CHAPTER 3

POWER ENCOUNTER IN LUKE-ACTS

3.1 OPENING STATEMENT

People in the first-century Mediterranean world were quite familiar with the influence and activities of the spirits of evil. It is for this reason that the practice of magic was widespread in the ancient world. The advent of the kingdom of God in Christ and the inception of the New Testament church occurred in an atmosphere that was infested by spirit beings. It is not surprising, therefore, that the kingdom of light, ushered by Jesus Christ, stood to collide with the forces of darkness. The New Testament writers report the instances of conflict between the forces of good and evil.

In this chapter, after dealing with the introductory matters on Luke-Acts, the encounter between the power of God and that of darkness, is illustrated by the Beelzebub controversy in the gospels with special reference to Luke and the power encounter in the book of Acts as related in the anecdotes of Simon Magus, Elymas the sorcerer, an anonymous slave-girl of Philippi and the botched exorcism in Ephesus.

3.2 THE RELEVANCE OF LUKE

In researching the history and mission of the early church, focus on the two-part work of Luke cannot be overemphasised. The mission of the early church is central in Luke's writings (see Bosch 1991:84). Hahn (1965:136) refers to it as the dominating theme for Luke. The other reason for selecting Luke is to be found in a basic difference between him and the other three evangelists in that Luke not only wrote a gospel, but also the book of Acts. By continuing his literary project into the Acts of the Apostles, Luke not only introduces us to Jesus and his ministry, but also to how that ministry relates to significant events in the early church. According to Bock (1992:495), this enables Luke to discuss

how God brought his salvation in Jesus, how the church preached Jesus and how it carried out its mission to both Jews and Gentiles.

The study of Luke's writings is also relevant because Luke was perhaps the only Gentile author of the New Testament writing for Christians who were predominantly of Gentile origin. Moreover, Luke appears to have had in view many communities rather than one single community (see Bosch 1991:85, cf. Bauckham 1998:44).

When turning to the issue of magic or power encounter in the first-century Mediterranean world, the writings of Luke cannot be ignored. Although the subject is still regarded as taboo or irrelevant by many New Testament scholars (Garret 1989a:2), there is rather sufficient evidence that the New Testament authors were, especially in the gospels and Acts, aware of the activities of evil spirits and the prevalence of magic. In their reporting of the ministry of the historical Jesus and the mission of the early church, the New Testament writers do not shun discussion on the subject of power encounter (Garret 1989b:142-165).

Luke uses several anecdotes in illustrating the prevalence of magic in the ancient world. He makes a theological point that Christians wielded authority over the devil and his works in the post-resurrection era. Before the passion, Jesus had described a vision in which he "saw Satan fall like lightning from the sky" (Lk 10:18). Jesus said this after his disciples came back with a report saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" (Lk 10:17). In the same passage of scripture, Jesus promises "authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you" (Lk 10:19). These statements serve to demonstrate the victory of Christ and his followers over the forces of evil.

The two-volume work of Luke does not only relate the one history of God in his business with the world but also helps modern inquirers in showing how Jesus dealt with the forces of evil and how the early church coped with the diabolical agents in its mission of proclaiming the good news of the kingdom. What Jesus begins in the gospels, specifically in Luke, is continued by the early church in the book of Acts. But before we delve into the issue of power encounter in Luke-

Acts, it is only appropriate to comment, albeit elementarily, on other introductory matters pertaining to Luke-Acts.

3.3 INTRODUCTORY NOTES ON LUKE-ACTS

3.3.1 AUTHORSHIP

3.3.1.1 EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

At the beginning of the gospel, the author addresses a certain Theophilus, and when referring at the very beginning of Acts to his 'former word', the author of Acts addresses a person of the same name. There is no convincing evidence against the natural conclusion that the same person is author of both the gospel of Luke and Acts (see Cadbury 1958:8f; cf. Beck 1976-7:346-352).

Allusions to the gospel of Luke appear early and exist in *1 Clement 13.2*; 48.4 (late 90's) and in *2 Clement 13.4* (c. 150). In addition, a use of Jesus' teaching, similar to that found in Luke 10:7, appears in 1 Timothy 5:18. Numerous texts comment on the authorship of Luke-Acts. Justin (c. 160) in *Dialogues* 103.19 speaks of Luke as having written a "memoir" of Jesus and notes that the author was a follower of Paul.

One of the earliest traditions for the writing of Luke-Acts is known as the Muratorian Canon, which was probably written in Rome (c. 180-200). According to its author, Luke, the physician, wrote after Paul had taken him along on his travels. Irenaeus (c. 175-195; *Adv. Haer. 3.1.1*; 3.14.1) states that Luke, the physician, a companion of Paul, wrote down the gospel Paul proclaimed. The so-called Anti-Marcionite Canon (c. 175) describes Luke as a native of Antioch in Syria (Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3; 15:30-35), commenting that he lived to be eighty-four, was a doctor, was unmarried, wrote in Achaia and died in Boetia. Tertullian (early third century; *Marc.* 4.2.2; 4.5.3) calls the gospel a digest of Paul's gospel. The tradition of Luke's association with Paul became embellished so that Eusebius (early fourth century; *Hist. Eccl.* 3.4.2), for example, writes that Luke was a native of Antioch, a physician, and a long-time companion of Paul's, and that he spoke carefully with other apostles and left us two volumes of

medicine for souls. The unified voice of these traditions regarding authorship enhances the identification of the gospel and Acts with Luke and makes Luke's connection very likely (see Knight 1998:8-9). But there is no clue in either the gospel or in Acts that a person named Luke is the author, so Luke (-Acts), like the other gospels, was originally anonymous.

3.3.1.2 INTERNAL EVIDENCE

Luke is mentioned three times in the New Testament, in each case in one of the Pauline letters (Col. 4:14; Phlm 24; 2 Tim 4:11), but it is in Acts that we gather our best information about him. The relationship between the gospel of Luke and Acts means that, despite the objections of certain scholars, we may justly accept that they were most probably written by the same person. Among the similarities between the two books, we may point to the following:

(a) Both are dedicated to the same person, Theophilus.

(b) Acts (1:1) refers to a 'first book', and this is usually taken as an allusion to the gospel.

(c) Similarities in concepts, vocabulary, and style.

(d) Similarities in certain preferences, characteristics, etc.

What are termed the "we"-sections in Acts, where the person plural replaces the third person plural (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16), indicate that their author was a companion of Paul's. These sections could be extracts from a travel narrative. If this is accepted, then their author must be one of Paul's travelling companions.

In search of the authorship and identity of Luke-Acts, it can also be stated that there is also no universal agreement whether Luke was a Gentile or Jewish Christian. The main argument in support of Luke as a Christian convert from Judaism is his use of LXX and Hebrew expressions such as "it came to pass that" (see Freed 1994:140). Arguments in favour of Luke as a Gentile who was converted to

Christianity from a pagan background, are the excellence of his Greek, his avoidance of Semitic expressions, his omission of Jesus' controversies with Jewish authorities over legal observances and the fact that his knowledge of the geography of the country of Palestine is not always accurate. Fitzmeyer (1981:42) has argued, among other factors, that on the basis of Luke's name and the tradition connecting him with Antioch, Luke was "a non-Jewish Semite, a native of Antioch, where he was well educated in a Hellenistic atmosphere and culture".

3.3.1.3 WORKING HYPOTHESIS

We have a few general facts concerning the author of Luke-Acts. We know, for instance, that he was not an eye-witness of Jesus' life and work; this is evident from his prologue to the gospel (1:1-4), where he mentions eye-witnesses as sources he calls on, which implies that he himself was not one of these. But if we take Acts as a sequel to the gospel of Luke, as both tradition and internal evidence suggest, the "we"-sections in Acts allude to the fact that the author of Acts was a first-hand witness of some of the events taking place in that volume and that he was a companion of Paul's. We may further tentatively conclude that Luke was of Hellenistic, non-Jewish antecedents, but who he was, is not clear from either the gospel or Acts.

3.3.2 PLACE AND DATE

The place of composition of Luke-Acts is uncertain, but most agree that it was written in Palestine. The traditional sites of Achaia, Rome Caesarea, the Decapolis (a region in Palestine east of the Jordan River), and some place in Asia Minor have been suggested. If we accept the four-source theory of the composition of the gospels and date Mark at c. A.D. 70, then Luke is later than Mark and was written after A.D. 70 (see Luke 19:39-44; 21:20, 24). Consequently, most scholars agree that Luke-Acts was written c. A.D. 70-90 (see Fitzmeyer 1981:55).

3.3.3 PURPOSES

Luke is the only gospel writer to state expressly why he wrote his gospel, and he does so right at the outset, in a prologue (1:1-4) which is unique in the New

Testament. Probably these prefactory verses are intended to serve also as an introduction to Acts (see Schuyler 1978:100). The way in which v. 5 begins, leads us to surmise that the first four verses may not have been written until after the rest of the gospel story - a practice still common among present-day authors.

The word "narrative" (Lk 1:1), often used in historical writings, indicates that Luke intended to write a historical work in the ancient sense of the term; he wanted to write accurately (*akribos* trans. "closely"), orderly and truthfully. To see that Luke's preface is like those of ancient historical writers, it needs to be compared with the one by Josephus in *Against Apion* (1.1-3; 2.1.1).

> I assume that in the history of the *Antiquities*, most excellent Epaphroditus, I have made clear to those who come upon it the nature of the Jewish race ... But since I see that many influenced by the malicious slanders of certain persons, do not believe what I wrote concerning our antiquity ... I thought to write briefly about all these things, to convict those who insult us ... to correct the ignorance of some, and teach all who want to know the truth about our antiquity.
>
> In the first book, my most esteemed Epaphroditus ...

In the prefaces of Luke and Josephus, the Greek is carefully written, the work is addressed to a respected person, the writing of others is implied not to be satisfactory, and the writer states his purpose. Luke seems to have a historical purpose for writing, at least to the extent of settling a story of Jesus and of salvation for all people in a historical context. Nevertheless, it needs to be noted that Luke is not primarily a historian in the narrow sense of the word but instead the greatest synoptic theologian (see Freed 1994:142). According to Marshall (1970:10), Luke was not attempting to transform the content of the message but "to set it out through the medium of a historical account for the benefit of Theophilus and all like him who want a reliable foundation for their faith".

3.3.4 THE READERS

Both the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts are dedicated to a person by the name of Theophilus. This name means 'beloved [=friend] of God', and this has led some scholars to suppose that it has only a symbolic significance, with no historical person intended. But according to Du Plessis (1983:154), this is unlikely since this name was common among both Jews and Gentiles (see e.g. Josephus, *Ant.* XVIII.5.3).

Scholars differ as to the reason why Luke-Acts is dedicated to Theophilus. For example, Du Plessis (1983:154) is of the opinion that Luke probably hoped to enlist him as a sort of publisher who could assist with the costs and distribution of his two-volume work. On the contrary, Marx (1980:17) believes that the dedication to Theophilus in Luke's two prefaces must not be confused with the dedication of a present-day book which may indicate a gesture of gratitude, the recognition of some family or ideological kinship. Marx further says that it is not like the prefaces written by Horace, Vergil, Cicero and Josephus who dedicated their works to a famous patron expecting him to underwrite the cost of publication. A shadow hung over the author always reminding him to avoid anything that might seem offensive to his patron. But in the case of Luke's preface, such a mercenary intention is not even remotely indicated. The central theme of Luke is that Jesus offers salvation to humankind (see Marshall 1970:116f).

Experts in the study of Luke-Acts seem not to emerge with a consensual view of the actual identity of who Theophilus was. The fact that Luke addresses him as 'most excellent' *(krátiste)* Theophilus, may indicate that he was a high-ranking official or someone high up the social ladder. Against the notion that 'most excellent' is no more than a form of courteous address, Du Plessis (1983:155) points out that the title is used in addressing Felix and Festus (Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25) which may demonstrate its formal usage than otherwise. Another intriguing fact in the prologue of Luke is whether Theophilus was already a convinced Christian or someone desiring to know more about the Christian faith. What is clear, though, is that Theophilus appears well informed about the Christian gospel.

Since earliest times until the present, names have been suggested in trying to identify Theophilus. Without using a definite name others have thought that this person must have been a Roman official, a resident of Rome, someone from Alexandria, or someone from Syrian Antioch. The seven names are:

(a) Theophilus, brother-in-law to Caiaphas, was high priest A.D. 37-41 (Josephus, *Ant.* XVIII.123; XIX.247).

(b) Theophilus, an official in Athens, convicted of perjury by the Areopagus. He has no known Christian connections (Tacitus, *Annals* ii.55). However, because of a tradition which says Luke wrote his history in Achaia and Boeotia, it is thought that this man may be Theophilus.

(c) Theophilus of Antioch was a wealthy and distinguished Christian who converted a large hall in his home into a church. He is mentioned in *Clementine Recognitions (10.71)*, and is favoured by many because the Anti-Marcionite Prologue to the Third Gospel (c. A.D. 170) states that Luke came from Antioch (Geldenhuys 1950:17f).

(d) Again, Luke could have given Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyrus, the name Theophilus as a pseudonym (Acts 13:7-12).

(e) Lucius Junius Annaeus Gallio. This brother of Seneca was perhaps the most eminent Roman that Paul met (Acts 18:12-17).

(f) Streeter (1930:534-539) nominates Titus Flavius Clemens, heir-presumptive of the Emperor Domitian, even though he does not appear in the pages of our New Testament. He is roughly a contemporary of Luke's and may have been executed because of his interest in Christianity.

(g) Bengel *(Ordo Temporum)* believes that Theophilus was Philo. Judaeus was an Alexandrian because his Hebrew name was *Yedidyah* which is the equivalent of Theophilus.

(h) To this list of seven names, Marx (1980:18) adds King Agrippa II as also a possibility.

Whoever Theophilus might be, it is generally accepted that the work of Luke was intended for him alone. The readers to whom he was expected to pass it on, were probably Gentile Christians (see Du Plessis 1983:155; Fitzmeyer 1981:58; Bock 1992:498). This view is based on Luke's obvious concern to relate his accounts of the Christ-event and its sequel to a Greco-Roman literary tradition (e.g. in the prologue of the gospel), his dedication of his two volumes to a person bearing a Greek name (though it could have been borne by a Jew), and his manifest desire to relate the salvation promised to Israel in the Old Testament, to Gentiles or non-Jews.

Again, Luke's elimination of materials from his sources, "Mk" or "Q", that are predominantly Jewish preoccupations (e.g. in the Sermon on the Plain - where most of the matter in the antithesis of Matthew 5:21-48 disappears; or the details about Jewish ritual purity and peity; or the controversy about what is clean or unclean Mark 7:1-23), are best explained by this Gentile Christian destination of his writings (see Fitzmeyer 1981:58). The substitution of Greek names for Hebrew or Aramaic names or titles also suggests a Gentile Christian audience, for example, *kyrios*, "Lord", or *epistatés*, "teacher", for *rabbi/rabbouni* (Lk 18:41; cf. Mk 10:51; Lk 9:33; cf. Mk 9:5); *kranion*, "skull", for 'Golgotha' (Lk 23:33; cf. Mk 15:22). His interest in Gentile Christians is likewise responsible for his tracing of Jesus' genealogy back to Adam and God (and not just to David or Abraham, as in Matthew). Most of Luke's quotations from the Old Testament are derived from the Greek version or LXX.

Luke's intended Gentile audience is clear in his use of the term, "Judea", which he, at times, utilises in the generic sense of Palestine as a whole (Lk 1:5; 4:44; 6:17; 7:17; 23:5; Acts 2:9; 10:37). In his relation of the expansion of the Christian church in the book of Acts, Luke also shows how Gentiles have gained a share in what had been given to Israel, that is, the salvation of God sent first to the reconstituted Israel (Acts 15:16-18; cf. 3:23 - see Jervell 1972:41-74). There may have been some Jews and Jewish Christians among the audience Luke addressed, as the quotation of Isaiah (6:9, 10) at the end of Acts (28:26-27)

suggests, but the general observation we may deduce is that the audience envisaged by Luke in his writings of Luke-Acts is one that is predominantly Gentile Christian, and Theophilus is one of them.

3.3.5 LUKE AS HISTORIAN

Stott (1990:22), in support of the view that Luke writes as a historian, says that in his introduction to the gospel, Luke delineates five successive stages. First, there are historical events. Luke calls them certain things that have been "fulfilled among us". And if fulfilled is the right translation, it seems to indicate that these events were neither random nor unexpected, but took place in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Second, Stott says that Luke mentions the fact that there were contemporary witnesses - apostles who were eye-witnesses of the historical Jesus. The third phase is Luke's own personal researches. Stott reminds us that, although Luke belonged to the second generation who had received 'tradition' about Jesus from apostolic witnesses, he had not accepted it uncritically. On the contrary, he had carefully investigated everything from the beginning. The fourth stage that Stott mentions is that, after the events, the eye-witness tradition and the investigation, came the writing. The fifth stage is that the writing would have readers, among them Theophilus whom Luke addresses "so you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught". Thus, the events which had been accomplished, witnessed, transmitted, investigated and written down, could be the ground of the Christian faith and assurance (Stott 1990:23).

Ramsay (1915:222) also sees Luke as a historian. He writes, "His (Luke's) statements of fact (are) trustworthy; he is possessed of the true sense; he fixes his mind on the idea and plan that rules in the evolution of history, and proportions the scale of his treatment to the importance of each incident. He seizes the important and critical events and shows their true nature at great length, while he touches lightly or omits entirely much that was valueless for his purpose". For Ramsay, this makes a great historian.

Another reason for crediting Luke's claim to be writing history is that he was a travelling companion of Paul's. Several times in the Acts narrative, Luke changes from the third person plural ('they') to the first person ('we'), and by these 'we'-

sections, he unobtrusively draws attention to his presence, in each case in the company of Paul. The first journey took them from Troas to Philippi, where the gospel was planted in European soil (16:10-17); the second, from Philippi to Jerusalem after the conclusion of the last missionary journey (20:5-15; 21:1-18), and the third from Jerusalem to Rome by sea (27:1-28:16). Apparently, during these periods, Luke would have ample opportunity to hear and absorb Paul's teaching, and to write a personal travelogue of his experiences from which he could later draw (see Stott 1990:24).

Insofar as historical reliability is concerned, it appears that Luke was careful with his material (Bock 1992:497), though some scholars like Dibelius (1956) and Goulder (1977-8), do acknowledge the fact that Luke should be understood to have used his sources with great freedom. Some of this historical selectivity perturbs Marshall (1970:53), who says it leaves the later scholar at the mercy of what an ancient writer (like Luke) considered vital instead of furnishing him or her with all the relevant evidence on a particular problem.

Another criticism Leaney (1958:9) levels against Luke's historical reliability, is his claim that he writes with scientific objectivity. Leaney believes that Luke's claim to historicity cannot exempt him from a judgement based on comparison of his work with the data afforded by Pauline epistles and Josephus. For Leaney, Luke is not a 'scientific' historian in the true sense of the word; rather, he writes as one for whom Christ alone makes history intelligible.

On the other hand, Marshall (1970:53-54) feels it can be protested that it is wrong to assess an ancient historian by the standards of contemporary history. Then, there were different standards of accuracy and there was a different outlook on the work. It would be wrong to expect an ancient historian to measure up to the standards of a later period. Marshall argues that the better comparison would be with his contemporaries. In that case, we shall be able to see what kind of historian he was, so that we can arrive at a fair judgement.

For the moment, Marshall (1970:75) feels that a blanket condemnation of Luke as a historian of the early church, is uncalled for. Though Luke may have limitations as a historian if judged by modern standards, Marshall believes that it would

be unfair to suggest that Luke is a thoroughly tendentious and unreliable writer when it comes to the writing of the early church. Therefore, Marshall concludes that "while we do not wish to underestimate the strength of the case that has been brought against him, there is, in our judgment, sufficient evidence in his favour to demand a more positive evaluation of his historical reliability". Bock (1992:498) reminds us that Luke shows interest in both history and theology, that he writes as a theologian and a pastor who is, at the same time, directed by the history which preceded him. Therefore, to underemphasise any element in the Lucan enterprise, whether pastoral, theological or historical, would be to underestimate the depth of his writing. To reiterate Leaney's (1958:9) statement: Luke "writes as one for whom Christ makes history intelligible".

3.3.6 LUKE AS THEOLOGIAN-EVANGELIST

Luke has been described by various scholars of the New Testament as a writer who puts his focus on salvation. Lohse (1954:256) comments that Luke is truly the theologian of salvation history. Salvation is explained by Walters (1962:1126) in the following manner:

> (Salvation) means the action or result of deliverance or preservation from danger or disease, implying safety, health and prosperity. The movement in scripture is from the more physical aspects towards moral and spiritual deliverance. Thus, the earlier parts of the Old Testament lay stress on ways of escape for God's individual servants from the hands of their enemies, the emancipation of his people from bondage and their establishment in a land of plenty; the later parts lay greater emphasis upon the moral and religious conditions and qualities of blessedness and extend its amenities beyond the nation's confines. The New Testament indicates clearly man's thraldom to sin, its danger and potency, and deliverance from it to be found exclusively in Christ.

