CHAPTER 5: THE GOOD SAMARITAN

5.1 Interpreting the Lukan parables

It has become common practice to study the parables ascribed to Jesus independently of the literary context in which they have been transmitted. This practice can largely be attributed to the fact that in the past few decades, especially after a period of focus on the metaphorical nature of Jesus' parables, the parables have largely been interpreted by *historical Jesus* scholars. Their approach has been fruitful. It has undoubtedly contributed to a better understanding of the historical Jesus. It has also raised awareness of the growth and transmission of the Jesus tradition, and the change in audience, depending on the setting of the parable. For the historical Jesus the setting is first-century Palestine, with the implied audience being Israelites. But with Luke the audience changes. It is a mixed audience, consisting now of both Israelites and Gentiles. The change of audience means that the way the parable is *heard* changes, depending on the religious and cultural associations provoked by the parable. Historical Jesus research assumes an Israelite audience with the parable's *Sitz im Leben* being that of first-century Palestine. Efforts to reconstruct the original *voice* of Jesus' parables have rightly been abandoned: the focus is on a reconstruction of the "original form" or the "originating structure" of the parables (cf, *inter alia*, Scott 1990:17-19). Although this approach has realised great advantages, it has not been without its disadvantages. One such disadvantage is that by focusing on the hypothetically reconstructed form of the parables the *written* form of the parables as transmitted to us by the Gospel writers have often been neglected (Vorster 1985:27). This applies not only to the parables themselves, but also to their literary context (co-text), both at micro and macro level, in which the parables have been embedded. It needs to be noted that not only are parables a narrative, but they are a narrative *within* a narrative and as such constitute an integral part of the Gospel narrative itself. To gain better understanding of the parables, one

needs to take the Gospel narrative as a whole into account. In chapter 4 we endeavoured to gain such an understanding of Luke's story at a macro level.

A second disadvantage, directly related to the first, is that with the profound focus on the historical Jesus, studies on how parables transmit their meaning, how they refer, and to what they refer has largely been confined to the reconstructed parables of Jesus (cf Vorster 1985:27-32). That parables within different contexts mean different things, has been indicated above. Semantics have taught us that there is no such thing as a *Grundbedeutung* (see Barr 1961:107-160; Louw 1976:20-51). Meaning depends upon the context in which a word is used. Like words, parables are open to a multiplicity of meanings depending upon their contextual setting. Because contexts are never fixed, a parable that is retold in a different context invariably leads to its expressing a different meaning, depending both upon the context in which the story is told and the aim pursued by the story teller or writer. In the case of the *Sondergut* parables of Luke, there is no consensus among scholars that the parables can indeed be traced back to Jesus himself. Schmithals (1998:12-16) for example argues for a Lukan composition of the parables. But assuming that the parables in Luke's Gospel can be traced back to the historical Jesus, one should be careful not to make "value judgements" on how a particular parable of Jesus is used by Luke. Funk (1996:170) attributes the meaning of the parable of "The Good Samaritan" in Luke to a "(mis)understanding" of the parable as used by Jesus. Similarly, Crossan (1973:63-66) invests great efforts in explaining how Luke in the use of Jesus' parables confused the metaphorical with the literal. A word like "misunderstanding" is however too harsh a word to use. First, one needs to accept that Luke's motives for telling the parable may have been very different to those of Jesus. To use a parable for a different meaning does not presuppose a misunderstanding. It would be more meaningful to pursue the question of to what extend there may be continuity or discontinuity in particular aspects of Jesus' and Luke's teaching. Second, historical Jesus scholars need to be humble about the possibilities of their

discipline. Although both the originating form of a parable as well as its *Sitz im Leben* can be reconstructed with some certainty, it is impossible to reconstruct with any degree of certainty the historical situation in which Jesus uttered these parables (cf Vorster 1985:64-65). In telling these stories, Jesus obviously wanted to tell his audience about something. This something is generally regarded to be the Kingdom of God. But in talking to his followers various *reasons* may have given rise to Jesus telling a particular parable, some of which may be related to something that cropped up in their conversation. These reasons have been lost to us. This is not the case in Luke's narrative, however. Luke himself supplies the immediate context in which his parables have meaning. Our task is to analyse this context (the immediate co-text) in order to gain understanding of the meaning of the parables as Luke used them.

What has been said about meaning of parables also applies to referent. Although great emphasis has been placed on determining what Jesus' parables refer to, and how they refer, this has not always been so with the parables within their Gospel setting. Again, it has generally been accepted that the parables of Jesus, once the first-order reference (the literal reference) has been suspended, *refer* to the Kingdom of God and that this is done by means of a metaphorical process in which often paradoxical entities are juxtaposed so as to elicit a new vision of reality and God. However the backdrop against which "Kingdom of God" is referred to in the Gospel narratives has often been disregarded. The terms "intratextuallity" and "extratextuallity" serve to explain this backdrop. Our thesis is that God's Kingdom is intratextually referred to against the tension created between the opposing points of view of Jesus and his witnesses on the one hand, and the Israelites leaders and those who adopt their point of view on the other hand. This means that entities juxtaposed in the parables reflect the tension of the two opposing points of view in Luke's narrative. It is a tension within the "narrative world" of Luke. Notably, most parables of Luke are told in a conflict situation between Jesus and the Israelite leaders, in the course of which somebody "tests"

Jesus, or someone "complains" about his actions.

In the parables, the contrasting points of view are accentuated by the juxtaposition of an Israelite with a Samaritan, an insider with an outsider, a rich person with a poor person, and so forth. Again it would be too harsh to suggest that Luke through lack of insight changed the vastly supreme "metaphorical stories" of Jesus into mere "example stories" (Crossan 1973:56). We believe that Kingdom of God is referred to *differently* by Luke, the difference being the Lukan frame of reference within which a particular parable features. Especially neglected has been the endeavour to explain how the Kingdom of God extratextually is referred to, that is, seen from within the political, social, and cultural context of *Luke's community*. That is the "contextual world "of Luke. Luke's narrative in general, and his parables in particular, are addressed to a particular audience (the implied or intended readers). Our analysis above (chapter 4) has shown that Luke's audience is itself characterised by tension. The followers of Jesus experience rejection from their Israelite counterparts, and the Lukan community itself is faced with the prospect of looming persecution. They are in need of assurance. The parables of Luke, characterised by a tension of opposites, reflect this tension. So the tension within the parables is a tension with which Luke's community can identify. In telling the parables, Luke however creates a new vision of reality and of God which Luke's audience is encouraged to embrace and in which the tension of their everyday lives can make sense. Accepting this new reality testifies the inbreaking of God's Kingdom.

Our analysis of Luke's parables follows in three major stages: (1) A description of the tension that constitutes the paradoxical backdrop of the parable, that is among other the repertoire on which Luke draws; (2) a detailed analysis of the text and immediate co-text of the parable; and (3) an interpretation of the parable against both the narrative and the contextual world of Luke in an effort to challenge conventional perceptions of reality and God in order to overcome religious, political and social segregation and to further the work for reconciliation.

The latter constitutes the focus of our study.

5.2 Judean-Samaritan tension

It has been noted that Luke's parables are invariable characterised by the juxtaposition of opposites. On a first-order reference the parable of "The Good Samaritan" (Lk 10:30-37) is written against the backdrop of the tension that existed between Judeans (that is, in particular the Israelites in Jerusalem) and Samaritans. Historical indications of a particular community that can properly be described as Samaritan can be traced back to about 180 BCE (Ravens 1995:73). This specifically Samaritan community lived at Shechem and had its own sanctuary on Mount Gerizim. It claimed to be descended from the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Levi. Like the Judeans, they worshipped Yahweh at what they claimed to be the true Israelite sanctuary. Their only Scripture was the Pentateuch, and they observed many Israelite customs, such as circumcision, keeping the festivals and observing the Sabbath (Ravens 1995:74). Indeed they believed themselves to be the true Israel, the descendants of the tribe of Judah being the heretics.

It remains difficult to trace the origin of the Samaritans or date of the final schism between them and the Judeans. More recently, extensive research has been done on the Samaritans by Martina Böhm (1999), *Samarien und die Samaritai bei Lukas*, and Ingrid Hjelm (2000), *The Samaritans and early Judaism*. Hjelm's literary study in particular accentuates the complexity of the matter. Invariably, past studies were primarily based on texts from the Hebrew Bible, both Judean and Rabbinic literature, and especially the writings of Josephus. These sources were often used uncritically, without taking necessary cognisance of the prejudice of their authors. Hjelm (2000:13-51) provides a helpful survey of the theories advanced in the past concerning Samaritan origins: Were the Samaritans a Jewish sect (Montgomery), the original Israelites (Gaster), or a separate Israelite state, the efforts made by Judeans to establish a single state destroying

its very basis (Hjelm 2000:284)?

The popular (Judean/Pharisaic) version sees the origin of the Samaritans in the events related in 2 Kings 17. According to this view the Samaritans were a mixture of pagans from different nations who were settled in Samaria during the time of the "Assyrian exile". It was this view that provided the Judeans with the necessary arsenal to discredit the Samaritans as "unholy" and "unclean", a nation to be "set apart". The extreme Judean view is reflected in various Mishnah passages. A statement on intermarriage reads: "The Samaritan women are menstruous from the cradle. And the Samaritans defile a bed both below and above, because they have connection with menstruous women, and the latter sit upon every kind of blood" (*m. Nid* 4.1; cf Hjelm 2000:113). The impure state of the Samaritans, also finds proverbial expression: "He that eats the bread of the Samaritans is like to one that eats the flesh of swine" (*m. Sheb.* 8.10; cf Scott 1990:197). This popular view of the Samaritans as a "mixed nation" also finds expression in the writings of the Judean historian, Josephus. Josephus employs negative labelling by referring to the Samaritans as the "Cuthaean sect" (*Bell. Jud.* 1:63; cf Van Aarde 2001:92), Cuthah being one of the heathen nations mentioned in 2 Kings 17:24. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, Cuthah is sometimes used to refer to the people of Assyria, or to the Egyptians, or to the Chaldeans, as the end-time enemies of Israel (Van Aarde 2001:92). As we have pointed out, the popular Judean view of the Samaritans as a "mixed nation" was fervently rejected by the Samaritans themselves. From their point of view there was little doubt that they, like the Judeans, were descendants of Joseph (see Hjelm 2000:239-272).

