senses. Or, put differently, when applied to *Yahweh* or Jesus, the audience was still aware of the application to the pagan gods and even to the emperors. So while it seems improbable that the sole origin of using *κύριος* for *Yahweh* or Jesus was this context, the Hellenistic pagan context must have influenced and continued to affect the use of *κύριος*.[68]

The Hellenistic Jewish context must have also continued to affect the use of *κύριος*. Despite the questions raised by Conzelmann and others concerning the use of *κύριος* for *Yahweh* within "the Septuagint," we still have the New Testament writers getting it from somewhere. Perhaps this represents a developing distinction within the early Jewish-Christian community between the "Hebrews" and the "Hellenists". Possibly the Greek-speaking Jewish Christians were responsible for translating the Aramaic מרא as *κύριος*.[69] Even if "the Septuagint" is not valid proof, there is evidence within the first-century Jewish world of using *κύριος* as a valid term for *Yahweh*. Fitzmyer states that there are non-"Septuagint" examples in Josephus, Philo and the Letter of Aristeas where *κύριος* is used for *Yahweh*. There is also an example from Aquila's translation of 2 Kings 23:24 in which the Hebrew Tetragrammaton is replaced by the Greek abbreviation κυ.[70]

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[67] Fitzmyer, 118-119.

[68] Fitzmyer, 118.

[69] Fitzmyer.

This evidence, along with the New Testament evidence, necessitates a continued awareness of at least the influence from Hellenistic Jewish sources.

Joseph Fitzmyer has argued that the Palestinian Semitic or Jewish context coupled with the Hellenistic Jewish context is most important for understanding the use of *κύριος* for *Yahweh* and Jesus. He has presented evidence from Qumran in both Aramaic and Hebrew in which *Yahweh* is clearly understood as "Lord" and *κύριος* would have been the appropriate Greek translation for the titles of אדון or מרא.[71] These titles were applied to God and subsequently were also applied to Jesus.[72] One important example of this is the already cited Philippians 2:6-11. If the Christian Aramaic setting of this passage is accepted, then the Palestinian Semitic background becomes even more important.[73] He also argues that while the scribal tendency to substitute *κύριος* for the Tetragrammaton may be of Christian origin, the Jews still would have felt the need to reverence the Tetragrammaton by substituting another word. If אדון was an acceptable substitution, would not its Greek equivalent have also been acceptable in Palestine where both Aramaic and Greek were present? It is certainly possible.[74] Fitzmyer does conclude that the evidence points to "at least an incipient custom among Jews of Palestine of referring to *Yahweh* as 'the Lord'" and "it was not 'unthinkable' to refer to *Yahweh* as

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[70] Fitzmyer, 121-122. Fitzmyer, "New Testament Kyrios and Maranatha and Their Aramaic Background," in *To Advance The Gospel: New Testament Studies* (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1981), 222.

[71] Fitzmyer, 124-125.

[72] Fitzmyer, 126.

[73] Fitzmyer, 118.

[74] Waddell: 161.

'the Lord.'"[75] The evidence also suggests "that Palestinian Jews, who were able to refer to God as מרא or אדון, could, on becoming the Ἑβραῖοι of the Palestinian Christian community, transfer the title to Jesus."[76] This would seem to mean that not only the Hebrew and Aramaic titles were transferred but through them the Greek equivalent title of *κύριος* was transferred.

Fitzmyer further strengthens the above conclusions when commenting upon the Enochic material from Qumran Cave 4. This material not only presents an unambiguous example of God being referred to as מרא, but the extant Greek translation renders this as *κύριος*. This adds to the already mounting evidence that there was "an incipient custom among Semitic-speaking and Greek-speaking Jews of Palestine in the last century prior to Christianity of referring to *Yahweh* as 'Lord' or 'the Lord.'"[77] Fitzmyer also discusses the use of *maranatha* by Paul in 1 Corinthians 16:22 and concludes that the acclamation is ancient—"held over from some primitive Palestinian liturgical setting."[78] Since Paul seems comfortable using this exclamation and expects his Christian audience to understand it, Fitzmyer sees the roots of *maranatha* going back to a pre-Christian Palestinian Semitic or Jewish context. He claims it is from this context that referring to *Yahweh* and Jesus as "Lord" arises.[79] Is it possible that *κύριος* is the appropriate Greek

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[75] Here Fitzmyer uses "the Lord" to refer to any and all of the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek terms אדון, מרא or *κύριος*. See Fitzmyer, 222.

[76] Fitzmyer, 126. See also Fitzmyer, 222.

[77] Fitzmyer, 222-223.

[78] Fitzmyer, 228.

[79] Fitzmyer, 229.

term for *Yahweh* and comes from the use of either אדון or even מרא? If so, then does the rendering of *Yahweh* as *κύριος* really represent a Christian scribal innovation under the influence of the New Testament writers? Perhaps "the Septuagint," though preserved by Christian scribes, does represent evidence that pre-Christian Jewish scribes chose *κύριος* as the appropriate Greek term for *Yahweh*.

Contributing to this debate, Albert Pietersma challenged the theory of the retention of the original Tetragrammaton.[80] He limits his argument to the earliest part of the LXX, namely the Pentateuch. He admits that the preservation of the Tetragrammaton, a transcribed ΙΑΩ, or square Hebrew characters that resemble ΠΠΠΠ within the LXX/OG has ancient literary testimony and clear manuscript evidence.[81] But does this textual evidence represent the earliest tradition of how the unutterable name of God was rendered in the Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures? The basis of questioning this manuscript evidence is whether the texts are accurate representatives of the Greek translations of the Jewish Scriptures. He examines these texts for their fidelity to the LXX. Pietersma also looks for internal evidence within the Pentateuch of the LXX regarding *κύριος* versus the Tetragrammaton. He suggests that the presence of the

[80] Pietersma, "Kyrios or Tetragram: A Renewed Quest for the Original LXX," in *De Septuaginta: Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (eds. Pietersma and Cox; Mississauga, Ont., Canada: Benben Publications, 1984), 88.

[81] Pietersma categorically rejects Origen's testimony that the tetragram is the more original. He states that Origen only knew what we also know "that among the Jews there were Greek texts which sported the tetragram in Hebrew characters." The fact that Origen considered this to be the original LXX/OG should not surprise us given his Hebraizing tendencies. Pietersma concludes his dismissal of this literary evidence with the statement that we "should rely on Origen for an original tetragram no more than one should rely on his fifth column as a whole for original LXX." Pietersma, 87-88.

Tetragrammaton in these earliest witnesses really represents a Hebraizing of the Greek text and thus comes from later scribal activity.[82]

Pietersma surveys four of the earliest texts that are dated as pre-Christian and Jewish.[83] These texts have been used as evidence that rather than rendering *Yahweh* as *κύριος*, the Tetragrammaton was retained. He concludes his survey with the statement that "of the four early texts that have been cited in support of an early tetragram, one gives no evidence at all, a second is non-Septuagintal, and a third contains hebraizing revisions (including at least one instance of the tetragram)."[84] The remaining surveyed text is the already presented 4Q120.[85] It has only two corrections to the Hebrew and demonstrates strong fidelity to the Greek translations. But even it does not render *Yahweh* with the Tetragrammaton but rather the transcribed ΙΑΩ.[86]

Pietersma, in questioning the original Tetragrammaton theory, also examines a critical edition of the Greek Pentateuch for internal evidence concerning the use of *κύριος* in the place of *Yahweh*. It is clear that *κύριος* is used throughout the Pentateuch as a

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[82] Pietersma, 90.

[83] The Scroll of the Minor Prophets (8HevXIIgr), P. Fouad 266 (Rahlfs 848), 4QLXXLev^{b} (Rahlfs 802), and P. Ryl. Gk. 458 (Rahlfs 957). Pietersma, 92. The Scroll of the Minor Prophets (8 HevXIIgr) is judged by Pietersma as "a Hebraizing recension of the LXX" that has preserved "a wealth "of information on the fascinating and complicated history of the LXX". He concludes his judgment with a question: "And in a text so filled with hebraizing corrections of LXX readings what could persuade one to count its paleohebrew (!) tetragram as original LXX?" (p. 89). Pietersma finds P. Fouad 266 (Rahlfs 848) suspect as a "typical exemplar" of the LXX and cites several examples (including a space left by one scribe the width of the word *κύριος* in which the Tetragrammaton was inserted instead by a later scribe) in which the "originality" of the tetragram is doubtful (pp. 90-91).

[85] See footnote 31 above.

[86] Pietersma, 91.

proper noun and he finds conclusive evidence that demonstrates "beyond a shadow of a doubt not only that *adonai* and the tetragram were taken to be equivalent to *kyrios* but also that this equivalency was expressed in written form."[87] Further, this applies to not only the *qere* (what is read) but also to the *ketiv* (what is written). Pietersma also argues that "the almost universal Greek equivalent of יהוה in the Pentateuch is *kyrios* in the dative case…." Further, he examines Exodus 23:27 and 34:23 and asserts "at least the translator of Exodus understood both *adon* and the tetragram as being equivalent to *kyrios*."[88] And finally, returning to Fitzmyer's observation that the Jews would have felt the need to reverence the Tetragrammaton by substituting another word, Pietersma concludes that when the Pentateuch was translated, *κύριος* was the written surrogate for both *Yahweh* and *Adonai* and that this would also safeguard the ineffable nature of the divine name.[89]

So if there are not strong textual witnesses to the Tetragrammaton being retained in the pre-Christian LXX/OG translations and the internal evidence of at least the Greek translations of the Pentateuch point to *κύριος* being written in the place of *Yahweh* and *Adonai*, is the representation of the tetragram by *κύριος* in the LXX/OG where the New Testament writers get this practice? If so, then the answer to where Luke got *κύριος* as the rendering of *Yahweh* when he quoted Deuteronomy 6:5 in Luke 10:27 would be simple. He got it from the LXX/OG. Pietersma helps with this confusion when he states that "both in the Hebrew MSS from Qumran and in our earliest Greek MSS there is clear

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[87] Pietersma, 93, 96.

[88] Pietersma, 95.

[89] Pietersma, 98.

evidence that the divine name was the object of revisionary activity" and this activity occurred in Palestine and was then exported to the Diaspora.[90]

The issue of whether *κύριος* was used by the scribes to render *Yahweh* in the LXX/OG depends upon several assumptions. First, can we accurately classify manuscripts as Christian or Jewish? If we can, then it follows that Conzelmann's objection that *Yahweh* is only replaced by *κύριος* in Christian manuscripts represents a Christian redaction reflecting the influence of the New Testament writers. Second, even if we can classify manuscripts as Christian or Jewish, do we take seriously Pietersma's contention that the earliest Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, which would obviously be Jewish, demonstrate clear signs of revision back to the Tetragrammaton from the Greek *κύριος*? Further Pietersma contends that these earliest Greek translations also show clear evidence that *κύριος* was used to render *Adonai* and the Tetragrammaton. If Pietersma is correct, then we know that certain Palestinian influences on the LXX/OG would have led to its Hebraizing with the reintroduction of the Tetragrammaton in place of *κύριος*.

This discussion about how the Jewish scribes originally chose to render the unutterable name of God has been advanced by the work of Martin Rösel. In his most recent work, he begins by asking how the Masoretes vocalized the Tetragrammaton. He concludes that the vocalizaton of יהוה, based upon the manuscript evidence, must be *Adonai* (Lord) and not Shema (The Name). As stated at the beginning of this section, the

[90] Pietersma, 99. "It is this archaizing tendency or process to which Skehan has called attention that was responsible for introducing the various forms of the tetragram into the Greek tradition." See Skehan, "The Divine Name at Qumran, in the Masada Scroll, and in the Septuagint," *Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies*, no. 13 (1980).

qere is *Adonai* and "it is obvious that the Masoretic text (MT) substitutes 'Lord' for the ineffable name of God."[91] Rösel then turns to the unambiguous evidence of the LXX/OG materials "where θεός can be found where the MT has אלהים, and κύριος obviously serves as a translation of the actual name of God, the *tetragrammaton*."[92] But again, we are faced with the contention that "all the complete manuscripts of the Greek Bible which read κύριος were written and transmitted by Christians."[93] When faced with the parallel evidence from pre-Christian Jewish manuscripts that preserve either the Tetragrammaton or the transcription ΙΑΩ, it would seem that the original translators never rendered the Tetragrammaton with *κύριος*. Rösel disagrees with this conclusion and picks up the counter-argument where Pietersma left off.

Rösel agrees with Pietersma that the presence of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton is due to pre-Christian revisions of the Greek biblical manuscripts. This argument is further bolstered by the presence of revisions other than just the divine name.[94] Rösel turns to the one piece of evidence that Pietersma does not sufficiently explain—4Q120. This text is deemed by Pietersma to have strong fidelity with "the Septuagint;" however, while it does not preserve the Tetragrammaton, it does render the divine name as ΙΑΩ. Rösel

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[91] Rösel, "The Reading and Translation of the Divine Name in the Masoretic Tradition and the Greek Pentateuch," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 31, no. 4 (2007): 412-413. Rösel does note that "Lord" was not "the only custom employed to avoid the pronunciation of the *tetragrammaton* in pre-Christian times." Qumran gives us evidence that "God" (אל or אלהים) were used to render the Tetragrammaton (p. 414).

[92] Rösel.

[93] Rösel.

[94] Rösel: 416.

rejects IAΩ as being original because of Leviticus 24:16—the strictest of prohibitions against pronouncing the name of the Lord. The Hebrew reads: "And he that blasphemes/curses the name of the Lord (יהוה), he shall surely be put to death." The LXX/OG reads: "But he that names the name of the Lord, let him die the death." Rösel finds it highly unlikely that the scribe who translated the Hebrew in the above manner would render the Tetragrammaton with the transcribed pronunciation of the name of God. If so, the text is self-contradicting: "He who names the name IAΩ shall surely die."[95] Rösel speculates that this reading of IAΩ comes from a community in Egypt, but even if his speculation is wrong, his argument against IAΩ still stands, though it is not clear how Rösel knows what the readers spoke when they saw IAΩ.[96]

Having dealt with 4Q120, Rösel turns to "important *internal* LXX evidence."[97] Like Pietersma, he restricts his argument to the Pentateuch though contending that this is indicative of the whole LXX/OG. Rösel insists that "*κύριος* is the original representation of the translators" and that the scribes regularly chose *κύριος* as the equivalent of the Tetragrammaton and *θεός* for אלהים.[98] His argument is simple. He maintains there are

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[95] Rösel: 418.

[96] Rösel: 419. Shaw argues "if one is to understand the appearance of Iao in the LXX's textual history, one must look beyond the merely textual issue. Rather this Qumran MS is evidence of the fact that there was contention within ancient Judaism on the matter of the use and disuse of God's name. Not all Jews of the second temple period were eager to discontinue their employment of the divine name. Some likely motives for their persistent use of Iao and the historical situation that may have influenced their usage of the name are explored." Abstract of Shaw.([cited November 18, 2011]); available from http://http://www.openthesis.org/documents/Earliest-Non-mystical-Jewish-Use-544216.html

[97] Rösel.

standardized equivalents for translating divine names and titles.[99] Further, there are examples where the standardized equivalents are not used because of theological motivations on the part of the scribes. Numerous examples are cited where *θεός* instead of *κύριος* is used for the Tetragrammaton.[100] In each case the surrounding context, and even in some cases, the immediate context have the Tetragrammaton being rendered by *κύριος*.[101]

Rösel contends that the scribes are motivated by the theological concern not to present *Yahweh* in a negative light. So where he is portrayed as punishing or judging, *θεός* is used instead of *κύριος*. In other examples where *Yahweh* is in contact with sinners such as Pharaoh, the men of Sodom and Gomorrah, or even disobedient Balaam, *θεός* is again used to render the Tetragrammaton. Philo also distinguishes between *θεός* and *κύριος* based upon function.[102] This type of theological commentary based in the translation does not work unless there is a standard equivalent for the Tetragrammaton

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[98] Rösel.

[99] The concept is the same as "appropriate equivalent" or McLay's "stereotyped equivalents."

[100] Genesis 4:3-13; 6:6-7; 12:17; 13:13; 18:13-14; 30:27; 31:49, 53; 32:2; 38:7, 10; Exodus 3:18; 5:2-3; 10:11; 13:19, 21; 16:7, 9; Numbers 16:5, 11; 22-24; Deuteronomy 2:14.

[101] Rösel: 422.

[102] Philo in describing God and his Creative Power and Ruling Power says, "the one in the middle is the Father of the universe, who in the sacred scripture is called by his proper name, I am that I am; and the beings on each side are those most ancient powers which are always close to the living God, one of which is called his Creative Power, and the other his Royal Power. And the Creative Power is God [*θεός*], for it is by this that he made and arranged the universe; and the Royal Power is the Lord [*κύριος*], for it is fitting that the Creator should lord it over and govern the creature." Philo, *On Abraham*, 121.

from which a deviation signals the commentary. Again, the surrounding context has numerous examples of the standard rendering of יהוה with *κύριος*, further underlining and emphasizing the deviation.

Rösel argues that his explanation of standard equivalents that are deviated from for theological reasons strongly supports Pietersma's earlier contentions. The bottom line is that "the earliest stages of the LXX read *κύριος*, not ΙΑΩ.[103] He takes the discussion further than Pietersma, concluding that "the texts of the Greek Pentateuch show a theological tendency to make distinctions between the powerful and mighty aspects of God, expressed by *θεός*, and the compassionate aspects of his deeds for Israel (*κύριος*)."[104] Since these deviations are found in the LXX alone, they are most likely scribal in origin, not textual.

In conclusion, during the third century when the Hebrew Scriptures began to be translated into Greek, the scribes had to decide how to present the unutterable name of God. The manuscript evidence presents a multifaceted picture with the Tetragrammaton either being retained or written in archaic Hebrew or transcribed as ΙΑΩ or written in square Hebrew letters misread as Greek ΠΙΠΙ or rendered by the appropriate Greek equivalent κύριος. Which evidence represents the earliest and original scribal decision? The answer, after much debate and contest over the years, seems to be κύριος. Rösel rightly declares "that from the very beginnings of the translation of the Pentateuch, the translators were using κύριος as an/the equivalent for the Hebrew name of God, following

[103] Rösel: 424.

[104] Rösel: 423.

a principle of replacing the sacred name with the word Hebrew אדני."[105] This evidence is now seen to be pre-Christian and "the citations [of the LXX] in the New Testament require at least that *κύριος* or אדני had been uttered when the Scriptures of Israel were read aloud and studied."[106] This leads to the firm conclusion that "the fundamental connection between the Hebrew form יהוה (YHWH), God's name in the OT, and the Greek form *κύριος* as this same name, is unshakeable."[107] Given the evidence, the appropriate Greek equivalent for *Yahweh* was *κύριος* and when the Greek-speaking worshippers—Jewish and Jesus-believer alike—heard *κύριος*, they heard it as "the name of the God of the OT."[108]

Did Luke use the Greek Jewish Scriptures?

Luke begins his gospel with the statement that he has followed carefully from the beginning the accounts passed on to us and it is these accounts that form the basis of his orderly account.[109] It is clear from the subsequent narrative that the stories of the Hebrews—the children of Israel—are a part of these accounts along with the more recent remembrances of Jesus. If we are to take Luke seriously in his claim, then we are faced with the question of what form of the Jewish Scriptures did Luke use? A question that

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[105] Rösel: 425.

[106] Rösel.

[107] Rowe, "Luke and the Trinity: An Essay in Ecclesial Biblical Theology," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 56, no. 1 (2003): 7.

[108] Rowe: 8-9.

[109] Luke 1:1-3.

cannot be answered in this study is whether Luke was even able to read non-Greek versions of the Jewish Scriptures, and if so, did he have access to the Hebrew Scriptures in languages other than Greek. It seems that at least one New Testament writer, namely Paul, was able to read the Jewish Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek.[110] Whether he had direct access is another question entirely.

Were New Testament writers, such as Paul and perhaps Luke, bilingual or even trilingual (Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic)?[111] Even beyond the question of language is the question of which form of the text is being used by the writers of the New Testament? Sometimes the quotation of scripture or the allusion to scripture is straightforward. Sometimes, however, the quotation does not correspond directly with either the available Greek (LXX/OG) manuscripts or the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Scriptures. Possible explanations are an alternative Greek text or an alternative Semitic text.[112] We know that there was a lot of recensional activity in the first century with competition between the Hebrew forms and the Greek forms of the Jewish Scriptures, and with the text of the Greek Jewish Scriptures being revised and perhaps even new translations occurring. Tim McLay asserts that the first-century context demands a question beyond whether the text is Hebrew or Greek but also "Which text (or texts) might this reading reflect?"[113]

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[110] Galatians 1:13-17; 2 Corinthians 11:22; and, if you accept the testimony of Luke, Acts 23:6.

[111] McLay.

[112] McLay.

[113] McLay. McLay bases this question on his description of the context: "…we can affirm from the data that there was a lot of recensional activity in Palestine and the neighboring regions in the first centuries of the common era….It is no wonder that we

Answering the original question of what form of the Jewish Scriptures did Luke consult must occur in this complex context. It is not simply answering what language the texts were written in but also which version—perhaps even versions to which we no longer have access—of the text a particular citation represents. This is even more foundational for Luke who informs his readers that he is using all the various accounts as defined by him. The need to answer these questions is based on the assumption that the particular texts consulted by writers substantially impacted their writing. Not only the actual form of scriptural citations but also the vocabulary and theology of New Testament writers would be influenced by the form(s) of the Jewish Scriptures they resourced.[114]

Despite the possible exception(s), the scholarly consensus is that Luke used the Jewish Scriptures in their Greek form as his primary source. Fitzmyer accurately sums up the position when he writes that of the forty-five explicit quotations of the Jewish Scriptures "in *no case* is there a citation that follows the Hebrew MT rather than the Greek, when the latter differs from the Hebrew."[115] However, the complex situation above is acknowledged by the statement that while Luke does not follow the Hebrew MT,

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often have to employ cautious language in the way we frame our conclusions about the text that a NT writer was citing. The multiple text forms in both the Greek and Hebrew Jewish Scriptures that existed in the first century, the freedom with which the authors employed them, and the subsequent transmission of the text during a period of further recensional activity on the Greek Jewish Scriptures demand that our first question of a NT citation be, "Which text (or texts) might this reading reflect?" See also Most, "Did St. Luke Imitate the *Septuagint*," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 15, no. J (1982): 36.

[114] McLay.

[114] Fitzmyer, "The Use of the Old Testament in Luke-Acts," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 31 (1992): 534-535.

he "quotes the OT *almost always* in a form either corresponding to the LXX or *close to it*…."[116] Beyond the explicit quotations, McLay states that the influence of the LXX on the vocabulary of the NT is obvious. Examples he gives are δόξα (glory), εὐαγγέλιον (gospel), and κύριος (Lord). The influences on the meanings of these words are "decidedly theological or technical in their use."[117] He goes on to concur with the above conclusion that κύριος is "the usual translation for יהוה (*Yahweh*) in the LXX."[118]

Luke uses the term "Scripture(s)" infrequently throughout his gospel and the Acts of the Apostles.[119] His use of Scripture, both explicit and implicit, as stated above, is prevalent. One of these uses provides an excellent example of why it is not only reasonable but also necessary to assume that Luke usually used some form of LXX/OG manuscripts when citing the Scriptures. Furthermore, due to this use, his vocabulary is influenced and impacted by LXX/OG materials.

In Luke 10:25 an expert in religious law tests Jesus by asking him how to inherit eternal life. Jesus, in turn, tests the lawyer by asking him what is written in the law and how he reads or understands it. The lawyer replies by quoting two passages of Scripture:

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[116] Fitzmyer. Emphasis added.

[117] McLay.

[118] McLay.

[119] Scripture is the accepted translation of the various forms of γραφή. While this word simply means writing, it has a technical sense of referring to the sacred writings of Scripture. Luke uses this term 4 times in his gospel and 7 times in the Acts of the Apostles (Luke 4:21; 24:27, 32, 45; Acts 1:16; 8:32, 35; 17:2, 11; 18:24, 28): 1) once in the pericope about Jesus reading from Isaiah in the synagogue of Nazareth, 2) three times in the pericope of Jesus' interaction with the disciples of Emmaus, 3) once in the mouth of Peter when replacing Judas, 4) twice in the story of the Ethiopian eunuch, 5) twice in Paul's ministry at Thessalonica and Berea, and finally, 6) twice in the story of Apollos.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself."[120] These are both well-known portions of scripture. The first comes from the Shema and the second comes from the Holiness Code.

From this evidence, Luke seems to have redacted this story. Both Matthew and Mark have the same question and answer; however, they both have Jesus answering the question. Luke, instead, has the lawyer answer his own question and then ask a further question prompting the parable of the Good Samaritan. The point is that this passage has received authorial attention from Luke and is not simply preserved by Luke. The clue to which form of the Jewish Scriptures Luke used lies within the quotation from Deuteronomy. The Masoretic text reads "You must love יהוה אלהים (*Yahweh Elohim*) with your whole heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength." The Greek text reads "You must love κύριον τὸν θεόν σου with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength."

If Luke is using the original Hebrew Scriptures, he makes an amazing decision. He decides to render יהוה with κύριος and אלהים with θεός in the same manner as is represented in the surviving versions of LXX/OG materials. It is much more likely that this correlation in the Greek between Luke 10:27 and Deuteronomy 6:5 is the clue to which Scriptures Luke was using. The quotations from Isaiah in Luke 4:18 corroborates

[120] Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. This translation and all subsequent translations of scripture, unless otherwise noted, are taken from *New English Translation/Novum Testamentum Graece New Testament* (Deutsche Bibelgesellshaft; NET Bible Press, 2004).

this evidence. Jesus reads Isaiah 61:1-2a.[121] The Masoretic text reads "The Spirit of יהוה אדני (*Yahweh Adonai*) is upon me, because יהוה has chosen me. He has commissioned me to encourage the poor, to help the brokenhearted, to decree the release of captives, and the freeing of prisoners, to announce the year when יהוה will show his favor…." The Greek text in the surviving versions of LXX/OG materials reads "The Spirit of κυρίου is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and the regaining of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of κυρίου…." Again, יהוה is rendered with κύριος. But even more interesting is that אדני is not translated in order to avoid a double κύριος. Κύριος is the translation of אדני but because the Jewish scribes had decided to render יהוה with κύριος, יהוה takes precedence over אדני and they are represented by a single κύριος. While it is impossible to know with certainty what was in the manuscripts that Luke used, this does seem to be a signature mark of LXX/OG materials that Luke most likely consulted.[122]

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[121] Isaiah 58:6 is also conflated with Isaiah 61:1-2, unless Jesus is reading from a different version where the conflation already occurred.

[122] Pietersma, 95-97. Pietersma cites Skehan as stating: "A large part of the LXX prophetic corpus…comes to hand with its earliest attainable stage showing leanings toward Κυριος ο θεος as an equivalent for אדני יהוה, in accordance with the Palestinian *qere*. Also, as far back as it is possible to go, the Kyrios term is employed in these books for both יהוה and אדני, on the basis of the spoken Adonay that stood for either separately; and there is a wide acceptance of one single *Kyrios* to stand in the place of the combined names."

CHAPTER 2

THE IMPERIAL CULT

Introduction

This chapter explores background issues and establishes assumptions related to the imperial cult. These issues and assumptions will then be used in the argument of the thesis that Luke uses κύριος in his narratives to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus. Both these narratives and this identification occur within the cultural setting of the Greco-Roman world and the Roman Empire within which the imperial cult was a dominant and pervasive element.[123] Within the Greco-Roman world and specifically within the fabric of the Roman Empire in the East, κύριος was used to refer to rulers in general and very specifically to the emperor. Luke's use of κύριος within his narratives results in his own unique evangelistic formulation for promoting his view of

[123] S.R.F. Price warns, "the boundaries of Christianity are further defined by a delimitation of the respective territories of politics and religion, which has long bedeviled the study of the imperial cult. The most dramatic manifestation of this preoccupation is the consistent misinterpretation by Christian scholars of the persecution of the Christians, which inflates the importance of the imperial cult and posits a stark choice between Christ and the Caesars, between religion and politics." Despite the truth of this warning, it is also still true that the imperial cult was dominant and pervasive. The false dichotomy of religion vs. politics should be rejected and with it the "stark choice" between Christ and the Caesars; however, it is also true that the imperial cult was one of, if not the, element(s) that most influenced the conflict between Christianity and the Roman Empire within the religio-political environment of the ancient world. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge, England; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 15.

Jesus in a new role.[124] Put simply, not only is Jesus God because he is the κύριος, he is also superior to the emperor as a god because Luke claims that he is Lord of all (οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος).[125] This conclusion is dependent upon the cultural context of the Greco-Roman world and the Roman Empire, which was pervasively informed by the imperial cult. While Luke's understanding of κύριος derives from the Greek Jewish Scriptures, the effects of his message were felt directly in this Greco-Roman world in which Luke effectively replaced Caesar with Jesus as κύριος.

This chapter will analyze the relevant issues related to the imperial cult and its influence on the context within which Luke used κύριος as the means to progressively reveal the identity of Jesus. First, the antecedents of the imperial cult will be examined. These include the divine ruler cults found within the East, their effect on Alexander the Great and by extension his successors, and the subsequent use of divine ruler cults within the Greek cities of the East. Second, how Alexander the Great and the Greek East influenced the emperors will be discussed. Specifically, Augustus and the Flavians will be inspected carefully with regard to the imperial cult and its influence during their tenures as emperors. Finally, a survey of "κύριος," "σώτηρ," "θεός" and other such terms within the imperial cult will be conducted. The cumulative results of these three areas will be used to establish a sufficient and relevant understanding of the context of the Greco-Roman world that was informed by the imperial cult of the Roman Empire. This

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[124] Please note again that the use of "evangelistic" is meant to refer to the unique message(s) of the early Jesus-believers that many within the Greco-Roman world would identify as a particular piece of propaganda among many competing messages of propaganda.

[125] Acts 10:36

understanding will allow an appropriate recognition of what Luke meant when Peter is reported to have said that Jesus is πάντων κύριος.

Divine Ruler Cults

The seeds of the imperial cult of the Roman Empire lie in the concepts of the divine ruler cults of the east. The three primary cultures that inform and give birth to these cults are the Persian, Egyptian, and Greek civilizations. Due to the history of the east, these three great empires not only inform the divine ruler cults individually, but they also cross-pollinate one another conceptually. Hence, the evidence points to a shared context with mutual concepts concerning the ruler and his divinity. In addition to this sharing, there was also development over time of this context and these concepts.

The extent to which the rulers were divine and whether they were actually gods or simply in some way partakers of the divine varied. Within Persia was found the concept of the spirit of the king (*fravashi*)—perhaps an antecedent to the "*genius*" of the emperor—being present even when the king was absent and fire, representing his glory, being borne before his supposed presence. Lily Ross Taylor writes, "the king's spirit and his glory were both symbols of the supernatural power which raised the king far above the ordinary mortal."[126] Despite this exaltation, the Persian kings were never named with the other gods, though a cult with sacrifices was accorded to at least one of their dead kings—Cyrus.[127] However, the Persian king was considered present in spirit even when absent in body, and obeisance was made before his spirit and offerings of food and drink

[126] Taylor, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* (Middletown, CT: American Philological Association, 1931), 3.

[127] Taylor, 3-4.

were offered at a table set up for his spirit.[128] This seems to parallel the libations offered in both public and private banquets to the *genius* of Augustus from 30 BCE.[129] It seems the Persian kings were more akin to "saints" than to "gods" and, though not named as gods, they were certainly treated and worshipped as having some measure of divinity.[130]

In contrast to Persia, the Egyptian concept of the absolute divine monarch was embedded in indisputable custom.[131] While this Egyptian concept of the divine ruler contrasted with Persia, it also seems to have been comparable in the idea of the ruler's spirit. Taylor writes, "with the vagueness that characterizes all religious conceptions, the Egyptian king seems to have had two forms of cult that doubtless merged—the worship of the king as an incarnate god and the cult of his *ka* which was like the Persian *fravashi*."[132]

This focus on the spirit of the ruler is also found within Greek culture in the *agathos daimon*. This concept of the *agathos daimon* was a development of the personal guiding spirit (*daimon*) already found within Greek literature. As the desire for a savior

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[128] Taylor, 3.

[129] Taylor, 251.

[130] Taylor, 3.

[131] Taylor, 4.

[132] Taylor, 6. Contra Taylor, Arthur Darby Nock flatly states that "there is not a particle of evidence for the worship of the fravashi of a living king" apart from a piece of poetic phraseology and two stories of table manners. Nock, "Review of The Divinity of the Roman Emperor by Lily Ross Taylor," *Gnomon* 8, no. 10 (1932): 514. Kenneth Scott disagrees, siding with Taylor in stating, "there was some form of cult offered to the δαίμων of the Persian king…." Scott, "Review of The Divinity of the Roman Emperor by Lily Ross Taylor," *The American Journal of Philology* 53, no. 1 (1932): 86.

was sensed and articulated by the Greek cities, they were willing to honor as *daimon* or god any man who could bring structure and stability to their very beleaguered world.[133] This (*agathos*) *daimon* seems to be analogous to the Persian *fravashi* and the Egyptian *ka*.[134]

Savior seems to be a term situated between the human and divine.[135] The great lengths that the Greeks were willing to engage in honoring the man who brought order to their world as a savior was the foundation of the divine ruler cults. Price argues that these cults were established in order to negotiate a new type of power.[136] The problem presented itself in that the ruler was different from a citizen.[137] In his greatness as a savior he shared attributes with the gods, while still being a Greek. How to solve this tension between the humanity of the king or great citizen and his greatness as a savior was the problem. The only "preexisting model of classification," according to Price, was

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[133] Taylor, 12. See Taylor's description of the hero of Syracuse, Timoleon, "He was called saviour and his birthday became a celebration." (p. 9) Taylor also states that there were multiple attestations of the use of "saviour" in honoring heroes and even divine rulers. (p. 28) Nock flatly rejects the notion that "the cult of the founders and saviours of cities in the 4th century B.C. was a cult of the *daimon* of the individual." Nock: 513.

[134] Taylor, 9-10. Cyril Bailey cautions that Taylor's theory that "the Hellenistic divine monarchy of Alexander was founded on that of Persia and that the worship of the *daemon* was an essential feature in the cult" has been challenged. Bailey, "Review of *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* by Lily Ross Taylor," *The American Historical Review* 37, no. 4 (1932): 732.

[135] Price, 47.

[136] Price, 29.

[137] Price, 36.

"the cults of the gods."[138] The divine ruler cults were reactions to power and it was "by solving the crucial problem of classification that the Greeks were able to represent to themselves otherwise unmanageable power, whether of the king or of local citizens."[139]

Alexander The Great

The need for a savior, articulated by the Greeks, that brings order to a harassed world became epically defined in the life of Alexander the Great. Both in fact and in myth, he became the metric for the great ruler. A new era of political relations began when Macedonia extended itself into Greece and "divine cult" began to be offered to Alexander within his lifetime.[140] Consequently, his story (and its attendant myths) became the defining element of the divine ruler cults that the Romans inherited as their empire expanded to the east. It was his life and empire that spanned the three great civilizations of Greece, Egypt and Persia. It was his successors that preserved and propagated the concepts of divine rulers found within these three cultures.[141]

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[138] Price, 30.

[139] Price, 52.

[140] Price, 26.

[141] Nock argues, "between [Alexander's] death and the first Hellenistic official ruler worship lies a generation spent in reversing his policy." Nock: 515. While Nock roundly rejects Taylor's interpretation of *proskynesis*, Scott agrees with Taylor that the "Greeks and Macedonians interpreted the act as one of worship." Scott: 83. In contrast, Ernst Badian argues forcefully "that the Greeks never considered *proskynesis* before the King an act of divine worship and that they well knew that the King was not a god but ἰσόθεος, which was far from divine." Badian, "Alexander the Great between two thrones and Heaven: variations on an old theme," in *Subject and Ruler: The Cult of the Ruling Power in Classical Antiquity: Papers presented at a conference held in the University of Alberta on April 13-15, 1994, to celebrate the 65th anniversary of Duncan Fishwick* (ed.

Alexander did not inherit a divine ruler cult from his father, Philip the Macedonian. Though there were isolated instances of Philip receiving divine honors, the real substance of Alexander's status came from the story that Alexander was not the son of Philip but rather of a god that came to his mother in the form of a serpent.[142] Though initially Alexander was not considered divine, and even after his journey to the Ammonium he was not given actual divinity, still "the declaration that Alexander was the son of a god…did accord him potential divinity."[143] Such an understanding of Alexander, coupled with his great acts as a savior of the Greeks, ultimately led to declarations of divinity, though these declarations seem to have emanated from Alexander himself and were not necessarily popular. His cult seems to have grown after his death to offset and oppose the pretensions of his successors.

The primary impediment for the Greeks in honoring the kings as saviors was death. How is succession dealt with peaceably and how do you explain the death of such a great person? Price argues that divine honors, in contrast to heroic honors, were the answer to both of the problems resulting from death. By offering the ruler divine honors while he was still living, these honors "served to veil the awkward fact of death, which could be seen merely as a change of state," since by means of the divine honors he was already associated with the gods.[144] In other instances they offered the divine honors

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Small; vol. no 17 of *Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary Series,* ed. Humphrey; Ann Arbor, MI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1996), 22.

[142] Taylor, 14.

[143] Taylor, 17.

[144] Price, 35.

after death which meant that "the glorification of death as a 'transferral to the gods,' as with the Attalids of Pergamum, or as in apotheosis, as in Rome, established a link with the gods and also made it possible to give prominence to the collectivity of the royal ancestors."[145]

The key concept behind Alexander and his divine rule was that a savior brought order to a disordered world. For the Greeks Alexander embodied precisely this savior. His conquering of Persia represented the work of someone greater than a mere mortal. While there was still a hesitancy to call a man god, divine honors were offered to him before his untimely death. Initially his successor generals were not formally declared gods, but they were the heirs of Alexander the Great--the son of Zeus Ammon and the savior of the world.[146] While the generals were not declared gods themselves, they did take cult titles for themselves such as "epiphanes"—the revealed one.

So "potential divinity" led to a type of deification but one theoretically distinguished from the gods and yet many times indistinguishable in terms of honor. Perhaps the distinction was simply that the being had been present on the earth as opposed to existing in the heavens. This progression, however, was not simple or linear because even with the worship of the king as a revealed god on earth, the belief in the

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[145] Price.

[146] The exception to this statement was the Ptolemies who were ruling as pharaohs in Egypt. Both the men and their consort-wives were declared divine, certainly at their deaths, but even before they died they were accorded divine honors and formulaic speech in deeds identifies them as divine. See: Carney, "The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women," *Classical Philology* 95, no. 1 (2000): 21-43. Chaniotis, "The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers," in *A Companion to the Hellenistic World* (ed. Erskine; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005). Erskine, "Life after Death: Alexandria and the Body of Alexander," *Greece and Rome* 49 (2002): 163-179.

king's *daimon* continued. Thus the separation of the various forms of heroic and divine honors was difficult, particularly with the Egyptian belief in the *ka* and the Persian idea of the *fravashi* keeping the concept of the *daimon* alive.[147]

So while the impulse led to the divinizing of the king as a revealed god and to the development of new cultic elements, there remained a distinction between the living ruler and the dead ruler; and "it was only the dead kings who were called gods."[148] This distinction was facilitated by the concepts of *agathos daimon*, *fravashi*, or *ka*—the spirit of the king—to which more absolute elements of divinity could be accorded while still maintaining the humanity of the presently alive king. The fact that divine honors were sometimes offered before death and other times were only offered after death represents "a continuing process of flexible adaptation of the traditional cults in response to the changing circumstances, as the Greeks attempted to represent to themselves first the Hellenistic kings and then the power of Rome."[149]

This non-linear development of concepts within the divine ruler cults of the east is the context of the development of the imperial cult begun under Julius Caesar and his heir Octavian. Scholars have recognized that Caesar and Augustus were very real successors of Alexander and his theocratic monarchy along with its traditions. In order to understand the basis of their power, it is critical to go back to Alexander and his divine rulership.[150] The genesis of the imperial cult within the Roman Empire lies with Julius

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[147] Taylor, 32.

[148] Taylor, 33.

[149] Price, 47.

Caesar and the carefully crafted decisions of his heir. The ultimate form of the imperial cult, however, issued from a confluence of Roman traditions mixed with the various elements of the divine ruler cults of the East inherited from Alexander. It is to this confluence of concepts and traditions that we now turn.

The Emperors And The Imperial Cult

Augustus expanded the foundations that Julius Caesar had started with regard to the imperial cult. Rome had been distrustful of kings throughout its existence. In fact, this fear and even hatred of kings may have been one of the reasons for Caesar's assassination, and it would seem that Rome was unreceptive to divine rulers. Such antipathy consistent so long in Rome's culture affected the form of the imperial cult; however, there was a point of contact between Rome and the east. The god-born king who founded Rome, Romulus, was worshipped under the name Quirinus. He had been elevated to the gods and thus was honored with rites that placed him among the gods, not among the dead.[151] Here again is found the concept of a great man, upon his death, being accorded a status of divinity with the gods. The Persians accorded it to Cyrus; Egypt accorded it to the Pharaohs while still alive; and Alexander received this status upon his death, if not before.

While the Romans in general were reticent, beyond their founder king, to allow men an official status of divinity with the gods within their state religion, in their private

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[150] Taylor, 1.

[151] Taylor, 45.

devotions they demonstrated a sense of the "divine in man."[152] They utilized the concept of *genius*, which can be defined as a spirit that accompanies a man throughout his life. This concept was similar to the Persian *fravashi*, the Egyptian *ka*, and the Greek *daimon* or *agathos daimon*.[153] During this period of the Republic leading into the time of Julius Caesar, a longing for a savior by the people was connected with the growth of the power of important individuals, such as great generals, to whom were accorded the closest thing for them to deification in the Roman Republic, namely triumphs.[154] With the growth of the empire that these generals were bringing came influences from outside Rome. Observing developments in the east, Price argues, "in the course of the second century B.C. the latent ideas were elaborated and there developed the idea that the giving of honours deified a person."[155] Taylor descriptively states, "The Orontes was already draining into the Tiber….All these contacts tended to strengthen the idea of the divine in man, and so to prepare the way for the deification of the preeminent man."[156] These important individuals were leaving behind their humanity and were becoming more and more elevated within society. As can be seen in the previous discussion of Persian, Egyptian, and Greek cultures, the ultimate elevation was deification.

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[152] Taylor, 54.

[153] Taylor, 50. Bailey questions whether the worship of the *agathos daimon* was essential in Hellenistic worship. If it was, he argues that it should have found a place within the cult of Julius Caesar because he was working from a Greek model. Bailey: 733.

[154] Taylor, 57.

[155] Price, 56.

[156] Taylor, 51.

Julius Caesar

It is within this context that Julius Caesar rose to power. He was a powerful and popular general that placed himself in the position of the patron of Rome. The developments that occurred with Julius Caesar, and ultimately led to his death, were feared and hated by the Roman aristocracy. There was fierce competition among the Republican aristocrats for honors, office, and money. "The danger that [these further developments] of the individual's power might bring divine honors in its train lay in the possibility that his power might turn into declared monarchy" and the only "monarchies known to the Roman world of Caesar's day were ruled by divine kings."[157] This is the broad context in which Julius Caesar carved out the blocks with which his heir Octavian established the imperial cult and later emperors refined it.

In his pursuit of greatness within Roman society, Julius Caesar not only utilized his greatness as a general but, like Alexander the Great, he also tapped into his familial myths. He began to emphasize the origins of his family coming from the god Mars and the goddess Venus.[158] Julius Caesar may well have come in contact with this concept of being the son of a god(s) during his early years of military service in the east, particularly at the court of Nicomedes of Bithynia. When he defeated Pompey, "a real saviour of the East, it was natural for the Greeks of Asia, who knew of his family's claims to divine ancestry, to honor him as 'a revealed god, offspring of Mars and Venus, and universal

[157] Taylor, 57.