Based on this summary, (Marshall 1970:95) says that it emerges that the word 'salvation' had a wide range of meaning. In the gospels, a considerable number of occurrences of the verb *sozo* refer to healing from disease or to deliverance from other threats to life and safety. Thus, in Luke it is used in 6:9 (Mk 3:4) of the preservation of life, in 8:3b (Luke only; cf. Mark 5:23, 28) of the cure of a demoniac, in 8:48 (Mk 5:34); 17:19; 18:42 (Mk 10:52) of the healing of various afflictions, and in 8:50 (cf. Mk 5:23, 28) of the raising of Jairus' daughter; it is also used when the bystanders and the dying thief call on Jesus to display his power by saving himself from the death of the cross (Lk 23:35, 37, 39; cf. Mk 15:30f). In the book of Acts, the verb is used of healing in 4:9 and 14:9, and of rescue from mortal danger in Acts 27:20, 31. This leads Marshall to conclude that there is some link between healings wrought by Jesus and the spiritual salvation which he brought to humankind - a link which is not merely linguistically easy but has its deeper roots in the fact that, common to both sets of activity, is the power of God revealed in Jesus to faith. The power to heal and the authority to save, both reside in God.

Though Luke neatly traces the theme of salvation in his writings, some theologians criticise him for this. In the 1950's, when German theologians, namely Dibelius, Haenschen and Conzelmann began applying redaction-criticism to the writing of Luke, felt that Luke pursued his theological concerns at the expense of his historical reliability. Marshall (1970:18-19), who built on their work, while at the same time subjecting Luke's work to a rigorous critique, urges that we must not set Luke, the historian, and Luke, the theologian, in opposition to each other, for he was both and in fact, each emphasis requires the other.

Salvation is the central motif in Lucan theology (see Marshall 1970:85), both in the gospel, in which we see it accomplished, and in Acts, where it is proclaimed (see Stott 1990:30). Green (1965:125) also draws attention to this when he states, "It is hard to overestimate the importance of salvation in the writings of Luke." The theology of salvation in Luke's writings is already adumbrated in the 'Song of Simeon' or *Nunc Dimittis,* which he records in his gospel in which Simeon is quoted saying,

For my eyes have seen your salvation
which you have prepared in the
sight of all people,
a light for revelation to
the Gentiles
and for glory to your people
Israel (Lk 2:30-31)

Stott (1990:31) also directs our attention to the fact that Luke, the theologian, is essentially the evangelist, for he proclaims the gospel of salvation from God in Christ for all people, hence, the inclusion in Acts of so many sermons and addresses, especially by Peter and Paul. In so doing, Luke not only shows them preaching to their original hearers, but also enables them to preach to us who, centuries later, listen to them. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter said that the promise of salvation is for us too, and for every generation, indeed "for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39).

3.4 SPECIAL INTERESTS OF LUKE

3.4.1 THE POOR

In the reading of Luke, there appears to be a focus on the poor and those who are marginalised. The beneficiaries of salvation are the outcasts: the poor, sinners and tax collectors. The poor in Luke are materially and spiritually poor (see Bock 1992:506). Already in the *Magnificat* (Lk 1:53), we read, "(God) has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty". Bosch (1991:98) shows that this sentiment is sustained by the gospel. The beatitude of the poor and the parallel woe-saying on the rich (6:20, 24), the parable of the rich fool (12:16-21), the story of the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31), the exemplary conduct of Zaccheus, the chief tax-collector of Jericho (19:1-10), serve to illustrate the message contained in the *Magnificat*.

The term *ptochos* ("poor") occurs ten times in Luke, compared to five times each in Mark and Matthew. In recent years much has been written in an endeavour to identify the poor to whom Luke refers. Particularly the difference between

Matthew's and Luke's first beatitude (Mt 5:3 - "Blessed are the poor in spirit"; Lk 6:20 - "Blessed are the poor") has attracted scholars and ordinary readers of the Bible alike. The Matthean version may be understood only in a spiritual sense but in Luke such a spiritualisation is "still more unwarranted" (Bosch 1991:99). But there is also no doubt that in Luke's idea of the poor, those that are devout, the humble and those who live in utter dependence on God (cf. Pobee 1987:18-20), are not excluded from the categorisation of the poor. Bock (1992:506) is of the opinion that sinners should be included in this category of the poor (cf. Lk 5:27-32; 7:28, 30, 34, 36-50; 15:1-2; 19:7). Bosch (1991:99) maintains that poverty is a social category in Luke, although it certainly has other undertones as well.

3.4.2 WOMEN

Seim (1994:3) maintains that it is a statistical fact that, compared with the other New Testament writings, the gospel of Luke contains more material about women. As many as forty-two passages in Luke are concerned with women or with female motifs (cf. Neyrey 1985:108f). But it is not only the responsiveness of women (7:36-50; 8:1-3; 8:48; 10:38-42; 13:10-17; 24:1-12) that Luke is interested in; often it is a widow who is cited since she represented the most vulnerable status within society (Bock 1992:506; see Lk 2:37; 4:25-26; 7:12; 18:3, 5; 20:47; 21:2-3). Whether in parable or by example, these women show that they are sensitive to the message of Jesus. Though on the periphery of first-century society, they are in the middle of Luke's story. Bock (1992:506) also points out that the fact that women are often paired with men (2:25-28; 4:25-27; 8:40-56; 11:31-32; 13:18-21; 15:4-10; 17:34-35; Acts 21:9-10), suggests that the gospel is for both genders, as well as all races and social strata (see also Bosch 1991:98-103).

In comparison with the other gospels, Luke's special interest in women cannot be overemphasised (see Freed 1991:146). In contrast to Matthew's account, where Joseph is the focus of attention in the birth narrative, Mary is much more prominent in Luke. The angelic salutation to Mary: "Greetings, you who are highly favoured" (Lk 1:28), is remarkable, especially if viewed against the backdrop of the oppression of women in the socio-cultural setting of the first-century

world. Only Luke has the story of Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, and Anna, the prophetess (2:36-38).

In Acts, women play a prominent part in the church. The disciples "devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus" (1:14). Luke also mentions "devout women of high standing" (13:50), Sapphira along with her husband, who was a member of an early Christian commune sharing rights and responsibilities (see Freed 1991:146). Other women specifically mentioned include Tabitha (Dorcas), "full of good works and acts of charity" (9:36-41); Mary, mother of John Mark, in whose house people worshipped (12:12); Lydia, "a worshipper of God", who became a Christian (16:14-15, 40); and Priscilla who, with her husband, became a leader in the church at Ephesus (18:1-3; 18-21, 26). Luke also includes women in his summaries of the growth of the church (5:14; 8:3, 12; 9:2; 17:2, 34; 22:4). In her work, based on the socio-historical setting and written from a feminist liberation theological perspective, Reimer (1995) gives a vibrant historical presentation of the women in Acts. Her investigation shows how dominant New Testament exegesis has neglected the question of women's "material" work. Reimer (1995:xx) is of the impression that women were constantly shoved into the "sacred" niche in the patriarchal family. She concludes that this not only ignores the fact that women worked hard then, just as they do today, but that it also sharply limits the history of women. Though Luke mentions women in Acts, there can be no denial that the proportion of material in Acts relating to women is much smaller than in the gospel (see Seim 1994:3). Relatively fewer examples of women occur, and those who are mentioned are given little space and attention. But as compared with the rest of the New Testament authors, Luke does give a better profile of women in the ancient world (cf. Koperski 1999:517f).

3.4.3 THE UNIVERSALITY OF LUKE'S MESSAGE

Luke views Jesus' work in a perspective that includes all humankind (see Knight 1998:173). So he deliberately sets his narrative in the framework of world history (Du Plessis 1983:148) by stating who the emperors and governors were at the time of Jesus' birth and when he began with his ministry (Lk 2:1f; 3:1). This universalism emerges clearly, *inter alia*, in the words of the veteran Simeon:

For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the
sight of all people,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel
(Lk 2:31-32)

In order to draw attention away from the Palestinian setting in his gospel and to stress the universal significance of Jesus' teaching, Luke sometimes omits references to specific locations (see Freed 1991:146). For example, by not mentioning Caesarea Philippi (Lk 9:18; see also Mk 8:27; 16:13) as a place of Peter's confession - "The Christ of God" - Luke implies that the confession of Jesus as the Christ can take place anywhere.

On the other hand, Samaria, not mentioned in Mark or Matthew, is mentioned in Acts, where it is referred to in connection with the growth of the church (8:1-17; 15:3), as well as in Luke 17:11-19. Although Mark does not mention Samaritans and Matthew does so only to say that their cities are to be avoided in the disciples' mission (Mt 10:5), Luke has a special interest in Samaritans. Jesus and his disciples go through Samaria on their way to Jerusalem. When some Samaritans will not receive Jesus, James and John want to "bid fire come down from heaven and consume them" (Lk 9:51-55). It is only Luke that has the parable of the good Samaritan (10:29-37) and the healing of the Samaritan leper (17:11-19). All this affirms Luke's view of the new inbreaking of divine salvific activity into human history which includes the extension of salvation to persons outside God's chosen people of old (see Fitzmeyer 1981:187).

3.4.4 THE HOLY SPIRIT

As if it were a forgotten factor, LaVerdiere and Thompson (1976:567f) remind us that the Holy Spirit is prominent in both Luke and Acts. To a very real extent, then, Luke unites the time of Jesus and the time of the church in one era of the Spirit (Bosch 1991:87). Fitzmeyer (1999:165) states that in any discussion about the unity of the Lucan gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, the role of the Holy Spirit is an important element. In another publication, Fitzmeyer (1981:227) re-

iterates that no adequate description of Lucan Christology or soteriology is possible without a discussion of the role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts (see also Du Plessis 1983:148; Bovon 1987:202).

Other New Testament writers have described the work of the Spirit in the early Christian community, but the unique character of the Lucan writings, which comprise almost a quarter of the New Testament, is seen partly in the way the Spirit is depicted both in the third gospel and in the sequel to the Jesus story that only Luke, among the evangelists, has bequeathed to us in the Acts of the Apostles. Although Mark uses the word "spirit" nineteen times; Matthew, fourteen as often as Luke, Luke uses "Holy Spirit" fourteen times more than Mark (four) and Matthew (five) together (see Freed 1991:165).

From the beginning of Luke to the end of Acts, the Spirit is the motivating force behind the main characters. In Luke, Zechariah (1:67), John the Baptist (1:15), Elizabeth (1:41), Mary (1:35), and Simeon (2:25-27) are portrayed as motivated by the Spirit. After his baptism, Jesus is "full of the Holy Spirit" (4:1), and returns "in the power of the Spirit into Galilee" (4:14). Luke prefaces Jesus' gratitude to the Father in Q (Mt 11:25-27) with the words "he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit" (10:21-22). Also in Q, the statement of Matthew 7:11 that God will "give good things to those who ask him", in Luke is "give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" (11:13). In Acts, the church begins with the outpouring of the Spirit as prophesied by Joel so that Christians who are assembled are "all filled with the Holy Spirit" (2:4-21). The Spirit is a motivating power behind the apostolic mission and is responsible for the growth of the church (9:31). Acts closes with a reminder from Paul that "the Holy Spirit was right in saying ... through Isaiah" that the Jews would reject the "salvation of God", which "has been sent to the Gentiles" (28:25-29).

When we return to the life of Jesus, it is doubtless that Jesus is "a bearer of the Spirit" (Conzelmann 1960:180). In Luke's writings, the Spirit is considered as to be the essential presupposition for the special messianic ministry (cf. Acts 10:38). According to Guthrie (1981:514f), many major events in the life of Jesus are specifically connected with the activity of the Spirit, for example, the prophecy of

his coming (Lk 3:15f), the virgin birth (Lk 1:35), baptism (Lk 3:22) and the temptation (Lk 4:1).

Conzelmann (1960:180) argues that, in the description of Jesus as bearer of the Spirit, there is implied his relation to the powers of the world. As far as Conzelmann is concerned, it is not accidental that it is in the story of the temptation that Luke emphasises the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit. It is in the encounter with Satan that the endowment with the Spirit is made manifest, and Satan has to yield. Guthrie (1981:519-520) says that the Spirit played a critical role in the exorcism of demons in the mission of Jesus. Since the whole operation is centred in the world of spirits, it is natural to find the Holy Spirit as the agent for casting out evil spirits. In Guthrie's opinion, the many exorcisms in the gospels act as a reminder of the spiritual conflict into which Jesus was plunged. The role of the Spirit in exorcism is clearly illustrated in Jesus' statement: "If it is by the Spirit (par. Lk 11:20 - "finger") of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Mt 12:28).

On the whole, the Spirit is the inaugurator and the motivating force behind the public ministry of Jesus. In the programmatic scene in the Nazareth synagogue, Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me ... to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour ... [to] preach the good news of the kingdom" (Lk 4:18, 19, 43), and this becomes the very purpose for which he has been sent (see Russel 1986:47-63; Fitzmeyer 1999:172).

3.4.5 PRAYER

Closely related to the preceding is Luke's stress on the significance of prayer; this applies both to Jesus himself and to his disciples (see Phil-Hyun 1999; Plymale 1991; Freed 1991:147; Du Plessis 1983:149). Luke has nine references to Jesus at prayer, seven of them peculiar to his gospel. Luke connects these occasions with particular turning points or events in the life of Jesus: at his baptism (3:21), at the time he chose the Twelve (6:12), before Peter's confession (9:18), at the transfiguration (9:28f), when the Seventy returned (10:21), prior to teaching the disciples the Lord's prayer (11:1), in Gethsemane (22:39-46), and crucifixion (23:34, 46) - but also in the normal course of his ministry (5:16). Luke is the only

evangelist to record two parables in connection with prayer, namely, the friend at midnight (11:5ff) and the unrighteous judge (18:1-8), and to include the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector praying in the temple (18:9-14). Again, it is Luke alone who has Jesus tell Peter of his prayer for him (22:32) and urge the disciples in Gethsemane to pray (22:40). He also mentions the congregation at prayer (1:10).

In his second volume, Luke uses the sanctioning power of prayer to affirm that the early church continued the ministry of Jesus, working as instruments of God to accomplish divine purposes (Plymale 1991:75). The prayer texts reveal that the leaders of the church possessed a God-given authority necessary to lead it in its monumental task in which members of the community of the faithful were empowered by God to face overwhelming opposition and carry out the mission of proclaiming the divine plan of salvation. Haenchen (1971:103-104) uses prayer at the election of Matthias (Acts 1:24-25) as an example of Luke's vivid and dramatising style, designed to present his understanding of the history and importance of the church so as to edify the church in his own day. The prayer offered by the Christian community upon the release of Peter and John (Acts 4:24-30) comes at the conclusion of the post-Pentecostal story, which begins in 3:1 with Peter and John going up to the Temple, presumably for prayer, since it was the "hour of prayer".

In the line of prayer texts in his writings, Luke concludes by citing Stephen's death prayers: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59) and "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (7:60). After saying the words of the first prayer, Stephen, while being stoned by an angry mob, knelt down and cried the second prayer in a loud voice. Following these prayers, Stephen died. Concerning the second prayer, Bruce (1951:180) remarks, "An unexpectedly beautiful word for so brutal a death". Stephen, a man filled with the Holy Spirit, died a horrible death of dignity and hope, uttering a prayer of forgiveness for his persecutors.

Luke also shows that Christians in Acts, pray at critical moments. After Jesus' ascension, the disciples, including women, "all joined constantly in prayer" (1:14). Christians also pray for receiving the Holy Spirit (8:15), before sending out apostolic missionaries (13:1-4; see also 14:23), and before receiving visions from

heaven (10:1-16; 11:5). Even the sailors taking Paul to Rome pray "for day to come" when they think they "might run on the rocks" (27:29). So, through these scriptures in Luke's writings, we can observe the thematic concern of prayer in Luke's theology.

3.4.6 JOY

Luke frequently uses words to express joy, as well as a large number of semantically related terms (see Du Plessis 1983:149). Luke begins and ends his gospel on a note of joy (1:47; 24:52f). In between, there are phrases expressing joy: people who leap for joy (6:23), laughter (6:21), merriment (15:23), and rejoicing over the recovery of what had been lost (15:6, 9, 23, 32). Again, it is only Luke who records the beautiful canticles that are best known by their initial Latin words: *Magnificat* (1:46-55), *Benedictus* (1:68-79), *Gloria in excelsis* (2:14) *and Nunc Dimittis* (2:29-32). In Acts, after receiving healing, the crippled beggar "went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God" (3:8) - generally a sign of joy and thankfulness.

3.4.7 CONCLUSIONS

Luke, to a large extent, seems to pick some important themes which otherwise do not feature prominently in the other gospels. By letting the spotlight fall on the socially disadvantaged, the poor and women, Luke gives modern believers, especially those in Africa, a glimpse of the social ills in the first-century Mediterranean world and how those on the periphery of society came to joyfully share in God's gifts of salvation and the Holy Spirit.

3.5 THE THEOLOGY OF LUKE-ACTS

3.5.1 THE PLAN OF GOD

According to Caird (1994:28), Luke has provided us with "the fullest, most explicit and most consistent answer to the question of God's plan". In support of this view, Squires (1993:1) agrees that the plan of God is distinctively a Lucan

theme which undergirds the whole of Luke-Acts, becoming especially prominent in the speeches of Acts.

In his gospel, Luke first presents this distinctive theme where he links the plan of God with accepting the baptism of John, which the people and the tax collectors did (Lk 7:29), thereby 'justifying God', and in contrast to the Pharisees and the lawyers, who rejected such a baptism (Lk 7:30). In the first major speech reported in Acts, Peter claims that Jesus' crucifixion occurred as part of God's "definite plan and knowledge" (Acts 2:23), and the early Christians acknowledged to God that the plot against Jesus which led to his death was "whatever thy hand and thy plan had destined to take place" (Acts 4:28). When the apostles came before the Sanhedrin, the Pharisee, Gamaliel, asks a rhetorical question as to whether this plan is really of men (Acts 5:38) or of God (5:39), implying the latter (see Squires 1993:2). Paul also knew of the overarching plan of God. In his first reported sermon, he says that David carried out the plan of God in his life (Acts 13:36). In his farewell speech to the Ephesian elders, Paul declares, "I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole plan of God" (Acts 20:27). The major elements of the plan are the career of Jesus, the hope of the spiritually humble and needy, the offer of God's blessings, the coming of the new era, along with the suffering which comes to Jesus, and the division which comes to Israel (see Bock 1992:502).

Supporting the theme of God's plan is the note of promise and fulfilment running throughout the gospel and Acts, especially as it relates to scripture (cf. Bock 1994:91). The Lucan prologue clearly speaks of fulfilment in the first verse of his gospel. Luke describes Jesus' activities as events "fulfilled among us". The prologue to Acts speaks of the completion of God's plan in terms of times and seasons, a phrase that indicates a set schedule (Acts 1:6-7). Verses 4-5 repeat the reference to the coming of "the gift my Father promised", that is, the Holy Spirit, a promise introduced in Luke 24:49. So both prologues discuss the same theme. The phrase: "the gift my Father promised", links the closing chapter of Luke's gospel with the opening chapter of Acts (Lk 24:49 with Acts 1:4-5).

The appeal to the Old Testament concentrates on three areas: Christology, Israelite rejection and Gentile inclusion, and justice at the end. The warnings to heed

the prophets are a recognition that irreversible authority resides in the message about Jesus. The prophets are to be believed (Lk 16:31; Acts 3:22-26; 13:27, 32, 40-41; 26:27). At the centre of this message from the Old Testament was Christology, as Luke 24:44-47 reveals. This Christological emphasis also permeates the infancy material. John the Baptist is the forerunner, as Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6 promised (Lk 1:14-17). Jesus is the promised son of David, the Son of God who will rule over Israel forever (Lk 1:31-35). God's accomplishment of this plan reflects his mercy promised to Abraham and to the fathers (Lk 1:46-55). The promise also pervades the end of Acts. Christ's death and resurrection and the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles were predicted of Moses and the prophets (Acts 26:22-23). Moses and the prophets also testified to Jesus and the kingdom (Acts 28:23). "The Way", as Christianity is called in Acts, is in accordance with the Law and the Prophets (Acts 24:14).

There are numerous Lucan texts which also speak of Israelite rejection and Gentile inclusion. Luke's quotation of Isaiah 40 stresses the theme of the appearance of salvation before all flesh (Lk 3:4-6). Other Lucan texts recall that Israel had earlier responded with unfaithfulness (Lk 11:49-51; 13:31-35; Acts 3:23; 7:51-53; 28:25-28).