Based on an survey of the most important events in the history of the Samaritans, Böhm (1999:38-43) maintains that not one single factor, but a progression of factors, will have contributed to the schism between Judeans and Samaritans. What is central however to our study are the events and developments in and around the city of Shechem and the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim. This has prompted scholars to use the word "Shechemites" as a more

appropriate geographical designation for the Samaritans (cf Van Aarde 2001:91).

Shechem was totally destroyed in the eighth century BCE by the Assyrians and remained uninhabited for most of the Persian rule. During the Hellenistic Period at the end of the fourth century BCE, however, the city was rebuilt. Scholars have put forward a number of different reasons for this development and the subsequent building of the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim (cf Hjelm 2000:30-48). Alt (cf Hjelm 2000:30-31) has argued that the building of the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim was political, an unavoidable consequence of Persian policy, which gave Judea an independent political role similar to that enjoyed by Samaria. This created the need for their own sanctuary, especially for the common population, who resisted the rule of the Judean élite who had returned from exile. Klippenberg (cf Hjelm 2000:46-48; Böhm 1999:6061), in contrast, has attributed the building of the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim a religious motivation. The main reason can be traced back to the reforms concerning mixed marriages initiated by Ezra and Nehemiah. These reforms led a number of people in and around Jerusalem, accused of breaking certain purity regulations, to seek a new sanctuary in the north. They were in turn joined by dissident priests. The natural place for such a sanctuary was Shechem, which once before had been birthplace of all Israel (Jos 24).

Although it is exceedingly difficult to determine the exact motivations and reasons that led to the building of the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim, there is no doubt about the rivalry that developed between the Mount Gerizim (the temple of Shechem) and Mount Zion (the temple of Jerusalem) concerning the rightful place for Israel worship and Yahweh presence. Most well-known statements on the animosity between Judeans and Samaritans have reference to this period. No one seems to have described the events more provocatively, and clearly prejudicially (from a Judean standpoint) than Josephus. Josephus postulates that during the time of Alexander the Great, following the Persian rule and the building of the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim, the Samaritans courted the king's favour and asked

for relief from tribute, upon which Josephus (*Ant.* 9.292) angrily remarks:

> For such is the nature of the Samaritans, as we have already shown somewhere above (*Ant.* 9.291 and note). When the Jews are in difficulties, they deny that they have any kinship with them, thereby indeed admitting the truth, but whenever they see some splendid bit of good fortune with them, they suddenly grasp at the connexion with them, saying that they are related to them and tracing their line back to Ephraim and Manasseh, the descendants of Moses.
>
> (in Massyngbaerde Ford 1983:89)

When however a few decades later the "Samaritans" suffered cruel persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes IV in 175 BCE, Josephus (*Ant.*12.257-264) remarks:

> ... they [the Samaritans] would no longer admit that they were their kin or that the temple of Gerizein [Gerizim] was that of the Most Great God, thereby acting in accordance with their nature, as we have shown (*Ant.* 9:291); they also said they were colonists from the Medes and the Persians, and they are, in fact, colonists from these people.
>
> (in Massyngebaerde Ford 1983:89)

The verbal attack on the Samaritans recorded in the Wisdom of Ben Sirach (50:5-26) also reflects on this period: "There are two nations that my soul detests, the third is not a nation at all: the inhabitants of Mount Seir, and the Philistines, and the stupid people living at Shechem" (cf Bailey [1980] 1983: 48). That the animosity was not confined to the regions of Judea and Samaria is recorded by Josephus, who reports of a dispute that had developed between the Judeans and the Gerizim-supporters in Alexandria concerning the sole legitimacy of the temple

in Jerusalem or the temple on Mount Gerizim, both maintaining that their temple was erected according to the "Law of Moses" (*Ant.*13.74-79; cf Böhm 1999:80). This is paralleled by the dispute between the Diaspora Israelites and Gerizim-supporters, also in Egypt, as to where their sacrificial offerings should be sent (*Ant.*12.8-10; cf Böhm 1999:82). Commenting on the latter incident, Crown (cited by Böhm 1999:82) writes:

> The Jews argued that they should go to the temple in Jerusalem and the Samaritans asserted that they should go to Gerizim. The story, though brief, is most informative. It tells us directly that the Samaritans offered sacrifices in their temple, and it implies that there was nothing to choose between these and the sacrifices at Jerusalem that would clearly distinguish them from each other. In other words, the Samaritan sacrificial rites were clearly considered as equivalent to the sacrifices offered at Jerusalem.

Part of the struggle for legitimacy was the question of priesthood, with accusations being reciprocated. From a Judean perspective, the priestly succession from father to son was not maintained in Shechem (*Ant.*11.306-312; cf Böhm 1999:83); but then again it was the Hasmoneans who broke the high priestly succession in *Jerusalem*, when after the murder of Onias III (175/4 BCE), Jonathan was assigned the functions of the office of high priest. This led to a break in the Zadokite lineage.

The tension between the Judeans and Samaritans reached a climax with the destruction of the temple on Mount Gerizim and the conquest of Samaria near the end of the second century BCE (cf Esler 2000:239; Böhm 1999:84). Most scholars propose this period as a formal date from which time onwards the two communities existed as separate entities (cf Böhm 1999:84). Historically however it is difficult to determine who was exactly responsible for the destruction of the

temple on Mount Gerizim. Josephus (*Ap.*13.1, 9; *Ant.*13.4, 127, 145) attributes it to the high priest John Hyrcanus who conquered Samaria. Hjelm (2000:282) however points out that the Samaritan Chronicle does not relate any destruction of the temple to the time of Hyrcanus but rather to a Simeon, who - on the evidence available - cannot be associated with the high priest Simeon II Just, but rather with the Hasmonean Simeon. Josephus seems to have placed the event in the time of Hyrcanus as a consequence of his account of the latter's conquest of the region of Samaria (Hjelm 2000:282).

This period was nevertheless decisive in Judean-Samaritan relationships, each community seeking scriptural legitimacy for their place of worship. This is witnessed by an adaption of certain passages in the Pentateuch, leading to a number of textual differences between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Masoretic Pentateuch texts (see Böhm 1999:58-59, 79, 313-316). Some examples follow: The words "at Shechem" appearing in Deuteronomy 11:30 of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Furthermore, the decalogue in Exodus 20:17 is followed immediately by Deuteronomy 27:2b-3a, 4-7, with its reference to the "Gerizim". Conversely in the Masoretic Pentateuch Deuteronomy 27:4 (with its reference to an altar which should be erected on crossing the Jordan), seems to have been changed from the original reading "on Mount Gerizim" to the secondary reading "on Mount Ebal", which, according to Deuteronomy 11:29, was the mount from which the "curse" was to be spoken over the land.

It has generally been accepted that Pentateuch-adaptions were made by both communities to legitimise their particular theology. Hjelm (2000:282) however advocates that it was not the Samaritans who (first) revised their Pentateuch, but rather the Judeans. This assertion is based on the observation that the Shechem traditions do not conflict with the Samaritan tradition, which maintains its coherence with the past. In contrast, the Judeans did not create its own origin-story independent of the Shechem traditions, but developed a new tradition consisting of the "New Israel" that should gather all its tribes to *Jerusalem*

(cf Hjelm 2000:283). These considerations lead to a revision of the variant claim in the Ezra tradition: that Ezra brought the "Law of Moses" to Jerusalem. The Law of Moses could well refer to the "Samaritan Pentateuch", that had been adapted in Jerusalem to establish identity and legitimacy for the nationalist movement of the Maccabees (Helm 2000:284). As such, the revision of the Pentateuch by the Judeans reflects the reinterpretation of the Torah in particularist and ethnocentric terms, and marks, as Hjelm (2000:284) notes, "a shift from the Mosaic Yahwism of בנישראל to a Judaism of new covenanters who now call themselves יהודים (Jews)."

After the tensions of the late second and early first century BCE, the Roman occupation brought relative peace to the whole region. But the tension between Judeans and Samaritans remained. In the period 6-9 CE this bitterness was intensified when some Samaritans secretly entered Jerusalem by night and scattered human bones around the temple, thereby defiling the temple area (*Ant.*18.9-30, cf Esler 2000:330-331). Oesterley (cf Bailey [1980] 1983:48) in turn observes, that the "Samaritans were publicly cursed in the synagogues; and a petition was daily offered up praying God that the Samaritans might not be partakers of eternal life." In 52 CE, during the time of the Roman governor Cumanus, a Galilean on his way to Jerusalem was murdered in the Samaritan village of Gema (*Bell. Jud.* 2:232-246; cf Massyngbaerde Ford 1983:90-91; Esler 2000:329). Enraged by the incident, a large group of Galileans assembled to take revenge upon the Samaritans. The Judean authorities, however, tried to negotiate with Camanus, beseeching him to punish the murderers. When he dismissed their request, a large crowd abandoned the Passover, and under the leadership of Eleazar (a bandit) attacked and massacred the inhabitants of Gema and burnt down their villages. Cumanus in turn went down to avenge the Samaritans. Fearing the further wrath of the Roman authorities, the magistrates of Jerusalem implored the insurgents to return home. A full-scale war was only prevented by the eventual intervention of Quadratus, the governor of Syria.

It is well-known that among the synoptic authors Luke takes most interest in the Samaritans. Mark never mentions them. Matthew excludes them from Israel and from the mission of the disciples (Mt 10:5-6), at least until the final commission to go forth as disciples with their message to "all nations" (Mt 28:19). In contrast, Luke narrates various passages featuring Samaritans (Lk 9:51-56; 10:30-37; 17:11-19; Ac 1:8; 8:1, 4-25; 9:31; 15:3).

