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Keith James Hacking

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**KEITH JAMES HACKING**

**SIGNS AND WONDERS – THEN AND NOW**

*An Examination of the Relationship Between Miracle-Working,  
Commissioning and Discipleship in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts.*



**- 6 DEC 2004**

Ph.D. thesis submitted to the Department of Theology, University of Durham, 2004.

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PART ONE

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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCING THE ISSUES

#### §1. THE SCOPE AND AIMS OF THIS STUDY.

##### *Introduction.*

There is no denying the fundamental importance of religious experience for Jesus and the first Christians as a starting point for articulating their beliefs about, for example, the kingdom and fatherhood of God, the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus of Nazareth, and the bestowal of the Spirit. For the writers of the NT, theology and *praxis* are the result of reflection upon religious experience as well as historical events.

The contemporary phenomenon of charismatic renewal has, from its inception with the Pentecostal revivals at the beginning of the twentieth century, been characterised by its claim to reproduce the earliest Christians' experience of the Holy Spirit as evidenced within the pages of the NT. The current charismatic emphasis on a theology of 'signs and wonders', associated with the so-called Third Wave<sup>1</sup> of contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic renewal<sup>2</sup> is no exception. Exponents of this theological emphasis claim to

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<sup>1</sup> I shall use the term 'Third Wave' to refer to Christians who particularly emphasise a theology and *praxis* of signs and wonders, healings and exorcism, and who represent a comparatively recent development within the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic renewal movement.

<sup>2</sup> Abbreviated throughout as PCR. I shall use this term to refer to the phenomenon of the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic renewal movement, which in its broadest sense includes Pentecostalism, neo-Pentecostalism, or charismatic renewal, and the Third Wave. The overall context for the Third Wave's influence in the UK is PCR.

reflect accurately or mirror in their experience, theology and *praxis* a biblical model or paradigm<sup>3</sup> which they consider as normative for the contemporary church. This paradigm is based upon the Third Wave's understanding of the proclamation and demonstration, with signs and wonders, of the kingdom of God in the ministry of Jesus and the early church, as it is described especially in the synoptic gospels and Acts.

It will be my contention here that, in their attempts to recover and reconstruct the NT paradigm that informs their contemporary theology and *praxis*, the Third Wave fail too often to engage critically with the biblical text and to grapple adequately with important historical, literary and theological issues that arise. Therefore, the key question that I will ask throughout this study will be, 'what results are yielded by a more critical approach to the text?'

The Third Wave, in common with other evangelical Christians, regard the canonical books of the NT as scripture and, therefore, as having a particular authority within the church, not least, when it comes to informing their primary paradigm for faith and *praxis*. Therefore, *ad hominem*, with the Third Wave, I shall regard the NT canon as my primary source, although this will not preclude using extra-canonical sources in order to enhance our understanding of the NT texts. Whilst I am aware of the questions posed by others to this working assumption,<sup>4</sup> I write, nevertheless, as an evangelical addressing an intra-

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<sup>3</sup> I am using the word 'paradigm' to indicate a biblical model which is used to inform contemporary faith and/or *praxis*.

<sup>4</sup> For a variety of views held in discussing problems associated with the appropriateness of the contemporary use and application of the canon of the NT in the church today, in light of the diversity evidenced within the NT itself, as well as discussing the relationship between scripture, canon and authority, see for example: J. Barr, *Holy Scripture: Canon, Authority, Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983); J.D.G. Dunn, 'Levels of Canonical Authority', in *Horizons in Biblical Authority* 4/1 (1982), pp.

evangelical issue. It should also be noted here from the outset that my purpose is to engage with the Third Wave in such a way that I am heard by both sides – the Third Wave as well as the academy.

### *Scope and aims.*

Why should we engage with this particular group, and what is the purpose of this study?

I have a number of reasons for wanting to engage with the Third Wave.

All evangelical Christians, whether ‘charismatic’ or not, would claim that their experience, theology and *praxis* are derived from within a biblical framework which is informed primarily by the NT and which often reflects their particular denominational or group emphasis.<sup>5</sup> The Third Wave’s particular theological emphases have become highly influential in PCR circles, particularly in the United Kingdom and are, therefore, an important contemporary example of a Christian group claiming to reflect or reproduce a

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13–60 and reproduced in J.D.G. Dunn, *The Living Word* (London: SCM, 1987), pp. 141–174 and J.D.G. Dunn, ‘Has the Canon a Continuing Function?’ in *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1977), pp. 374–388; J. Goldingay, *Models for Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 1994), pp. 77–196; *Models for Interpretation of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 1995), pp. 87–132; R.M. Grant, ‘Literary Criticism and the New Testament Canon’, originally in *JSNT* 16 (1982), 24–44 and reproduced in S. E. Porter and C.A. Evans, *New Testament Interpretation and Methods* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 82–101; R. Nixon, ‘The Authority of the New Testament’, in I.H. Marshall, (ed.), *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1979), pp. 334–350; C. Tuckett, *Reading the New Testament: Methods of Interpretation* (London: SPCK, 1987), pp. 5–20; R. W. Wall, ‘Reading the New Testament in Canonical Context’, in J. B. Green, (ed.), *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 1995), pp. 370–393.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, R.T. France, ‘The Church and the Kingdom of God’, in D.A. Carson, (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation and the Kingdom of God: Text and Context* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1984), pp. 30–44, and esp. p. 42. In a similar vein, but in the context of a biblical approach to contemporary social, political and ethical concerns, see J.R.W. Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today* (Basingstoke: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1984), p. 15.

normative NT paradigm in their theology and *praxis*. As such, they clearly deserve closer attention.

Their theology and practice of ‘signs and wonders’ is informed by a particularly interesting NT paradigm<sup>6</sup> which is both influential within PCR circles, as well as being potentially divisive within the wider Christian community. As such, its importance for contemporary theology and *praxis* in the church today approximates that of ideas about baptism in the Spirit and the manifestation of *charismata* which were characteristic of an earlier stage of PCR. These issues were not only controversial within the church at the time, they also attracted notable scholarly attention.<sup>7</sup>

As I have already indicated, the way in which the Third Wave use the NT evidence to inform their contemporary paradigm raises critical, exegetical and hermeneutical issues which need to be addressed both here and, I would argue, by all Christians who believe that the NT can provide normative models for the church today. Therefore, my aim in this study will be to:

- Identify and discuss the particular distinctives which characterise the Third Wave with a view to evaluating the accuracy of their claim to reflect a normative NT paradigm based on the life and ministry of Jesus, as it is evidenced particularly in the

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<sup>6</sup> See §3 below for a discussion of the Third Wave paradigm.

<sup>7</sup> Here I have in mind particularly J.D.G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in relation to Pentecostalism Today* (London: SCM, 1970). This study is now something of a ‘classic’ and continues to provoke scholarly dialogue and discussion within PCR circles. It also provides a model of good practice for my current study.

synoptic gospels, together with the experience of the early Christian communities, as evidenced in Acts.

- Assess whether a too direct and uncritical correlation between contemporary Third Wave experience and *praxis* and the perceived experience and *praxis* of Jesus and the early church, as evidenced in the NT, has resulted in a theology of ‘signs and wonders’ which is more reflective of contemporary experience than of the NT evidence.
- From here, if it can be shown that, due to a lack of critical rigour appropriate to the nature of the biblical material, the Third Wave’s handling of the NT evidence lacks the necessary historical, literary, or contextual sensitivity, I shall seek to demonstrate how such a failure on the part of the Third Wave results in a naïve understanding of the NT evidence which is subsequently inadequate for informing a contemporary paradigm for faith and *praxis* based upon the experience of Jesus and the first Christians.

More positively, throughout this thesis I shall endeavour to answer the primary question:

As a result of the refining process involved in a properly critical approach to the biblical material and related issues, does a NT theology emerge, in relation to the place of signs and wonders in the contemporary church which more accurately reflects the biblical evidence and, therefore, is more appropriate for informing contemporary theology and *praxis*?

Finally here, although I believe that what has been said so far gives more than adequate grounds for embarking on this present study, the prevailing atmosphere of increasing scholarly dialogue between writers and theologians involved in PCR and the wider academic community<sup>8</sup> provides an ideal opportunity to make a contribution to that dialogue at an academic level which does full justice to the important theological issues raised.

But, who are the Third Wave? Where do they fit into twentieth century PCR? How is the Third Wave paradigm, which I discuss in §3, related to earlier PCR theology and practice? These are questions which we will address in our next section.

## §2. RIDING THE THIRD WAVE, OR JUST AZUSA STREET RE-VISITED?

Christian history has, from its earliest beginnings, been punctuated by enthusiastic challenges to the religious orthodoxies of the day. Sometimes, these challenges have resulted in what later generations have come to regard as ‘watersheds’ in the history of the church. At other times, the challenge has foundered or enthusiasm has simply died out. Indeed, we may point to the characteristic enthusiasm of the post-Easter Christian communities themselves as a point of unity to be discerned within the diversity of the writings we call the New Testament. In addition, most NT scholars would agree that

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<sup>8</sup> This development will be discussed further in §4 below.

earliest Christianity began as an enthusiastic Jewish sect.<sup>9</sup> It is certainly true that signs and wonders, exorcisms and miraculous healings, are a striking feature in the ministry of Jesus as described in all the gospel accounts (see for example, Matt. 4.23; Mark 1.34; Luke 4.40f.; John 4.46–54; cf. John 2.23; 20.30; Acts 2.22; 10.38).

Similar phenomena occur in the ministry of the apostles, as described in Acts (cf. Acts 5.12–16). In Acts, such activity also extends to those who are not counted amongst the Twelve, for example, Stephen (Acts 6.8) and Barnabas with Paul (Acts 14.3). In his letters, Paul alludes to his own miraculous activities (Rom. 15.18f.; 2 Cor. 12.12), and discusses gifts of healing (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων) in his first letter to the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 12.9, 28). It is interesting to note here that Paul uses the plural χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων in relation to a single person (ἄλλος). This probably indicates that each occurrence of a healing is to be regarded as an act of God effected through the healer who is gifted by the Spirit on each occasion with a healing gift, rather than healing being a gift in its own right.<sup>10</sup> Elsewhere in the NT, church leaders are clearly expected to exercise a healing ministry of prayer and anointing with oil (Jas. 5.16; cf. Mark 6.13).

Immediately following the apostolic era, there was a growing tendency towards ‘catholicity’ within the church – the beginnings of which are evidenced within the NT itself – which came to regard outbreaks of enthusiasm, such as second-century

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<sup>9</sup> For a recent and comprehensive survey of the relationship of Christianity to Judaism, see J.D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways* (London: SCM, 1991).

<sup>10</sup> See further, G.D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994), p. 169; J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1975), p. 211; G.H. Twelftree, ‘Healing, Illness’, in G.F. Hawthorne, R.P. Martin, D.G. Reid, (eds.), *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Leicester: IVP, 1993), 380.

Montanism,<sup>11</sup> as a challenge to ideas of authority which are an integral feature of any move towards catholicity.<sup>12</sup> In the West, following the sixteenth-century Reformation, a frequent consequence of enthusiasm has been schism, resulting in an increasing multiplicity of denominations within Protestantism. Notable examples in this country are the Quakers, led by George Fox (1624–91) in the seventeenth century, and the Methodists, led by John Wesley (1703–91) in the eighteenth century. Another important feature of post-apostolic Christian enthusiasm has been its appeal to a first-century ideal which, it is claimed, is evidenced by the NT and is, therefore, somehow normative for later situations. Examples of this appeal to a NT ideal may be seen in the insistence on believers' baptism by the Anabaptists, and the form of ecclesiastical polity which characterises Presbyterianism.<sup>13</sup>

Occasionally, a group's particular appeal to the NT is reflected in the name of the resultant movement. Such is the case with the twentieth century Pentecostal movement which began with the Azusa Street revivals in Los Angeles, California, in 1906. Church historian, Nigel Scotland, traces the development of early Pentecostalism from the influence of the Welsh revival of 1904, associated with Evan Roberts, upon an American Baptist minister, Joseph Smale. When Smale returned to Los Angeles he in turn

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<sup>11</sup> See further, D.E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), pp. 313–316; D.F. Wright, 'Why were the Montanists condemned?', *Themelios* 2/1 (1976), pp. 15–22.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of developing catholicity within the NT see the seminal essay by Ernst Käsemann, 'Paulus und der Frühkatholizismus', *ZTK* 60 (1963), pp. 75–89, ET 'Paul and Early Catholicism', in *New Testament Questions of Today* (London: SCM, 1969), pp. 236–251.