The reality of judgement at the end is emphasised in the Old Testament allusions to the eschatological discourses of Luke 17:20-37 and 21:5-38. In addition, the apostles stressed the reality of the coming judgement (Acts 2:38-40; 17:26-31). The God of design and concern has carried out his plan in Christ Jesus and through him in the church.

Themes that reveal the outworking of the plan of God are also discernible in other scripture verses in Luke-Acts. The "today" passages show the availability of promise (Lk 2:11; 4:21; 5:26; 13:32-33; 19:5, 9; 19:42; 23:42-43). John the Baptist is the bridge stretching between the old era of promise and the new era of inauguration (Lk 1-2; esp. 1:76-79; 3:4-6; 7:24-35; 16:16). The era of promise-expectation followed by the era of inauguration is illustrated in clear terms in Luke 7 where John the Baptist represents the greatest prophet of the old era (7:27). Nonetheless, the new era is so great that the lowest member of the kingdom is higher than the greatest prophet of the old (7:28).

Other elements of the plan are seen in Jesus' mission statements where he outlines his task. These statements represent Jesus' timeless mission. They describe what he was called to do in his life and what those who followed his message are called to proclaim in his name. The statements represent why he came and why he was raised. Referring to Isaiah 61:1, Jesus said of his mission:

> The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
> because he has anointed me
> to preach good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim freedom
> for the prisoners
> and recovery of sight for the blind
> to release the oppressed,
> to proclaim the year of the Lord's
> favour (Lk 4:18-19).

Bosch (1991:100) comments that these words contain a programmatic statement concerning the mission of Jesus in which he reverses the destiny of the poor. Bosch says that they are "a sort of manifesto" of Jesus. Against the strong inclination to interpret this text in spiritualistic terms, Yoder (1972:34) argues that this passage, quoted from Isaiah, is not only a most explicitly messianic one: it is one which states the messianic expectation in the most expressly social terms. In this text, Jesus appealed to the Old Testament year of Jubilee (see Bock 1994:93). Lebacqz (1987:123) interprets the Jubilee as depicting a time of emancipation and of returning to ancestral lands. Families long divided because of misfortune and debt will be reunited on their tribal lands. The good news is that they will be able to begin again. Sider (1990:80) believes that the Jubilee prescribes justice and not a haphazard handout by wealthy Israelite philanthropists. Bock (1994:93) says that like the Jubilee, the period of Jesus' messianic ministry signalled a time in which people could be graciously released from debts and the burden of sin (cf. Lv 25:1-12; Dt 15:2-23; Ps 82:1-2; Isa 52:7). And as part of those in need, Jesus was commissioned to heal those that were sick (Lk 5:30-32) and demonised. The mandate is conveyed to the representatives of Christ (Lk 10:1-23; esp. 17-20; cf. Acts 10:36-43).

The geographic progression also reveals the movement's growth under the plan. The basic outline of the gospel from Galilee to Jerusalem (Lk 4:14-15; 9:51) shows this growth, as does the necessity of Paul's going to Rome in Acts (1:8; 19:21; 23:11). Perhaps no theme underscores divine design more than the Lucan "it is necessary" *(dei)* theme. This Greek word is used 99 times in the New Testament, of which 40 are in Luke-Acts. The references cover a wide variety of topics. Christ *must* be in the Father's house (Lk 2:49). He *must* preach the kingdom (4:43). He *must* heal women tormented by Satan (13:16). In looking at events associated with his death or his return, certain things must precede the end (21:9). The Passover lamb must be sacrificed, as Jesus and his disciples gathered for a final meal (22:7; see Neyrey 1985:8f). The Son of Man or the Christ *must* suffer, perish in Jerusalem, and be raised (9:22; 13:33; 17:25; 24:7, 26; Acts 17:3). The scriptures *must* be fulfilled in that Jesus *must* be numbered with transgressors (Lk 22:37, quoting Isa 53:12), and certain events predicted of Christ *must* occur (Lk 24:44). Judas' fall was a *necessity* according to Acts 1:16. The gospel *must* go to the Gentiles after the Jews rejected it (Acts 13:46). Entrance into the kingdom to come *must* come through trials (Acts 14:22). Christ *must* remain in heaven till the appropriate time (Acts 3:21). Paul *must* suffer for Jesus' name sake (Acts 9:6, 16). He *must* stand trial before Caesar (Acts 25:10; 27:24), and he *must* go to Rome (Acts 19:21) where he *must* witness (23:11). Much in God's plan was carried out by commissioned agents, some of whom knew what they should do (see Bock 1994:94).

3.5.2 CHRISTOLOGY

Anyone familiar with the history of Christian theology, is supposed to be more or less conversant with the fact that sincere and faithful believers have held different and conflicting views about the person and significance of Jesus Christ. From the great Christological debates of the patristic era to the contemporary discussion about the historical Jesus (cf. Focant 1999:563f), Christians have understood Jesus Christ in diverse ways (see Matera 1999:1). Berkouwer (1954:13) points out that during Christ's sojourn on earth, widely divergent ideas of him were already current (see also Cullmann 1963:1f). This is seen partly in Christ's question to his disciples: "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" (Mt 16:13).

In trying to answer this question from a Latin American perspective, Sobrino (1978:xv-xvi) says that, frequently, Christ has been reduced to a sublime abstraction. He argues that "the bad feature of this abstractness is seen in practice, where a separation is introduced between the total or whole Christ on the one hand and the concrete history of Jesus on the other". Sobrino concludes, therefore, that this opens the way for the theoretical possibility of an alienating comprehension of Christ. Sobrino's comment is, among other things, possibly a reaction to a one-sided understanding of the person and mission of Christ (see also Bosch 1980:202f; Khathide 1999a:39; Costas 1974:313). In the African context, the holistic understanding of Christ is more urgent because, "to an African there is no dichotomy between the sacred and the secular" (Adeyemo 1979:97). In support of this reality, Oduyoye (1979:11) explains that in Africa, spiritual needs are as important for the body as bodily needs are for the soul. In seeking a relevant Christology in Africa, we need to be aware of the African worldview in which the world is believed to be inhabited by beings both invisible and visible, and by inanimate objects all of which exist in a balance of relationships within the context of the natural rhythm and cycle of life (see Mugambi 1989:56). Any inquiry into the Christology of Luke-Acts within the African context needs to take cognisance of these different realities of the African, otherwise it would become a sublime abstraction, as stated by Sobrino.

In search of the Christology of Luke-Acts, we encounter one major difficulty in that Luke is not directly accessible to us (Tuckett 1999:134). Luke also never writes an essay or a doctrinal treatise on his own understanding of the person of Jesus. Different scholars, though, have attempted to discover the meaning of Christology in Luke-Acts. The last few years have seen four major full-length monographs on Lucan Christology, namely, Doble (1996), Strauss (1995), Buckwalter (1996) and Fletcher-Louis (1997). Another notable work is that of Bock (1987) who, by using redaction-critical means, assesses afresh Luke's use of the Old Testament in the service of his Christology.

Though the Christology of Luke-Acts may be a disputed terrain, with some saying that the titles (e.g. Saviour, Christ, Son of David, Son of God, Son of Man, Prophet, etc.), which were applied to Jesus may not have been univocal in meaning within either Judaism or Greco-Roman thinking at the time, Tuckett (1999:139)

maintains that, in looking for a Christology of Luke-Acts, one cannot ignore the more traditional approach entirely. According to him, the fact remains that certain key "titles" or terms were used by early Christians to refer to Jesus in a potentially significant way which means that these terms so provide an important part of the evidence for seeking to uncover Christological ideas of early Christians. Although Jesus was reluctant to call himself certain titles (see Schweizer 1982:82), except possibly "Son of Man", there is little doubt that the early church, in the usage of titles, preferred to formulate its understanding of the person and mission of Christ, albeit in a less theologically structured manner.

According to Fitzmeyer (1981:196), there are four phases of Christ's existence in Lucan Christology. The first begins with his virginal conception and continues until his appearance in the desert to be baptised. The second begins with his baptism and continues through the Period of Jesus until his ascension. The third begins with his ascension and continues until the *parousia*. The fourth is the *parousia* itself. Bock (1994:102; 1992:503) sees a study of Lucan Christology as indicating that Luke consciously revealed who Jesus is with a step-by-step approach starting from Messiah-Servant-Prophet to Lord. In this position, Bock is opposed by other scholars like Evans (1990) who say Luke's Christology is more of a patchwork than a unified whole; it is a collection of a variety of traditions.

In Lucan Christology, we discover that Jesus is the key figure in salvation-history, for he is the one in whom God's activity in human history is manifested (see Conzelmann 1960:170f; Fitzmeyer 1981:192). Luke depicts Jesus as a Palestinian Jew, born in Bethlehem (2:6-7; cf. Du Plessis 1983:190), of Davidic lineage (1:27; 2:4; 3:31; a "regal figure" - Bock 1992:503), raised in Nazareth (4:16). Luke speaks of Christ as "a man attested to you by God with mighty deeds, wonders, and signs which God did through him in your midst" (Acts 2:22). In Luke's portrait of Jesus, we see a man of genial ways, a man with a great concern and love for other people. Despite his tendency to suppress the marks of human emotion that are found in the Marcan narrative, Luke has depicted him with notably human qualities. But Luke also affirms certain things about Jesus that transcend his human condition, which among others include (i) Jesus' virginal conception through the power of the Holy Spirit (1:34-35); (ii)

Jesus' unique Spirit-guided ministry (3:22; 4:1, 14, 18; 10:21; Acts 10:38); (iii) Jesus' special relation to his heavenly Father (2:49; 3:22; 9:35; 10:21-22; 23:46); (iv) Jesus' resurrection from the dead (Lk 24:6a; Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 37; 26:23) and (v) Jesus' ascension (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9) or exaltation to the Father's right hand (Acts 2:33; 5:31).

Despite reservation by some scholars, we need to return to several titles used for Jesus in Luke-Acts. Fitzmeyer (1981:197), in reference to the Christological titles, says that we need to be aware that in the Lucan writings, the titles are more expressive of soteriology than of Christology. He also points out that in a study of Christological titles used in the New Testament, one has to discuss three aspects of them: the background or origin of the title (Palestinian, Judaism or Hellenistic world?), its meaning and its application. Though such a detailed approach is an interesting and worthwhile exercise, it falls beyond the scope of the current study.

The title of *Messiah* or *Christ (christos)*, though not the most frequently used title for Jesus in the Lucan writings, has to be regarded as the most important (cf. Mainville 1999:313f). This emerges from the question that the Lucan Jesus poses to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, "Was not the Messiah bound to suffer all this before entering into his glory?" (24:26). Moreover, only Luke in the New Testament implies the importance by telling us the name "Christians", by which the disciples came to be known (Acts 11:26; 26:28). The title "Christ", refers to Jesus as the promised Anointed One ("Messiah" in Hebrew means "Anointed One"; see *Ps Sol. 17:32; 1 Enoch 48:10; 52:4; 2 Esdras 12:32; 1QS 9:11*).

A key usage of the word "Christ", unique to Luke, occurs in Luke 4:41. Demons confessed that Jesus is the Son of God, then Luke explains that they "knew that he was the Christ". In this way, Luke shows Jesus' sonship is linked to the promise of the Messiah (Bock 1994:106). "Christ" was also the title used by Peter in his confession (9:20). The issue of Jesus' identity as Christ was a key contention at Jesus' trial (22:67). The issue of Jesus as Christ, the king, continued to be central in his movement toward crucifixion (23:2, 35, 39). In reflecting on the resurrection, Luke makes the point that Christ's suffering was necessary and was foretold. In the book of Acts, a number of things are said to happen "in the

name of Christ": baptism (2:38), salvation (4:10, healing (9:34), peace (10:36), baptism of the Spirit (10:48), risking of life (15:26) and exorcism (16:18).

In discussing salvation-history, it is notable that a distinctive Lucan title for Jesus is *Saviour* (*soter*). John also uses it (4:42), but among the synoptics it is found exclusively in the third gospel. It appears in the infancy summary in Luke 2:11 when the angel announced Jesus' birth: He is Saviour, Messiah and Lord. The title occurs again in Acts 5:31, when Peter and the apostles rebut the accusations of the Sanhedrin by declaring that God raised Jesus to his right hand "as Leader and Saviour". Jesus is presented as the Saviour of Israel who is exalted to the right hand of God to give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel (Acts 13:23-25). The title "Saviour", has an Old Testament background, since it is used there for both individuals whom God raises up for the deliverance of his people (Judg 3:9, 15) and of God himself in that capacity (1 Sam 10:19; Isa 45:15, 21); and *soter* appears in the corresponding passages in the LXX (see LXX *Wisd. 16:7; 1 Macc. 4:30; Sir. 51; Ps. Sol. 3:6; 8:33; 16:4* - all used of God).

The title most often applied to Jesus in Luke-Acts is *Lord (kyrios)* - almost twice as many times as Christ. It is used for both Yahweh and Jesus. In the angels' announcement to the shepherds of Bethlehem, he is identified, among other things, as "Lord" (Lk 2:11). Elizabeth is made to refer to Mary as "the mother of my Lord" (1:43) whereas Mary is calling herself the "handmaid of my Lord" (1:38), referring to Yahweh with this title. Fitzmeyer (1981:203) believes that the sense of Lordship that *kyrios* 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. Conzelmann (1960:171) cautions, though, that we should not read any cosmological reference into the title *kyrios*, such as there is, for example, in the hymn in Philippians 2:6f. Nevertheless, he agrees that it is true that Jesus is Lord over the evil spirits, over every power of the enemy, even in his lifetime (cf. Lk 10:18f). Cullmann (1963:234-235) is not persuaded that *kyrios,* as a title referring to Jesus, does not have a cosmological dimension, basing his argument on scriptures like Isaiah 45:23 ("To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" - a repeat of Phil 2:10f; cf. Ps 102:25; Heb 1:10f; Acts 10:36).

The title, *"Son of God"*, which became so important for later theology, is likewise used for Jesus in the Lucan writings. The title is used in Luke 1:35 in association with the virgin birth. It is also used by Satan at the temptations as the claimed title for Jesus ("If you are the Son of God" - 4:3, 9). A significant use of this title appears in 4:41, where it is linked to and explained by the title "Christ." Demons called Jesus the "Son of the Most High God" (8:28). The title seems predominant when spiritual beings are addressed (Bock 1994:108). The use acknowledges that Jesus possesses a high level of authority. The title, "Son of God", was a position in dispute at Jesus' trial, as seen in Luke 22:70. Acts 9:20 is the only place where the full title appears in Acts. It clearly describes the exalted Messiah who sits next to God the Father with total authority. As such, it is a title of high Christology (Bock 1994:108; cf. Tuckett 1999:149). The designation: "Son of God", does make the Father-Son relationship between God and Christ a special and quite a unique one (Cullmann 1963:270).

The key title that Jesus preferred to speak of himself is *Son of Man (ho huios tou anthropou)*. Late in the gospel (21:27), Jesus, by referring to "the Son of Man", alludes to the authoritative figure of Daniel 7:13-14, who received authority from the Ancient of Days over the kingdom. In Daniel, the term is not a title but a description, "one like a son of man", that is, a human. The title, "Son of Man", is prevalent in all three gospels. Though Mark emphasises the suffering Servant, Luke's treatment is divided between the uses that describe Jesus' current ministry, suffering and return.

A step in the process of development between Daniel and the New Testament, commentators have often referred to the individual use of the phrase in *I Enoch* (46:2-4; 48:2; 62:5-7; 13-14; 69:27-29). Here the phrase is applied to a mysterious hidden figure who is to be revealed; he is also called "the Elect One" (I Enoch 49:2-4; 61:8-9; 62:1), "the Righteous and Elect One" (53:6), "the Lord's Anointed" (48:10; 52:4), and "the Light of the Gentiles" (49:4; cf. Lk 2:32). Thus, it would seem that this is a transitional use, referring to an apocalyptic figure (see Fitzmeyer 1981:209).

In employing the title, "Son of Man", Luke uses it of Jesus' earthly ministry, in which it expresses his mortal condition (5:24; 6:5; 11:30; 12:10; 22:48, with a

connotation of dignity; in 6:22; 7:34; 9:58, with a connotation of service or lowliness). Luke also employs it in sayings that refer to Jesus' passion (9:22, 44; 18:31; 22:22; 24:7- in the announcements of the suffering that is awaited). The apocalyptic Son of Man is a figure with great authority who judges (9:26; 12:8, 40; 17:22, 24, 26, 30). Jesus asked whether the Son of Man will find faith on earth when he returns (18:8). Luke 21:27 notes Jesus will ride the clouds as he returns (cf. Dan 7:13-14), a figure of speech that was an Old Testament picture of deity (Ex 34:5; Nm 10:34; Ps 104:3). People are to watch so that they have the strength to stand before the Son in that day (Lk 21:36). When Stephen was martyred, he saw Jesus standing as the Son of Man to receive him. The Son of Man for Luke is a title that allowed Jesus to describe himself, since only he used the title. Included in the title is authority, rejection and reign (see Bock 1994:111).

Another primitive title that Luke has picked up from the gospel tradition, is *prophet (prophetes)*. Jesus is depicted using the title of himself (by implication at least) in the Nazareth synagogue: "No prophet is accepted in his own country", a saying based on Mark 6:4. The outstanding example of this rather submerged category is Luke 4:16-30. Here Jesus said he fulfilled Isaiah 61:1-2a, in which Isaiah described a prophet who would be anointed by God and would bring the message of hope to God's people (see Bosch 1991:108-112). However, Jesus is more than a prophet, for he brings the salvation he proclaims. Jesus' prophetic function receives confirmation in Luke 4:24 (par. Mk 6:4). In the same episode, he compares himself to Elijah and Elisha (Lk 4:25-27). Still later, he is explicitly recognised by the people as "a great prophet" (Lk 4:25-27). Still later, he is explicitly recognised by the people as "a great prophet" (Lk 7:16, in an episode exclusive to Luke), as "one of the prophets of old" (9:8, 19), and as "a prophet mighty in deed and word in the eyes of God and all the people", a confession attributed to Cleopas on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:19; cf. 7:39). Also, in a passage exclusive to Luke, Jesus refers to himself as a prophet and links his destiny in Jerusalem to this role: "It is impossible that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem" (13:13). Indeed, as that destiny begins to unfold itself, he is taunted by those who hold him in custody and have blindfolded him, "Now prophesy! Who was it that hit you?" (22:64). The prophetic description of Jesus received more emphasis in the Transfiguration. Luke 9:35 ("Listen to him") points to Jesus as the "prophet like Moses", by alluding to Deuteronomy 18:15. The

role is even more explicitly given to him in Peter's speech in the temple, where a form of Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19 is quoted (Acts 3:22-23), and again in Stephen's speech, where Deuteronomy 18:15 is cited (Acts 7:37). As a prophet, Jesus shared the fate of earlier prophets, namely, national rejection (Lk 13:13; 11:47-51; see Karris 1985:93).

There are also less frequently used titles in Lucan Christology. Luke presents Jesus as a *Servant,* a glorified one and not the suffering Servant. Jesus is God's Servant glorified (Acts 3:13) and exalted (v. 26). This is the emphasis in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. Peter spoke of Jesus as the *Prince* or *Leader (archegos*, Acts 5:31), an image that depicts a royal figure with authority who leads the way for his people in redeeming them. The redemptive emphasis is seen in its use alongside the title "Saviour" in the same verse. Jesus was called the *King (ho basileus)* at the time of his triumphal entry (Lk 19:38, which alludes to Ps 118:26). "King" is the title discussed in the legal proceedings surrounding Jesus' trial before Pilate (Lk 23:3 - "Are you the King of the Jews?") and in connection with his death (vv. 37-38). One of the thieves recognised he was dying with a king, for he asked to come into Jesus' kingdom (v. 42) and was promised paradise that day. Some Jews in Thessalonica accused Christians by saying the believers called Jesus a king (Acts 17:7). The demons confessed that Jesus is "the Holy One of God" *(ha hagious tou theou,* Lk 4:34). These spiritual beings were silenced by Jesus, who had authority over them (cf. Acts 3:14-15). The title of the *Son of David* occurs in Luke only in the episode of the healing of a blind man outside Jericho: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me" (Lk 18:38-39), and in the debate of Jesus with the scribes about how the Messiah could be called David's Son (20:41, 44). The title obviously related to Jesus' Messiaship. This relationship can be seen in *Ps. Sol.* 17:21 in a pre-Christian writing.