A critical passage is Luke 9:51-56. It forms the introduction to the so-called Lukan "travel narrative" (Lk 9:51-19:44), and is as such situated at a very important juncture in Luke's narrative (cf Böhm 1999:205-238). At this point the journey from Galilee to Jerusalem begins. But, at this point notably Luke also leaves his Markan source. Whereas in Mark (and Matthew) Jesus and his disciples follow the route that leads beyond the Jordan through Perea to Jerusalem (Mk 10:1), Luke recounts that Jesus travelled through *Samaria*. As Böhm (1999:232-233) shows, this can hardly be attributed to geographical ignorance on Luke's part, who despite arguments to the contrary is well acquainted with the geography of at least certain parts of Palestine. From the point of view of narrative construction, this journey takes up a considerable amount of space and time ("narrating" space and time) in Luke's narrative, so that Luke's account seems to create the impression that a large part of Jesus' ministry took place in Samaria. Ravens (1995:78) observes that the whole travel narrative, which extends over a number of chapters in Luke's Gospel, contains only two indications of Jesus' location, both mentioning Samaria (Lk 9:51; 17:11). This is in stark contrast to Luke's narration of Paul's missionary journey in Acts, which can be traced step by step on a map. Apart from the introductory pericope of the travel narrative (Lk 5:51-56) establishing the tension between Judeans and Samaritans (by implication the question of temple legitimacy - Jerusalem/Gerizim), the travel narrative is further characterised by two further stories concerning Samaritans, the parable of "The Good Samaritan" (Lk 10:30-37) and the story of "The ten healed of Leprosy" (Lk 17:11-17), both of which evoke sympathy for the Samaritans.

These observations raise the question: Why does the Lukan Jesus travel through *Samaria* and what is the purpose pursued by Luke by his accented interest in Samaritans (both in the Gospel and Acts)?

Various scholars have explained this stress on the Samaritans by referring us to Luke's universalist tendencies, by which, here, we mean that not only the Judeans but also the Samaritans are included in the salvation of God. Over the years, this thesis has seen various refinements (cf Böhm 1999:8-30), the most well-known being the position of a "unified Israel" in which Judeans and Samaritans, who historically belong together, are reunited through the ministry of Jesus (cf Jervell 1972:113-127). Through the ministry of the Samaritans, the "restoration of Israel" takes place (cf Ravens 1995).

More recently Thomas and Van Aarde (1998:760-788; see also Selling 1975:42-43; Van Aarde 2001:111) have advocated a two-fold hypothesis as an explanation for the (narratological) accent on the Samaritan mission in Luke-Acts: (1) Samaria functions as a "hinge" between the crossing of the message to Israel, and the world; and (2) Samaria functions as a "hurdle" on the journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. Scholars have observed the mirrored pattern: Galilee/Samaria/Jerusalem = Jerusalem/Samaria/ Rome in the Gospel and Acts respectively, with Samaria each time constituting the "hinge". It thus seems as if Luke uses Samaria in a context in which Jesus wishes to explain to his disciples and others (implied readers) *how* he wants to be followed on his "way to Jerusalem" (used symbolically; see "taken up to heaven" in Lk 9:51). This "way" includes the mission to the Samaritans. Those who are not prepared to follow Jesus through Samaria are not ready for the journey to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Rome (Thomas & Van Aarde 1998:784): Samaria is the "hurdle" that needs to be cleared. The crossing of the hurdle constitutes the "breaking in" of God's Kingdom. Again in Acts, Samaria is the hurdle that needs to be crossed before the message reaches the rest of the world. Notably John, who according to Luke 9:54 was one of the disciples who wanted to call down fire from heaven

to destroy the Samaritans, is sent with Peter to confirm the acceptance of the gospel by the Samaritans in Acts 8 (Thomas & Van Aarde 1988:785; see also Massyngbaerde Ford 1983:91). On their return, Peter and John preach the gospel in many Samaritan villages. The hurdle has been crossed and Luke continues his narrative with the spread of the gospel (primarily through Paul) to the end of the world (Rome).

The above observations (illustrative of a wide scholarly debate) provide us with valuable insight concerning the Samaritans in Luke-Acts. A weakness however seems to be that not enough attention is given to *point of view*. The focus invariably falls on the debate concerning the Judeans/Samaritans versus Gentiles as separate and distinctive groups. It is our conviction that the focus should not be on the groups as such, but on the *attitude* (point of view) that prevails within these groups, when they are challenged by the alternative view presented by Luke in his narrative. Furthermore "characterisation" in Luke's narrative is not absolute, meaning that the point of view conveyed by the characters is *fluid* (open to change) within their particular social or ethnical group. Not all Judeans (Israelites) reject Jesus. Not all Samaritans are good (or evil). Not all Gentiles accept the gospel. The juxtaposition of people (Israelites with Gentiles, or Judeans with Samaritans) invariably involves the juxtaposition of contrasting points of view; and it is this that serves as a challenge to the Lukan audience to see God differently. This thesis finds support in the summary remarks of Böhm (1999:310-311):

> Die Samariter sind bei Lukas die abseits der offiziellen Toraauslegung und des offiziellen Kultus Stehenden. Ihr Glaube an den Gott Israels wird ihnen an keiner Stelle abgesprochen oder auch nur in Frage gestellt. Lukas ist vielmehr wichtig, an ihrem Beispiel auf das aufmerksam zu machen, worauf es beim Glauben und für die Erlangung des Heils eigentlich ankommt. Bei denen, die

> den Gotteswillen und sein Heilangebot erkannt haben und ihren Glauben über alle einengenden Bestimmungen hinweg in Dank und Tat umsetzten, relativieren sich alle anderen "konfessionell bedingten" Unterschiede - sie sind, obwohl sonst abseits stehend, gerettet.

Böhm refers to the Samaritans as an "example" (*Beispiel*). They are an example of those who have accepted God's salvation. Böhm however fails to explain *how* and in what *way* they are an example. Our reading of Luke-Acts indicates that they are an example not in the sense of a "substitution" or a "comparison theory", a "simile" whereby A is *like B* (see chapter 3). Samaritans do not "illustrate" proper behaviour, but constitute an "interaction" with the behaviour of those who claim to represent God, but from a Lukan perspective oppose God and his purpose as realised by Jesus and his witnesses. For this thesis to hold water, the Lukan audience would at least have to have had knowledge of the tension between Judeans and Samaritans. We may recall that the "interaction theory" of metaphors presupposes what Max Black (1962:40) called a "system of associated commonplaces". The "associated commonplaces" are those properties commonly believed of an object, a person, or an event. The metaphor, as a diaphoric juxtaposition of opposites, can only be a force to ignite new insight if these "associated commonplaces" are known. The question is: are they known to Luke's audience, that is to his community?

Based on the assumption that Luke's audience consists of *Gentiles*, scholars have suggested that the animosity between Judeans and Samaritans may hardly have impacted on the intended readers of Luke-Acts (cf Scott 1990:192). The target audience of Luke is of course the subject of a highly contested scholarly debate in itself (see especially Forbes 2000: 307-327). Our literary reading has indicated that Luke's audience probably consisted of both Gentiles and Israelites, the Gentiles emanating largely, if not exclusively, from the

so-called Godfearers with close affinity with the cultural and religious traditions of Israel (cf Ac 10:2, 22, 35; 13:16, 26, 43, 50; 17:4, 17; 18:7). Tyson (1992:19-41) and Forbes (2000:323-327) support the thesis of the Lukan audience being Godfearers, but as yet unconverted Godfearers (that is a "non-Christian" audience), whom Luke is trying to reach through his narrative (which would give Luke-Acts a distinctive evangelistic ring). Whether the Godfearers are converted "Christians" or as yet unconverted Gentiles, is for our immediate purpose irrelevant. Whoever they were, however, knowledge of the tensions between Judeans and Samaritans can be presupposed. A careful analysis of Luke-Acts confirms this.

The animosity noted above is well documented in the pericope of Jesus entering Samaria on his way from Galilee to Jerusalem (Lk 9:51-56), which, among other, features to prepare Luke's audience for the parable of "The Good Samaritan" that follows shortly thereafter. This pericope is characterised by the inhospitality of the Samaritans. When they hear that Jesus is on his way to "Jerusalem" they turn him away. Notably there is no need for Luke to explain why "Jerusalem" should be a problem to the Samaritans. Obviously the world "Jerusalem" suffices to *recall the tension* that existed between Gerizim and Jerusalem. Indeed, as Jervell (1972:116) notes, for a reader who is unaware of the relationship between Gerizim and Jerusalem, this pericope would be quite "unintelligible". Similarly the calling down of fire by Jesus' disciples, with its allusion to Elijah who called down fire three times upon the Samaritans (2 Ki 1:9-16), needs no further explanation. Knowledge is presupposed. The same applies to the other Samaritan pericopes in Luke-Acts. Luke 17:11-19 (the ten healed from leprosy) may serve as a further example. This pericope is even less informative than Luke 9:51-47. What can the line Luke "... and he was a Samaritan" (Lk 17:16) mean to readers who have no knowledge of Judean-Samaritan animosity? It may be true, as Böhm (1999:309-310) concludes, that the Lukan audience hardly pictured the Samaritans in the traditional sense as the

"hated half-breeds" or something on these lines. But the traditional animosity and the tensions between Judeans and Samaritans was well-known among Luke's audience, and as such could serve the purpose of literary reflexion and provide the backdrop of two opposing entities juxtaposed in a tensive metaphor.

Knowledge of the tension between Judeans and Samaritans plays indeed an important role in determining the challenge posed by Luke in telling his story. This challenge needs to make sense to an audience which consists of both Israelites and Gentiles. It is our thesis that the challenge is directed to anybody in Luke's audience, Israelites or Gentiles, who might adhere to the conventional Israelite view of God as one characterised by exclusivity and partiality. Luke's narrative is one of crossing boundaries to a new vision of God. The tone is set by Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem crossing the boundary into Samaria.

5.3 The text of "The Good Samaritan"

The travel narrative is characterised by extensive teaching and frequent dialogue. Scholars have attested that Luke wants to portray Jesus as teaching his disciples the "way of discipleship" (cf Donahue 1988:128), a Markan motif taken over by Luke, although Luke at this point abandons his Markan source. From this perspective the lawyer's question in Luke 10:25, which seems to interrupt the preceding passage, is not out of place. It introduces the first of many instructions on discipleship embedded in a juxtaposition of opposing points of view. The instruction in Luke 10 takes the form of a prolonged dialogue between Jesus and a lawyer in which the parable is embedded. As the dialogue resembles similar dialogue also transmitted by Mark (12:28-34; cf Mt 22:34-40) it is highly probable that the dialogue does not provide the original historical situation of the parable.