<sup>13</sup> The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church notes that during the 16th and 17th centuries, the proponents of this form of ecclesiastical polity regarded it as 'a re-discovery of the apostolic model found in the NT, and many of them held it to be the only permissible form of government and thus permanently binding upon the Church'. F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, 'Presbyterianism', *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: OUP, 1974), p. 1118.

influenced a black preacher, William Seymour who, from 1906, began to hold services in an abandoned warehouse in Azusa Street, Los Angeles which resulted in reports of powerful spiritual experiences, including tongues speaking, by members of the congregation.<sup>14</sup> In September, 1907, a Norwegian Methodist, T.B. Barratt, who had himself been affected by the Azusa Street meetings, was invited to hold a series of meetings in All Saints Parish Church, Sunderland, after which Pentecostal groups began to meet all over the UK.<sup>15</sup> As the name suggests, the particular emphasis of Pentecostalism is its appeal to the events of the day of Pentecost (Acts 2.1 ff.) as being a normative paradigm for Christian experience today. The features they have traditionally emphasised are Spirit-baptism, as a second experience subsequent to conversion, glossalalia, or speaking in tongues, as initial evidence for Spirit-baptism, a general restoration of NT *charismata* (1 Cor. 12.8–11, 28; Rom. 12.6–8; Eph. 4.11 f.) and, in particular, divine healing.

Healing ministries have been a significant, if somewhat controversial, aspect of Pentecostalism and the charismatic renewal, usually centred on particular individuals thought to possess a special gift of healing, with some even becoming household names in North America such as William Branham, Aimee Semple McPherson, Kathryn Kuhlman

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<sup>14</sup> N. Scotland, *Charismatics and the Next Millennium: Do they have a future?* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995), p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> For a survey of the development of Pentecostalism in the UK leading to charismatic renewal in the 1960's and the influence of the Third Wave from the 1980's see N. Scotland, *op. cit.* For details of Pentecostal churches see for e.g. Cross and Livingstone, *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 1062. See also, W.J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (ET Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988<sup>3</sup>); R. Massey, *Another Springtime: The Life of Donald Gee, Pentecostal Pioneer* (Guildford: Highland Books, 1992), pp. 14–22; C.M. Robeck, Jr., 'Pentecostal Origins from a Global Perspective', in H.D. Hunter and P.D. Hocken, (eds.), *All Together in One Place: Theological Papers from the Brighton Conference on World Evangelization* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 166–180.

and Oral Roberts.<sup>16</sup> The most significant point about Pentecostalism here is its responsibility for, and influence upon, the phenomenon of twentieth century PCR.<sup>17</sup>

According to Scotland,<sup>18</sup> the link between Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement came through the ecumenical and international Pentecostal spokesman, David Du Plessis (1905–87) who attended the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches held in 1954.<sup>19</sup> From the 1960s and throughout the 1970s the emerging charismatic movement, with its emphasis on the need for individuals to receive a powerful experience of the Spirit, together with the practice of spiritual gifts as normative for the contemporary church, began to have a spectacular influence on just about every major branch of the church throughout the world, both Protestant and Catholic. This development within PCR has come to be designated by commentators as the second wave of the Holy Spirit.<sup>20</sup> In addition to its influence within the historic denominations, PCR was largely responsible for the emergence of the so-called ‘house church’ movement which attracted very large numbers to its ranks with its emphasis on a restorationist theology which

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<sup>16</sup> For a fuller account see, P.G. Chappelle, ‘Healing Movements’, in S.M. Burgess and G. M. McGee, (eds.), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), pp. 353–374 [abbreviated hereafter as *DPCM*].

<sup>17</sup> Articles covering the history and development of PCR can be found in *DPCM*. See also, R. Massey, *Another Springtime*; E.D. O’Conner, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1971); P. Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1986); N. Scotland, *op. cit.*

<sup>18</sup> Nigel Scotland has written what is probably the most up to date account of developments within PCR over the last 30 years.

<sup>19</sup> For a short biography of this significant Pentecostal leader, see R.P. Spittler, ‘Du Plessis, David Johannes’, *DPCM*, pp. 250–254. Fuller treatments can be found in D.J. du Plessis, *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Oakland: Published by the author, 1963) and M. Robinson, *To the Ends of the Earth: The Pilgrimage of an Ecumenical Pentecostal, David J. du Plessis 1905–1987* (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 1987).

<sup>20</sup> N. Scotland, *Charismatics and the Next Millennium*, pp. 6–10.

sought to restore to the contemporary church a NT pattern for ministry and structure, including the practice of spiritual gifts.<sup>21</sup>

Twenty years later, PCR began to feel the impact of what has been called the 'Third Wave' of the Holy Spirit.<sup>22</sup> In the United States, the most significant Christian group to be influenced by the Third Wave were conservative evangelicals who held formerly to a dispensationalist/cessationist theology which denies the contemporary validity of the *charismata*, signs, wonders, exorcisms and miraculous healings, associated with Pentecostalism and the later charismatic movement. Initially under the influence of John Wimber and other members of the faculty of the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, attitudes to the place of *charismata* and signs and wonders in contemporary mission changed through those who were influenced by Wimber's teaching and writing, increasingly describing themselves as 'empowered evangelicals'<sup>23</sup>. A course, conducted at Fuller by Wimber and featuring practical demonstrations of 'signs and wonders' in the classroom, not surprisingly, became such a *cause célèbre*. Not all members of the faculties at Fuller were in agreement with the emerging Third Wave teaching, and this led to public disagreements between faculty members resulting in the

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<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>22</sup> According to John Wimber, 'Introduction', in K.N. Springer, (ed.), *Riding the Third Wave* (Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1987), p.30f., the phrase was coined by C.P. Wagner, professor of missions at Fuller Theological Seminary, California, and long-time associate of John Wimber and other American leaders of the Third Wave. Wagner identifies Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement as waves one and two respectively.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. R. Nathan and K. Wilson, *Empowered Evangelicals* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Vine Books, 1995).

eventual withdrawal of the MC105 course, 'The Miraculous and Church Growth' taught largely by Wimber, despite its attracting record numbers of students.<sup>24</sup>

In the United Kingdom where the charismatic movement has continued to develop, the Third Wave, with its particular theological emphases upon the contemporary practice of signs and wonders as being characteristically normative for Christian ministry and mission, has had an enormous influence upon this development across the denominations, as well as in the house church movement. It is worth noting here that estimated numbers of Christians involved in PCR run into the millions world-wide, with an estimated number of over eight million involved in the Third Wave in Europe alone.<sup>25</sup> If for no other reason, the huge numbers of Christians being influenced by the Third Wave make this revival movement of great significance in any study of contemporary Christianity. Little wonder it has attracted considerable attention from a variety of commentators,<sup>26</sup> although none of these has engaged in the detailed exegetical analysis of the relevant NT material I am proposing here.

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<sup>24</sup> For details of the internal discussions between Fuller staff which led to the withdrawal of Wimber's course, see L.B. Smedes, *Ministry and the Miraculous: A case study at Fuller Theological Seminary* (Pasadena, CA: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1987).

<sup>25</sup> See further, D.B. Barrett, 'Global Statistics', in *DPCM* pp. 810–830 and C.P. Wagner, 'Church Growth', in *DPCM*, pp. 180–195. For an earlier indication of the influence of Pentecostalism, especially in the Third World see W.J. Hollenweger, *op. cit.*

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, J.R. Coggins and P. Hiebert, *Wonders and the Word: An Examination of Issues Raised by John Wimber and the Vineyard Movement* (Winnipeg, MB: Kindred Press, 1989); N. Geisler, *Signs and Wonders* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1988); J. Gunstone, *Signs and Wonders: The Wimber Phenomenon* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1989); D. Lewis, *Healing: Fiction, Fantasy or Fact* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1989); N. Scotland, *op. cit.*; T. Smail, A. Walker and N. Wright, *Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology* (London: SPCK, 1993); C.P. Wagner, *Signs and Wonders Today* (Altamonte Springs, FL: Creation House, 1987); E.E. Wright, *Strange Fire: Assessing the Vineyard Movement and the Toronto Blessing* (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 1996).

In terms of healing ministries, the charismatic renewal has followed earlier Pentecostalism and has had its own healers, for example the Roman Catholic Francis MacNutt,<sup>27</sup> and tele-evangelists such as Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland. Most recently, signs and wonders, exorcisms and miraculous healings have played a central role in the theology and *praxis* of those associated with the Third Wave, most notably under the influence of John Wimber and others associated with the Vineyard Christian Fellowship churches. Wimber's influence has been well-documented both in his own writings and by others.<sup>28</sup> The important point to note here is that since 1980 Wimber's ministry has had a tremendous impact on those associated with PCR in the United Kingdom. This has been particularly because Wimber has presented a contemporary model for a theology and *praxis* of signs and wonders, based upon a paradigm derived from his understanding of the NT evidence for the ministry of Jesus and his disciples, which insists that this should be considered normative for all Christians, rather than being restricted to a few 'gifted' individuals.

In an earlier generation, A.J. Gordon, who was a leading apologist for divine healing in the United States and who was also associated with the Keswick Movement in the United Kingdom,<sup>29</sup> argued in a book that became popular on both sides of the Atlantic<sup>30</sup> that Jesus' ministry was two-fold; healing the sick, and forgiving sinners. From here, Gordon

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<sup>27</sup> McNutt holds a Ph.D. (Harvard) and is a former Catholic priest.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, biographical notes in, J. Wimber, *Power Evangelism* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985), *passim*. and *Power Healing* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1986) *passim*. together with biographical notes *passim*. in the works cited above, n.9, and especially J. Gunstone, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–20.

<sup>29</sup> The Keswick Movement was born out of an annual convention which began meeting in Keswick, Cumbria, in 1875 for Bible study and addresses and which sought to promote 'practical' holiness'. The movement continues to the present day and attracts a world-wide following. See further, D.D. Bundy, 'Keswick Higher Life Movement', in *DPCM* pp. 518f. and bibliography.

<sup>30</sup> A.J. Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing* (1882), cited by Chappelle, *op. cit.*, p. 362.

argued on the basis of Ps. 103.3 and Matt. 8.17 that physical healing was to be understood as being provided for in the atonement and that an ongoing healing ministry within the church was integral to the so-called Great Commission, based particularly on Mark 16.18.<sup>31</sup> Clearly, there are considerable hermeneutical issues being raised here about the way in which scripture may be used legitimately to inform contemporary *praxis*, and I will deal further with this issue in some detail below. The important points to note here are that Gordon attempts to set out a biblical model for the ongoing healing ministry of the church, and he attempts to ground that model in the Great Commission – an important *Anknüpfungspunkt* which becomes central to later PCR theology of signs and wonders.