Jesus is called a *Judge* in Acts 10:42 and 17:31. Another title of respect is *Master,* used in Luke 5:5; 8:24, 45; 9:33, 49; 17:13. A centurion referred to Jesus' innocence by affirming that he was "a righteous *[dikaios]* man" (Lk 23:47). In Acts 4:11, Peter spoke of Jesus as the "rejected stone", an allusion to Psalm 118:22. Another title refers to Jesus' role as instructor. Twelve times he was called *Teacher (didaskalos*, Lk 7:40; 9:38; 10:25; 11:45; 12:13; 18:18; 19:39; 20:21, 28, 39; 21:7; 22:11) This title is the most popular title used by the Scribes and Pharisees

for Jesus. It described Jesus as a "rabbi". Although nowhere was Jesus directly called healer/exorcist, there is little doubt that Luke does put a strong emphasis on the miracles, healings (see Lindemann 1999:225f) and exorcisms carried out by Jesus (and his disciples) as signs of God's power and the ushering in of God's kingdom (see Tannehill 1986:89). Bock (1992:168) writes that, for Jesus ,

> his ministry of exorcism was not preparatory to the kingdom, nor a sign of the kingdom, nor an indication that the kingdom had arrived, nor even an illustration of the kingdom, but actually the kingdom of God itself in operation.

In summary, Luke used numerous titles to describe Jesus. Most suggested his authority or his role as the promised Messiah. In Lucan Christology, Jesus is at the centre of God's plan. He is able to save and to bring wholeness to humankind and is worthy of people's trust. Therefore, because of who Jesus is, people are offered a divine opportunity to respond to him. For not only is Jesus prophet, Messiah, Saviour and Lord, but also he will return to judge all as they stand before him. In fact, even now he sits at the right hand of God exercising authority and distributing the benefits of salvation, even the Spirit of God, to those who call on him for salvation. It is significant that Luke, in his use of Christological titles, makes no distinction between the historical and the exalted Christ.

3.5.3 SOTERIOLOGY

Having sketched Luke's basic Christology, we turn to his view of the significance of Jesus' role in the Father's plan of salvation. From the foregoing it is clear that Luke has not written the story of Jesus just with an intention to explain his human condition or the history of the Christian church. Rather he has retold the story of Jesus with a definite Christological and soteriological intent: what Jesus did, said and suffered for had, and has, a significance and bearing on human history. Acts 4:12 makes that clear: "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among human beings by which we are saved".

Before we can go on to explain the Lucan concept of salvation, it is of importance that we discuss, albeit briefly, whether there is any saving significance in the death of Jesus in the Lucan writings. Conzelmann (1960:201), among others, says that in Luke's writings there is no trace of any passion mysticism, nor is any direct soteriological significance drawn from Jesus' suffering or death. Conzelmann further states that in Lucan Christology, "the idea of the cross plays no part in the proclamation" (ibid). Fitzmeyer (1981:219), in his response to Conzemann's view, argues that this is only true if one is looking for the Pauline way of expressing the significance of Jesus' death in the Lucan writings. Neyrey (1985:190) reminds us that many models of soteriology are operative in Luke-Acts as well as in the early church's preaching and therefore it would be a mistake to expect only one model, and a sacrificial or atonement model at that.

George (1973:186f) has gathered all the references to the death of Jesus in the Lucan writings, and the sum total of them makes a striking impression. It may be that they do not all underline the saving significance of it in a Pauline or Marcan way, but in the whole picture of the suffering Messiah, it is difficult not to see Luke's way of presenting that significance. Bock (1992:505) adds that though the cross is less important for Luke than for Paul, its significance moves beyond an ethical or historical function and occupies an important theological position in Luke's teaching. Jesus, as seen in Luke 22-23, is the righteous sufferer. But two texts cast light on the meaning of his death. Luke 22:20 makes it clear that Jesus' death inaugurates the new covenant with God, while Acts 20:28 argues that the church was, in Paul's words, "purchased" with Jesus' blood. Covenant inauguration and a soteriological transaction take place in Jesus' death. Though Luke, for some inscrutable reason, omits the Marcan saying about the Son of Man who had to give his life as a ransom for many (Mk 10:45), he is the only synoptist who has preserved the words pronounced over the bread at the Last Supper as, "This is my body which is given for you" (Lk 22:19; cf.. 1 Cor. 11:24). Luke also depicts Jesus as a suffering Messiah: "Was not the Messiah bound to suffer all this before entering his glory?", "... the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead" (Lk 24:46; see Acts 3:18; 17:3; 26:23). Luke further depicts Jesus as the prophet who has to perish in Jerusalem (Lk 13:33), and Acts 13:28-30 clearly explains that what happened to him was divinely related to God's salvific plan. Fitzmeyer (1981:220) writes that "In other words, the Lucan 'necessity' involved

in the plan of salvation-history has a bearing on the death of Jesus". Both Bock (1992:505) and Karris (1985:80) agree that to view the death or the cross of Christ in Luke-Acts as an isolated event, is a mistake. Rather, it should be seen integrated as part of God's whole plan in Jesus Christ. George (1973:216-217), in reaction to the perception of the lack of the cross message in Luke, concludes, "In fact, Luke does not suppress the cross, nor its tragedy, nor its mystery, nor even at times its salvific role, nor the necessity for the disciple of Jesus to deny himself, to take up the cross, and follow the Master".

Having touched on Luke's soteriological understanding of the death of Christ, we now can move on to explain the meaning and effects of salvation in the Lucan Christology. Bosch (1991:104) states that "salvation", as well as its attendant ideas of repentance and forgiveness of sins, is central to Luke's two-volume work (see also Marshall 1970:159). The words *soteria* and *soterion* ("salvation") appear six times each in Luke and Acts, against no occurrences in Mark and Matthew, and only one in John . Four times, salvation is mentioned in Luke's infancy narrative. In two of these instances Luke uses the less common form *soterion* which, apart from Acts 28:28 (that is, at the very end of his two-volume work), occurs only in Ephesians 6:17. Bosch (1991:105) therefore concludes that, in a sense, then, Luke frames his entire corpus of writing with the idea of the salvation that has dawned in Christ. Among the synoptics, only Luke calls Jesus *Soter* ("Saviour"), once in the gospel (2:11), and twice in Acts (5:31; 13:23). Luke also gives prominence to *metonoia* (repentance) and the forgiveness of sins. This message of repentance and the forgiveness of sins reverberates in the missionary sermons in Acts (cf.. 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 10:43; 13:38; 17:30; 20:21; 26:18, 20). However, the message does not begin only in Acts. At the end of the gospel, the risen Jesus tells his disciples that, "in his name the message about repentance and forgiveness of sins must be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem" (Lk 24:47).

In the writings of Luke, those who repent and whose sins are forgiven, experience *soteria* (salvation). In the infancy narrative of Luke, *soteria* obviously has political undertones: God has raised up a "horn of salvation" for Israel (1:69); he has saved Israel from its enemies (1:71); and will give his people "the knowledge of salvation" (1:77). But it is also evident that the salvation that has come to

Zaccheus' house is not really political. In his case, as with the prodigal son, salvation means acceptance, fellowship and new life.

Whatever salvation is, according to Luke-Acts, it includes in every specific context "the total transformation of human life, forgiveness of sin, healing of infirmities, and release from any kind of bondage" (Bosch 1991:107; cf. Bock 1994:126; Fitzmeyer 1981:223; Marshall 1970:94f; Walters 1962:1126f). This comprehensive understanding of salvation is evident in both the gospel and Acts. It is centred in Jesus Christ. It is offered to all races (Acts 10-11). It is at the centre of the apostolic message. But it does not have only a vertical, individualistic dimension. It involves the reversal of all the evil consequences of sin, against both God and neighbour (Bosch 1991:107). And if Fitzmeyer's (1981:223) statement is valid, which in my view it sufficiently is, that the image being used in *aphesis hamartion* (the forgiveness of sins) is derived from an economic and social background in antiquity, either from the remission of debts or punishment or from the release from captivity or imprisonment (cf. *4QMess ar*), then salvation, according to Bock (1994:127), must impact the human structures (cf. Lk 1:68-79). Salvation, in Luke-Acts, denotes deliverance of human beings in all spheres, whether they be evil, spiritual, moral, political or cataclysmic. It connotes a victory of them from a state of negation, and a restoration to wholeness or integrity in Jesus Christ (see Fitzmeyer 1981:222) that comes from the act of faith.

Luke does not only just explain the meaning of salvation but he also gives the benefits thereof. The first is forgiveness *(aphesis)*. In Luke, the knowledge of forgiveness is available through the preaching of the "prophet of the Most High", namely, John the Baptist (Lk 1:76-77), who in turn pointed the way to the Davidic "horn" (v. 69) who will bring salvation to the nation of Israel (v. 68) and light to all those who sit in darkness (v. 79). To the synagogue crowd, Jesus proclaimed a release *(aphesin)* for the captives and liberty for those who are oppressed (Lk 4:18). Here the words of Jesus harked back to the imagery in Isaiah 61:1 and 58:6 (see Bosch 1991:101, 109; Bock 1994:135). This "serious exodus" imagery, as Jesus announced in the synagogue, pictured God's people released from enemies, which included Satan and sin, as Jesus' later mission made clear (Lk 10:9, 18; 11:20-23; 22:20). Luke 24:47 summarises the disciples' message, a message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins. The Acts passages are all

familiar summary passages. In Acts 2:38, forgiveness is related to repentance and pictured in baptism; in 5:31, forgiveness is available to Israel; in 10:43, forgiveness is based on faith; in 13:38-39, forgiveness is available through Jesus based on the faith that frees one from bondage, a freedom that the law could not provide; and in 26:18, those who turn from Satan to God receive his forgiveness.

Besides the presence of the indwelling Spirit (see Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17), Luke enumerated numerous benefits that come from salvation. The forgiveness of sins has already been mentioned. Another key benefit of salvation is life *(zoé)*. A scribe asked Jesus about inheriting eternal life (Lk 10:25), actually concerned about being assured of participating in the final resurrection (cf. Dan 12:3). Jesus replied that he should love God and his neighbour, a reply that well summarises the message of the law. To do this would bring life (Lk 10:28). A negative statement about life is given in Luke 12:15 where it is stated that life does not consist in one's possessions. The parable of the rich fool (Lk 12:16, 21) illustrates this truth and calls on the rich towards God (see Bosch 1991:99-103; Bock 1994:135). Another benefit of salvation in Lucan writings, is peace. Like a rising star, Jesus, as the promised one from the house of David (Lk 1:69), shines as light and reveals the way of peace (v. 79). A reconciled relationship between God and humanity as effected by Jesus the Saviour, Christ and Lord, brings peace to humankind of God's pleasure (2:14). The offer of peace is part of the kingdom message (10:5-6). In a counter note, Jesus denies that he has come to bring peace in a passage preserved from "Q". Fitzmeyer (1981:225) explains this note of discord or division as belonging to another theme in the Lucan gospel, foreshadowed already in the infancy narrative, when Simeon says of the child that he is set for the fall and the rise of many in Israel (2:34). Jesus denies that his coming brings peace because of the recognition that human beings will have to make a decision about him, either for or against him. Indeed, this division is precisely what did happen within many Jewish families, as verses 51-52 indicate. But, in the long run, those who accept him as an influence in their lives will experience that comprehensive peace which is the effect of the Christ-event itself (cf. Phil 4:7). Peter said his message was "the good news of peace through Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:36).

Luke also mentions other less frequently used modes of expressing the effects of the Christ-event in his writings. One of them is "justification", which Luke, surprisingly enough, uses in a speech of Paul in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch: "Be it known to you, therefore, brothers, that through him the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and [that] in all those things in which you could not be justified in Mosaic Law everyone who has faith is [now] justified through him" (Acts 13:38-39). This is the only time that Luke speaks of justification as an effect of the Christ-event, and he links it explicitly to his own more common notion of "the forgiveness of sins". He seems to be making known to his readers that he knows of Pauline justification (see Fitzmeyer 1981:226).

Another benefit of salvation mentioned by Luke, though used with some variation of force, is grace *(charis)*. Grace refers to unmerited favour, a gift one receives from God at the moment a person genuinely believes (Bock 1994:136). Mary was the object of God's favour as God prepared to use her as a vessel through whom Jesus would enter the world (Lk 1:30). In two verses that describe Jesus' growth (2:40, 52), grace, that is, God's favour, is said to rest on him. In Acts, grace rests on people and communities. Acts 4:33 speaks of grace resting on all believers. Stephen was full of grace (6:8), and Stephen spoke of God's favour on David (7:46). Paul and Barnabas had been committed to God's grace by the church at Antioch for their first missionary journey (14:26). Still, another mode of expressing an effect of the Christ-event may be found in the words of the crucified Jesus who replies to the penitent thief, "Today you shall be with me in Paradise" (Lk 23:43; see Fitzmeyer 1981:226). Here the effect is seen as an intimate association "with Jesus", that is, a share in the destiny of the Christian, "to be with the Lord", of which Paul speaks in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and Philippians 1:23.

In contrast to those who respond positively to the gospel and consequently become receivers of the benefits of salvation, Luke also identifies spiritual and human opponents of salvation and of the new community. At the transcendent level the spiritual forces, that is, Satan and the demons, stand resistant though powerless before the plan of God (Lk 4:1-13, 33-37; 8:26-39; 9:1; 10:1-12, 18; 11:14-26; 22:3; Acts 8:14-25; 13:4-12; 16:16-19; 19:10-20; see also Fitzwater 1948:507). For Luke, God's struggle not only involves reclaiming humanity's

devotion, but reversing the effects of the presence of the evil forces (Bock 1992:507).

On a human level, the opponents of the Saviour and his saving activities are primarily the Jewish religious leaders, especially the Scribes and Pharisees. When Jesus claims authority to forgive sin and challenges the Sabbath tradition (Lk 5:24; 6:1-11), their opposition becomes a regular feature of the narrative. In three instances where Jesus is seated at the table with the Pharisees, they are warned (Lk 7:36-50; 11:37-52; 14:1-24). In the journey section as well as in Jerusalem, it is the leaders who are at the centre of Jesus' condemnation (11:37-52; 20:45-57). For the most part, Luke sees the leadership standing opposed to Jesus and plotting his demise (Lk 6:31; 23:3-5). Again, the response of Israel is a tragic one. As a nation, Israel was in line for a blessing, but has missed its day of visitation and now awaits judgement (Lk 19:44). Now it is the "time of the Gentiles" (21:24). In Acts, the nation is warned to change its mind about Jesus and repent (Acts 2:22-24; 5:27-32). In Acts as well, the new community of God's salvation suffers great risk when it returns to the synagogue to offer hope for the nation. In reading Luke-Acts, it becomes obvious that God's plan of salvation is vehemently opposed by both transcendental and human forces.

Luke's understanding of salvation is evident in both the gospel and Acts. The mission of the Christian community in Acts is a mission of salvation, as was the work of Jesus. In Luke-Acts the incomparable grace of God is lavished upon sinners. The initiative to save and to forgive remains God's throughout. Perhaps the parable of the prodigal son best captures Luke's ideal of what salvation means. The prodigal son in Luke becomes the recipient of unfathomable and undeserved kindness; sinners are not only sought and accepted but receive honour, responsibility and authority. God answers the prayer of the tax-collector instead of the Pharisee, not as Jesus' listeners have anticipated. Salvation comes to a chief tax-collector, of all people, but only after Jesus has taken the initiative and invited himself to the house of Zaccheus. A Samaritan, the most unlikely candidate imaginable especially considering the religious and racial divide between the Jews and Samaritans at the time, performs an extraordinary deed of compassion. A contemptible criminal receives pardon and the promise of paradise in the hour of death, without any possibility of restitution for his wicked deeds. In Acts,

the Samaritans and the idol-worshiping Gentiles receive pardon and the gift of the Holy Spirit and are incorporated into Israel, with whom they form the one people of God. According to Bosch (1991:108), "The Jesus Luke introduces to his readers is somebody who brings the outsider, the stranger, and the enemy home and gives him or her, to the chagrin of the 'righteous', a place of honour at the banquet in the reign of God".

3.5.4 THE KINGDOM

Among scholars, it is generally agreed nowadays that the notion of *basileia* (kingdom) belongs to the core of the theology of Luke (see Del Agua 1999:639). The concept of *basileia* seems to give unity to the whole narrative of the Lucan two-volume work. Luke seems to have placed a framework of the *basileia* by putting the logion of Luke 4:43 which gives an overall interpretation of the mission of Jesus and the last sentence of the colophon, in Acts 28:31.

In Luke's gospel, Jesus is the proclaimer *par excellence* of the kingdom (see Du Toit 1982:220; Fitzmeyer 1981:154). Conzelmann (1960:20, 114) has noted that John the Baptist in Luke does not proclaim the kingdom of God, in contrast to Matthew 3:2, where the proclamation that Jesus is to make is first heard from the lips of John . The first proclamation of it in the Lucan gospel is made by Jesus (4:43), even though Luke has omitted any reference to it in his parallel to the first dramatic announcement of it in Mark 1:15. In Fitzmeyer's (1981:154) view, this omission was to make room for the identification as the one in whom Isaiah's words were fulfilled. When the first proclamation of the kingdom of God is made in Luke (4:43), Jesus is made to add significantly, "Because that is why I was sent".

At the beginning of the section on the messianic self-proclamation of Jesus in Nazareth and the fulfilment of the kingdom of God (Lk 4:16-30), the narrator sets the scene for his reading of Isaiah 61:1-2a, combined with the phrase "to set free the oppressed" of Isaiah 58:6; it is the prophetic reading of a synagogal service (cf. Del Agua 1999:649). The speech which follows the reading of Isaiah in Luke 4:18f, is presented as a synagogal homily. By identifying himself with the Isaianic tradition of *mebasser*, Jesus proclaims himself the eschatological "Her-

ald-Prophet". Thus, the Lucan Jesus applies to himself, in an explicit way, a messianic tradition of prophetic typology by which he is characterised as Messiah, Herald of the kingdom and "Anointed by the Spirit" (cf. *11 Q Melchizedek*; TgIsa 52.7; Bosch 1991:110; Ford 1984:55-61).

Fitzmeyer (1981:54) sees Luke as deriving part of the kingdom preaching from Mark (see Lk 8:10; 9:27; 18:16, 17, 24, 25; 22:18) and part of it from "Q" (see Lk 6:20; 7:28; 10:9; 11:2, 20; 12:31; 13:18, 20, 28, 29; 16:16). Therefore, we may safely conclude that the Lucan Jesus proclaims in this respect what the Marcan and the Matthean Jesus does. However, there are some Lucan nuances in the manner of Jesus' kingdom preaching that is noticeable in Luke. Whereas Mark 10:29 records Jesus' words about the need of disciples to leave home and family "for my sake and that of the gospel", the reason becomes in Luke 18:29 merely "for the sake of the kingdom of God". Moreover, there is a sense in which the Lucan Jesus speaks of the imminence of the kingdom: "The kingdom of God is near" (Lk 10:11, 21:31). Yet he does not hesitate to speak of its presence in his own person and acts, "The kingdom of God is among you" (Lk 17:21). The kingdom of God becomes personified in Jesus Christ who came to do the will of the Father (see Shenk 1983:207). The Lucan narrative is to retell the story of Jesus Christ as *autobasileia* (cf. Green 1970:60-61; Del Agua 1999:651; Padilla 1985:186).

The good news of the kingdom was both preached by Jesus and embodied by him. Commenting on Luke 17:21 ("Behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you"), Costas (1979:7) writes, "Jesus spoke of the kingdom not only as a transcendent and future reality, but also as immanent and present". In Jesus, God's rule has broken into our world. In the words of Costas, "whoever believes in Jesus Christ knows him personally, is in fellowship with the Father and has entered the kingdom" (ibid). The preaching of the gospel of the kingdom of God is a summons to a decision: the acceptance of the grace of God, an adoption of new values and a new lifestyle and an acceptance of a new perspective on reality. As much as God in the *missio Dei* says "yes" to humanity and the rest of creation, the requirements of God's kingdom say "no" to the world's way of doing things (see Bosch 1991:10-11). The call of the kingdom is to participate in the new humanity which God is creating through Jesus Christ in the power of his

Holy Spirit. Costas calls this a demand for total commitment to God and neighbour. Indeed, this conversion also embraces a person's change of attitude to nature and the environment. The *basileia* of God stands for the new order of life. It demonstrates God's resolve to make all things new (cf. Rev 21:5).

Ridderbos (1962:61) and Bock (1992:504) state that the evidence that the kingdom has come, is the overthrow of the wicked one. In Matthew 12:28 and Luke 11:20, Jesus speaks emphatically of the presence of the kingdom: "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God (Lk - "finger of God"), then the kingdom of God has come to you". The kingdom, as a present reality, is associated with Jesus' authority, well illustrated as he exercises his command over the spiritual forces of evil. The arrival of the kingdom is accompanied by the powerful demonstrations of victory over evil through miracles in general, and the casting out of demons in particular (see Burgess *et al* 1988:523; Wimber 1985:30). In the miracles of Christ, especially in exorcisms, the message is clear: eschatology has invaded the present age (see Khathide 1999a:53; Burgess *et al* 1988:523; Ridderbos 1962:65-76). Perrin (1963:185) sums up realised eschatology as God's kingly activity manifested in a breaking into history and human experience to visit and redeem his people in a manner decisive for their salvation. However, the way to the realisation of the kingdom is through the cross (Shenk 1983:210).