[158] To read more about divine ancestors and propaganda surrounding it, particularly the Julians, see Evans, *The Art of Persuasion: Political Propaganda from Aeneas to Brutus* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1992).

saviour of the human race.'"[159] How much Julius Caesar believed his own hype is irrelevant. While he was engaging in rhetoric and practice that had been employed by other Roman aristocrats, he was doing so to such a degree as to inhibit their access to the honors they desired. Even though it never really did lead to kingship in title, it certainly resulted in divine kingship in practice.

Julius Caesar was attempting to set up a form of government that had never been seen in Rome, except perhaps at its founding (if the myths are believed). This was not a new form of government; rather, it was simply new to Rome. Caesar began to accumulate honors that were at the same time both divine and royal. He was accorded a "throne of gold and ivory on which he sat to transact state affairs, the laurel crown, the permanent use of the triumphal garb, which was at the same time the costume of the Roman kings."[160] Again, the primary problem was not the divinity but rather the rights of royalty that in practice, if not in title, came with it. It was this achieving of royalty rather than divinity that offended the sensibilities of the Roman elite.

Taylor most aptly describes below what Caesar was trying to do.

> What Caesar desired to set up was the hereditary divine monarchy as it had survived in the East and as he had himself seen it function in Egypt. The oath by his Genius, the public birthday celebrations, the festivals added in his honor to the calendar, the games every four years, the placing of his portrait on coins, the naming of a month and a tribe for him, the erection of his statue in all temples, and the procession with his gold and ivory image all have parallels there. His task, however, was more like Alexander than that of the later Hellenistic kings. It was to ***create*** rather than to maintain the conception of such a kingdom.[161]

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[159] Taylor, 60-61.

[160] Taylor, 71-72.

In this pursuit Caesar was constantly aware of the example of Alexander the Great. He saw himself as the rightful heir of Alexander's legacy. Caesar believed that he was continuing what Alexander had begun by "carrying out his conquests and his process of civilizing the world."[162] The idea that that both Caesar and Alexander were too intelligent to actually believe the adulation given to them as divinities is quite persuasive. For them the adulation was a necessary part of this form of government that they were creating, namely divine kingship. "Under the ideal of government which they had in mind they were themselves the authors of their own divinity."[163] Of course, Julius Caesar never brought this ideal government to fruition because the aristocracy, hating his accumulation of offices, honors, money and power, assassinated him. Because so much power had been concentrated in his hands, the resulting vacuum of power led to a civil war with the elites of Rome on one side and the triumvirate of Marc Antony, Lepidus, and Caesar's young heir, Octavian, on the other side.

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[161] Taylor, 73-74. Emphasis added. Nock disagrees, stating, "If [Julius Caesar] meant to found a Hellenistic monarchy he would surely have taken pains to avoid assassination and to make the position of a successor secure; if he had cared about worship of himself he would have established it without hesitancy or compromise. He was a tired man, working while he could for the world but too weary to care very much when the end came." Nock: 516.

[162] Taylor, 75.

[163] Taylor, 76.

Augustus

The Triumvirate

Almost immediately after the rise of the triumvirs in 42 BCE, Julius Caesar was deified. "Caesar was in fact placed in the number of the gods by the decree of divinity, priest, and temple accorded him early in the year 44; the only difficulty had been that the decrees were not carried out."[164] Suetonius (*ca.* 69 CE) wrote, "a comet shone for seven successive days, rising about the eleventh hour, and was believed to be the soul of Caesar."[165] The Roman historian Cassius Dio (*c.* 150-235 CE) wrote that the famous comet that was reported to be the apotheosis of Julius Caesar was associated with his deification; in fact, the triumvirs "exalted him, not only by the honours which had already been voted him, but also by others which they now added."[166] Ovid (March 20, 43 BCE - 17/18 CE) wrote in his *Metamorphoses* the following description of his deification: "Then Jupiter, the Father, spoke...'Take up Caesar's spirit from his murdered corpse, and change it into a star, so that the deified Julius may always look down from his high temple on our Capitol and forum.' He had barely finished, when gentle Venus stood in the midst of the Senate, seen by no one, and took up the newly freed spirit of her Caesar from his body, and preventing it from vanishing into the air, carried it towards the glorious stars. As she carried it, she felt it glow and take fire, and loosed it from her breast: it climbed higher than the moon, and drawing behind it a fiery tail, shone as a star."[167] Pliny the Elder (23

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[164] Taylor, 96.

[165] Suetonius, *Julius Caesar*, LXXXVIII.

[166] Cassius Dio XLVII, 18, 2.

– August 25, 79 CE) has preserved Octavian's own words on this matter: "This comet, the people thought, indicated Caesar's soul had been received among the immortal gods. For that reason this symbol was placed above the head of the statue of Caesar which I consecrated in the Forum soon afterwards."[168] So the triumvirs actualized what had been given to Caesar in honors while he was still alive—divinity. It was not actually Octavian that made Caesar a god. The people and the Senate declared Caesar a god; however, Octavian certainly capitalized on this piece of luck.

The comet strengthened the subsequent actions of the triumvirs, "which could readily be associated with the popular idea that the souls of great men were translated to the stars."[169] The triumvirs used Julius Caesar's translation to the stars as the reason for actualizing the honors already accorded him while still alive, namely his divinity. His apotheosis was him taking his place with the gods. As seen above, Octavian made good use of this connection by placing the star on the many statues of Caesar. What had been potential and not yet actualized during Caesar's life was now reality. He was a god. But Octavian's actual genius was tapping into the potency of Caesar as god. "Nowhere is his potency more apparent than in its effect on the power of the adopted son who henceforth styled himself *divi filius*."[170]

The thirteen years following the formation of the triumvirate were foundational for the formation of the imperial cult. It would seem that the only reason that Rome did

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[167] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XV, 840.

[168] Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, II, 94.

[169] Taylor, 99.

[170] Taylor, 99.

not immediately become a divine monarchy with a god-king like the divine ruler cults of the East is that there were two vying for the throne—Marc Antony and Octavian.[171] There is, however, much numismatic evidence that all sides utilized their divine associations in propagandizing the Greek cities of the East and even the eastern influenced *plebs* of Rome.[172] It is interesting that both sides of the civil war—the triumvirate and the party of Brutus—assumed "one prerogative which Caesar, like the Hellenistic rulers before him, had usurped from the realms of the gods."[173] Numismatic studies show that all sides issued coins where their portraits were placed in the position normally reserved for the gods and where the god-kings of the east were presented.[174] This only makes sense if the objections of the aristocracy were to the royal claims of Caesar as opposed to his divine honors. During this period, Octavian was careful to remind everyone of his connection with Caesar and Caesar's divine ancestors by officially signing himself *divi filius*, son of a god and by issuing coins with representations of Aeneas carrying Anchises from Troy.[175]

While Octavian was determined to take up all of the honors accorded to his adoptive father, including the divine honors, and demonstrated this determination by "as early as the year 40 B.C. [beginning] in his official title to insert the words *divi filius*," he

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[171] Taylor, 100.

[172] Taylor, 102-103.

[173] Taylor, 107.

[174] Taylor, 107-108. See also Buttrey, *The Triumviral Portrait Gold of the 'Quattuorviri Monetales' of 42 B. C.* (vol. 137; New York, NY: American Numismatic Society, 1956).

[175] Taylor, 106.

was careful to avoid claims to kingship.[176] Antony was the first to receive divine honors when he was hailed as divine in the east and presented himself as Dionysus.[177] Octavian was also identified with a god by first being called *divi filius* and then being called the son of Apollo. "It may have been at this very time that the story became current that Apollo had come to his mother Atia, as Ammon had to Alexander's mother Olympias, in the form of a serpent."[178] Despite these developments with regard to divinity, Octavian refused to claim kingship.

Antony, on the other hand, journeyed to Egypt where divinity and kingship were tightly bound together. He as Dionysus had met Cleopatra as Aphrodite and this meeting of two divinities was to have tremendous impact upon the triumvirate and the course of Octavian.[179] The worship of Antony in the east as a god was not simply political; rather "Cleopatra made it an official worship by commanding the erection of a great temple to Antony in Alexandria….Antony was playing the god in the East."[180] It should be noted that this is certainly Octavian's propaganda. Since the winner writes the history, we don't know how Antony would have responded to the allegations. It seems likely that both men were playing around with this concept of divinization at this period.

Antony's behavior in Egypt gave Octavian the opportunity to oppose him as a Roman who had been corrupted by the east, particularly by that most pernicious Egypt.

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[176] Taylor, 130-131.

[177] Taylor, 108-110.

[178] Taylor, 119.

[179] Taylor, 108-110.

[180] Taylor, 130.

It seems that Antony "was waiting for victory to give him in name the kingship that he already claimed by his divine pretensions" and "he could point to Caesar's own designs as a precedent for his ambition."[181] In order to obtain the favor of Italy, Octavian restrained himself from claiming to be the god-king that Julius Caesar seemed to have been setting up. Instead, he found "himself by virtue of his opposition defending Rome and Roman tradition against the conception of the eastern ruler that Antony represented."[182] Octavian was no less interested in securing the absolute power afforded a divine king; however, he had learned the lessons of his adopted father. Further, if he could position Antony as a man with designs for kingship and himself as a defender of Rome and Roman tradition, then he could be seen as a savior. He succeeded in thus positioning himself and Antony, and thus became the most important and powerful man in the whole of the Roman Empire.

The Principate

What Octavian did after vanquishing Antony in 30 BCE was crucial. No longer did he have to set himself in opposition to another; rather, he was able to self-define. Octavian sensed that he must maintain, at least in form, the Roman traditions; however, the empire was diverse and this afforded him the ability to distinguish between his Roman subjects and his non-Roman subjects. For example, in Egypt, in order to govern effectively, he became the divine king expected by the Egyptian culture.[183] Meanwhile in

[181] Taylor, 139.

[182] Taylor.

the other provinces of the east he was being hailed as a savior and he accepted temples erected to himself via Augusta, but only if they were in conjunction with a temple to the goddess Roma.[184] We have the example of the honoring of Augustus as "a savior who put an end to war and established all things" by the assembly of Asia.[185]

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Figure 2. Reverse of an Athenian imperial bronze coin

In addition the Greek translation of "Augustus" became important and both Roma and Octavian were honored as divinities by this name "Sebastos."[187] However, his subjects in

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[183] Taylor, 145. This can be seen most graphically in the reliefs on the Temple of Dendera, where Augustus is visually undifferentiated from a pharaoh of the New Kingdom.

[184] Taylor, 146-147.

[185] Price, 54.

[186] Reverse of an Athenian imperial bronze coin showing the N side of the Akropolis with the Temple of Roma and Augusta at left. 3rd c. A.D. Hoff, "The Politics and Architecture of the Athenian Imperial Cult," in *Subject and Ruler: The Cult of the Ruling Power in Classical Antiquity: Papers presented at a conference held in the University of Alberta on April 13-15, 1994, to celebrate the 65th anniversary of Duncan Fishwick* (ed. Small; vol. no 17 of *Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary Series,* ed. Humphrey; Ann Arbor, MI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1996), 188.

Rome were only allowed to erect temples to Roma and Divus Julius.[188] The problematic political structure that is known as the Principate is made more understandable by "the category of *Divi Augusti* and its related Greek counterpart, the *Theoi Sebastoi*…."[189]

What Octavian did allow for his subjects in Rome, however, was the honoring of his *genius*.[190] This concept, as discussed before, seems to be analogous to the Persian *fravashi*, the Egyptian *ka*, and the Greek *(agathos) daimon*, and was essentially the spirit of the person. Taylor writes, "the decree that a libation should be poured to his *genius* at every banquet, both public and private…was preparing the way for a more extensive cult such as developed later….Like the Greek worship of the *agathos daimon* of the living man, of which we have found traces, it was probably a species of heroic honor for a living man."[191] So, Octavian received honors from the east that essentially treated him as a god-king. At the same time he directed his Roman subjects to only honor his *genius*, while the overt divine honors were to be given to Roma and Divus Julius.

Despite this decision to refrain from encouraging the Romans in the worship of his person as a god, the Senate continued to offer adulatory decrees.[192] In the census year

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[187] Taylor, 147.

[188] Taylor, 147-150.

[189] Lozano, "Divi Augusti and Theoi Sebastoi: Roman Initiatives and Greek Answers," *The Classical Quarterly* 57, no. 01 (2007): 152.

[190] Bailey argues, "The worship of the Genius of the Emperor, which Miss Taylor takes to be the Roman counterpart of this Greek precedent, was in fact introduced by Augustus, who disliked the Hellenistic model, and was trying to direct the cult into channels with Roman precedent." Bailey: 733.

[191] Taylor, 151-153.

of 28, Octavian finally made a move with regard to the dichotomy between monarchial power (which he had but would not name) and the restoration of the Republic (which he was not really doing but was claiming). He employed the existing term of *princeps senatus* in a new manner. He purged the senate rolls and listed himself at the head as *princeps*, meaning first citizen. Octavian interpreted this move as a restoration of the Republic and his interpretation was accepted by most of the historians of his time. What Octavian actually did by accepting this new position, however, was begin a new form of monarchy.[193]

What is at issue are Octavian's decisions about two questions—his divinity, with its connected royalty, and his royalty, with its connected divinity. He desired to answer these two issues in a manner that allowed him to avoid Julius Caesar's fate. And history bears witness to his ingenious solution. Further, his solution had immense impact on the form and substance of the imperial cult, both in his day and in subsequent years. Octavian's answer was simple and yet complex: "On earth he is not a god, but he looks forward after death to a divine status won by virtue" while at the same time he was "the son of a god descended from a long line of divine forebears; his life of virtue and benefaction to his fellow men [will] ensure to him the same divinity that his father [is] enjoying."[194]

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[192] Taylor, 155.

[193] Taylor, 156.

[194] Taylor, 157.

This solution worked for Octavian because it was consistent with what has been called "the republican transformation of the doctrine of the divinity of Kings."[195] It allowed him to acquire the honors of his adopted father, while both refraining from accepting kingship and seeming to restore the Republic. With the restoration of the Republic, it was necessary that Octavian be given a distinctive title that represented him as the new founder of Rome. The title chosen was *Augustus*. It was particularly useful to Octavian's agenda because "*augustus* through *augere* was related in origin to *auctoritas*, the peculiar quality of the Roman senate in which Augustus as *princeps senatus* excelled all other senators."[196] This title allowed him to avoid all hints of monarchy but it also carried with it strong associations with divinity. It was a synonym for *sanctus* and *divinus* and Livy defined the word as meaning "more than human."[197] Further, Lozano asserts, "*Augusti* is a religious notion that combines both an individual and a communal meaning, because while it paid attention to individual members of the group, at the same time, it emphasized an abstract conception of power and the people who held it."[198] Thus Octavian is able to accept, both in action and in name, the divine honors of his father while seeming to refuse the position of a monarch.

In Rome, with this new title, Octavian was given potential divinity not yet acquired. The potential divinity was acquired only upon the apotheosis of the emperor, which took place after his death, and its official recognition by the Senate. Then, and

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[195] Taylor, 157-158.

[196] Taylor, 159.

[197] Taylor, 160.

[198] Lozano: 151.

only then, did the emperor become a *divus* with an official cult.[199] The worship was informal, lacking public priests, temples, and offerings, and "the offerings were made to the gods for him but not to him."[200] His current humanity was emphasized even while his potential divinity was embraced such that "the idea that Augustus was a man on earth, destined after his death, like his father, to become a God, took firm hold on popular fancy."[201] The cult of Augustus was Octavian's way of veiling what his adopted father Julius Caesar had openly created and died for—divine rulership.[202] Octavian used the title Augustus and the worship of his *genius* as a means of having the honors and power of divine rulership while at the same time seeming to operate as a defender and restorer of the Republic. This veiling was necessitated by the circumstances in Rome. By contrast, in the Greek world the cult was focused on the person of the reigning emperor "who could be called *theos*, god, in his lifetime."[203] In these different, eastern circumstances, "the formal cult of the Emperor under his new title Sebastos, the word chosen as the Greek equivalent for Augustus, developed steadily, and met with the sanction of Augustus."[204] This "cult of the *Sebastoi* was, thus a convenient mean to

[199] Price, 75.

[200] Taylor, 166.

[201] Taylor, 162.

[202] Taylor, 166.

[203] Price, 75.

[204] Taylor, 168.

stress devotion to the living emperor while maintaining due respect and worship of past rulers."[205]

In Rome, however, the emperor received the veiled worship of his *genius* within the context of the household gods, which "was a form of cult at public and private banquets which prepared the way for a more formal state worship."[206] This *Genius Augusti* quickly became a symbol of the state and the object of a state cult whose observance was a sign of loyalty to the state. This cult of the *Genius Augusti* "provided for the Roman emperor under veiled form a worship which was no less a ruler cult than was the more declared worship of the Hellenistic king as a revealed god on earth."[207]

What is key to understanding Octavian's agenda and action is the veiling. Octavian was not opposed to establishing a ruler cult. He was simply opposed to dying for it. Perhaps Octavian's brilliance can be attributed to his ability both to recognize Julius Caesar's mistakes and to craft a solution with a different outcome. This solution of a veiled divine ruler cult is fundamental to understanding the imperial cult. Furthermore, his acceptance of a less veiled (if not totally unveiled) divine ruler cult in the east makes plain that Octavian desired to possess exactly what Julius Caesar had created and died for. He simply veiled it with this notion of his *genius*, which in concept had deep associations with the divine ruler cults of the Persian, Egyptian, and Greek cultures.[208]

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[205] Lozano: 151.

[206] Taylor, 182-183.

[207] Taylor, 190.

[208] It should, however, be noted that the Senate had a role in this scenario. They decreed that Octavian be given a libation before each meal. It must be remembered that

With this new cult came the development of oaths by, altars for, and sacrifices to the *genius* of the emperor. As stated above this cult was based upon Roman precedents in that it was conducted within the context of the household gods. However, the fact that it was more than a household cult is evident by the break it made with Roman custom. Normally only bloodless sacrifices were made to the *genius*; however, in this new cult blood sacrifices were offered, though never in the home or in Rome. However, in Asia Minor, "sometimes libations or ritual cakes were offered, but the burning of incense, perhaps on special altars, or the killing of an animal, normally a bull, were the standard offerings at public festivals."[209]

The bull as the offering of choice "is consistent with the root meaning for the word *genius*" and "the eastern ruler cult provided precedents for this victim" because "the bull had been a symbol of the king in the Syrian and Egyptian religion" and "was moreover a form of the god Dionysus with whom Alexander and after him the Ptolemies and the Attalids were in some instances identified."[210] Also, the *genius* came to be closely identified with Mars (who was the paternal deity ancestor of Caesar and all

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the people longed for a savior-ruler to relieve them of the years of civil war and the immense cost they had paid in lives, money, and stability. M.P. Charlesworth, however, would caution against the above characterization of "Augustus' attitude as one merely of prudent statecraft" instead emphasizing "the belief which he cherished not only in the importance and efficacy of the state-religion but also in himself as the restorer of it: the different priesthoods that he held, the rebuilding of the temples, the celebration in 29 B.C. of the Augurium Salutis, and the holding in 17 B.C. of the Secular Games were outward and visible signs of an inward and invisible thing, a deep religious consciousness, wherein he differed greatly from his adoptive father Julius Caesar." Charlesworth, "Review of *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* by Lily Ross Taylor," *The Classical Review* 46, no. 5 (1932): 226.

[209] Price, 208. Price cites representations (see Pl. 3a) of these scenes of sacrifice.

[210] Taylor, 191-192.

Romans) for whom the sacrifice of choice was the bull. So while the cult seemed to be based upon Roman tradition within the worship of the household gods, it was, in fact, much more than that and, in reality, it was based upon the worship of kings. Price claims that "this range of ritual practices and language expressed a picture of the emperor between human and divine….The emperor stood at the focal point between human and divine."[211]

"The only real appurtenance of divinity that the Genius lacked was a temple, and that was a distinction which it never secured either for Augustus or for any other emperor in Rome."[212] Instead of a temple, the worship of the cult of the *genius* took place at an altar connected with shrines to other gods. The cult was never given directly to the person of the emperor, but rather was rendered to his spirit. But this cult that was given to his spirit took "on the character of the Hellenistic ruler cult" with "the sacrifices and the festivals that belonged to a god, and, like the cult of most of the great gods of the Roman pantheon, its worship was in the hands of the college of *pontifices*."[213] This meant that Augustus, who like any man could sacrifice to his own *genius*, found himself as *pontifex maximus*, the high priest of a cult dedicated to himself through the thin veil of his *genius*.[214]

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[211] Price, 233.

[212] Taylor, 204.

[213] Taylor, 203-204.

[214] Taylor, 204. The *pontifex maximus* was the highest office in the state religion of ancient Rome and it directed the college of pontiffs. The office was originally religious but by the time of Augustus it had become also political. It was ultimately subsumed into the imperial office under Augustus. Charlesworth understands this office

This cult that was based upon the worship of kings was not so veiled in the east. Lozano describes how the provinces adopted ritual practices typical of Rome, but they did not copy them directly, and there were definite differences. "The most important is that, while in Rome emperors were only worshipped posthumously, in the provinces they could receive divine cult while alive."[215] In the east the living emperor and his family were the objects of worship for Romans and non-Romans alike, even while the official position was that the citizens were worshipping the *genius* of the Emperor and his deified father.[216]

Price describes decrees that "make explicit and elaborate comparisons between actions of the emperor and those of the gods," even to the disadvantage of the gods.[217] These explicit comparisons between the gods and the emperor are symptoms of change within the subtleties of the cult as the Greek cities of the east negotiated this new external power of Rome and Augustus.[218] The ultimate culmination of this trend, which began in the second century BCE, is seen most clearly "in the decree from Mytilene which not only awarded Augustus some of the most explicitly divine honours anywhere, but also stated that these would deify him, while leaving open the possibility of extra divine honours at a

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to be the primary argument against Taylor's understanding of Augustus' imperial cult because the position of was entirely incompatible with divinity. Charlesworth: 226.

[215] Lozano: 140.

[216] Taylor, 207.

[217] Price, 55-56.

[218] Price, 56.

later date;" consequently, "the system of honours had considerable importance in conceptualizing the political actions of the emperor."[219]

Because Octavian allowed these differences between the cult in the east and the cult in Rome and the west, there existed "certain popular ideas of the divinity of Augustus and his house which had no formal recognition in Roman state worship" but were still potent influences on the imperial cult as it developed over time.[220] The many legends that accrued about him, along with the belief that a god was incarnate within him, all led to a popular belief about Octavian that went further than the formal state religion. The result was that the cult was more formally expressed in the east, while further constrained in the west.[221]

Thus the emerging imperial cult in the west was constructed within the context of acceptable Roman practices with some influence from the east, even though the Greeks had been "faced with the rule first of Hellenistic kings and then of Roman emperors which was not completely alien, but which did not relate to the traditions of the self-

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[219] Price, 56-57. Duncan Fishwick observes that Price's methodology allows him to sidestep "the difficulties in either a literal (the emperor was a god) or metaphorical (the emperor was like a god) interpretation of the imperial cult." Fishwick questions whether in fact the question should be sidestepped because "any analysis of the ruler-cult should take some account of the individuals who participated, that their mental attitudes, seen from a pre-Christian perspective as far as possible, were of relevance, however indeterminate they might have been." Fishwick feels that the sources would allow for this accounting. Fishwick, "Review of *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* by S. R. F. Price," *Phoenix* 40, no. 2 (1986): 229-230.

[220] Taylor, 232.

[221] It should be noted that this constraint was not complete in the west. There are altars to Augustus in Lyon, Narbonne, and Tarragona, at least. See Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire* (t 108; 3 vols.; Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1987).

governing cities."[222] The solution was to focus upon ritual and thereby to represent the emperor to themselves in terms that were most familiar: those of divine power.[223] "Both diplomacy and the imperial cult were ways of constructing the emperor, and religious language was used in both contexts."[224] The imperial cult served to stabilize the religious order of the world. Its symbolism presented a depiction of the relationship between the emperor and the gods. The imperial cult, coupled with politics and diplomacy, fashioned the reality of the Roman Empire in the east.[225] Octavian understood the need for the cities of the east to represent the Roman Empire and its ruler in familiar terms and therefore allowed the imperial cult to take on additional features from its form in the west.

When Octavian died, there was no problem accepting his divinity as "it had been well prepared for by the cult that was given to his deified father and to his own *genius* in his lifetime, and by the abundant memorials of his name into temples in the festivals that kept him and his house before the minds of men."[226] In fact, his divinity was really already realized while he was alive but refused and veiled by Octavian in order to avoid assassination. The cult had always been an instrument of politics—an effective tool of government.[227] The only reason he rejected his divinity at Rome was that it blunted the effectiveness of the cult in governing. At the same time he accepted his divinity in the

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[222] Price, 247-248.

[223] Price.

[224] Price, 235.

[225] Price, 248.

[226] Taylor, 232.

[227] Taylor, 237-238.

east because it maximized the effectiveness of the cult in that political environment. Octavian was above all a pragmatic politician for whom power was a means to an end, not simply an end in itself.

It is clear that Augustus laid the foundation of the imperial cult with the building blocks provided by Julius Caesar. This foundation was the cult of Augustus himself, whether through his *genius* in the west or directly to himself in the east. This "cult of Augustus both in his lifetime and after his death developed through a fortunate combination of organized propaganda and spontaneous expressions of loyalty."[228] This cult was definitely enhanced by Augustus' view of himself. "The simplicity of his court, the informality of his relations with his friends, his prohibition of the name *dominus* in address are indicative of his attitude"—an attitude that clearly did not view himself as a god.[229] This attitude, however, should not dissuade the recognition that Augustus was a shrewd politician who recognized the potency of "worship as an effective instrument of government."[230]

Perhaps an accurate working definition of the divinity of the emperor Augustus is "a man on earth, destined one day to be a god."[231] He was *divi filius* and therefore came from the gods (both through his adopted father, Julius Caesar, and his ancestor gods, Mars and Venus). Divinity was being revealed through him but he was not yet a god. His role as savior pointed to the gods working through him. But as stated above,

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[228] Taylor, 234.

[229] Taylor, 236.

[230] Taylor, 238.

[231] Taylor, 235.

potential divinity was to be distinguished from actual divinity if only by the element of being present on the earth as opposed to being in the heavens. And yet, in practice this distinction was blurred and many times indistinguishable. Octavian even intentionally obfuscated the god/man distinction based upon his political calculations of what was most effective and would succeed. Octavian understood that "the acts of a god had permanent binding force" thus "in his lifetime Augustus made the oath by his Genius a symbol of loyalty to the empire, so after his death he expected and secured his formal enshrinement in the cult of the state which legalized his rule."[232]

The concepts, words, and types of worship that Octavian was so skillful in controlling were left as elements of the imperial cult that later emperors would employ in their own fashion. They would retain the various elements discussed, but they would also expand and redeploy them in ways that developed the imperial cult. Further, the east would exert influence upon Rome as the interests of Rome became more focused upon the east. While Rome would always be reticent to call the emperor a god while he was still alive (and with it accord him kingship), "the Genius of the Roman Emperor had inherited the cult of the Hellenistic monarch who appeared before his subject as an incarnate god."[233]

The Flavians

On August 19, 14 CE, Octavian died as Caesar Augustus. He was successful at not being assassinated. He had also achieved setting up a monarchy while claiming to

[232] Taylor, 238.

[233] Taylor, 246.

restore the Republic. He was succeeded by his adopted (step)son, Tiberius, as *princeps*. Tiberius ruled for a little less than 23 years, also seeming to escape assassination and dying on the March 16, 37 CE.[234] Tiberius' great-nephew Caligula succeeded him but ruled for less than 4 years. Though initially a promising ruler, Caligula proved to be quite mad and was assassinated by the Praetorian Guard on the January 24, 41 CE. According to Cassius Dio, Caligula was the first emperor to have referred to and presented himself publically as a god, as well as having two temples erected to him in Rome and requiring worship of himself as a god. Ancient and modern historians, however, view this as a result of his insanity and do not accept this as a genuine development of the imperial cult.

Upon Caligula's death, despite attempts by the Senate to perhaps genuinely restore the Republic, the Praetorian Guard placed Claudius on the emperor's throne. Surprisingly, Caligula's uncle proved to be an able emperor and ruled until his death on the October 13, 54 CE.[235] He was succeeded by his great-nephew and adopted (step)son Nero. Like Caligula his predecessor, Nero also increasingly demonstrated signs of insanity and erratic behavior. In June 68 CE, the Senate replaced him with Galba,

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[234] "Detained, however, by bad weather and the increasing violence of his illness, he died a little later in the villa of Lucullus, in the seventy-eighth year of his age and the twenty-third of his reign, on the seventeenth day before the Kalends of April, in the consulship of Gnaeus Acerronius Proculus and Gaius Pontius Nigrinus. Some think that Gaius gave him a slow and wasting poison; others that during convalescence from an attack of fever food was refused him when he asked for it. Some say that a pillow was thrown upon his face, when he came to and asked for a ring which had been taken from him during a fainting fit." Suetonius, *Tiberius*, LXIII, 1-2.

[235] Despite several attempts on his life, Claudius seems to have escaped assassination, though there are accounts that his wife Agrippina (the mother of Nero) poisoned him. For accounts of his death see Suetonius, *Claudius*, XLIII-XLIV; Tacitus *Annals*, Book 12, LXIV, LXVI- LXVII.

declaring Nero a public enemy. Before the year was out, Nero reportedly committed suicide. Thus ended the Julio-Claudian dynasty and thus began the "Year of the Four Emperors."

When the ensuing civil war ended, a very different sort of man was holding the title of *princeps*. Vespasian was in no way related to Julius Caesar, Octavian or any of their descendants. He was from an equestrian family; and, though he had attained senatorial rank, he was most known for his military prowess. He was a successful military commander in the Roman invasion of Britain under Claudius. When the "Year of the Four Emperors" began, he was effectively crushing the Jewish rebellion in Palestine. He had two sons, Titus and Domitian, and with them Vespasian founded the Flavian Dynasty, which was to span almost twenty-seven years.

Vespasian, in December of 69, inherited an empire that remembered and even maintained the forms of the Republic; however, the very circumstances of his rise to emperor underlined the fact that the emperor exercised absolute power based in his control of the armies of Rome. Despite the fact that Octavian's veil was shredding, the imperial cult and its customs were largely maintained. Nero had appeared on coins with the radiate crown of the sun god and, say the ancient authors, as a 120 foot tall statue by the entrance to his house—*Nero Sol*. Prior to Nero this designation had been reserved for a *divus*, which are typically deceased.

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Figure 3. Roman coin showing Nero with radiate crown

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Figure 4. Roman coin showing Nero with both laureate head and radiate crown

Based upon Nero's precedent, Vespasian allowed the Senate to flatter him by presenting him on imperial coinage with the *corona radiata*.[238]

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[236] NERO CLAVDIVS CAESAR AVG GERM P M TR P IMP P P, Radiate head right. VICTORIA AVGVSTI, Victory flying left, holding palm-branch and wreath; S-C in fields, II (mark of value) in exergue. Nero (12.69 g). Rome mint. 64 AD. RIC 201; BMC 220; MacDowell 191. Courtesy A. Tkalec AG, 2009. http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/nero/RIC_0201.txt

[237] Nero. AD 54-68. AV Aureus (19mm, 7.32 g, 6h). Rome mint. Struck circa AD 64-65. Laureate head right / AVGVSTVS AVGVSTA, Nero, radiate, and Poppaea Sabina, veiled, standing left, each holding patera; Nero also holding scepter, Poppaea holding double cornucopias. 775477. Nero. AD 54-68. AV Aureus (19mm, 7.32 g, 6h). Rome mint. Struck circa AD 64-65. RIC I 44. From the CNG Online Coin Shop, Before July, 2006. http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/nero/RIC_0044.txt

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Figure 5. Roman coin showing Vespasian with radiate crown

If we can trust Josephus as accurately reflecting the circumstances of his time, he presents us with evidence of Vespasian receiving adulation consistent with the divine ruler cults of the east. Josephus tells us himself that when the Romans took him captive he prophesied to Vespasian that he would establish a dynasty of Caesars. His prophecy suggests the adulation of the Hellenistic ruler cult: "You, Caesar, are master (δεσπότης) not only of me but also of the earth and sea and all the human race."[240]

Most historians question whether Vespasian, like Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar, actually believed the hype or whether it was simply a necessary part of governing. Despite such ironic statements as the reported quip on his deathbed "I am already becoming a god," Vespasian expected to be enrolled with the previous emperors as a

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[238] Scott, *The Imperial Cult Under the Flavians* (New York: Arno Press, 1975), 32-33.

[239] IMP CAES VESPASIAN AVG COS III, radiate head right. Roma seated left on cuirass, holding wreath and parazonium, two shields behind, S-C across fields, ROMA in ex. Vespasian, AE Dupondius, 71 AD, Rome. 13.51 g. RIC 279 C. 411. BMC 591. CBN 569. With permission of Helios Auction 5, June 2010, lot 232. http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/nero/RIC_0279.txt

[240] Josephus, *The War of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 8.9 (402). Scott, 7.

god.[241] This expectation was met since "he was duly deified by Titus because, according to the Younger Pliny, he desired to seem the son of a god."[242] Titus ruled for a scant two years before dying. He too is divinized and is represented on the Arch of Titus in Rome as ascending to heaven on the back of Jupiter's eagle. His brother, Domitian, then succeeded him. It is Domitian, along with Octavian, that most influenced the forms of the imperial cult. His reign and influence were also particularly relevant given that most scholars date Luke's writings to the time of the Flavians, and many even more precisely to the reign of Domitian.[243]

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[241] Cassius Dio, LXVI, 17, 3.

[242] Scott, 40.

[243] Almost no historical scholar, with the exception of those most conservative (such as Hendrickson and Bock), dates the writings of Luke to earlier than the time of the Flavians. Some are less precise with dates ranging from 75 to 130 CE, such as C.F. Evans or Charles Talbert. Others date his writings to the second century (115-130 CE), such as J.C. O'Neill (cited in Evans, Conzelmann, and Fitzmyer). Most, however, date Luke's writings to the time of the Flavians and more precisely the reign of Domitian. Even if the date is a range or the second century, it still means that the developments of the imperial cult during the Flavian period have occurred and therefore are a part of the cultural context within which Luke is writing. I. Howard Marshall accepts a date "not far off AD 70." F.F. Bruce and Ben Witherington both argue for the late 70s or early 80s, but definitely during the Flavian period. Luke Timothy Johnson and Joseph Fitzmyer suggest 80-85 CE, with Johnson allowing for the possibility of an earlier date. Francois Bovon argues for 80-90 CE, while Conzelmann opts for 80-100 CE. Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994). Bovon and Koester, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 9. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 9-18. Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987), xxxiii. Evans, *Saint Luke* (London; Philadelphia: SCM Press; Trinity Press International, 1990), 14. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According To Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (2vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), 57. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1998), 54. William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, Vol. 11, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, New

With the exception of Caligula and Nero, for whom there are clear mitigating circumstances, all the emperors following Octavian seem to have followed his policy of restraint and veiling with regard to divinity. They allowed more overt expressions of the divine ruler cult in the east, while retaining only potential divinity that was realized in the west upon their death. This changed with Domitian. He left the easiness and modesty of his father and the cordiality and regard for the Senate demonstrated by his brother. Instead, he emphasized his status as the son of a god and brother of a *divi*, thus becoming more the divine monarch.[244] This was also a departure from the form of Octavian, Tiberius, and Claudius. This departure, according to Suetonius, was marked by the use of the title *dominus et deus*, which Octavian was careful to refuse.[245]

As discussed above, Octavian was hailed as a savior. There is also evidence of Claudius being called "lord" and "savior of the world" and Nero being hailed in Egypt as "Savior and Benefactor of the World."[246] In the east "the Greeks had long been

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Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1953-2001), 33. Johnson and Harrington, *The Gospel of Luke* (ed. Harrington; vol. 3; Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 2. Marshall, I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Exeter, England: Paternoster Press, 1978), 35. Talbert, Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Third Gospel*, Rev. ed., Reading the New Testament Series (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2002), 1. Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; The Paternoster Press, 1998), 62.

[244] Scott, 89.

[245] "With equal arrogance, when he dictated the form of a letter to be used by his procurators, he began it thus: " Our lord and god commands so and so;" whence it became a rule that no one should style him otherwise either in writing or speaking." Suetonius, *Domitian*, XIII, 2.

accustomed to bestow upon their rulers the divine titles of savior σωτήρ and benefactor εὐεργέτης" and "Domitian was honored in the same way…in an inscription from Limyra it is possible that he may have been referred to as the 'savior of the world.'"[247] Scott claims that "often the ancients seem to have found it difficult to separate the honor to the mortal and divine cult" and perhaps this difficulty finally, over time, led to the departure of Domitian from the custom of his predecessors.[248] The sources "show that for some years the emperor neither encouraged nor demanded the use of the title *dominus et deus* and also that when it finally was required it marked a departure from the *principatus*."[249] Scott, in agreement with Eusebius, dates this departure to 85/86 CE, precisely the time frame in which Luke was writing his treatises.[250]

Not only is the timing important but also the development of using *dominus et deus* is directly related to Luke's use of κύριος. *Dominus* can certainly be seen as opposed to the concept of *princeps*. On the one hand you have a master of slaves and on the other hand you have the first citizen of the state. But the relevance is deeper than simply a break from Octavian's refusal of *dominus*. It lies in the culture and concepts of the east: "*dominus et deus noster* is certainly derived from the orient, where, for example,

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[246] Donald L. Jones, "Christianity and the Roman imperial cult," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: (ANRW): Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung 2,13 Principat; 13. Recht (Normen, Verbreitung, Materien) Principat 23/2; vorkonstantinisches Christentum* (New York; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980), 1028-29.

[247] Scott, 97.

[248] Scott, 98.

[249] Scott, 104.

[250] Scott, 109.

the title κύριος (καὶ) θεός is applied to the ruler, while κύριος alone originates as an epithet of Semitic divinities" and "in the East the genitive ἡμῶν corresponding to the Latin *noster* is used with κύριος as a title of the divine monarch, the lord of his subjects and worshippers."[251] This was not simply a master of slaves in contrast to the first citizen of the state. This was the development of using the Latin equivalent of an eastern title for a divine monarch.

The further development of the imperial cult in the east had continued under Tiberius and the natural impulses of the divine ruler cult became more and more clear. There is evidence that "in Greek inscriptions and papyri the Greek equivalent of the Latin *dominus*, namely, κύριος, is found as early as A.D. 82 and is used frequently with reference to Domitian, as it had also been for Claudius, Nero, Galba, Vespasian, and Titus."[252] These further developments were not just related to κύριος but also included σωτήρ. This is seen in the Egyptian calendar in which months were named in honor of the emperor. Scott writes, "One of these is apparently Σωτήριος or Σωτήρειος….It seems likely that Σωτήριος was instituted during the reign of Domitian….It was quite in keeping with the religious policy of either Nero or Domitian to be honored as Σωτήρ, but I feel quite certain that the month was a creation of the time of Domitian."[253]

This exaltation of the emperor in the east by titles such as θεός or κύριος or σωτήρ was based in the sanctity with which the monarchy was invested. Not only did he represent the majesty of the state but also "in the East, a long tradition for exalting the all-

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[251] Scott, 112.

[252] Scott, 109.

[253] Scott, 162-163.

powerful ruler to the rank of the gods, to whom, to many, he probably seemed more real and able to act in their behalf or to their harm."[254] It is most likely under Domitian that this eastern attribute of the imperial cult migrated to the west in a manner rejected by its original architect, Octavian. It became acceptable to speak of the emperor as *dominus et deus* or *dominus et deus noster*.

Terminology of the Imperial Cult[255]

In understanding the imperial cult it is fundamental to recognize the use of ritual. Part of this element is the language and terminology used to refer to the emperor. This aspect of the imperial cult is complex because language receives its precise meaning from its particular context, while at the same time contributing to the very context used to interpret it. This presents ancient historians, whose sources are primarily language-based inscriptions and writings, with a difficult challenge. Despite the complexity, the challenge must be addressed in order to make sense of the ancient sources and to arrive at an appropriate understanding of the imperial cult. Further, the challenge must also be addressed because "there are great similarities between the position of the pagan rulers of the Roman Empire and that of Christ in the Christian world; similarities which find expression in the divine titles, the ceremonial and the formulae of the official cult-worship."[256]

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[254] Scott, 130.

[255] "Sebastos" has been excluded because it is too general to be included in this discussion.

[256] Cuss, *Imperial Cult and Honorary Terms in the New Testament* (Fribourg: University Press, 1974), 35.

θεός

As stated above, there was a difference between the east and the west in particular elements of the imperial cult. These differences, however, changed over time with the east influencing developments in the west. Price examines in detail one of these elements of language in which there are both differences between the east and the west and influences between them. In the west, until the time of Domitian (or perhaps Caligula or Nero) there was a clear reticence to call a man god until after his death. In the east, however, θεός was used more broadly. Price argues "that *theos* is the same sort of predicate as 'person'" meaning "as with 'is a person', 'is a *theos*' makes a statement about the world which is not based in human fiat."[257] According to Price, "*Theos* was predicated quite commonly of both Hellenistic kings and Roman emperors" and though "the Roman emperors did not use *theos* of themselves when communicating in Greek with their subjects" these "Greek subjects of the emperor repeatedly referred to him as *theos*."[258] Price notes the well-known example from Jewish and Christian sources regarding Herod Agrippa and his death at the hands of Yahweh presumably for being called θεός.[259]

It seems that θεός was used in the imperial context in the east in two ways that were similar to its application to the traditional gods. First, "'the *theos*' on its own could refer unambiguously to the emperor" and second, "*theos* was added to the name of the

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[257] Price, "Gods and Emperors: The Greek Language of the Roman Imperial Cult," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 104 (1984): 80-81.

[258] Price: 81.

[259] Acts 12:21-22: "On a day determined in advance, Herod put on his royal robes, sat down on the judgment seat, and made a speech to them. But the crowd began to shout, 'The voice of a god, and not of a man!'"

emperor (e.g. *theos* Nero)."[260] Despite these similarities with the traditional gods, the use of θεός by the Greeks was very fluid and random because "there were no institutional procedures nor established criteria controlling the predication of *theos* of the emperor."[261] To further complicate this context, in Rome, the living emperor was not a *deus*; only after his death was it possible for him to be made a *divus*. Price writes, "From the cult of the deceased Julius Caesar onwards *divus* referred exclusively in official terminology to former emperors and members of their family" and "they were thus distinguished from the traditional *dei*."[262]

The differences between Rome and the east are further clarified by the recognition that the *Divi Augusti* were "adored" in Rome, while the *Theoi Sebastoi* were "worshipped" in the east. It is a mistake to equate the two categories. Lozano argues, "The *Divi Augusti* formed a smaller collective, whose members were accepted in accordance with the complex balance of power typical of imperial Rome, while *Theoi Sebastoi* were recognized as a result of the interaction of local tradition with the central power."[263] Not only was there a difference in terms but also a difference in composition. In Rome, you had to die first, while in the east the group was larger and included imperial persons not yet dead.

The Greeks were aware "that in Rome the living emperor was not *deus* or *divus* and they could tell which emperors were *divi filius*," yet "they did not establish a simple

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[260] Price: 81-82.

[261] Price.

[262] Price: 83.

[263] Lozano: 145.

term as a precise translation of *divus*."[264] This reality meant that there was a clear divergence between the east and the west when it came to their use of the generic concept of "god." Price argues, "while it was impossible to refer to the living emperor as *divi filius divus*, because he only became *divus* after his death, the Greeks could refer to the living emperor as *theou huios theos* ('god, son of god')."[265] This divergence means "functional equivalence is not the same thing as identity of meaning."[266] Price rightly concludes, "The fact that the Greeks could use *theou huios theos*, even in conjunction with other Roman titles, shows that they did not regard the simple *theou huios* in the same way as the Romans saw *divi filius*."[267] Even though there were times that θεός had both functional equivalence and identity of meaning with *divus*, it also "had a different range of evocations, forming part of a radically different conceptual system."[268] This range of meaning and different conceptual system allowed the Greeks to utilize θεός as a predicate of the emperor.