Pentecostalism, followed by the later charismatic renewal, also viewed its theology of healing and associated phenomena as being based upon the commissioning of the apostles both during Jesus' earthly ministry (Matt. 10.1–17; Mark 6.7–12; Lk. 9.1–6) and post-Easter (Matt. 28.16–20; Mark 16. 14–18; Luke 24.44–49;). R.F. Martin, a Catholic NT scholar and theologian associated with the charismatic movement concludes in his article, 'The Gift of Healing', "It is obvious then that healing and deliverance from demonic power are integral parts of evangelization".<sup>32</sup>

However, in both Pentecostalism and later charismatic renewal this particular NT model has not really held centre stage as the primary informant of their theology and *praxis* of healing, particularly at the local level. Those involved in PCR have, until recently,

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<sup>31</sup> The longer ending of Mark's gospel is often referred to in this context and usually considered to be authoritative by Third Wave writers. I discuss this issue further in chapter three.

<sup>32</sup> R.F. Martin, 'Gift of Healing', *DPCM*, p. 353.

focused more on the Pauline idea of individuals receiving various gifts in order to play their part in the life of their Christian community, with the Acts narrative being used, somewhat uncritically, to re-enforce their understanding of a contemporary Spirit-filled charismatic community. We might also note here that the idea of spiritual warfare and exorcism has never been very far from the PCR agenda!<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, until comparatively recently, the theological focus within charismatic circles in the UK has been on the role of the Spirit in Christian conversion-initiation, together with an emphasis on the practice of *charismata* during worship services, and with special attention being given to gifts of utterance such as tongues, interpretation of tongues and prophecy. Indeed, the NT evidence for the role of the Spirit in Christian conversion-initiation continues to be debated, as does the NT evidence for and against a dispensationalist doctrine of cessationism which has characterised non-charismatic evangelical critiques of PCR theology and *praxis*.<sup>34</sup>

More recently, under the considerable influence of the Third Wave, there has been a resurgence of interest in the contemporary practice of healing and exorcism which is informed particularly by the Third Wave's development of earlier (Pentecostal) ideas

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<sup>33</sup> See M. Harper, *Spiritual Warfare* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1970), and cf. the collection of articles on demon possession and exorcism in *Churchman* 94/3 (1980).

<sup>34</sup> For examples of the ongoing debate see in addition to Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, recent further discussion in J.D.G. Dunn, 'Baptism in the Spirit: A Response to Pentecostal Scholarship on Luke-Acts', *JPT* 2 (1993), 3–27 with responses in and R.P. Menzies, 'Luke and the Spirit: Reply to James Dunn', *JPT* 4 (1994), 115–138 and J.B. Shelton, 'A Reply to James D.G. Dunn's Baptism in the Spirit: A Response to Pentecostal Scholarship on Luke-Acts', *JPT* 4 (1994), 139–143. See also, R.P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: JSNT Supps., 54, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991); M. Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: JPT Supps., 9; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996); M. Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: Then and Now* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996); J. Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Postbiblical Miracles* (Sheffield: JPT Supps., 3; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993); W. Grudem, (ed.), *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today?: Four Views* (Leicester: IVP, 1996).

which saw in the Great Commission, and elsewhere in the NT, that such a ministry was normative for the church both during and following the Apostolic era. Whilst clearly owing much to aspects of Pentecostal theology, the Third Wave has sought to avoid earlier theological conflicts associated with Pentecostalism's two-stage theology of conversion-initiation and the importance placed upon speaking in tongues.<sup>35</sup> At the same time, their emphasis on signs and wonders derives from what they consider to be a normative NT paradigm intended for every Christian. Unlike earlier Pentecostalism, they have become more open to theological dialogue, particularly with NT scholarship, and have become conscious of the need to be more discerning in their presentation of theological emphases, making use of NT scholars from within their own ranks.<sup>36</sup> In other words, it would be unfair to the Third Wave to regard them as simply 'Azusa Street revisited'. The Third Wave have provided the vanguard for more recent developments and theological emphases in PCR, especially in the United Kingdom where PCR may perhaps more fairly be described as 'riding the third wave'.<sup>37</sup>

In my next section, I will examine the Third Wave's understanding of the kingdom of God and ask, what contribution does their 'kingdom theology' make to the way in which the ministry of Jesus and his disciples informs their paradigm for contemporary ministry. Again, I shall note significant hermeneutical issues raised by the Third Wave's handling of the NT evidence, and these will be addressed in §4 below.

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<sup>35</sup> See J. Wimber, *The Dynamics of Spiritual Growth* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990), pp. 129–163.

<sup>36</sup> See further the discussion of PCR and NT scholarship in §4 below.

<sup>37</sup> For common use of this expression, see K. Springer, (ed.), *Riding the Third Wave*.

### §3. KINGDOM THEOLOGY AND THE THIRD WAVE.

There has never really been a satisfactory theology of power to show us where God's power fits into the Church's role in history. Kingdom theology provides a vehicle for such an understanding.<sup>38</sup>

So writes John White, a prominent Third Wave writer and conference speaker in the foreword to former New Testament Professor Don Williams' book, *Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God*.<sup>39</sup> But what is 'kingdom theology'? How is kingdom theology understood and articulated by those associated with the Third Wave? What are the implications, with particular reference to the use of NT paradigms, of their understanding of kingdom theology for contemporary Third Wave belief and *praxis*?

In New Testament scholarship today, all are agreed that the central feature of the message of Jesus of Nazareth was his proclamation of the kingly rule of God (see for e.g. Mark 1.15; Matt. 4.17; Luke 4.43; Mt 5.3/Lk 6.20; Matt. 10.7/Luke 10.9).<sup>40</sup> The centrality of this fact for the theology of contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic renewal is affirmed by

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<sup>38</sup> J. White, Foreword to D. Williams, *Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Vine Books, 1989), p. ix.

<sup>39</sup> Don Williams is now the pastor of a church in San Diego, California, but was formerly Professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California.

<sup>40</sup> Most recently noted by J.D.G. Dunn in *The Partings of the Ways*, p. 164. I do not propose here to give an historical survey of research into the meaning of 'kingdom of God' in the gospels. This task has been more than adequately carried out by others in the past. See, for e.g., B. Chilton, (ed.), *The Kingdom of God* (London: SPCK, 1984); G. Lundström, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus: a history of interpretation from the last decades of the nineteenth century to the present day* (ET London: Oliver & Boyd, 1963); N. Perrin, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus* (London: SPCK, 1963); G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W<sup>m</sup>.B. Eerdmans Publishing; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1986).

Peter Kuzmic writing on 'kingdom of God' in the *DPCM* as follows:

The biblical motif of the kingdom of God provides the essential theological framework for understanding the contemporary Pentecostal-charismatic phenomenon.<sup>41</sup>

For the Third Wave in particular, their understanding of the kingdom of God in the NT provides the theological undergirding for their contemporary application of NT models taken from the ministry of Jesus and the early church. Their understanding of the kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus and its implications for contemporary ministry is summarised in what follows.

*Power and presence.*

The Third Wave's understanding of the kingdom of God is developed particularly from the perspective of G.E. Ladd; the kingdom of God should be understood as the 'kingly rule of God' and is both present and future.<sup>42</sup> In other words, it is the kingdom power and presence of God and is to be understood as God's dynamic kingly rule in the hearts and lives of his people.<sup>43</sup> Through Jesus, the rule of God is being established in the hearts of those who respond appropriately to the message of the in-breaking kingdom. Having said this, the Third Wave emphasis on the contemporary manifestation of signs and wonders means that they also understand that the presence of the rule of God is visibly revealed in healings and exorcisms.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> P. Kuzmic, 'Kingdom of God', *DPCM* 526.

<sup>42</sup> G.E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1974); *The Presence of the Future* (London: SPCK, 1974).

<sup>43</sup> J. Wimber, 'Power Evangelism', in C.P. Wagner and F.D. Pennoyer, (eds.), *Wrestling with Dark Angels* (Eastbourne: Monarch, 1990), p. 25. Cf. G. Cray, 'A Theology of the Kingdom', in *Transformation* vol. 5 No. 4 (1988), 25; B. Chilton, *Jesus and the Ethics of the Kingdom* (London: SPCK, 1987), p. 48.

<sup>44</sup> G.S. Greig, 'The Purpose of Signs and Wonders in the New Testament', in G.S. Greig and K.N. Springer, (eds.), *The Kingdom and the Power* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), pp. 157.

*Present and future.*

According to Williams, in heralding the kingdom of God (Mark 1.15), we are to understand that Jesus proclaimed a kingdom which is both future and present.<sup>45</sup> In the NT accounts we find that the time of eschatological fulfilment has dawned (Matt. 8.11) with the return of the prophetic Spirit. This is evidenced in Luke's gospel in the prophetic activity of John the Baptist's father, Zechariah (Luke 1.67–79), Simeon (Luke 2.25–35), Anna (Luke 2.36–38), John the Baptist (Luke 1.15), and supremely in Jesus himself (Luke 4. 18–21). Williams argues that Jesus believed in the re-establishment of God's rightful rule, first over Israel and then over the Gentile nations,<sup>46</sup> and that his mission was the inauguration of that rule. While God's direct rule was present and manifest in Jesus (Matt. 12.27f./Luke 11.19f.), there will also be a future fulfilment when Satan, sin and death are completely destroyed.<sup>47</sup>

Today there is nothing controversial in this understanding of the kingdom of God in the gospels. All are agreed that within the NT we have an eschatological tension between the 'now' and the 'not yet'. The Third Wave understanding of this eschatological tension is clearly articulated by Williams who writes that a correct understanding of this eschatological tension explains:

...both our sense of triumph in Christ and the continuing spiritual warfare which we fight on many fronts. It explains the reality that we have died with Christ and, at the same time, that the flesh still wars against the spirit. It explains why people are dramatically healed today by the power of God and also continue to get sick and die.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Williams, *Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God*, p. 10.

<sup>46</sup> The question arises whether this issue is really so clear in the synoptic gospels?

<sup>47</sup> Williams, *Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God*, p. 107.

<sup>48</sup> Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

*Realised eschatology.*

According to the Third Wave, 'kingdom theology' teaches that until the final consummation of the kingdom of God, Christians experience the eschatological tension found in the NT because they must live under two kingdoms – the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Many of those associated with the Third Wave quote with approval Oscar Cullmann's argument that, in the coming of Christ, the division of time between the 'now' and the 'not yet' occurs. Cullmann writes:

The decisive battle in a war may already have occurred in a relatively early stage of the war, and yet the war still continues...But the war must still be carried on for an undefined time, until 'Victory Day'...that event on the cross, together with the resurrection which followed was the already concluded decisive battle.<sup>49</sup>

It may be that many would find little to argue with here in the Third Wave's theological presentation of NT eschatology. However, there remains a degree of tension between the Third Wave's theological presentation and its practical application. Practically speaking, the Third Wave emphasis tends to be almost wholly concentrated on the present reign of God which is to be understood 'spatially' in that the kingdom of God is within reach, and our broken humanity is being restored to God's original order.<sup>50</sup> In my view, this emphasis on the presence of the kingdom is more for pragmatic reasons rather than a deliberate theological aberration towards an over-realised eschatology. In the final analysis, we may have to say that the Third Wave's theology of the kingdom is faulty due

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<sup>49</sup> O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time* (ET London: SCM, 1951), p. 84. For Third Wave references see, for e.g., C. Kraft, *Christianity with Power* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Vine Books, 1989), p. 177; Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 107f; J. White, *When the Spirit Comes with Power: Signs and Wonders Among God's People* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988), p.36; Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, p.23 and J. Wimber, *Kingdom Come: Understanding what the Bible says About the Reign of God* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1989), pp. 19f.