According to Ridderbos (1962:62), the whole struggle of Jesus against the devils is determined by the antithesis between the kingdom of heaven and the rule of Satan, and time and again the superior power of Jesus over Satan and Satan's kingdom demonstrates the breakthrough on the part of the *basileia* of God. This is proven at the start by the temptation in the wilderness (Lk 4:1-11). In Luke 10:17-19, the evangelist narrates a fascinating episode of Jesus having sent out seventy-two disciples who came back and jubilantly told him of their mission success upon which Jesus responded, "I beheld Satan fall as lightning from heaven." Jesus accepts the joy of those sent out and shows them the background of their power over the devils (Ridderbos 1962:63).

But the advent of the *basileia* is not only shown in the miraculous demonstrations (e.g. exorcisms), but also in Jesus' preaching-teaching of the kingdom (see Fitzmeyer 1981:154-155; Ridderbos 1962:65f, Wimber 1985:30). The days of

the ministry of Jesus are characterised as the time in which the good news of the kingdom is being preached. In answer to John the Baptist's question: "Are you he that cometh?" Jesus not only refers to his miracles but also to the preaching of the gospel to the poor: "The poor have the gospel preached to them" (Lk 7:22). The Lucan Jesus stresses the radical character of the reaction of the kingdom preaching, most notably in Luke 16:16, of which Conzelmann (1960:23) has made so much in a different respect: "Up until John it was the law and the prophets; from that time on the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is pressed to enter it", that is, everyone who enters it does so only with a radical, demanding invitation to do so (cf. Fitzmeyer 1981:155).

Concerning kingdom preaching, it is remarkable that it is only Luke who depicts the risen Christ speaking to his disciples about the kingdom (Acts 1:3) and reacting against a still-misunderstood sense of it among them (Acts 1:6). Fitzmeyer 1981:155) comments that this is obviously a transitional nuance, which links the disciples' eventual preaching to that of Jesus himself. The same transition is suggested in the specifically Lucan saying recorded in 22:29-30, addressed to the disciples who have followed him in his trials: "I assign you a kingdom such as my Father has assigned me, that you may eat and drink in my kingdom ..."

What is also observable in the Lucan writings is that some passages dealing with the kingdom, have a two-pronged reference, to a present and a future aspect - a reference that is not without its significance for the eschatology of the Lucan writings. Luke 17:22-37 describes the judgement preceding the full arrival of the kingdom. Here is the "not yet" aspect - the kingdom in consummation (see Bock 1992:504). Luke 21:5-38 also describes the "time of redemption". Here, the imagery of the Day of the Lord abounds as evil is decisively judged. Within the space of a few verses (21:25-27), allusion is made to a range of Old Testament verses suggesting cosmic disturbance associated with the Day of the Lord (Isa 13:10; Ezek 32:7; Joel 2:30-31; Ps 46:2-3; 65:7; Isa 24:19 (LXX); Hag 2:6, 21; Dan 7:13; cf. Bock 1987). The Old Testament hope and expectation is not dead, as Acts 3:20-21 also makes clear. Jesus will return to fulfil the promise - a promise that will show itself visibly on earth to all humanity, as well as in the eternal benefits given to believers.

Though the kingdom was inaugurated by Jesus, it has yet to reach its complete fulfilment. Burgess *et al* (1988:524) explain it this way: "While the kingdom of Satan has already been invaded by Jesus in the power of the Spirit, there yet remains a future eschatological consummation accompanied by the final destruction of Satan and the complete victory over all evil and its consequences." The full revelation of the age of the Messiah will be the time when the new order of God's salvation will be fully experienced, including the elimination of social, physical and personal disabilities (see Shenk 1983:210). The apocalyptists shared in the hope when the Messiah makes war against the enemies of Israel and against Beliar whose captives he sets free (*Test. of Dan 5:10-11*); he then binds Beliar (*Test. of Levi 18:12*) and casts him into the fire (*Test. of Jud. 25:3*; cf. Rev. 20:7-10). In the *Psalms of Solomon*, the coming of the kingdom is identified with the mighty ruler, a descendant of David's line (17:23) and God's anointed, that is, the Messiah (18:6). In the *Similitudes of Enoch* (*1 Enoch 37-71*), it is stated that at the end of age the supernatural and pre-existent Son of Man will come to take his place 'on the throne of glory' where he sits as judge (45:3; 48:2f; 49:4; 61:8f) and through whom God transforms the heaven and the earth and makes them a place of blessing (45:4-5; Rev 21). In the *Assumption of Moses*, the writer mentions that God's kingdom "will appear throughout all his creation" (10:1). God's people will live lives of joy and peace, for there will be no Satan or any other evil destroyer to hurt them (see *Book of Jubilees* 23:29). In the *Sibylline Oracles III* it is said God will send his King, or Messiah, who will lift the curse of war from all humankind (652-656) and it will be a time of peace throughout all the earth (741;759).

The familiar picture discernible in the apocalyptic writings is that of an earthly kingdom, eternal in duration, universal in its scope and ruled over by God's Messiah (see Russel 1964:289). In almost the similar manner, the Lucan view of the future aspect of the kingdom is that it is earthly, that is, Jesus will rule as a Davidide on the earth and will bring about total deliverance as he executes his sovereignty over all (cf. Bock 1992:504). Such hope is most strongly expressed in the narrative and songs of Luke (1:32-33, 46-55, 67-79). The eschatological discources and the remarks of Acts 1:11 and 3:18-21 show that the future hope has not been absorbed in the theme of present inauguration, but remains alive, connected to its Old Testament roots (see Khathide 1999a:49; Russel 1964:288; Burgess *et al* 1988:522; Bock 1992:504).

.5.5 ECCLESIOLOGY

Paul and Luke in Acts are the two main New Testament writers who use *ekklesia* as the name for the "called assembly", the organised Christian community, either local or universal (see Fitzmeyer 1981:252). Besides the Matthean usage of the term *ekklesia* (see Mt 16:18; 18:17) and its frequent occurrence in Revelation 1-3 (in the letters to the seven local churches), it is used but rarely elsewhere (Jas 5:14; 3 Jn 6, 9, 10; Rev 22:16). Except for his usage of *ekklesia*, Luke also refers to the members of the church in various ways. He mentions, for instance, that the followers of Jesus, the Christ, have come to be known generically as "Christians" (*Christianoi*, Acts 11:26). Sometimes he refers to them simply *mathetai/mathetria* (disciples, Acts 6:1, 2, 7; 9:1, 36, etc.). Again, sometimes he refers to them as *adelphoi* (brothers, brethren), using a term that implies community rather than a function or ministry within it (Acts 1:15; 9:30; 10:23; 11:1, 29, etc.). Luke is also aware that some members of the church served in special functions or ministries: "elders", "the Twelve", "apostles".

Luke depicts Paul (and Barnabas) setting up "elders" *(presbyteroi)* "in every church" (Acts 14:23). When Paul is returning to Jerusalem from what is generally called Mission III (A.D. 58), he summons the elders of Ephesus to Miletus and addresses them, telling them to be responsible "overseers" *(episkopoi)* of the church of God (Acts 20:17, 28; cf. 1:20). The elders appear elsewhere as functionaries or leaders in local churches (Acts 11:30; 15:2, 4, 5, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18). It seems, then, that Luke has attributed to Paul the structure of the community with which he was familiar in his own day. The elders appear to have been understood by Luke to be persons of authority and this is evidenced by the way that they are coupled with the apostles in Acts 15-16.

Luke is also aware of a group in the early church called "the Twelve". Like the other synoptists, he traces the origin of this group to the ministry of Jesus himself (Lk 6:13; cf. Mk 3:14; Mt 10:1-5). The betrayal of Jesus by Judas, "one of the Twelve", is remembered with horror by the early church (Mk 14:10, 43; Lk 22:3, 47; Mt 26:14; cf. Jn 6:71). That they serve as an important link between Jesus and the early church is seen in the beginning of Acts, where the initial nucleus of disciples feels that it is necessary to reconstitute the Twelve and Matthias

is chosen by lot to be with "the Eleven" in the place vacated by Judas' death (Acts 1:26). Luke sought to explain this necessity by the relation of the new community to be fashioned on Pentecost to that of Israel (see O'Toole 1984:18; Fitzmeyer 1981:253; Bovon 1987:323f).

In Luke's thinking of the organised or structured Christian community, he also refers to the seven table-servers, appointed by the whole assembly under the supervision of the Twelve or the apostles (Acts 6:1-6). They represent a structure that the community itself introduces. They are to "serve tables" *(diakonein trapezais)* in order that the Twelve might devote themselves to preaching, prayer, and the ministry of the word (6:2, 4). Amazingly, Stephen (6:8-7:53) and Philip (8:4-13), two of the appointed seven on whom the apostles prayed and laid hands, are subsequently depicted by Luke as preaching and disputing with the Jews. However, it is significant to note that Luke is much more concerned about tracing the growth of the church in various parts of the eastern Mediterranean world and with the spread of the word of God through it to "the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8) than the details of church structure.

For Luke as well as other New Testament writers, the main concern is that the crucified Christ lives on as the risen Christ and is glorified by God and this certainty gives meaning and reason for existence to the community of believers, the church. The New Testament authors endeavour to argue that the church sprang not from imaginations of the disciples, not out of a baseless credulity, but from real experiences of encounters with one who was truly alive (Lk 24:36-49; Acts 2:24; 3:15; 10:39-41). In the witness and interpretation of events by the new community, "Jesus the preacher becomes Jesus the preached, the bearer of the message becomes the central substance of the message" (Küng 1968:80). In the church, Jesus is recognised and acknowledged to be what he has now revealed himself to be: the (the anointed one, the *Christos*), the Son of Man descended from heaven, the Son of David, the Servant and the Son of God, the King, the Lord. With this affirmation a new community is born. The scattered disciples congregated once more in Jerusalem. The experience of this new community is a cause of joy and gratitude for the disciples.

The new community applies to itself the Old Testament prophecies concerning

the last days (see O'Toole 1984:18-19). From the reading of Luke-Acts and other New Testament writings, it becomes clear that the new community had not chosen to seperate itself from Judaism. Instead, it has presented itself as the hope of the nation of Israel but had to be forced to become distinct (see Bock 1992:506).

What sets the new community apart from the Jewish community is the experience of the Spirit (see Heyns 1980:60, 77). The Spirit not only evidences the presence of the ascended Lord in their midst (Acts 2:14-40; 11:15; cf. Mt 28:20b; Mk 16:20), but also enables the new community to live by the principles of Jesus - a life distinct from contemporary norms of piety and current cultural standards (Acts 12:1; 14:1-14; 22:24-27). In the fulfillment of ancient prophecies the special gift of the last days, the Spirit of God, is bestowed upon the new community (see Fitzmeyer 1981:256; Küng 1968:80). In many ways the new group of disciples may be seen as the eschatological community of salvation (Küng 1968:81) or "the transmitter of the message" of salvation (Conzelmann 1960:207).

But it is not only God's will revealed in people being saved in and through Jesus Christ that Luke is interested in, he also equally lays stress on the necessity of discipleship to which the free offer of God's mercy and grace constrains one (see Du Toit 1983:181). According to Martin (1976:366f), Luke does not recount his story as a disinterested or neutral narrator; he tells the Jesus story in order to evoke reaction from his readers. The Spirit comes to a person, sets before them the offer brought by Jesus and expects him or her to react by yielding himself or herself to Christ and wholeheartedly following him. The Christian is exposed to many perils, the greatest of them being apostasy and the loss of faith (Brown 1969). These dangers beset the church from within and without. Those external to it are described in Luke 12:1-12 (cf. Acts 4; 5:17-42; 7; 8:1-3; 12:1-19; 16:16-40, etc.). In his gospel, Luke's reference to disciples being brought before the synagogues and authorities is preceded by a statement regarding the necessity to confess Christ publicly (v. 8) and a warning not to slander the Holy Spirit (v. 10). Intense persecution, even death (v. 4f; cf. Acts 7), can threaten the Christian and cause them to lose courage. This is why Luke exhorts believers to persevere in prayer (19:1-8; cf. Acts 4:23-31), bidding them not to condemn too easily those who stumble. As in the case of the widow in that parable, God

will rectify the cause of the true believer, who may be assured that he will do so, and quickly (see Du Toit 1982:182).

Luke also states that discipleship makes high demands on a believer. This is clear from Luke 9:57-62, where would-be followers of Jesus, and the one he called to follow, but had an excuse or another, evoking this response from him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God" (v. 62). In Luke 14:25-33, Jesus points out that anyone who wishes to follow him must first count the full cost. In Acts 14:22, Paul and Barnabas teach the believers in Lystra, Iconium and Pisidian Antioch that they "must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God".

Still in the context of Christian discipleship, it can be noted that no other New Testament writer, except perhaps the author of the epistle of James, even then only in an analogous way, speaks out as emphatically as does Luke about the Christian disciple's use of material possessions, wealth and money (e.g. Lk 6:20; Lk 1:53). In Acts, Luke presents an idyllic picture of the first Jewish Christians of Jerusalem in the matter of common ownership and sharing of wealth as a model for the community of his own day (see Bosch 1991:98-100; Fitzmeyer 1981:247; Bock 1992:509; Tannehill 1986:127).

Though the following of Jesus is not exclusive to Luke (see Mk 2:14; 10:21), the stress that this idea receives in the Lucan gospel is noteworthy. In particular, its relation to the travel account is to be noted, since immediately after the introduction to it (9:51-56) comes sayings of Jesus to three prospective followers, "as they were walking along the road" (9:57-62). Thus, for Luke, Christian discipleship is portrayed not only as the acceptance of a master's teaching, but as the identification of oneself with the master's way of life and destiny in an intimate, personal following of him (see Fitzmeyer 1981:241) or as the Belgic Confession says of Christians that they "bow their necks under the yoke of Jesus Christ" (Article 28). The Lucan view of discipleship is further illustrated by a special corporate sense of following that is found in the Acts of the Apostles, where the primitive Palestinian Christian community is designated "the Way" (*hé hodos*), a term that is exclusively Lucan in the New Testament, being found in Acts 9:2;

19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22. Therefore for Luke, the church comprises persons of discipled community who are willing to walk the path that Christ walked.

ESCHATOLOGY

In the view of Fitzmeyer (1981:231), eschatology is the most difficult and most controverted aspect of Lucan theology today. What compounds the problem is that Luke, unlike the other evangelists, wrote Acts as a sequel to his Jesus story. Some scholars assert that the first Christians expected Christ's imminent return, the *Naherwartung*, as it is called. When he did not speedily return to earth, the primitive community was grievously disappointed and discouraged (see Du Toit 1983:252).

To help this situation, Luke intervenes and broadens the time schedule within which God continues to bring his salvation to his people (see O'Toole 1984:149). In his eschatological conceptions, Luke no longer speaks of an instant or imminent *parousia*, the second coming of the Lord. In doing so, he breaks with the earliest Christianity which, according to Du Toit (1983:253), "took no account of the progress of world history but expected the end, the *parousia*, to take place shortly". On the contrary, Mattill (1972:276f) maintains, basing his argument on scriptures like Acts 10:42; 17:31; 24:15, 25, that Luke held for an imminent expectation like the rest of the earliest believing community. But the majority opinion on the Lucan view of eschatology is that Luke moves away from an instant or imminent *parousia*. However, it is to be noted that Luke does not do away completely with the primitive gospel tradition about the imminent judgement or an imminent coming of the kingdom or the Son of Man (see Fitzmeyer 1981:233). For example, John the Baptist is portrayed challenging the crowds about "the wrath that is coming" (Lk 3:7) and preaching how "the axe already lies at the root of the trees" (3:9; cf. Mt 3:7-10) and how the winnowing fan of judgement has already been taken up" (3:17; cf. Mt 3:12).

Among the scholars who maintain that Luke, in his writings no longer speaks of an imminent *parousia,* is O'Toole (1984:149) who states that for Luke the *parousia* is the end of the end times; it is the final establishment of the kingdom. But the end times, according to Luke, begin with the birth of Jesus (see Lk 1:76;

cf. 1:15-17; Lk 1:17; Mal. 3:1; 4:5-6; Lk 1:78; Mal 4:2; Isa 60:1-2) whose arrival is preceded by the messenger who goes first to prepare the day of the Lord. Later, Jesus contends in the synagogue at Nazareth that the proclamation of the acceptable year of the Lord (cf. Lk 4:19) has been fulfilled for his hearers. Luke himself in his story of Pentecost inserts into the quotation from Joel 2:28 "... in the last days, God declares". Luke thus makes Pentecost an event of the last days. O'Toole (1984:150) concludes therefore that the last days according to Luke should not be completely identified with the *parousia*, which is really the last event of these days. Conzelmann (1960:95) perceives Luke as expanding the original sense of the "last days" according to which the outpouring of the Spirit is no longer itself the start of the eschaton but the beginning of a longer epoch, the period of the church.

For Conzelmann (1960:95), "The Spirit himself is no longer the eschatological gift, but the substitute in the meantime for the possession of ultimate salvation." The Spirit makes believers to exist in the continuing life of the world and in persecution and he gives the power for missionary endeavour and for endurance. This change in the understanding of eschatology can be seen in the way in which Luke, by his description of history, depicts the nature of the church, its relation to the world and the course of the mission in its progress step by step, and in the way in which he repeatedly describes the Spirit as the power behind this whole process (see Fitzmeyer 1981:230). In Acts, the Spirit becomes the guiding force of Christian disciples and witnesses (see Acts 2:4; 4:31; 8:29, 39; 10:19, 44; 11:28; 13:2, 4; 15:28; 20:22, 28).

When one reflects on the Lucan writings especially on eschatology, one realises that it will be entirely not true to say that Luke has abandoned belief in an early expectation of the end time. Instead, he has obviously coped with the delay of the *parousia* which puzzled early Christians. In his eschatological conception, Luke does retain, albeit in a somewhat blunted way, some of the traditional references to the imminent coming of the kingdom, Son of Man or judgement. These cannot be ignored in looking for the mere widespread pattern of the Lucan shift, because Luke could have omitted all the traditional material about an imminent coming. Apparently Luke was aware of the importance of it in the tradition and that is why he retained some of it. But he also has sought to shift Christian

attention from an exclusive focus on imminence to a realisation that the present period of the church has a place in God's salvation history (see Conzelmann 1960:95-97; Fitzmeyer 1981:235; O'Toole 1984:159). As part of the mission of salvation that the church is privileged to participate in (see Bosch 1991:10), believers are expected to engage the powers of evil that hinder God's total salvation meant for humankind (see O'Brien 1984:110f). This area of power encounter in Luke's theology becomes the next focus of our attention.

3.5.7 DEMONOLOGY/POWER ENCOUNTER IN LUKE-ACTS

3.5.7.1 AN OVERVIEW

In Acts 10:38, we are told that Jesus "went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil". Perhaps this sums up the ministry of healing and exorcism of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts. This role of Jesus is broadly developed in a number of exorcism stories recorded in Luke-Acts. Jesus' relation to demons is highlighted in the exorcism in the Capernaum synagogue (Lk 4:33-37) and in the story of the Gerasene demoniac (8:26-39). Tannehill's (1986:89) comment on these passages of scripture is insightful. He says that in these stories there is emphasis on the qualitative distinction between Jesus and the demon expressed by "What have you to do with us" (4:34; cf. 8:28) and by the contrast between "the holy one of God" and the "unclean spirit" (4:33-34). The demons submit to Jesus' authoritative command, which prevents them from working further harm to their victims. While Mark 1:26 and 9:26 tell of the frightening and possibly dangerous effects of the demon after Jesus' exorcising command, the parallels in Luke 4:35 and 9:42 make clear, in one case, that the man was not harmed and, in the other case, that the convulsion took place before Jesus' command. Luke 8:28 presents a stronger picture of the impotency of demons when they respond to Jesus with "I beg you" (cf. Lk 8:28) instead of Mark's "I adjure you by God" (cf. Mk 5:7; see Tannehill 1986:90). The authority of Christ over the demonic is also shown in the other stories of exorcism in Luke-Acts. The fact that Acts records the disciples continuing to perform some of these works (see Acts 5:16; 8:7; 16:16-18; 19:11-12) shows that authentication continues and that Jesus' authority continues as well (see Bock 1992:505).

As for the devil, Conzelmann (1960:16, 156f) shows that Satan plays a subordinate role in Luke's plan. Satan does not enter as a factor in the saving events. Conzelmann argues that in fact the only part the devil plays is the negative one of being excluded from the period of Jesus' ministry. Between the temptation and passion of Jesus, Satan is absent, then he reappears (Lk 22:3) and the temptations are back again but it is not explicitly stated that he is responsible for the passion. According to Conzelmann (1960:156-157), it is clear that in two passages, the range of the devil's power is more precisely defined. The reading of Luke 4:6 reveals that the worldly powers are at his disposal; but this authority has been "delivered" to him, which indicates his limitations. Furthermore, according to Luke 22:31, he has "asked to have" the disciples, which again demonstrates his dependence.