This utilization of θεός also led to another development that has already been alluded to—the assimilation of the emperor to particular deities. Octavian was called the son of Apollo and Domitian created strong ties with Jupiter. In the east, however, with the predication of θεός for the emperor came the logical result that the names of specific gods and the emperor were collocated. The most common of these assimilations was

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[264] Price: 84.

[265] Price.

[266] Price: 85.

[267] Price: 84.

[268] Price.

Zeus; however, there are also examples of Helios and Dionysus with empresses being collocated with Hera, Aphrodite, and Demeter.[269] Lozano states, "The development of local imperial cult was mainly based on each city's cultural and religious milieu and usually resulted in a close relation of the foremost deities with members of the imperial family" with "previous religious frameworks [being] employed to accommodate the new central power."[270]

Price accordingly articulates the basic concept, "If 'Zeus' can thus operate like *theos*, it becomes possible to understand the addition of Zeus to the emperor's name as the predication of divine power of him."[271] This connection of the emperor in naming or titles with specific deities also extended to specific attributes such as *epiphanes* and *athanatos*, thus attributing the divine characteristics of being manifest and deathless. "The assimilation to particular deities, the addition of *epiphanes* to *theos* and the use of *athanatos* all tended to strengthen the primary predication of *theos* of the emperor."[272] It is precisely these types of titles that prompt the argument that "the early Christians used similar formulae to those used currently in the imperial cult and for official state apotheosis"; therefore, "Christ, claiming as he did to be both God and man, offered a real challenge to those rulers who strove to encourage the myths that they were 'epiphanes'

[269] Price: 86.

[270] Lozano: 149.

[271] Price: 86.

[272] Price: 88.

gods."[273]

Despite this primary predication of θεός of the emperor, there is still a hesitation when describing the imperial cult concerning the position of the emperor. Price argues that a key to understanding this hesitation is *isotheoi timai*, which is best paraphrased as "honours equivalent to those paid to the gods."[274] "The phrase both compares and distinguishes ruler cult from the cult of the gods" and these honours were "modeled on the cult of the traditional gods but were distinguished from them" resulting in the reality that "the emperor could be called *theos*; his honours were equivalent to those given to the traditional gods, but they were not the same."[275] Price also states that "*Eusebeia* ('piety'), which is what the imperial cult was designed to express, again classifies the emperor with the gods, but here too nuances emerge."[276] Despite these nuances, based upon the foundation of the predication of θεός of the emperor, the demonstration of piety toward the emperor functioned in analogy to the demonstration of piety toward the gods. Both were responsible for securing stable order and even specific divine and imperial interventions. "The display of *eusebeia* to the emperor emphasized that the subjects were dependent on the emperor as on the gods."[277]

Price concludes, "the whole linguistic system of which *theos* forms a part has to be interpreted primarily as the application of traditional Greek categories; *theos* has

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[273] Cuss, 35.

[274] Price: 88.

[275] Price.

[276] Price.

[277] Price.

different meaning from the Latin *divus*."[278] These traditional Greek categories operated within a religious system that located the emperor "in an ambivalent position, higher than mortals but not fully the equal of gods."[279] This ambivalence is consistent with the conclusions above regarding Alexander the Great and the earliest ruler cults. Perhaps the best way to understand this use of θεός as a predicate of the emperor is to realize that "the Greek gods are powers, not persons" and thus "religious thought is a response to the problems of organizing and classifying these powers."[280] Since the emperor presented the east with a power that was foreign to them and needed to be classified, it seems natural that they would rely upon the classifications already used to deal with power developments under the earlier ruler cults. Perhaps a Greek maxim best captures the scenario:

> What is a god? The exercise of power.
> What is a king? God-like.[281]

σωτήρ

Predicating θεός of the emperor was not the only element of ritual language and terminology used to refer to the emperor. As already seen during the reigns of Nero and Domitian, σωτήρ was also used to refer to the emperor. This term, along with κύριος in particular, came to be a touch point between the imperial cult and the cult of Christ.

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[278] Price: 89.

[279] Price: 93.

[280] Price: 94.

[281] τ]ί θεός; τ[ὸ] κρατοῦν· τί βασιλεύ[ς; ἰσ]όθεος· *Philol*. lxxx (1924-5) 339 with *RhM* cxii (1969) cited in Price: 94.

Adolf Deissman accurately describes the development of this touch point as "the passionate determination of the monotheistic cult of Christ to tolerate no compromises."[282] The Christians refused to accept or accommodate, and in fact abhorred, any form of worship of the emperor.[283] Whether this resulted from competition between the emperor and Christ in using the same rituals terms, or whether the use of the same ritual terms was a result of this competition is hard to determine. Cuss argues that these terms "were deliberately chosen by the Christians insofar as they were appropriate and fitting, although how far they were used in contrast to those used for the emperor is far more difficult to judge."[284]

What is clear is "the cult of Christ goes forth into the world of the Mediterranean and so displays the endeavor to reserve for Christ the words already in use for worship in that world, words that had just been transferred to the deified emperor (or had perhaps even been newly invented in Emperor worship)" resulting in "a polemical parallelism between the cult of the Emperor and the cult of Christ, which makes itself felt where ancient words derived by Christianity from the treasury of the Septuagint and the Gospels happened to coincide with solemn concepts of the Imperial cult which sounded the same or similar."[285] Cuss argues that the Christians were offended by "the organization of the

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[282] Price: 95.

[283] Price.

[284] Deissman, *Light from the Ancient East; The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1965), 338-339.

[285] Cuss, 35.

imperial cult in such a way as to give to men honours which should be reserved for God alone."[286]

These solemn concepts expressed in ancient words included the already discussed θεός, along with σωτήρ and κύριος.[287] These were imperial titles that were also the divine titles that Christians who believed in one God set aside exclusively for that God.[288] Deissman argues that the polemical parallelism is particularly clear in the case of σωτήρ. Citing the title of honor, "Savior of the World," applied to Jesus in the Gospel of John, Deissman points out that this same title of honor "was bestowed with sundry variations in the Greek expression on Julius Caesar, Augustus, Claudius, Vespasian, Titus, Trajan, Hadrian, and other Emperors…."[289] The example of Nero being hailed as "Savior and Benefactor of the World" has already been cited and "Jesus is also referred to as 'Saviour of the World' and this particular form is strongly reminiscent of the equivalent in the imperial cult."[290] Even beyond the literal, technical use of the term σωτήρ, there is the already established conceptual prevalence of great men being treated and honored as saviors for their bringing order to the world, such as the Egyptian Hellenistic use within the titles of the Ptolemies.

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[286] Deissman, 342.

[287] "An aspect of cult-worship which could have scandalized the Christians of Asia Minor and which was probably one of the reasons behind John's phrase concerning the 'blasphemous titles', was the use of such titles as 'Lord', 'Saviour' and 'God', attributed to the emperors by their well-wishers and flatterers." Cuss, 51.

[288] Cuss, 52.

[289] Cuss, 51-52.

[290] Deissman, 364.

κύριος

Perhaps the most important element of ritual language and terminology used to refer to the emperor is κύριος. As has already been discussed, Scott sees κύριος as the Greek equivalent term behind the Latin *dominus* and that it most likely influenced the acceptance of *dominus* under Domitian. Even if κύριος were not the most important element of ritual language and terminology used to refer to the emperor, it was the most important touch point between the cult of Caesar and the cult of Christ. Deissman presciently describes the context of the development of this conflict. He writes, "Paul and the other apostles are, in a much higher degree than has probably been supposed, at home also in the world of cultural, especially of religious, ethical, and legal ideas peculiar to their Hellenistic age, and they are fond of making frequent use of details taken from this world of thought….This is particularly true in the case of technical ideas and liturgical formulae, but also where institutions of the surrounding world exert an influence on the figurative language of religion."[291]

As a result of the apostles' frequent use of technical ideas and liturgical formulae, whether intentionally or coincidentally, there was "the early establishment of a polemical parallelism between the cult of Christ and the cult of Caesar in the application of the term κύριος, "lord."[292] Deissman argues that "to express the relation of the divinity to the worshipper as that of the 'lord'" is a common cross-cultural concept and the most

[291] Cuss, 70.

[292] Deissman, 301. Concerning intention or coincidence: "I am sure that in certain cases a polemical intention against the cult of the Emperor cannot be proved; but mere chance coincidences might later awaken a powerful sense of contrast in the mind of the people." Deissman, 350.

important example of this is the replacement of Yahweh with κύριος.[293] While some disagree with Deissman's point, Cuss rightly counters that "while κύριος does not directly imply divinity, the divine emperor was called κύριος and it is on this level that confusion could have been caused, irrespective of the source of the title, or the influences which affected its use."[294]

Based upon the background and context of the Greek Jewish Scriptures, it should be noted that "St. Paul's confession of 'Our Lord Jesus Christ' was his cosmopolitan expansion of a local Aramaic cult-title, *Marana*, applied to Jesus the Messiah by the apostolic Primitive Christians at Jerusalem and occasionally even by Paul himself in the outer world."[295] Deissman argues further that Paul was able to do this because "we find the word "lord" or "lady" as divine names extending also into a number of cults in the Graeco-Roman world" so that "it may be said with certainty that at a time when Christianity originated "Lord" was a divine predicate intelligible to the whole eastern world."[296] While it is true that originally the emperors did not aspire to divine status while still alive, by the time of Nero and Domitian this was changing. So even if κύριος were originally a political title with no religious meaning (a highly improbable argument given the unity of politics and religion in the Greco-Roman world), "it would be artificial

[293] Deissman, 342-343. See also Deissman, 350. See Chapter 1: The Greek Jewish Scriptures ("the Septuagint") for more detailed discussion.

[294] Cuss, 54.

[295] Cuss, 54. See Chapter 1: The Greek Jewish Scriptures ("the Septuagint").

[296] Deissman, 350.

to attempt to keep the political sense apart from the man himself who received the title, if he were, at the same time, regarded as a divine being."[297]

Even if the use of κύριος in the imperial cult was not prevalent in the west and did not take hold until the time of Domitian through the Latin equivalent *dominus*, it was certainly prevalent in the east. "The ancient title, which had long been in use in the language of the native courts, and the soul of which was of cult origin and nature, was bestowed on the emperors much earlier" than the time of Domitian and with "the subsequent victory of the 'Dominate' over the 'Principate'—ultimately a victory of Oriental over Roman feeling" the eastern use of κύριος became dominant within the imperial cult.[298]

There are numerous examples from Hellenistic culture in Egypt in which κύριος was applied to rulers. Such addresses as "O king, our lord," "lord of the diadems," "the lord king god," "the lords, the most great gods," and "the lady queen" are all found within the inscriptions and writings of the Hellenistic ruler-cults of Egypt.[299] This is consistent with the earlier discussion of divine ruler cults in Egypt. It also adds explanation to the decision of the translators of the Greek Jewish Scriptures to utilize κύριος as the appropriate Greek equivalent for Yahweh.[300] This is further strengthened by the examples from Palestine where κύριος was applied to the Herods in Greek

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[297] Deissman.

[298] Cuss, 56.

[299] Deissman, 351-352.

[300] See discussion in Chapter 1: The Greek Jewish Scriptures ("the Septuagint").

inscriptions in a manner that speaks to the parallelism between Egyptian and Jewish culture.[301]

It is therefore no surprise "in accordance with Egyptian or Egypto-Semitic custom that in numerous Greek papyri, inscriptions, and ostraca of the earliest Imperial period the title 'lord' is attached also to the Caesars by Egyptians and Syrians."[302] There are examples of this attachment for Augustus, Tiberius, Livia, Caligula, and Claudius. Under Nero, there was a marked increase of these examples. Deissman states, "the statistics are quite striking; everywhere, down to the remotest village, the officials call Nero *Kyrios*."[303] There is also a very important inscription found in Greece in which the *Kyrios*-title was given to Nero. This market tablet of Acraephiae in Boeotia contains a decree awarding Nero divine honors and calling him "lord of the whole world" and "the lord Augustus."[304] The prevalent use of κύριος in reference to Nero is even supported by our Lukan narratives where Deissman claims "the fact that a New Testament writer (St. Luke, Acts 25:26) well acquainted with this makes Festus the procurator speak of Nero simply as "the lord" now acquires its full significance in this connection."[305] Deissman concludes, "This important inscription shows how far the East had already penetrated on its march of conquest into the West."[306] He also alludes to examples of the *Kyrios*-title

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[301] Deissman, 352.

[302] Deissman, 353.

[303] Deissman.

[304] Deissman.

[305] Deissman, 354.

from the Flavian Dynasty, particularly the time of Domitian, which have already been discussed. Cuss strengthens Deissman's conclusion by noting that there are numerous examples even under Claudius where the emperor was referred to as κύριος.[307]

It is not only in Luke's writings that we find cognizance of the application of κύριος to the emperor and the consequent response by the Christians. Deissman argues, "the Christians of the East who heard St. Paul preach in the style of Phil. ii. 9, 11 and I Cor. viii. 5, 6 must have found in the solemn confession that Jesus Christ is "the lord" a silent protest against other "lords," and against "the lord," as people were beginning to call the Roman Caesar."[308] It is precisely this connection of the emperor as "the lord" that explains the adjective κυριακός. Based on examples from Egypt and Asia Minor it can be argued that this adjective (meaning literally "belonging to the Lord" or "Lord's") is from contemporary constitutional law in which it meant "Imperial."[309] Hence the familiar New Testament Christian usage of κυριακός in phrases such as "the Lord's supper" and "the Lord's day" takes on a new and loaded meaning within the polemical parallelism between the imperial cult and the cult of Christ.[310]

Finally, the imperial cult received the use of κύριος καὶ θεός from the eastern Mediterranean cults. Here previous observations concerning θεός and Domitian's use of the Latin equivalent *deus* should be noted. Deissman makes the very obvious remark that

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[306] Deissman.

[307] Deissman.

[308] Cuss, 59.

[309] Deissman, 355.

[310] Deissman, 357-361.

"If at the pregnant words 'God' and 'Lord' all manner of sensations of protest were roused in the Christian worshiper against the cult of the Caesar, this was of course also the case with the still more impressive combination κύριος καὶ θεός, 'Lord and God,' which, as in the confession of St. Thomas, is one of the culminating points (originally the climax and concluding point) of the Gospel of St. John."[311] It is significant that this combination of κύριος καὶ θεός (in its Latin form of *dominus et deus*) is specifically claimed by Domitian. It seems likely that this element of Christian worship was influenced and informed not only by the Septuagint but also by the imperial cult.

[311] Deissman, 357.

CHAPTER 3

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE AND THE CONCEPT OF 'LORD'

Introduction

This chapter examines Luke's use of κύριος in his first narrative, the Gospel of Luke. Through this analysis the evidence will be marshaled to argue that Luke uses κύριος in his gospel narrative to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus. This use of κύριος within his narrative of the life of Jesus results in his own unique evangelistic formulation for promoting his view of Jesus in a new role.[312] Put simply, Luke claims Jesus is God because he is the κύριος. This conclusion is dependent upon the Greek Jewish Scriptures and Luke's understanding of κύριος derived from these scriptures.[313] Further, not only is Jesus God because he is the κύριος, Luke claims he is also superior to the emperor as a god because he is Lord of all (οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος).[314] This conclusion is dependent upon the cultural context of the Greco-Roman world and the Roman Empire, which was pervasively informed by the imperial cult. And

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[312] It should be noted from the outset, as indicated by the title "Luke's Narrative Agenda," this study is not focused upon either the historical questions of what actually happened or what Luke's sources actually wrote or spoke. Instead, this study is singularly focused on Luke's narrative agenda and what he claims with regard to the identity of Jesus based upon his use of κύριος within his own narrative.

[313] As previously discussed in Chapter 1: The Greek Jewish Scriptures ("the Septuagint").

[314] Acts 10:36.

as discussed in the previous chapter, while Luke's understanding of κύριος derives from the Greek Jewish Scriptures, the effects of his message were felt directly in this Greco-Roman world in which Luke effectively replaces Caesar with Jesus as κύριος.

The argument of this thesis is cumulative. The accumulation of evidence, both from the gospel and through the Acts of the Apostles, proves the argument. Because κύριος occurs over 100 times in each of Luke's narratives, time and space prohibit every occurrence being treated individually; however, representative examples will be examined in order to establish the argument sufficiently. Because the argument is cumulative, exceptions do not disprove it; rather, it will be demonstrated that the evidence of Luke's use of κύριος is sufficiently consistent that it proves an intentional use of κύριος to develop and progressively reveal his own unique evangelistic formulation of the identity of Jesus. Some examples will be considered normative, while others will be treated as corroborating. By the end of the examination of Luke's entire written corpus, the accumulation of evidence will prove that Luke's use of κύριος is neither accidental nor incidental; rather, it is the result of a purposeful, programmatic presentation of Jesus as κύριος.[315]

Both the conclusions and applications of this examination of Luke's narratives are heavily dependent on the background issues and assumptions established in the first two chapters of this work. Without the realization that when Luke and his Jewish audience

[315] This work concurs with C. Kavin Rowe's argument that κύριος serves Luke as a *Leitwort* guiding the reader in both meaning and movement through his narrative. To ignore Luke's particular use of κύριος would result in missing the rhythm of the uniquely Lukan story. Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (Band 139; eds. Dunn, et al.; Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 30. Also see Rowe's chapter five.

hear κύριος they understand it to mean *Yahweh*, Luke's use of κύριος in his narratives to progressively reveal the identity of Jesus becomes unintelligible. Luke is reaching back into the common religious cultural context of the early Christians to make his statement about the identity of Jesus. At the same time, the impact of Luke's revelation of Jesus' identity cannot be felt without the realization that Luke and his Greco-Roman audience (including his Jewish audience) instinctively recognize that κύριος' most obvious Greco-Roman referent is the emperor. Luke is not only reaching back into the common religious cultural context of the early Christians; he is also propelling his message forward into the dominant culture of the Roman Empire with the bold claim that Jesus is πάντων κύριος. Even if this message took some time to be recognized by the Roman Empire, the early Christians themselves could not have missed it. So Luke's narrative agenda not only embraces the Jewish roots from which Christianity was born, but also challenges the environment in which it would thrive and ultimately triumph.

The Birth-Infancy Narrative of the Gospel of Luke (1:1-3:6)[316]

Luke begins his narrative of the life of Jesus by explicitly stating his method and form. He writes, "Now many have undertaken to compile an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, like the accounts passed on to us by those who were

[316] Rowe is correct when he writes, "In contrast to many standard treatments of the birth-infancy narrative, which end their discussion with the young Jesus in the temple (2:52), a focus on κύριος requires that we follow the narrative through to the arrival of John the Baptist from the wilderness and his initial proclamation in 3:4-6. Tracing the arc of the narrative out to 3:4-6 will allow us to discern the significance of κύριος in connection to the actual movement of the story." Rowe, 31. *Contra* Fitzmyer, 310.

eyewitnesses and servants of the word from the beginning."[317] Luke then states that "it seemed good to me as well, because I have followed all things carefully from the beginning, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know for certain the things you were taught."[318] The form of the gospel of Luke is clearly a narrative; in fact, Luke actually *claims* to be telling a story. Consequently, it seems reasonable to conclude that Luke, in writing "an orderly account" for Theophilus, is adding the story of the Gospel of Luke to the many others who "have undertaken to compile an account." These accounts, based upon the Greek word used in Luke 1:1, διήγησιν, are to be understood as narratives. Further, by referring to the previous accounts and having followed all things carefully from the beginning, Luke makes clear that his account is not new; rather, it is an ordered account based upon previous narratives. Luke is not simply composing his gospel out of thin air. His narrative is based upon sources. Some of them are accounts already written; others are most likely oral in nature from his having followed all things. It is fundamental to recognize that Luke tells his readers that he has written a narrative according to his sense of order and this narrative is based upon sources.[319]

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[317] Luke 1:1-2.

[318] Luke 1:3-4.

[319] Joseph Fitzmyer writes, "He 'has done his homework,' in investigating the story of Jesus and its sequel, with a claim that rivals the boast of any historian. Three qualities are claimed for his investigation, completeness, accuracy, and thoroughness ('from the beginning'); and another for his composition, order ('systematically')." Fitzmyer, 289. François Bovon writes, "With the words, 'about the events that have been fulfilled among us,' Luke nonetheless embraces the *content* both of these earlier works and of his own project….Thus one expects neither a scholarly monograph nor a religious exposition, but an account of events." Bovon and Koester, 19-20. Luke Timothy

The God of Israel as κύριος in the Birth Announcements

His motivation to create an ordered narrative based upon the sources available, including the previous accounts, is why Luke's gospel begins in a manner different from any of the other gospels, including the only other gospel to begin with a birth-infancy narrative, Matthew. Further, he uses this unique opening to set the foundation for his use of κύριος to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus.[320] Unlike Matthew, who introduces Jesus in the opening sentence of his gospel, Luke does not introduce Jesus until sentence 22 (1:31). Instead he begins his narrative with the story of a Jewish priest named Zechariah and his barren wife Elizabeth. Luke describes them as "righteous in the sight of God (τοῦ θεοῦ), following all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord (τοῦ κυρίου) blamelessly."[321] Luke introduces the reader to κύριος by the third sentence (1:6) and in this introduction κύριος is clearly the God of Israel. In fact, in the

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Johnson writes, "He wants to emphasize a connection to eyewitness accounts 'from the beginning' (see Acts 1:21). But is he subtly criticizing previous narratives for being too dependent on the form of those traditions (with an emphasis on the 'just as'), and too little 'arranged'? The necessity of rearranging one's sources is recognized by Lucian in *How to Write History*, 47." Johnson and Harrington, 27-28.

[320] Like Rowe, it will be argued that what Luke introduces in the birth-infancy narrative truly sets the course of κύριος and its use within the gospel narrative. It is relevant and important to include the cited quotation from Mark Coleridge: "The general claim of this study is that the first two chapters of the Third Gospel set the Lukan narrative in motion and lay the ground for all that follows by articulating in narrative form a vision of both the divine visitation and the human recognition of it, and this as a way of preparing for the birth of a distinctively Lukan christology." Coleridge, *The Birth of the Lukan Narrative: Narrative as Christology in Luke 1-2* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 22-23.

[321] Luke 1:6.

subsequent nine occurrences of κύριος within the birth-infancy narrative, each time κύριος unambiguously refers to the God of Israel.[322]

The reader is introduced to Zechariah's duties as a priest when he entered "the holy place of the Lord (τὸν ναὸν τοῦ κυρὶου) and burn[t] incense."[323] While completing his service, "an angel of the Lord (ἄγγελος κυρίου), standing on the right side of the altar of incense, appeared to him."[324] The angel encouraged Zechariah not to be afraid because he had an answer to Zechariah's prayer. Elizabeth would give birth to a son to be named John and "many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord (ἐνώπιον [τοῦ] κυρίου)."[325] The angel foretold that John would be filled with the Holy Spirit before his birth and "he will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God (κύριον τὸν θεὸν αὐτῶν)."[326] John is further described as going before him in

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[322] It may only be eight occurrences based upon textual considerations.

[323] Luke 1:9. It should be noted here that there is a textual variant in which θεοῦ is found in place of κυρίου. I personally think κυρίου is the correct reading; however, I do not wish to divert attention to a detailed textual argument. Instead, it should be recognized that this occurrence of κύριος might not contribute evidence to the argument based upon how the textual question is resolved.

[324] Luke 1:11.

[325] Luke 1:15. Again, it should be noted here that there is a textual variant in which θεοῦ is found in place of κυρίου. See comment above.

[326] Luke 1:16. This is the first occurrence of κύριος and θεός together in the gospel of Luke. This structure is most likely a reflection of the Greek Jewish scriptural rendering of יהוה אלהים, where κύριος is used to represent יהוה and θεός is used to render אלהים. See Chapter 1: The Greek Jewish Scriptures ("the Septuagint"), "Rösel insists that "κύριος is the original representation of the translators" and that the scribes regularly chose κύριος as the equivalent of the tetragrammaton and θεός for אלהים." Rösel: 411-428. While Luke directly cites Scripture only twice (2:23, 24) within the birth-infancy narrative, Rowe correctly recognizes that "the characters and events of the Old Testament are everywhere present and nowhere mentioned." Also, this is the language of the Old

the spirit and power of Elijah in order to turn fathers' hearts back to their children, the disobedient back to the wisdom of the just, and "to make ready for the Lord (κυρίῳ) a people prepared for him."[327] When Zechariah questioned the angel because he and his wife were old, he was struck mute. Upon his return home, Elizabeth did conceive a child and secluded herself for five months, stating, "This is what the Lord (κύριος) has done for me at the time when he has been gracious to me, to take away my disgrace among people."[328]

In every occurrence of κύριος in the birth announcement of John, Luke has clearly identified κύριος as the God of Israel. He continues this same identification in the birth announcement of Jesus. The reader is again introduced to the angel Gabriel when, in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, he appeared to Mary in Nazareth. He addressed her, "Greetings, favored one, the Lord (ὁ κύριος) is with you!"[329] Mary, like Zechariah,

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Testament refracted through the Greek Jewish Scriptures. Rowe, 33. Based on this, Fitzmyer notes that "Here *Kyrios* clearly refers to Yahweh." Fitzmyer, 326.

[327] Luke 1:17. Robert C. Tannehill notes that in both of these descriptions of John turning people the verb ἐπιστρέφω is employed and this word is "commonly used in the sense of repent or convert in Luke-Acts." Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (vol. 1: The Gospel According to Luke; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 23. Fitzmyer argues that John clearly goes before Yahweh. He further argues, "The parallelism of the stories of John and Jesus suggests that John 'goes before' Jesus, who is also called 'the Lord' (1:43; 2:11)." But that cannot be meant here, since Zechariah is told nothing of the birth of yet another child in God's plan. Moreover, neither in the OT nor in any other pre-Christian Jewish literature is Elijah ever depicted as the precursor of the Messiah. That notion developed only in Christian times (see J. A. T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus")." Fitzmyer, however, is completely missing the point of Luke's narrative agenda. John goes before Yahweh because Jesus as κύριος is Yahweh born a human. Fitzmyer, 327.

[328] Luke 1:25.

[329] Luke 1:28.

was troubled and did not understand. The angel informed her further that God had favored her and she would become pregnant and give birth to a son to be named Jesus. It is here in verse thirty-one that Luke first introduces Jesus; he is not yet conceived in the mind of Mary his mother, let alone within her womb. As he did with John, Gabriel declared that Jesus would be great. But unlike John who "will be called prophet of the Most High, he will be called "the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God (κύριος ὁ θεὸς) will give him the throne of his father David."[330] Mary, like Zechariah, questioned the angel on how this could be since she had not had sexual relations with a man. The angel informed her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you."[331] The angel then made explicit what had been implicit: this holy child will be called the Son of God![332] This child is the Son of God the Most

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[330] Luke 1:32. Again, this structure is most likely a reflection of the Greek Jewish scriptural rendering of יהוה אלהים, where κύριος is used to represent יהוה and θεός is used to render אלהים. See comment above. Also, Tannehill understands the combination of these themes as recalling the oracle of Nathan to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-16. The importance of the Davidic Messiah becomes clearer as Luke's narrative develops. Tannehill observes that "the title Son of God is not only associated with the Davidic Messiah in Gabriel's words to Mary but also in later passages of Luke-Acts, which serve as reminders of this special sense of Son of God." Tannehill, 25. Fitzmyer also concurs that "the throne of his father David" alludes to 2 Samuel, further noting "the indirect relation to the *kērygma* of such details as that Jesus was the Son of God, descended from David, and related to the holy Spirit." Luke's narrative agenda, however, seems to point to a direct relation to the *kērygma*, at least the *kērygma* of Luke. Fitzmyer, 305-306, 348.

[331] Luke 1:35. Fitzmyer notes, "The language used here is highly figurative; neither verb, *eperchesthai*, "come upon," or *episkiazein*, "overshadow, cast a shadow over," has an immediate connotation of conception, let alone a sexual implication. They are otherwise unattested in a context that would suggest these nuances. They are figurative expressions of the mysterious intervention of God's Spirit and power which will bring about Jesus' Davidic role and his divine filiation." Fitzmyer, 337-338.

[332] Fitzmyer is careful to note that "the child will not be merely a Davidic Messiah but God's own Son." Fitzmyer, 339-340.

High.[333] After the angel cited the miracle of her cousin Elizabeth's pregnancy with John, Mary responded, "Yes, I am a servant of the Lord (κυρίου); let this happen to me according to your word."[334]

Luke employs his literary skill to establish that the κύριος in the birth announcements of both John and Jesus is the God of Israel. He does so for two reasons. First, by clearly setting forth that the God of Israel is the κύριος, he embraces the Jewish roots from which Christianity was born. His narrative embraces these roots by explicitly using κύριος in the manner that his Jewish audience expects. He knows that when Jewish audiences would hear κύριος, they would understand it to mean *Yahweh*. Luke relies firmly on the audience's knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures in Greek.[335] He expects them instinctively to understand the God of Israel when they hear κύριος. Luke then builds on this predisposition by constructing his narrative to confirm their nearly automatic identification that the κύριος is the God of Israel.

Luke constructs his narrative not simply to fulfill his purposes, but also because he sees the "new" events he is narrating bound together with the "old" events by means of the "purpose and action of God."[336] The gospel story is a continuation of the stories of

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[333] Fitzmyer argues that the "first occurrence of [Son of God] in the Lucan writings is related to the other, 'Son of the Most High.'" Fitzmyer, 352.

[334] Luke 1:38.

[335] Luke's Jewish audience is spoken of on this particular point because it is unclear to what extent the non-Jewish audience would have instinctively understood the God of Israel when they heard κύριος. The Jewish Scriptures in Greek were the Scriptures used by the early Christians for sure; it is just not apparent how well the non-Jewish Christian converts were versed in these scriptures.

the Jewish Scriptures.[337] The birth-infancy narratives of Luke, in particular, "unfold in such a way as to disclose a single skein of events, all of which stem from the marvelous fulfillment by God of his covenant promises to Israel."[338] Central to these Lukan narratives is the divine identity expressed as κύριος ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ or more simply and frequently ὁ κύριος. "To write, therefore, of fulfillment and unity is to write of the act and purpose of the κύριος," and thus Rowe writes, "The God whose life is depicted in Israel's Scripture and who acts now in fulfillment of his purpose is, for Luke, the Lord."[339] For Luke, based on the Greek Jewish Scriptures, κύριος is clearly the God of Israel. And since the "purpose and action" of this God of Israel is what binds together the "old" events with the "new," the narrative key to this divine identity is κύριος.

There is a second reason why Luke establishes that the κύριος in the birth announcements of both John and Jesus is the God of Israel. Such a thesis lays the foundation for his development and progressive revelation of the identity of Jesus. If Luke wants to claim that Jesus is the God of Israel because Jesus is the κύριος, then firmly establishing—both in precedence and in narrative—that the God of Israel is the

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[336] See Rowe, 33. See also Brawley, *Centering on God: Method and Message in Luke-Acts* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997).

[337] Rowe, 32-33. Johnson observes that "Luke's intention of continuing the biblical narrative is shown by the dramatic shift from the balanced, complex sentence of the prologue (1:1-4) to the more plodding rhythms of the Greek Bible (LXX) in 1:5. His language suddenly is filled with Semitisms….So skillful is he that the reader is plunged into the world of Ruth, the Judges, and Samuel." Johnson and Harrington, 34-35.

[338] Minear, "Luke's Use of the Birth Stories," in *Studies in Luke-Acts* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1966), 129.

[339] Rowe, 34.

κύριος is crucial. Luke has in mind a unique evangelistic formulation for promoting his view of Jesus in a new role. His formulation is firmly rooted in the Greek Jewish Scriptures, and thus he uses it authoritatively in his narrative. Such a narrative strategy is brilliant. Luke knows that the reader almost instinctively identified the κύριος as the God of Israel, and he utilizes this to introduce a startling revelation. The God of Israel, ὁ κύριος, was being conceived in the womb of Mary.[340]

Jesus as κύριος in the Womb

After the two birth announcements, Luke shifts his narrative to recount a visit between Mary and her cousin Elizabeth. He begins the story with a generic "in those days," which lacks precision and therefore denies the reader the ability to pinpoint exactly when the visit occurred. After Mary arrives in the hill country of Judah and enters the home of Zechariah and Elizabeth, she greets Elizabeth. At that moment John leaps within the womb of Elizabeth, and she is filled with the Holy Spirit. A common feature of the advent of the Spirit within Luke's story—both in the gospel and Acts—is revelation and proclamation. Elizabeth exclaims, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child (fruit) in your womb!"[341] The subject of the first proclamation is Mary and the subject of the second proclamation is the child produced by the Holy

[340] While Fitzmyer recognizes that "Luke, in affirming that Jesus was Son of God, not only at his conception, but through his conception, is representative of early Christians among whom such an awareness was achieved," he misses Luke's ultimate narrative objective: the revelation of Jesus as Yawheh incarnate. Fitzmyer erroneously calls "the idea of incarnation—a notion foreign to Luke (as to Matthew)." Fitzmyer, 340.

[341] Luke 1:42.

Spirit—the power of the Most High.[342] Though the reader is prepared for this pregnancy, it is unclear whether Elizabeth's knowledge is miraculous or whether Luke has simply left out Mary telling Elizabeth her joyous news.[343] Even if Elizabeth's knowledge of Mary's pregnancy is miraculous, Luke shocks the reader with what Elizabeth says next: "And who am I that the mother of my Lord (ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ κυρίου μου) should come and visit me?"[344]

It is amply evident that τοῦ κυρίου in 1:43 refers to Jesus since the subject of the preceding proclamation is "the fruit of your womb." Such a child is extraordinary, produced by the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary. Further, it must be a reference to the child because the subject modified by "my Lord" is "the mother." Up to this point the God of Israel has had no parents. The only child to whom this mother is related is Jesus. When the statements of the angel to Mary concerning this child are remembered, Jesus is

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[342] Fitzmyer argues "The parallelism of 'holy Spirit' and 'power of the Most High' is intended to let the phrases explain each other. The latter phrase indicates that the Spirit is understood in the OT sense of God's creative and active power present to human beings. The *parallelismus membrorum* here is reminiscent of Hebrew poetry. See further 4:14; Acts 1:8; 6:8; 10:38, where Luke further uses the two ideas of 'power' and 'Spirit/grace' in conjunction." Fitzmyer, 350.

[343] Johnson sees this as an example of "how Luke uses dialogue to advance the story, or, more properly, to advance the reader's understanding of the story." Thus Elizabeth's statements reveal to the reader "dimensions of Mary's condition and Jesus' status previously undisclosed." Unfortunately, Johnson seems to miss some of Elizabeth's revelation concerning Jesus' status. Johnson and Harrington, 43. Fitzmyer concludes from the activity of the spirit and the resultant prophetic activity that "each mother learns from heaven about the child of the other." Fitzmyer, 358.

[344] Luke 1:43. Johnson call this "Elizabeth's most dramatic statement." He appropriately observes that "'Lord' is a title first of all for God" but then incorrectly says "of Jesus, it is used most properly as a resurrection title." He instinctively recognizes that "a deeper dimension is surely implied" but he is unable to recognize Luke's narrative agenda. Johnson and Harrington, 41.

clearly the "Son of the Most High God." Now, in the words of Elizabeth, he is also τοῦ κυρίου μου.

Elizabeth's question is the first time that Jesus himself emerges within the narrative.[345] There have been predictions of Jesus, but this is the first time that the reference coincides with his actual existence. Narratively speaking, Jesus has only come into being between 1:38 and Elizabeth's proclamations and question.[346] Jesus now "actually exists in the narrative" since both the proclamations and the question assume the conception of Jesus.[347] So when Jesus first appears within the narrative—as opposed to being referred to and described by the narrative—he is introduced as "ὁ κύριος in the womb."[348] This is the opening statement by Luke in developing and progressively revealing the identity of Jesus. This use of κύριος within his narrative of the life of Jesus results in his own unique evangelistic formulation for promoting his view of Jesus in a new role. Jesus, the Son of the Most High God, is κύριος. The God of Israel, Yahweh, is κύριος. Is it possible that Luke's unique evangelistic formulation for promoting his view of Jesus in a new role is that Jesus is none other than the God of Israel born a human? If

[345] Rowe, 39.

[346] Luke 1:38, "So Mary said, 'Yes, I am a servant of the Lord; let this happen to me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her." Fitzmyer notes that "In the OT the expression [You are going to conceive in your womb and bear a son] is addressed sometimes to a woman who is already pregnant, and sometimes to one who will conceive in the immediate future. Luke has followed the Septuagintal future, and that tense will appear in v. 35 again." Fitzmyer, 347.

[347] Rowe, 43.

[348] Rowe, 39.

this is so, then the use of κύριος is Luke's means to develop and progressively reveal this identity.

There are five different, but interrelated, issues that must be examined in truly understanding Luke's opening statement about Jesus ὁ κύριος. These issues underline the singular importance of 1:43 to the understanding of Luke's use of κύριος within his narrative.[349] First, the importance of the introduction of a character within a narrative cannot be overstated. To this it should be added that Luke intentionally introduces κύριος early in his narrative to emphasize its importance. Further, he methodically emphasizes an identification of the God of Israel as the κύριος early in his narrative in the birth announcements. Finally, he introduces Jesus as the κύριος in his first appearance in the narrative. "Such an introduction should profoundly shape the way we conceive of Lukan

[349] It should be noted how many scholars completely miss the significance of 1:43. Tannehill's only comment is that "the special importance of Jesus' birth will be emphasized further in the visitation scene…in which Elizabeth will address Mary as 'the mother of my Lord' and bless her and her offspring." Tannehill, 25. Bovon, besides noting that "My Lord" is Jewish rather than Christian and serves to highlight the difference between the positions of honor of John and Jesus, actually claims that Elizabeth's question gives "the impression of a surprised woman who does not really know what is happening." He attributes this incoherence to a lack of fixed tradition or an attempt to express emotions. Bovon and Koester, 59. I. Howard Marshall notes the application of κύριος to Jesus in a short comment but identifies its significance as either royal or messianic. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Exeter, England: Paternoster Press, 1978), 81. John Nolland follows Marshall with even less comment and absolutely no recognition of Luke's agenda. Nolland, *Word Biblical Commentary: Luke 1:1-9:20* (vol. 35A; Dallas, TX: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 67. Darrell L. Bock argues against 1:43 alluding to Jesus' divine nature, instead calling it evidence of "messianic respect." Bock, *Luke Volume 1: 1:1-9:50* (2vols.; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994), 137. Fitzmyer does recognize the significance of 1:43 in applying κύριος to Jesus, though he refuses to allow Luke's narrative agenda to express itself fully.

Christology, and how we interpret Luke's use of κύριος in the rest of Luke-Acts, for it is in fact as κύριος that Luke first brings Jesus into the human realm."[350]

Second, not only is Jesus introduced as κύριος, his introduction occurs at or near to his conception. This means that Jesus is κύριος from his very conception. There is never a moment in Luke's narrative when Jesus is not κύριος. Luke's narrative "does not allow for a separation between Jesus and his identity as ὁ κύριος."[351] While this point is not self-evident from 1:43, it becomes perfectly clear by the end of Luke's Gospel and his Acts of the Apostles. The accumulated evidence will point to Luke's development and progressive revelation of Jesus through his identity as ὁ κύριος.

Third, it has already been established that κύριος is the Greek Jewish scriptural equivalent of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton among Greek speaking Jews and Christians.[352] Thus it is startling, yet extremely important, that he introduces Jesus as κύριος in the middle of numerous occurrences of κύριος in which the referent is clearly YHWH:

1:38: Mary: "ἰδοὺ ἡ δούλη κυρίου."
1:43: Elizabeth: "ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ κυρίου μου."
1:45: Elizabeth: "τοῖς λελαλημένοις αὐτῇ παρὰ κυρὶου."
1:46: Mary: "μεγαλύνει ἡ ψυχὴ τὸν κύριον."[353]

Based on this introduction and its surrounding context, "it becomes possible to draw the conclusion that the dramatic moment of 1:43 in the narrative bespeaks a kind of unity of identity between YHWH and the human Jesus within Mary's womb by means of the

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[350] Rowe, 43.

[351] Rowe, 44.

[352] As previously discussed in Chapter 1: The Greek Jewish Scriptures ("the Septuagint"). Rowe, 44. See footnote 36 in particular.

[353] Rowe, 45.

resonance of κύριος."[354] Here it should be noted that Rowe does not allow Luke's unique evangelistic formulation to speak fully. As established in the discussion of the Greek Jewish Scriptures, the Greek equivalent term for Yahweh is κύριος. Luke further establishes this identification between Yahweh and the term κύριος within the birth announcements of John and Jesus. He then introduces Jesus as that same κύριος. The result is like a familiar mathematical formula: If a=b and b=c, then a=c. If Yahweh is κύριος and Jesus is κύριος, then the reason that Luke introduces Jesus as κύριος in the midst of numerous references to κύριος as Yahweh is that he is actually revealing Jesus as Yahweh.[355]

Fourth, the reason that Luke can use the same word to refer to Yahweh and Jesus is because of his understanding of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a character within Luke's narrative in a uniquely distinct manner; however, the Holy Spirit is still not distinct from God. It is, in fact, the dynamic and movement of God within the world. The Holy Spirit is God's power as seen in Luke 1:35 (power of the Most High).[356] The importance of this unique and distinct character of the Holy Spirit is no more evident than in the conception of Jesus. Rowe argues, "God remains God 'above' the world and at the same time in the Holy Spirit 'comes upon' and 'overshadows' the earthly woman Mary."[357] This means that the work of the Holy Spirit in the conception of Jesus creates

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[354] Rowe, 45.

[355] This identification does not preclude Luke from using κύριος in its various secular applications and meanings. The observation is focused exclusively on the Christological identification of Jesus as Yahweh through Luke's use of κύριος.

[356] Again, see Fitzmyer, 350.

a "twofold referent" for the word κύριος because "God's life is now bound up with Jesus' life to such a great extent and with such intensity that they share the name/title κύριος."[358] In fact, Luke's unique formulation of the identity of Jesus results in the reality that the Holy Spirit of God by overshadowing Mary created itself in human form. The revelation is that the identity of Jesus is not a shared title—κύριος—but rather that Jesus is **the Lord** (ὁ κύριος). Gradually Luke leads the reader to the realization that Jesus is in fact Yahweh.

Finally there is one more consideration. Along with Fitzmyer, Rowe argues that Luke's use of κύριος does not mean that "Jesus is the same character or person as God the Father."[359] Both of them argue that Jesus cannot simply be identified as the Father, yet this does not remove "the continuity in their identity."[360] They maintain that Luke's narrative requires the identity of the Lord to be understood and constructed in a much more intricate and active way than easy and straightforward identification.[361] These arguments lack substantiation in the Lukan narrative. Furthermore, they contradict the conclusions already discussed above. If "the narrative bespeaks a kind of unity of identity between YHWH and the human Jesus within Mary's womb by means of the resonance of κύριος" and "God remains God 'above' the world and at the same time in the Holy Spirit 'comes upon' and 'overshadows' the earthly woman Mary," the logical

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[357] Rowe, 48.

[358] Rowe, 48.

[359] Rowe, 49.

[360] Fitzmyer, 202.

[361] Rowe, 49.

conclusion is that Luke is presenting Jesus as the human manifestation of Yahweh. Fitzmyer even admits that calling Jesus κύριος puts him "on a level with Yahweh."[362] The only way for Jesus to be on a level with Yahweh without taking away from Yahweh's unique superiority is for Jesus to actually be Yahweh. It is not a "kind of unity of identity," but in fact an identity in which Jesus is Yahweh. He is the product of the Holy Spirit of Yahweh overshadowing Mary; hence, the child she bears is Yahweh because Yahweh is about to be born a human. Luke constructs his narrative to show that κύριος progressively reveals such an identity of Jesus.