<sup>50</sup> Williams, *Signs and Wonders and the Kingdom of God*, p. 111.

to their (over)emphasis on the presence of the kingdom, but that this is due more to 'effect' (in terms of their experience of signs and wonders etc.) rather than its being the 'cause'. Nevertheless, the question arises as to how far there is a tendency towards a pragmatic dualism in the Third Wave position which appears to be inherent in their theology of spiritual warfare and which, in turn, fails to reflect properly the eschatological tension found in the NT.<sup>51</sup>

However, this concentration on the present aspect of the kingdom of God, particularly by John Wimber, has attracted criticism. In a recent article, D.L. Smith writes:

Wimber's doctrine of the kingdom is either defective or somewhat premature in its expectations...He anticipates that all believers should be mediating sensational 'power' gifts which will throw Satan on his back to the canvas and will destroy the works of evil.<sup>52</sup>

It is at this point that problems, so far as Third Wave kingdom theology is concerned, arise out of their (over)emphasis on the present aspect of the kingdom of God. In practice, the Third Wave appear to be so taken up with the idea of living now in the 'presence of the future',<sup>53</sup> that they tend to project on to the biblical evidence that informs their faith and *praxis*, understandings which serve their kingdom theology rather than allow the biblical evidence to speak for itself in its own terms and, where appropriate, to (re)shape that theology.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> A question we will return to in chapter 2.

<sup>52</sup> D.L. Smith, 'Third Wave Theology: The Vineyard Movement', in D.L. Smith, *A Handbook of Contemporary Theology* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1992), p. 236.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. G.E. Ladd, *The Presence of the Future* (London: SPCK, 1974).

<sup>54</sup> This emphasises the important point I shall make throughout the thesis that the refining process involved in a more critical approach to the biblical evidence will result in a contemporary theology and *praxis* which

The most serious argument against the Third Wave's theology of signs and wonders in contemporary ministry is not one which denies contemporary demonstrations of the miraculous *per se* – such arguments are dismissed by the Third Wave as theologically liberal and rationalistic and, therefore, a sign of unbelief. It is, rather, the argument by some fellow evangelicals who claim that biblical miracles are not there to provide a contemporary paradigm for ministry, but are there to authenticate God's revelation. Therefore, they are to be found in the Bible 'clustered' around significant redemptive events such as the Exodus and the ministry of Jesus.<sup>55</sup> This primary argument that signs and wonders are given to authenticate revelation, is levelled especially against the Third Wave idea of the contemporary manifestation of signs and wonders accompanying the proclamation of the Christian gospel.

Against this view, the Third Wave argue firstly that the kingdom's coming involves a clash between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, and the reality of this clash is demonstrated in displays of signs and wonders. Secondly, in the NT, signs and wonders frequently attest the identity and authority of Jesus and the apostles. Their purpose is to establish ministry, and not just the ministry of Jesus and the early church. In other words, as demonstrations of kingdom power, the role of signs and wonders also extends beyond attestation.<sup>56</sup> They bear witness to the earthly presence of the coming heavenly kingdom of God and, as such, they serve to advance the kingdom.

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more accurately identifies and reflects the contemporary relevance of the NT paradigms to which appeal is made.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, D.A. Carson, 'The purpose of Signs and Wonders in the New Testament', M. Scott-Horton, (ed.), in *Power Religion: The Selling Out of the Evangelical Church?* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1992), pp. 89-118, and L.B. Smedes, *Ministry and the Miraculous* (Pasadena: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1987).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. D. Carson, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

So far as the key elements in the ministry of Jesus which serve as a contemporary paradigm for ministry are concerned, an important argument against the Third Wave's position on signs and wonders is raised by the fact that in Jesus' ministry the emphasis is to be found in his forgiving people their sins, rather than casting out demons and healing the sick. We need to ask here, 'Does the NT evidence bear this out?'

In defence of the Third Wave position, Williams points out that in the gospel summaries of Jesus' ministry (Matt. 4.23; Luke 4.18–21) 'forgiveness' is never included,<sup>57</sup> and to place forgiveness at the forefront of Jesus' works is to make a theological judgement rather than an historical observation.<sup>58</sup> How far is this really the case? Evidence for the place of forgiveness of sins in Jesus' ministry amounts to more than explicit incidents where sins are forgiven,<sup>59</sup> and this bears out the need for a more detailed examination of the evidence for the role of forgiveness of sins and the purpose of signs and wonders in relation to Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God.<sup>60</sup>

*A paradigm for contemporary ministry.*

The Third Wave believe that Christians are inheritors of the ministry of Jesus and that this is clearly reflected in the experience and *praxis* of the early church. Christians are to continue, in each generation, to proclaim and demonstrate the presence of the kingly rule of God. The historical and theological arguments mounted by the Third Wave are based

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<sup>57</sup> Williams appears to ignore here Mark 1.14f.!

<sup>58</sup> Williams, *Signs, Wonders and the Kingdom of God*, p. 111.

<sup>59</sup> See, for example, J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology Volume One: The Proclamation of Jesus* (ET London: SCM, 1971), p. 113f.

<sup>60</sup> These issues will also be followed up in chapter 2, §7.

on three factors. Firstly, the relationship, described in the gospels, between Jesus and his disciples. Secondly, Jesus' restoration of charismatic leadership and giving to those he calls the task of being his representatives. Thirdly, the idea of the disciples being sent out in mission during Jesus' lifetime and their subsequent 'commissioning' by the risen Christ with its mandate to continue the ministry of the earthly Jesus in proclaiming and demonstrating, with signs and wonders, the kingdom of God.

According to the Third Wave, there is a two-fold pattern to be discerned in the way Jesus delivered his message of the kingdom of God. Jesus not only proclaimed the arrival of the kingdom of God, he also demonstrated its presence through signs, wonders, exorcisms and various other 'power encounters'. In other words, the kingdom of God is seen as both a 'message' and a 'ministry', something, John Wimber argues, the institutional church has not always understood (Matt. 4.23–25; 9.35).<sup>61</sup> According to Wimber, in the proclamation and demonstration of the kingdom of God by Jesus, we have the '... decisive turning point of all history'.<sup>62</sup> Just as in the gospels, where we read that the supernatural is to be expected as part of the presence of the kingdom of God<sup>63</sup>,

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<sup>61</sup> Wimber, 'Power Evangelism: Definitions and Directions', pp. 24f. Also, J. Wimber, *The Kingdom of God* (Vineyard Ministries International Cassette Series, 1985), cassette 1, side 1.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Williams, *Signs, Wonders and the Kingdom of God*, p. 108. Once again, this raises hermeneutical issues for our handling of the NT texts and the question of the need to be sensitive theologically to the differences which exist between pre and post-Easter situations. This sensitivity appears to be often lacking, especially in the handling of the biblical material and also in the subsequent identification of biblical paradigms and the resulting theology of ministry. In the NT, the pivotal point of history occurs with the death and resurrection of Jesus and it is from a post-resurrection perspective that the NT documents have been written. Once again, we would argue, only a critical handling of the text will allow for the necessary sensitivity required to do justice to the intended meaning of the authors.

for the Third Wave, when the finger/Spirit of God touches you, the kingdom of God is manifestly present.<sup>64</sup>

From here, it is asserted that this two-fold pattern identified in the ministry of Jesus provides a paradigm for contemporary ministry in that the church, as inheritors of the ministry of Jesus, should also proclaim the present reality of the kingly rule of God and demonstrate this reality through signs and wonders. It is the life and experience of Jesus, as we have it described in the gospels, which provides the principal paradigm for his followers and the early church, and now provides the principal paradigm for Christians today. Confirmation for the contemporary validity of the paradigm is sought particularly in the experience of the disciples of Jesus of being sent out in mission by him in both the pre and post-Easter situations.<sup>65</sup>

In other words, the Third Wave claim, the followers of Jesus have been commissioned by him to be inheritors of his ministry and, therefore, as such the kingdom of God should continue to be proclaimed and demonstrated by the church today. That Christians are commissioned to continue this ministry, using Jesus as the primary paradigm for ministry, can be seen in the model of discipleship used by Jesus; the commissioning and sending out the disciples and the Seventy (Luke 10.1–16; Matt. 9.37–38; 10.7–16); and especially in the Great Commission by the risen Jesus to go out into the world and make disciples etc. (Matt. 28.18–20; cf. Mark 16. 9–20).<sup>66</sup> For the Third Wave, the idea of

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<sup>64</sup> Wimber, *The Kingdom of God*, cassette 1, side 1.

<sup>65</sup> In subsequent chapters, I will ask what results are yielded by a more critical approach to the NT evidence which takes account of the redactional activity and christological emphases of the Evangelists?

<sup>66</sup> Considerable weight is placed on the longer ending to Mark's gospel, despite the weight of manuscript evidence testifying to the lateness of Mark 16.9–20. This issue is discussed in detail in chapter 3.

‘commissioning’ contains within it the idea of a linear development from the historical Jesus to the disciples (Matt. 10.6),<sup>67</sup> to the wider circle of disciples (Luke 10.1–16) to the apostles/disciples who received the post-resurrection commissioning on behalf of the church (Matt. 28.18–20).<sup>68</sup> In addition to explicit commissionings, implicit within the NT presentation of discipleship is the idea of following, emulating and representing the teacher/sender.<sup>69</sup> It is pointed out that in the ancient world the word ‘apostle’ carries with it the idea of being commissioned to be the legal and authoritative representative of another, and that this accords with the rabbinic idea that, ‘the one sent by a man is as the man himself’.<sup>70</sup> In calling the Twelve, unlike the Rabbis who wait for disciples to ask to join them,<sup>71</sup> Jesus takes the initiative and calls individuals to follow him.<sup>72</sup> Williams points out that in calling his disciples/apostles,

Jesus restores charismatic leadership to Israel in order to carry out both his message and his ministry.<sup>73</sup>

Furthermore, the proclamation and demonstration of the kingdom of God was not just restricted to the Twelve, as is evidenced by Jesus’ sending out the Seventy (Luke 10.1ff).

Jesus’ ecstatic vision of the fall of Satan (Luke 10.17–20) serves to emphasise Jesus’

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<sup>67</sup> K.L. Sarles, ‘An Appraisal of the Signs and Wonders Movement’, *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Jan–March, 1988), pp. 57–58, argues that the commission in Matt. 10.6 specifically restricted the activity of the twelve to Israel. Therefore, it is inappropriate to find a wider contemporary application here – a point we will need to return to in a more detailed treatment of the NT ‘commissionings’.

<sup>68</sup> One is almost tempted to see this as a Third Wave alternative to Apostolic succession!

<sup>69</sup> John Wimber also views the NT concept of discipleship as critical for understanding the Great Commission (Matt. 28.18–20). See, Wimber, ‘Power Evangelism: Definitions and Directions’, pp. 25 and 29f.

<sup>70</sup> Williams, *Signs, Wonders and the Kingdom of God*, p. 124. Cf. Rengstorf, ἀπόστολος in *TDNT* I, p. 415.

<sup>71</sup> E. Schweizer, *Jesus* (ET London: SCM Press, 1971), p. 40.

<sup>72</sup> Williams, *ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> Williams, *Signs, Wonders and the Kingdom of God*, p. 125. Cf. M. Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers* (ET Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1981), p. 88.

intention of commissioning a wider following. Here Williams concludes ‘...from these passages that Jesus’ kingdom ministry, his word and his work, is first exhibited by him and then reproduced in his followers’.<sup>74</sup>

This intention by Jesus is further evidenced in the Great Commission (Matt. 28.18–20) where, Williams argues, the whole thrust in the idea of making disciples is again for Jesus to reproduce himself and his kingdom ministry in his followers.<sup>75</sup> To facilitate this process, the exalted Lord continues to ‘gift’ his church with ‘charismatic leaders’<sup>76</sup> (cf. Eph. 4.7–12; Acts 6.5, 8; 8.6–8; 13.8–12). In other words, for the Third Wave, there is no dispensational restriction to the ‘Apostolic Age’, charismatic leaders who are raised up by the Spirit are to continue to reproduce themselves in their disciples, which means that the ministry of proclaiming and demonstrating the kingdom of God will continue to be an ongoing process until the end of the age.<sup>77</sup>

Again, important hermeneutical issues are raised concerning the ways in which the NT evidence is approached and which require a particularly sensitive approach when handling the synoptic gospels. We cannot simply handle the texts in this homogenising fashion and remain faithful to a high view of the authority of scripture that, I would argue, must always seek to understand the text in its own socio-historical and literary terms.