Crossan (1973:58) discerns four separate units: (1) 10:25-28, the questions concerning eternal life; (2) 10:29, the question regarding one's neighbour; (3) 10:30-35, the parable of "The Good Samaritan"; and (4)10:36-37, the Lukan conclusion. Crossan's unit identification is based primarily on what has been

termed a number of "inconsistencies" in the pericope. Two of these stand out. First, the shift in question from, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" in 10:25, to "Who is my neighbour?" in 10:29. Second, the shift from "neighbour" as the object of love in 10:27, 29, to "neighbour" as the subject of love in 10:36 (cf Crossan 1973:58-62; Funk 1996:178). But leading scholars have also affirmed both the authenticity of the parable's context in Luke (cf Keesmaat 2000:276; Forbes 2000:55-58), as well as the basic unity of the entire passage (cf Bailey [1980] 1983:33-34; Green 1997:427). For an understanding of the *Lukan* meaning of the parable, there is no need to evaluate its structure in terms of original unity. Our focus falls on the parable as narrated by Luke. It is however imperative not only to explicate the parable as such, but to consider the whole dialogue in which the parable features. According to Bailey ([1980] 1983:33); it is a failure to do so that has led to the hasty and superficial conclusion that the parable as narrated by Luke is merely an ethical exhortation to reach out to those in need, with the Samaritan providing the good example called for.

The dialogue consists basically out of two parts, (1) 10:25-28, and (2) 10:29-37, which show a remarkable structural resemblance. This is aptly demonstrated by Bailey's ([1980] 1983 :34) structural analysis, slightly revised by us:

Part one: A lawyer *tests* Jesus (identification of motive)

(1) Lawyer: (Question 1) "What must I *do* to inherit eternal life?"

(2) Jesus: (Question 2) "What about the *Law*?"

(3) Lawyer: (Answer to 2) "Love God and your neighbour."

(4) Jesus: (Answer to 1) "*Do* this and you will live."

Part two: The lawyer desires to *justify* himself (identification of motive). He asks:

(1') Lawyer: (Question 1') "Who is my neighbour?"

(2') Jesus: (Question 2') "A certain man went down from Jerusalem ..."
"Which of these three became a neighbour?"

(3') Lawyer: (Answer to 2') "The one who *did* mercy on him."

(4') Jesus: (Answer to 1') "Go and *do* likewise."

This structural analysis shows that in order to appreciate the force of the parable (10:30-35) it is imperative to examine both parts of what is a unified composition. The italicised words stress what to us seems to be the two central issues of the dialogue: (1) It involves a challenge (2) relating to the interpretation of the Law. The challenge is highlighted by the words ἐκπειράζω ("to test"; 10:25) and δικαιόω ("to justify"; 10:29). Both words expose the motives of the lawyer and prepare the reader for the challenge lying in the passage ahead. Although both Luke and Mark situate the dialogue in a conflict situation involving the controversies between the Israelite religious leaders and Jesus, the setting within Mark's Gospel is less prejudiced than in Luke's. In Mark, the lawyer's question is motivated by the good answer given by Jesus to the Sadducees concerning the resurrection (Mk 12:28). The lawyer is portrayed as earnestly seeking an answer. In Mark the dialogue also ends on a positive note, on mutual agreement, Jesus confirming that the lawyer is not far from the Kingdom of God (Mk 12:34). That the Kingdom of God has not yet quite dawned in the lawyer's life is made plain by Mark in the pericope of the widow's offering - she gave all she had (Mk 12:41-44). In Luke the lawyer's question is clearly narrated as a "test". It involves a challenge, the opening gambit in the social dynamic of "challenge-and-response" typical of first-century Mediterranean culture (Malina 1993:34-37; cf Esler 2000:333).

Within the wider framework of Luke's narrative as a story of opposites it is worthy to note that the conflict is initiated by the lawyer, a member of the Israelite religious leadership. This lawyer is not necessarily a real lawyer appearing in the life of the historical Jesus. He is a character in Luke's narrative, who as a

character must have made sense to Luke's audience. The lawyer, it seems, is a prototype of those who constitute the opposition to the βουλὴ τοῦ θεοῦ in Luke's narrative. This is confirmed by Luke's adding to the motif of a "test" in 10:25 that of "self justification" in 10:29, an attitude which throughout Luke's narrative epitomises the "exaltation-orientated point of view" of those who oppose God's will as presented by Jesus and his disciples (cf Resseguie 1982:45; Lk 16:15).

The second central issue highlighted by the structural analysis above is the "Law", more specifically the interpretation and *practice* of the Law. The topic of the "Law" is introduced by Luke with the use of the word νομικός. Böhm (1999:241) notes that Luke replaces the word γραμματατεύς in Mark with νομικός, a term used by Luke only in passages which relate specifically to an understanding of the Law. The Law by implication poses the question, here articulated by the lawyer: "What must I *do*?" The word "do" features repeatedly. Following the exchange with the lawyer, Jesus responds "*Do* this" (10:28). The same word is heard again in the lawyer's response to the question of Who was a neighbour? - "The one who *did* mercy" (10:37a), followed by the concluding response of Jesus, "Go and *do* likewise" (10:37b). The repeated call by Jesus to "do this" in both 10:28 and 10:37b, implies that the lawyer has not yet fulfilled the Law. But it is not the Law per se, which is at stake here, but its construal, its interpretation and application (Green 1997:428). Luke 10:25-37 indicates that there is a certain distance between the Lukan Jesus and the Mosaic Law.

This observation is confirmed by the second major way in which Luke diverges from Mark (cf Esler 2000:334). In contrast to Mark, in whose Gospel the lawyer's initial question concerns the greatest commandment (Mk 12:28), the lawyer's question in Luke's Gospel concerns the acquisition of eternal life (cf Lk 18:18). This has been noted above as an "inconsistency". However Esler (2000:334) maintains that this "inconsistency" reflects on a particular Lukan understanding of the Mosaic Law. Luke's attitude to the Law has resulted in wide scholarly debate (cf, inter alia, Jervell 1972:133-147; Esler 1987:110-130).

Conzelmann's traditional view that for Luke the Law is a matter of history, and as such play's no significant role in Luke's narrative, has found much criticism. Jervell (1972:137-138) notes that Luke's narrative nowhere contains any criticism of the Law or any part of the Law in itself. Luke recounts in detail how all the rituals prescribed in the Law are carried out by Jesus and his parents (Lk 1-2). Similarly Luke makes every effort to portray Paul as someone who has a high regard for the Law (Ac 15, 21). For Luke the "Law" in the strict sense as the "Law of Israel", relates to the *identity* of the people of God, and can therefore never be abandoned or reduced to insignificance (Jervell 1972:134). Significantly, Luke does not - like the rabbis - attempt to raise certain parts of the Law above others; nor, for Luke (in contrast to Matthew, Mark, and Paul) can the Law be summarised in the one central commandment of love (cf Jervell 1972:139). This is most apparent in Luke 10:25-28. Whereas in Mark Jesus responds to the question of the greatest commandment by citing Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18, the Lukan Jesus refrains from doing so: the summary is given by the lawyer. For Luke, the status of the Law is not in question. This does not exclude the fact that the Lukan Jesus sometimes transcends and sometimes challenges the Law (see Esler 1987:114-118). The challenge however is not a rejection of the Law as such, but as Esler (2000:334) attests, a *subversion* of the "Mosaic Law", whenever the Law is used to justify exclusivity and partiality based on group differentiation.

This argument finds support in the unique terminology used by Luke concerning the Law, especially in his use of the name "Moses" (Jervell 1972:136-137). The expression "to speak against Moses" is present only in Luke's writing (Ac 6:11, 13, 14 [18:13]; 21:21, 28: 25:8 [10]; 28:17). The expression "the Law of Moses" (only used three times by other New Testament authors), is employed five times by Luke (Lk 2:22; 24:44; Ac 13:38; 15:5; 28:23). Similarly the name "Moses" referring to the Law appears frequently in Luke-Acts and seldom in other writings (Lk 5:14; 16:29; 24:27; Ac 6:11; 15:1; 21:21). Reading Luke 10:25-37 as a subversion of the Mosaic Law radically revises traditional interpretations of the

parable. Jesus' closing words, "Go and do likewise" (10:37b) is then no longer an admonition to moral behaviour for which the Samaritan featured as a good example. Indeed, the closing remark is not an answer to the parable per se but to the original question of inheriting eternal life (10:25); or as the term ζάω in 10:28 suggests, it is a challenge to embrace the life within the Kingdom of God. These remarks warrant a closer look at the two parts that constitute this dialogue.

Verses 25-28: Luke presents the dialogue between Jesus and the lawyer as one between two colleagues. The lawyer "stands up" and addresses Jesus. That the dialogue concerns the Law is not only indicated by the word νομικός for the lawyer (see above), but also by the word διδάσκαλος with which the lawyer addresses Jesus. Within the setting of first-century Palestine διδάσκαλος invariably refers a teacher who gives instruction on the Torah (Böhm 1999:241). The word ἐκπειράζω however reminds the audience that the lawyer belongs to the Israelite leadership which has continually monitored Jesus' faithfulness to the Law, and indicates that the encounter will follow antagonistic lines (cf Forbes 2000:59). The "priests", one of whom is introduced later in the parable, formed part of the Israelite leadership, and when not performing priestly duties often functioned as legal experts (Green 1997:427). The introduction of a priest returning from his temple duties is therefore scarcely arbitrary. It serves to heighten the drama, and paves the way for the lawyer (and others who share his point of view) to be drawn into the world of the parable, and for the challenger to become the challenged.