Jesus as χριστός *κύριος (Christ-Lord)*

Luke chooses to introduce the birth of Jesus in his narrative with the announcement of the angel to the shepherds. This is the first time in his narrative that Jesus exists outside the womb of his mother Mary. In the midst of this announcement to the shepherds is the statement "Today your Savior is born in the city of David. He is Christ the Lord (χριστός κύριος)."[363] This declaration is the centerpiece of the announcement.[364] When Luke's use of κύριος and χριστός are examined throughout his

[362] Fitzmyer, 365. Fitzmyer positions this statement as an eventual development; however, Luke's narrative presents it as reality from the very conception of Jesus.

[363] Luke 2:11. Fitzmyer makes a very important observation, though he does not realize its significance for Luke's narrative agenda: "The Lucan title [Savior] for Jesus is put first; it had been used of Yahweh in 1:47. Now it is explicitly used of Jesus, having been implied in 'the horn of salvation' (1:69)." Fitzmyer, 409. This observation makes clear that Luke is developing and progressively revealing an explicit identification of Jesus as the Lord God of Israel, an identification that Fitzmyer denies, at least in its explicitness.

[364] Bock notes that part of the significance of this announcement is that it contains three key Christological terms—Savior, Christ, and Lord. He incorrectly characterizes

narratives, it is apparent that Luke is using these two words in a "mutually determinative manner: χριστός conveys which and what kind of κύριος Jesus is, and κύριος discloses the depth of Jesus' messianic identity."[365] There are only three passages in the gospel of Luke in which χριστός and κύριος are used in conjunction with one another: 2:11, 2:26 and 20:41-44. The second occurrence is presented during the description of Simeon in which it is stated that the Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he should not see death before he had seen τὸν χριστὸν κυρίου—the Lord's Christ.[366] And Jesus himself, during a discussion of Psalm 109:1, introduces the third occurrence.[367]

The reader is presented with an important question by Luke's use of ὁ χριστὸς κυρίου in 2:26, juxtaposed with the presentation of Jesus as κύριος in 1:43 and χριστὸς κύριος in 2:11: Can Jesus be both *the Lord* (κύριος) and the Christ *of the Lord* (κυρίου),

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2:11 as the first "formal comprehensive use of the title κύριος," dismissing 1:43 as a "reference of respect." Bock, 216. Fitzmyer also misses Luke's narrative agenda by describing these Christological terms as "titles born of resurrection-faith, which are being pressed back to the very beginning of his earthly existence." Fitzmyer, 397. Tannehill understands the announcement to the shepherds as anticipating Peter's proclamation in Acts 2. Tannehill, 38. Both scholars fail to recognize Luke's narrative agenda. Luke is advancing a program in which he claims that Jesus is κύριος from his very conception.

[365] Rowe, 54.

[366] This construction may have led to the textual variant in Luke 2:11 in which κύριος is presented as a modifier of χριστός by being in the genitive form (κυρίου). Nolland actually gives preference to 2:26, noting that χριστός κύριος is not paralleled elsewhere in the New Testament, and thus 2:11 is suspected of being corrupted. He concedes, however, that if it is not corrupted then it is likely pre-Lukan. Nolland, 107. While it cannot be established with certainty whether the construction of 2:11 is pre-Lukan, it can be demonstrated that it is vital to Luke's narrative program of developing and progressively revealing the identity of Jesus.

[367] The chapter number is based upon "the Septuagint" numbering.

and if so, how?[368] It is precisely this question that is at the heart of the third occurrence of χριστός and κύριος used in conjunction with one another—20:41-44. Luke shows Jesus asking a question in which he cites Psalm 109:1. The key to the energy of this passage is best demonstrated by Jesus' words surrounding the quotation from Psalms: "How can they say that the Christ (χριστός) is David's son?....David thus calls him Lord (κύριος)." Not only is the reader presented with the puzzle of why David would call his son Lord, but also how the Christ, who is David's son, can also be the Lord, who is the source of both David and the Christ. Luke does seem to construct this segment so as to draw the attention and emphasis away from the question of the Christ as David's son toward the question of the Christ as Lord.[369] The irony, however, is that the κύριος himself cites the Psalm and therefore introduces the reader, yet again, to the puzzle. And the puzzle is glaring, particularly when the reflections of the previous uses of κύριος within the gospel narrative are allowed to resonate.

This auditory reflection and the resulting resonance, firmly rooted in Jewish Scripture, is clearly heard when it is noted that "the possessive pronoun μου in τῷ κυρίῳ μου provides a strong semantic link between 20:42 and the first use of κύριος for Jesus in 1:43: τοῦ κυρίου μου."[370] Further, the significance of the question raised by the κύριος himself, when connected with both the larger narrative and 2:11 and 2:26, becomes indicative of how important κύριος is to Luke's narrative and how he is using it. Jesus'

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[368] Rowe, 53.

[369] Rowe, 171-172.

[370] Rowe, 175. Nolland describes this material as "thoroughly Jewish" but also notes "an echo of the language in which Augustus had been honored." Nolland, 107.

quotation of Psalm 109:1 demonstrates that Luke is using κύριος as a means to reveal the identity of Jesus. Jesus is Yahweh born a human. As Yahweh he is clearly the Lord and thus David's Lord. Further, he has been born a human in order to save his people; thus, he is the Christ, the anointed one. In this birth he is a son of David and a product of the Lord God of Israel overshadowing his mother Mary. But in his origin he is the Lord God of Israel. The expectation that the anointed one (χριστός) would come from the Lord (κύριος) is miraculously fulfilled by the Lord himself becoming the anointed one! Luke's genius is that in chapter 20 it is Jesus himself who reveals his identity. And thus Jesus speaks to the reader himself about the identity that Luke is developing and progressively revealing.

So, Luke introduces the juxtaposition of χριστός and κύριος in 2:11, returns to it in 2:26, further elucidates it in 20:41-44 and then returns again to it in Peter's sermon in Acts 2:34-36. Luke's use of κύριος and χριστός in these passages, along with his use of κύριος throughout his narratives, firmly establishes that κύριος and χριστός should be understood as mutually defining.[371] They maintain their own separate distinction of meaning and yet are forever related to one another. This perpetual relation, even unity, is found "in the figure of Jesus, who, narratively understood, is both χριστός and κύριος. Jesus, that is, holds the titles together."[372] While these words are distinct in meaning, they are perfectly unified in Luke's narrative by whom they identify. Rowe incorrectly

[371] Rowe, 174. Tannehill adds, "The title Messiah, which appears here for the first time, should be interpreted in light of what has already been said to Mary and by Zechariah about salvation for the Jewish people through the reestablishment of the Davidic kingdom. The reference to the birth 'in David's city' supports this connection." Tannehill, 38.

[372] Rowe.

applies this character of unity while still being distinct to God and Jesus. He argues that this type of unity despite distinctiveness is also consistent with Luke's "application of the same word κύριος both to θεός and to Ἰησοῦς…wherein there exists both an overlap and a differentiation of character or person through κύριος."[373] This application is only required if Jesus is not and cannot be God. The narrative certainly begins without the identity of Jesus as God because Jesus did not yet exist. But as soon as he is conceived, he is presented as κύριος and thus Luke begins to develop precisely this identity. Luke's narrative does not require a differentiation of character or person between God and Jesus. Whatever differentiation does exist in Luke's gospel is due to his program of developing and progressively revealing the identity of Jesus. This becomes evident when the differentiation blurs, fades, and recedes as his narrative progresses both in the gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles. While Rowe argues that in both cases distinctiveness is maintained, it is clear through the character of Jesus that χριστός and κύριος are united and it is through κύριος that God and Jesus are united. In contrast to Rowe, Luke's evangelistic formulation is not to maintain God and Jesus as distinct, yet united. His formulation is to claim that while initially God and Jesus seem to be distinct, they are in fact united because Jesus is God because he is the κύριος.

While Rowe argues that Psalm 109:1 "provides Luke with a way to write about continuity and distinction within identity," in fact, Luke uses Psalm 109:1 and Jesus' statements to reveal Jesus' identity as the Lord God of Israel born a human.[374] Instead of this psalm allowing Luke to point the reader toward Jesus' resurrection and thus the many

[373] Rowe, 175.

[374] Rowe, 175.

future and ambiguous uses of κύριος in Acts, while also reminding the reader of all of the previously ambiguous uses of κύριος in the gospel, Luke actually uses Psalm 109:1 to clear up any ambiguity of identity. The κύριος himself is born a human and thus becomes the χριστός who will save his people from their sins. Luke's narrative agenda does not preserve any perceived distinction in identity; rather, it ultimately eradicates any ambiguity, leaving the reader with the clear identification of Jesus as the Lord God of Israel born a human.

And so with force in both directions—forward through Acts and back through the gospel—"Jesus exegetes the word-play with his identity."[375] As a result, 2:11 needs to be translated "in a rather jarring way such that both titles are given equal weight and remain intact as nominative nouns: 'Christ-Lord.'"[376] The result of this retro application of Jesus' exegesis is to conclude that 2:11 is an announcement of the birth of a baby who saves the world as both Christ and Lord.[377] The connections between 2:11 and 20:41-44 (along

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[375] Rowe, 176.

[376] Rowe, 54. Bock lists several ways to render χριστός κύριος, ultimately favoring "The most natural rendering, given 1:31–35, [seeing] the terms as appositionally related"—Messiah, Lord. Bock, 217. While noting the precise rendering problematic, Johnson notes "the translation reverses the order of the Greek to put the English emphasis on Messiah, making 'Lord' something of an honorific, like 'master.'" Johnson, however, does recognize that Luke reverses this order in Acts 2:36; nevertheless, he does not realize the significance of this in that these terms stand in a mutually determinative manner. He is completely in error concerning the meaning of κύριος. Johnson and Harrington, 50.

[377] Bovon notes that these two terms never appear in the New Testament absent articles and καί. Bovon contends, "Luke wants to stress Jesus' dominion alongside his function as a savior. For Jewish readers ὁ χριστός ("the Messiah," "the anointed") was unambiguous in the context of Bethlehem; for Greek readers ὁ κύριος ("the Lord") fulfilled the same function. In Judaism the dominion of the Messiah was already an attribute of the "anointed" figure, and so perhaps too was the title κύριος in some places,

with the occurrence of 2:26) and the reintroduction of Psalm 109:1 in Acts 2 all point to a narrative program in which κύριος is a word of singular importance to the narrative development of the identity of Jesus. It is through this narrative program that Luke develops and progressively reveals that Jesus is God because he is the κύριος.[378]

Luke chooses to use the introduction of Jesus as "ὁ κύριος in the womb" in 1:43 and the announcement of Jesus to the shepherds as χριστός κύριος in 2:11 as the defining moments in his revelation of Jesus' identity. This does not mean that his identity is yet fully revealed within Luke's gospel narrative; it is still in the development process.[379] However, this does mean that the reader is introduced to κύριος and its singular importance within the Lukan narratives. This introduction is elaborated and confirmed

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although it is used almost exclusively of God in the LXX. Χριστός κύριος ("the Lord Messiah") could have been a traditional title in Hellenistic Judaism (Lam 4:20*; *Ps. Sol.* 17:32)." Bovon does not agree with Sahlin nor Marshall, however, "that one can retrovert from the Greek to a 'Messiah-YHWH' formula." Bovon and Koester, 89. Even if Bovon is correct that you cannot retrovert literally to a Messiah-YHWH formula, Luke's narrative agenda certainly is arguing this very concept. Jesus, because he is ὁ κύριος, is YHWH born a human and thus is the anointed one come to save his people from their sins. Fitzmyer cautions that these "traditional titles [are] inherited by Luke from the early Palestinian Christian community before him" and thus "are not to be regarded as additions made by a Hellenist." Fitzmyer, 409.

[378] Marshall begins to recognize Luke's narrative agenda when he notes, "Behind it may lie the idea of a Saviour who is to be regarded as the 'Messiah-Yahweh'; cf. the thought of the epiphany of the Lord in T. Levi 2:11; see also T. Sim. 6:5; T. Levi 5:2 (Sahlin, 214–218; Marshall, 100f.)." Marshall, 110. This recognition, however, is not developed.

[379] Bock observes: "The presence of this title serves to tip Luke's hand about how he sees Jesus, but Luke does not define the title here. He merely introduces it as a descriptive title of the messianic Savior. Luke defines his Christology mainly from the earth up, since that is how most people of his time came to see who Jesus was. He allows the readers, through exposure to Jesus, to grow in their understanding of who Christ is. In this way, the readers experience christological understanding, much as those around Jesus had." Bock, 218.

by other occurrences within the narratives. The result is a uniquely Lukan formulation of the identity of Jesus as κύριος, which allows Luke to present Jesus in a new, and perhaps, unexpected role—Jesus as God.[380] Luke's formulation does not mean that Jesus has replaced God; rather, God became a human and that human is Jesus. Luke's formulation, however, does mean that Jesus has replaced Caesar.[381] Caesar began as a human claiming to become divine; Jesus began as God who became a human. Caesar claimed to be the lord of the world; Jesus, by virtue of his divinity, was the Lord of the universe.

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[380] Bock agrees stating, "The term will clearly come to refer to the *absolute sovereignty and divine relationship* that Jesus possesses as the one who brings salvation (Bock 1986). The title does not detract from the main declaration of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah; but its presence here suggests that there is more present in Jesus than his merely being Messiah." Emphasis added. Bock, 218. While the declaration that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah is crucial, it is not the main declaration; rather, the narrative agenda for Luke is that Jesus is more than the expected Davidic Messiah. He is the Lord God of Israel himself, ὁ κύριος, born the Davidic Messiah. The main declaration is that Jesus is God.

[381] Despite recognizing the echoes of Augustan language, particularly Savior, and acknowledging that "what is offered in Luke 2 in the name of the Christ is recognizably kin to what was offered elsewhere in the name of the Roman emperor," Nolland refuses to allow "that Christ and Caesar, however, were in any sense to be considered as antagonists in the realpolitik of the day." Nolland, 107. See Chapter 4: The Acts of the Apostles and Luke's Use of 'Kyrios' for why this contention is mistaken. Marshall, however, is more nuanced and approaches accuracy with his observation, "The origins of the language here can be satisfactorily explained in terms of the Jewish background (W. Foerster, TDNT VII, 1015), but Luke may well have expected his readers to see a contrast with rival Hellenistic statements." He further contributes, "Although the title is rare, the thought of Jesus as Saviour pervades the NT and is fully expressed in the birth story (1:69, 71, 77; Voss, 45–55)." Marshall, 110. The background of this is found in the Hebrew Scriptures with God identified as exclusively Savior; if Jesus is God born a human and this is expressed through κύριος, then it is easy to understand the proclamation of 2:11 declaring him Savior. Bovon, while noting the title comprehensible to both Jewish and Greek reader, contends that Luke characterizes the term by presenting Jesus as "a *healing* Messiah, and who thus proves his kindness palpably without thereby succumbing to the misconceptions of the political theology of the time." He also notes the use of Savior in "the Septuagint" for God himself or even a deliverer of Israel. Bovon and Koester, 88.

Luke's evangelistic formulation is breathtaking in its audacity and its claim. He argues narratively that it was foretold in the scriptures. Presenting the angel and Zechariah announcing these words of scriptural prophecy then bolsters the claim.

Preparation for the Coming Lord (1:16-17, 76, 3:4-6)

The revelation of Jesus in the womb as κύριος and the announcement of his birth as κύριος requires the readers to reexamine what they have assumed about the identity of the previous instances of κύριος. Specifically, the prophetic proclamation of Gabriel in 1:16-17, the prophetic statement by Zechariah in 1:76, and the fulfillment of these prophesies in the life of John in 3:4-6 take on new meaning based upon the presentation of Jesus as κύριος in 1:43 and 2:11. Luke uses these passages, which are bound together by "similarity of style, continuity of theme, and a promise-fulfillment movement," to further develop and reveal the identity of Jesus as the Lord God of Israel born a human.[382] The reader, having been introduced to Jesus as κύριος in 1:43 and 2:11, is compelled to reassess the identity of κύριος in these prophesies and their fulfillment.

The first passage is the prophetic proclamation by the angel Gabriel to Zechariah concerning his just-announced son. Among the statements of description given by the angel, it is stated in 1:16 that John will turn many of the sons of Israel ἐπὶ κύριον τὸν θεὸν αὐτῶν. Luke 1:17 continues with the statement that, with the spirit and power of Elijah, John will ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ…ἑτοιμάσαι κυρίῳ λαὸν κατεσκευασμένον. Given that these verses are all part of the same prophetic proclamation by the angel Gabriel, "the

[382] Rowe, 56. Johnson states, "Luke's infancy stories also point forward. By means of programmatic prophecies they anticipate later plot developments. Luke uses prophecy and fulfillment to structure his entire narrative." Johnson and Harrington, 35.

κυρίω of 1:17 clearly refers back through the αὐτοῦ of 1:17 to the κύριον τὸν θεὸν of 1:16; hence, the κύριος of 1:17 is the God of Israel."[383] Such a claim, already presented earlier, is further strengthened when the presence of the infinitive ἑτοιμάσαι, in connection with John's relationship to the κύριος in 1:76 and 3:4, is recognized. The use of ἑτοιμάσαι in describing the relationship of the κύριος and John is further underlined by the structure of the Lukan birth-infancy narrative. The narrative begins with the announcement of the birth of John (1:5-25) followed by the announcement of the birth of Jesus (1:26-38). Then the transition of Mary and Jesus in utero visiting Elizabeth and John in utero (1:39-56) precedes the birth, circumcision, and appearance of John (1:59-80) followed by the birth, circumcision, and appearance of Jesus (2:1-40) and finally John going before Jesus (3:4-6). This is why the narrative structure of Luke's gospel requires the birth-infancy narrative to be integrated with the following story because Luke has unified it with his use of κύριος and the structure found in 1:16-17, 1:76, and 3:4-6.[384]

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[383] Rowe, 57. Fitzmyer also agrees with this conclusion with his summary statement, "Here *Kyrios* clearly refers to Yahweh." Fitzmyer, 326. Marshall concurs, while acknowledging the Christian reader could be arriving at a different conclusion: "αὐτοῦ must refer to God (Mal. 3:1) who can be thought of as appearing on the earth (T. Sim. 6:5–8), but the pronoun could be regarded by Christian readers as referring to the coming of God in Jesus." Marshall, 58. Fitzmyer further comments, "The parallelism of the stories of John and Jesus suggests that John "goes before" Jesus, who is also called "the Lord" (1:43; 2:11). *But that cannot be meant here*, since Zechariah is told nothing of the birth of yet another child in God's plan. Moreover, neither in the OT nor in any other pre-Christian Jewish literature is Elijah ever depicted as the precursor of the Messiah. That notion developed only in Christian times (see J. A. T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus")." Emphasis added. Fitzmyer, 327. Bock is in agreement. Bock, 87-88. And yet Luke's narrative agenda will clearly develop Jesus' identity such that John does go before Jesus and that is precisely what is "meant here."

In Zechariah's prophetic statement about his son John in 1:76 the elements of ἐνώπιον, ἑτοιμάσαι, and κύριος are reintroduced: "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἑτοιμάσαι ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ to give knowledge of σωτηρίας to his people in their ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν."[385] These elements are clearly a repetition of what is introduced in 1:16-17; however, since 1:16-17 the reader has been introduced to "ὁ κύριος in the womb."[386] Further, Luke anticipates the description of 2:11 (σωτὴρ ὅς ἐστιν χριστὸς κύριος) with the type of knowledge that John will be providing as he goes before the Lord—knowledge of salvation.[387]

While Rowe claims that "it is becoming ever more difficult to determine exegetically whether the κύριος for whom John is preparing is the God of Abraham or the babe yet to be born," Luke's narrative agenda cannot be plainer.[388] He is taking the

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[384] While Johnson does not recognize the need for including John's fulfillment of the prophecies in chapter 3 as a part of the birth-infancy narrative, he does note that "Luke shows [the description in 1:16] dramatically fulfilled in his fuller than usual depiction of John's preaching ministry, 3:3-18." Johnson and Harrington, 33.

[385] Nolland sees 1:76 echoing "the thought of Mal 3:1 in much the same way as does Luke 1:16 (see there), but with an overlap of language only in ἐνώπιον, "before." The following ἑτοιμάσαι ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ, "to prepare his ways," is also dependent on Mal 3:1 (the plural ὁδοὺς, "ways," may betray an influence from Isa 40:3–4 [cf. Mark 1:2–3])." Nolland, 88.

[386] Rowe, 39.

[387] Bovon notes the uniqueness of this knowledge: "*Salvation* begins only with Jesus (vv. 68–71). But the forerunner brings more than just its promise through the prophets. John will grant "knowledge of salvation." This is more than a mere intellectual knowledge, since it results from existentially experiencing forgiveness, and emerges from a living relationship with God as the fruit of the preaching of repentance. The un-Lukan word γνῶσις ("knowledge") should be understood in the Semitic sense, as practical knowledge, wisdom, faith, acknowledgment." Bovon and Koester, 75.

[388] Rowe, 70.

reader from an assumed position that John is to go before the Lord God of Israel to the revealed position that the Lord God of Israel has been born a human and thus John will go before this human manifestation, namely Jesus.[389] Rowe's perceived exegetical difficulty is the result of theological tenets that were not shared by Luke. Luke's agenda does not require a distinction between the God of Abraham and the babe yet to be born.[390] By anticipating 2:11 and σωτὴρ, Luke is engaged in a program of narrative structure and use of κύριος that is anything but unintentional.[391] He is purposefully identifying Jesus as both the κύριος and the God of Abraham; in fact, Jesus is the God of Abraham because he is κύριος and he is κύριος because he is the God of Abraham. If this

[389] Bovon seems to recognize this with his comment, "The role of forerunner, announced in Isa 40:3 and Mal 3:1, was interpreted by the Baptist's community in reference to God himself (ἐνώπιον κυρίου, "before the Lord"); the Christian community applied it to the *Messiah Jesus*." Bovon and Koester, 75. There is no evidence, however, that he specifically recognizes Luke's narrative agenda.

[390] Marshall maintains this either/or distinction when he observes, "For Christian readers κυρίου would presumably refer to Jesus; the mention of God in v. 78 need not mean that κυρίου refers to God here. It is not clear, however, whether Zechariah was thinking of the Messiah here (as Elizabeth did, 1:43) or of God (so Vielhauer, 40)." Marshall, 93. Why not allow both/and, with Jesus as κύριος being God himself? Bock, citing Schürmann "who distinguishes between the original meaning [God] and Luke's [Jesus]" argues, "John goes before the God of Israel, because he goes before the salvation that is tied to the Messiah. In the Messiah, God's plan and design are found, so that when Messiah comes, God comes." Bock, 188-189. Exactly! Jesus the κύριος is God the κύριος born a human. The only new thing about God's arrival is that he has come as a human.

[391] Here Fitzmyer recognizes Luke's narrative program and gives it voice. "The hindsight with which the infancy narrative has been composed by Luke makes it likely that *kyrios* here would be understood by him as Jesus. That identification makes the canticle itself hang together better as a unit: Jesus is not only the horn of salvation in the house of David (1:69), the Dawn from on High (1:78), but also the *Kyrios* before whom John prepares the way (1:76)." Fitzmyer, 385-386. Why this same conclusion cannot be allowed to extend back to 1:17 is unclear. For the reader, this extension based upon hindsight cannot be escaped.

identity is still not fully revealed to the reader in 1:76, 2:11 is a burst of revelation and it becomes perfectly clear in the description of John's fulfillment of the prophecies in 3:4-6.[392]

With chapter 3 the reader finds John fulfilling the role that was foretold of him by both the angel Gabriel and his father Zechariah—he is the one obeying the command ἑτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου. With the reappearance again of ἑτοιμάσαι, and κύριος, the similarity of style, continuity of theme, and promise-fulfillment movement is clearly present.[393] What has been foretold in 1:16-17 and 1:76 has now come to pass. The repetition and narrative structure of the birth infancy narrative (including the fulfillment of prophecy concerning John) points to Luke's narrative agenda. Luke has in mind a unique evangelistic formulation for promoting his view of Jesus in a new role. Luke knows that the reader almost instinctively identifies κύριος as the God of Israel, and he utilizes this to confirm the startling revelation already introduced in 1:43. The God of Israel, ὁ κύριος, born into humanity is who John is going before. And this is precisely what Luke presents to the reader in chapter 3.[394] John is going before Jesus, ὁ κύριος, the God of Israel conceived in the womb in 1:43 and born in 2:11.

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[392] Johnson, unknowingly, recognizes the theological importance of Jesus being the Lord God of Israel (not just sharing divine identity) when he states, "If Luke cannot show that 'the God of Israel visited and redeemed his people,' then the hope of the Gentiles is groundless." Johnson and Harrington, 48.

[393] Rowe, 56, 70.

[394] Bovon sees this as being the result of interpretation by Luke and does not think John shared this identification. "Of course, for them, and especially for Luke, ὁ κύριος ("the Lord") indicates Jesus (for Isaiah, Qumran, and the Baptist, it still meant God)…." Bovon and Koester, 121. Marshall continues his assumption of either/or identification stating, "αὐτοῦ is substituted for τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν, thus identifying the κύριος mentioned

The ambiguity that Rowe insists upon is, in fact, the point of revelation.[395] His conclusion of shared identity with distinction is not what Luke's narrative program presents. Luke 1:16-17 is not ambiguous at all: κύριος is the God of Israel. Luke 1:76, with its anticipation of 2:11, does present κύριος with ambiguity. However, this ambiguity is present not because Luke desires to be ambiguous; rather, it is ambiguous because Luke is in the process of developing and progressively revealing the identity of Jesus. This temporary ambiguity is erased when John's fulfillment of the prophecies in 1:16-17 and 1:76 is presented in 3:4-6. Rowe is correct that the κύριος in 3:4 is clearly Jesus.[396] That is the point of the prophetic "promise-fulfillment movement." What is

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earlier as Jesus and not as God." Marshall, 136. Again, why not identify the κύριος as both Jesus and God because Jesus was God himself born the human Jesus? This is precisely Luke's narrative agenda to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus as the Lord God of Israel born a human.

[395] Here Fitzmyer also insists on ambiguity, despite his admission concerning 1:76. "If there were any way of being sure that the historical John described his mission in these words of Isaiah, we would have to realize that 'the Lord' in his preaching would have meant Yahweh. His historical preaching of a baptism of repentance would have been a preparation for the 'day of the Lord' in the OT sense. But, as this phrase is now used by the Christian evangelists, 'the Lord' shares the same sort of ambiguity as *kyrios* in 1:76 (see Note). Hence, in the Lucan context John's making ready of the way of the Lord takes on another connotation." Fitzmyer, 461. Nolland also notes ambiguity commenting, "The imagery is primarily that of a coming of God for which preparation is to be made; but for Luke this visitation by God takes the form of the coming of Jesus (cf. Luke 7:16), and there may, therefore, be a happy ambiguity about the reference of 'Lord' (Κύριος) here (see further at 1:17 and 3:4)." Nolland, 89. This insistence on ambiguity is motivated by theological tenets and has no basis in Luke's narrative agenda. In fact, what is identified as ambiguity is actually the precise point of clarity. The Lord God of Israel is Jesus, Jesus is the Lord God of Israel, and Luke's means of declaring this is κύριος.

[396] Bock consistently maintains that Luke does not use κύριος to refer to Jesus but rather to God. He does so in the face of almost all other scholars. "Virtually every recent commentator takes this change to be christologically motivated, so that the idea is that John goes before Jesus (Danker 1988: 84 is the only exception). However, such a

incompletely understood as the God of Israel in 1:16-17, and ambiguously understood as the God of Israel in 1:76, is now clearly understood to be Jesus the God of Israel born a human in 3:4. The ambiguity is temporary and is the result of Luke's development and progressive revelation of Jesus' identity. Luke's narrative program does not remove the possibility of referring to the God of Israel as κύριος. His program does, however, present the reader with the revelation that not only is Jesus κύριος but he is in fact the God of Israel. By the end of Luke's narratives, there is no ambiguity regarding the identity of Jesus as the κύριος—he is the God of Israel. Neither is there any ambiguity regarding the identity of the God of Israel—he is Jesus the κύριος.[397]

Jesus Public Ministry and the Year of the Lord (4:14-21)

The explicit identity of Jesus as the God of Israel within the birth-infancy narratives is corroborated in the story of Jesus' public debut in the synagogue of Nazareth. Luke develops his narrative to be explicitly focused on Jesus and his ministry. The birth-infancy narratives and all they foretold are concluded. Now, after Jesus' trials in the wilderness, Luke begins the narration of Jesus' actual ministry. He begins this narration

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conclusion, though possible, does not seem likely, at least for Luke." Bock, 293. This conclusion clearly misses Luke's narrative program for developing and revealing the identity of Jesus.

[397] It should be noted that this identity is firmly founded in Luke's initial connection with his readers, namely the birth-infancy narratives. Nolland comments, "The importance of the infancy narratives for Luke's theological presentation has not always been recognized….Lukan scholarship has failed to come to terms with the fact that it is precisely with these infancy narratives, with their intense Jewish piety, that Luke considers that he will be able to establish a point of first contact with his intended readership." Nolland, 19.

by stating that Jesus "began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by all."[398] Luke's first example occurs in the synagogue of Jesus hometown of Nazareth.[399] Jesus is presented as standing up to read. This was not something new for him or for this context.[400] He read from the prophet Isaiah, but the significance of this narrative is not that he read or what he read, but how he interpreted the meaning of the passage.[401] The importance of this passage for Luke's narrative plan has long been recognized with it's "foreshadowing the character of [Jesus'] mission as well as the subsequent rejection by his own people."[402] There is an "inter-narrative and verbal connection" between the

[398] Luke 4:15. Bovon notes, "It is fiercely debated whether an earlier account of Jesus' beginning can be perceived behind 4:14–15." Bovon and Koester, 149. Fitzmyer argues, "These verses are to be regarded as an editorial statement, composed by Luke….a 'summary' of the sort that Luke uses in Acts." Fitzmyer, 521-522. Marshall states, "Luke himself has clearly edited his source here." Marshall, 176.

[399] Bovon argues, "But Luke wants to make a programmatic statement that precisely his hometown of Nazareth—which, in the final analysis, appears here representatively for all Israel—hears the good news (in the Pauline sense) and resists it from the start." Bovon and Koester, 152.

[400] Bovon is helpful in commenting, "Luke is at least describing in detailed fashion a synagogue service on the Sabbath, in which, for understandable reasons, important elements…are lacking." Bovon and Koester, 153.

[401] Bovon does note that "The manuscripts of Isaiah from Qumran attest that Isaiah 61 was read and commented on in schools and synagogues" and "the citation agrees verbatim with the LXX…." Bovon and Koester, 153.

[402] Rowe, 79. In addition to the foreshadowing of Jesus' ministry, Fitzmyer sees this passage as being "foreshadowed in a sense in Simeon's oracle in the infancy narrative (2:34)…." He further argues, "Because Luke's narrative is a conflation, there is, on the one hand, the fulfillment-story ending on the note of Jesus' success; on the other, there is the rejection-story. As the episode now stands, there is a climactic buildup of popular reaction, but it takes place with conflicting reactions." Fitzmyer, 526, 528.

Spirit of the Lord's anointing (ἔχρισεν) found in the passage of Isaiah that Jesus reads and the "messianic overtones" of Jesus' previous identification as χριστός (2:11).[403]

The first occurrence of κύριος within the Isaiah passage is clearly a reference to the God of Israel and his anointing spirit upon the prophet. The second occurrence is likewise a clear reference to the year of the God of Israel; however, in the hands of Luke it becomes prophecy that is being fulfilled in the life of Jesus the κύριος. In one sense, ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν refers to the jubilee year of the God of Israel from the Jewish

[403] Rowe. Bovon adds, "Anointing with the Spirit justifies the title "Messiah" (2:11; cf. Acts 10:38). But Luke does not advocate a narrow royal messianism. His Christ is the son of David but also bears prophetic characteristics; much in the citation alludes to his message." Bovon and Koester, 154. Fitzmyer argues against any Davidic dynasty or royal function, stating rather that the anointing in this passage is only a prophetic anointing. Fitzmyer, 529-530, 532. In contrast, Marshall argues for a merging of both: "Above all, the fulfilment of Scripture is to be found in the person of Jesus himself, who has been anointed with the Spirit and appears as the eschatological prophet — a figure who is to be identified with the Messiah and the Servant of Yahweh. It is through his word that forgiveness comes to men." Marshall, 178, 183. Johnson, while noting that the context strongly suggests the anointing occurred at baptism, contends that "The verb 'anoint' (*chrio*) is cognate with *Christos* (Messiah), so that Luke's notion of Messiah is quite literal (cf. 9:20)." He does, however, agree with Fitzmyer in characterizing Jesus as a "prophetic Messiah." Johnson and Harrington, 79, 81. Nolland comments that "Luke gives confusing signals about whether the anointing is to be understood as prophetic…or messianic…" ultimately deciding that "it is likely, given Luke's tendency to use Christological titles somewhat promiscuously, that Luke thinks in both prophetic and messianic terms, though in the immediate pericope the prophetic thought is predominant." Nolland, 196. Bock disagrees with the consensus, stating, "He has correctly linked it to other events in his Gospel. The infancy narrative, the baptism, and the following section (4:38–41) all strongly emphasize Jesus as the anointed Son and proclaimer of the kingdom (4:43–44) (Bock 1987: 319 n. 70, 320 n. 74). In fact, the term ἔχρισεν (*echrisen*, he anointed) in the citation looks back in the flow of Luke's Gospel to the baptism, which was not just prophetic, but was regal as well, since it was grounded in allusions to Isa. 42 and Ps. 2." Bock, 407. In all of this discussion no one recognizes that the perceived problem of deciding whether the anointing is prophetic or Messianic (meaning Davidic or royal) is done away with by Luke's narrative agenda. If Jesus is the Lord God of Israel born a human then he definitely speaks for God because he is God and he is definitely Messianic because there is no purer form of anointing than God himself present in human form. The key identity does not lie in prophetic or Messianic but rather in κύριος.

Scripture.[404] When, however, Jesus states, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing," a realized meaning is given to the phrase. Not only is it the year of the Lord in the passage from Isaiah, it is also the year of the Lord fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus.[405]

While Rowe argues that "the actualization of the year of the Lord's favor in and through the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus [as] seen throughout the entire Gospel narrative" makes sense because "there is a unity between [sic] God of Israel and Jesus to the degree that the 'way of the Lord' (3:4) is manifested in the year of the Lord's favor precisely as it is worked out or actualized through the mission and life of the Anointed Lord," Luke is in fact going further.[406] "Jesus of Nazareth is the movement of God in one human life so much so" that it is possible to speak of the year of the Lord's favor being fulfilled in his life and ministry precisely because Jesus is the God of Israel born a human.[407] This programmatic passage from Isaiah is narrated through the subsequent

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[404] Bovon writes, "…Isaiah 61 is associated with the beginning of the Year of Jubilee on Yom Kippur (cf. 11QMelch and its expectation of a priestly Messiah)." Bovon and Koester, 153. Johnson notes that ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν is sometimes translated as "year of the Lord's favor" in order to capture this sense of the Jubilee Year; however, he argues that it should be translated "acceptable year of the Lord" because of the deliberate echo found in 4:24. Johnson and Harrington, 79.

[405] Rowe states, "the year of the Lord's favor is in fact the ministry of the Lord." Rowe, 80-81. Fitzmyer comments, "The Isaian description of a period of favor and deliverance for Zion is now used to proclaim the Period of Jesus, and the new mode of salvation that is to come in him. This is the form that his kerygma takes in the Lucan Gospel in contrast to Mark 1:14b–15 (see p. 153 above). The last part of 61:2 is omitted, "the day of vengeance of our God," since it is scarcely suited to the salvific period now being inaugurated." Fitzmyer, 533. Nolland adds, "The 'today' of salvation is inaugurated in the ministry of Jesus…." Nolland, 198.

[406] Rowe, 81-82.

stories of Luke's gospel, and throughout these stories the explicit identity Jesus as the God of Israel through the use of κύριος is continued.

The reason that Jesus is able to declare, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" is that he is the God of Israel—the one whose spirit was upon the prophet to proclaim the year of his favor. Now that same spirit has overshadowed a woman in order that this God of Israel be born a human and that human is now proclaiming good news to the poor, release to the captives and the regaining of sight to the blind, and the setting free those who are oppressed.[408] It is now the year of the Lord's favor because the Lord himself has come to fulfill the proclamation of the prophet. This is not a shared identity—it is an explicit declaration through a narrative program that Jesus through his identity as the κύριος is the God of Israel. The year of the God of Israel's favor was foretold and now that year has arrived in the person of Jesus the κύριος.[409] This declaration of prophetic fulfillment by Jesus fits perfectly with Luke's development and revelation of Jesus' identity found in the birth-infancy narratives.[410] Now he will proceed to progressively reveal further this identity through his use of the vocative form of κύριος.

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[407] Rowe, 218.

[408] Luke 4:18.

[409] Bovon comments on the prophecy and fulfillment, stating, "Thus the scheme of prophecy and fulfillment is refined. This takes place in deed and word, in the event and its interpretation, in history and in preaching." Bovon and Koester, 154.

[410] It should be noted that no scholar, with the exception of Rowe, recognizes the significance of this passage and its use of κύριος for Luke's narrative agenda of developing and progressively revealing the identity of Jesus.

Κύριε: Formal or Christological?

Scholars have long argued that whatever the meaning of κύριος within Luke's narratives, κύριε, the vocative form, must be understood as direct, formal address with the generic meaning of "sir." There are several examples of Luke's use of the vocative form of κύριος that refute the conclusion that the choices in understanding κύριε are either a formal address such as Sir or the Christological title of Lord. This either/or scenario does not grasp the narrative development and genius of Luke's composition and misses his exploitation of the ambiguity of the word in the vocative form. Key to this contention is the idea that characters within the story can "say more than they know or more than they can retain."[411]

What a character knows or does not know should not affect the way that Luke's use of κύριε is read. Instead of an either/or scenario, it is both/and with both the meaning derived from the character's knowledge and the meaning derived from the reader's knowledge of Luke's use of the word—particularly with dramatic irony—being valid.[412] Within the same word then can be both the formal and the Christological, with the character perhaps only knowing the formal, but the reader hearing the Christological also. Luke uses this double-meaning in his program to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus as the God of Israel through his use of κύριε.

Without Luke's development and progressive revelation, the expectation is that when Jesus is addressed as κύριε, he is simply being addressed in a formal and respectful manner. Luke and the reader understand that the participants in the stories of Jesus do

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[411] Rowe, 91.

[412] Rowe, 91.

not yet fully understand the identity of Jesus; hence, at times, they do not even realize what they are saying. They think it means only one thing when in fact it means much more. But Luke and the reader have insight that the participants are lacking. They have the development and revelation that Luke has already established in the birth-infancy narratives and subsequently within the larger narrative. Jesus is being addressed with respect, but in that address of respect is another dimension of identity, namely that he is the κύριος, the God of Israel born a human. What the participants do not know, they nonetheless affirm in their statements and the reader is able to recognize this narrative program of identity.

Foundational to this argument and conclusion is the first occurrence of κύριε. Luke introduces the vocative form of κύριος in 5:8 in a "strategic and carefully crafted" manner.[413] The pericope is about the calling of the first disciples and Peter plays a pivotal role in the story. He speaks twice in the passage and both times directly addresses Jesus. The first time Peter calls Jesus "master" and the second time Peter addresses him as "κύριε." Rowe argues that, unlike other commentators' conclusions, "ἐπιστάτης is actually used by Luke to convey in the speaker some sense of distance from Jesus and his purposes."[414] This contention is corroborated by the fact that the five other occurrences of "master" within the Lukan narrative "convey either misunderstanding or insufficient

[413] Rowe, 90.

[414] Rowe, 84. Johnson notes that Luke is the only evangelist to use the term and "the awkwardness of the Greek has led in this and the following verses to a number of scribal corrections in the manuscripts." Johnson and Harrington, 88. The fact that Luke is the only gospel writer to use the term adds weight to the contention that he is using it with intentionality.

faith."[415] Two of these occurrences are Peter himself addressing Jesus as "master" and in both cases Peter is lacking understanding.[416]

The miracle of the catch of fish at Jesus' command transforms Peter's perception of Jesus.[417] Prior to the miracle, Jesus is the Master to be obeyed reluctantly and with doubt; after the miracle, Jesus is the Lord before whom you fall and proclaim yourself a sinner. Every time ἁμαρτ-cognates are used by Luke it "is a moral-theological category related to the need for repentance, forgiveness, and salvation."[418] And, as already seen, Luke's narrative is clear that repentance, forgiveness and salvation come through Jesus who is the κύριος. So Peter's change of address and his self-characterization as a sinner fits perfectly within an understanding of κύριε as Lord rather than only Sir.[419] Then, when the earlier occurrences of Jesus as κύριος within the narrative (1:43; 2:11) are noted,

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[415] Rowe, 84.

[416] In contrast, Bovon argues that Peter's use of ἐπιστάτης is evidence that Peter "is beginning to articulate his faith, which then expresses itself in the beautiful, 'yet at your word.'" For Bovon this indicates that Peter is "almost a disciple already." Bovon and Koester, 170.

[417] Rowe, 86.

[418] Rowe, 87.

[419] Fitzmyer argues that this passage reflects a post-resurrection context: "Another reason for thinking that it originally stems from a post-resurrection setting is the reaction of Simon Peter in v. 8, addressing Jesus as 'Lord' and regarding himself as a 'sinner,' a reaction that more plausibly suits one who has denied his Lord." Fitzmyer, 561. While Luke's narrative is certainly written in a post-resurrection context, he is claiming that Jesus is the κύριος from his conception. Fitzmyer's observation does not account for the possibility that Luke's narrative agenda actually reflects a pre-resurrection identity. Again, this dissertation is not attempting to establish what is historically accurate; instead, the focus is upon Luke's narrative agenda. Through his use of κύριος, Luke is claiming that Jesus is κύριος from his conception. Whether this developed post-resurrection or pre-resurrection is dependent upon the historical accuracy of Luke's narrative.

it is clear that Luke is strategically and carefully crafting his first use of κύριε.[420] And this first usage sets the tone for subsequent occurrences of the vocative. Luke's strategy is to establish "the Christological significance of κύριε and [he] makes use of its inherent ambiguity" and thus the "both/and character of the vocative gains in its narrative significance as the story progresses."[421]

Based upon the above conclusion, when the reader encounters κύριε in the mouth of a leper (5:12-16), or κύριε, κύριε in the mouth of Jesus introducing the final parable of the Sermon on the Plain (6:46), or κύριε in the mouth of a centurion (7:1-10), it cannot be

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[420] Nolland seems to understand Luke's narrative agenda in this verse better than most: "Simon's response is appropriate to a theophany (cf. Isa 6:1–8, esp. vv 5 and 8, and Ezek 1:1–2:3, esp. 1:28 and 2:3, and cf. 1 Sam 5). This is better than finding here post-resurrection remorse for the denial of Jesus. Κύριε is here probably not Luke's usual 'Sir,' but the 'supreme Lord' of 1:43 and 2:11—and of Luke's own narrational designation of Jesus as Lord." Nolland, 222.