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<sup>74</sup> Williams, *Signs, Wonders and Kingdom of God*, p. 125f. Interestingly, O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time* (ET London: SCM, 1951), p. 71 sees an eschatological emphasis here on the anticipation of the final end-time victory over Satan rather than an example of discipleship. He argues that Luke 10.17–20 indicates that already in his lifetime Jesus sees Satan’s downfall, although the final victory over Satan is still in the future.

<sup>75</sup> Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

*Kingdom and kerygma.*

Throughout my discussion, in which I have sketched out the Third Wave's kingdom theology, a vitally important point by which much of Third Wave kingdom theology could stand or fall, has emerged. As we have seen, the Third Wave has identified the proclamation and demonstration of the kingdom of God as a continuing and prominent theme for the post-Easter community. This being the case, it is argued, then by extension (and commission) we have a paradigm for the contemporary message of the church. Central to that message today should be the message proclaimed by Jesus – i.e. the kingly rule of God – and that proclamation should be accompanied, as with Jesus, by signs and wonders. The Third Wave position can be summarised as follows:

Not only was the kingdom a prominent theme before the resurrection, but ample evidence exists in Scripture that it was a very important theme thereafter. In Acts 1:3 we read that during the 40 days between the time Jesus was raised from the dead and His ascension, He spoke to His disciples about 'the kingdom of God'. When Philip evangelised Samaria, he 'preached the good news about the kingdom of God' (Acts 8:12). In Rome, Paul 'spoke boldly, arguing and pleading about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered' (Acts 28:31). Paul, Peter, James and the author of Hebrews all mention the kingdom in their epistles.<sup>78</sup>

In other words, just as the kingdom of God was central to the kerygma of Jesus, according to the Third Wave the NT evidence clearly suggests that it should also continue to be central to the kerygma of the church.<sup>79</sup> But is this really the case? Does the weight

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<sup>78</sup> J. Wimber, 'Theological Foundation: The Kingdom of God', *Signs, Wonders and Church Growth* Part I, Section 2 (Placentia, CA: Vineyard Ministries International, 1984), pp. 7f.

<sup>79</sup> This appears to be the general perspective shared by others associate with the Pentecostal-charismatic renewal. See, for example, P. Kuzmic, 'Kingdom of God', *DPCM*, p. 526

of NT evidence support such a direct correlation between the ministry of Jesus and the early Church? Alternatively, is the Third Wave position undermined because it virtually ignores the radical change in perception that was occasioned by the resurrection?

The scholarly consensus detects a vital change between the content of the kerygma of Jesus and the kerygma of the post-Easter communities. This change is summarised succinctly by James Dunn who writes:

Jesus proclaimed the kingdom, the first Christians proclaimed Jesus; Jesus called for repentance and faith with respect to the kingdom, the first Christians called for faith in Jesus; Jesus held out the offer of God's forgiveness and acceptance, the first Christians held out a similar offer but as mediated through Jesus. Quite clearly, Jesus stands at the centre of the post-Easter kerygma in a manner which is not really paralleled in Jesus' own kerygma.<sup>80</sup>

If, on the one hand, there are substantial differences between the kerygma of Jesus and the post-Easter kerygma, and yet, on the other hand, there is a unity between the historical Jesus and the kerygmatic Christ,<sup>81</sup> what are the implications for Third Wave kingdom theology? Here we should also note particularly how surprising is Paul's treatment of the kingdom and, if the Third Wave are correct, and what are we to make of John's silence?<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, p. 31.

<sup>81</sup> Dunn, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

<sup>82</sup> Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), pp. 190f. draws attention to the relative paucity of references to the kingdom of God by Paul (14 times) when compared to Jesus-the synoptics (c. 105 times). He points out that for Paul Jesus' emphasis on the kingdom of God has given way to an emphasis on righteousness (Paul 57 times/Jesus-synoptics 7 times) and the Spirit (Paul 110+ times; Jesus-synoptics 13 times). Nevertheless, he asserts, Paul's references to the kingdom of God are in line with Jesus' teaching. Paul clearly acknowledges the presence of the kingdom (e.g. Rom. 14.7), although the majority of Paul's references are to the future eschatological rule of God.

*Some conclusions.*

In this section I have set out in broad terms the Third Wave's understanding of the kingdom of God; how they see it relating to the miraculous in the ministry of Jesus and the early church, as well as how they believe it provides a paradigm for the ministry of Christians today with an emphasis on the contemporary manifestation of signs and wonders. We have also noted a number of specific NT issues arising out of the Third Wave's kingdom theology which need to be followed up in more detail. These include, for example, the relationship in the ministry of Jesus between the authority to forgive sins and the miraculous; the purpose of signs and wonders; the evangelists' presentation(s) of the disciples and discipleship, and the consequent understanding we are to derive for the nature and purpose of discipleship today; the contemporary relevance of the commissioning of the disciples and being empowered by the Spirit; the relationship between the kerygma of Jesus and the post-Easter kerygma of the early church.

Throughout this section, I have also been alerted to hermeneutical issues which particularly focus on the need to be sensitive to the different perspectives that exist between the pre and post-Easter situations, the redactional activity of the evangelists, and their particular theological interests and christological emphases. This, in turn, raises questions about the uniqueness of Jesus and continuity/discontinuity between the experience of Jesus as he is presented in the synoptic gospels and that of the post-Easter church as Luke presents it in Acts, all of which will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

In identifying and constructing biblical models, with a view to their informing contemporary theology and *praxis*, I have suggested that it is crucial that such paradigms

are first subjected to the refining process involved in a properly critical approach to the text. Only in this way can paradigms be shown to be a legitimate reflection of NT teaching and applied with authority to contemporary situations. If a biblical paradigm is identified but will not stand up to a rigorous analysis and sifting of the evidence offered in support of it, then it can hardly be taken as an authoritative model for informing contemporary theology and *praxis*.

In my final section, I will address hermeneutical questions relating to an appropriate methodology for interpreting and evaluating the NT evidence and so aim to set the hermeneutical agenda for the task ahead.

#### §4. HERMENEUTICAL ISSUES AND METHODOLOGY.

##### *PCR and New Testament scholarship.*

Over thirty years ago, James Dunn set out to engage with those involved then in PCR (as well as others) on the basis of an examination of the NT evidence for the process of Christian conversion-initiation. In so doing, he opened up a field of debate between PCR and the academy which continues vigorously to the present day. More importantly, Dunn pioneered dialogue at a scholarly and technical level with Pentecostals and others which has increased in both the range of subjects under discussion, and the number of scholarly contributions both from sympathetic 'outsiders' as well as from those who identify themselves as coming from within the ranks of PCR.

In a sense, the purpose of this present study is to take this scholarly dialogue on a stage further, by engaging in a detailed examination of the NT material offered in evidence by the Third Wave in support of their theology of ‘signs and wonders’. In this final section of my first chapter, I will identify and discuss a number of hermeneutical issues raised by the Third Wave’s approach to, and use of, the NT material to which they appeal in their discussions of the NT paradigm they identify as informing their contemporary theology and praxis of ‘signs and wonders’. As a *Neutestamentler* with an interest in NT theology and a belief in the need for scholarship to serve the community of faith, it is my hope that the results which emerge from my examination of the NT evidence will both further our understanding of the NT texts themselves, and establish a case for a more critically sensitive approach within the church to their contemporary application to faith and *praxis*.

At an early stage in his dialogue with Pentecostalism over the issue of baptism in the Spirit and how this relates to the NT evidence for the process of Christian conversion-initiation, Dunn raises the important methodological issue of how we are to approach the NT evidence by asking the question, ‘Are we to approach the NT material as systematic theologians or as biblical theologians and exegetes?’<sup>83</sup> Dunn answers the question by pointing out that the common error of the former is to approach the NT as an homogenous whole, selecting texts on a particular topic out of their literary context and using them to construct a theological framework or system which he deems ‘extra-biblical’. For Dunn, the more appropriate approach is that taken by the latter who treat

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<sup>83</sup> Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, p. 39.

each author and book separately with a view to identifying the particular theological emphasis and intention of the various writers before allowing a particular text to interact with others. He adds,

This means, in our case, that we cannot simply assume that the Gospels and Acts are all bare historical narratives which complement each other in a direct 1:1 ratio, nor can we assume that Luke and John have the same emphases and aims. They may, of course, but we cannot assume it without proof.<sup>84</sup>

Just as this methodological point was an important one to make for Dunn's study, so it is for my present study. Those with whom I shall engage also have a strong tendency to treat NT texts in a similar homogenising fashion. It is encouraging to note that there is an increasing degree of theological expertise being brought into the various discussions between scholars associated with PCR and their partners in dialogue, and this strengthens even further the case for appropriate methodologies to be used by all sides. Indeed, there is a growing recognition that biblical scholarship, which is sympathetic to a high view of the authority of scripture, has a crucial role to play in setting the hermeneutical agenda for evaluating biblical models which inform contemporary faith and *praxis*.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> In addition to Dunn, see also, for example, Turner, *Power from on High*; G.H. Twelftree, *Christ Triumphant* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985) and *Jesus the Miracle Worker* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1999); R.P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology* (Sheffield: JSNTS 54, 1991).

*A new generation of PCR scholars.*

In retrospect, Dunn's *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* has proved to be something of a catalyst in that it has been, at least partly, responsible over the past 20 to 30 years for the increasing dialogue between those associated with PCR and academic biblical scholarship. In his recent study of current trends in PCR, church historian Nigel Scotland also notes that there are a number of rising theological and biblical scholars who are also charismatics.<sup>86</sup>

Another significant development in this overall trend has been the advent of the scholarly *Journal for Pentecostal Theology*.<sup>87</sup> In an article for *JPT*, published in 1993, Mark Stibbe, traces the development of the dialogue between Pentecostal spirituality and academic theologians since the 1970s and also notes particularly the rise of a new generation of Pentecostal and charismatic scholars which has taken place particularly since 1983.<sup>88</sup> In a similar vein, with reference to the growing interest of Pentecostal scholars in academic theology, W.J. Hollenweger can write that 'Pentecostalism has come of age'.<sup>89</sup> According to Stibbe, those involved in the Third Wave include more people with theological training and critical temperaments than the first two 'waves', and he concludes that the future for PCR lies in church leaders embracing a more critical emphasis in their ministries,<sup>90</sup> an important point with which we concur.

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<sup>86</sup> Scotland, *Charismatics and the Next Millennium*, p. 259.

<sup>87</sup> Published by Sheffield Academic Press, now part of the Continuum International Publishing Group.

<sup>88</sup> M. W.G. Stibbe, 'The Theology of Renewal and the Renewal of Theology', *JPT* 3 (1993), 71-90.

<sup>89</sup> W.J. Hollenweger, 'The Critical Tradition of Pentecostalism', *JPT* 1 (1992), p. 17.

<sup>90</sup> Stibbe, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

Today, the extent of this dialogue continues to develop and it is now becoming one of the most fruitful areas for NT research with notable contributions from scholars such as R. Stronstad,<sup>91</sup> R. Menzies,<sup>92</sup> M. Turner,<sup>93</sup> and M. Stibbe.<sup>94</sup> It is also interesting to note here that Mark Stibbe is a particularly prominent Third Wave leader in the UK. He holds a Ph.D. in Johannine studies from Sheffield and is currently vicar of St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Chorleywood, which has been at the forefront of the Third Wave in the UK since the early 1980s.<sup>95</sup>

It is worth making two further points here which further illustrate the developments taking place. Firstly, theological colleges, representing most denominations in the UK are including courses that relate to the theology and *praxis* of PCR, with the larger colleges offering opportunities for postgraduate work in this field.<sup>96</sup> Secondly, Stibbe is right to point out that the Third Wave in the United States is also producing more scholarly contributions from within its own ranks.<sup>97</sup> However, leading Third Wave writers from the United States have always relied on NT scholars whom they perceive to be sympathetic in some way, referring with approval especially to George Ladd, Oscar

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<sup>91</sup> *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984).