The connection between Satan and the evil spirits becomes clear in the story of a woman who had a spirit of infirmity, especially when we compare Luke 13:11 and 13:16. The exorcism in the story of a dumb person and the ensuing Beelzebul controversy also reveals the connection between Satan and the evil spirits (see Lk 11:14-22). In Acts 10:38, he is the oppressor, which is the traditional conception. The passage in Acts 26:18 speaks of his power but it does not refer to redemptive history as a whole, but to the event of conversion as it concerns the individual (cf. Witherington 1998:745; Kistemaker 1990:898). In his study of the theology of Luke, Conzelmann (1960:157) comes to a conclusion that it is clear that the statement that human beings are under the devil's power does not serve to lessen personal responsibility but to underline the call to repentance. Having given a broad sketch of demonology in Luke-Acts, it becomes significant to narrow our focus to a few stories of power encounter in Lucan theology in order to illustrate our point of discussion further. To help us in this, we turn to the following stories: The Beelzebul controversy, Simon Magus, Elymas the Sorcerer, the anonymous slave-girl and the power encounter in Ephesus.

3.5.7.2 THE BEELZEBUL CONTROVERSY

Ferguson (1984:18) believes that the fullest amount of teaching in the gospels on demons is called forth by the Beelzebul controversy (Lk 11:14-23; Mk 3:22-30;

Mt 12:22-30; cf. 32-34). Concerning the literary genre of the Beelzebul pericope all the synoptists agree that a controversy is involved (see Syx 1992:167). Zimmermann (1978:185) derives three common characteristics in the controversy, namely, the "act of Jesus, question of the opponents, answer of Jesus".

Garret (1989:43) draws attention to the fact that before the actual Beelzebul controversy, Luke, in the preceding two chapters, relates several important incidents involving healings and the casting out of demons (9:1-5; 10:1-20). The Beelzebul controversy is therefore the climactic confrontation between the kingdom of God in Jesus and that of Satan.

In both Matthew and Luke, the Beelzebul controversy is introduced by an act of Jesus, the exorcism, whereas this miracle story is, significantly, omitted in Mark. Various interpretations are advanced in trying to find solutions to this omission. For some, the absence of the exorcism in Mark is sufficient reason either to claim that Mark did not know Q or hold that the miracle story was missing in Mark's oral Q-tradition (see Syx 1992:168). In the opinion of Guijarro (1999:120), the narrative introduction and the initial question of Mark's version (Mk 3:23) are due, most probably, to his redactional activity. It can be argued that Mark chose to omit an introduction of this sort when incorporating this unit into his narrative (Sellew 1988:100-101; Twelftree 1993:103-104; Ling 1961:18-19; cf. Syx 1992:169). At any rate, the exorcism does not appear in Mark and as to why the omission, is something that is beyond the scope of our exploration here.

In spite of its brevity, the exorcism contains a complete healing account with the description of the ailment (a dumb man), the act of healing (the demon cast out), the confirmation of healing (he spoke) and the reaction of the bystanders ("they were astonished" - see Mt 12:22-23; 9:32-33; Lk 11:14). The healing or exorcism appears to have drawn different reactions from the bystanders. The identification of the accusers is different in the three gospels (Mt: Pharisees; Mk: Scribes; Lk: some of them) and this makes it difficult to know exactly who the original accusers of Jesus were (Twelftree 1993:104). As for the reason why the accusers rose against Jesus, remains a matter of speculation. Perhaps they were jealous of the popularity of Jesus (Ferguson 1984:18; see also 1 Sam 18:7). It could also be that the accusers were incensed after the people who had witnessed the

exorcism asked, "Can this be the Son of David?" (Mt 12:23). Realising the honour of Messiahship that people were willing to bestow on Jesus, the Pharisees (in the Matthean version) felt inclined to react negatively. The accusers of Jesus resorted to name-calling and labelling (cf. Malina and Neyrey 1991a: 97-122; see also Wenham 1975:295; Giujarro 1999:128).

In their accusation, the opponents of Jesus insinuated that he was in league with a more powerful demon who enabled him to subdue lesser demons. The prince of demons here is named Beelzebul, who is identified with Satan in Luke 11:18. Wagner (1996:146-147) objects to the identification of Beelzebul with the devil himself. He says that Beelzebul is "so powerful that some confuse him with Satan himself. Beelzebub is known as 'the ruler of the demons' (Lk 11:15) but he rules these demons under the high command of Satan". Wagner concludes by saying, "Beelzebub is not Satan". Though Wagner's statement purports to introduce something new into the Beelzebul pericope, it lacks sufficient substantiation to inspire confidence. There is general congruence among scholars that Beelzebul is identified with Satan in the pericope. De Blois (1986:301) agrees that "The three terms Satanas, diabolos and Beelzebul refer to the same cosmic adversary and opponent of God". Penny and Wise (1994:633) also support the view that, in the synoptic gospels, the Semitic word *Beelzeboul* is used as the equivalent of *satanas* and the ruler of demons (see also Marshall 1978:470, 472; Stein 1997:43-45; Garrett 1989:44).

The derogatory accusation that Jesus was Beelzebul (Mt 10:25) or demonised (cf. Jn 7:20; 8:48) or that he was mad (cf. Jn 10:29; Mk 3:21) or involved in magic (as in the Beelzebul controversy), appears to have been rather common. The charge had been made against John the Baptist that he had a demon (Lk 7:33). It appears to have been a stock charge against anyone who acted contrary to the usual norms of behaviour (Ferguson 1984:19-20).

By claiming that Jesus was in league with Beelzebul in his exorcism, the Jewish accusers thought that they had categorised him and his ministry in worst terms because among the Jews it would apparently be used as an alternative name for Baal Shamayin, that is, the chief god of Canaanite religion or the leader of the Israelite god's rebel angels (see MacLaurin 1978:156f; Sellew 1988:104).

Ferguson (1984:18) says that Beelzebul is usually derived from Baalzebub (2 Kgs. 1:2; see De Blois 1986) and he also adds that this word, 'Beelzebul', was a Hebrew pun ("lord of the flies") of the name of a Philistine or Canaanite god. In his observation, Ferguson draws a conclusion that Beelzebul is apparently the same as Belial (Beliar) encountered in the intertestamental literature. In the New Testament, Beelzebul is the name derived from the Aramaic form which meant "lord of the high house" or "lord of the temple" (see MacLaurin 1978:156-158). Sellew (1988:104) even suggests that the name, 'Beelzebul', might well have been one of the potent names invoked by magicians and exorcists, just as Jesus' own name was soon to become. But the responses of Jesus to the accusation of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebul, reveal that he never accepted this interpretation (Guijarro 1999:128).

In the response of Jesus to the accusation that he was in league with the prince of demons, several things come to light (see Marshall 1978:471; Ferguson 1984:20-24). In the reply of Jesus, it becomes clear that Satan would not be conducting civil war in his own kingdom. If Satan is casting out his own subordinates, this would be folly and a sign of weakness and confusion in the kingdom of evil. Sellew (1988:103-104) says that Jesus, in his response, employs a proverb from everyday wisdom about the instability of divided states of warring households. The image of the kingdom at war and a house (hold) divided could certainly have been commonplace in the socio-political realities of mid-first-century Palestine (cf. Brown 1983:366-367; Hollenbach 1981:565f). The pronouncement by Jesus of the divided kingdom that is laid waste and a divided household that falls was revealing in terms of the state of the kingdom of evil (Lk 11:17-18; cf. 21-22). What also becomes clear in the reply of Jesus is the larger consideration that presents the essential unity of the kingdom of evil. The demons function under a prince or ruler and are his subordinates. Evil may have varied manifestations but ultimately there is only one principle of evil. Instead of a world dominated by warring demons (a pagan and polytheistic conception), Jesus saw one kingdom of Satan (cf. Ferguson 1984:20). The Jewish exorcists might deal with local manifestations of demonic activity, but Jesus saw his work as demonstrating that the whole dominion of evil was being conquered. The demons functioned as part of the larger whole.

Again, Jesus in his reply to the accusation that he was in alliance with Beelzebul, reminded his accusers that there were Jewish exorcists going about casting out demons, or at least claiming to do so. Jesus' question, "By whom do your sons cast them out?" was found by the accusers to be both tricky and intriguing. For the Jews to ascribe Jesus' exorcisms to Beelzebul or Satan was implicitly to attribute exorcisms performed by their own wonder-workers or exorcists to the same agent (see Marshall 1978:471; Ferguson 1984:20). The logical consideration was that if the Jewish exorcists were working by the power of God, then so was Jesus.

Another consideration advanced by Jesus was that if it was indeed only by the power of God that he cast out demons, then the *basileia* (kingdom) or rule of God was being manifested. The phrase "finger of God" (Lk 11:20; par. Mt 12:28 - "Spirit of God") is of significance here. The protasis of this phrase alludes to the deliverance power of the Exodus contest between Moses and the magicians of Pharaoh (Ex 8:19; see Garrett 1989:45; Woods 2001:245). On that occasion, the Egyptian magicians were finally forced to conclude that the power by which Moses worked his signs was superior to the power that they themselves utilised. They admitted that indeed the power tapped by Moses must be divine or as they said "the finger of God". In as far as who has preserved the original version from Q between Matthew ("Spirit of God") and Luke ("finger of God"), Meier (1994:407-411) and Crossan (1983:180) conclude that we cannot be sure. For Ferguson (1984:20-21) the two phrases are equivalent in meaning. Of great importance for us is the fact that Jesus' exorcisms herald the kingdom of God. As the kingdom of Satan diminishes, the kingdom of God grows proportionately (Garrett 1989:45). While the accusers interpreted the exorcisms as a threat to the political order as they (exorcisms) drew crowds (Oakman 1988:112), Jesus considered them as a sign of the presence of the reign of God (see Chilton 1982:559). Guijarro (1999:127) contends further that the main purpose of Jesus' responses was not to clarify what kind of exorcist he was, but to make clear the cosmic and political implications of his exorcisms.

The ensuing metaphor of the strong man (Lk 11:21-22; Mt 12:29; Mk 3:27; *Gospel of Thomas* [*GThom*] 35) who is overpowered by a stronger man, may be seen as a striking affirmation of Jesus' power and a very meaningful illustration

of the significance of Jesus' ministry in general and his exorcisms in particular (see Ferguson 1984:22). Unlike Matthew and Mark who employ the imagery of robbery, Luke utilises military terminology ("fully armed", "guard", "armour", "overcome", "spoil"). The feeling among some scholars is that Luke, in his careful shaping of this passage, has apparently been influenced by Isaiah 49:25 and/or 53:12 [LXX] (see Syx 1992:172; Noll 1998:134; Garret 1989:45). The possible allusion to Isaiah 53:12 ("Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors") is, according to Garret's (1989:45) view, usually overlooked or at least downplayed, probably because at this point in the narrative it seems irrelevant. But Garret is of the opinion that perhaps Luke is building on a perceived connection between Jesus' earthly control of demons and what will happen at his impending death and resurrection (see also Kingsbury 1991:79f; Noll 1998:134; Arnold 1992:81).

Though there is no doubt about the defeat of Satan in the parable of the strong man, there are different interpretations as to how this defeat actually took place. Ferguson (1984:22-23), for example, sees Satan as a strong man who dwells in a fortified palace and this leads him to think of this world as enemy-occupied territory. Satan, as its ruler, has a fortress to protect its ill-gotten possessions. But there comes one stronger than he and, according to Syx (1992:176), the "stronger" man is already mentioned in Luke 3:16/Matthew 3:11; in both Luke 3:16 and 11:22, Jesus is the one to whom the expression refers. The conqueror liberates the fortress, takes Satan's power and takes charge of his possessions for his own use (Ferguson 1984:23) or for redistribution purposes (Robbins 1991:272; cf. Schweizer 1984:194; Oakman 1988:119).

Gooding (1987:223) comments that "strong and fully armed as the enemy was, by means of the incarnation a stronger than he began to invade the prison, overpower the tyrant, and talk to the prisoners". Gooding further says that since then the stronger than the strong - by his death - has invaded the deepest of the enemy's dungeons and broken his last stronghold. Humanity, in bondage to Satan has been set free (see Ferguson 1984:23; Col 2:13-18; Heb 2:14-15; Eph 4:7-13). What is interesting in Gooding's comment is that, unlike many scholars who associate the defeat of Satan only with the exorcisms, death and resurrection of

Jesus, he appropriately points out that the incarnation signifies the initial step in the victory process of Christ over the evil one. It represents the invasion of the strong man's fortress. The act of the stronger man (Jesus Christ) signals God's intervention in the affairs and plight of humankind in a world infested by demons under the rule of Satan. Therefore, when we speak of Christ's victory over the devil, the incarnation cannot be separated from the exorcisms, death and resurrection. They all form part of the integral whole: The defeat of Satan and the ushering in of the kingdom of God in Christ.

In relating the parable of the strong man, it is significant to note how Luke differs from Mark and Matthew. The Marcan and Matthean versions refer to "plundering" or "spoiling" the man's goods (Mk 3:27; Mt 12:29). Thus, according to Robbins (1991:272), in the plundering imagery, the powerful action invades and takes away what a person possesses. In contrast, the Lucan illustration evokes a system where power is used as a means to gain access to the wealth of strong men and distribute it to others. Robbins further observes that in the Lucan version the strong man is not bound, nor are his goods viewed as stolen. The armour in which he trusted is taken away and his goods are divided among others (cf. Lk 19:8). Schweizer (1984:195) interprets this as even placing more emphasis on someone who is stronger, who brings "peace" through his victory and vanquishes a false confidence based on possessions.

Contrary to the Lucan version, both Matthew and Mark present the strong man as bound. As to when the strong man was bound is a matter of scholarly speculation. Some assume that the binding of the strong man took place in the temptation (cf. Foerster 1971:159; Arnold 1992:76). The statement of the seventy-two disciples who joyfully reported, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name" (Lk 10:17), upon which Jesus replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Lk 10:18), has led some thinkers in theological studies to contend that the exorcisms acted as the binding or demise of the devil. Another view states that the victory of Jesus over the devil occurred at the cross and the resurrection (e.g. Arnold 1992:79; Foerster 1971:159; Gooding 1987:223). Garret (1989:58), by some intricate explication of Isaiah 14:1-27 and also using some other documents like *IIQ Melchizedek* and Revelation 9:1-11, arrives at a suggestion that the exaltation of Christ to the heavenly places spelled the demise or fall of Satan

from the position of authority. Whatever position or angle is adopted as to how and when the strong man was bound, there is general congruence that the binding of the strong man does tell of the defeat of Satan by Jesus at some point. Regardless of what it alludes, the parable of the strong man implies "that during his earthly ministry, Jesus vanquished Satan in some way albeit not fully comprehensible in human experience" (Page 1995:107). The parable suggests that Satan suffered an unprecedented defeat at the hands of Jesus (see Khathide 2000:87). Ladd (1959:48) is quite categoric in his conviction of Satan's demise: "Satan is bound". Prabhu (1994:158) adds, "Satan's rule is ended". Green (1981:49) understands the binding of Satan as meaning that the devil has no rightful authority over human beings; he is simply a usurper and his power is curbed.

As Page (1995:107) rightly points out that though the devil is defeated, this is not fully comprehensible in human experience. Garret (1989:58) says that though Satan was fallen from heaven, he still remains on the scene because he has not yet been made a "footstool for Christ's feet". The apparent contradiction of the devil who is defeated by Christ but is still active in his hostile work to God and the church can be best explained by the already and not-yet schema whereby God's kingdom has come into the world in Christ but not yet fully revealed. Arnold (1992:82) explains it thus: "Christians face the unique tension of having conquered Satan by virtue of their identification with Christ's work on the cross (cf. 1 Jn 2:13-14) and needing to continue the war with Satan while they still live in this world during the present evil age". New Testament scholars describe this paradox as an "eschatological tension" - the "now" but "not yet" of our Christian lives.

The new age has dawned, the kingdom of God is present, but only partially. The Lord Jesus makes it clear that in his own person, the kingdom or reign of God has already entered human history (see Green 1970:60-61 Shenk 1983:207-208; Ladd 1994; Khathide 1999a:51). To the question of the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God is among you" (Lk 17:20-21). Ridderbos (1962:61) explains that the evidence that the kingdom of God has come, is the overthrow of the wicked one and the evil spirits. Also, the presence of the kingdom of God in Christ is manifested in

his preaching-teaching of the kingdom and in the miraculous demonstrations of the power of the kingdom (Wimber 1992:30; Burgess *et al* 1988:523; Ridderbos 1962:65-76; cf. Lk 16:16). But Shenk (1983:208) correctly sounds a reminder that the kingdom of God is to be understood eschatologically. It was inaugurated by Jesus but has not yet reached its fulfilment. In agreeing with this stance, Burgess *et al* (1988:524) add: "while the kingdom of Satan has already been invaded by Jesus in the power of the Spirit, there yet remains a future eschatological consummation accompanied by the final destruction of Satan and the complete victory over all evil and its consequences" when the Son of Man will come in power and glory (Mt 24:30; Mk 8:38; Lk 9:26). The binding of Satan in the parable of the strong man should therefore be comprehended within this context and understanding.

According to Ferguson (1984:23), Luke 11:23, which states: "He who is not with me is against me and he who does not gather with me scatters" emphasises that there can be no neutrality in the conflict between Christ and Satan. Wimber (1992:40) describes this conflict and says that

> in our battle with Satan there are no demilitarised zones. There is never a lull in the fighting. We are born into the fight, and unless the Day of the Lord comes, we will die in the fight.

The theology of the kingdom of God is essentially one of conflict and conquest over the kingdom of Satan (Ladd 1974:51).

But the Beelzebul pericope will not be complete without touching on the evil spirit who has come out of a man but after not finding a resting place says, "I will return to my house whence I came from" (Lk 11:24) - a teaching of Jesus which illuminates a fact of which his contemporaries were already aware that those who had been exorcised did become repossessed (cf. Ling 1961:21). This is evidenced in the exorcism of a young boy when Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of him and never enter him again (Mk 9:25). That this was a possibility, and was recognised among the Jews to be likely, is evident from the words of Josephus, who, in praise of the exorcistic formulas of Solomon, says that these

will drive demons away "so that they never return" (*Antiquities* 8.2.5). In the opinion of Ling (1961:21), the significance of this teaching of Jesus on the subject is that it widens and brings the story not only to refer to the evil spirit which possesses the individual man but the evil spirit which possesses the whole generation. Following this very line of thought, Gooding (1987:225) says that in this story, Jesus was urging his contemporaries that, although the Judaism they belonged to had been purged of idolatry and thoroughly reformed by exile, they had to ardently seek the gift of the Holy Spirit. Schweizer (1984:195) cautions that no one can remain neutral like an empty house; either the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19) or an unclean spirit will dwell there.

In the Beelzebul controversy, we learn several lessons about demonology and the conflict between Christ and Satan. Unlike the Jewish exorcists of the time who viewed demons in an atomistic way, Jesus regarded evil forces as operating as a single entity under one ruler, Satan. The casting out of demons by the power of God, since no other agent comes into question, is a sign of the presence of the kingdom of God. The role of the Holy Spirit in exorcisms cannot be underestimated. In ushering in the kingdom of God and its diverse activities, the Holy Spirit plays a pivotal role. He is the source of Christ's power and that of his church. Though the hostility of the devil and his demons is still experienced by God's people and the rest of creation, their authority has been dealt a serious blow in the person, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. The incarnation forms part of this victorious process. By virtue of the church's identification with Christ, especially the cross, believers share in the victory of Christ over the evil forces. In this conflict, people are encouraged to stand on the victorious side of Christ. Lastly, there is a warning that it is dangerous to exorcise demons without replacing them by something good, for example, seeking the gift of the Holy Spirit or appropriate the kingdom of God personally and collectively.

3.5.7.3 SIMON MAGUS (ACTS 8:4-25)

In his commentary on the historical aspect of the early church, Kistemaker (1990:294) says that in Jerusalem, Satan's opposition to the church came in the form of the deceit of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), the imprisonment of the apostles (4:3; 5:18), the death of Stephen (7:60), and the great persecution

(8:1b). In Samaria, Satan employs different methods to thwart the growth of the church. He uses a man named Simon Magus, known in Samaria as the sorcerer (see also Witherington 1998:283).

As for the lexical overview of the meaning of the word *magoi*, Bruce (1951:184; cf. *idem* 1988:166; Moulton 1913) states that the *magoi* were originally a Median caste, a pre-Zoroastrian class (Herodotus i.101, 140), but he also goes on to say that the word is used in an extended sense of practitioners of various kinds of sorcery and even quackery. This Simon Magus of Acts 8 seems to be depicted by the narrator of Acts in this light.