[421] Rowe, 89. Johnson erroneously claims "Peter's designation of Jesus as 'Lord' (*kyrios*) is equivalent here to 'Master' in verse 5" though he correctly realizes that "the reader naturally detects the deeper resonance of resurrection power throughout the story." Johnson and Harrington, 88. Here again though, Johnson, like most other scholars, continues to insist upon the meaning of κύριος being derived from the resurrection rather than realizing Luke's narrative agenda in which κύριος derives its meaning and significance from the opening birth-infancy narratives. Whether Luke's claim reflects pre-resurrection or post-resurrection reality is not obvious. Clearly Luke is claiming that Jesus has always been κύριος, not just after the resurrection. Luke is not simply anticipating a future realization but rather is developing and progressively revealing an already existing identity. Bovon does not treat "Master" and "Lord" as equivalent, and notes that "Simon has addressed [Jesus] correctly with κύριε, 'Lord,'" though he does not recognize the significance of this identification for Luke's narrative agenda. Bovon and Koester, 170. Marshall also does not view "Master" and "Lord" as equivalent but refuses to acknowledge divinity in the use of κύριος: "Such humility is appropriate before a person addressed as κύριος, which here presumably has a deeper meaning than ἐπιστάτης and is not simply equivalent to 'Sir' (6:46 note). But no precise connotation (e.g. of divinity) can necessarily be attached to it." Marshall, 204. Fitzmyer simply sees this occurrence as a reflection of "the evangelist's hindsight, as he writes from Stage III of the gospel tradition." Fitzmyer, 568.

read as only "Sir" or only "Lord."[422] Rather, "Luke here exploits the semantic range and ambiguity of the vocative such that within the same word readers can hear both 'sir/master' and 'Lord' simultaneously."[423] Any division between κύριε and κύριος is alien to Luke's usage because "the continuity between the vocative and the nominative is

[422] Bovon does not even comment on κύριε in the mouth of a leper (5:12-16), transfers κύριε, κύριε in the mouth of Jesus introducing the final parable of the Sermon on the Plain (6:46) as reflecting a time when "the address κύριε ("Lord!") was used at that time both in private devotion and public liturgy" and "Κύριος was no longer only God the father, but also the risen Lord, whom one thanked for his saving work, whose presence one invoked, and whose return one awaited," and again does not even comment on κύριε in the mouth of a centurion (7:1-10). Bovon and Koester, 253-254. Clearly the significance of κύριε for Luke's narrative agenda has not registered. Johnson also misses the significance. He only comments that Peter and the leper have called Jesus "Lord" and mistakenly mistranslates the centurion's address as master while acknowledging that the Christian reader would find the address a sign of faith. Johnson and Harrington, 114, 118. Fitzmyer comments as follows, 5:12-16: "The translation, 'Sir,' suits the gospel tradition in Stage I; for Luke, writing at Stage III, it may have the connotation of 'Lord;'" 6:46: "Even if we insist that the Lucan form of this saying is the more original, it is very difficult to trace it back to the historical Jesus (in Stage I of the gospel tradition). This is so because of the use of the title *Kyrios* in the sense of "Lord" in the ministry, and the association of it with following his instructions. Though the use of the title in this double form is certainly pre-Lucan, it probably stems from the early community, which was seeking to link *didache* with its *kerygma*;" and 7:1-10: "There is no need to give it any nuance other than a secular greeting." Fitzmyer, 574, 644, 652. Fitzmyer's insistence on post-resurrection development strips Luke's narrative of his program with regard to Jesus' identity. It is an error with grave consequences for Luke's agenda. In contrast to the above scholars, Nolland recognizes some element of Luke's narrative program: "The connection with Peter's use in 5:8 of the same address suggests that more is involved than a polite 'Sir.'" and "It is difficult to know how to translate Κύριε here. No more than a secular greeting need be intended by the term ("Sir"). But the linking of such a profound recognition of Jesus' authority with the centurion's own sense of unworthiness (cf. at 5:8) suggests that more is intended (so, "Lord")." Nolland, 227, 317. Bock, while incorrectly stating that κύριος, "does not appear on people's lips with reference to Jesus before the resurrection," does acknowledge that "in combination with the act of bowing, it is more than mere polite address. It is a recognition of sovereignty, but how much is intended in that recognition is not clear." Bock also recognizes that κύριε is more than polite address in 5:12-15, 6:46, and 7:1-10, though he denies a meaning of full deity choosing rather to see it "as a way to refer to Jesus as a respected teacher." Bock, 459, 473, 618, 639-640.

[423] Rowe, 89.

the person of Jesus."[424] Jesus is the same character in the narrative whether he is called ὁ κύριος by Elisabeth, κύριος by an angel, or addressed as κύριε by Peter the Jew (5:1-11), a leper (5:12-16), or the Gentile centurion (7:1-10). In fact, Jesus calls himself κύριε in 6:46. While the audience of Jesus may not recognize Jesus calling himself κύριε as "Lord," Luke's audience certainly recognizes κύριε as "Lord."[425]

Within this argument lies an interesting observation. Luke's programmatic use of κύριος within his narratives is done in order to unite two disparate elements into one identity. Luke uses κύριε to unite in the person of Jesus both the formal, direct address of "sir" that one expects to be given to Jesus and the developing identity of Jesus as "Lord." Jesus as "sir" and Jesus as "Lord" is one and the same character within the narrative. And as the same character, Jesus brings a unity of meaning to all forms of κύριος, including the vocative. It is not only in κύριε that Luke unites two disparate elements into one identity. Just as the expected, obvious meaning of κύριε is "sir," so also the expected, obvious meaning of κύριος is the God of Israel. But Luke's narrative program is to develop and progressively reveal another dimension of identity.

Luke develops his narrative in such a manner that the reader is able to hear within the same word both the God of Israel and Jesus. In κύριε the reader hears Jesus as both "sir" and "Lord". In κύριος the reader hears both the God of Israel and Jesus. The reader is able to hear this because Luke is using κύριος as a "*Leitwort* guiding the reader in both meaning and movement through his narrative."[426] Through κύριος Luke is revealing the

[424] Rowe, 89.

[425] Rowe, 111-114.

identity of Jesus. Just as surely as Jesus is both "sir" and "Lord," ὁ κύριος is both the God of Israel and Jesus.

What scholars miss in Luke's narrative program is that κύριος as the God of Israel and κύριος as Jesus are one and the same character within the narrative. There is no difference in identity, only in presence and manifestation. Κύριος as the God of Israel is present as a spirit, while κύριος as Jesus is present as a human. Κύριος is Luke's means to address the incarnation. Rowe, unlike other scholars correctly recognizes Luke's agenda, but does not allow it to be fully developed and revealed. Luke's ultimate revelation concerning the identity of Jesus is that "Jesus of Nazareth is the movement of God in one human life so much so" that the reader is able to realize that the God of Israel (a spirit) is Jesus (a human).[427] In Luke's use of κύριος lies the revelation that Jesus is not only a human, but he is the God of Israel born a human. The participants in the stories of Jesus do not yet know this, but the reader is developing an awareness of this identity of Jesus as κύριος. And Luke uses κύριε to contribute to this developing awareness.

The Power of the Lord (5:17-26)

The healing and forgiving of the paralytic presents a pivotal moment in Luke's narrative concerning his use of κύριος to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus. There is a textual variant between αὐτόν and αὐτούς within the descriptive phrase καὶ δύναμις κυρίου ἦν εἰς τὸ ἰᾶσθαι αὐτόν (and the power of the Lord was with him to

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[426] Rowe, 30.

[427] Rowe, 218.

heal/to heal him/to heal them). Typically this question is resolved based upon the certainty that αὐτόν should be read as the subject of the infinitive; however, neither syntax nor grammar precludes reading αὐτόν as the object.[428] At the core of this decision is a discussion of the proper referent of κύριος. Historically, scholars have read the referent to be God the Father because, as Marshall stated, "κύριος when used without the article means God."[429] Rowe describes this logic of scholars, "because κύριος (without the article) refers to Jehovah, αὐτόν is seen to be the subject of the infinitive which, in turn, excludes the reading of κύριος as Jesus."[430] While scholars have accurately recognized the connection between the referent of κύριος and the reading of αὐτόν, they are severely mistaken in deciding that κύριος refers to the God of Israel and cannot refer to Jesus.[431]

First, the contention that the anarthrous use of κύριος must refer to the God of Israel is false. Several examples of this use clearly referring to Jesus have already been discussed and there are more to come. Not only has the significance of the absence of the article been overstated, it is patently false. Second, the contention that κύριος must refer

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[428] Rowe, 93.

[429] Marshall, 212.

[430] Rowe, 95.

[431] Fitzmyer, as previously demonstrated, chooses an either/or scenario with Yahweh being the κύριος: "This phrase is clearly a Lucan creation, a description of Yahweh's power present in Jesus for the sake of curing people. In effect, it echoes 4:14, 36 and prepares for the miracle and the pronouncement that are to come. Here *Kyrios* is clearly distinguished from Jesus and means Yahweh; recall 1:6, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, etc." Fitzmyer, 582. His citation of verses from chapter 1 makes clear that he does not recognize Luke's narrative program and thus is mistaken in his either/or scenario. Κύριος means both Jesus and Yahweh because Jesus is Yahweh born into humanity as Jesus ὁ κύριος.

to either the God of Israel or Jesus is false. Not only can κύριος refer to God and to Jesus, κύριος is used by Luke to refer to Jesus as God. Scholars have thoroughly and historically missed Luke's point. For reasons external to Luke's narrative they have incorrectly described the choices as either the God of Israel or Jesus. Luke's narrative program presents another option—Jesus as the God of Israel. This point is further strengthened when the idea that δύναμις belongs only to the God of Israel is refuted by "the statement in Luke 6:19 that 'power [δύναμις] went out from him [Jesus] and healed them all" (cf. Luke 8:46), the description of Jesus' ministry as one filled with 'deeds of power' (Luke 10:13; 19:37; Acts 2:22), other ambiguous κύριος texts (1:17; 1:76; 3:4; cf. 4:19) and the reality that Jesus is called κύριος throughout Luke-Acts."[432] It seems obvious on several levels that the referent of κύριος in 5:17 is Jesus. In fact, Luke's narrative has actually prepared the reader to recognize in 5:17 a fastening of "the activity of Jesus to the identity of God precisely as κύριος" to such an extent that Jesus is the God of Israel. And this is precisely the point of the story introduced by 5:17.

In the midst of a story of healing Luke presents the reader with the first conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees and teachers of the law. This conflict is significant within Luke's narrative program because it is focused upon the identity of Jesus and the consequent power and authority that he has.[433] When the friends lowered the paralytic

[432] Rowe, 97. Johnson characterizes the δύναμις as "a force working impersonally through Jesus." Johnson and Harrington, 93. This characterization, however, does not recognize Luke's program of identity where Jesus is the Lord God of Israel and therefore the δύναμις is very personally related to the identity of Jesus as God.

[433] Nolland comments that Jesus' conflict in this story "renders explicit the challenge to the religious leaders of Jesus' ministry to call sinners." Nolland, 232, 238. Bock adds, "The issue is not just his power, but the extent of his authority…. According

through the roof tiles in front of Jesus, his initial response sparked the conflict. Jesus, upon seeing the faith of the friends, said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."[434] The Pharisees and teachers of the law responded with an understandable Jewish response, "Who is this man who is uttering blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"[435] This response has two emphases. First, there is a focus upon identity.[436] Who is Jesus?[437] Second, in pursuit of this question, man and God are set in opposition to one another with the man blaspheming and God forgiving sins. When a man takes actions that are God's, he blasphemes because man cannot be God and God is not man. All of

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to this account, the authority of Jesus includes the right to forgive sins (5:20, 23–24)…. Jesus is claiming prerogatives that point to the full identity of his person (Marshall 1978: 210–11). Clear christological lines are being drawn that dominate the rest of the Gospel. Is Jesus ultimately a teacher, a prophet, a Messiah, or someone much greater?" Bock, 465-466.

[434] Luke 5:20.

[435] Luke 5:21. Marshall contributes useful context to understand the conflict. "Only God can forgive sin, for only the offended person can forgive the offender; he may, however, act through a prophet or other agent (2 Sa. 12:13). Hence the question arises whether Jesus has any authorisation to speak in this fashion, either by usurping the prerogative of God or in virtue of a prophetic gift. Since the Pharisees believed that prophecy had effectually ceased, although they do not in fact appear to have been completely certain on the matter (R. Meyer, TDNT VI, 816-825), the question whether Jesus was a prophet was a rhetorical one, and hence they put their own answer into the question: he is uttering blasphemies (plural, used of one saying, BD 142)." Marshall, 214.

[436] Nolland describes it thus: "Jesus' Pharisaic evaluators ask the Christologically focused question 'who is this?' (cf. 7:49; 8:25; 9:9), but immediately follow this up with their own negative evaluation: 'who speaks blasphemies.' This man has sought to rob God of his eschatological prerogative." Nolland, 239.

[437] Bock states it particularly well: "Those who observe him must wrestle with who he is. He also fulfills the commission laid out in 4:18. Jesus' claim to perform God's role and have authority over God's prerogatives forces Jesus' (and Luke's) audience to a decision." Bock, 483-484. This is precisely the point of Luke's narrative agenda.

this, however, is in service of the question of Jesus' identity. Who is he that he would take action that can only be performed by God?[438]

The phrase μόνος ὁ θεός (the Only God) is important to this story: "This phrase is a fundamental Jewish affirmation which expresses in thetic form the God of Israel's uniqueness and, to use OT language, jealousy."[439] The importance of this phrase to this story is underlined by Luke's departure from his dependence on Mark by substituting μόνος for εἷς.[440] Εἷς ὁ θεός most likely refers to the *Shema* in Deuteronomy 6:4, but this isn't strong enough for Luke's narrative program.[441] He needs to highlight the "God Only" aspect of forgiving sin. By emphasizing μόνος Luke is able to focus the reader upon the central issue: Jesus is not only being accused of taking action that only God is able to perform, but he is also being accused of identifying himself as God.[442] "The forgiveness of sins derives from the person of Jesus in such a way as to rival God's uniqueness and in this way to arouse – quite understandably – the opposition of those

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[438] Bock states, "Blasphemy is a serious charge, one that will eventually become the basis of Jesus' conviction. It involves an overt defilement of the divine name, that is, abusive speech or action directed against God…. Conviction was punishable by death, which involved stoning in the OT (Lev. 24:10–16, 23)…. They see Jesus claiming a divine prerogative and therefore violating God's majesty by taking to himself something reserved for God. Forgiving sin is God's work only (μόνος, *monos*, is somewhat emphatic)."

[439] Rowe, 99.

[440] Bovon and Koester, 180. Fitzmyer, 578.

[441] Rowe, 100-101.

[442] Johnson descriptively states, "Slanderous speech (*blasphemia*) when directed against a divine being becomes in a monotheistic religion like Judaism a fundamental rebellion against God. Here, the declaration of sins forgiven is read as an arrogation of authority belonging to God 'alone' (Luke has *monos*)." Johnson and Harrington, 94.

who are jealous on behalf of the only God."[443] The vehement complaint of the Pharisees and teachers of the law was that Jesus by forgiving sin was declaring himself on par with the God of Israel.[444]

This scenario is perfect for Luke's narrative program of developing and progressively revealing Jesus' identity as the God of Israel. His reader is narratively prepared to recognize the mistake of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law. Jesus is not a man who is blaspheming by forgiving sin and placing himself on the level of the God of Israel.[445] Jesus, as κύριος since his conception, is the God of Israel become a

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[443] Rowe, 102.

[444] Fitzmyer describes the story as presenting "Jesus as the Son of Man, a heaven-sent agent, able to do what people normally ascribe to Yahweh alone (5:21c). The implied equality is heightened in this Lucan form of the episode by the addition of the adj. *monos*, 'alone.' A new dimension of Jesus' role is thus seen, and a new title is given to him. All of this takes place in the context of his teaching." Fitzmyer, 580, 583. Bovon comments on the unexpected newness of this forgiveness of sins: "Although Jesus did not say "*ego* te absolvo" ("*I* absolve you"), and thus respects the prerogative of God by means of the passive construction, he still takes upon himself the right to pronounce the forgiveness of God *hic et nunc* (here and now). Does the blasphemy inhere in Jesus' doing something that Judaism never expected from the Messiah? It is probably rather that the Judaism of that time claimed to possess already the institutions responsible for the forgiveness of sins: ritual activity and its legal piety. Jesus is attacked so vehemently because he plainly ignores both of these and mediates God's forgiveness of sins in a completely new manner." Bovon and Koester, 182. Although he does not comment on the significance of κύριος within Luke's narrative program in this story, Bovon does recognize the newness of how Jesus is being presented. Nolland states, "What is expressed here is an objection in the strongest terms to Jesus' act of making that declaration of the forgiveness of God which in their understanding God had reserved as his own prerogative for the final day….Jesus' claim to bring this eschatological forgiveness forward into the very midst of history is for them nothing short of blasphemy. (It is this same eschatological forgiveness that is later offered in Jesus' name as part of the Christian proclamation [Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18].)" Nolland, 235-236.

[445] Fitzmyer describes the offense as follows: "In most of the NT passages, where the charge is leveled against Jesus, the implication is that he has somehow claimed or

human. The contention that Jesus is simply the agent of God in forgiving sins cannot be the answer to Jesus' identity, because this would not have engendered the vehement opposition of the Pharisees and teachers of the law.[446] Here the Pharisees and teachers of the law understand very clearly what the problem was—Jesus was claiming to be the God of Israel! And Luke clearly prepared the reader to recognize the validity of this claim through his use of κύριος.

Jesus' response to the Pharisees and teachers of the law is fundamental to Luke's agenda—he healed the paralytic man in order that "you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."[447] The authority to forgive sins in 5:24 is grounded in the δύναμις κυρίου in 5:17.[448] "The initial ambiguity in the referent of the

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implied that he is an equal of Yahweh…. Underlying the charge of blasphemy here seems to be the notion of sin as an offense against God. If God is offended, only he can pardon the offense. In ascribing to himself a power to forgive sins, Jesus would be judged guilty of an attack on God's majesty. This might imply that he was putting himself on a par with Yahweh." Fitzmyer, 584. Marshall adds, "NT evidence indicates that the term [blasphemy] was used more widely to indicate any 'violation of the power and majesty of God.'" Marshall, 214.

[446] Fitzmyer misses the point of the offense when he writes, "Above Luke spoke of "the power of the Lord" being with Jesus (v. 17e), but now it is phrased in terms of his "authority" (*exousia*), i.e. an authority rooted in a spokesman for God himself." Fitzmyer, 585. Luke certainly seems to present the Pharisees and teachers of the law understanding what Jesus was claiming in the exercising of his power, while modern scholarship totally misses the point of his narrative. Jesus was not simply a spokesman for God himself; he was God himself born a human and hence, as ὁ κύριος, he was utilizing the power that came with being the Lord God of Israel born a human. He was both forgiving sin and healing the sick.

[447] Luke 5:24. This is the first time of twenty-four times that Luke uses this Christological title, though it is not clear what he expects the reader to understand by it. Bovon and Koester, 182-183. Fitzmyer, 584. Johnson adds, "This cluster of symbols makes sense only in the context of Torah and the covenantal relationship with the 'only' (*monos*) God, as Luke puts it (5:21)." Johnson and Harrington, 95.

κύριος represents the Lord of Israel as present through the person and action of the Lord Jesus: it is the year of the Lord's favor (4:19)."[449] Here Rowe rightly argues against himself. While maintaining that there is a distinction between heaven and earth and between the God of Israel and Jesus, he actually undoes this distinction in his description of Jesus' identity within this story. "Jesus does not, then, constitute a final threat to μόνος ὁ θεός, as Jesus embodies the only God of Israel in the power of the Lord and lives out this unity in the power to forgive sins."[450]

Luke's narrative program is to have Jesus actually fulfill what he claimed in 4:19. And in fulfilling his claim Jesus now actually declares his identity by means of his actions. He is ὁ κύριος who through the prophet Isaiah promised the Lord's favor. The year of that favor has now arrived in Jesus. He, the Lord God of Israel, is come to proclaim the good news of release and freedom, and the height of that freedom is the forgiveness of sins. The Only God (μόνος ὁ θεός) has been born the Savior (σωτὴρ), the Christ-Lord (χριστός κύριος). Truly John's proclamation that "all humanity will see the salvation of God" is fulfilled in Jesus just as Zechariah prophesied that his son would "go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give his people knowledge of salvation."[451] Luke

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[448] Nolland notes, "The reference to 'power' (δύναμις) links back to 4:14 and prepares for the coming references to tangible power proceeding from Jesus (6:19; 8:44): the power that flows out of Jesus and brings healing is the power of God himself." Nolland, 234.

[449] Rowe, 104.

[450] Rowe, 105. Johnson almost recognizes Luke's agenda when he states, "through his *dynamis* in the Messiah, God is the one at work." Johnson and Harrington, 95.

[451] Luke 3:6; 1:76-77.

uses κύριος in his gospel narrative to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus resulting in his own unique evangelistic formulation for promoting his view of Jesus in a new role. Jesus is the God of Israel. And not only can the God of Israel forgive sin—he can also raise the dead.

The Lord over Death (7:11-17)

In the story about the resurrection of the son of the widow of Nain, Luke not only shifts from Capernaum to Nain, but also moves from Jesus' power to forgive sin and heal to his power to raise the dead.[452] This passage is particularly important because it is a unique story found only in the gospel of Luke and is the first undeniable use of ὁ κύριος by Luke in his authorial material within the body of the Gospel.[453] It is clear that when Luke writes about Jesus in this story he "chose to write ὁ κύριος, and this choice reflects the way in which Luke thought of Jesus."[454] The result of Jesus' power to raise the

[452] Fitzmyer rightly describes this story, "It thus further reveals the extent of his power and authority in this part of the Lucan Gospel." Also, it anticipates the inquiry of John's disciples and Jesus' reply: "In 7:22 Jesus will say to the messengers from John the Baptist that 'the dead are being raised to life' as a manifestation of the kind of ministry in which he has been engaged." Fitzmyer, 655.

[453] It should be noted that it is not possible to know with certainty whether this passage represents a Lukan composition or whether it is from one of his lost sources. Either way it represents a unique story found only in Luke's gospel and at the very least points to an editorial decision (if not an authorial composition) on the part of Luke. Johnson acknowledges that Luke himself has identified Jesus as ὁ κύριος. He also states, "This entire section of the Gospel bears the marks of vigorous and independent redaction." Johnson and Harrington, 118, 119. Rowe, 117.

[454] Rowe, 118. Marshall, while maintaining "that already during his earthly ministry Jesus was exercising the functions of the Lord," still insists that "the use of the term reflects the designation of Jesus in the early church as the one exalted by God to be the Lord." To further compound the oversight of Luke's narrative agenda he questions "whether the use of the title in Lk. is due to the Evangelist himself…." Marshall, 285.

widow of Nain's son is that word of a great prophet risen among us went out throughout Judea and the surrounding country.[455] While it is certainly appropriate to speak of Jesus as a great prophet, it falls short of his actual identity as ὁ κύριος. Nevertheless the word about Jesus leads John to send his disciples to inquire of Jesus. It is significant that this inquiry is about his identity, and it is in this inquiry that Luke makes plain that Jesus is more than a great prophet.

Nolland, in contrast, seems to recognize more of Luke's agenda: "From this point on Luke will frequently in narrative (7:19; 10:1, 39, 41; 11:39; etc) refer to Jesus as ὁ Κύριος, "the Lord." This has been prepared for by the uses of the word in direct address in 5:8, 12; 6:46; 7:6. The use of ὁ Κύριος reflects the later Christian usage of this term for Jesus as the one exalted by God to be the Lord (Acts 2:36; Rom 1:4), but Luke thinks particularly of the authority of Jesus." Nolland, 322-323. Bock also recognizes Luke's use of κύριος as significant but still does not understand the narrative agenda. "The description of Jesus as Lord is the first use of κύριος (*kyrios*) in Luke's narrative comments with regard to Jesus (Creed 1930: 103–4). The description presents Jesus with the title that will depict his exalted and authoritative position after his resurrection (Acts 2:33–36). Luke is the only Synoptic writer to use κύριος before the resurrection in narrative editorial notes, and he does it often. Κύριος indicates the authority that Jesus had during his earthly ministry (Moule 1966; Franklin 1975: 49–55). Nonetheless, it is a reflective use of the term, since the title does not occur for Jesus within the events of his ministry, though the more ambiguous vocative use does appear (see 5:8; 6:46). Luke looks back and characterizes Jesus' acts in terms of the authority that the disciples later came to understand as a reflection of his earthly ministry. It is debated whether Luke's use of κύριος is his own or reflects his sources." Bock, 650. Whether κύριος comes from Luke's sources or represents his own authorial contribution does not compromise the reality that Luke uses κύριος (including the vocative κύριε) to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus as the Lord God of Israel born a human.

[455] Fitzmyer, among others, comments on the connection between this story and the prophet Elijah: "The passage recalls the raising of the son of the widow of Zarephath by Elijah in 1 Kgs 17:8–24….The identification of Jesus as "a great prophet" (7:16c) and the allusion to the Elijah story (7:15) suffice to show that Luke uses this incident to cast Jesus in the role of *Elias redivivus* (see p. 215 above). There is, however, one significant difference between this story and the Elijah story: Jesus raises the widow's son by a command of his powerful word, whereas Elijah had to stretch himself over the child three times." Fitzmyer, 656.

Luke, again in authorial material, describes John as sending his disciples πρὸς τὸν κύριον (7:19).[456] Both the dialogue between Jesus and John's disciples and Jesus' speech to the crowd demonstrate that "Jesus is greater than John" with John being "more than a prophet;" in fact, "none of those born of woman is greater than John."[457] In order for these statements to be true, Jesus primary identity must not come from being born of a woman, else there would be one greater than John, namely Jesus. Instead, Luke's narrative program tells the reader that his primary identity comes from being ὁ κύριος. Luke tells the reader his own judgment by how he introduces the dialogue--John is sending two of his disciples πρὸς τὸν κύριον.[458] This is evidence that there is a "continuity in Luke's usage" and a "consistency with which he develops" his use of κύριος.[459] In the context of death, Jesus' identity does not lie in his birth as a human, but rather, in his identity as the God of Israel born a human—ὁ κύριος.

It is interesting to observe Luke's qualification of the people's understanding of Jesus as a prophet. While Luke maintains the view of Jesus as a prophet, he "also directly introduces his own basic Christological judgment of κύριος, thereby qualifying the category of prophet as christologically insufficient."[460] While Jesus is certainly

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[456] This is subject to textual variants. Some manuscripts read πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, while others read πρὸς τὸν κύριον. The problem is that both variants have good witnesses and thus the text critical decision is very difficult.

[457] Luke 7:26, 28. Rowe, 119.

[458] Again, it is important to note that this point is dependent upon how the text is established based upon text critical considerations (see note above).

[459] Rowe, 122.

[460] Rowe, 120.

fulfilling the role of a prophet, he is more than a prophet.[461] Jesus is not simply an agent of God, he is ὁ κύριος. This point is emphasized by Luke in his choice of ἐσπλαγχνίσθη to describe Jesus' response to the sorrow of the widow of Nain. In fact, it is unusual for Luke to note Jesus' emotions, but he does so here in order to recall the description of God found in Zechariah's prophecy in 1:78—God's σπλάγχνον ἔλεος.[462] This means that Luke 7:16 is synchronized with Zechariah's prophecy in Luke 1 so that unity of action on the part of Jesus and the God of Israel connects at their compassion and thereby further demonstrate the explicit identity of Jesus as the God of Israel born a human. This explicit identity is demonstrated through the same compassion being expressed by God when he is born into humanity as Jesus.[463]

Instead of Rowe's contention that this implicit unity is due to overlap in the use of κύριος for Jesus and the God of Israel, Luke's actual agenda is to coordinate the descriptions of the emotions of Jesus and the God of Israel so as to arrive at the revelation that Jesus is the God of Israel. Just as Jesus has the authority to forgive sins because he is the God of Israel, so also he experiences tender mercy for the widow of Nain just as

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[461] Johnson notes that this story represents "the narrative fulfillment of the programmatic prophecy of Luke 4:25-27….Luke has Jesus perform wonders that closely resemble those performed by those 'prophets of old' (see Luke 9:19)." Johnson and Harrington, 120. Though Johnson doesn't recognize it, this miracle at Nain is not only a fulfillment of the programmatic narrative of Luke 4, but also an example of ὁ κύριος doing what he said in the synagogue was prophesied about him as ὁ κύριος.

[462] Marshall states concerning σπλαγχνίζομαι, "Luke takes over none of the four occurrences in Mk. (Mk. 1:41; 6:34; cf. 8:2; 9:22) and does not use the word in Acts. It is probably, therefore, pre-Lucan (cf. 1:78)." Marshall, 285-286. Bock agrees. Bock, 650. If, in fact, Marshall and Bock are correct, then Luke's ability to utilize, shape, and connect his sources to fit his narrative program is even more impressive.

[463] Rowe, 121.

Zechariah prophesied: "Because of our God's tender mercy the dawn will break upon us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."[464] The story of Jesus' raising of the widow of Nain's son becomes for Luke an example of God's tender mercy giving light to this woman in the shadow of death and guiding her feet back to the way of peace.[465] God does this as Jesus and Jesus does all of this as κύριος.[466] Again, Luke continues through κύριος to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus as the God of Israel born a human.

This passage also anticipates the narrative of Acts and Luke's narrative agenda that effectively replaces Caesar with Jesus as κύριος. Luke not only presents Jesus as more than a prophet, he presents him as the Lord over death. "In the first century, such a claim by the Christians would be understood not only as typological in a Jewish context, but as polemical in an intercultural dialogue."[467] This type of action was the prerogative of the gods and through the imperial cult the emperor was sharing in the divinity of the gods. Given that this passage is so thoroughly Lukan, it is no surprise that it reveals not

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[464] Luke 1:78-79.

[465] Fitzmyer notes that "the miracle is not particularly related to faith in Jesus; that is not demanded either of the mother of the boy or of his friends who are carrying him to burial. It is attributed to Jesus' compassion…." Fitzmyer, 657-658.

[466] Bovon totally misses Luke's narrative program in his description: "Christologically, Luke makes explicit with the subject ὁ θεός ("God") the connection between the work of Jesus and the work of God. What Jesus does is nothing less than the fulfillment of God's will; indeed, in the final analysis, it is God's personal action. This identification exalts Jesus into the divine sphere, but it also abases him to the function of an obedient mediator." Bovon and Koester, 274. Luke's use of ὁ θεός does not abase, Jesus but rather, through κύριος, identifies him as the Lord God of Israel.

[467] Bovon and Koester, 269.

only the narrative agenda of developing and progressively revealing the identity of Jesus as κύριος but also points toward his later narrative agenda of displacing Caesar as "Lord of all." For Luke and his narrative this Lordship of all included death.

The Lord of Mission & The Lord of Heaven and Earth (10:1-22)[468]

Unlike the other gospel writers (again in an authorial introduction) Luke presents the mission of the seventy (-two) with the following statement: "After these things the Lord…." Here again Luke's choice of wording indicates his opinion concerning Jesus' identity—ὁ κύριος.[469] Most modern commentators identify τοῦ κυρίου τοῦ θερισμοῦ in 10:2 as the God of Israel.[470] Again, however, the authorial introduction in which Jesus is clearly identified as κύριος places the referent of the subsequent occurrence of κύριος in question. At this point in the narrative, however, it is not so much a question as it is another opportunity to advance Luke's narrative program. The reader is prepared to read the two verses (10:1, 2) in harmony. Luke's authorial guidance in 10:1 alerts the reader to read 10:2 as referring to the κύριος of 10:1. This then primes the reader to recognize Luke's agenda in that "as Jesus instructs his disciples to ask the κύριος of the harvest to send workers to the harvest, he is at that very moment actually sending workers himself."[471] This is precisely where the reader of Luke's narrative is prepared to realize

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[468] It should be noted that to date Professors Bovon, Nolland, and Bock have only completed their work on Luke's gospel through chapter 9; therefore, their voices will be missing in the subsequent three sections.

[469] Marshall notes, "Luke has strongly edited the opening and conclusion of the section in accordance with his normal habit." Marshall, 413.

[470] Rowe, 133. Marshall, 416. Fitzmyer, 846-847.

that not only is Jesus the Lord, he is the Lord of the harvest. Thus, immediately after Jesus instructs, "ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest," he commands the seventy (-two) he has appointed, "Go! I am sending you…."[472] The Lord of the harvest is doing exactly what he has instructed the disciples to ask him to do: He is sending out workers into the harvest.

Whereas Rowe continues to refrain from an absolute identification of Jesus as κύριος, requiring the exclusion of the God of Israel, Luke continues to develop his progressive revelation of Jesus as the God of Israel born a human through his use of κύριος. Interestingly Rowe's own words are appropriate as his own correction. Not only does "an either/or reading impose a necessity of choice that is foreign to the text," a refusal to allow Luke's narrative agenda to present Jesus as the God of Israel also imposes a choice that is foreign to the text. There is nothing within Luke's narrative program that *a priori* requires the reader to exclude the absolute identification of Jesus as the God of Israel. Rather, it is simply not expected.[473] This is precisely why Luke uses κύριος to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus in a new and unexpected

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[471] Rowe, 134.

[472] Luke 10:2-3.

[473] Here Fitzmyer's refusal to allow absolute identification should again be noted: "In using *kyrios* of both Yahweh and Jesus in his writings Luke continues the sense of the title already being used in the early Christian community, which *in some sense regarded Jesus as on a level with Yahweh. This is not yet to be regarded as an expression of divinity*, but it speaks at least of his otherness, his transcendent character. The sense of lordship that *kyrios*, *ʾādōn*, or *mārêʾ* would have carried among Palestinian Jews for Yahweh is now extended to Jesus, especially in his risen status. It is expressive of the dominion that both figures are thought to have over human beings." Emphasis added. Fitzmyer, 203. It is not an expression of divinity and yet the sense of Yahweh's lordship is extended to Jesus? How is this not an expression of divinity? Fitzmyer's filtering based upon theological tenets is astounding.

role. If the possibility that the God of Israel was born a human and that human was Jesus is allowed, then this is a perfectly valid interpretation that does not require either a choice between Jesus and the God of Israel or the fuzzy, ambiguous interpretation Rowe articulates. In fact, the only reason to arrive at Rowe's interpretation is that an absolute identification of Jesus as the God of Israel has been precluded. Luke's narrative does not require this preclusion; in fact, his narrative develops and reveals precisely this identity of Jesus as the God of Israel born a human.

If then, Luke's narrative program of developing and progressively revealing the identity of Jesus as the God of Israel is allowed to stand, how does Jesus pray? Luke addresses this question in the prayer that Jesus prays when the seventy (-two) return to him rejoicing, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."[474] If the God of Israel were to be born a human, he would not abdicate his position as an omnipresent spirit. Instead, he would simply be manifested as a human. Further, the God of Israel would be the Father of his human manifestation, precisely as presented by Luke in his birth-infancy narratives. Is it not possible, then, that this human manifestation, if fully human, would need to pray and would pray to his Father, the God of Israel? As convoluted as this sounds, Jesus ὁ κύριος in the flesh would pray to himself as the Lord God of Israel.[475] Again, this is unexpected, but is precisely what Luke's narrative program achieves—the

[474] Luke 10:17. Fitzmyer states, "Luke now appends to Jesus' comments on the success of the disciples' mission a double-episode, in which he records Jesus' praise of God as his Father (10:21–22) and his declaration of the favored status of his disciples as eyewitnesses of his ministry and teaching (10:23–24). The double-episode acts as further commentary on the disciples' relationship to him." Fitzmyer, 865.

[475] Psalm 65:2. Literal translation: "O one who hears prayer; to you all flesh comes."

development and progressive revelation of the identity of Jesus in a new role. This new role is that Jesus is the human manifestation of the God of Israel.

Just as the pairs of disciples address him as κύριε in 10:17, so Jesus addresses his Father as "Lord of heaven and earth" in 10:21. While the preceding pericope and the prayer of 10:21-22 are temporally connected, they are even more tightly connected through κύριος. Rowe's observation describes Luke's agenda without totally recognizing it: "almost within the same breath Luke speaks of Jesus ὁ κύριος, portrays the disciples as addressing Jesus as κύριε and Jesus as addressing the Father as κύριε, and uses an expression, κύριος τοῦ θερισμου, in which both κύριος Ἰησοῦς and κύριος πατήρ remain possible referents."[476] The total recognition of Luke's narrative agenda would be to realize that κύριος Ἰησοῦς and κύριος πατήρ are both the referents because Jesus is the God of Israel (Father) born a human (Son). It is not a shared identity where distinctions are preserved between the God of Israel and Jesus; instead, it is a shared identity whereby the reader recognizes that the God of Israel was born into humanity as Jesus and thus κύριος serves as Luke's means to proclaim this.

Luke realizes the newness and resulting confusion that his narrative agenda could engender. This is why the reader finds this revelation occurring in the mouth of Jesus. The disciples addressed Jesus as κύριος, Jesus describes himself as κύριος, and he addresses his Father as κύριος. Luke realizes that this identity he is developing and revealing is going to be profoundly discomfiting to his readers. In fact, Jesus realizes this confusion about his identity. It is no accident then, both in Jesus' prayer and Luke's narrative program that Jesus' prayer to his Father, Lord of heaven and earth is about his

[476] Rowe, 137.

hidden identity.[477] Jesus praises his Father "because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your gracious will. All things have been given to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son decides to reveal him."[478]

The hidden things are not simply that the demons submit to the disciples because Jesus has given them authority; rather, the identity of Jesus himself is a hidden thing. It is hidden because it will be rejected by the wise and the intelligent. This is God's will.[479]

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[477] Marshall comments concerning this prayer, "…there is no mention of the place of Jesus in it." The realization of Luke's narrative agenda would render this mention irrelevant. Marshall notes the "declaration by Jesus which speaks of the authority given by the Father to the Son: there is complete mutual knowledge between the Father and Son, so that only the Son can reveal the Father to men" without recognizing it as the answer to his question. Jesus is the Lord God of Israel born a human. It is from this identity that his place derives. Marshall, 431.

[478] Luke 10:21-22. Johnson comments, "The double repetition of 'Father' (*pater*) in verse 21 leads naturally to this solemn declaration concerning the unique relationship of Jesus as Son (*huios*) to God ('my Father'). Such explicit relational language is unusual in the Synoptics…." Johnson and Harrington, 169. When Luke's narrative agenda is recognized, this relational language makes much more sense. Fitzmyer comments, "Again, to what *panta* referred in the original saying is difficult to say. It might be thought to refer to the totality of cosmic power and sovereignty implied in the title 'Lord of heaven and earth,' with which Jesus has just hailed the Father, but it more likely refers to the knowledge of the mutual relation of himself and God, the content of the revelation gratuitously to be given. If this cognitive sense of *panta* is preferred, it is not to be forthwith understood of the eternal relations of the Trinity, such as would emerge in later Christian theology." Fitzmyer, 874. And yet it is "the eternal relations of the Trinity, such as would emerge in later Christian theology" that demands "mutual relation of himself and God" rather than Luke's explicit identification of Jesus as the Lord God of Israel born a human.

[479] Marshall argues, "The thought is of the secrecy of God's plans and purposes which he reveals at his own appointed time to his chosen people. The content of his plan is indicated by a ταῦτα which lacks a clear antecedent. The reference was probably originally to the gospel of the kingdom, attested by the preaching and mighty works of

Not only is there a question about who the Son is, but there is a question about who the Father is. Only those to whom the Son reveals it can understand the identity of both the Son and the Father.[480] It is precisely this identity that Luke's narrative agenda is developing and progressively revealing. The Father is the Lord God of Israel, ὁ κύριος. The Son is Jesus, ὁ κύριος. But the real revelation is that ὁ κύριος is the Lord God of Israel born a human whose name is Jesus. This is Luke's narrative agenda and the reader is able to recognize and participate in this program of development and revelation of identity.

The Entry of the Lord (19:28-40)

Beginning with 19:28, Luke's narrative enters the part of the story known as the passion narrative. As with the birth-infancy narrative, Luke's narrative structure,

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Jesus (Grundmann, 215). What was happening remained obscure in its significance to one group of people, but to the disciples it constituted a revelation of God's saving action." Marshall, 434. Fitzmyer adds, "That to which *tauta*, "these things" (v. 21), originally referred is not only obscure, but it is not certain that *panta*, "all things" (v. 22), refers to the same. Jesus' praise of the Father in v. 21b speaks of the Father's revelation and says nothing about himself, whereas v. 22 is concerned with the Son's revelation." Fitzmyer, 866. While the reference of what is hidden is broad, it certainly includes the identity of Jesus who as κύριος constitutes God's ultimate "saving action." It is ironic that these scholars seem to be subject to the very hiding that Jesus is speaking of. They seem unable to recognize that the revelation is the identity of Jesus as the Lord God of Israel born a human—ὁ κύριος.

[480] Marshall makes an interesting, if incomplete, conclusion: "Here Jesus takes up the role of the Son of God, and claims to stand in an exclusive relationship to him and to be the sole mediator of knowledge of God to men. This relationship is adequately explained in terms of Jesus' consciousness of God as Father….for Christian readers 'a son' (generic) could only be understood as an allusion to the unique status of Jesus." Marshall, 438. What precisely is the unique status of Jesus? Luke's narrative agenda is to present Jesus as ὁ κύριος. This presentation allowed him to develop and reveal how very unique Jesus was—the Lord God of Israel born a human. The Lord God of Israel was revealing himself to humanity through his own incarnation. It is the ultimate in exclusivity and explains why God would so empower the Son.

contrary to convention, requires treating the passion narrative and the resurrection narrative together.[481] Here, in the entry of the Lord into Jerusalem, what are instructive are the changes Luke makes to the basic story found in Mark. First, instead of the disciples encountering "some bystanders," they encounter οἱ κύριοι αὐτοῦ. This description is the opposite of Jesus' self-designation in 19:31: ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ.[482] Second, Luke shifts the narration of the story from Mark's third person to direct speech. The result is that the disciples repeat verbatim what the Lord has instructed them to say: ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ χρείαν ἔχει.

The following visual comparison with Mark makes clear the auditory results:

Mark 11:3-6	*Luke 19:31-34*
"ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ"	"ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ"
τῖνες τῶν ἐκεῖ ἑστηκότων	οἱ κύριοι αὐτοῦ
εἶπαν αὐτοῖς καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ ᾽Ιησοῦς	"ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ"

These changes are not very significant with regard to actual meaning nor are they required of Luke in order to render Mark's story more readable.[483] What they represent, however, is "not only Luke's knowledge and appropriation of the everyday use of κύριος but also his conscious employment of this meaning of the word to contrast it with his use of κύριος for Jesus."[484] This point is made even more obvious in this translation of 19:31-34:

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[481] Rowe, 158.

[482] Rowe, 159-160.

[483] Rowe, 167-169. Luke makes similar changes in 20:9-19: The Parable of The Lord, The Vineyard, and the Tenants in order to identify Jesus as the referent of the κύριος within the parable.

[484] Rowe, 160.

> And if anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" you will say, "its Lord [ὁ κύριος αὐτου] has need"….And while they were untying the colt its lords [οἱ κύριοι αὐτου] said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" And they said, "Its Lord [ὁ κύριος αὐτου] has need."[485]

Luke clearly understands the mundane meaning of κύριος; however, he also clearly identifies Jesus as more than a master—he is the Lord. This is why the disciples have the right to untie the colt—Jesus, its true Lord, has need of it.[486] While the animal certainly belongs to its masters from the village, it ultimately belongs to the Lord God of Israel its creator and that God, having been born a human, now exercises his supreme authority by instructing his disciples to bring the animal to its ultimate Lord.[487]

The villagers, upon hearing "Its Lord has need of it," assumed that the Lord being spoken of is the God of Israel, the creator of the colt.[488] But the reader understands more

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[485] Rowe, 161.

[486] Marshall describes Luke's changes without fully understanding their significance: "The word κύριος is ambiguous. It is unlikely to refer to God; it is more likely that it refers to the animal's owner (αὐτοῦ should perhaps be taken with κύριος rather than χρείαν, at least in Mk.; cf. J. D. M. Derrett, 246 n. 2), but in Lk. there is a reference to οἱ κύριοι αὐτοῦ in v. 33 which indicates that this is not the meaning here. Accordingly ὁ κύριος must mean 'its (real) owner' (J. D. M. Derrett*, 246f.) or 'the Master' (123), as a term used to refer to Jesus. On the first view, Jesus is the 'real owner', in contrast to 'its owners' below. Readers of the Gospels probably accepted the second of these two possibilities. It is not clear how much significance was originally present in the phrase." Marshall, 713.