<sup>92</sup> *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology*.

<sup>93</sup> Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts and Power from on High*.

<sup>94</sup> *The Gospel of John as Literature: An Anthology of Twentieth Century Perspectives* (New Testament Tools and Studies; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993).

<sup>95</sup> For a fuller, and impressively comprehensive list of recent publications in the field of NT Pneumatology, see Stibbe's bibliography, *JPT* 3 (1993), 83–90.

<sup>96</sup> Undergraduate and postgraduate course are available at, for example, St. John's College, Nottingham, Spurgeon's Baptist College, London, and the London School of Theology. It is also worth noting here that Max Turner writes in the Preface to *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: Then and Now*, p. xi, that the book arises out of an invitation from the Open Theological College to write a half-module for its third year BA (Hons) course in Theology.

<sup>97</sup> Stibbe, *JPT* 3, p. 79. See, for example, D. Williams, *Signs, Wonders and the Kingdom of God*; J. Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1994); C.S. Storms, 'A Third Wave View', in Grudem, (ed.), *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today?*, pp. 175–233.

Cullmann, and James Dunn,<sup>98</sup> although the hermeneutical approach of these NT scholars is, for the most part, not reflected in contributions from Third Wave writers.<sup>99</sup>

Whilst I have noted here the positive trend within PCR to engage in dialogue with academic NT scholarship, I have also noted evidence of hermeneutical ambivalence, on the part of Third Wave writers which, in practice, leads to an homogenising approach to the NT. This, I would argue, substantially weakens their case when it comes to identifying NT models that are then applied to their contemporary theology and *praxis*. What further evidence is there of this ambivalence? What do Third Wave leaders say about hermeneutical approaches to the text? Is this carried through in practice?

#### *Third Wave hermeneutical ambivalence.*

We have already seen in §3 above how the gospels are a primary source for informing the Third Wave paradigm. This renewed interest by the them in the gospels, and especially the synoptics, is presented by the Third Wave as a corrective against what they see as evangelicalism's traditional concentration on the Pauline epistles, and the Pentecostal-charismatic concentration on the Book of Acts. The primary model the Third Wave find in the gospels is a model for mission from which they derive their particular paradigm for

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<sup>98</sup> The two works by Dunn that are usually recommended are *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* and *Jesus and the Spirit*. I have also seen both books on sale in John Wimber's Anaheim Vineyard Church Bookshop.

<sup>99</sup> A recent Third Wave example which exemplifies this ambivalence is Nathan and Wilson's, *Empowered Evangelicals*, see esp. pp. 135–149 at the end of which Ladd's *Theology of the New Testament* and Dunn's *Jesus and the Spirit* are recommended for 'further study'. Other examples may be found in G.S. Greig and K.N. Springer, (eds.), *The Kingdom and the Power* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), *passim*; Williams, *Signs, Wonders and the Kingdom of God*; Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*.

ministry in signs, wonders and spiritual warfare which, they claim, is ‘...rooted in the ministry of Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels.’<sup>100</sup>

Emphasis especially on the synoptic gospels’ portrayal of Jesus and his disciples opens up particular hermeneutical issues with reference to literary relationships that clearly exist within the synoptic tradition, and concerning how we are to interpret and understand the evangelists in their own terms, recognising that each evangelist handles the Jesus tradition in his own distinctive way. It is in their handling of material from the gospels that we find the clearest evidence of the Third Wave’s ambivalent attitude to more scholarly approaches to the text. On the one hand they can affirm the need for historical-critical approaches to the text,<sup>101</sup> and yet their methodology has a strong tendency to treat the NT as a homogenous unit where the gospels are used without sensitivity to the diversity of theological and christological concerns of the individual evangelists.<sup>102</sup> For example, John Wimber adopts a similar homogenising approach to the biblical material in his books and yet he can write:

In using every critical tool at his or her disposal the evangelical’s goal is to discern what Scripture meant to say to its original audience so that we can better understand what God intends to say to us today through his Word.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Nathan and Wilson, *Empowered Evangelicals*, p. 140.

<sup>101</sup> See, for example, Wimber, in Springer, (ed.), *Riding the Third Wave*, p. 25.

<sup>102</sup> See, for example, Williams, *Signs, Wonders and the Kingdom of God*, *passim* and especially pp. 105–142 where Williams sets out the NT evidence of the Third Wave paradigm for a theology of ‘signs and wonders’ based on the ministry of Jesus and his disciples.

<sup>103</sup> Wimber, *Ibid.*

In light of this, it is a little surprising that engagement with the text evidences little use of critical tools. Indeed, the word 'critical' itself can be viewed as both negative and threatening, especially by non-academics, but for the academic it is an entirely neutral word.

Again, Dunn makes the important point that,

...the New Testament critic must be willing to treat the New Testament texts as products of the first century, and as such be willing to analyse them in the same way as he would other historical texts. Such an examination is not antithetical or hostile to their further role as scripture.<sup>104</sup>

In other words, our interpretation of scripture must rest on the assumption that each of the original authors had a specific purpose in writing in a particular way. This requires us to use the insights and methodologies of biblical scholarship in order to understand as much as we can of the author's intended meaning before we can understand what the text might mean for us today. Here, I am aware of the justified criticism of the hermeneutical shift that took place in the nineteenth century away from the 'plain meaning' to the 'intended meaning' of the text which has been identified as the 'intentional fallacy' where the intention of the author is identified as an irretrievable 'private state of mind' lying behind the text.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Dunn, *The Living Word*, p. 16.

<sup>105</sup> J.D.G. Dunn, 'What Makes a Good Exposition?', *ExpT* 114/5 (2003), p. 151. See further A.C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics* (London: Harper Collins, 1992), pp. 58–59.

In discussing the ‘intentional fallacy’, Thiselton rightly points out that in biblical studies it is both legitimate and necessary to engage in historical re-construction, but this has nothing to do with the ‘mental state’ of the author or ‘falling prey to the genetic fallacy’, but is a ‘pre-condition to the currency of the text’.<sup>106</sup> As Thiselton observes: ‘Intention is better understood adverbially: to write in a way that is directed towards a goal’.<sup>107</sup> Language is intended to convey meaning and, if we are to make sense of the biblical texts, we cannot avoid the concept of meaning nor, as Dunn rightly points out, is it necessary to dispense with the concept of authorial intention as a ‘realistic goal’ which we find ‘entextualised’.<sup>108</sup>

My approach to the question of the intentionality on the part of the evangelists throughout this thesis will be to understand and approach the author’s ‘intended meaning’ only in so far as I am able to discern it through the use of critical hermeneutical tools which take as a ‘given’ that the authors and their readers are seeking to share meaning through the text and their shared worldview. We cannot ignore the fact that when we approach the NT we face a number of immediate historical, linguistic, socio-contextual and literary-critical difficulties. These must all be faced and dealt with before we seek to apply the text to our own situation. It has also been rightly pointed out that competent scholarship must face the problem of the discontinuities between the biblical event and the present

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<sup>106</sup> Thiselton, *New Horizons*, p. 558–560 and esp. p. 559.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> Dunn, *Op cit.*, and see F. Watson, *Text and Truth: Redefining Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1997), p. 118 who also makes the point that authorial intention ‘is to be seen as primarily embodied in the words the author wrote’.

circumstances before making appeals to biblical paradigms.<sup>109</sup> For example, the liberation theology of G. Gutierrez has been rightly criticised for failing to take adequate account of the discontinuities between the Exodus story in the OT and using the Exodus as a paradigm for informing revolutionary struggles against political oppressors in South America.<sup>110</sup>

Where, then, does this leave us here in terms of an appropriate hermeneutical approach to the NT?

*Setting the hermeneutical agenda.*

I have argued throughout that the nature of the NT documents demands a hermeneutical approach which makes appropriate use of the historical and literary methods of interpretation developed by NT scholarship, before the results may be properly used to inform contemporary paradigms for faith and *praxis*. And yet, despite their tacit approval of ‘sympathetic’ NT scholarship, we have noted an abiding methodological ambivalence on the part of the Third Wave themselves, which eschews the use of more scholarly approaches to the NT texts, preferring to treat the NT writings as an homogenous whole from which a normative paradigm is constructed and applied.

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<sup>109</sup> D.A. Carson, ‘A Sketch of the Factors Determining Current Hermeneutical Debate in Cross-Cultural Contexts’, in D.A. Carson, (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation and the Church: Text and Context* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1984), p. 26.

<sup>110</sup> See E.A. Nunez, ‘The Church in the Liberation Theology of Gustavo Gutierrez: Description and Hermeneutical Analysis’, in Carson, *op. cit.*, pp. 166–194.

Against this homogenising approach, I have argued that any NT paradigm, let alone one which is absolutely central to a particular group's ethos and *praxis*, requires a much more careful approach to the NT evidence. Here the warning of E. Käsemann is apposite when he writes in the Preface to his commentary on Romans:

The impatient, who are concerned only about results or practical application, should leave their hands off exegesis. They are of no value for it, nor, when rightly done, is exegesis of any value for them.<sup>111</sup>

If, as I am seeking to argue throughout this thesis, a result of the refining process involved in a more critical approach to the biblical material and related issues, is that a NT theology emerges which more accurately reflects the biblical evidence and, therefore, is more appropriate for informing contemporary theology and *praxis*, why does the Third Wave fail to apply this hermeneutical approach for themselves? In other words, what are the barriers which prevent the Third Wave from using a more critical approach to the NT texts? I believe the answer lies in three related issues.

Firstly, there is a strong tendency amongst Third Wave writers to regard the application of critical approaches to the biblical text as being symptomatic of the historical scepticism which was born out of the Enlightenment and characterised nineteenth century liberalism, and continues to influence contemporary western rationalism.<sup>112</sup> Perhaps the best example of this may be found in R. Bultmann's demythologizing approach to the

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<sup>111</sup> E. Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (ET London: SCM, 1980), p. viii. A similar view is expressed by N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1993), p. 60.

<sup>112</sup> For Third Wave discussions see, for example, Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, pp. 74–96; D. Williams, 'Exorcising the Ghost of Newton', in Springer, (ed.), *Riding the Third Wave*, pp. 151–163; and especially Kraft, *Christianity with Power*.

NT. Describing NT cosmology in terms of a three-tier universe inhabited by God, angels, Satan and demons who engage regularly in supernatural activities, both at the heavenly and earthly levels, thus ensuring that people are not master of their thoughts or actions, Bultmann concludes:

This then is the mythical view of the world which the New Testament pre-supposes when it presents the event of redemption which is the subject of its preaching. ... To this extent the kerygma is incredible to modern man, for he is convinced that the mythical view of the world is obsolete.<sup>113</sup>

With this, Bultmann sets out on his programme of demythologizing the NT in order to ensure that the saving message is not obscured by a pre-scientific worldview which, he believes, the scientific mind is unable to accept.<sup>114</sup> Of course, the fundamental problem raised for the interpreter of the NT by demythologizing is that it is difficult to know where to stop, and anything that may be regarded as supernatural or miraculous is suspect. The result of this level of scepticism is that it may not allow the interpreter of the NT to remain adequately sensitive either to historical-critical questions raised by the text, or to more recent narrative-critical ideas about assumptions being made by the implied author about his readers' prior-knowledge and their shared worldview. However, it must be pointed out here that Bultmann's historical-scepticism is not necessarily characteristic of contemporary NT scholarship. For example, N.T. Wright is quite scathing in his criticism of earlier (and present) NT scholars who saw the gospel as little more than founding myths which bore little resemblance to what actually happened,

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<sup>113</sup> R. Bultmann, 'New Testament and Mythology', in H.W. Bartsch, *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate* (ET New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), pp. 1f.