Simon Magus plays a prominent part in post-apostolic Christian literature as the first heretic, the father of Gnosticism (Iranaeus *Against Heresies* 1.16; see Bruce 1951:183). Justin Martyr, who himself came from Samaria (see Stott 1990:148), in his *Apology* 1.26, tells how Simon by his magic power secured a following of devotees not only in Samaria but also in Rome, to which he went in the time of Claudius (*First Apology* 26.2). Justin's statement that he was honoured in Rome with a statue dedicated to Simoni Deo Sancto seems due to the misreading of an inscription to an ancient Italian deity which commenced in this manner SEMONI SANCO DEO FIDIO, 'to Semo Sancus the god of oats' (*CIL* vi. 567). In defence of Justin, Bruce (1951:184 - see footnote) feels that it is quite possible that the error was not Justin's, but that the Simonians in Rome (see Meeks 1977:137-142) regarded this or a similar inscription as providentially applicable to Simon, and used it for their worship (cf. Tertullian *Apol.* xiii.9: *'cum Binonem Magus Statua et inscriptione Sancti Dei inauguratis'*).

In the *Acts of Peter* 4-32, Simon is said to have corrupted the Christians in Rome by his false teaching and made authorities ill-disposed toward them, but to have been worsted at last in a magical contest with Peter (cf. Bruce 1988.166). But it is in the pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* and *Homilies* that the Simon legend is mostly curiously elaborated. In these writings, he not only appears as untiring adversary of Peter but seems, to some extent, to serve as a camouflage for Paul. When all this is compared with the basic story in Acts, the feeling among some scholars (cf. Bruce 1988:166-167; Garret 1989a:73) is that Luke knew more about Simon than he recorded; in this account he relates only what he

judged relevant to his purpose. Klauck (1994:98) in his observation, though, believes that what appears in the apocryphal and some post-apostolic literature about Simon Magus are only later embellishments of the basic story in Acts 8:4-24 (cf. Spencer 1992:126-127).

With a flashback, Luke introduces Simon who had previously practised magic and fascinated the people (v. 9). According to Luke, Simon had claimed that he, himself, was somebody great (cf. 5:36) while the people gave heed to him (v. 10-11) because of his magical artistry so much so that "they accepted his own account of himself and regarded him as the grand vizier of the supreme God, the channel both of divine power and of divine revelation" (Bruce 1988;167; cf. *PGM 4.1225-29*). In the people's confession that "this man is the divine power known as the Great Power" (v. 10), Kordel (1986:162) says that we could deduce that Simon probably taught, "I am the Great Power of God", meaning "I am God incarnate, and the proof of my claim lies in my magic". Since most magicians in the first century practised for money (see e.g. Plato *Laws* 909A, B; Philo *Special Laws* 3.100f; Lucian *Lover of Lies* 15, 16; Juvenal *Satire* 6.546; Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.7), this makes Garret (1979:286-288) to conclude that Simon too obviously practised for money again. Hermas cites this trait as one of the characteristics distinguishing the "soothsaying" *(manteuein)* false prophet from the prophet who is divinely inspired: the former "lives in great luxury and in many other deceits, and accepts rewards for his prophecy, and if he does not receive them he does not prophesy" (*Hermas Mandate* 11.12). Although there is sufficient evidence that avarice was characteristic of magicians in the first century, it is also true that in Acts Simon does not ask for money, but rather offers it (Garret 1989a:70). But Garret (1979:288) also remarks that, "If he [Simon] was willing to pay money for the power of conferring the spirit by the imposition of hands he would certainly intend to charge for the commodity when he passed it on". The very fact that Luke has Peter say of the Spirit as God's free gift that cannot be bought (8:20) further casts Simon's character in a bad light as a heavy money-minded person.

But before discussing the confrontation of Simon with Philip, Luke prefaces the narrative in this manner: "Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miracles he did, they all

paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city" (Acts 8:5-8). Luke discloses the full content of Philip's message, that is, the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ (v. 12). The proclamation of the dynamic saving rule of God in Christ by Philip led to exorcisms and many healings. By employing the phrase "kingdom of God", Luke uses it to illustrate "that Philip stressed the kingship and sovereignty of God in this world in opposition to the powers of Satan which Simon displayed through his magic" (Kistemaker 1990:297). Upon hearing the message of the kingdom that Philip was preaching, and seeing the miracles performed by him in the name of Jesus, many Samaritans "were baptised, both men and women" (v. 12). Luke also mentions that Simon believed and was baptised. According to Klauck (1994:98), we see that in the narrative, the Christian preachers are more than a match for Simon Magus and consequently he acknowledges their superiority by becoming a believer and getting baptised, himself. Klauck believes that we may presume that the responsive faith and subsequent baptism happened with the best intentions though he later relapses again motivated by his greed for more money and more spiritual power (see also Spencer 1992:122-126). Against the views that "Simon never converted at all" (Witherington 1998:288) or that "he views baptism not as sign of entering into a relationship with the Triune God but as an initiation into fellowship with that powerful spirit" (Kistemaker 1990:297), the opinion of Klauck and Spencer of seeing a relapsed faith in Simon is more attractive considering that "it is difficult to shed former perspectives" (Krodel 1986:163). This is well exemplified by the ethnocentric attitude of Peter (see Gal 2:11-21) for which Paul rebuked him. Peter's behaviour occurred despite the fact that he was part of the core of the early disciples of Christ. In the case of Simon whose behaviour could not be condoned, in my opinion, it was a matter of urgently needed Christian discipleship than necessarily a lack of faith or conversion.

After hearing that Samaria had accepted God's word, they sent Peter and John there to check out the reports. Peter and John did not invalidate the work of Philip by starting over with the Samaritans (cf. Lk 9:54; Jn 4:9); rather they press forward by praying for the Spirit to fall on them. They placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. In the view of Witherington (2001:192), here, as elsewhere in Acts, having the Spirit is the *sine qua non* of being a

Christian. Indeed, according to Luke's opinion, there was no such thing as a Christian without the Spirit (cf. Acts 19:1-7; see Khathide 1999a:103-134; 2002:86) This observation is also alluded to by Müller-Fahrenholz (1995:xii) who notices that the Spirit dimension in the Trinity has been notoriously overlooked by classical God-talk. But, according to Acts, this was not the case in the ancient church. The experience of the Holy Spirit formed part of a person's initiation process into the Christian faith, together with conversion and baptism.

When Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money so that he could also do the same (vv. 18-19). Luke does not explain what Simon saw in real terms. Krodel (1986:165) thinks that Simon perhaps had a magical understanding of the Spirit (see also Keener 1993:345). He speculates that when Simon saw what the apostles could do, he saw his chance of advancing to the position of super magician within the church. What Simon wanted was control of the Holy Spirit. He aspired to be a Christian magician with the power to transmit the Spirit to others. But in Peter's response, we read that the Spirit is God's free gift which no human being controls and that money cannot buy (v. 20). Peter curses Simon, upbraiding him for his evil heart (8:20-21, 23). But interspersed with Peter's words of condemnation is what appears to be a ray of hope for Simon: Peter tells him that he should repent of his wickedness and ask the Lord whether the intent of his heart might be forgiven him (v. 22). Assessing Simon's humble response is difficult (see Garret 1989a:72) in which he asks Peter and John to intercede on his behalf, "that nothing of the things you have spoken may come upon me" (v. 24). What makes it difficult to judge is whether Simon was sincere and genuine in his repentance. Some writers ask whether Simon, in requesting the prayers of the apostles, was motivated by fear, that is, wanting to escape punishment of the Lord. What is intriguing, though, is that the Bible has revealed to us only Simon's request for prayer and nothing more.

In his narrative, Luke leaves the reader with some significant clues in our understanding of the mission of the church. The church is under constant attack from Satan; if not by persecution, it is magical deception. As in Samaria, the church runs the risk of having its miracles, healings or exorcisms being understood as the better and stronger form of magic. Magic and all its related forms are not up-

rooted once and for all but remains a latent danger also for Christian believers, who more than once relapse (see Klauck 1994:99). The church is, nevertheless, assured of the Spirit's ability to handle manifestations and deceptions of magical artistry in the advance of its mission. The other thing that Luke concludes with in this narrative is that those who may wish to turn their backs on magical practices should be assured of the church's willingness to intercede for them and not judge them.

5.7.4 ELYMAS THE SORCERER (ACTS 13:4-12)

The story of Paul and Bar-Jesus (Elymas) has in many ways puzzled and stretched the minds of many commentators of the New Testament (see Garret 1989a:79). Nock (1972:187-188) has even gone to the extent of characterising the story as lame, among other things. But since these points of contention are not our main focus, we can, in short, agree with the observations made by Garret (1989a:80) that the narrative appears to be full of unlikelihoods or inconsistencies. But Garret also points out that Luke was not as inept a narrator as many commentators would suggest. Nevertheless, the analysis of the mythological background to the Bar-Jesus account and its literary function within the narrative of Luke-Acts, will suggest that the story made a definite and important point. Despite Nock's (1972:188) assessment of the story as poorly contrived, he lists three points made by it: "First it represented the Roman authorities as very sympathetic at the outset of Paul's active ministry in the Gentile world; secondly, it gave to Paul a *Gottesurteil* comparable with that declared by Peter on Ananias and Sapphira; thirdly, and this was perhaps important, it represented Christianity in very contrast with *magia*". Garret (1989a:80) also adds that the story "tied in nicely with other incidents in the two-volume account".

The conflict with the magician on Cyprus is the first significant event on Paul's first missionary journey. In the narrative, we are told that Barnabas and Saul (as he is still called in Acts 13:1-2 by Luke) are sent out by the church of Antioch in Syria, which served as their home base for several years. They go down to the next port, Seleucia, embark there, sail to Cyprus (13:4), reach Salamis at the east end of the island (13:5) and cover 100 or so miles to Paphos (see Klauck 1994:94), the capital of the island with the Roman administration, at the opposite

end (13:6). There they met not only the Roman proconsul, Sergius Paulus (see Witherington 1998:399-400), who shows interest in the gospel, but also a Jewish magician named Bar-Jesus in his entourage. Luke's silence about other mission stops along the way indicates that the Paul/Elymas incident is the only one that interests the evangelist (see Haenchen 1971:402). But perhaps the evangelist's focus on the incident is because Luke states that they went to Paphos at the invitation of the proconsul (v. 7). According to Witherington (1998:400), Sergius Paulus invited them presumably because they appeared to be travelling philosophers or rhetors because they offered public teaching. Garret (1989a:80) also observes that Saul (alias Paul) and Bar-Jesus (alias Elymas) are the central human characters in the narrative. Paul's companions, Barnabas and John, play distinctly subsidiary roles, and even the character of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, functions primarily as a foil for the confrontation between Paul and Elymas.

For a better understanding of the confrontation, Luke lists six things describing the portrait of Bar-Jesus (see Klauck 1994:95-97). First, Luke calls him a magician, a profession that Luke does not look at favourably (cf. Philo *On the Special Laws* 3:100-101). Second, in Acts 13:6 Luke adds a second attribute of false prophet, thus evoking the Old Testament which relates of the true prophet, who speaks and acts as God's messenger, and his opponents, the false prophets, who speak in their own name and act in their own interest (cf. Jer 23:9-40; 2 Chr 18). Third, Bar-Jesus is identified as a Jew. Klauck (1994:96) points out that, "first-century Judaism displays some fairly strong tendencies to become mixed up with more popular and unorthodox religious practices". Fourth, it is something to do with his proper name, Bar-Jesus. Jesus is a common Jewish name in the New Testament (cf. Jesus who is called Justus in Col. 4:11) and that is generally also true for the use of the patronymics, composed with *bar*, 'son', the Aramaic equivalent to the Hebrew *ben* (see Klauck 1994:96). Luke seems to take special delight in this combination, referring not only to Barabbas, 'son of the father', in the passion story (Lk 23:1 par.), but also to Barnabas, 'the son of encouragement' in Acts 4:36, and two different persons called Barsabbas (Acts 1:23; 15:22). But Bar-Jesus, nevertheless, means 'son of Jesus', and "Luke indicates that he recognises the hidden potencies and dangers of this name" (Klauck 1994:96). In Acts 13:10, Paul launches a counter-attack with the open address: "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness ...". Fifth, Luke

informs us that Bar-Jesus "was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus", probably serving as his court theologian, as his adviser and perhaps as his astrologer (this specialisation could be indicated by a peculiar feature of his punishment in v. 11: he will be 'unable to see the sun', which he needs for calculations - Klauck 1994:96; cf. *Antiquities of the Jews* 20:142). Sixth, in v. 8, Bar-Jesus gets a new name 'Elymas, the sorcerer' (magician - for that is the translation of his name) opposed them (see Yaure 1960:297f). Elymas saw in the Christian missionaries a threat to his prestige and livelihood (Witherington 1998:401; Stott 1990;219; Klauck 1994:96). So he tried to turn the proconsul from the faith.

This attempt the apostle saw as an extremely serious attack from the evil one so that he now confronted Elymas as Peter confronted Simon Magus in Samaria (Stott 1990:219). Luke chooses this moment to inform us that "Saul ... was also called Paul" (v. 9). It was appropriate for Luke to mention Saul's new name now as he moves into increasingly non-Jewish contexts. He does not call Paul 'Saul' again (see Hemer 1985:179f).

At this juncture, Garret (1989a:80) sees Paul and Bar-Jesus as human combatants who in turn represent superhuman figures. On the one hand, Paul acts under the power of the Holy Spirit. In the introduction to the episode, Luke has noted that the Spirit set Barnabas and Saul aside for the entire first missionary journey (13:2) and dictated to them their itinerary (v. 4). Furthermore, just before Bar-Jesus is rebuked (v. 9), Luke describes Paul as "filled with the Holy Spirit". On the other hand, Bar-Jesus is closely linked with the figure of Satan. Paul calls the magician-false prophet a "son of the devil" and "enemy of all righteousness". Paul also accuses Bar-Jesus of being "full of all deceit and all fraud" (cf. Barret 1979:289). The proximity of this vitriolic charge (v. 10a) to Luke's description of Paul as "filled with the Holy Spirit", serves to contrast these characters in the sharpest terms possible; Luke would have us see Bar-Jesus as controlled by Satan, the very antithesis of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the confrontation between Bar-Jesus and Paul is also a confrontation between the Holy Spirit and the devil (cf. *Martyrdom of Isaiah* 1:8-9; 2:1; *Jubilees* 48:9-11; *Testament of Naphtali* 8:6; *CD* 5:18-19; *Hermas Mandate* 11:3).

The opposition of Elymas to the message of salvation preached by Paul, makes the apostle to react in holy wrath. Paul, empowered by the Holy Spirit, curses Elymas with blindness and thus exerts his apostolic authority and this episode parallels Peter's rebuke of Simon, the sorcerer (8:20-23; see Kistemaker 1990:462). From the curse of Paul on Elymas, we realise a few things: First, it is not Paul who punishes Elymas, but the Lord: "And now the hand of the Lord is against you" (v. 11a). Second, we see the Lord's mercy and grace when Elymas is told that his punishment would only be temporary. Third, God's affliction on Elymas with a scourge of blindness causes him to live in confinement and therefore probably hindering his work as the proconsul's astrologer (cf. Klauck 1994:96). Paul could relate to this condition; in his state of physical blindness his spiritual blindness was removed so that he was able to understand God's purposes (Acts 9:8-18; see Kistemaker 1990:463; Bruce 1951:258; Chrysostom *Hom.* 28; *Letter of Aristeas* 316). In the sharp conflict between Paul and Elymas, Paul triumphs while his opponent gropes in darkness: "Immediately a mist and darkness fell upon him" (v. 11b). The immediacy of divine punishment descending upon Elymas astounds the proconsul who sees in Paul a true prophet of the Lord and Elymas, the fraud. In the story we are told that Sergius Paulus, seeing what had happened, was brought to faith in Christ (v. 12) whereas it is not stated that Elymas repented and believed.

Luke evidently wants us "to discover some hidden parallel between the Jewish itinerant preacher and miracle-worker Paul and the Jewish professional magician with the telling name Bar-Jesus, between the now-true prophet and the false prophet" (Klauck 1994:97). In the view of Williams (1964:156), this story proves the superiority of Christianity over even a form of magic which could impress a Roman official and it also balances the story of Peter and Simon Magus, suggesting that Paul was as good an apostle as Peter. By stressing that Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit when he confronted Elymas, Luke endeavours to show the difference between miracles whose source is God (the Holy Spirit) and those that are magic-inspired whose author is the devil. In the Bar-Jesus incident, one can discern a pattern of conflict between good and evil, between the purposes of God and the purposes of Satan (Garret 1989a:87). In this episode, Luke brings his reader a dramatic power encounter in which the Holy Spirit overthrew the evil one, the apostle confounded the sorcerer and the gospel triumphed over the occult (see Stott 1990:220).

It is notable that Johnson and Tannehill come up with somewhat amusing explanations of the Bar-Jesus incident (cf. also Garret 1989a:84f). Johnson (1992:227) says, "Perhaps we are to see Saul, at the moment he takes on his new and proper identity as Paul the Apostle, fighting the final battle with the 'Jewish false prophet' within him, blinding the hostile magician that is his former self at the moment he assumes his role as 'light to the Gentiles'" (see Acts 13:47). Tannehill (1990:15), on the other hand, states, "Paul in denouncing Elymas is rejecting his own former personality and value structures, which remain threatening potentialities within himself". Although these explanations by both Johnson and Tannehill seem attractive adornments, they should not distract our focus from the basic story of what Luke says, namely, the confrontation between the power of the Holy Spirit in Paul and the power of Satan in the life and profession of Elymas, the magician-false prophet. It is also evident that Luke intends showing his community that God's power is victorious over the kingdom of darkness.

3.5.7.5 THE PHILIPPIAN SLAVE-GIRL (ACTS 16:16-18)

In Acts, Luke gives a history of how the church progresses from the infancy stages. In addition, he also relates how Satan tries to obstruct the work of God's servants. For instance, in Samaria the sorcerer offered Peter and John money to obtain the gift of the Holy Spirit (8:18-19); on the island of Cyprus, Elymas opposed Saul and Barnabas by trying to persuade the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, not to believe in Jesus Christ (13:7-8). Likewise, in Philippi, Satan uses a demon-possessed girl to thwart the work of the missionaries (see Kistemaker 1990:592).

On the way to the place of prayer, a slave girl who has a spirit of divination (and not just demented or mad - see Barclay 1976:124; cf. Bruce 1951:315). Luke writes that she has a spirit called Python, which translators render "divination" (see Wright 1978:558-559). The word *Python* referred to the legendary snake that guarded the Delphic Oracle, a sanctuary in central Greece, but was slain by the god of prophecy, Apollo. Apollo was thought to be embodied in the snake and to inspire 'pythonesses', his female devotees, with clairvoyance, although other people thought of them as ventriloquists (see Plutarch *de defectu oraculorum* ix.414 E; cf. Trebilco 1989:51f). Luke regards the slave girl as possessed by an evil spirit (cf. Stott 1990:264). Luke also tells us that the demonised girl was exploited by her owners for whom she made a lot of money by fortune-telling (v. 16).

Empowered by the spirit in her, the slave girl follows Paul and Silas for many days, crying out, "these men are servants of the Most High God and proclaim to you a way of salvation" (v. 17). The term 'Most High God' is a bit confusing here. For Witherington (2001:260; 1998:495), the term 'most high god' reflects the existence of a pantheon of deities dominated by a supreme being, Zeus or Jupiter. Witherington explains that 'servants of the most high god' is not a monotheistic remark, but simply a "recognition that they serve a very powerful deity perhaps indeed the most powerful one" (cf. *NewDocs* 1:25). Bruce (1951:315) understands the term 'Most High God' as a divine title current among both Jews and Greeks and thus provided them with a common denominator in referring to the Deity because, according to him, the Jewish title is a translation of the Hebrew *El Elyon* (cf. Mk 5:7; Nm 24:16; Isa 14:14; Dan 3:26; 1 *Esdras* 2:3). In the opinion of Stott (1990:264), the term 'Most High God' as a term of the Supreme Being, was applied by the Jews to Yahweh and by the Greeks to Zeus. Williams (1964:194) explains that the Greek *Hypsistos* was the name for Yahweh not only among Greek-speaking Jews but also among Gentiles who worshipped Yahweh without accepting all the demands of Judaism. In his gospel and Acts, Luke uses the expression *Most High* seven times with reference to God (see Lk 1:32, 35, 76; 6:35; 8:28; Acts 7:48; 16:17). In the Septuagint, the term generally refers to God.