[487] Rowe, p. 43. Fitzmyer notes, "To some commentators the use of *kyrios* is ambiguous. It scarcely is used of Yahweh or God. In the Marcan text, one could translate, 'Its master has need (of it),' but this meaning seems precluded in the Lucan text because of *hoi kyrioi* in v. 33 (changed by Luke from 'those standing by')." He also cautions, "There is no need to invoke here a 'prior arrangement' made by Jesus with the owners…." Fitzmyer, 1249.

[488] Marshall argues, "It is unlikely that ὁ κύριος here means the actual owner of the animal, and the implication is that a higher authority is recognised who has the right to impress the animal." Marshall, 713.

than the participants. Jesus ὁ κύριος has need of the colt and has the right to lay claim to the colt because he is the God of Israel, the colt's true κύριος. While the villagers have a limited understanding, the reader of Luke's narrative recognizes an explicit identification—Jesus ὁ κύριος has the right to lay claim to the colt because he is the Lord God of Israel.[489] Again, Luke develops and progressively reveals this identification through this use of κύριος.

The weight of the argument that Luke uses κύριος to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus and thereby to present him in a new (and unexpected) role is dependent upon the accumulation of evidence.[490] A prime example of this evidence is found in the use of Psalm 117 within the coming (ὁ ερχόμενος) of the Lord into Jerusalem and in particular the phrase ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου.[491] This phrase from Psalm 117:26 reaches back from 19:38 through 13:35 to 7:19 and probably even to 3:16:

> εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου (Luke 19:38)
> εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου (Luke 13:35)
> σὺ εἶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἢ ἄλλον προσδοκῶμεν (Luke 7:19, 20)
> ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου (Luke 3:16)[492]

The Psalmist declares, "May the one who comes in the name of the Lord be blessed!"[493] John announces, "I baptize you with water, but one more powerful than I am is coming

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[489] Johnson is unable to recognize Luke's narrative program and therefore concludes, "the ambiguity of the use of *kyrios* in both cases cannot be entirely resolved." Johnson and Harrington, 296.

[490] Rowe, 197.

[491] The chapter number is based upon "the Septuagint" numbering.

[492] Rowe, 163.

[493] Psalm 117:26a.

(ἔρχεται)."[494] John sends his disciples to question Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come (ὁ ἐρχόμενος)?"[495] Jesus invokes Psalm 117:26a in clear reference to himself in his lament over Jerusalem, "And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord (ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου).'"[496] And finally, the crowd ushers Jesus into Jerusalem with shouts, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord (ὁ ἐρχόμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου)."[497] What the Psalmist has spoken prophetically (Psalm 117:26a), John himself speaks prophetically (Luke 3:16), and then asks for confirmation (Luke 7:19-20), and Jesus speaks prophetically (Luke 13:35), and it is then fulfilled in his entry into Jerusalem (Luke 19:28).

This structure within the Lukan narrative "illustrates rather vividly Luke's messianic or Christological interpretation of the Jewish Scriptures" and this interpretation leads to the unmistakable conclusion that "as the Coming One, Jesus is the Royal Messiah (hence Luke's insertion: ὁ βασιλεύς) who enters the city ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου."[498] When the preceding context of the Parable of the Pounds and the authorial use of κύριος

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[494] Luke 3:16.

[495] Luke 7:19-20.

[496] Luke 13:35.

[497] Luke 19:28.

[498] Rowe, 164. Johnson notes that Luke "places the title *ho basileus* ('the king') more emphatically into the heart of the citation than the other evangelists….This emphasis on Jesus as king in Luke's version must be understood in light of the kingship parable of 19:11-27." Johnson and Harrington, 297, 301. It is also likely that Luke is anticipating developments within the Acts of the Apostles (see section "The Lord Jesus: βασιλέα ἕτερον" in Chapter 4: The Acts of the Apostles and Luke's Use of 'Kyrios').

in the mouth of Zaccheus in 19:8 is remembered, Luke's narrative agenda becomes vivid: "Through Luke's word-play and narrative technique, the royal (ὁ βασιλεύς), messianic (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) entry takes on the character of an *embodied* coming of the God of Israel as κύριος through his χριστὸς κύριος" thus "not remain[ing] far off (sending, as it were, only a messenger) but instead [coming] into Jerusalem as κύριος in the person of his Messiah…."[499]

Luke has developed and progressively revealed the unexpected, yet true, identity of Jesus. He is the embodiment of the God of Israel come personally as the χριστὸς κύριος to bring salvation to his people through the forgiveness of their sins. He is the royal, messianic figure anticipated by Psalm 117:26a because he is the Son of the Most High; the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David and his kingdom will never end. Hence, Luke's insertion of ὁ βασιλεύς takes on additional significance.[500] The reader is prepared to recognize the fulfillment of the angel's announcement to Mary in Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

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[499] Rowe, 165. Marshall contends, "In the Ps., however, it appears to have been originally a greeting addressed to the king as he approached the temple to worship God (G. W. Anderson, PC, 439). This original force reappears in Lk. with the addition of ὁ βασιλεύς….For Luke the kingdom is not yet to appear (19:11) but the one who is to be king is at hand….Perhaps the phrase means that there is peace in heaven, i.e. between God and man as a result of the exaltation of Jesus as king (cf. Acts 10:36), or more probably the force of the saying is the same as in Rev. 7:10 where God is praised by the ascription of salvation to him, i.e. he is praised as the author of salvation." Marshall, 715-716.

[500] Fitzmyer writes, "Luke, following Mark, quotes the text exactly but inserts *ho basileus*….The royal title that is thus introduced into the Lucan greeting has been foreshadowed in this Gospel in 1:32 and in 18:38, 40 ('Son of David')." Fitzmyer, 1251. Again, it is most likely anticipating narrative developments within Luke's Acts of the Apostles.

At the conclusion of Jesus entry into Jerusalem, he weeps, "If only you had known on this day…you did not recognize the time of your visitation."[501] The echo of "visitation" (ἐπισκοπῆς) stretches across Luke 1:68, 78, and 7:16. This visitation or presence of the God of Israel comes directly from the Greek Jewish Scriptures.[502] This echo, sense and use do not lead to ambiguity but explicit identification. Luke is clearly identifying Jesus as the God of Israel. What is the context of 1:68 and 1:78? It is the birth of John who will prepare the way for Jesus. Who is this Jesus? As noted above, while it is certainly appropriate to speak of Jesus as a great prophet, it falls short of his actual identity as ὁ κύριος. This is made clear in 7:16 because when this great prophet appears, God has come. As before, Israel has again missed the time of their visitation. For Luke, this visitation is unlike any other. It is the visitation of the God of Israel himself who is come in the name of the Lord and Jesus is unambiguously that κύριος.

The Risen Lord (24)

Luke clearly chose to use κύριος as a means to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus in a new and unexpected role. Consequently, there is tremendous significance in the fact that κύριος is completely absent during the passion narrative. In fact, the last occurrence of κύριος before the passion narrative is found in 22:61 in which Peter betrays Jesus by his denial. The passion narrative is Luke's story of how humanity,

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[501] Rowe, 165.

[502] Rowe, 165-166. Luke 1:68: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because he has come to help and has redeemed his people." Luke 1:78: "Because of our God's tender mercy the dawn will break upon us from on high." Luke 7:16: "Fear seized them all, and they began to glorify God, saying, 'A great prophet has appeared among us!' and 'God has come to help his people.'"

including Peter who first addressed Jesus as κύριε, rejected the identity of Jesus as ὁ κύριος. Luke makes this rejection evident to the reader by not once using κύριος within the passion narrative.[503] This "absence of κύριος is the silence of Jesus' death" and the silence is broken by the reappearance of κύριος twice within the resurrection narrative.[504] Not only does Luke signify the rejection of Jesus by not using κύριος, he is able to use this silence to emphasize its reappearance and consequent meaning.

With Peter's denial of the Lord in 22:61, Luke begins a series of narrative events all of which represent the rejection of Jesus as κύριος. He is mocked and beaten (23:63-65), taken to trial (22:66-23:25), executed (23:26-49) and finally buried (23:50-56). Throughout this rejection, Luke maintains two opposing themes: Jesus is innocent and yet he dies a horrible death. It is the tension of these two themes and the contrast that they present within the narrative that is the context of Luke's reintroduction of κύριος. Against this backdrop of rejection despite innocence, Luke breaks the silence of the passion narrative with a further development of the identity of Jesus.

Given this preceding silence during the passion narrative, the reintroduction of κύριος in 24:3 becomes even more important. When the women go to the tomb to find the results of his death—the body—not only do they not find the body, they do not find the body of ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς. This is this the first occurrence of κύριος since Jesus was crucified and buried, and this is the first time that Luke joins together κύριος and Ἰησοῦς. Both of these designations are used throughout the narrative but never together. The fact that Luke joins them together at precisely this point in the narrative is not an accident, but

[503] Rowe, 184.

[504] Rowe, 184.

rather, an intentional decision.[505] So 24:3 is significant as both the first occurrence of κύριος after the death of Jesus and as the first joining of κύριος and ᾽Ιησοῦς.[506]

There are three important statements being made by Luke when he joins these two words at this major moment of the story. First, Luke is making a clear statement about the rejection of Jesus as κύριος: "The human attempt to negate the identity of Jesus as ὁ κύριος has failed and this negation has been reversed through the ongoing story of the Lord."[507] Put simply the human rejection has been rejected by both God and Luke. Second, Luke unifies the identity of what Charles Talbert calls "the pre- and post-Easter Jesus" throughout his narrative by joining κύριος and ᾽Ιησοῦς. Through ᾽Ιησοῦς Luke is able to embrace the totality of the human life, from conception to death, that is the object of rejection. This character is then presented with his rejected, yet reaffirmed, identity of κύριος. Thus Luke is able to convey to the reader the realization that the human life and identity of Jesus is the same from the beginning of the story with his miraculous conception through his rejection in death to his vindication at resurrection. Jesus is the same Lord God of Israel born a human through all of this.[508] Finally, Luke is pointing ahead to Acts where ὁ κύριος ᾽Ιησοῦς is found many times, thus tying the resurrection

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[505] Rowe, 183.

[506] Fitzmyer barely acknowledges it with "Here once again *kyrios* is used in a statement of the evangelist." Fitzmyer, 1544.

[507] Rowe, 185. Marshall submits, "For Luke the body is that of the Lord Jesus, τοῦ κυρίου ᾽Ιησοῦ….The phrase declares the new status of the risen Jesus; he is the Lord." Marshall, 884-885. Here again, scholarship continues to miss Luke's narrative program by insisting that Jesus has received a new status after his resurrection. This, however, cannot be maintained when Luke's agenda is recognized as beginning with Jesus in the womb as ὁ κύριος.

[508] Rowe, 185-186.

story and the forthcoming birth of the church to the already presented narrative of the life of the Lord God of Israel in humanity.[509] The ultimate conclusion is simple and yet fundamental to Luke's narrative agenda: "The expression ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς functions as a kind of shorthand or abbreviated form to express the reversal of death and the continuity of identity: the Lord Jesus whose body is missing is the same as the Lord Jesus who trod the soil of Palestine to his death."[510]

The second occurrence of κύριος within the resurrection narrative is also the last time that anyone speaks of Jesus within Luke's Gospel. When Cleopas and his companion return to Jerusalem from Emmaus, they hear from the disciples that "the Lord has risen" (ἠγέρθη ὁ κύριος). There is immense significance in the fact that the first time that Jesus is spoken of by a person while actually existing is Elizabeth's statement in 1:43 calling him κύριος and the last time Jesus is spoken of by a person is the disciples' statement in 24:34 calling him κύριος.[511] It seems obvious that Luke intends the reader to

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[509] Rowe, 186.

[510] Rowe, 186. Johnson again misses Luke's point: "Luke likes to use 'Lord' of Jesus in the narrative (e.g., 10:1; 11:39). The title *kyrios* is particularly associated with the resurrection in early Chrstianity (e.g., 1 Cor 12:3; Phil 2:11), as we see from Acts 2:36. Luke will use 'Lord Jesus' again in Acts 1:21; 4:33; 8:16….In the earliest Christian writings, the conviction that Jesus was alive in a new and more powerful fashion was connected to the experience of the Holy Spirit, so that having this Spirit and being able to confess 'Jesus is Lord' went together (1 Cor 12:1-3)." Johnson and Harrington, 386-387, 389. This was not some new and more powerful Jesus identified by a new title. This was the same Jesus whose rejection as ὁ κύριος had itself been rejected. The only thing new was the affirmation of an already developed and revealed identity as ὁ κύριος.

[511] Marshall's only comment is "Note how the risen Jesus is referred to as ὁ κύριος." Marshall, 900. Johnson is equally brief: "The title 'Lord' (*kyrios*) is used absolutely (cf. 'Lord Jesus' in 24:3 and 'Jesus' in 24:15)." Johnson and Harrington, 397. Fitzmyer deals with it briefly but still without recognition of Luke's agenda: "Luke makes use here of a kerygmatic formula, possibly inserting himself *ho Kyrios*, though

recognize that this first and last use of κύριος frame the Gospel and thus emphasize the identity of Jesus that Luke has developed and progressively revealed.[512] Jesus is κύριος when he is conceived and retains his identity as κύριος through death to resurrection. The absence of κύριος during his death underscores the fact that the human judgment was wrong. Even though "Jesus' identity as κύριος is imperiled by the fact that he was rejected and executed," his resurrection is God's answer to this rejection—Jesus is still κύριος.[513]

Jesus is κύριος when he is conceived, born, lives and lives again. It would be wrong, as many scholars have done, to describe Jesus' identity after the resurrection as somehow a new status. After the resurrection, Jesus in not "something or someone he was not before"; rather, "the resurrection, to the contrary, guarantees the continuity of the self-same κύριος through rejection and death."[514] The resurrection, however, does have an impact on Jesus' "somatic location and mode of existence."[515] The resurrection offers Luke the occasion to narrate the transition from the incarnation (Jesus present physically) to the Holy Spirit (Jesus present as the spirit of the Lord God of Israel).[516] Luke articulates this change in the conclusion of his first narrative in such a manner that the

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that may have been part of it originally (see pp. 201–204), for it is not at all impossible that the title formed part of the original kerygma." Fitzmyer, 1569.

[512] Rowe, 187.

[513] Rowe, 187-188.

[514] Rowe, 188-189.

[515] Rowe, 189.

[516] Rowe, 189.

reader is prepared for the second narrative in the Acts of the Apostles where Jesus' presence is presented through the spirit rather than physical incarnation.

Jesus moves from the restricted bodily existence of incarnation to the unrestricted bodily existence of resurrection—"a bodily-earthly to a bodily-heavenly existence."[517] This allows for Luke's continued narrative of the life of the κύριος in the life of his new earthly body—the church—within the Acts of the Apostles. While he is now bodily located in heaven, he is also earthly located in the church through his spirit. Thus while the gospel narrates the identity of ὁ κύριος in the incarnation of the Lord God of Israel in Jesus, Acts narrates the identity of ὁ κύριος in the incarnation of the Lord God of Israel in his new body, the church. This allows Luke to continue what he developed and progressively revealed in the gospel narrative in the narrative of the church. Jesus is still ὁ κύριος in the life of the church. And the identity that Luke has developed and progressively revealed is now established and assumed as Luke begins his narrative of the church in the Acts of the Apostles.

[517] Rowe, 189.

CHAPTER 4

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES AND LUKE'S USE OF 'KYRIOS'

Introduction

This chapter examines Luke's use of κύριος in his second narrative, the Acts of the Apostles. The evidence will be marshaled to argue that Luke now assumes the identity of Jesus that was developed and progressively revealed in the gospel narrative. Luke utilizes this established identity to continue his narrative agenda that Jesus is Yahweh because he is κύριος. Further, Luke uses Jesus' identity as κύριος to claim that Jesus is superior to the emperor as a god because he is Lord of all (οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος).[518] Thus Luke is making an overt political claim that is dependent upon the cultural context of the Greco-Roman world and the Roman Empire, which was pervasively informed by the imperial cult. While Luke's understanding of κύριος derives from the Greek Jewish Scriptures, the effects of his message had direct ramification in the Greco-Roman world, where Luke explicitly replaces Caesar with Jesus as κύριος.[519] This point is presented most dramatically within the Acts narrative.

Both the conclusions and applications of this examination of Luke's Acts of the Apostles are heavily dependent on the background issues and assumptions established in

[518] Acts 10:36

[519] As previously discussed in Chapter 2: The Imperial Cult.

the first two chapters of this work. Without the realization that when Luke and his Jewish audience hear κύριος they first understand it to mean *Yahweh*, Luke's use of κύριος in his narratives to progressively reveal the identity of Jesus becomes unintelligible. This chapter is also dependent upon the previous examination of Luke's gospel. Luke's readers recognize and understand his development and progressive revelation of Jesus in the gospel as κύριος. Thus in Acts, Luke is reaching back into this common religious cultural context of the early Christians—the stories of the Jewish people and the story of the Jewish Messiah—to make his statement about the identity of Jesus.

At the same time, when Jesus is described as Lord of all, the displacement of Caesar by Jesus is unavoidable. Luke is not only reaching back into the common religious cultural context of the early Christians; he is also propelling his message forward into the dominant culture of the Roman Empire with this bold claim that Jesus is πάντων κύριος. This message may in fact be the source of some later Christians' refusal to engage in any form of allegiance to the Empire through the imperial cult. Even if this message took some time to be recognized by the Roman Empire, these early Christians themselves seem not to have missed it. They would gladly pray for the emperor, but they would not honor him as κύριος, for there was only one Lord. So Luke's argument not only embraces the Jewish roots from which Christianity was born, along with the revelation of Jesus' identity in the gospel, it also challenges the environment in which it would thrive and ultimately triumph. This challenge is felt most intensely within the narrative of the life of the church within the Acts of the Apostles.

The Beginning of the Acts of the Apostles

The subject of the prologue of the Acts of the Apostles is "the former account…about all that Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up to heaven."[520] It is a reference to Luke's previous narrative addressed to Theophilus and known to us as the Gospel of Luke. It is significant to note, again, that this gospel narrative begins with the vast majority of the occurrences of κύριος definitely referring to the God of Israel and his purpose and actions in ways that are clearly influenced by the Greek Jewish Scriptures.[521] Luke introduces the reader to κύριος by sentence 3 (1:6) and κύριος is clearly the God of Israel. In fact, in the subsequent nine occurrences of κύριος within the birth-infancy narrative, each time κύριος unambiguously refers to the God of Israel.[522] In contrast, the opening sentence of Acts is all about Jesus—what he did and what he taught. In fact, verses 1-11 can be seen as a recapitulation of the end of the gospel.[523] While the gospel story is the continuation of the stories of Jewish Scripture, in

[520] Acts 1:1. Also Fitzmyer notes "the mention of Jesus' being 'taken up' is an important christological affirmation, since it reflects the early Christian conviction that after his earthly ministry and death Jesus has become the risen Lord…Even in this brief prologue Luke is emphasizing for the Christian reader of Acts how Jesus, who is now the risen and exalted Christ, has taken care through the Holy Spirit to train his apostles. The risen Christ does not leave his followers without assistance and instruction." It is interesting that Fitzmyer notes the christological connection with the resurrection and ascension of Jesus but does not realize (beyond calling him Lord) that a primary narrative tool used by the author of Luke and Acts to express this connection is κύριος. Fitzmyer, 194.

[521] Rowe, 33.

[522] It may only be eight occurrences based upon textual considerations.

[523] Johnson and Harrington, *The Acts of the Apostles* (ed. Harrington; vol. 5; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 28. Also Ben Witherington sees verses 12-14 as a part of this recapitulation. Witherington, 113.

Luke's view, the Acts of the Apostles is the continuation of the stories about Jesus found in the gospel. These stories, however, are transformed because Jesus is now risen and his death has been vindicated by his resurrection.

While the gospel opens with the God of Israel in the foreground and Jesus' identity yet to be developed and revealed, Acts opens with Jesus in the foreground and his developed and revealed identity already assumed. This context is important to provide a proper appreciation of the first occurrence of κύριος within the narrative of Acts. The ascension of Jesus is introduced in Acts by the disciples questioning him about the restoration of the kingdom of Israel (1:6). This question begins with the vocative κύριε. Given the clear reference to the previous account of the gospel and the convincing work of Rowe concerning the proper understanding of Luke's use of κύριε within the gospel, it is obvious that this direct address includes a Christological sense. Further, it is apparent that the referent of this title is unambiguously Jesus. This argument is unmistakably viable based upon the subject introduced in the first sentence of Acts and continued in the verses following until verse six. This identification of Jesus as κύριε is completed in the subsequent verses (1:7-11).

In verse seven Jesus replies that the times and the periods have been set by the Father's authority and in verse eight he goes on to say that the disciples are to be his witnesses when they receive power from the Holy Spirit coming upon them.[524] Upon

[524] Fitzmyer rightly notes that "all these instructions are given by the risen Christ, 'after he had suffered' (1:3)….Though he makes no comment here about the significance of that suffering, Luke implicitly asserts in this way the identity of the crucified Jesus of Nazareth with the risen Christ…." While Acts 2:36 certainly makes it appropriate to call Jesus the "risen Christ," the immediate context seems to recommend a better designation—the risen Lord. Fitzmyer, 200.

making these statements Jesus is lifted up in verse nine and in verse eleven two men in white robes question the disciples as to why they are looking up into the sky because "this same Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will come back in the same way you saw him go into heaven."[525] The antecedent of the speaker in verse seven and the one lifted up in verse nine are evidently the same one addressed in verse six as κύριε. Given the focus upon Jesus in the beginning verses of Acts and the two men's unambiguous identification of the one taken up as Jesus, it is clear that the referent of κύριε in verse six is Jesus.

This point is very important. Whereas Luke has "contruct[ed] his Gospel in such a way that it *becomes* impossible to conceive of Jesus apart from the word κύριος," he begins the Acts of the Apostles with this assumption that has been developed in the gospel.[526] Jesus is κύριος. The first time that Jesus is spoken of by a person while actually existing he is called κύριος and the last time that Jesus is spoken of by a person within the gospel he is called κύριος. This framing of the gospel defines the identity of Jesus as ὁ κύριος.[527] Based on this identification of Jesus, the first occurrence of κύριος within the Acts of the Apostles clearly refers to Jesus. It is also interesting that the first occurrence is in the vocative which supports the work and conclusions of Rowe in that

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[525] Here again it is important to remember Fitzmyer's note concerning "taken up" and its connection with the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus. Fitzmyer, 194 & 208-209.

[526] Rowe, 202. Emphasis added.

[527] Rowe, 187. Also Fitzmyer notes that the apostles address Jesus as Lord, "the title used repeatedly in the NT for the risen Christ". Fitzmyer, 201. While he is correct that κύριος is tightly connected with the resurrection, he is incomplete in his characterization of κύριος as a title for the risen Jesus. Luke claims that Jesus was κύριος from the very beginning and the resurrection is simply the vindication of this identity.

Luke uses the semantic range of κύριε so as to present the reader with both the formal and the Christological sense of the word.[528] Jesus is clearly "sir/master" to his disciples but he is also, and more importantly, "Lord." Further, in Acts it is impossible from the very beginning of the narrative to conceive of Jesus apart from the word κύριος.

This proper understanding of the first occurrence of κύριος within Acts (verse 6) prepares us for an even more fundamentally important use of κύριος in verse twenty-one of the first chapter. This occurrence falls within the section of chapter one variously called the restoration or reconstitution of the twelve.[529] The disciples have returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives where they have observed Jesus taken up into the clouds. They convene in an upper room where they were staying in Jerusalem. It is not clear from verse fifteen whether the action was immediate but Peter addresses the need to replace Judas as "a witness of his resurrection together with us."[530] After concluding his comments concerning the prophecy about Judas and its fulfillment in his betrayal of Jesus and his subsequent death, Peter states that "one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time the Lord Jesus associated with us, beginning from his baptism by John until the day he was taken up from us" must replace Judas.[531] This is the second instance of κύριος within Acts but more importantly, it is the first time within Acts that the author joins together κύριος and Ἰησοῦς.

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[528] Rowe, p. 116.

[529] See Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1990), 729. Also Fitzmyer, 217.

[530] The Greek reads: Καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις. Acts 1:22.

[531] Acts 1:21-22.

Just as the first occurrence in Acts of κύριος is dependent upon the identity developed in the gospel—namely that Jesus is κύριος—likewise the first occurrence in Acts of κύριος ᾽Ιησοῦς is dependent upon Luke's work within the gospel.[532] Luke only joins together κύριος and ᾽Ιησοῦς once within the gospel, but he does so following a significant absence of κύριος within the narrative. Following Peter's betrayal of Jesus in denying that he knew him, the passion narrative in the gospel is devoid of any reference to κύριος. All have rejected Jesus. His claims, including identity, have been refused. The author of the gospel underlines this rejection by the absence of κύριος within the passion narrative.[533] The silence is broken by the reintroduction of κύριος in the passage describing how the women go to the tomb to find the results of Jesus' death—his body—only to find that the body of ὁ κύριος ᾽Ιησοῦς is gone. The reason it is gone is that he has risen from the dead. The rejection of Jesus that resulted in his death has itself been rejected through the resurrection.[534]

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[532] Fitzmyer argues that Luke's use of κύριος is a retrojection and the appropriate use of the title is reserved for the risen Christ. Given this understanding Fitzmyer thinks that the occurrence in Acts 1:21 is more justified because Peter is using it with hindsight. Luke is actually claiming through his development and progressive revelation of Jesus' identity that he has been the κύριος from his very conception and the resurrection is only the validation of his identity, not the source of his identity. Whether this is historically accurate depends upon how much Luke's claims are believed. Do Luke's sources present historically accurate material? Did his reuse of the sources accurately represent or distort them? These are questions that must be answered in order to establish historical veracity. This dissertation is focused only on what Luke is claiming through his narrative agenda. Fitzmyer, 202-203, 226.

[533] Fitzmyer, 202-203.

[534] Rowe, 184.

It has already been noted by Talbert that Luke has unified "the pre- and post-Easter Jesus" through his joining of κύριος and ᾽Ιησοῦς.[535] The moment of this unification is precise—the resurrection! So it should be no surprise that Luke chooses to (re)introduce κύριος ᾽Ιησοῦς in Acts within the context of the resurrection. When speaking of the need to replace Judas, Peter describes the qualifications of the replacement as one who has accompanied the twelve and Jesus from the beginning and who is able to be "a witness of his resurrection."[536] It is not until the resurrection and with it the validation of Jesus' identity that Luke joins κύριος to ᾽Ιησοῦς. Luke further underlines the connection with the resurrection when he uses κύριος ᾽Ιησοῦς almost immediately in his Acts narrative and links it with the resurrection. Rowe is correct on two key points. Luke is making clear that the resurrected κύριος is the same figure as the ᾽Ιησοῦς whose birth, life and death are written of in the gospel. Further the author has also utilized κύριος ᾽Ιησοῦς in such a manner as to bind the earlier narrative of the gospel with the later narrative of Acts.[537] With this identity firmly established and given the surrounding context, it seems most likely that Larry Hurtado, Simon Kistemaker, and Talbert are correct in asserting that the prayer for guidance in replacing Judas in 1:24 is addressed to the Lord Jesus.[538] The fact that prayer is offered to Jesus within Acts is

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[535] Rowe, 185.

[536] Acts 1:22.

[537] Rowe, 185.

[538] Rowe, 185-186. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (Philadelphia, PA: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1988), 104. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990), 67.

without dispute; further, Jesus is the one who originally chose the apostles.[539] Not only has the identity of Jesus been validated, so also has his authority. The disciples' prayer is an indication of their recognition of this authority. Equally important is the fact that Luke has structured his narrative to include this recognition and affirmation of Jesus' authority that is dependent upon his identity as κύριος.[540]

Unlike in the gospel where it occurs only once, κύριος Ἰησοῦς appears fifteen times in the Acts of the Apostles and in various contexts.[541] What is particularly significant is that the second occurrence of κύριος Ἰησοῦς within Acts is also in connection with the resurrection. It comes at the conclusion of the conflict between the apostles and the Council over the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate. After being released and returning to the other Jesus-believers, Luke tells the reader that "with great power the apostles were giving testimony to *the resurrection of the Lord Jesus*, and

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[539] Hans Conzelmann, Dennis Gaertner, Johnson, and Fitzmyer all assert the contrary opinion that the Lord being addressed in the prayer is God, with Barclay Newman and Eugene Nida ambivalent concerning the referrent; however, this misses the very point of Luke's narrative agenda. In fact, Fitzmyer's comment that κύριος is "a title used by Luke elsewhere for Yahweh of the OT" both establishes and misses Luke's point—Jesus identity is Yahweh become a human because he is the κύριος. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005), 21. Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 12. Gaertner, *Acts* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 1993). Johnson and Harrington, 37. Fitzmyer, 227.

[540] Barclay Newman and Eugene Nida accurately caution that Lord in verse 21 should not be considered "a mere title of respect." Instead, "the power to command and the corresponding obligation to obey" is present within this identity of Jesus. Further, it is precisely this power to command that is being appealed to in the disciples' prayer. Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles* (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1972), 31.

[541] Preaching, prayer, baptism, believing on, the name of, etc. Two of these occurrences are κύριος Ἰησοῦς χριστός.

great grace was on them all."[542] This is noteworthy for several reasons. Not only does this occur early in the narrative, but also it is only the second time (and only the third time in his combined narratives of Luke-Acts) that the author has utilized this important identity construct—κύριος Ἰησοῦς. Further, both occurrences in Acts thus far are explicitly associated with the resurrection, further validating the connections and conclusions concerning the first introduction of κύριος Ἰησοῦς at the end of the gospel. And, finally, this second instance in Acts is prefigured by the first. Peter states that the twelve must be reconstituted with a follower of the Lord Jesus who will bear witness to his resurrection. And the second occurrence of κύριος Ἰησοῦς is in the mouth of the narrator telling the reader that the apostles are doing precisely what Peter said they would do—bearing witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

This occurrence (4:33) has been drawn into the discussion at this juncture in order to further solidify the argument that Luke is utilizing κύριος Ἰησοῦς at precisely these points in the narrative for a reason.[543] Luke wishes to establish that the resurrected Jesus is the Lord Jesus because his rejected identity has been vindicated. Even his disciples had rejected his identity, but now, following the resurrection, they have accepted and bear witness to his true identity made apparent by the resurrection—κύριος Ἰησοῦς. This utilization of κύριος within Luke's narrative begins at the end of the gospel, but is immediately (re)introduced at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles. It is an example

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[542] Acts 4:33. Emphasis added.

[543] Johnson sees "witness to the resurrection" in 4:33 as defining the apostolic role just as we have seen in the qualifications of the replacement of Judas in 1:22. See Johnson and Harrington, 37. See Witherington, 125. Also Fitzmyer cites the common connection found in 1:22 and 4:33 while adding that it meant "a person to whom the risen Christ has appeared." Fitzmyer, 226.

of how Luke uses κύριος narratively to develop the identity of Jesus. What Luke has developed and progressively revealed in the gospel, he now makes central to the purpose of the church. The rejected Jesus is now vindicated and his disciples are witnesses to his affirmed identity as κύριος ᾽Ιησοῦς. This early presentation of the identity of Jesus also makes clear that in Acts Luke expects the reader to assume that κύριος refers to Jesus.

Peter's Sermon: "This Jesus Whom You Crucified"

Peter's sermon is as central to Luke's continued revelation of the identity of Jesus within the Acts of the Apostles as the birth-infancy narrative is to his development and progressive revelation of Jesus' identity within the gospel. Here, in Peter's sermon, Luke removes any question concerning the continued relevance of the identity of Jesus developed in the gospel. Luke uses the context of Peter's sermon to present Peter as a participant that *now* knows, along with the reader, the true identity of Jesus. Previously in the gospel, Peter, along with other participants, demonstrated an ignorance and misunderstanding concerning the identity of Jesus. In chapter two of Acts, Peter, along with the other disciples, now understands the true identity of Jesus. He has become the voice that speaks truth to the other (ignorant) participants—the crowd—about who Jesus really is. It is Peter's sermon that serves Luke as the means to further solidify Jesus' identity as κύριος. It serves Luke as the "frontispiece" for Acts, just as Jesus' speech in Luke 4 does for the Gospel.[544]

The sermon is consistent with Luke's method of using the foundation of the Greek Jewish Scriptures to reveal that Jesus is ὁ κύριος – the same ὁ κύριος that is the

[544] Talbert, 30.

God of Israel in the Greek Jewish Scriptures. When Peter stands to address the crowd that misunderstands what has happened at the birth of the church in that upper room, it is not surprising that he immediately begins his explanation with the citation of Greek Jewish Scriptures. Not only do these scriptures serve Peter in explaining to the crowd what has occurred in the upper room, but also these scriptures are focused upon κύριος and thus the identity of Jesus. When trying to illuminate the miracle of the birth of Mary's baby, κύριος is central to Luke's explanation in the gospel. Likewise, when trying to explain the miraculous birth of the church, κύριος is again central to Luke's description in Acts.

Κύριος occurs six times in Peter's sermon: four times in quotations from the Jewish Scriptures and twice in proclamations by Peter. The apex of Peter's sermon is found in 2:36 with both κύριος and χριστός central to the statement. The proclamation of 2:36, however, is the culmination of Peter's sermon, which is focused upon Jesus' identity and the fact that God has rejected humanity's rejection of Jesus. The quotations from the Greek Jewish Scriptures not only support Peter's argument that God has rejected the rejection of Jesus, but they also contribute to the specific articulation of Jesus as κύριος. Peter's explanation of what has occurred in the upper room on this festival day of Pentecost is completely interwoven with an understanding of the identity of Jesus. The birth of the church on the day of Pentecost cannot be described without reference to the identity of Jesus as κύριος.

Joel: τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου

Peter begins his sermon by correcting the crowd's assumption that the disciples are drunk. Peter argues instead that what has occurred in the upper room is the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy—God has poured out his Spirit on all people.[545] Peter describes the days when God will pour out his Spirit as "the last days."[546] This interpretative explanation—not a part of Joel's prophecy—alerts the reader to Peter's focus. Contrary to expectation, Peter is not as focused on the outpouring of God's Spirit as he is on when it occurs, by whom, and what it is for. Peter certainly cites Joel because of his description of God pouring out his Spirit; however, he is particularly interested in "the inauguration of the 'last days'; for the time has come when the Christian message is about to move out from Jerusalem to 'the end of the earth' (1:8)."[547] This Christian message is what Peter is inaugurating in his address to the crowd. It is a message about salvation through the pouring out of God's spirit; however, this salvation is only possible through the one whom they have rejected but God has affirmed.

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[545] Joel 2:28-32. Fitzmyer correctly claims that Peter cites Joel because of the Spirit, as opposed to talking in tongues: "Peter quotes Joel not because of the mention of talking in tongues, as Haenchen (*Acts*, 178 n. 11) remarks, but because of the experience of the Spirit, even though such talk may be implied in the reference to prophecy." Fitzmyer, 252.

[546] Acts 2:17.

[547] Fitzmyer, 252. Wilhem Bousset notes that this Christian message emanates from a community that is already identified by the name of Jesus in the time of Paul and to whom the passage from Joel is readily applied. Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1970), 130.

God's Spirit will be poured out, accompanied by wonders and miraculous signs, in order to usher in "the great and glorious day of the Lord."[548] In these last days the wonders and miraculous signs, including the pouring out of God's Spirit, are meant to usher in the day of the Lord. For in these last days when the great and glorious day of the Lord has arrived, "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."[549] This last sentence is of particular importance to Peter; in fact, "in the context of Peter's speech, this concluding clause of Joel's prophetic utterance becomes climactic."[550] Just as Jesus cited Isaiah concerning the year of the Lord being fulfilled that day in him, so Peter cites Joel concerning the day of the Lord being fulfilled in the birth of the church.[551]

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[548] Acts 2:20.

[549] Acts 2:21. This verse represents the first of thirty-two times that Luke uses ὄνομα in connection with Jesus' identity as divinity. H. Douglas Buckwalter argues that Peter's use of Joel 2:32 in Acts 2:21 "may reflect Luke's personal belief about Jesus' relation to God…." Buckwalter, *The Character and Purpose of Luke's Christology* (89; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 183-185. Luke's narrative agenda certainly points the reader to a recognition that Jesus' relation to God is understood through the use of κύριος.

[550] Fitzmyer, 253.

[551] Luke 4:21. Tannehill makes note of this connection between Joel in Acts 2 and Isaiah in Luke 4. He further notes the importance of "repeated reference to both the name of Jesus and to salvation through him….The divine promise through the prophet passes into narrative, which displays its fulfillment." Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (vol. 2: The Acts of the Apostles; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 31. Bousset makes a similar connection between "day" and the "Son of Man" and specifically cites Acts 2:20 in the footnote to the following statement: "For to the Son of Man are to fall power and honor and lordship (Dan. 7:14). So people ventured already to speak of the 'day' of the Son of Man just as the Old Testament spoke of the day of Yahweh." Bousset, 47.

So, again, the birth of the church is inextricably bound together with the identity of Jesus, the very Lord of the day by whom salvation arrives.[552]

Peter cites Joel because it serves his purpose (as well as Luke's purpose) of focusing the crowd upon the identity of Jesus. The link between the crowd's understanding of τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου as referring to Yahweh and Peter's understanding of τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου as referring to Jesus is "so close that the two are virtually indistinguishable."[553] They are indistinguishable because Peter is declaring the advent of the last days—the great and glorious day of the Lord. This is the same Lord declared by Jesus in Luke 4. It is Yahweh, ὁ κύριος, who has been born as the human Jesus, ὁ κύριος. This citation of Joel gives Peter the scriptural basis for transferring "the agency of salvation from God (Yahweh) to Jesus."[554] But this transfer is not between two

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[552] Talbert states emphatically "In this context, 'the Lord' can only refer to Jesus (1:24; 2:36, 38)." Talbert, 28. Fitzmyer begins to recognize this connection and importance of κύριος and the identity of Jesus with salvation (though his recognition lacks the development that Luke's narrative actually presents): "Salvation is linked with invocation of the Lord. The words of Joel thus quoted prepare for the proclamation of the risen Christ as Lord and Messiah and also for the call to repentance and baptism (Dillon, "Prophecy," 547). In the Hebrew text of Joel, 'Lord' referred to Yahweh, but salvation as a consequence of the invocation of 'the name of the Lord' appears again in Acts, with *Kyrios* as the risen Christ (4:10–12; 22:16). That too is the connotation of *Kyrios* here. *Pas hos*, 'everyone who,' is emphasized because Luke does not want to limit the quoted words only to the Jews assembled in Jerusalem: all human beings may call on the name of the Lord for salvation. This is his way of stressing an effect of the Christ-event in the first kerygmatic speech in Acts (see *Luke*, 222–23)." Fitzmyer, 253-254. Conzelmann righty notes "the interpretation of κύριος, "Lord," as Jesus is possible only on the basis of the LXX, not the MT." (See Chapter 1: The Greek Jewish Scriptures ("the Septuagint").) Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 20.

[553] Buckwalter cites Hans Bietenhard's observation that in the New Testament "the name, person, and work of God are…inseparably linked with the name, person, and work of Jesus Christ." Buckwalter, 183.

[554] Buckwalter, 196.

separate entities; rather, it is a transfer necessitated by the revelation that Jesus is himself Yahweh born as a human being. This is why he is ὁ κύριος and is now revealed to be the agent of salvation. Salvation will come through calling on his name.[555] Peter's citation of Joel, in particular Acts 2:21, "defines what the object of Christian witness will be – i.e. the Lord Jesus Christ – and the controlling meaning of ὄνομα in Acts."[556] When the meaning of κύριος within the Hellenistic synagogue is remembered – Yahweh – Peter's understanding of Joel's prophecy as referring to Jesus becomes obviously important.[557]

After citing Joel's prophecy, Peter immediately turns to Jesus' identity and his rejection. All through Peter's description of Jesus' rejection is the constant affirmation of God. While the human verdict about Jesus is rejection, the divine verdict is affirmation. Peter, in defending and explaining the occurrences in the upper room, is focused on Jesus' identity, subsequent rejection, and finally God's rejection of humanity's verdict. As seen before in the gospel, God's reversal of the human verdict is demonstrated in the vindication of the resurrection. In spite of God's attestation through powerful deeds,

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[555] It is important to note that salvation through calling on the name of the Lord occurs in Acts within the context of baptism. Bousset's observation must be heard and noted: "At the beginning of the Christian life stands baptism. It is still essentially a baptism ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου, as it was in the Pauline era. The book of Acts witnesses to this formula in numerous passages [2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5]; even the Didache, which next to Matthew offers the earliest witness to the Trinitarian baptismal formula, in its statements about the eucharist still speaks quite simply of 'all those who are baptized in the name of the Lord' (βαπτισθέντες εἰς ὄνομα κυρίου). It is said, more precisely, that baptism takes place during the invocation of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ: 'Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16)." Bousset, 295.

[556] Buckwalter, 183.

[557] Hengel, "Christological Titles in Early Christianity," in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (ed. Charlesworth; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 441.

wonders, and miraculous signs, the crowds, ignorant of who Jesus was, crucified him. Still God was in control and raised Jesus from the dead in affirmation of who he was and in rejection of humanity's ignorance. The need to call on the name of the Lord for salvation proceeds from the imperative for the crowd to repent for their part in the rejection of Jesus' identity. This repentance and subsequent salvation come through the Lord and his name. It is ironic, and yet narratively impacting, that the forgiveness is for rejecting the very one who is the source of salvation—Jesus the κύριος.

David and the Psalms

It is in support of this description of Jesus' rejection by humanity, but affirmation by God, that Peter cites David. After quoting Joel that salvation will come to all that call on the name of the Lord, Peter turns explicitly to the rejection of Jesus of Nazareth. Despite the testimony of his powerful deeds, wonders, and miraculous signs, Jesus was executed by nailing him to a cross. This rejection, though clearly wrong, was anticipated and used by God in his foreknowledge and predetermined plan.[558] It was used by God to demonstrate the identity of Jesus even more clearly than the powerful deeds, wonders, and miraculous signs of his ministry. Despite the testimony of Jesus' ministry, the people had killed him. Their verdict was rejection. God, however, rejected their verdict in affirming the identity of Jesus by "having released him from the pains of death."[559] Peter has picked up this closing theme from Luke's gospel and presented it in his first sermon.

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[558] Fitzmyer cites William Barclay's description of Luke's reference to "the eternal paradox of the Cross; the Cross is at one and the same time the action of the purpose and the plan of God, and an unspeakably terrible crime at the hands of wicked men." Fitzmyer, 256.

[559] Acts 2:24.

Whether the presence of this theme is due to Luke's authorial material or whether it is present because it is central to the early church's understanding of Jesus' identity cannot be determined with certainty. What is clear is that the theme is common to both the Gospel and Acts, and that this theme is central to Luke's development and progressive revelation of Jesus' identity.

It is in the context of the resurrection that Peter quotes Psalm 16:8-11 from the Greek Jewish Scriptures.[560] He uses it as proof of God's divine plan, though most of the quotation is not directly applicable to Peter's sermon.[561] The subject of the Psalm is David's assurance because of the presence of the Lord always before him. What is crucial, however, to Peter's sermon is buried in the midst of the quotation: the Lord "will not leave my soul in Hades, nor permit your Holy One to experience decay."[562] While Peter's use of this Psalm does not make much modern sense, the reference to "your Holy One" is why Peter cites it.[563] Peter applies this Davidic psalm to Jesus "who is the preeminent 'holy One,' whose status is not in the netherworld, and who has not

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[560] This citation of Psalm 16:8-11 is the only use of this Psalm within the New Testament writings. Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), 174. Johnson argues that not experiencing decay along with the motifs of the "paths of life" and "joy in your presence" all point to resurrection. Johnson and Harrington, 51.