<sup>114</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 3.

and that the gospels cannot make sense as they stand.<sup>115</sup> Wright insists that this is not the case and concludes, in a way that should encourage Third Wave exegetes to adopt a more academic approach to the evidence, that there is the ‘high probability that the earliest Palestinian Christianity continued in many important respects the sort of ministry in which Jesus himself had engaged’.<sup>116</sup> To further emphasise the point, Wright suggests that a sceptical approach to the gospels which sees them as almost deliberately misleading smacks of G. Theissen’s fictional ‘committee for misleading later historians’.<sup>117</sup>

Secondly, there is the Third Wave’s opposition to dispensationalist cessationism and what they regard as the rationalistic, anti-supernatural presuppositions which characterise its hermeneutical approach.<sup>118</sup> This, they argue, results in a mis-reading of the NT evidence which, they believe, supports a continuing expectation of the Spirit’s supernatural activity in the church today. In both cases, the Third Wave reject presuppositions which they consider to be ‘unbiblical’, and this leads us to the third of our three related issues which militate against the use of a more critical hermeneutical approach by the Third Wave – the question of ‘worldview’.

The Third Wave worldview, which they describe in terms of a ‘paradigm-shift’, and its influence on their hermeneutical approach may be seen in the following:

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<sup>115</sup> Cf. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, p. 106.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> Cf. G. Theissen, *The Shadow of the Galilean: the quest of the historical Jesus in narrative form* (ET London: SCM, 1987), p. 66.

<sup>118</sup> See especially, J. Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, pp. 45–117.

...it is impossible to understand the Bible apart from a worldview of consistent supernaturalism. To speak of God as the Lord of nature and history and to see him on his throne executing judgement and accomplishing redemption and, at the same time, to deny the reality of his sovereign, direct intervention with signs and wonders makes the assertions about his lordship empty (“mythological”), or even worse, irrelevant.<sup>119</sup>

Whilst primarily seeking to guard against anti-supernaturalist presuppositions, the Third Wave’s so-called ‘paradigm-shift’ towards an epistemological framework, which uncritically accepts a first-century worldview fails to take account of the fact that a contemporary Christian worldview needs necessarily to be more extensive than simply adopting a ‘biblical worldview’.<sup>120</sup> They also fail to take account of the fact that we all bring our own ‘baggage’ to the text of scripture in terms of who we are and how we have been affected by our prior experience and understanding. In other words, it is simply not possible to approach the text of the NT in isolation from one’s contemporary twenty-first century worldview. At best, the Third Wave’s paradigm-shift can do no more than open them up to the possibility of existential applications of the NT data to contemporary faith and *praxis* .

If, on the one hand, we are arguing here with Bultmann and others that presuppositionless exegesis is not possible, and yet on the other hand we want to remain open to understanding the NT text in its own terms, how are we to approach the hermeneutical task? Our approach can only be to take account of both the beliefs which

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<sup>119</sup> Williams, *Signs, Wonders and the Kingdom of God*, p. 48. For a detailed discussion of ‘worldview’ from a Third Wave perspective, see, Kraft, *Christianity with Power*, *passim*.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. for example, Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, pp. 132–134 who describes a Christian worldview in terms of four categories: story, answers to questions, symbols, and praxis.

characterised first century Judaism, as well as the challenge to those beliefs which faced the NT writers in light of the post-Easter witness and experience of the church. We should also note here that the best approach to understanding the worldview reflected in the NT is that which recognises the socio-historical conditionedness of the texts and, in response, applies the hermeneutical tools and insights of academic NT scholarship to the task of understanding, so far as we are able, the original authors' intended meanings before seeking to construct and apply contemporary NT theologies which accurately reflect the evidence.

This is by no means the same thing as the Third Wave's attempt to adopt, uncritically, a 'biblical' worldview which owes little or nothing to contemporary socio-historical, linguistic or literary-critical insights into the world of the NT writers normally associated with a more scholarly approach to the texts. Whereas such an hermeneutical approach, I would argue, not only improves our pre-understanding, but is more appropriate to a view of the authoritative nature of the NT and its continuing role of informing contemporary Christian faith and *praxis*.

Although Christians have, understandably, sometimes criticised the scepticism which has accompanied and governed the application of historical-critical methods, it is important for us here that we differentiate between the methods and the presuppositions which govern their application.<sup>121</sup> In the ancient Greek world the task of the ἱστωρ was to act

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<sup>121</sup> Cf. S.C. Barton, 'Historical Criticism and Social-Scientific Perspectives in New Testament Study', in J.B. Green, (ed.), *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing; Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1995), p. 63.

in the neutral role of an arbitrator who could look at the facts objectively.<sup>122</sup> It may not be possible to be entirely neutral in our approach to the text, but there is a case to be made for being open-minded in our approach to the text. Such an approach opens up the possibility of a hermeneutical dialogue with the text of the NT which allows any questions which seem appropriate to the nature of the text, or claims being made about the text, whilst remaining open to allowing the text to speak, in its own terms, to us in our situation and so ‘fine tune’ our faith and *praxis*.<sup>123</sup>

### *Conclusion.*

In terms of setting the hermeneutical agenda for this present study, I shall begin with the descriptive task of the historian in order to understand, so far as possible, what the NT texts meant in their original socio-historical context, giving careful attention to the theological and christological individuality and purpose of the NT writers. From here I will compare my findings with relevant aspects of the Third Wave’s case and ask what results are yielded by the refining process involved in a more critical approach to the NT material and the issues raised? Does a model emerge which more accurately reflects the biblical evidence and, therefore, is more appropriate for informing contemporary theology and *praxis*?

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<sup>122</sup> U. Mauser, ‘Historical Criticism: Liberator or Foe of Biblical Theology?’ in J. Reuman, (ed.), *The Promise and Practice of Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), p. 102. Cf. *Iliad* 18:501 where the ἵστωρ is called to arbitrate between two characters who were in dispute over the ‘blood price’ of a man who had been killed.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Dunn, *The Living Word*, p. 18f.

## Chapter II

### THE GREAT COMMISSION ACCORDING TO MATTHEW: A CONTEMPORARY PARADIGM FOR SIGNS AND WONDERS?

#### §5. INTRODUCTION.

In chapter one, I argued that the homogenous approach of the Third Wave to the NT evidence they claim in support of their paradigm for contemporary Christian ministry, where signs and wonders are regarded as normative, is just too simplistic. I also argued that seeking to identify any NT paradigm, let alone one which is absolutely central to a particular group's ethos and *praxis*, requires a much more careful approach to the NT evidence in order to remain as sensitive as possible to the intention of the author. Indeed, the question of 'intentionality'<sup>124</sup> on the part of the evangelists will be a central issue throughout my investigation and discussion of the various commissionings in the synoptic gospels and Acts, as well as the ways in which the evangelists appear to relate these to discipleship and mission. I also pointed out at the beginning of chapter one, that the Third Wave, in common with other evangelical Christians, regard the canonical books of the NT as scripture and, therefore, as having a particular authority for informing faith and *praxis* within the church.<sup>125</sup> With this in mind, it is worth repeating here that I write as an evangelical addressing an intra-evangelical issue and, *ad hominem* with the Third

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<sup>124</sup> See my discussion of 'intentional fallacy' in §4 above.

<sup>125</sup> See §1 above.

Wave, I shall regard the NT text as my primary source, although this will not preclude my using extra-canonical sources in order to enhance our understanding of the text.

The foundational commissioning text for the Third Wave is the so-called Great Commission with which Matthew concludes his gospel (Matt. 28.16–20). It is the Third Wave’s understanding of the content and function of this text that provides them with a filter through which they understand and interpret the other commissionings in the synoptic gospels and Acts.<sup>126</sup> My focus in this chapter will be on Matt. 28.16–20 with a view to understanding particularly how these concluding verses relate to the First Gospel as a whole.

In his preface to the commands that follow, the risen Jesus makes the extraordinary claim that, ‘all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me’ (Matt. 28.18a). How does Matthew understand the way in which the ἐξουσία of Jesus relates to the disciples and their commission, and what does it mean for the disciples in their post-Easter mission? The central command of the risen Jesus to his disciples in the Great Commission is that they should go themselves and ‘make disciples’, but what can we learn about Matthew’s presentation of discipleship from his portrayal of the earthly Jesus and his disciples that helps us to understand what is meant here? How does the mandate to make disciples relate not just to initiation/baptism but also to teaching all that Jesus commanded? Is

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<sup>126</sup> See, for example, Greig and Springer, ‘Appendix 3: Matthew 28.18–20 – The Great Commission and Jesus’ Commands to Preach and Heal’, in *The Kingdom and the Power*, pp. 399–403; J. Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, p. 42; K. Blue, *Authority to Heal* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1987), pp. 158f.

there any evidence that Matthew implies a place for signs and wonders and the miraculous in the post-Easter mission of the church?

With the above in mind, I will begin by asking how would Matthew's readers have understood Matt. 28.16–20 and its background? From here I will seek to identify relevant key themes in Matthew's gospel and ask how these help us to understand the way he portrays Jesus and his disciples. Is his portrayal of Jesus and the disciples intended by Matthew to be paradigmatic in any way for later Christian generations, and if so, how? In examining Matthew's narrative of the sending out of the disciples in mission (Matt. 10.5–15), I will ask how would Matthew's readers relate this both to the earthly ministry of Jesus and to the post-Easter ministry of the church? From here I will examine Matthew's use of ἐξουσία with a view to understanding how he relates this to Jesus and his disciples and how, for Matthew, his concept of authority was to be operative in the post-Easter situation. Finally, I will draw conclusions from my study of the First Gospel about how, if at all, Matthew and the Great Commission that concludes his gospel may be said to lend support to the Third Wave paradigm.

§6. THE GREAT COMMISSION (Matt. 28.16–20):  
THE DEBATE ABOUT *GATTUNG*.

16 Οἱ δὲ ἕνδεκα μαθηταὶ ἐπορεύθησαν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν εἰς τὸ ὄρος οὗ  
ἐτάξατο αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, 17 καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν προσεκύνησαν, οἱ δὲ  
ἐδίστασαν. 18 καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς λέγων, Ἐδόθη μοι  
πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῶ καὶ ἐπὶ[τῆς] γῆς. 19 πορευθέντες οὖν  
μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ  
πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, 20 διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς  
τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν· καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας  
τὰς ἡμέρας ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος.

(Matthew 28.16–20)

*The importance of Gattung.*

As we turn to the scholarly debate, we find that the most common attempt to uncover the 'theological heart' of Matthew's intended meaning in Matt. 28.16–20 has been to determine the literary genre which lies behind the pericope.<sup>127</sup> A clear indication of the complexity of the issues raised for our understanding of Matthew's intended meaning in Matt. 28.16–20 can be seen from the way in which the contemporary scholarly debate about the question of *Gattung* has developed. This complexity also serves as a cautionary tale against taking an homogenous approach to the text in order to inform

<sup>127</sup> Cf. T.L. Donaldson, *Jesus on the Mountain* (JSNT Supps., 8; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), p. 175. For a full and stimulating discussion of the importance of identifying *Gattung* in NT studies see, J.L. Bailey, 'Genre Analysis', in J.B. Green, (ed.), *Hearing the New Testament*, pp. 197–221. Earlier examples of *Gattung* analysis include, H. Gunkel and J. Begrich, *Einleitung in die Psalmen*, 2 vols., (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1928–33); M. Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel* (ET London: Clarke, 1971<sup>2</sup>); R. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (ET New York: Harper & Row, 1976).

contemporary paradigms for ministry and mission. As we shall see, the presence of Matthean editorial activity<sup>128</sup> in this pericope indicates that we are not simply confronted here with history or reportage. Rather, the presence of Matthean redaction indicates that the First Evangelist has carefully crafted the conclusion to his gospel. This, in turn, raises crucial questions as to how Matthew's conclusion, and subsequent intended purpose, relates to the preceding narrative.