The initial question of the lawyer concerning "eternal life" is closely related to that of the "Law" (cf Keesmaat 2000:276-277). A connection between obedience to the Law and inheritance/life is noted in Deuteronomy 6:16-18. Whereas this passage makes no explicit reference to "eternal" life, the connection is clearly expressed in the rabbinical commentaries on the Torah. The following quote from the well-known Rabbi Hillel serves as an example. He writes: "... who has gained for himself words of Torah has gained for himself the life of the world to come" (*m. Pirke Ab.* 2.8; cf Bailey [1980] 1983:36). Similarly, an anonymous

rabbinical saying reads: "Great is Torah, for it gives to them that practise it life in this world and in the world to come" (*m. Pirke Ab.* 6.7; cf Bailey [1980] 1983:36). That such practising of the Law was often presented in the form of a list of requirements to be fulfilled, is witnessed by the following extract from *Slavonic Enoch*. Enoch is told:

> This place (Eden), O Enoch, is prepared for the righteous, who endure all manner of offense from those that exasperate their souls, who avert their eyes from iniquity, and make righteous judgements, and give bread to the hungering, and cover the naked with clothing, and raise up the fallen, and help injured orphans, and who walk without fault before the face of the Lord, and serve him alone, and for them is prepared this place for *eternal inheritance*.
>
> (in Bailey [1980] 1983:36)

Fulfilling certain requirements in order to obtain eternal life forms part of the symbolic universe of those represented by the lawyer in Luke's narrative. It implies that the lawyer could have expected a similar list of requirements from Jesus. The setting into which Luke has placed this dialogue however is not that of a "classroom teacher" but a conflict situation marked by a "challenge" from the lawyer. The challenge is countered with a question posed by Jesus: "What is written in the Law? How do you read?" Jesus' response rejects any thought that he had any unfavourable view of Israelite piety centred on observance of the Law in itself (see also Lk 1:6; 2:22-25; Ac 10:2). Forbes (2000:59-60) notes that the debate was possibly initiated by the very fact that the lawyer was uneasy about Jesus' attitude to the Law and wanted to discredit him publicly. However by referring the lawyer to the Law, Jesus was both stressing the continued validity of the Law and seeking to gain clarity on the lawyer's understanding of it.

Just as the lawyer's initial question derived from the connection between

obedience to the Law and the inheritance of eternal life as set out in Deuteronomy 6:16-25, so his answer is an extract from the same passage: unreserved love for God (Green 1997:428). To this he adds the Law of "love for your neighbour" in Leviticus 19:18, a combination otherwise only found in the mouth of Jesus (Mk 12:30-31; Mt 22:37-39; cf Forbes 2000:59).

From the lawyer's side the quote from Leviticus 19:18 paves the way for a wider discussion. Jesus' response, "You have answered well; *do this* and you will *live*" (10:28) caries a double critique and at the same time indicates his intention to end the discussion. First, it is a critique levelled at the interpretation of the Law without *practising* it. This critique is to be read against the background of a society governed by group differentiation, a society in which love for one's neighbour always involves different kinds of partiality and exclusivity. Second, Jesus' answer implies a critique of any interpretation of the Law in which some connection is made between meeting the requirement of the Law and obtaining "eternal life". Notably, Jesus avoids the term "eternal life". He says: "... and you will *live*"(cf Bailey [1980] 1983 :38). By doing so he indicates that loving God and your neighbour is what *life* (within the Kingdom of God) is all about.

Verse 29: As Jesus' answer ("do this") suggests that the lawyer may not have fulfilled the Law, the lawyer feels the need to "justify" himself. He does not allow the debate to end there. The Law needs some commentary. By revealing the motives of the lawyer, Luke indicates to the readers of Luke-Acts that the intentions of the lawyer are not pure. The question imposed on Luke's audience now is: Is the lawyer concerned with understanding God's Law and practising it? Or with his own status and honour-rating? It should be noted that in the co-text of Leviticus 19:18 love towards one's neighbour is presented as a disposition of the heart (Green 1997:428). But where is the heart of the lawyer? Has he love for his neighbour? Or is he more concerned with an interpretation of the Law by which his status and repute can be asserted?

While granting the importance of Leviticus 19:18 when quoting the Law

(10:27), the lawyer exploits its ambiguity. The God whom one must love is known. But who is the neighbour? In Leviticus 19:11-18 reference is made five times to one's "neighbour". The Greek word πλησίον is used to translate the Hebrew words עמית and רע, both of which have a wide range of meanings, extending from an associate to any one of one's own countryman (cf Böhm 1999:243). In Leviticus 19:18 reference however is made to "sons of your own people" intimating an understanding of "neighbour" to include only members of the Yahweh covenant. Based on this context, the rabbis concluded that all Gentiles were excluded from an act of neighbourliness. As to the Israelite proselytes, they were divided, some arguing for their inclusion others for their exclusion. Orthodox Israelites drew the line even more tightly, excluding certain categories of fellow-Israelites (see Forbes 2000:61). No "sinner" could be a neighbour, as such an inclusion would invariably condone their sins (cf Sir 12:1-7). Jeremias ([1963] 1984:135) refers to a rabbinical saying that heretics, informers, and renegades should be pushed (into the ditch) and not pulled out. Based on the historical background and the animosity that existed between Judeans and Samaritans, the Samaritans belonged to those who should be "pushed into the ditch".

Esler (2000:335) notes that the question posed by the lawyer is not merely a question of, "Where does one draw the line?", but that it is a "legal" issue, and indeed of an "exclusionary" nature. He refers to a similar passage in Exodus 21, where the directive is given that if a man kills another man (his neighbour) deliberately, he must be put to death (21:12-14). As the context of Exodus 21 clearly indicates that the neighbour is a fellow Israelite, the *Mekilta* interprets the verse in such a way as to suggest that the deliberate killing of a non-Israelite would not trigger the same result (*Nez.* 4.60-64; cf Esler 2000:335-336). Killing a fellow Israelite is forbidden; killing a foreigner however is justified.

The legal issue, then, posed by the lawyer's question, is: "Whom are we Israelites obliged to treat as our neighbours and who not?" The question is an indicator, determining who are the insiders to whom one is obliged to show love,

and who are the outsiders for whom no such obligation exists. Esler (2000:336-337) observes that while the lawyers question is "a perfectly respectable legal one in fact, it inevitably conveys an invitation to engage in group differentiation and stereotypification."

Verses 30-35: In his response to the lawyer's question, Jesus employs a parable. On a first-order reference the parable is used to expound Leviticus 19:18. The story told by Jesus, although fictional, reflects everyday reality. The route from Jerusalem to Jericho was a well-known highway, often used by priests and Levites who made Jericho their habitat (Scott 1990:195; Böhm 1999:253). With Jerusalem situated about 2,500 feet above sea level, and Jericho in the Jordan valley about 800 feet below sea level, the word καταβαίνω (going down) adds to the realism. Realistic too is the picture of violence on the road. Throughout history the route was notorious for banditry (see Bailey [1980] 1983:41-42; Keesmaat 2000:278). An attack by bandits would pose no surprise for the listener. The everydayness of the setting serves to draw the listener into the world of the parable. The listener can thus no longer remain a detached observer of events. He becomes part of the story.

The story starts with a "certain man" travelling down the road (10:30). The ethnic identity of the man is not disclosed. Based on the premises that the story unfolds in Judea, scholars have argued that the *Judean* identity of the man is presupposed (Scott 1990:194; Funk 1996:171; Du Plessis 1995:365; Keesmaat 2000:278; Forbes 2000:62), and that the non-disclosure of the man's identity is without any point in the story (Böhm 1999:244). Others argue that the identity of the man is consciously concealed and forms a central part of the parable. It suggests that a half-dead man is to be regarded as a simple human being, someone in need, with whom any person can identify (Bailey [1980] 1983; Green 1997:429). For Esler (2000:337), the concealment of this man's identity is crucial. He argues that the parable, being a response to Leviticus 19:18, would have imposed the question: was this man to be classified among those whom an

Israelite was obliged to help. If it is not clear whether the half-dead man is a fellow countryman of the priest and the Levite, the legal debate concerning "love towards one neighbour" is compounded. Argument for the deliberate concealment of the man's identity finds support in two details: (1) He is stripped of his clothes, and (2) is left behind half-dead (unconscious). Bailey ([1980] 198e:42) argues that the two ways to identify a man in a multi-ethnic community is by his dress and his speech. Although the area of "dress-code" needs to be investigated further, the assumption that an Israelite could be distinguished from a non-Israelite by his clothing seems probable. With the multiple dialects in first-century Palestine, identification by speech is likely. Esler (2000:338) postulated that the nakedness of the man meant that an observer could determine whether such a man was circumcised or not: "If uncircumcised, he was a Gentile and certainly not a neighbour; if circumcised an Israelite or Samaritan." For Esler, who interprets the parable within the framework of "social identity theory", this is important, as it would present a scenario of a person belonging potentially to one of three different ethnic groups. It does however remains difficult to ascertain to what degree the story implicates such a probable identification of the man as either a Judean or a Samaritan. Even without a "three group identification, the half-dead man provides the perfect background into which various Israelites can be introduced to test the meaning of Leviticus 19:18 and the question of keeping ("doing") the Law.

The half-dead man is soon joined by another person, denoted by class as a priest. Notably it is not "just anybody" travelling down the road, but someone with whom the lawyer can identify, someone like himself who belongs to the upper classes of society. But more important than the social status of the priest is his status as a temple functionary - someone with authority to interpret the Hebrew Scriptures, well acquainted with the Mosaic Law (Böhm 1999:252). That "by coincidence" the first person to travel down the road is a priest, someone characterised by obedience to God and the Mosaic Law (it could have been a less favourable calling) heightens the expectation of help und underlines in the

circumstances the fortunate state of the half-dead man (Mell 1999:135). The priest however, though seeing the victim, passes by on the other side. That the priest "passes by on the other side" (thereby not even noticing that the half-dead man is alive) is shocking. That is indeed the initial effect that the priest's actions will have had on listeners of the parable. The story itself is remarkably silent concerning any motivation for the priest's action. The silence is an intentional "gap" in the narrative - it is there to promote thought. After the initial shock it will have triggered a whole range of thought relating to the lawyer's initial question of neighbourliness. Did the half-dead man next to the road belong to those who according to Leviticus 19:18 could be classified as a neighbour; and why did the priest not help? If indeed the half-dead man was identifiable as a non-Israelite, the case - from the lawyer's point of view (conventional Israelite wisdom) - would have been solved: there was no need to render help. But as the parable gives no hint of the man's identity, focus now falls on what needed to be done if he was indeed a fellow-Israelite, belonging to the "house of Israel."