[561] Fitzmyer, 256.

[562] Acts 2:27. Here Conzelmann warns that being left in Hades must refer to death. "The text cannot be understood as referring to a journey to Hades. Luke is unfamiliar with such a notion and we should not infer a pre-Lukan meaning." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 21.

[563] Fitzmyer cites Alfons Weiser in stating that while this proof of Scripture seems strange, it was necessary in order to fulfill the early church's desire for what happened to Jesus to be demonstrated as being in harmony with the Jewish Scriptures. Fitzmyer, 257.

experienced decay."[564] Peter presents the scripture and then demonstrates that it does not apply to David because he is dead, buried and his tomb is proof thereof.[565] Peter then proceeds to apply this prophetic psalm to Jesus, the descendant of David, because Jesus has been raised from the dead.[566] While the human verdict placed Jesus in Hades to decay, God rejected the human verdict and affirmed his identity as ὁ κύριος by raising him from the dead and exalting him.[567]

Peter uses this citation from David not only to affirm God's rejection of the human verdict through resurrection and exaltation, but also to introduce David and his messianic psalms into the sermon.[568] This introduction of David allows Peter (and/or

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[564] Fitzmyer.

[565] Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 21. Conzelmann also notes that the proof is further established by Peter's use of Psalm 131:11 from the Greek Jewish Scriptures stating that God had promised to place a descendant of David upon his throne. This connection is further strengthened by the fact that in Psalm 131 David is called God's Annointed One. Fitzmyer, 258. Witherington notes that "Peter's point is that David's tomb was still in plain view for any Jew to see and there was no evidence of David having vacated the premises. Thus, it follows he must be referring in the psalm to another." Witherington, 146.

[566] Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 174. Johnson notes that Peter's use and interpretation of David is based upon the assumptions that David wrote the Psalms as God's 'anointed,' that God had promised David an eternal dynasty, and thus the Psalms were either referring to himself (David) or his descendant (the Messiah). Thus, because it was obvious that David had experienced decay, the quotation from Psalm 15 must apply to the Messiah. Johnson and Harrington, 54-55.

[567] Fitzmyer notes that "Psalm 16 is a lament, actually a psalm of personal trust in God; it expresses the psalmist's faith in God's power to deliver from evil and personal troubles, as he calls upon God to recall his constant seeking of refuge in divine help and makes renewed recognition of that help. As Peter makes use of it in his speech, it is applied to the risen Christ's exaltation." Fitzmyer, 256.

[568] Kistemaker argues in parallel that "Peter introduces David's name once more to link Psalm 16:8–11 to Psalm 110:1." Kistemaker, 101.

Luke) to utilize an even more important Psalm from the Greek Jewish Scriptures that has already been used in the gospel to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus as ὁ κύριος – Psalm 109.[569] It has already been noted that Psalm 109 and its interpretation by Jesus in Luke 20:41-44 plays a pivotal role in Luke's use of κύριος to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus. When Jesus interprets the meaning of Psalm 109, the force of the passage is not just how κύριος is used within Luke 20; rather, the full force comes from the development of Jesus' identity throughout the gospel, particularly beginning in the birth narrative. The use and interpretation of κύριος in Luke 20 resonates with all the previous progressive revelations of Jesus as κύριος.

This reflection in sound and resulting resonance within the Gospel, firmly rooted in Jewish Scripture, is clearly seen when it is noted that "the possessive pronoun μου in τῷ κυρίῳ μου provides a strong semantic link between 20:42 and the first use of κύριος for Jesus in 1:43: τοῦ κυρίου μου."[570] Further, the significance of the question raised by the κύριος, when connected with both the larger narrative and 2:11 and 2:26, becomes indicative of how important κύριος is to Luke's narrative and how he is using it. Jesus' quotation of Psalm 109:1 demonstrates that Luke is using κύριος as a means to reveal the identity of Jesus. In Luke 20 it is significant that it is Jesus himself in his own words who

[569] Peter's interpretation is dependent upon the exact wording found in the Greek Jewish Scriptures ("the Septuagint"). Conzelmann argues that "only on this basis is the distinction possible between κύριος, "Lord" = God, and κύριος μου, "my Lord" = Christ." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 21. Further Fitzmyer states, "Peter argues: since David remains in his tomb, the words cannot refer to him. So David's words must refer to the exaltation and enthronement of the risen Christ, a descendant of David, thus exploiting a sense that goes beyond its OT meaning. This christological sense of Psalm 110 is found elsewhere in the NT, showing how the early church understood it particularly of the risen Christ." Fitzmyer, 260.

[570] Rowe, 175.

is revealing his identity. Now in Acts 2 it is Peter using this same passage to reveal and proclaim again the identity of Jesus. What has already been established in the gospel is now reintroduced and reiterated in Peter's sermon. Not only has God rejected humanity's verdict by affirming Jesus' identity in resurrection, Jesus has taken his rightful place as the κύριος with his foes becoming his footstool.[571]

What Luke has introduced in Luke 2:11 and 2:26, has been confirmed by Jesus himself in his exegesis of Psalm 109 in Luke 20 and is now being invoked by Peter in Acts 2. These connections between Luke 2:11 and 20:41-44 (along with the occurrence of 2:26) and the reintroduction of Psalm 109:1 in Acts 2 all point to a narrative program in which κύριος is a word of singular importance to the narrative development of the identity of Jesus. It is through this narrative program that Luke develops and progressively reveals that Jesus is God because he is the κύριος.[572] His development and

[571] Fitzmyer notes: "In its OT context these words of the psalm would have expressed the victorious status acquired by the newly enthroned Davidic king. As applied to the risen Christ, they symbolize the victorious status of Christ that Peter will announce in the next verse." Fitzmyer, 260.

[572] Here scholars miss the point that Luke's use of κύριος is not simply flexible or ambiguous, but rather, is precise in identifying Jesus as God. Contrary to Witherington's assertion that "the quotation from Ps. 110:1 in Acts 2:34 where both God and Jesus are referred to as κύριος shows how flexible Luke was prepared to be in his use of the term κυριος," Luke uses κύριος as the instrument to develop and progressively reveal that Jesus is the God of Israel born as a human being. This is why, in contrast to his above statement, Witherington is right in noting that "It would be wrong to conclude from such a text that Luke saw Jesus as merely the *believer's* Lord, for in Acts 10:36 he is called the Lord of all (πάντων κύριος)." Only God can be Lord of all and Jesus is Lord of all because he is God. Witherington, 148. William Larkin does seem to grasp Luke's narrative agenda: "Then, following the lead of Jesus, Peter claims that David is addressing the Messiah when he says, "The Lord [God] said to my Lord [the Messiah]" (Lk 20:41–44/Ps 110:1). When Jesus asked how David could call his descendant "Lord," he was not simply making *Messiah* and *Lord* synonymous titles. When the One who is literally exalted to the right hand of the Father is called "Lord," he is addressed as more

progressive revelation has reached such a climax that what has been presented in the gospel is now taken as established in Acts and is the basis of Peter's proclamation in verse 36. The apex of Peter's sermon is founded upon the revelation of Jesus' identity as both κύριος and χριστος. This revelation began in the gospel in the words of the angel, was confirmed by Jesus himself and is now proclaimed by Peter: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know beyond a doubt that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ."[573]

The Introduction is the Conclusion

Luke introduces Jesus in his gospel as the κύριος. First, he is κύριος in the womb and when he is born, he is proclaimed χριστὸς κύριος by the angel. Now, after being rejected by humanity through the crucifixion, Jesus' identity is again proclaimed and affirmed. He is both κύριος and χριστὸς. In fact, he has always been κύριος and χριστὸς. In Luke's narrative there has never been a time that he was not κύριος and χριστὸς. The conclusion of Peter's sermon in which he proclaims that God has made Jesus both κύριος and χριστὸς has long been misunderstood and mischaracterized by scholars. Some scholars have argued that Luke actually used the declaration in 2:36 in contradiction to the Christology of his own gospel.[574] It seems incredible that Luke, having already

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than an honored human descendant of David. The way Jesus formulated the question implied as much. Peter, unveiling what Jesus' question hinted at, declares him to be Lord in the sense of Yahweh. Jesus is God!" Larkin, Briscoe and Robinson, *Acts* (5; Downers, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), Acts 2:22-36.

[573] Acts 2:36.

[574] Rowe, 191-192.

established the connection between κύριος, χριστὸς and Jesus' identity in the gospel, would use a declaration at the apex of Peter's sermon that was inconsistent with his already established narrative agenda concerning this same identity of Jesus. It is also not tenable.

Fitzmyer argues that "the first of the two christological titles implies that Jesus in his risen status has been made the equal of Yahweh of the OT, for "Lord" was used by Palestinian Jews in the last pre-Christian centuries as a title for Yahweh: either *mārêʾ* or *māryāʾ* in Aramaic, or *ʾādôn* in Hebrew, or *Kyrios* in Greek."[575] He also asserts "the second title means that God has made Jesus in his risen status the anointed agent (Hebrew *māšîăḥ* = Greek *christos*) to bring aid or deliverance to the people of Israel, who were looking forward to the coming of a Messiah."[576] The operative and fundamental marker for Fitzmyer is "in his risen status." This means that when God rejected humanity's verdict and rejection of Jesus by raising him from the dead, he also elevated Jesus to a new status denoted by the titles κύριος and χριστὸς. This totally misses Luke's narrative agenda. From the voice of Elizabeth to the angel's declaration to the shepherds through Jesus' own exegesis to this moment in Peter's sermon Jesus has always been κύριος and χριστὸς. The emphasis in this verse should not be "has made" but rather "know beyond a doubt."

Witherington accurately describes how Peter's declaration has been historically understood: "it has been seen as a classic exposition of the very primitive 'adoptionist' Christology of early Jewish Christianity, for the text suggests that God made Jesus these

[575] Fitzmyer, 260.

[576] Fitzmyer, 261.

things (both Lord and Messiah) *after* he died, and perhaps on the basis of the crucifixion…roles that Jesus only fully assumed after his death."[577] In some sense Jesus' act of sacrifice not only purchased atonement, but also won his exaltation to the status of κύριος and χριστὸς. While Witherington rejects an outright adoptionistic understanding, he does argue "from Luke's point of view, Jesus did not in any full sense assume the roles of Lord and Messiah over all until after the resurrection and ascension."[578] Dillon and Fitzmyer actually claim that Luke has not truly formulated 2:36 but rather is utilizing an early adoptionistic statement.[579] Both positions, however, ignore the already developed and revealed identity of Jesus expressed in the Gospel.

Like Hurtado, Witherington claims that Jesus is the recipient of God's action and the result is "his installation in a dignity and office not previously held" and only following his death and resurrection is Jesus "God's chief agent who has been exalted to a position of superlative status, resembling the sort of status accorded to the chief agent figures in the Jewish tradition."[580] David Aune goes so far as to assert that "the Christian confession 'Jesus is Lord' can be understood as an affirmation that Jesus is the royal Messiah at the right hand of God (Acts 2:34, Romans 8:34, 1Cor 15:25, Eph 1:20, Col 3:1), i.e. the Lordship of Jesus is **the result** of the completion of his saving work, not **the**

[577] Witherington, 147.

[578] Witherington, 149.

[579] Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 175.

[580] Hurtado, 94.

presupposition for it."[581] Both positions grossly miss Luke's narrative agenda of the development and progressive revelation of Jesus' identity as κύριος and χριστὸς.

Conzelmann does acknowledge the adoptionistic ring of 2:36 while still rejecting the assertion that it is a pre-Lukan statement. While the formulation may or may not come from Luke himself, he argues the combination of the two titles, κύριος and χριστὸς, comes from Psalm 16 and Psalm 109 in the Greek Jewish Scriptures. "Luke is not reflecting on the time of installation at all but simply sets forth God's action in opposition to the behavior of the Jews."[582] While Conzelmann is correct in rejecting the adoptionistic understanding of 2:36, he still does not recognize the fullness of Luke's true narrative agenda. Buckwalter contributes insightful and precise questions to this discussion: "Are we to understand Luke as merely reading *ex eventu* Jesus' Lordship back onto the Gospel account, or is there more to it for him than this? And does Acts 2, for Luke, necessarily underscore a thoroughgoing subordination of Jesus to God, or is there a better way of understanding the event within Luke-Acts?"[583] At the heart of this discussion is Jesus' identity: is he the κύριος and χριστὸς or is he simply awarded these titles because of his sacrifice and death? Scholars have typically argued the subordination of Jesus to God and the awarding of exaltation upon his death and resurrection.[584] This could not be more at odds with Luke's narrative agenda.

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[581] Emphasis added. Aune, "Christian Prophecy and the Messianic Status of Jesus," in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (ed. Charlesworth; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 415.

[582] Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 21.

[583] Buckwalter, 4.

Peter's declaration that God has made Jesus κύριος and χριστὸς is not because of the resurrection, but because he now fully knows Jesus' true identity. It is a function of revelation. What Peter himself did not understand in the gospel, now, because of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, he understands and declares to the crowd which also has not understood. They had rejected Jesus' identity. The resurrection was God's response to the human rejection of this identity of Jesus. Now Peter declares, on the basis of the resurrection, that the house of Israel should now know beyond a doubt the identity of Jesus. His death did not earn him the status of κύριος and χριστὸς. He died because he was already κύριος and χριστὸς. It is his identity and the house of Israel's rejection of that identity that led to his death. But his resurrection was the divine answer. God has rejected humanity's rejection and has affirmed the identity of Jesus. Even his disciples had not really understood who he was, but now through God's divine plan, not only has salvation been purchased, but the identity of Jesus has been affirmed. While the powerful deeds, wonders, and miraculous signs of his ministry were not sufficient proof, his resurrection was.

Peter's conclusion in 2:36 is simply a restatement of Luke's Gospel introduction. As surely as the angel informed Mary that the Holy Spirit of the Most High was going to perform the impossible, Peter now declares that the impossible was done. The Lord God of Israel had made himself a human. That human's name was Jesus and he was and had been since his conception and birth the κύριος and χριστὸς. The conclusion of Peter's sermon was not a declaration of something new. It was the declaration of something already established, but only now being understood. For Luke's narrative agenda, this

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[584] Buckwalter, 19-20.

moment was the culmination of his development and progressive revelation of the identity of Jesus as κύριος and χριστὸς. Under the inspiration of the Spirit, Elizabeth had declared it. The angels had known and declared it. Jesus had certainly known and progressively revealed it. But now, Peter and the other disciples knew it and bore witness to the crowd—the very crowd that had, along with them, rejected Jesus' identity. Jesus was the Lord God of Israel born as a human being. This is why he is κύριος and χριστὸς. God had not made Jesus κύριος and χριστὸς upon his resurrection. God had made Jesus κύριος and χριστὸς when God himself was born the human Jesus.

Scholars continue to insist upon some level of distinction between God and Jesus. The only necessary distinction is the miracle of God being born as a human being. This was certainly a transformation of existence and manifestation, but it was not a change in identity. The reason that it was not necessary for Luke to distinguish clearly between God and Jesus—"to speak of one was to speak of the other"—is that Luke's narrative agenda was to develop and progressively reveal the identity of Jesus as the Lord God of Israel born as a human being.[585] Κύριος (along with χριστὸς) was Luke's chosen element to effect this narrative program. Luke was certainly intentional in his description of Jesus as κύριος because for him it was theologically correct to consider both God and Jesus as the divine referent, because Jesus was the God of Israel born as a human being.[586] Just as "transcendent Yahweh personally involved himself with his people in the OT," he

[585] Buckwalter, 186.

[586] Buckwalter.

continued to personally involve himself as Yahweh born as a human being—Jesus the κύριος and χριστὸς.[587]

Why does Luke portray Jesus as continuing this work among humanity? It is not because he is God's co-equal. It is because Luke was developing and progressively revealing the identity of Jesus as the God of Israel born as a human being—the κύριος. Luke views Jesus not as a co-equal of Yahweh but as Yahweh manifested as a human. Max Turner is correct in arguing, "To speak of Jesus directing God's Spirit (understood in this sense) would surely be tantamount to calling him God."[588] Buckwalter argues, "similarly, to substitute Jesus for Yahweh, as implied in the phrase τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου in Acts 2:21, would denigrate the uniqueness of God unless Jesus were considered his equal….Thus, with good reason we propose that Luke believed Jesus' Lordship to represent 'a status equal to Yahweh.' Jesus appears as 'co-regent' in Acts."[589] In fact, Luke's narrative agenda goes further than equality. It lays claim to actual identity. Jesus is κύριος because he is Yahweh born as a human. It is precisely this claim of identity that the Jewish people had rejected. It is precisely this identity that Peter is now declaring to the house of Israel. And it is precisely this revelation of Jesus' identity that defines how Luke uses κύριος in the remainder of his narrative. Luke does not have to clearly distinguish between God and Jesus because his narrative agenda has developed and progressively revealed through its use of κύριος that Jesus is God.

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[587] Buckwalter, 188.

[588] Buckwalter.

[589] Buckwalter.

Stephen's Prayer

Luke first introduces the reader to Stephen in the story of the complaint between the Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking Jewish widows in Acts 6. The apostles address the problem by appointing seven men to take care of the task of distributing food to the widows. Stephen is the first man mentioned and is described as full of faith, grace, power, and the Holy Spirit.[590] Luke most likely truncates the passage of time in his account because Stephen quickly moves beyond his task of distributing food to the widows.[591] Within the same chapter as his appointment, Stephen is found performing great wonders and miraculous signs and arguing the gospel with wisdom and the Spirit to members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen.[592] Both his name and the fact that his opposition comes from such diverse locations as Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia, and Asia, points to the fact that Stephen was a Greek-speaking Jewish Jesus-believer. Very quickly his disputation with these Greek-speaking Jews leads to Stephen being accused of blasphemy and he is brought before the Sanhedrin. It is before this council that Stephen gives his defense in the form of a sermon indicting the Jewish people of betraying and murdering the Righteous One.

Not only is Stephen's sermon "the longest single discourse in Acts," but also, Johnson argues, it is "the key Luke provides his readers for the interpretation of his entire

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[590] Acts 6:5, 8.

[591] See Witherington, 252.

[592] Acts 6:8-10. Witherington notes that evidence suggests, though not conclusively, that this synagogue may have been the place of worship for Saul of Tarsus in Cilicia. Witherington, 254.

two-volume narrative."[593] Even if Johnson overstates its importance—not understanding that the key Luke provides his readers is his use of κύριος, Stephen's sermon certainly represents Luke's interpretation of the biblical narrative (based upon the Greek Jewish Scriptures) of which he views his own narrative as a continuation.[594] The sermon definitely illustrates Luke's belief "in the convincing character of narrative, through a retelling of that people's history."[595] Just as Luke's narrative in the Gospel begins with God as the main actor, Stephen begins the Abraham story with God as the first subject mentioned and it is his actions that dominate the story.[596]

After Abraham, Stephen turns to Joseph who is often understood as a type of the innocent; therefore, he serves as both a type of Jesus and one who is not recognized by his family.[597] The reader can recognize that Jesus, like Joseph, is "the one rejected by his own people…empowered through God's intervention, and is now in a position to save the

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[593] Johnson and Harrington, 119. Fitzmyer characterizes the speech as historical or typological, didactic, and accusatory. Fitzmyer, 364. Witherington also sees the length of Stephen's sermon as indication of "the importance Luke assigned to this episode in the history of earliest Christianity." Witherington, 251-252.

[594] Johnson and Harrington, 121. Conzelmann argues that the sermon "fits the situation as Luke understands it." The subject or theme is the holy promise that has been rejected time after time by a disobedient people. This certainly conforms to Luke's narrative agenda of Jesus as the promised savior and humanity's rejection of his identity as κύριος. Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 57.

[595] Johnson and Harrington, 120. The question of whether the speech comes wholly from a source or wholly from Luke's pen has been much debated. Fitzmyer is most likely correct in stating, "It is, however, likely that Luke has passed on to us an inherited form of Stephen's speech, into which he has introduced modifications…In its present form it is certainly a Lucan composition, but it builds on inherited tradition, possibly Antiochene." Fitzmyer, 364-365.

[596] Johnson and Harrington, 121.

[597] Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 53.

ones who rejected him."[598] Also, like Joseph, Jesus fits the pattern of double visitation in which he is not recognized the first time but now in the second time "the rejected and rescued savior" offers the option of salvation to those who have rejected him.[599] Stephen spends the bulk of his speech on Moses. While it can certainly be understood in terms of "salvation history," Luke actually utilizes it to demonstrate his theme of "rejection and infidelity of the people."[600] Moses, like Joseph, serves as a type of Jesus with dual visitations and rejection and infidelity. When Moses first comes to deliver Israel, he is rejected because the people do not understand. Again in the wilderness the people refuse to obey him, turning rather to idolatry and the golden calf. Despite these dual rejections, "it was the rejected one whom God made ruler and deliverer for them."[601] The reader is prepared to see this connection because Jesus and Moses are already connected at the end of Peter's speech in 3:22-23 with the citation of Deuteronomy 18:15-19.[602] The rejections of both Joseph and Moses serve as the past examples of humanity's rejection of God and his plan, with the subsequent rejection by God of their verdict. This is why the quotation of Moses is so powerful: "The Moses who was rejected, moreover, was also the one who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you, from among your own kinsfolk, a prophet like me.'"[603]

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[598] Johnson and Harrington.

[599] Johnson and Harrington, 122.

[600] Johnson and Harrington, 135.

[601] Talbert, 62.

[602] Johnson and Harrington, 136.

It is not necessary to explore further this thematic structure of Stephen's sermon. It is sufficient to recognize that Luke has definitely invoked an already established theme of humanity rejecting a prophet whom God has sent and God then affirming that prophet's identity by rejecting the people's verdict. What has happened to Jesus is nothing new. The people of Israel have been rejecting God and his prophets for generations: "You stubborn people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are always resisting the Holy Spirit, like your ancestors did! Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold long ago the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become!"[604] What is new is who this Jesus is. Stephen's sermon culminates in precisely the same place that Peter's sermon in Acts 2 culminates—an indictment of the people for rejecting and killing Jesus. The people rejected and killed Jesus because of his claimed identity as κύριος. It is this aspect of Stephen's sermon and the events of his subsequent death that need further examination.

As already noted, Stephen begins his sermon with God as the first subject mentioned and his actions dominating the story. Throughout his sermon, there is no question concerning the identity of God. It is in 7:31 that κύριος is first used within the sermon and it is clearly referring to the Lord God of Israel. Stephen states that when Moses saw an angel in the fire of the burning bush he also heard the voice of the Lord

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[603] Talbert, 62.

[604] Acts 7:51-52. See Talbert, 63-64. Witherington also notes "The title 'Righteous One' is appropriate in a forensic speech, indicating Jesus' innocence (cf. Acts 3:14) and the guilt of Stephen's audience. Instead of dealing with Stephen's 'crimes' or guilt, the speech becomes an indictment of the crimes and guilt of the audience." Witherington, 274.

who identified himself as "the God of your forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."[605] This same κύριος is again cited in 7:33 as instructing Moses to take off his sandals because of the holy ground. There is no question concerning the referent of these occurrences of κύριος—it is the Lord God of Israel.

Κύριος is referenced one other time within Stephen's sermon. Near the conclusion of the sermon, Stephen claims, "the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands."[606] The proof of this claim is a quotation from Isaiah 66:1-2: "Heaven is my throne, and earth is the footstool for my feet. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is my resting place? Did my hand not make all these things?"[607] Again, the referent of κύριος is unambiguous—the Lord God of Israel. This is not surprising. It is similar to the initial occurrences of κύριος within the birth narrative of Luke's Gospel. But like the birth narrative of the Gospel, there is a moment of recognition revealed when κύριος is used to identify Jesus. Unlike, however, the first revelation in the birth narrative, the reader has already been prepared to expect this moment. It is a moment that has been developed and progressively revealed by Luke's narrative agenda concerning the identity of Jesus as κύριος.

This moment of recognition occurs during the stoning of Stephen. Upon indicting the people for having killed the Righteous One, Stephen bears witness to the exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of God. The point of seeing Jesus, obviously identified as the Son of Man, standing at the right hand of God is to convey his position

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[605] Acts 7:32.

[606] Acts 7:48.

[607] Acts 7:49-50.

of honor and vindication.[608] Since this belongs to Luke's authorial material, Fitzmyer citing Haenchen is probably correct concerning the point of this vision: "If Jesus stands on the right hand of God, this must show that the Christians are right in the sight of God and that the High Council is virtually God's enemy."[609] This proclamation, perceived as blasphemy, is the tipping point, for the people rushed Stephen, drove him out of the city and began to stone him.[610] "They thus fulfill precisely the point of his accusation."[611] What was perhaps a legal proceeding becomes nothing more than a lynching.[612] It is

[608] Fitzmyer, 392. Fitzmyer further notes: "The vision that Stephen sees is described in terms reminiscent of Luke 22:69, where the words of Jesus on trial echo Dan 7:13 ("son of man") and Ps 110:1 ("Sit at my right hand")." Talbert notes "The early chapters of Acts have contrasted the Jerusalemite rejection of the "righteous one" (3:14; 7:52; Luke 23:47) with God's vindication of him to his right hand (2:34–35; 5:31)." I would add that the narrative of the Gospel also establishes Jesus' rejection and vindication. Further, Talbert, after listing a number of options for understanding the Son of Man standing rather than sitting (vindication, living, celestial being, celestial judge, one who assists martyrs), states that "the Son of Man stands to do" and "a collage of connotations seems probable in this context." Talbert, 64-65. Witherington characterizes Jesus standing as a legal stance: Jesus is "witnessing before God about the one who had witnessed for him on earth. Jesus has stood to give the ultimate witness to the first μάρτυς—the one who witnessed even unto death." Witherington, 275. See also Johnson and Harrington, 139-140.

[609] Fitzmyer, 389.

[610] Witherington notes, "the audience believes they have heard blasphemy, for the idea that a human being could be at the right hand of God in heaven, especially a crucified manual worker from Galilee, was unthinkable." Witherington, 276.

[611] Johnson and Harrington, 142.

[612] Fitzmyer, 389-391. Witherington notes "nothing is said about the high priest offering verdict, no formal sentence is announced, and nothing here suggests anything other than a lynching, an act of violent passion. This means that debates about whether the Sanhedrin had the legal authority to execute are moot, for we are not talking about a legal action here. It seems clear the audience thought they had the moral authority and perhaps a duty to perform this act." Witherington, 276.

during this improper stoning that the reader receives the anticipated moment of recognition.[613]

As he is being stoned, Stephen begins to pray. It is important to note that stoning was the punishment for blasphemy.[614] While the crowd may have felt Stephen's blasphemy was against the temple, Luke has contextually presented another perceived blasphemy—the affirmation of the identity of Jesus. Anyone familiar with the gospel narrative recognizes the Son of Man exalted to the place of honor in heaven is Jesus. The crowd certainly recognizes Stephen's claim for it is this precise moment that they take him out of the city and begin to stone him. The moment of recognition for the reader is that his prayer is to none other than the Lord Jesus.[615] This is further proof of the already noted, but misunderstood, blasphemy of Stephen's vision. It has already been recognized that the disciples prayed to Jesus as κύριος in Acts 1. In Acts 4 the disciples prayed to God as κύριος. Now Stephen is praying to Jesus as κύριος. Luke is not ambiguous—he is intentionally explicit. He is not distinguishing between praying to Jesus as κύριος and God as κύριος because Jesus is God. The reader understands this through Luke's narrative agenda: God has been born as a human being and that human is Jesus the Lord. Luke has developed and progressively revealed the identity of Jesus such that his true identity as the Lord God of Israel born as a human being is now assumed to be clear.

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[613] Talbert, 65.

[614] See Fitzmyer for various forms of blasphemy. Fitzmyer, 393.

[615] Witherington, 276.

In his prayer, Stephen makes two requests: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" and "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!"[616] Both requests are traditionally made to God. It is from God that the spirit comes and to whom the spirit returns.[617] It is God who has the authority to judge and forgive sins.[618] In fact, the second request is found in the mouth of Jesus himself upon the cross.[619] Further, instead of asking for forgiveness for his blasphemy, Stephen asks forgiveness of those who are wrongfully stoning him.[620] At this point in Luke's narrative the identity of Jesus has been sufficiently developed and revealed such that these requests can be made to Jesus himself because he is the κύριος. In fact, Stephen is asking forgiveness for those who are wrongfully stoning him of the very κύριος for whom he is suffering martyrdom. Further he is literally "calling on the

[616] Acts 7:59-60. Conzelmann notes, "Stephen's death is reminiscent of the death of Jesus (Luke 23:46; there is a reminiscence of Ps 31:6)." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 60.

[617] Genesis 2:7 and Ecclesiastes 12:7.

[618] See the previous discussion of Luke 5:17-26.

[619] Fitzmyer notes in detail the parallel between the death of Jesus and the death of Stephen: "Lucan literary endeavor is seen in the parallel of Stephen's death to that of Jesus in the Lucan Gospel: As Jesus 'uttered a loud cry' (Luke 23:46), so Stephen 'shouted aloud' (Acts 7:60). The vision that Stephen is accorded of 'the Son of Man' standing 'at the right hand of God' (Acts 7:56) echoes the words of Jesus on trial before the Sanhedrin (Luke 22:69). The vision introduces Stephen's prayer, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them,' reminding the reader of the Lucan Jesus' prayer, preserved unfortunately only in some MSS, 'Father, forgive them; they do not realize what they are doing' (see *Luke*, 1503–4). After that Stephen 'passed away' (Acts 7:60) just as Jesus 'breathed his last' (Luke 23:46). This is another instance of the parallelism with which Luke has fitted out his entire story; it is part of his imitative historiography, the way he has chosen to present his historical narrative." Fitzmyer, 390. See also Talbert, 66-67. Witherington sees this parallel extending beyond Jesus to also include characters from Stephen's sermon, namely Joseph and Moses. Witherington, 252-253.

[620] Talbert, 65-66.

name of the Lord" in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:21.[621] The reader is able to understand these literary connections because Luke's narrative program of Jesus' identity has prepared them to recognize the Lordship of Jesus both in his identity and in his receiving Stephen's prayer.

These requests are made "with a loud voice"; therefore, it is conceivable that the young man Saul heard them. Both requests being made to Jesus as κύριος must have struck Saul as further confirmation of Stephen's blasphemy. It is at this point that the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles begins to turn from Jerusalem toward the rest of the world.[622] "The Jerusalem story is effectively ended.…All that remains is for Luke to show that the people will grow to include the Gentiles represented by his reader."[623] "The Stephen episode in Acts is the bridge over which the gospel marches unhindered out of Jerusalem."[624] It is also at this point that this new and dominant character is introduced into the narrative. Saul is presented in totally negative terms because of his agreement with, if not authorship of, Stephen's martyrdom; however, Luke's presentation of Saul's persecution of the Jesus-believers sets up Saul's moment of revelation and transformation on the road to Damascus.[625]

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[621] Johnson and Harrington, 140.

[622] Witherington, 252.

[623] Johnson and Harrington, 143.

[624] Talbert, 68.

[625] Johnson and Harrington, 143-144.

Saul's Revelation: τίς εἶ κύριε;

Luke first introduces Saul into his Acts narrative as a young man at whose feet the witnesses laid their cloaks during the stoning of Stephen. The implication of this description is that Saul did not actively participate in the stoning itself; however, Luke is careful to note, "Saul agreed completely with killing [Stephen]."[626] It is with this introduction of Saul that Luke also cites a great persecution against the church.[627] The greatness of this persecution is such that all the believers are forced to leave Jerusalem and scatter throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. Only the apostles remained in Jerusalem.[628] Whether Saul instigated this persecution cannot be established, but Luke clearly presents Stephen's martyrdom as the beginning of this severe persecution.[629] In

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[626] Acts 8:1. Conzelmann notes the tension between Saul as a young man and then Saul as the organizer of the persecution (assumed by Conzelmann but not established). He thinks the tension is the result of Luke's reworking of the source material to fit his literary purposes: "at the death of Stephen it was necessary for Saul to play a relatively harmless role, but for the continuation of Luke's account Saul must be the main character." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 61. Fitzmyer also notes this presentation of Saul, citing Haenchen who "finds Luke's picture of Saul 'breathtaking, to say the least.'" Fitzmyer, 397.

[627] Fitzmyer notes that the persecution is actually a continuation of the opposition that Peter and John experienced in Acts 4. Fitzmyer, 396.

[628] Conzelmann is skeptical that the persecution affected all the believers except the apostles. He contends the Hellenistic group alone was driven out. Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 61. For a opposing view, see Witherington, 278. Fitzmyer wonders why the apostles did not flee, but states that "Luke records a historical recollection, and it gives his story the picture of unflinching apostolic reaction to persecution, a characteristic that he gladly records: it is the way Christians should react to persecution. It also establishes a linkage between Jerusalem Christianity and other evangelized areas, for Jerusalem will remain the mother church." Fitzmyer, 397.

[629] Witherington conjectures that Saul was the ringleader of this persecution and his going from house to house was actually going from house-church to house-church. Witherington, 278.

addition Luke also presents Saul as being intimately involved in the persecution. He is described as "trying to destroy the church."[630] Luke states that he entered one house after another and dragged off men and women, putting them in prison. This description is certainly consistent with Paul's own statements in Galatians 1:13: "I was savagely persecuting the church of God and trying to destroy it."[631] Luke gives this description of Saul to set up what follows: "Now those who had been forced to scatter went around proclaiming the good news of the word."[632] Luke also gives this description in anticipation of Saul's activities in Acts 9, which are a continuation of his actions in Acts 8: "Meanwhile, Saul, still breathing out threats to murder the Lord's disciples…."

After exploring Philip's proclamation of the good news of the word to the Samaritans and the Ethiopian eunuch, Luke turns his narrative back to Saul.[633] This young man who agreed completely with the stoning of Stephen has participated in a persecution of the Jesus-believers and is now enlarging the scope of that persecution by going to Damascus. It is ironic that the presence of Jesus-believers in Damascus may in

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[630] Acts 8:3.

[631] In Acts 22:4, Paul also describes his persecution as "even to the point of death." Whether this represents Paul himself or the authorship of Luke is dependent about the historical veracity of the Acts narrative. It should be noted, however, that "even to the point of death" is consistent with "persecuting the church of God and trying to destroy it."

[632] Acts 8:4.

[633] Witherington observes that the reader is to see the material in Acts 9 as a continuation of the description of Saul at the end of Acts 7 and the beginning of Acts 8. Witherington, 302.

fact be due to Saul's earlier persecution of them in Jerusalem.[634] He requests letters of authorization from the high priest to find men and women who belong to the Way and bring them back to Jerusalem as prisoners. This is a pivotal moment in Luke's narrative. Saul epitomizes the rejection of the Jesus-believers and their affirmation of the identity of Jesus. Within Luke's narrative program, the people rejected Jesus' identity and their verdict was crucifixion. God, in turn, rejected the people's verdict and affirmed Jesus' identity in his resurrection and exaltation. Now, in Acts, the witnesses to the identity of Jesus are being rejected, with the verdict of stoning and imprisonment. But, again, God rejects the verdict of the people. At this point in Luke's narrative, this rejection is wrapped up in one person—Saul!

Saul's conflict with God is narrated by Luke in Acts 9, but is then presented by Luke as being repeated by Saul (Paul) himself in Acts 22 before the crowd in the Temple and in Acts 26 before Festus, King Agrippa and Bernice.[635] This narrative repetition by Luke signals the importance of this account to Luke's narrative agenda. "This is an important incident in the Lucan story, because it narrates how Saul, who will become the

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[634] Johnson notes, at a narrative level, Luke's introduction of Philip's work in Samaria "prepared the reader to imagine Christians existing in other places, so that without ever telling us about a mission to Damascus, we can picture Saul going to find some there…." Johnson and Harrington, 166. Again, the irony is that Philip's work in Samaria (and likely the preaching of the gospel in Damascus) is the result of persecution.

[635] Dillon and Fitzmyer argue that Luke's emphasis in these three accounts is deliberate and represents decisive moments in the spread of the gospel: chapter 9 – the spread of the word to the Gentiles; chapter 22 – the great struggle of Christianity for liberty and independence from its Jewish context; and chapter 26 – the time when Rome's authority has been invoked to protect Christianity. Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 185-186.

hero of the second half of Acts, is transformed by the risen Christ himself."[636] Saul's experience is not just a calling, but also stood as a narration of God's dismissal of humanity's misunderstanding, and hence rejection, of Jesus' identity.[637] No single person more vehemently rejected the identity of Jesus than Saul. So Luke uses this focused conflict to continue his narrative agenda of developing and progressively revealing and now affirming the identity of Jesus.

Saul stands as a single representative of the rejection of Jesus' identity and his calling serves as an example both of God's rejection of that verdict and his affirmation of Jesus' identity. The power of Luke's narrative program is that in Saul's case, God not only rejects Saul's verdict and affirms Jesus' identity, but he also reveals Jesus' identity in Saul thus changing him from an opponent to a proponent of this very identity—Jesus ὁ κύριος.[638] Johnson accurately recognizes this significance of Saul in Luke's narrative: "…no one worked harder to extirpate the messianic movement than this agent (as Luke has it) of the chief priest; his failure to stop it and his being transformed into its boldest

[636] Fitzmyer, 419.

[637] Fitzmyer describes Saul's interaction with God as not being "the story of the conversion of a great sinner, but rather of how heaven can upset the persecution of God's people." Fitzmyer, 420.

[638] Johnson describes this as a "(by definition incommunicable) personal experience of the risen Lord…." Johnson and Harrington, 167. Fitzmyer adds, "The archpersecutor of Christians was transformed by the call of Christ into the "apostle of the Gentiles" (Rom 11:13). The Lucan story of that call and transformation proclaims the power of the risen Christ in the life of a human being. 'Man proposes, but God disposes!' so runs the proverb." Fitzmyer, 422.

advocate stands for Luke and his readers as the surest sign that the crucified Messiah was indeed Lord…."[639]

Luke tells the reader that Saul, with the letters of authorization, is approaching Damascus when a light from heaven shines around him with such brilliance that he falls to the ground.[640] Paul corroborates this fact in his accounts in Acts 22 and 26, adding in 26:13 that the light from heaven was brighter than the sun.[641] Upon falling to the ground, Luke tells the reader that Saul, upon falling to the ground, hears a voice saying to him: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"[642] This question is a powerful thunderclap in the ears of the reader. Saul has been clearly described as persecuting people of the Way.

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[639] Johnson and Harrington, 166.

[640] Fitzmyer observes that Acts 26:11 "implies that Paul succeeded in getting the letters of authorization" that he sought in Acts 9:2. Fitzmyer, 423.

[641] Paul's account in Acts 26 adds the detail that the light shone around both him and his travel companions and as a result they all fell to the ground. This is not inconsistent with the other accounts in Acts 9 and 22, but is an additional detail. Fitzmyer notes that this account is "important to Luke, because he is not content to narrate it only once (here in 9:1–19a), but will present two further accounts in the form of speeches (22:1–16; 26:9–18). Thus, three times over in Acts one reads the story of Saul's conversion. They represent a single tradition, derived ultimately from Saul himself. Luke's vocabulary and style in all three forms are quite similar, despite his tendency to vary phrases and details." Fitzmyer, 420. Johnson argues that Luke's repetition indicates his difficulty in explaining this profoundly paradoxical "turning of a Pharisaic persecutor into the apostle of the Gentiles." Johnson and Harrington, 166.

[642] Acts 9:4. Other witnesses also include the statement that is found in 26:14: "You are hurting yourself by kicking against the goads." Witherington states, "This expression was a *Greek* not Jewish idiom, and it meant 'It is fruitless to struggle against God, or against one's destiny.' This proverbial saying was one that Agrippa or Festus would likely have understood and perhaps even have heard before (see Acts 26 on its origins), but it is hardly something one would expect to originate on the lips of Jesus in Aramaic. Paul or Luke inserts this line into the discourse to make clear that Jesus had indicated to Paul that he was struggling against God by persecuting Christians, and indeed against his own destiny." Witherington, 311-312.

He is going to Damascus to root out more Jesus-believers. But the reader is acutely aware of why he is persecuting followers of Jesus—because of their belief in the particular *identity* of Jesus.[643] The Stephen narrative and Saul's complete complicity in his death makes this plain. So the reader instantly knows who is talking. Even before Saul asks for identification, the reader knows this is Jesus. Jesus' identity has been in question throughout Luke's narratives. It is the rejection of Jesus' identity that has led to both his death and now the persecution and death of his followers. But now this risen and exalted Jesus has directly confronted Saul's rejection with the very personal question: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting *me*?"[644]

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[643] Here Johnson misses the point when he claims that Luke is not interested in "the conscious reasons why Saul might have wanted to eliminate the Christians." Johnson and Harrington, 166-167. The reason is not mentioned explicitly because it has been narratively developed and progressively revealed such that the reader is fully aware of why the Jesus-believers are being persecuted—because of their belief in his identity as ὁ κύριος.

[644] Fitzmyer notes the "equivalence of 'me' and 'the Way'" but does not develop the notation and thus does not recognize its true significance, yet with Dillon cautions against the "me" being too facilely identified with the concept of the "Church." Fitzmyer, 425. Brown, Fitzmyer and Murphy, 186. Kistemaker recognizes that "Jesus' wording is remarkable" but still does not go beyond the absolute identification between the believers and Jesus. Kistemaker, 332. Conzelmann also argues, "When the disciples are persecuted, the Lord himself is persecuted." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 71. While these statements are undoubtedly true, they miss Luke's narrative program and therefore the point of the direct, personal question. The disciples are persecuted because of their belief in the identity of Jesus. The reason, for Luke, the Lord himself is persecuted when the disciples are persecuted is that the source of the persecution is the rejection of Jesus' identity. Other scholars, such as Witherington, also miss Luke's narrative program. Talbert does perceptively observe the confrontational nature of Saul's encounter on the road to Damascus. Talbert, 85, 89.

Whether Saul's response demonstrates recognition that God was confronting him is debatable.[645] Here the narrator's omniscience, and by extension then the knowledge of the reader, becomes the relevant point. Even if Saul does not recognize God in the voice, the reader recognizes his response to be true, based on the identity of the voice. Even if Saul himself does not know this identity, the reader is fully aware. The reader is prepared by Luke's narrative program to hear the voice of God in Jesus. So when Saul replies to the voice in the light with the question, "Who are you, Lord?," the reader already knows the answer both because of who Saul has been persecuting and because of the use of κύριος.[646] Next to the birth infancy narratives in the Gospel, the response of the voice in the light is one of Luke's most forceful passages in his narrative agenda. "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting!"[647] Whatever Saul knew when he asked, "Who are you,

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[645] Johnson would certainly disagree stating, "The title *kyrios* ("Lord") should be taken at full value. Saul does not yet know it is *Jesus* who is Lord, but he recognizes that he is involved in a theophany!" He describes Saul's experience of this theophany as "the commanding, transcendent power of God." Certainly κύριος should be taken at full value, but Johnson's point is definitely clear to the reader but only possibly clear to Saul. Johnson indeed acknowledges the literary function of the dialogue for the reader. Johnson and Harrington, 163, 168. Witherington is more nuanced in his assessment but ultimately thinks Saul is aware that "he is involved in some sort of divine-human encounter." Witherington, 317. Fitzmyer, however, directly disagrees with Johnson's "full value" statement, instead writing that κύριος "could not yet have had for him the connotation of "Lord," with which he would so often later use it." Fitzmyer, 425.

[646] Acts 9:5. Alan Segal writes, "Although Paul uses 'Lord' as a term of respect, it is also related to one Hebrew word for God and a significant *divine* title for Christ in Christianity. Paul is portrayed as applying the divine title before he knows the identity of the revealer, showing that accuracy to the historical events is not likely to be of first importance to Luke." Segal, "Conversion and Messianism: Outline for a New Approach," in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (ed. Charlesworth; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 331. Segal's observation more clearly points to Luke's narrative program, rather than his historical accuracy, and the difference between what the participant knows and what the reader knows.