Another unsettling thing in the statement of the demonised girl was the confession that "these men ... proclaiming to you the way of salvation" (v. 17). The term *soteria* was a current term among Gentiles as well as Jews; as used by Gentiles, it combined the idea of salvation in the more spiritual sense with that of bodily healing (see Bruce 1951:316). According to Kistemaker (1990:593), in itself the confession is noble provided that it comes from the heart of a believer and in the form of the declaration of faith. Witherington (2001:260) believes that Paul is rightly disturbed by the girl's pronouncement, for it not only leaves a false impression, but also comes from a dubious source. Kistemaker (1990:593) views the acknowledgement as coming indirectly from Satan, who, by using this demonised girl, is trying to diminish the effectiveness of Paul's ministry. Kistemaker contends that if Paul had accepted the acknowledgement without discernment (see 1 Cor 12:10 - "to another distinguishing between spirits"), he would have given the devil credit and thus approved his motives.

After many days of being followed by the demonised slave girl with her shouting, Paul becomes grieved or dismayed by this inappropriate and unwelcome kind of publicity (see Stott 1990:265; Kistemaker 1990:593). His distress leads him to turn and exorcise her by saying to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her." Obeying Paul's command, the spirit leaves her (v. 18). As Jesus healed the demon-possessed people in Israel, so, through his servant, Paul, he casts out the demon from the slave girl in Philippi. As Jesus gave his apostles power over unclean spirits (Mk 6:7), so he endows Paul with the same authority (see Kistemaker 1990:593). The result is that the demon instantly leaves the girl. Her owners lose a valuable source of income and their fury brings unpleasant consequences for the missionaries (Acts 16:19-40).

Klauck (1994:99) sees in the episode a demonstration that Christians have other options than consulting fortune-tellers and pagan soothsayers who are clearly inferior. Luke also incriminates the exploitation of human beings like the poor slave girl through merciless owners only interested in their profit. In the story we also observe that, as in the case of Christ with evil spirits, the demonised girl correctly identifies the servants of the Most High God and their message of salvation. This correct identification of what is true by the demonised girl, as is common with most mediums, usually leads to more enslavement by Satanic forces. Such imitation of the truth by the mediums, who are basically agents of the kingdom of darkness, is aimed at drawing people away from God. In the Old Testament, consulting mediums or fortune-tellers was forbidden probably because their source of information was not God (Ex 22:18; Lv 20:6; Dt 18:10-13; cf. 2 Ki 21:6).

The deliverance of the slave girl leads Krodel (1986:308) to conclude that all healings performed in Jesus' name manifest not only his superior power but the all-encompassing purpose of God, articulated in the words of Isaiah by Jesus in his inaugural address and continued by his servants in his name: "to proclaim release to the captives" by word and deed and "to set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Lk 4:18). The defeat of the evil powers is essential to the establishment of the rule of God and his Christ (Lk 11:20). Although Luke does not explicitly refer to either her conversation or her baptism, the fact that her deliver-

ance took place between the conversions of Lydia and the jailer may cause a reader to infer that she too became a member of the Philippian church (see Kistemaker 1990:593; Stott 1990:265).

3.5.7.6 THE SPIRITUAL CONFLICT IN EPHESUS

Wendland (1999:203) writes that it would be no exaggeration to say that the leading city of Ephesus, as well as the surrounding areas of Asia Minor, was possessed by the powers at the time Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesian church. Multitudes were afflicted by powers that were perceived to be diabolical in action and intention. They therefore had to be continually placated, counteracted or combated by supernatural means, namely, through a diverse range of magical practices (see Keener 1993:378) and via various appeals to Artemis (or Diana, as the Romans called her). In Roman lore, Diana was a symbol of virginity. But in the ancient metropolis of Ephesus, Artemis symbolised sexual fertility (see Boice 1997:328; Arnold 1992a:25-26). Boice describes the idols that represent Diana that have been discovered recently, as showing a rather grotesque, multi-breasted female figure.

Thus, Ephesus was both a centre of the magical arts, a home for magicians, sorcerers and charlatans of all sorts (cf. Arnold 1992a:14), and it was also the base for the prestigious cult of Artemis, which was manifested in particular by a magnificent temple dedicated to her honour. According to Pliny *(Nat. Hist. 36.96),* the temple measured 220 x 425 feet (55.10 x 115m). The grandeur and beauty of the temple led Antipater (*Anth. Pal.* 9.58) to classify it as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The Greek historian, Pausinias (*Descr.* 4.31.8) declared that the size of the temple surpassed all known buildings (cf. Arnold 1993:250). Keener (1993:379) also adds that, as often religious piety becomes a thin cloak for personal economic interests, it was so in the case of the temple of Artemis which served as a bank as well as a temple and people from all over the world deposited funds there (cf. Acts 19:23-41). It was widely recognised as a place of asylum and sanctuary (see Witherington 1998:587).

Insofar as the universality of the cult of Artemis is concerned, Demetrius attested to her greatness when he said, "All who worship her in Asia and the whole world

will suffer the loss of her magnificence" (Acts 19:27). Archeologists have found evidence that the goddess, Artemis, was worshipped in at least 33 places in the Mediterranean world (cf. Newman and Nida 1972:373; Keener 1993:380; Morgan 1946:358). Her worship was conducted by eunuch priests called *megabyzoi* (Strabo xiv. 1.23; cf. Wheaton 1962:311). The silversmiths who made small votary shrines, portraying the goddess in a recess with her lions in attendance, or possibly souvenir models of the temple, caused the riot when Paul was ministering there (Acts 19:23-25; 20:1). Keener (1993:380) even goes on to say that in antiquity, Artemis was said to have commanded followers in visions to spread her cult. All this serves to illustrate some unusual spiritual activity in the city of Ephesus during the days of Paul. Arnold (1992a:38) rightfully describes the significance of Ephesus as "a strategic centre for Asia Minor - commercially, economically, in communications, and not the least of all, in terms of its religious influence" (see also Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 4.10).

What was occurring in Ephesus, namely, the fear-laden interaction between the unseen world of spirits and the practice of magic on the part of the masses was characteristic of what was happening throughout the Hellenistic world in which there was belief that the spirit world exercised influence over virtually every aspect of life (cf. Wendland 1999:204). The goal of the magician was to discern the helpful spirits from the harmful ones and learn the distinct operations and the relative strengths and authority of spirits. Through this knowledge, means could be constructed (with spoken or written formulas, amulets, etc.) for the manipulation of the spirits in the interests of the individual person (Arnold 1992a:18). The potentially helpful spirits were thus enlisted by means of magic, either directly or through certain ritual specialists (diviners, magicians, etc.) in the aid of otherwise defenceless folk to provide the power necessary to protect them against both the covert influence and then overt attacks of virulent counterparts, or demons, as well as their human manipulators, that is, sorcerers.

It is within this context that even the worship of Artemis and related deities, especially *Hekate*, the goddess of the Underworld, should be understood. Artemis was believed to possess supreme cosmic powers which enabled her to exercise absolute control over all demonic forces, including the malevolent spirits of the dead. Arnold (1992a:23) remarks that it is no wonder then that she was enthusi-

astically worshipped and invoked by many of those residing in Asia Minor and beyond who were plagued by the constant fear of some spirit-related attack. There was a close link between this allegiance to Artemis and the practice of magic since people assumed that "the might of Ephesian Artemis lay behind the ancient (apotropaic) formula, but, more than that, the power also of primitive magic and religion" (Arnold 1992a:23). Thus, in this syncretistic age, one mode of worship typically incorporated and complemented elements of another, with the appeal to Artemis for divine protection often appearing, for example, in some magical rite designed for the same purpose. This explains the connection that made Artemis also a prominent figure in the popular practice of astrology and angelology whereby believers attempted, through various ritualistic techniques, to alter their present undesirable state or a certain predicated fate by controlling the astral powers of the universe (Arnold 1992a:28; 1996:20-31; Pattemore 1994:119). This was also evident in the Hellenistic mystery religions (see Metzger 1983:66f; Green 1970:22f) in which adherents actively sought some manner of intimate mystical contact with the divine (cf. Wendland 1999:205).

This world that was obsessed with the mystical and/or spiritual power, helps us to comprehend better the message and ministry of Paul to the Ephesian community and other communities. Luke depicts Paul following his usual pattern in Acts, showing him initially spending his days in the city preaching about the kingdom of God in the synagogues of the Jews (Acts 19:8). For three months this strategy works, but then some of the Jews become stubborn and malign the Way before the crowds (v. 9), with the result that Paul is compelled to withdraw with his disciples. For the next two years he spends his time arguing daily in the hall of Tyrannus, "so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (v. 10).

It is at this point that Luke relates that God did extraordinary miracles through the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs and aprons were carried away from his body to the sick and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them (v. 11). Kistemaker (1990:685) observes an interesting parallel in Acts. He says that after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, God performed extraordinary miracles through the apostles (2:43; cf. 5:12). Before the Spirit came upon the Samaritans, God worked miraculous signs through Philip (8:6, 13).

When the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples in Ephesus, God made his power known through miracles effected by Paul. God had already given both Paul and Barnabas power to perform miraculous signs and wonders in Iconium during the first missionary journey (14:3). Another parallel pointed out by Kistemaker is that of Peter's shadow falling on the sick who were healed when he passed by (5:15); Paul's handkerchiefs and aprons cured the sick. Handkerchiefs (Latin *sudaria*) and aprons (Latin *semicinctia*) would be used by Paul in his trade as a leather-worker or tent-maker (see Williams 1964:221). Kistemaker (1990:685) says this refers to Paul's cloths that were used to remove perspiration and to protective coverings that likely were soiled and stained from daily use in the workshop. These items were taken to the sick who, upon touching them, would be healed; evil spirits would leave demon-possessed people. But Witherington (1998:579) is of the opinion that the image that is conjured up is that Paul's reputation as a miracle worker got around and people came to see him while he was at work, and upon their request he gave them items of his clothing, used in his trade.

Garret (1989a:91) notices that Luke's organisation of the narrative parallels his organisation of the story about Philip and Simon Magus: There, too, Luke depicted a missionary who, expelled by the Jews, initiates a highly successful ministry of preaching the word and healing. There, too, the picture of successful missionary activity serves as a foil for an ensuing portrayal of reprehensible deeds by a wonder-worker who is outside the Christian fold. Philip's healing actions and missionary message had been regarded by Luke as mutually reinforcing: release from the grip of unclean spirits and of paralysis and lameness had visibly enacted Philip's proclamation of the release brought by "the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus". So also now, Luke likely views Paul's remarkable healings in Ephesus as consistent with the message that he preaches, indeed as part and parcel of that message. In her view, Garret (1989a:91) says that in depicting Paul as bringing about the obedient departure of diseases and unclean spirits, Luke implies that the authority of the spirits' lord, Satan, who strives to keep the possessed and diseased under his control, has been eclipsed by the authority which is invested in Paul to heal and about which he speaks.

Evidently, Paul had used the name of Jesus in performing miracles of healing and of ridding people of evil spirits (see Newman and Nida 1972:367). Luke now tells of certain Jewish exorcists who seem to have looked upon the name of Jesus as another magic formula by which they could chase out evil spirits for profit (very similar to the understanding of Simon Magus in 8:19). This is another evidence that Jews and Jewish things played a prominent part in ancient magic; papyri reveal the use of magic of such Jewish names as Abraham, Saboath, Iao or Iabe (Yahweh), etc (see Bruce 1951:358). The name of Jesus was used by those who were not his disciples (cf. Mk 9:38; Lk 9:49f). The Paris magical papyrus 574 (lines 3018ff) contains, "I adjure you by Jesus the God of the Hebrews". Such use of the name of Jesus was later censured by the Rabbis (cf. Tosefta, *Hullin* ii.22f; TJ *Shabbath* xiv.4.14d).

As "success encourages imitation" (Witherington 1998:580), Luke relates that seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jew and a chief priest (his identification is a much debated issue - see Bruce 1951:358; Newman and Nida 1972:366-367; Kistemaker 1990:688), tried to exorcise evil spirits by using an incantation that says, "I adjure you by the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out" (see Josephus *Ant.* 8.42-49). In depicting some of the Jewish exorcists as mentioning "the Jesus whom Paul preaches," Luke indicates that the exorcists were patterning their own actions after those of Paul (see Garret 1989a:92). Witherington (1998:580) says that this bears witness to the syncretistic environment that existed in Ephesus. One day, when the seven sons of Sceva tried their magical formula, the evil spirit responded as follows: "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" Luke's description of the evil spirit who talks through the mouth of the demon possessed person, parallels accounts in the synoptic gospels (cf. Mt 8:29; Mk 1:24; Lk 4:41). In these accounts, the demons acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God. In Ephesus, the demon, hearing the formula spoken by the exorcists, responds with full knowledge: "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" (Acts 19:15; see Kistemaker 1990:689).

Realising that the Jewish exorcists had no power or authority, the demon vents his wrath on the seven sons of Sceva. The demonised man, given superhuman strength, leaps on the exorcists and subdues them. Luke describes the demoniac giving the exorcists such a beating that they narrowly escape from the house in

which they were. Luke tells us that they were so overpowered that they fled from that house naked and wounded (v. 16). Doubtless, Luke here engages "in the humorous and burlesque style" (Klauck 1994:100; see also Witherington 1998:581). The incident shows, on the one hand, the embarrassment and lack of authority of the Jewish exorcists and, on the other, the promotion of the cause of the gospel. In showing the failure of the exorcists or magicians (v. 16) and the success of Paul in driving out evil spirits (v. 11), Luke indicates that Paul, the humble leather-worker, has more power than the magicians (cf. Gen 41:8-25; Ex 7:11; see Keener 1993:379).

The consequences of this incident are far-reaching. Luke relates that "when this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honour" (v. 17). According to Kistemaker (1990:689), through this incident, God confirms that he is in control of the situation. He thwarts Satan's strategy of usurping Jesus' power and thus displays his sovereign rule over the demonic forces even in the Gentile world. The result was that the name of the Lord Jesus became the topic of conversation both among Jews and Greeks in Ephesus. Lenski (1944:796) suggests that people asked themselves: "Paul used that name, and the demons were expelled; the exorcists used it, and were themselves crushed. What was back of that name?" Stott (1990:306) points out that, though there is power in the name of Jesus, that is, saving and healing power, as Luke is at pains to illustrate (e.g. Acts 3:6, 16; 4:10-12), its efficacy is not mechanical, nor can people use it second-hand. Garret (1989a:93) is of the opinion that what is important is not whether the exorcist "knows" the name of Jesus, but whether the demons "know" the exorcist as one who has truly been invested with authority to call upon that holy name. Such authority had been bestowed by Jesus upon his disciples during his earthly ministry (Lk 10:17-19; cf. Mk 16:17-18). On reflecting on the incident, Luke shows that the incident had a wholesome effect in that, when this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were "all" (stressing the all-encompassing nature of the incident - see Kistemaker 1990:690) terrified and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honour.

The power encounter of Jesus with the kingdom of Satan was not yet complete. After healing and exorcism, came deliverance from occult practices (v. 18-19).

Luke describes how the power of the gospel arrested the widespread influence of magic in Ephesus. The city was a centre of magic arts, as archeological discoveries confirm (see Wendland 1999:203; Arnold 1992a:38; Klauck 1994:100). The general practice of magic was so pervasive that even Christians were not immune (cf. Kistemaker 1990:690). Luke refers to Christians who had come to faith in Christ but who continued to practise the magic arts. Having heard about the incident involving the sons of Sceva, these believers realised that such magic practices were "deviant and inconsistent with the Christian faith" (Aune 1986:216). Luke tells that the erring Christians confessed and reported that they were practising magic. They realised that their behaviour was unbecoming to a Christian lifestyle and that they had to repent of their evil deeds. Kistemaker (1990:690) describes them as believers who were still practising divination and sorcery, interpreting signs and omens, engaging in black magic, casting charms, or consulting the dead - things that they were told that long ago God had forbidden these detestable practices (Dt 18:10-14).

Upon hearing the embarrassment and defeat of the sons of Sceva by a demoniac, these believers repented and turned from their evil deeds. We are told that those who practised magic brought their valuable books (see Newman and Nida 1972:369) to be burned on a bonfire. Luke's term "books" or "scrolls" probably refers to magical papyri which were rolled up in small cylinders or lockets used as amulets around the neck (see Keener 1993:379). Some of these documents containing magical incantations were known as *Ephesia grammata* (Ephesian letters or writings).

The Ephesian believers who were obviously convicted by the word of God and his almighty acts, showed their repentance by bringing their books or magical papyri to be burned, something which was common in antiquity as a demonstration of the repudiation of the books' contents (see Keener 1993:379). Books that were considered as dangerous or subversive, were burned. For example, Augustus is said to have collected whatever Greek or Latin prophetic writings in circulation that were anonymous or written by those of low repute, and burned them (*Augustus* 31). Livy speaks of the burning of books in the sight of the people that were subversive of true and authorised religion (Livy 40.29.3-14; cf. Jer 36:20-27; 1 *Macc.* 1:56). Witherington (1998:582), however, shows us that

unlike other books or documents that were seized and burned in antiquity, the owners in the Lucan narrative are voluntarily burning their own books. In view of the fact that Luke stresses the worth of books, it is clear that their act was of spiritual significance. Instead of realising the monetary value of their magic spells by selling them, the willingness on the part of the believers to throw them on a bonfire "was a signal of genuineness of their conversion" (Stott 1990:307). Witherington (1998:583) writes: "These actions of public renunciation are seen as clearing a path for the gospel, or can be said to be the proper negative response to pagan religion by those who had turned to the Christian faith."

It is clear from the spiritual conflict in Ephesus that Luke viewed magic, divination, sorcery and other occultic practices as altogether Satanic and evil. The pericope reveals that he would not tolerate even the briefest continuation of magical or Satanic practices by the Ephesians after their profession of belief. The connection of verse 20 with the whole incident shows that the purgation of magic in the midst of God's people led to the word of God spreading and prevailing mightily. The obstacle of the practice of magic in Ephesus, which led to trafficking in evil spirits and its concomitant loyalty to Satan, had been overcome. Consequently, the word of God grew, showing its superior power over the kingdom of the forces of evil (see Garret 1989a:96-99; Witherington 1998:583). The picture given by Luke here is that of a shrinking dominion of the devil as the word of God "grew".

3.5.7.7 CONCLUSIONS

The examples of power encounter that we have listed from Luke-Acts, namely, the Baalzebul controversy, Simon Magus, Elymas (Bar-Jesus), the anonymous Philippian slave-girl and the spiritual conflict in Ephesus, serve to illustrate Luke's belief in the sufficiency of the gospel of Christ for people who profess the Christian faith. In these episodes, Luke seems to be challenging the split-level faith of the early believing community. Luke wholeheartedly condemns dependence on occultic practices like magic, divination, sorcery, astrology, etc. for believers. Luke appears aware of the contamination of the faith of the young believers in the world where magic and other occultic practices prevailed. He also uses instances of confrontation with magic and evil spirits to show that the demise of

Satan has come and the kingdom of God in Christ inaugurated. By defeating the magicians and winning away their adherents, who include the Samaritans, Sergius Paulus and the residents of Ephesus, Christian missionaries demonstrate that their authority surpasses that of Satan. Another interesting observation is the interrelatedness between the occult and economics. In one way or another, money plays a role in the actions and reactions, especially among those benefiting from occultic or magical practices. The fear of loss of income was paramount in their minds. In the defeat of the magicians or occult practitioners, Luke also shows how the message and ministry of Christian missionaries challenged the ungodly, demonic, long-established, religio-economical and social ways and structures in which people in the first-century Mediterranean world found themselves. Instead of living in fear of spirits and fate, thus exposing themselves to be victims and captives of magical agents, the people could get hope in the proclamation of the liberating message of Christian preachers. What is also obvious in the incidents discussed above, is that Luke points beyond the visible human arena to the invisible spiritual one, where the Holy Spirit repeatedly meets the spirits of the devil and defeats him. Luke's anti-magic apology is discernible in his insistence that it is ultimately God who is active in all the miraculous ministry of Jesus and his disciples. Even the demons testify to the difference between Christian miracle workers and magicians, acknowledging the right of Christians to use the name of Jesus but denying the right of magicians to do likewise (Acts 19:15).

3.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, we have sketched through the theology and special interests of the author of Luke-Acts, showing his emphasis on, inter alia, the marginalised in society and women, and how Jesus responded to their needs. Of special interest again is the author's focus on the role of the Holy Spirit and prayer in the life of Jesus and in the church's mission of proclaiming God's dynamic rule over all the forces of the enemy. In his two-volume work, like other evangelists and other New Testament writings, Luke seems to show no doubt in believing that the invisible world (with its human agents) impacted on the visible world. In his writings, Luke acknowledges the existence of the devil, spirits and the use of magic as part of apotropaic measures that people used against the forces of evil. What we also notice in Luke's writings is that Christ has power and authority over the

forces of the enemy and in turn he has delegated this authority to his followers. Their authority is a gift from Jesus (Lk 10:19) and, ultimately, from God (Acts 8:20).

In the next chapter, our focus turns to the belief in spirits in Africa, which generally shares some commonalities with the first-century Mediterranean communities, especially as exemplified by the Lucan audience.