Apart from the fear factor that the robbers might still be lingering to attack once again, the priest's problem (as that of the lawyer) is compounded by the fact that in this particular case he is subject to two laws, one to love his neighbour (Lv 19:18) and the other not to touch a corpse (Lv 21:1-4) (cf Böhm 1999:256; Esler 2000:339-340). To somebody passing by, the half-dead man might *appear* dead. The risk of corpse defilement was real. According to Leviticus 21:1 "none (of the priests) may defile himself for the dead among his people (fellow Israelites)." An exception is made for the nearest of kin, a relative (Lv 21:2). The general directives of Numbers 19:11 and 19:16, however, know no such exception. Both passages clearly state that a person touching the corpse of "anyone" (unspecified) is unclean for seven days and has to undergo ritual purification (cf Keesmaat 2000:278-279). Of course the priest could have risked contracting uncleanness. As he was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho, it can be assumed that he had fulfilled his period of service in the temple, and that he would have had

enough time to cleanse himself before his next period of duty. But, as Bailey ([1980] 1983:45) notes, returning to Jerusalem to undergo ritual purification rites would have been a humbling experience, as the priest together with all the other unclean people would be made to stand at the Eastern gate to shame them for contracting ritual impurity. One can also imagine, as Esler (2000:340) notes, that in the light of the clear prohibition in Leviticus 21:1-4, the priest would refrain from committing any breach of the Mosaic Law, even if reparations would be possible later (see also Forbes 2000:62-63). Such considerations would accentuate an excessive defence of the temple cult and its purity regulations at the expense of the (most important commandment) of loving God and your neighbour as yourself (Lk 10:27). This leads to a preposterous reversal of priorities. The position is pushed to an extreme by an interpretation of Leviticus 21 in the Mishnah and the Talmud stating that the danger of contacting uncleanness did not apply to a "neglected corpse", that is, a corpse with no one to bury it (Scott 1990:195-196). In such a case the corpse takes priority over religious purity and a priest would be obliged to take care of the corpse at all times. The Mishnah quote (*m. Naz.* 7.1) reads:

> A high priest or a Nazarite may not contact uncleanness because of their [dead] kindred, but they may contact uncleanness because of a neglected corpse. If they were on a journey and found a neglected corpse, R. Eliezer says: The high priest may contact uncleanness but the Nazarite may not contact uncleanness.
>
> (in Scott 1990:195)

That the priest may contact uncleanness for touching the corpse is not an excuse for "neglecting" the corpse. Prohibitions in Leviticus 21:1-4 with regard to touching the corpse of a family member are clear. But when it comes to a "neglected" corpse, the high priest has no choice, he *must* care for the corpse. Ironically, the

exception of the neglected corpse is not in the Torah but in the tradition, the Mishnah and the Talmud. Hypothetically, the lawyer could argue that the priest was strictly following the Torah; but for any listener such a "passing of the buck" would be preposterous (cf Scott 1990:197). Without any direct reference to the Law, the point made by the parable is clear: help should have been rendered.

The introduction of the Levite is structured in perfect parallel to that of the priest. He formed part of the Israelite clerical hierarchy. Levites were temple functionaries, who among other duties served as gatekeepers, accepted tithes from the people and performed as singers (Böhm 1999:253; Keesmaat 2000:279). As the priest, the Levite is bound by the Law concerning love towards God and one's neighbour (Lv 19:18). The scenario is, however, slightly different. The prohibition in Leviticus 21:1, concerning the risk of defilement on touching a corpse, seem to apply only to priests. Also in the Mishnah commentary, quoted above, the prohibition is confined to the priests. The Levite could therefore allow himself more latitude than the priest. At least the repercussions for him would be of less consequence. Expectations of help are aroused when the Levite "comes up to the place", suggesting that he drew closer to the half-dead man than did the priest (Bailey [1980] 1983:47). But he also passes by on the other side. Again this behaviour is not explained. In the background, however, the echo resonates: there is no excuse.

As many parables progress through a triad structure (see also Lk 14:18-20 and 20:10-14), the introduction of a third person, in this case an "ordinary Israelite" is expected. The triad of "priest, Levite, and Israelite" represents the threefold division of the Israelite people (Scott 1990:198). This hierarchal character is evidenced in the following quote from the Mishnah (*m. Hor.* 3.8):

> The priest preceded a levite, a levite an Israelite, an Israelite a bastard, a bastard, a *Nathin* a proselyte, and a proselyte a freed slave. This applies when all are [otherwise] equal; but if a bastard

> is learned in the Law and a High Priest is ignorant of the Law, the bastard that is learned in the Law precedes the High Priest that is ignorant of the Law
>
> (in Scott 1990:198)

Apart from evidencing the hierarchal structure in Israelite society, this quote is illuminating, as noted by Scott (1990:198), because it highlights the importance of point of view. The somewhat scandalous comparison between a High Priest and a bastard originates from the writers of the Mishnah who belonged to the rabbinic tradition. From their point of view the priests constitute the enemy, while they themselves are the Israelites.

The introduction of a "Samaritan" instead of an ordinary Israelite causes what Funk (1966:138) called an "imaginative shock". The framework that marked the discussion is simply knocked away. There is no ordinary Israelite who could be presented as the one who "does" the Law, thus providing the implied critique to the lawyer in verse 29. With that, the issue of an Israelite exercising neighbourly love is not wiped off the table. But the paradigm which views the problem in a particular way has been sprung. This perspective undoubtably includes that of "group identification" and "group differentiation" as attested by Esler (2000:341-342). The introduction of the Samaritan nullifies any dialogue which proceeds solely from an Israelite (ethnocentric) perspective: whether a particular person (an Israelite or not) should be shown love. But more particular, in the light of the tension between Jerusalem and Gerizim, it also springs the paradigm which echoes the belief that the supporters of the temple cult in Jerusalem - based on their apparently stringent adherence to the Law - constitute *exclusively* the true Israel.

The introduction of the Samaritan, who from an Israelite point of view is a representative of a hated out-group, is used in the parable metaphorically. The juxtaposition in this case is not epiphoric but diaphoric; not illustrative, but tensive.

The Samaritan does not fit on the basis of similarity, but dissimilarity. It is not an obedient Israelite who shows mercy and obedience to the Law but a hated Samaritan. The diaphoric structure signifies that the introduction of the Samaritan does *not* serve as an illustration of something (love towards one neighbour), but that something new is being created which evolves out of the juxtaposition of two opposites that simply cannot be assimilated. The lawyer is faced with a scenario that fits neither into his worldview nor into his perception of reality.

In contrast to the perceptions that arise out of a "group identification" and "group differentiation" paradigm, the surface structure of the parable suggests that contrary to popular belief there is not much to distinguish the Samaritan from the priest and the Levite. The steps built around their descriptions are very similar and create what Donahue (1988:131) calls a "rhythmic cadence", only to be broken abruptly by the word "compassion":

1. A priest goes down
   and when he sees (καὶ ἰδών), he goes by on the other side (ἀντιπαρῆλθεν)
2. The Levite comes to the place
   and when he sees (καὶ ἰδών), he goes by on the other side (ἀντιπαρῆλθεν)
3. A Samaritan makes his way
   and when he sees (καὶ ἰδών), he has compassion (ἐσπλαγχνίσθη)

This structure shows that, within the narrative world of the parable, what distinguishes the three is not fundamentally that two belonged to the house of Israel and one was a Samaritan (ethnical identity), nor that the first two were "pious" men, temple functionaries with a high regard for God's Law, nor that the Samaritan was an "impious" scoundrel, a lawless "Gentile" (religious identity). What distinguishes the Samaritan from the other two is the word σπλαγχνίζομαι:

he has "compassion".

The shock is not only that a Samaritan as such is introduced in the parable, but that the Samaritan by showing mercy "does" the Law. Within a context where the interpretation of the Mosaic Law is being debated, the irony is compounded by the fact that the Samaritan is *not* a lawless Gentile. Indeed, even if hated by the Judeans, he is a member of a group which had the Pentateuch as its Scripture and was therefore bound by the same Mosaic Law (including Leviticus 19:18) as the two Judean clerics (cf Bailey [1980] 1983:48). Strictly speaking, the Samaritan could therefore have argued along the same lines as the priest and Levite concerning the question as to whether he was obliged to help the half-dead man as his neighbour (as a fellow countryman or kinsman). But he does nothing of the kind. The whole issue of whom he may or may not help as imposed on him by the Mosaic Law is simply immaterial to him. He has "compassion" and helps. "Compassion" epitomises the crossing of socially and religiously defined boundaries maintained by the temple and a rabbinic interpretation of the Law, while also undermining any evaluation of a fellow human on the basis of his or her group identity.

The same juxtaposition of "seeing" and "compassion" occurs elsewhere in Luke's narrative (cf Donahue 1988:132). In Luke 7:13 Jesus sees (καὶ ἰδών) the woman who is burying her son and has compassion. Similarly in the parable of the "A Man Had Two Sons" (to be analysed below in chapter 6), the father sees his younger son returning and has compassion (ἐσπλαγχνίσθη). Indeed "compassion" is a major theme of Luke's narrative, central to his narrative world and the symbolic universe created by him. The tone is set as early as the first chapter of his narrative. In the Benedictus, Zechariah praises John, who "will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, through the tender mercy (σπλάγχνα ἐλέους) of our God" (Lk 1:77-78). Compassion is the core value that defines God and determines his relationship to humankind.

The compassion of the Samaritan is enriched by a detailed description of his actions towards the half-dead man (verses 34-35). From a literary perspective his dragging out of events in time (narrating time) allows the lawyer (and Luke's audience) to absorb the sudden twist in events. It gives the lawyer time to reorder his by now shattered worldview.