Lord?," the already developed and progressively revealed identity of Jesus is now affirmed to the reader with emphasis. A possible rephrasing to illustrate what the reader is hearing is "Who is the Lord? The Lord is Jesus!"[648] To emphasize further this point, echoes of Moses' encounter with God are present.[649] No longer is God's response to the inquiry of the people of Israel concerning the God of their fathers, "What is his name?," simply "I am."[650] Now God is responding to an inquiry by another of the children of Israel asking, "Who are you, Lord?" and the response is "I am Jesus!" Luke's reader is able to hear the rhetorical echo of Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush in Saul's encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus. This encounter, however, is unambiguous in articulating the identity of God. Whereas Moses was given the cryptic "I am," Saul is given the explicit "I am Jesus." The Lord God of Israel is Jesus ὁ κύριος.

Saul is left blinded by this encounter with the vindicated and exalted Lord. He follows the instructions to proceed into the city of Damascus where he will be told what

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[647] Acts 9:5. Johnson states, "The use of the personal name alone is very striking….The personal character of the early Christian belief in the resurrection could not be more clearly stated." Johnson and Harrington, 163.

[648] Conzelmann notes, "The question is formulated in view of the ἐγώ εἰμι, 'I am,' of the one who appears in the vision." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 71.

[649] Johnson argues these echoes begin with repetition of Saul's name which is similar to the voice from the bush in Exodus 3:3. He also sees parallels with the story in 4 Maccabees 4:1-14 of Apollonius, as well as Asenath's conversion from paganism in the Hellenistic Jewish novel, *Joseph and Asenath*. Johnson, however, concludes, "Luke has therefore used elements from familiar traditions about theophanies, conversion, and the overturning of oppressors, but he has put them together in distinctive fashion." Johnson and Harrington, 163, 167-168.

[650] Exodus 3:14.

to do. For three days, he is left to ponder this encounter.[651] During this time, he neither eats nor drinks anything. Luke turns his narrative from Saul to another man named Ananias whom he describes as a disciple. In a vision, reminiscent of Samuel's first interaction with God, ὁ κύριος calls him by name and he replies "Here I am, κύριε."[652] He is instructed by ὁ κύριος to go to Saul in the house of Judas on the street called 'Straight.' Ananias again responds with the address of κύριε, protesting that Saul has come to imprison "all who call on your name."[653] But ὁ κύριος responds with the command, "Go, because this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel."[654] "The one who caused suffering for those 'who call on the name' of the suffering Messiah is now to be shown 'how much he must suffer for the sake of the name.'"[655] As Talbert notes, "Christ not only overpowers his enemy in the process of converting him; he also chooses him as an emissary."[656]

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[651] Fitzmyer accurately notes, "…Saul has been accorded a unique postpentecostal appearance of the risen Christ, whereas all the other appearances preceded the 'ascension' of Christ." Fitzmyer, 428.

[652] Johnson confirms that this pattern of call and response is similar to Samuel's interaction with God in 1 Samuel 3:4, 10. Johnson and Harrington, 164.

[653] Acts 9:14.

[654] Acts 9:15.

[655] Johnson and Harrington, 168. Conzelmann notes that "who call upon, etc." must be redactional because these phrases "had already become a technical designation of Christians by Paul's time (1 Cor 1:2)." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 72. See also Fitzmyer, 428.

[656] Talbert, 90. Witherington gives a similar description: "…transformation of Saul from a persecuting Pharisaic Jew to a zealous missionary for Christ…." Witherington, 319-320.

When Ananias enters the house and places his hands on Saul, he says, "Brother Saul, ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς who appeared to you on the road as you came here has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." In this part of the narrative culminating with the statement above, Luke presents the reader with five occurrences of κύριος. The occurrences all reverberate with the identification from the road to Damascus, "I am Jesus."[657] But in case there is any mistake, Ananias now affirms this very identification in his address to Saul—the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road has sent me. The very same Jesus who appeared to Saul has appeared to Ananias and sent him to Saul to tell him what to do, just as Jesus promised on the road.[658]

Luke tells the reader that following the removal of something like scales from his eyes and his baptism, Saul immediately begins to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues.[659] This proclamation is amazing enough given Saul's previous opposition and persecution of the believers in the identity of Jesus. But the reader is drawn to the fact that this earlier persecution was all about the identity of Jesus because of exactly what Saul proclaims about Jesus: "This man is the Son of God."[660] This description of Jesus is unique in all

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[657] Fitzmyer writes, "From vv 15 and 17 it will become clear that *Kyrios* is used of the risen Christ, not of Yahweh of the OT." Fitzmyer, 427. Here, as elsewhere, Fitzmyer notes the use of κύριος but misses Luke's narrative agenda and therefore misunderstands its significance and meaning. Κύριος is used of the risen Christ because he was from his very conception Yahweh of the OT born as a human being.

[658] Johnson and Harrington, 165.

[659] Witherington notes the similarities between the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Luke 4:16-30 and Paul's ministry in Acts 9:20-35. Witherington, 320.

[660] Acts 9:20. Witherington points out that "this is the very term or title Paul himself uses to describe his early encounter with and faith in Jesus (cf. Gal. 1:16; 2:20) and his call (cf. Rom. 1:1–4)." Witherington, 321.

the Acts narrative, but this uniqueness serves to underline its importance. The man who agreed with killing Stephen, who perpetrated a great persecution against any who belonged to the Way, is now proclaiming the identity of Jesus. "The persecutor has become the preacher" and "what Peter proclaimed on Pentecost in Jerusalem, Saul is now depicted proclaiming in Damascus."[661]

Luke's narrative agenda has anticipated this moment for it is precisely this description of Jesus that the angel told Mary in the infancy narrative: "Therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God."[662] This is a moment of strength within Luke's narrative program. This Jesus, whose identity had been rejected by the people of Israel through his crucifixion but whose identity had been affirmed and vindicated by his resurrection and exaltation, is now being proclaimed the Son of God by the very man who had also rejected his identity by persecuting all who affirmed him as κύριος. But the echoes from the infancy narrative are not exhausted. For the longer Saul proclaims him the Son of God, the more and more capable he is in proving that this Jesus is the Christ! Again, Luke's narrative agenda has anticipated this moment for the reader in the announcement of the angel: "Today your Savior is born in the city of David. He is the Christ-Lord."[663]

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[661] Talbert, 87. Fitzmyer, 434.

[662] Luke 1:35. Fitzmyer, 435. Conzelmann notes that calling Jesus the Son of God is "a common confessional formula" and this instance in Acts should be compared with Luke 22:67-71. Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 74.

[663] Luke 2:11. Here Fitzmyer again notes but does not recognize Luke's narrative agenda: "The title expressed a unique relationship of Jesus to Yahweh, the God of the OT….Luke, however, does not mean that Jesus was recognized as God's son merely in the adoptive sense in which a king on David's throne would be called his son (2 Sam

Saul is causing such consternation among the Jews in the synagogues that the disciples send him away to Jerusalem. Here Barnabas takes him under hand and brings him to the disciples. Again, Luke continues his narrative program in his description of how Barnabas presents Saul to the apostles. Luke presents Barnabas as telling the apostles that Saul has seen ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ τὸν κύριον, the Lord has spoken to him and Saul has spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. The apostles receive Saul for a time and as he is staying with them, he again speaks out boldly ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου. "Paul went from being a highly committed Pharisee to being a highly committed Messianist."[664] While the Pharisees certainly expected a Messiah, Saul's Messiah had arrived in the person of Jesus ὁ κύριος and he boldly speaks in his name. This boldness causes such a stir that the Greek-speaking Jews of Jerusalem, like the Jews of Damascus, try to kill him.[665] This attention so disturbs the brethren in Jerusalem that they send Saul away from Jerusalem to Tarsus.

Luke is no longer progressively revealing the identity of Jesus in a dramatic format as he does in the Gospel. Rather in Acts he emphatically affirms the identity of

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7:14; 1 Chr 17:13); the use of the title at the time of Jesus' conception (Luke 1:35) connotes much more. *Pace* Haenchen (*Acts*, 331), the title is not 'synonymous with the Messianic epithet of verse 22.' Both in OT origin and in Palestinian usage and connotation the two titles were different. For their proper understanding in the NT, they should be kept distinct and not equated or conflated." While the titles are certainly distinct, with each having its own history of use, Fitzmyer misses Luke's narrative program that the being to whom they are now being applied is in fact Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, born a human—Jesus the Christ-Lord. Fitzmyer, 435.

[664] Talbert, 89.

[665] Witherington argues, like he did regarding Stephen and Acts 6, that these Jews were "presumably in the synagogue of the Freedmen mentioned in Acts 6:9, which involved Greek-speaking Jews from Paul's native region of Cilicia." Witherington, 325.

Jesus through the way he changes people's lives and in Luke's view, history. This changing of history comes at the hands of the apostles and followers of Jesus who are empowered by Jesus himself to bear witness to his identity. Jesus is ὁ κύριος because he is the God of Israel born as a human being. Peter proclaims Jesus' unique identity in Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know beyond a doubt that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ." Stephen proclaims this identity in his prayers in Acts 7:59-60: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" and "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And now this Jesus, who is ὁ κύριος, confronts his archpersecutor and reveals himself to Saul, such that Saul is now proclaiming with proof that Jesus ὁ κύριος is ὁ χριστός, the Son of God. When examining Luke's narrative program and agenda, it is clear that what he has developed and progressively revealed in the Gospel—Jesus ὁ κύριος—he now completely assumes and affirms in Acts through the actions of the apostles and followers of Jesus. The power of the gospel lies in the proclamation of the identity of Jesus as ὁ κύριος. But is Jesus ὁ κύριος only in a Jewish context? Does this identity extend beyond Jewish borders? Luke addresses precisely this question through Peter in the house of a Roman centurion in Caesarea Maritima.

This One is Lord of All!

It has long been noted that two characters—Peter and Paul—dominate the Acts narrative of Luke. It has also been recognized that Luke begins with Peter and transitions to Paul, and this transition coincides with the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. As the gospel begins to be spread outside of Jerusalem and Judea, Paul (Saul) begins to be present within the narrative. Luke's narrative ultimately ends up with an exclusive focus

on Paul and his mission to the Gentiles; however, during the transition, the focus shifts from Peter to Saul to Peter to Saul (Paul) to Peter and finally to Paul. It is during this time of transition that Luke extends his narrative agenda from a restricted, Jewish context to the context of the Roman Empire. Certainly the stories of Jesus and the birth of the church all occur within the larger context of the Roman Empire; however, they are sheltered in their immediate Jewish context.

Now, with the introduction of Saul's calling and his self-proclaimed mission to the Gentiles, Luke begins to extend this context. Not only is he narratively transitioning the gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles, he is also extending the claim of Jesus' identity from reaching back to reaching forward. To this point, Luke has utilized his narrative program to establish Jesus as ὁ κύριος and thereby claim that he is Yahweh, the Lord God of Israel, born as a human being. This claim reaches back into the context of the Greek Jewish Scriptures. Now he begins to utilize his narrative program, with this established identity of Jesus, to reach forward into the Graeco-Roman context of the Roman empire, claiming that Jesus as ὁ κύριος is superior to the emperor, not only as a god, but as the only God.

Luke turns his narrative back to Peter by recounting Saul being sent to Tarsus and then telling several miracles that occurred at the hand of Peter.[666] First, he heals a man

[666] Conzelmann sees these two miracle stories as connections Luke uses to move his narrative from Jerusalem to the Gentiles. "The 'instrument' is ready. Now the mission to the Gentiles must get under way, proceeding, naturally, from Jerusalem. These two local legends serve as connecting links." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 76. Fitzmyer notes that since "it is important for him that Peter, the spokesman and leader of the apostles, be the one to inaugurate that mission, Luke begins by telling about Peter's journeys outside of Jerusalem." Fitzmyer, 443. Johnson adds that Luke has accomplished two things through his narrative artistry: 1) he has presented to the reader

named Aeneas in Lydda and then he raises Tabitha (Dorcas), the seamstress, in Joppa. Following this raising of Dorcas, Peter "stayed many days in Joppa with a man named Simon, a tanner."[667] It is here that Peter receives a vision from God. This vision serves as further development of Luke's narrative transition of the gospel being preached to the Gentiles also. Already, the disciples who are scattered by Saul's persecution have gone around proclaiming the gospel, such that Luke's narrative recounts its presence in Samaria and Damascus. Then the reader is introduced to Saul's calling and mission: "my chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel."[668] But now Peter, himself the first preacher of the gospel, must participate in the gospel being preached to the Gentiles. But, first, God must prepare him with a vision.[669]

Luke uses complementary visions to Peter and the Roman centurion Cornelius to set up the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles.[670] One afternoon an angel of God appears in a vision to this Roman centurion living in Caesarea Maritima.[671] The angel

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"the career of Saul (Paul) as intimately involved and entwined with that of the other missionaries" and 2) the initiative to preach the gospel to the Gentiles is taken first by Peter, rather than Saul the former persecutor. Johnson and Harrington, 179.

[667] Acts 9:43. Fitzmyer contends, "Luke's account of Peter's tour of ministry in Lydda and Joppa is intended as a buildup to his coming missionary activity in the conversion of Cornelius and his household." Fitzmyer, 443.

[668] Acts 9:15.

[669] Fitzmyer characterizes this story in Luke's narrative as: "Thus under heaven's direction Peter, the spokesman of the Twelve, officially inaugurates the mission to the Gentiles." Fitzmyer, 447.

[670] Fitzmyer, 453.

[671] Conzelmann comments, "Caesarea was refounded by Herod the Great and provided with a manmade harbor (Josephus *Ant.* 15.331–41). In 6 C.E. it became the seat

informs Cornelius that God has received his prayers and acts of charity and that he should send for a man called Peter.[672] Upon receiving instructions where to find Peter, Cornelius immediately sends two personal servants and a devout soldier to Joppa. The next day, around noon, as the servants and soldier are traveling to Joppa, Peter enters a trance on the rooftop. In this vision, he sees a large sheet full of animals deemed unclean by Jewish law and custom. A voice commands him to slaughter these animals and eat. Despite his hunger, Peter refuses. This happens three times, but the voice responds with a foundational and transformational statement: "What God has made clean, you must not consider ritually unclean!"[673]

When Peter wakes from his trance and puzzling over what the vision meant, the Spirit tells him there are three men looking for him. Peter is to accompany them without

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of the Roman procurator and the major garrison of the province…There is evidence for a cohors II Italica civium Romanorum … exercitus Syriaci ("Second Italian cohort of Roman citizens belonging to the Syrian army"), or cohors miliaria Italica voluntariorum quae est in Syria ("Italian cohort of one thousand volunteers, which is in Syria"), in Syria(!) from the time before 69 C.E. on into the second century. Only auxiliary troops were quartered in Caesarea (a unit of cavalry, five cohorts of infantry)." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 81.

[672] Fitzmyer writes that Luke uses this to show "how a person sympathetic to Judaism and praying to the God of Israel has already manifested a basic faith." Fitzmyer, 448.

[673] Acts 10:15. Conzelmann argues, "the original intention of the vision does not conform with Luke's use of it. Its original point did not have to do with human relationships (Jews and Gentiles), but with foods—that is, with the issue of clean and unclean (cf. vs 15b). This was an issue present in Jewish Christianity, and goes back to the Jesus tradition. The vision is an artifice, but pre-Lukan." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 79. Contra Conzelmann, Fitzmyer states, "Conzelmann's view that [the Cornelius story] 'does not fit the facts' (*Acts*, 80) is extreme; his analysis of possible sources is no basis for such a conclusion." Fitzmyer instead argues that the vision is in "symbolic form" and is about "human beings: none of them is beyond the pale of salvation by Christ." Fitzmyer, 447, 453.

hesitation because the Spirit has sent them. Upon going downstairs, Peter finds Cornelius' servants and soldier asking for him. The next day Peter goes with them, taking along some brothers from Joppa. When they arrive in Caesarea Maritima, having traveled about 50 kilometers, they find Cornelius the centurion and his friends and relatives eagerly awaiting them.[674] Cornelius falls at Peter's feet and worships him, but Peter corrects him, "Stand up, I too am a mere mortal."[675] This correction anticipates a later statement by Peter that speaks to whom Cornelius should be worshipping. Despite the voice's reprimand not to consider ritually unclean what God has made clean, Peter, while telling Cornelius of the admonition of the voice, reminds him that he should not be in his house.[676] Peter then asks why Cornelius sent for him and Cornelius tells Peter of his vision and the instructions he received.

Again, as in Acts 2, Peter's speech or sermon becomes a powerful instrument in Luke's narrative program.[677] As noted previously, Luke is turning his narrative toward the gospel being preached to the Gentiles.[678] The reader is already alert to this transition

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[674] Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 81.

[675] Acts 10:26.

[676] Conzelmann argues, "These verses are a Lukan insertion, evident in that they presuppose the vision." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 82.

[677] Fitzmyer characterizes Peter's sermon as a "missionary speech" having affinity with those speeches Peter has already addressed to Jews. This last of Peter's speeches is now being addressed to a Gentile who has good relations with Jews, and perhaps even a Godfearer. "This classic proclamation of the gospel to Gentile sympathizers" serves as "the beginning of apostolic testimony being borne to Gentiles without insistence on the obligation to obey the Mosaic law." Fitzmyer, 459-460.

[678] Fitzmyer rightly contends, "The Cornelius episode is not just another conversion story, like that of the Ethiopian eunuch (8:26–40), for Cornelius and his

that began with the persecution of Saul. So, when Peter begins his sermon in the home of a Gentile centurion in the city of Caesarea Maritima, he does so with another foundational statement—one with which he is not entirely comfortable himself: "I now truly understand that God does not show favoritism in dealing with people, but in every nation the person who fears him and does what is right is welcomed before him."[679] This statement perfectly reflects Luke's contention that the gospel is to be preached to the Gentiles.[680] So the man, who preached to the people of Israel that Jesus is Lord and Christ in Acts 2, now declares to the Gentiles in Acts 10 that if they fear God and do what is right, they are welcome before him.[681]

This opening statement is powerful, but it rapidly recedes in the shadow of the very next statement. Peter reminds the listeners in Cornelius' house of the message sent to the people of Israel, the good news of peace through Jesus Christ. And this Jesus Christ, this one is Lord of all (οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος). This statement is another thunderclap in the ears of Cornelius' household and the reader. In a city named for the

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household symbolize Gentiles, to whom testimony about the Christ-event now spreads, not just under the aegis of the leader of the Twelve, but at the direction of heaven itself." Fitzmyer, 447-448.

[679] Acts 10:34-35. Conzelmann argues, "Luke intends that the narrative action interpret the vision [of Peter in Joppa] for the reader." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 82.

[680] Conzelmann sees this statement as a reflection from within the Christian community concerning the reality of the Gentile mission. Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 83.

[681] Fitzmyer contends that Cornelius' prayer and almsgiving does not earn him salvation; instead, "they are a sign of his openness to divine grace, which is now about to reveal to him that his salvation comes through Jesus Christ." Fitzmyer, 448. Conzelmann writes of Caesarea Maritima: "The population was predominantly Gentile (Josephus *Bell.* 3.409)." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 81.

Roman emperor, in the house of a Roman centurion, to the subjects of the Roman Empire, Peter declares that Jesus is Lord of all. This context signals Luke's further application of his developed and progressively revealed identity of Jesus: Jesus is not only God because he is the κύριος, he is also superior to the emperor as a god because he is πάντων κύριος (Lord of all). Luke has explicitly replaced the gods, including the emperor, with Jesus and done so within the home of a centurion who previously has known the primary identity of ὁ κύριος as the emperor.[682] Now he is faced with a decision: Who is truly πάντων κύριος? This declaration forces Cornelius and "the reader to think through a startling juxtaposition: both Jesus and the Roman Ceasar are called κύριος; yet it is Jesus Christ, not the emperor, who is named the κύριος πάντων."[683] Luke's narrative may allow room for Caesar to be lord of the Roman Empire; however, Jesus is the only Lord of all (including the Roman Empire).

At this point in his narrative Luke does not need to further develop or progressively reveal the identity of Jesus. He has already done so in his gospel and the

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[682] Conzelmann notes that this expression is found in classical religion, as well as Hellenistic. In addition, he highlights that "the expression is also used politically, as in Epictetus 4.1.12: "Caesar, the lord of all" (ὁ πάντων κύριος Καῖσαρ)." Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 83. Fitzmyer adds that "this ancient title" may have been used in Palestinian Judaism. He also questions whether πάντων should be taken as a genitive of neuter (hence, all things) or a genitive of masculine (hence, all people). Either way the significance of πάντων is clear. Fitzmyer, 463-464. Johnson states that the expostulation "finds its expression in Jesus' future role of judging all, and in the possibility of forgiveness for all peoples." Johnson and Harrington, 195. While all of these observations have merit, they totally ignore or more likely miss Luke's narrative agenda. Οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος has present significance because Luke is extending the identity of Jesus into the realm of the emperor and he is doing so in a thoroughly Roman context.

[683] Rowe, *World Upside Down: Reading Acts in the Graeco-Roman Age* (Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 106.

echoes are clearly present.[684] This identity of Jesus has been further developed and affirmed in the earlier chapters of Acts. But now Luke is simply allowing the ramifications of this identity to be felt. The claim that Jesus is ὁ κύριος and thus is the Lord God of Israel born as a human being is not simply a revelation within its Jewish context. It is also a revelation within the Graeco-Roman context. God, "who is Lord of heaven and earth," has revealed himself in humanity as Jesus.[685] "The Roman emperor's claim to be the κύριος πάντων is at its core the usurpation by a human being of the identity that belongs to the God of Israel alone."[686] The worship that Cornelius was culturally conditioned to give to a man, namely the emperor (or even Peter), is now being redirected exclusively to the Lord God of Israel himself in the human manifestation of Jesus. Cornelius' previous worship of the God of Israel had brought him to this place of revelation that he could worship only the κύριος πάντων. Because the emperor's role within the Roman Empire as lord of all demanded divine worship, it rivaled the rightful place of the God of Israel. "And therein lies the central, animating fact behind Luke's juxtaposition of Jesus Christ and the Roman emperor: the Christians have to deny what the Roman emperor has to be" and thereby "the universal scope of the emperor's lordship is thus implicitly denied even as it is explicitly ascribed to Jesus."[687]

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[684] Witherington notices perceptively that "It is at this point that the alert listener would hear echoes of the early material in Luke's Gospel; in fact, it echoes the angel's message to the unclean shepherds in Luke 2:10–14…." Witherington, 357.

[685] Acts 17:24.

[686] Rowe, 111.

[687] Rowe, 106, 111.

While Peter's sermon is a summary, it is conceivably "the most comprehensive review of the career of Jesus found in any of the sermons in Acts, perhaps because the audience is Gentile."[688] God's infusion of his Spirit in all those who heard the message, however, interrupted this summary.[689] God takes charge of the situation by giving his Spirit and this serves as confirmation both of what Peter is preaching and of the hearers accepting the message.[690] This confirmation serves Luke's narrative program in that it affirms both the content of the message (that Jesus is Lord of all) and the message being preached to the Gentiles. Further approval of these elements of Luke's narrative agenda occurs when Peter orders the Roman centurion and his household to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, just as he instructed the Jews on the day of Pentecost.[691] So not only is the gospel extended to the Gentiles, but also these Gentiles, who are Romans, are now called to identify themselves with the one who is κύριος πάντων. This moment of salvation for Cornelius produces ramifications for Christianity and the Roman Empire in which it exists. Salvation, even a savior, is no longer found within the structures of the empire. Instead it is to be found within Jesus who is κύριος πάντων. No longer is allegiance to be given to Caesar as κύριος but rather to Jesus as κύριος.

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[688] Witherington, 357. Johnson describes Peter's sermon as "something of a master summation of Luke's own Gospel narrative." Johnson and Harrington, 195.

[689] Conzelmann contends, "The coming down of the Spirit before baptism (cf. its counterpart in 8:15–17) is an ad hoc construction: heaven itself points the way to the admission of the 'Gentiles.'" Conzelmann, Epp and Matthews, 84. Johnson and Harrington, 195.

[690] Witherington, 359.

[691] Talbert, 98-99.

Luke's contention in this part of his narrative is not that Caesar is not a κύριος. Rather, his claim is that Caesar's identity as a κύριος does not include being Lord of all. Only the God of Israel born into humanity as Jesus is κύριος πάντων. Thus the piety and reverance given and/or demanded by the Caesar can only be given to Jesus, the rightful Lord.[692] Luke does not have to be explicit in this claim; rather, he develops and reveals this claim from the beginning of his narrative until it culminates at the end of Acts. This claim, however, is clearly understood by the members, both Jewish and Gentile, of the Graeco-Roman culture as Paul preaches this gospel to the Gentiles. It is also recognized by the readers of Luke's narrative who themselves are members of the Graeco-Roman culture of the Roman Empire.

The Lord Jesus: βασιλέα ἕτερον

As Luke's narrative turns to the mission of Paul to the Gentiles, the reader is presented with multiple stories of how the gospel is preached and the conflict that ensues. "Luke narrates the movement of the Christian mission into the gentile world as a collision with culture-constructing aspects of that world."[693] As the gospel is preached, certain Christian theological claims must necessarily be embraced and become normative. Perhaps the most fundamental of these theological claims is the identity of Jesus. The

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[692] It should be noted that there are differences in time and place with regard to piety, reverence, and even worship given and/or demanded by the Caesars. Certainly in the time of Jesus Roman Emperors in the West were not yet declared gods until after they died, while in Asia Minor the Greeks were all to eager and willing to set up temples to the emperor and worship him as a god. This feature of the east would eventually migrate westward with Trajan being declared both "*dominus et deus"*—Lord and God. See Chapter 2: The Imperial Cult.

[693] Rowe, 5.

identity of Jesus as both ὁ κύριος (the God of Israel born as a human being) and κύριος πάντων (the God of Israel born as a human being who is superior to both the gods and the emperor) results in fundamental cultural conflicts. Christian identity is founded in the identity of Jesus; in fact, "at its core, the Christian mission claims to be a revelation of God" and this revelation is none other than Jesus as both ὁ κύριος and κύριος πάντων.[694] But this identity of Jesus supplanted the religious notions of the Graeco-Roman world to such an extent that "basic patterns of Graeco-Roman culture are dissolved."[695]

Examples of these cultural conflicts are found in the missionary stories of Paul.[696] In Acts 14 the reader is presented with Paul and Barnabas preaching the gospel to both Jews and Greeks in Iconium. Their message, however, divides the town and ultimately the inhabitants try to stone them. Upon fleeing Iconium, they come to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe. In Lystra they experience temporary success when they heal a man whose feet were lame from his birth. Upon seeing the miracle, the town declares, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" and begin to call Barnabas Zeus and Paul Hermes.[697] But their Christian identity founded in the identity of Jesus precludes Paul and Barnabas from receiving this adulation. Instead they remonstrate with the people of Lystra saying, like Peter in Acts 10, "We too are men, with human natures just like you."[698]

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[694] Rowe, 4.

[695] Rowe, 5.

[696] For a fuller treatment of the four examples cited, see Chapter 2 of Rowe.

[697] Acts 14:11-12.

But when Jews come from Antioch and Iconium, they are able to win the crowds over and Paul is stoned and dragged from the town, presumably dead. How could a town go from proclaiming him Hermes to stoning him? They could because the gospel demanded theological claims that were at odds with the religious sensibilities of the Graeco-Roman world. "This end to the episode in Lystra articulates narratively the offense caused by a collision of divine identity and the practice it entails."[699] Just as Cornelius was faced with a fundamental choice about the identity of ὁ κύριος and to whom he would render worship, so also the Jews of Antioch and Iconium along with the Gentiles of Iconium and Lystra were faced with the revelation of God in Jesus. The conflict lay, at its most fundamental level, in "the clash between the exclusivity of the Christian God and the wider mode of pagan religiousness."[700]

In Acts 16, the reader finds Paul, on his way to Macedonia after seeing a vision. He enters the city of Philippi and stays there a number of days. Almost immediately a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to foretell the future meets him. Though she brought her masters much profit, she begins to follow Paul, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation."[701] Finally, after many days, Paul becomes sufficiently irritated and speaks to the spirit: "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!"[702] The spirit does indeed

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[698] Acts 14:15.

[699] Rowe, 23.

[700] Rowe, 18.

[701] Acts 16:17.

leave her, and thus her masters lose their lucrative source of income. Seizing Paul and Silas, they bring them before the authorities and accuse them of causing confusion by "advocating customs that are not lawful for us to accept or practice since we are Romans."[703] Beaten, jailed, and suffering an earthquake, Paul and Silas are finally released and repeatedly asked to leave. Significantly Paul proves Jesus is Lord as a culmination of the episode when he casts out the spirit in the name of Jesus. This miracle-working demonstrates "the inherently destabilizing power of Jesus Christ for the pagan way of life" because "the recognition of the superior power of Jesus Christ is simultaneously the invalidation of the power claims of other πνεύματα."[704] But it is precisely this reality-defining facet of the gospel that led to the conflict. Again, the fundamental cultural conflict results from the claims of the gospel and the Christian identity that is based in the identity of Jesus.

Acts 19 presents one of the most dramatic episodes in Ephesus, narrating the economic consequences of the preaching of the gospel, along with the cultural destabilization. As Paul sojourns in Ephesus and preaches the gospel, the spirit of Jesus again clashes with the magic of pagan religion. After the seven sons of Sceva fail at

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[702] Acts 16:18.

[703] Acts 16:21. Fitzmyer observes, "Paul is charged with preaching a non-Roman cult, a mode of worship and practices that Romans do not welcome." See also his discussion of the legality of converting to Judaism and whether Paul's gospel is Judaism or a *religio licita*. Fitzmyer, 587.

[704] Rowe, 26. Rowe's quotation of Ramsey MacMullen is particularly appropriate for this discussion as well: "The unique force of Christian wonder-working…lies in the fact that *it destroyed belief as well as creating it*—that is, if you credited it, you had then to credit the view that went with it, denying the character of god to all other divine powers whatsoever."

utilizing the name of Jesus to cast out an evil spirit, fear comes over both Jews and Greeks in Ephesus and they praise the name of Jesus.[705] This fear leads many to believe and as a result to confess and make known their deeds. These deeds are presumably magical because "large numbers of those who had practiced magic collected their books and burned them up in the presence of everyone."[706] No doubt this large bonfire attracts considerable attention within the city of Ephesus.

Luke also tells the reader of another disturbance occurred in Ephesus as "the word of the Lord continued to grow in power and to prevail."[707] Because Paul's preaching has wreaked havoc on his business, Demetrius, a silversmith, collected fellow workmen and incited them to public demonstration. Demetrius feared that Paul's preaching concerning "gods made by hands are not gods at all" would continue to turn away large crowds at the famed Artemis temple both in Ephesus and in the province of Asia. The effect of the preaching of the gospel is both that the gods would cease to be worshipped and the livelihood of the craftsmen would be destroyed. The reader recognized what Demetrius understands that "it is either magic or Christianity, either Artemis or Christ" because "the practice of magic is incompatible with Christian life, as is the worship of Artemis and veneration of her images/shrines."[708]

The point of this brief survey of some of the most dramatic episodes is to establish the claim that Paul's preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles created cultural

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[705] Acts 19:17.

[706] Acts 19:19.

[707] Acts 19:20.

[708] Rowe, 49.

conflict because of "the reconfiguration of divine identity" resulting in "a collision between the expansion of the gospel and essential assumptions of ancient pagan life."[709] The Christian gospel declares the gods are not even gods. The practices of worship and religious life are ignorant of the truth. In Athens, Paul even accuses that great city of worshipping a god whose identity they do not even know, through images of gold or silver or stone they have made, in temples where God does not reside.[710] These accounts "tell the story of a profound incommensurability between the life-shape of Christianity in the Graeco-Roman world and the larger pattern of pagan religiousness" and "the difference in the perception of divine identity amounts to nothing less than a different way of life."[711] The preaching of the gospel calls both Jew and Gentile to a different way of life that springs from the revelation of the identity of God in Jesus. This revelation then leads to a collision between Christianity and the cultural-religious construct of the Roman Empire because "to call into question pagan religion is to critique pagan culture: tear out the threads of pagan religiousness and the cultural fabric itself comes unraveled."[712]

Today's reader may not recognize what the ancient reader would have heard instinctively in Luke's narrative in Acts. The ancient reader would have known the profound problem of declaring Jesus κύριος πάντων. Even if Luke denies that the gospel is seditious or treasonous, the ancient reader can certainly identify that its ramifications

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[709] Rowe, 50.

[710] Acts 17:16-34.

[711] Rowe, 50-51.

[712] Rowe, 51.

are profound for the cultural world of the Roman Empire.[713] Cornelius and his household are the first to face this profound choice of identity springing from the revelation of the identity of the God of Israel in Jesus ὁ κύριος, but they will not be the last. Luke's narrative agenda so successfully establishes the identity of Jesus as ὁ κύριος and κύριος πάντων that the reader is able to recognize that the gospel presents Jesus as not only displacing the gods, along with their religious practices, but also displacing the emperor. The emperor may be κύριος (in a purely secular sense) of the Roman Empire, but he is not κύριος πάντων. "Thus does cultural destabilization appear to Roman eyes as sedition and treason" and the ancient reader definitely understood this part of Luke's narrative agenda.[714]

The most telling example of this recognition lies in the story of Paul and Silas at Thessalonica in Acts 17. Upon being repeatedly asked to leave Philippi, Paul and Silas traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, arriving at a Jewish synagogue in Thessalonica. For three successive Sabbaths Paul addresses the Jews from the scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. He did this by announcing, "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."[715] Though he has some success among the Jews, along with a large number of God-fearers, the larger Jewish population rejects his message. The significance of this story, however, is not their rejection, but their accusation. They began to cause such a fuss that they "set the

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[713] See particularly pages 6-7 of Rowe.

[714] Rowe, 6.

[715] Acts 17:3.

city in an uproar."[716] A mob proceeds to attack the house of Jason, looking for Paul and Silas. When they cannot find them, they bring Jason and some other brothers before the city officials. Their accusation is such that it causes confusion not only within the crowd but also among the city officials. What accusation could be so fundamentally disturbing?

Luke tells his reader that the jealous Jews, along with the mob, shout that Paul and Silas have turned the world upside down.[717] They have done so by "acting against Caesar's decrees, saying there is another king named Jesus!"[718] The accusation that they have turned the world upside down may be even more pointed than the modern reader realizes. The term used is οἰκουμένην and usually is taken to mean the known inhabited world. If then οἰκουμένην is taken as a reference to the Roman Empire (which it most likely should be), then the accusation is one of sedition and treason. They have turned the world upside down by acting against the decrees of Caesar. The known inhabited (civilized) world, namely the Roman Empire, is turned upside down by actions that are not respectful of the decrees of the ruler of that world, namely the emperor. But the accusation is not generic. They have specifically acted against the decrees of Caesar by

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[716] Acts 17:5.

[717] Literally: "these (are) the inhabited (world) upsetters." Fitzmyer, 596.

[718] Acts 17:7. Johnson perceptively notes, "The translation of *basileus* is difficult: from one point of view, it should be rendered as 'emperor,' for such was Caesar's title in the East (although see Luke 23:2; Acts 25:8), and such is the burden of this charge; from another point of view, the translation 'king' enables the reader to recognize the theme of Jesus' kingship that runs through Luke's two-volume work (Luke 1:33; 19:11, 12, 15, 38; 22:29-30; 23:2-3, 37)." Johnson and Harrington, 307. Notice, however, that Johnson is unable to cite any references within Acts. If his claim is accurate (which it probably is), it depends upon Luke's use of κύριος and thus this passage is central. Fitzmyer disagrees with Johnson on this translation. Fitzmyer, 596.

saying there is another king named Jesus.[719] Nowhere within the Lukan narrative of Acts has Jesus been declared a king. He has been declared the annointed Christ, and certainly Lord. Why then accuse them of declaring Jesus a king other than Caesar?[720]

Not only does this passage tell us about the conflict that occurred in Thessalonica, but it also serves as a key piece in Luke's narrative agenda. From the beginning of his narrative in the Gospel, Luke develops and progressively reveals the identity of Jesus as ὁ κύριος. From his mother's womb he has been ὁ κύριος. Closely connected with this identity has been the declaration that he is the anointed one. In fact, the angel declared that the baby who would save his people was χριστός κύριος. These two terms are mutually determinative. The anointed one of Israel is Lord. The Jews of the Graeco-Roman world understood the connection. To be the anointed one—ὁ χριστός—is to be the Lord. But in the Graeco-Roman world of the Roman Empire to be the Lord—ὁ κύριος—is to be emperor.

In his Gospel Luke has already introduced this to the reader. When the Jews brought Jesus before Pontius Pilate, they accused him of "subverting our nation, forbidding us to pay the tribute tax to Caesar and claiming that he himself is Christ, a

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[719] Rowe, 96. Fitzmyer recognizes the controversy that Paul's gospel has engendered: "Espousal of Christianity may be seen as a contravention of Caesar's *dogmata*, 'decrees,' but how?" However, he does not recognize the obvious answer to his question: "Saying there in another king named Jesus!" Fitzmyer, 596.

[720] In Roman terms, king is not the appropriate term, but rather *imperator*, "emperor." The use of "king" here is most likely a reflection of the eastern context of Luke's composition, though this cannot be firmly established. Fitzmyer's answer to the question is loyalty: "instead of loyalty to Caesar in Rome, Paul and his companions are charged with advocating loyalty to some other *basileus*, 'king.'" Fitzmyer, 596. This answer is not complete and totally misses the significance of Luke's narrative agenda with regard to Jesus' identity as ὁ κύριος.

king."[721] The Jews connected the identity of Jesus as χριστός to kingship.[722] Pontius Pilate does not seem to catch the significance of this connection beyond kingship for when he questions Jesus, he only asks, "Are you the king of the Jews?"[723] And upon sentencing him to die by crucifixion, Pilate, rather ironically, had the superscription written in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, "This is the King of the Jews."[724]

But here in his Acts narrative, Luke clearly reflects the reality that within the Graeco-Roman world to be Lord is to be emperor. The reason the Jews, along with the mob, in Thessalonica accuse Paul of acting against the decrees of Caesar by declaring another king is because Paul along with the whole of Luke's narrative has declared Jesus ὁ κύριος. In fact, he is not only ὁ κύριος, he is κύριος πάντων. "In the eyes of its opponents, Christian proclamation positions a King inescapably over against Caesar" such that "there is *another* King…a contender for the imperial throne, namely, Jesus."[725] If the gospel message being preached to the Gentiles is that Jesus is κύριος πάντων, then it must mean that they are declaring a king other than Caesar.[726] What the Jews in Jerusalem understand by means of Jesus' identity as ὁ χριστός, the Jews of Thessalonica

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[721] Luke 23:2.

[722] Johnson describes this connection: "the confession of Jesus as 'Messiah' is put in the most politically inflammatory form." Johnson and Harrington, 307.

[723] Luke 23:3.

[724] Luke 23:38.

[725] Rowe, 97.

[726] See Witherington's discussion of the themes of Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians as evidence of the "politically charged" language of Paul's preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. Witherington, 508. Despite this discussion, Witherington does not recognize the significant connection between κύριος and kingship.

understand by means of Jesus' identity as ὁ κύριος. And when the gospel narrative is taken into account, the conclusion is inescapable. Rowe states it succinctly: "…the Christians are seditious precisely because of their treasonous acclamation. Jesus, not Caesar, is King."[727] But this declaration within Acts is made not by directly declaring Jesus emperor; rather, it is done by declaring him ὁ κύριος and κύριος πάντων.

Thus to proclaim Jesus ὁ κύριος and κύριος πάντων is to displace the Roman emperor. Luke, through his narrative agenda, using κύριος, develops and progressively reveals the identity of Jesus as the Lord God of Israel born as a human being. He then takes that established identity and extends it into the Graeco-Roman context, declaring that Jesus ὁ κύριος is actually κύριος πάντων and thus is superior to the emperor as a god. Not only does the city of Thessalonica understand this claim. So does every reader of Luke's narrative. They do not miss the significance of Peter's declaration to a Roman centurion in a city named for the emperor that Jesus is κύριος πάντων. They do not miss the implication of the accusation that Paul and Silas are accused of acting against the decrees of Caesar by declaring another king, namely Jesus. The Christian reader understands that Jesus' kingdom is not of this world, and therefore, these claims are not seditious or treasonous. But the non-Christian readers are faced with a stark choice: will

[727] Rowe, 99. Johnson remarks further that the declaration of Jesus as Messiah, let alone Lord, "is generally subversive, and for an empire chronically suspicious of any unapproved social gatherings (see Pliny the Younger, *Letters* 10:34), surely to be regarded as against the *dogmata* ('decrees'; compare Luke 2:1) of Caesar." Johnson and Harrington, 307. While this cannot be explored further here, Luke's narrative agenda certainly allows greater understanding as to why the Christians of the second century would die rather than worship within the imperial cult. What Pliny could not understand perhaps lies in the wholesale success of Luke's narrative program concerning the identity of Jesus as both ὁ κύριος and κύριος πάντων.

their allegiance to the Roman emperor as ὁ κύριος and κύριος πάντων allow them also to be identified with this Jesus whom his followers claim to be ὁ κύριος and κύριος πάντων?

This is precisely Luke's narrative agenda: to bring the Jew to a place of revelation that Jesus is the God of Israel born as a human being; to bring the Gentile to a place of revelation that Jesus is Lord of all as the God of Israel born as a human being. The revelation is reiterated through the repetition of Saul's vision on the road to Damascus in which Jesus is revealed in him as ὁ κύριος. First, Paul retells this moment of revelation in the Jewish context of Jerusalem. He then retells it again within the predominately Roman context of Caesarea Maritima before the Roman governor Festus and the client king Agrippa. Each subsequent retelling reminds the reader, whether Christian or non-Christian, of Luke's agenda regarding the identity of Jesus. In fact, before Festus and Agrippa, Paul again states what he stated in Thessalonica: "the Christ was to suffer and be the first to rise from the dead…."[728] Luke's skillful repetition of revealing Jesus' identity as ὁ κύριος is made the more evidentially contrasting when Festus tells Agrippa, "I have nothing definite to write to my κύριος [Caesar] about him."[729]

Finally, Luke proceeds to close his narrative by physically moving Paul from Jerusalem to Rome, from the Jewish context to the Roman context. Scholars have long seen this as the trajectory connecting the gospel with Acts; however, geographical and cultural expansion is also related to Luke's agenda for Jesus' identity. While he began by developing and progressively revealing the identity of Jesus as the God of Israel born as a human being through his use of κύριος within the Gospel, Luke takes this established

[728] Acts 26:23.

[729] Acts 25:26.

identity within Acts and extends it into the Graeco-Roman context of the Roman empire by declaring that Jesus is superior to the emperor (and the gods) as Lord of all. And the crescendo of this agenda is the closing, summary verse of the Acts narrative: Paul is presented in Rome "proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with complete boldness and without restriction."[730] Here the reader has both claims—Jewish and Graeco-Roman—joined.

Jesus, Lord from his mother's womb and Christ from his birth, and his kingdom are both being boldly proclaimed to the world in the capitol of the Roman Empire without restriction. This proclamation of the identity and kingdom of Jesus is nothing short of evangelistic. It is intended to promote Luke's unique message about the identity of Jesus and how this identity fundamentally changes expectations for how the world works. While this unique message of the early Jesus-believers would be identified by the members of the Graeco-Roman world as a particular piece of propaganda among many competing messages of propaganda, Luke's agenda was for his message to triumph. And he ends his narrative with that message being proclaimed at the heart of the empire it would eventually conquer.

[730] Acts 28:31. Witherington notes, "that v. 31 is not just a continuation of v. 30, though that is of course true, but it is the final summary statement in Acts." Witherington, 810. It is remarkable, however, that Conzelmann, Fitzmyer, Talbert, and Witherington do not even recognize the significance of κύριος within this summary statement.

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