The use of "oil and wine" for medical purposes is well attested. In Isaiah 1:6 reference is made to wounds and sores that are to be cleansed and soothed with oil. Wine serves the purpose of disinfection. For Jeremias ([1963] 1984:135) the order should be changed around. First the wine to disinfect the wound and then the oil to sooth it. In the light of the debate surrounding the interpretation of the Mosaic Law, maintained by the temple and its functionaries, the sacrificial element associated with "oil and wine" is more important (cf Bailey [1980] 1983:50; Donahue 1988:132; Böhm 1999:248-249). Both formed part of the daily temple sacrifice, in the course of which priests and Levites poured out oil and wine on the high altar of God (see Lv 23:13; cf Ex 29:40; Nu 28:13-14). The *sacrificial* element evoked by the words "oil" and "wine" should be heard against the backdrop of prophetic critique against the temple cult. Donahue (1988:132) draws attention to an allusion in the admission of the lawyer in 10:37 that the neighbour is "the one who showed *mercy*", to Hosea 6:6, where the prophet announces: "I [Yahweh] desire *mercy* not sacrifice." The same critique is echoed in Micah 6:7-8: God is not pleased with "ten thousand rivers of oil," he instead requires deeds of justice and "mercy" (see also Is 58:5-9). Ironically, the Samaritan who from a Judean perspective was unclean because of his apostate status and his potential contact with a corpse, offers the true sacrifice, pleasing and acceptable to God. Furthermore, although not recognising the books of the prophets, it is the Samaritan who epitomises the expression of love and mercy for which the prophets had called. It is a love which echoes the language used in the Hebrew Scriptures *of God* as the one who binds up the wounds of his people (cf, inter alia, Is 30:26; 61:1; Jr 30:17; Ezk 34:16; Hs 6:1; Ps 147:31; Keesmaat 2000:281).

Scholars generally pay little attention to the final action of the Samaritan: The Samaritan places the half-dead man on his donkey and takes him to an inn (10:34b). Bailey ([1980] 1983 :51) draws attention to the social distinction between riders and leaders of a riding animal in Middle Eastern society. The Samaritan humbles himself by placing the injured man on "his own riding animal" (10:34). The rider becomes the leader; the master the servant. Socially defined boundaries of honour and shame, so pivotal in first-century Mediterranean society are disregarded, undermining an "exultation-orientated ideology" so prevalent among the Israelite leaders (cf Lk 14:7-11; 18:9-14). In taking the injured man to an inn, the Samaritan not only shows unreserved generosity by paying the innkeeper two denarii (two normal day's wages), but enters (again) what could well be a hostile environment in a society characterised by "blood vengeance retaliation" (Bailey [1980] 1983:51-52; Keesmaat 2000:281). It was an established phenomenon of Mediterranean society (as in many Middle Eastern and African countries today) that vengeance be exercised against a person believed to be responsible for causing bodily harm, all the more so if the presumed attacker belonged to an out-group. If the actual attacker sought was not available, anybody related to him in the remotest way might suffer. The Samaritan could have dropped the injured man at the door of the inn and disappeared. But when he stays the night and promises to return to pay any unpaid debt, anonymity is no longer possible. Indeed the Samaritan is not concerned about his own safety or well being. Compassion invariably focuses on the need of the other. Referring to Matthew 18:23-35, Donahue (1988:133) notes that unpaid debt could lead to enslavement. By promising to pay any possible debt, the Samaritan not only covers the debt itself, but assures the injured man's freedom. All possible arguments to justify the "passing by" of the priest and the Levite, based on what could be valid legal considerations, are subverted. The well-organised world of conventional Israelite wisdom springs apart at both ends.

Verses 36-37: Having completed his parable, Jesus, as before, counters

the lawyer's question with a question of his own. As many scholars have noted, the logical question would have been: Was the half-dead man a neighbour to the priest and the Levite? If that was the question posed by Jesus, the parable would indeed have been an "illustration" of mercy and unrestricted love, which could also be expressed in terms *other* than a parable. Our thesis however is that the Lukan parables (including the narrative in which they are embedded, both at micro and macro level) are metaphorical in nature and as such not translatable into discursive language without cognitive loss. Being metaphoric, the parable and its co-text invariably pose a challenge (diaphor) to conventional perceptions of God and reality. In the light of our analysis, Crossan's (1973:56) remark that Luke in error accepted many of "Jesus' reversal parables as actual examples of good and/or bad ethical action" needs to be revised (see also Scott 1990:200). The same "twist" characterising the introduction of the Samaritan, is evident in Jesus' question to the lawyer: "Which of these three men seems to you to have been a neighbour to the man who fell among the thieves?" (10:36). The twist is one from "neighbour" as the recipient of love, to "neighbour" as the agent of love. The lawyer's question focused on whether the injured man possessed neighbourly status, a question which in the light of the Mosaic Law and its rabbinical interpretation undoubtedly would have resulted in a lively debate, albeit if contested only by the temple hierarchy and without a conclusive result. But by juxtaposing "neighbour" as an agent in a story where the "neighbour" was to be a recipient, conventional realities are subverted and challenged. It is worthy of remark that the identity of the injured man is never revealed. His identity in the "world of Luke" (and Jesus) is a non-issue.

The lawyer's answer: "The one who did mercy on him" (showed him mercy) testifies to the existing animosity between the Judeans and the Samaritans. Jeremias ([1963] 1984:136) notes: "er vermeidet es, das verhaßte Wort Samariter in den Mund zu nehmen." But in the world created by Luke, the lawyer's answer is the *only* possible answer. It is a world in which compassion is the "essence of

life" (Van Staden 1991). Jesus' concluding command, "Go and do likewise", is not a general, moralistic admonition to help those in need, but a confirmation of the answer given by the lawyer and an invitation to enter the world of the parable.

The narrative does not disclose how the lawyer responded to the directive. What we do know is that the lawyer received an answer to the question he originally sought. Indeed he gives the answer himself, which is characteristic of Luke. In contrast to Mark and Matthew, the Lukan Jesus does not supply the correct answer. He guides the lawyer along to come to his own conclusion. It is an appeal to see things differently, which characterises the purpose of diaphoric language, used to ignite thought through the juxtaposition of dissimilar entities. This is further underlined by the use of the word "see", both in the parable and in Luke's narrative as a whole. It has been noted before that Luke presents the disciples of Jesus as being led along "from blindness to sight, from minds without understanding to open minds" (Tannehill 1986b:281; cf Lk 24:31, 45). The priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan all come and see (καὶ ἰδών). Two are blind, despite seeing. At the close of the dialogue the lawyer gives the correct answer. But does he *see*? The failure of the lawyer to explicitly name the Samaritan as "the one" who showed mercy, leaves the narrative open-ended. Indeed the narrative itself does not disclose the outcome. Will the lawyer enter the world of the narrative? The lawyer's world characterised by group differentiation, legitimised by the rabbinic interpretation of the Mosaic Law and institutionalised by the temple of Jerusalem and its functionaries, has been subverted. Will he enter the world of "compassion"?

5.4 The challenge of a God who chooses all nations

We have stated that Luke uses the parable of "The Good Samaritan" not purely as an "example story" (illustrative in nature), but as a metaphorical story (subversive by nature). In the past, the subversiveness of this parable has largely been attributed to its use within the historical Jesus context. The failure to see the

diaphoric nature of this parable as used by *Luke*, can be attributed to a failure on the part of many scholars to interpret the parable both intratextually within the literary context of Luke-Acts and extratextually within the socio-historical context of the Lukan community.

We have argued in chapter 4 that juxtaposing opposites constitutes part of the literary style of Luke, and that Luke in using this literary style invariably does not confirm, but challenges a conventional view of reality and God. It is to be noted that we have also argued that Luke is a "reconciler of opposites". This may seem to stand in direct contrast to the subversive nature of both Luke's narrative as a whole and this parable in particular. But reconciliation does not necessitate a non-subversive approach. In this particular context, where the conflict arises from an exclusive view of God, reconciliation between the two conflicting groups is best brought about by subverting and challenging the conventional exclusive view of God with one that is inclusive. The characters in Luke's narrative invariably reflect either the latter or the former point of view.

At first-order reference the parable of "The Good Samaritan" is a tension-filled debate between "two lawyers" on the interpretation of the Torah. The case study is "loving your neighbour as yourself" (Lv 19:18). The lawyer approaches the question within the paradigm of conventional Israelite wisdom, in which the question of neighbourliness is directly related to the Israelite concept of holiness. As shown above (4.5.2), the holiness of God was directly linked to the holiness of God's people, who preserved God's holiness by adhering to a number of purity regulations, including the avoidance of all contact with people and animals deemed to be unclean. However, by introducing a Samaritan into his narrative - an unclean outsider, who contrary to conventional expectations *does* what the Law requires - the paradigm of conventional Israelite wisdom is burst. According to the alternative view presented by this parable, the heart of the Law is not God's holiness as expressed in purity regulations, but God's holiness as expressed by *mercy*. The Law understood in terms of purity regulations is subverted by an

alternative understanding of Law as that of mercy (cf Lk 6:36). Note that the parable does not advocate that mercy supersede the Law, thereby rendering the Law redundant. Instead, mercy is presented as constituting the heart of the Law, which in turn reflects on the heart of God himself. In showing mercy, the Samaritan *does* what the Law demands. By defining the Law in terms of mercy, rather than Israelite purity regulations, the Law can no longer be used to promote separateness and exclusivity, but is by nature inclusive of everyone.

The notion of a merciful God is not new to Israelite thought. Keesmaat (2000:280) shows that God "having compassion" is the most often used confessional statement about God in the Hebrew Scriptures. It appears as early as Exodus 34 (verses 6-7), where God is described as *compassionate* and gracious, slow to anger and great in goodness. This description of God re-occurs throughout the Hebrew Scriptures and constitutes what Keesmaat (2000:280) has termed the "foundational" view of God. God's compassion is depicted as

- the basis for God's deliverance (cf Ps 40:11; 51:1; 19:16; 77:9; 79:8; 102:13; also Is 63:15-16);
- the basis for God's remembrance of his people (cf Dt 4:13; 2Ki 13:23);
- the basis for God's forgiveness (cf Ps 78:38; 1 Ki 8:50; Is 49:13; Hs 2:21-23; Mc 7:19 [...], and, most importantly,
- central to the restoration and reconciliation of God with his people (cf Hs 2:19; Zch 1:16; also Zch 12:10).

In the parable of "The Good Samaritan" the mercy of God is juxtaposed with the Israelite view of God as a God who practises ethnocentricity, that is, as one who chooses one nation (Israel) and rejects the other (Gentiles). Ethnocentricity inevitably diverts attention from the Law of God and those who live by it towards a people, who as a group are either "in" or "out" (based on Israelite purity regulations) irrespective of both God's attitude towards them (mercy) and their

attitude towards God (keeping his Law).

That ethnocentricity constitutes a central feature of the Israelite view of God is demonstrated by Forbes (2000:285-290) who provides an overview of the attitudes prevalent in the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as in the intertestamental and rabbinic literature. It is of course notoriously difficult, as Forbes (2000:280-284) himself cautions, to present a *definite* Israelite view of God. Invariably, the teachings in the literature under investigation are not always systematic or consistent. Furthermore much of the material, especially the rabbinic literature, is from a period later than the first century. Literature from this period, however, remains important, as one can assume that if Luke and other first-century authors address attitudes which are clearly prevalent of the time of their writing, then these attitudes must have their *roots* in an earlier period. Our focus falls on what constitutes the *conventional view*, which does not reflect the diversity of views present in any particular society. The conventional view can also be termed the "popular view", that is, the view which over a prolonged period of time has become dominant and constitutes the grand narrative of a society. In this regard the investigation done by Forbes is valuable. Forbes (2000:288) reaches the conclusion that between the time of the Hebrew Scriptures and that of the rabbinic literature of the second to the fourth century, one can discern a definite but gradual intensification of a decidedly negative attitude towards "the nations". Within the Hebrew Scriptures, God's attitude towards these nations outside Israel is presented rather ambivalently. On the one hand all nations are included in God's salvation (cf Is 2:2-4; 42:1-7; 45:22; 56:6-8; 66:18-21; Mi 4:1-4; Zch 2:11; 8:20-23). But on the other hand there is a decidedly disapproving attitude towards the nations, who are presented as the objects of God's wrath (cf Ps 2:8-9; Is 13-23; 49:23; 54:3; Jr 4-51; Ez 25-32; Am 1:3-2:3; Mi 7:16-17). This ambivalence is not explained by Forbes. An explanation is given by Syrén (1993) who argues that the exclusion of the nations can be traced back to the post-exilic period, a time during which the identity of the "people of Israel" was under tremendous threat

(see below 6.2.2). During this time the "blessing" of Israel - which served to accentuate the gratuitous decision of God in choosing Israel as his people - is used *against* the other nations and becomes the "grand narrative" of conventional Israelite wisdom. This corresponds with our description of the Judean-Samaritan tension described above (5.1).

What according to Forbes (2000:288) still constituted a certain balance between salvation and judgement within the Hebrew Scriptures, experiences a marked and almost conclusive shift to the latter in the intertestamental and rabbinic literature. The negative thrust against the nations is naturally most apparent in the rabbinic writings regarding the Gentiles. Although the rabbis did at times indicate the ideal of doing good to all of God's creatures, the scorn felt for the Gentiles is nevertheless evident. Forbes (2000:287) provides the following examples:

- God loves only Israel of all the nations whom God has made (*Deut. R.* 5.7). God is in a special sense the God of *Israel* - not the God of the nations (*Ruth R. Intro.* 1.1).
- The nations have no part in God (*Cant. R.* 6.1).
- The Lord is only gracious to Israel (*Midr. Ps.* 2.5).
- The best the *goyim* can do is kill! (*Mek. Exod.* 27a [on 14.7]).
- Only repentant *Israelites* are accepted: "If a man repents, God accepts him. Everyone? No, Israel, but not of another nation" (*Pes. K.* 156a). [Reference of abbreviation unknown - also does not occur in Jastrow 1975:XVI-XVIII.])

There may have been multiple reasons for this shift from inclusion to exclusion based on ethnocentric considerations. But more importantly, it testifies to what Borg (1987:86) has termed an intensification of the "politics of holiness" by the Israelite leaders, fuelled among other factors by the oppression of the Israelites by foreign powers, not least of all the destruction of the temple in 70 CE. In an

effort to safeguard Israel identity, the Israelite leaders invariably fostered the view that those who failed to adhere to Israelite Law and its purity regulations, were rejected by God and are as such *excluded* from his Kingdom. Being excluded from God's kingdom, they were no longer objects of neighbourly love.

Within the parable of "The Good Samaritan" the priest and the Levite epitomise an ethnocentric, exclusive view of God (see also Green 1997:431). The parable however subverts this view by the (diaphoric) introduction of the Samaritan who "does the Law", albeit not as defined by Israelite purity regulations but that of God's mercy. Inclusion or exclusion based on ethnic or tribal ties is rejected. This view is also echoed by Esler (2000:351) who draws attention to what seems a perfect parallel to the "dissolution of social categories" in Acts 10:34-35: "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in *every* nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to God. " The worldview that gives rise to a question like "Who is my neighbour?" has capsized.

At literary level, the parable of "The Good Samaritan" features a tension-filled debate between two lawyers, the "scribe" and Jesus. Intratextually, the debate reflects the tension between the Israelites leaders and Jesus and his witnesses, who constitute the two opposing poles in Luke's narrative. The former epitomises a conventional worldview, the latter its subversion in the realisation of an alternative view of God. Extratextually, the debate reflects the tension between Judeans and Samaritans (as members of an out-group), which at a second-order reference reflects the tension between the Israelites (regrouped under Pharisaic leadership after 70 CE) and that of the Lukan community, consisting of both Israelites and Gentiles, who are - in view of the tension - in need of assurance (Lk 1:4). Assurance, we have argued, is realised by juxtaposing opposing points of view, so aiming to create a symbolic universe in which nobody is excluded per se, but both Israelites are Gentiles are included in God's salvation. This is in essence "reconciliation". But how does Luke effect the work reconciliation in this particular parable?

We have noted above that "mercy" (as practised by the Samaritan) does not render the Law redundant. This is often overlooked or stated without the necessary nuance by scholars. Forbes (2000:289) for examples concludes: "Jesus thus challenges the view whereby God orders the world according to the law, and where his holiness and righteousness are seen in terms of the destruction of, or separation from, those who do not follow the law." Although Luke draws different maps of holiness (cf Neyrey 1991a:285-288), and subverts the principle of any categorisation of people according to conventional Israelite purity regulations, he does not reject the notion of God's holiness as such; nor does he question the validity of the Law (cf Jervell 1972:137-138; Green 1997:428; Esler 2000:335). What he questions is, a *particular* understanding and application of the Law as advocated by the Israelite leaders that in essence promotes exclusivity and separateness (evidenced by the action of the priest and the Levite). But the Law as such remains valid. Note, the Samaritan does not *violate* the Law in showing mercy. In contrast to the priest and the Levite, he does what the Law in essence *demands*. A rejection of the Law per se, the Samaritan doing what is laudable but outside the frame of the Law, would lead to what Crossan (1973:5) termed a "polar reversal" of roles, whereby the latter (the Samaritans) are included at the expense of the former (the Israelites). But exclusion of any kind is not the purpose pursued by Luke (see 4.6 above): exclusion is self-inflicted - whenever a point of view based on ethnic or social categorisation is in tension with the βουλὴ τοῦ θεοῦ is adopted. Luke promotes reconciliation by letting the Law stand unchanged, while presenting a member of an Israelite outgroup doing what the Law says he should do. Luke thus subverts a world in which salvation is determined by ethnic or social association (coded in the Israelite purity regulations), and creates a world in which salvation is for all. The challenge posed to the listener is: Will he or she enter the world of the parable? - a world which is both the world of compassion and the world of the Law, not contrasted but reconciled with one another on the basis of God's mercy.

One last question needs further consideration. Why did Luke use a Samaritan? The obvious answer is that the Samaritan provides Luke with a diaphor which by shock tactics jerks his audience out of any comfort zone in which they may be and compels them to consider the "new world" created by Luke through his subversive story. This in itself does, of course, not necessitate the use of a Samaritan: any member of an out-group would provide the same shock effect. The subversiveness of the story, however, and the harshness of the exclusive attitude prevalent in conventional Israelite wisdom are accentuated by the ironic fact that the Samaritan *knows* the Law and (like the Judean priest and Levite) has the Pentateuch as his Scriptures.

Apart from this metaphorical function attributed to the Samaritan, scholars have noted that the Samaritan-pericopes both in Luke's Gospel and in Acts constitute a "hinge" or "bridge" to the inclusion of the Gentiles (cf Selling 1975:42-43; Thomas & Van Aarde 1998:760-788, see also Sanders 1987:148-150). As such, the Samaritan-pericopes prepare the reader for the ultimate mission to the Gentiles. More specifically however for Luke's audience, the Samaritan brings into focus the temple rivalry between Jerusalem and Gerizim to be considered the only legitimate place of Torah interpretation and as the sole place of God's presence. By telling a story within an Israelite context, where a Samaritan *does* what the Law says he should do, the validity of this rivalry is subverted. The temple cult is relativised, which is of great significance to a community without a (recognised) sanctuary (cf Böhm 1999:258). This subversion is echoed in Stephen's speech: "God the Most High does not live in dwellings made by human hands" (Ac 7:48), and by Paul's word:"God ... does not live in dwellings made by man" (Ac 17:42).

In sum, the parable of "The Good Samaritan" is a metaphorical story, characteristic of the literary style of Luke, with the distinct aim of subverting a conventional, exclusive view of God, in order to create a vision of God whose salvation is for all. This is done, not by choosing between two groups of people,

whereby one is included at the expense of the other, but by juxtaposing alternative points of view (expressed by the actions of the priest/Levite and the Samaritan respectively) without questioning the validity of the Law as such, thereby promoting reconciliation and challenging the hearer to enter the world of the parable. In this world, the Law of God and the mercy of God are not opposites, but united one with the other.