Bailey defines *Gattung* as being:

... the conventional and repeatable patterns of oral and written speech, which facilitate interaction among people in specific social situations. Decisive to this basic definition are three aspects: patternedness, social setting, and rhetorical impact.<sup>129</sup>

According to Bailey, *Gattungen* are used to convey the experiences and insights of a previous generation to the next and he cites the example of Jesus' use of the picture of God's vineyard (Mark 12.1–12) which he suggests would have evoked the 'love song' genre in Isa 5.1–7.<sup>130</sup> Of immediate importance for us here is that implicit within the choice of *Gattung* are interpretative clues to the author's intended meaning. This fact has been recognised especially by NT scholars who have sought to unlock both the meaning of Matt. 28.16–20 as well as its relationship to the rest of Matthew's narrative.

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<sup>128</sup> Hereafter designated Matt.R.

<sup>129</sup> Bailey, 'Genre Analysis' in Green (ed.), *Hearing the New Testament*, p. 200.

<sup>130</sup> Bailey, 'Genre Analysis', p. 202.

*The debate about the Gattung of Matt. 28.16–20.*

During the earlier part of the last century, biblical scholarship, with its primary interest in form criticism, viewed Matt. 28.16–20 as no more than a word of revelation by a divine personage (the risen Jesus) typical of first century Hellenistic religion<sup>131</sup> and unmistakably mythological in character.<sup>132</sup> Dibelius designates the pericope a ‘missionary command’, and points to the lack of a detailed historical context provided by vv. 16–17<sup>133</sup> for the words of commission in vv. 18–20. He suggests that we should understand the Great Commission as being editorially constructed by the First Evangelist in a mythological framework and being dependent upon Matt. 11.25–30, which, he argues, is stylistically untypical of the synoptics.<sup>134</sup> Dibelius’ exclusive concentration upon similarities between Matt. 11.25–30 and Matt. 28.16–20 has since been questioned on the grounds that Matt. 11.25–30 does not contain a universal mission or the instructions from the risen Jesus to make disciples and for them to obey all that he commands. The principal likeness is only between Matt. 11.27 and Matt. 28.18b.<sup>135</sup> We must also question whether Dibelius’ designation of ‘missionary command’ is entirely adequate in view of the fact that, strictly speaking, the missionary command covers only vv. 19–20. Such a designation is questionable for vv. 18–20 and entirely inadequate when it comes to vv. 16–20.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> M. Dibelius, *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1961<sup>4</sup>), p. 282.

<sup>132</sup> Dibelius, *Formgeschichte*, p. 285.

<sup>133</sup> E.g. which mountain? where does Jesus appear from? where does he disappear to? etc.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 282–285.

<sup>135</sup> B. J. Hubbard, *The Matthean Redaction of a Primitive Apostolic Commissioning* (PhD thesis, University of Iowa, 1973), p. 4.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. J.P. Meier, ‘Two Disputed Questions in Matt 28:16–20’, *JBL* 96/3 (1977), p. 417.

In a similar vein, R. Bultmann classifies the appearance stories in Matt. 28 with those of Luke 24 and suggests that they are both products of the evangelists' editorial activity. In the case of Matt. 28.16–20, Bultmann writes:

The last appearance of Jesus in Mt. 28.16–20 is a sort of cult legend in virtue of the appended instruction to baptise.<sup>137</sup>

With Dibelius, Bultmann also views Matt. 28.16–20 as the product of (late) Hellenistic Christianity. He classifies the pericope as a 'cult legend' which presupposes a universal mission ordered by the risen Lord and about which primitive Palestinian Christianity knew nothing!<sup>138</sup> However, Bultmann's treatment of the pericope must be judged inadequate because it does not take account of the various individual elements contained within the pericope. Nor does Bultmann's treatment, in common with others, adequately take account of the literary form of the whole of Matt. 28.16-20.<sup>139</sup>

The work of Georg Strecker<sup>140</sup> marks a significant development in the study of the Great Commission. Although Strecker concentrates only on vv. 18–20, he maintains that Matt. 28.18–20 contains both traditional and redactional elements. He begins by isolating what

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<sup>137</sup> R. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (ET Oxford: Blackwell, 1963), p. 286.

<sup>138</sup> Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p. 289.

<sup>139</sup> As we shall see, this is a recurrent criticism of many commentators on the final verses that conclude Matthew's gospel who fail to take adequate account of the contextual setting provided by vv. 16-17.

<sup>140</sup> G. Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung zur Theologie des Matthäus* (Göttingen: Vanenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1962).

he considers to be a pre-Matthean ‘word of revelation’ containing the following elements:

- (i) ἐξουσία of the risen Christ (v. 18b)
- (ii) command to baptise (v. 19b)
- (iii) promise of abiding presence with disciples (v. 20b)<sup>141</sup>

From here, Strecker goes on to identify what he considers to be typically Matthean language which the First Evangelist uses to make the pericope his own. This includes v.18a: προσελθὼν, ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς λέγων; v.19a: πορευθέντες, οὖν, μαθητεύσατε; v.20a: τηρεῖν, πάντα, ἐνετειλάμην, καὶ, ἰδοὺ, συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος.<sup>142</sup> According to Strecker, the baptismal command, with its triadic formula, was not composed by Matthew but provides the clue to the *Sitz im Leben* for the pre-Matthean material, namely the liturgical life of Matthew’s church.<sup>143</sup>

Strecker is open to criticism in two areas. Firstly, his failure to engage with vv. 16–17 which, as I have already intimated, are crucial for supplying the Matthean context for vv. 18–20. Secondly, as Hubbard rightly points out, it is unlikely that in the pre-Matthean tradition identified by Strecker that the sayings of the risen Jesus declaring universal authority (v. 18b) and the promise of his abiding presence (v. 20b) were there only to provide authority for the community's baptismal practice.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, p. 210.

<sup>142</sup> Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, p. 209.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, p. 7.

Michel, who understands Matt. 28.18–20 as ‘the key to understanding the whole book’,<sup>145</sup> argues that Matthew’s final commission is both form-critically and linguistically a reshaping of Dan. 7.14 (LXX) which reads:

Καὶ αὐτῷ ἐδόθη ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ ἡ τιμὴ καὶ ἡ βασιλεία, καὶ πάντες οἱ λαοὶ, φυλαὶ, καὶ γλῶσσαι αὐτῷ δουλεύσουσιν· ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ, ἐξουσία αἰώνιος, ἣτις οὐ παρελεύσεται, καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ οὐ διαφθαρήσεται.

According to Michel, Matt. 28.18–20 reflects the liturgical pattern of an early Christian enthronement hymn, similar in form to the christological hymn in Phil. 2.5–11, and based upon the enthronement of kings in the ancient Near East.<sup>146</sup> The enthronement elements identified by Michel are: exaltation, presentation (announcement of exaltation), and enthronement (handing over sovereignty). In Matt. 28.18–20 ἐξουσία is given to the risen Jesus as the exalted Son of Man.<sup>147</sup> Michel asserts that Matthew’s understanding of how the exalted Christ ‘builds’ his community is to be seen in the christological terms of 28.18–20.<sup>148</sup>

Against Michel, it must be observed that, whether or not Dan. 7.14 lies somewhere behind Matt. 28.18–20, central to these verses is the idea of Jesus commissioning others rather than the enthronement/exaltation of Jesus himself. This is presupposed in the ἐξουσία saying in v. 18b and provides the christological rationale for the commissioning

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<sup>145</sup> Michel, ‘The Conclusion of Matthew’s Gospel: A Contribution to the History of the Easter Message’, in G.N. Stanton, (ed.) *The Interpretation of Matthew* (London: SPCK/Fortress, 1983), pp. 30–41; ET from the original German article: ‘Der Abschluss der Matthäusevangeliums’, *Evangelische Theologie* 10 (1950–51), pp. 16–26.

<sup>146</sup> Michel, ‘The Conclusion of Matthew’s Gospel’, p. 36.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> Michel, ‘The Conclusion of Matthew’s Gospel’, p. 35.

which follows. Also, as Meier correctly points out, Matt. 28.20b cannot be fitted into the enthronement *schema* for in these verses Jesus is not spoken about, as one might expect in a hymn such as Phil. 2 or 1 Tim. 3, but speaks himself to others in the first person.<sup>149</sup>

Following the earlier work of Michel, J. Jeremias<sup>150</sup> attempts to develop Michel's evidence for a 'triple action coronation text'<sup>151</sup> providing the underlying literary form for Matt. 28.18–20 by turning to 1 Tim. 3.16 and Heb. 1.5–14. He explains the enthronement background in terms of an ancient Egyptian coronation ritual, but presents no evidence in confirmation of his case.<sup>152</sup> Whilst few would now deny Dan. 7.14 (LXX) probably lies somewhere in the background of Matt. 28.16–20, precisely to what extent continues to be debated.<sup>153</sup> What we can say here is that the evidence for Dan. 7.14 influencing Matt. 28.16–20 is insufficient for regarding the Great Commission as an enthronement hymn along the lines of Phil. 2.5–11 with its primarily christological emphasis.

Jeremias' *schema* does not fit the facts closely enough. Matt. 28.18–20 is primarily concerned with the commission by the exalted Jesus to make disciples, baptise them and to instruct them in everything that he had commanded, and not with the person of

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<sup>149</sup> Meier, 'Two Disputed Questions', p. 417.

<sup>150</sup> J. Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations* (ET London: SCM, 1967).

<sup>151</sup> Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*, p. 39.

<sup>152</sup> Cf. Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*, p. 38.

<sup>153</sup> A most thorough and recent examination of the Danielic background to Matt. 28.16-20 is by Jane Schaberg, *The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit: The Triadic Phrase in Matthew 28:19b* (SBL Dissertation Series 61; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982), who concludes [pp.335f.] that the triadic phrase in Matt. 28.19b is a traditional midrash which has developed from the triad found in Daniel 7 (Ancient of Days, one like a son of man, and angels.)

Jesus.<sup>154</sup> The emphasis in Matt. 28.16–20 is christological, to be sure, but it is a christology which for Matthew serves primarily as an authoritative context for the building of the church through universal mission. Whereas enthronement is all about the bestowal of power, Matthew's christological starting point in v.18 is that Jesus already possess *πάσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῶ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*.

F. Hahn<sup>155</sup> also builds on the work of Michel, paying particular attention to the Matthean independence of the major elements of Matt. 28.18–20: the assertion of authority (v.18), the missionary command (vv.19, 20a), and the promise of the presence of Jesus (v.20b).<sup>156</sup> Hahn asserts that in its present Matthean context, 'the whole utterance is dominated by the theme of exaltation'.<sup>157</sup> This, he believes, is indicative of the influence of Hellenistic Jewish Christianity's view of Jesus as *κύριος*. He accepts that Trilling's warning that the enthronement pattern should not be accepted uncritically<sup>158</sup> and argues for a modified version of Michel's enthronement hymn pattern underlying Matt. 28.18–20.<sup>159</sup> Hahn acknowledges the fact that the *ἐξουσία* saying in v. 18b does not speak directly about enthronement but assumes that enthronement has already been accomplished.<sup>160</sup> Hahn reasons:

... it must be seen that the three basic elements of Matt. 28.18ff. are primarily of different origin and that they had already exercised a more or less mutual attraction;

<sup>154</sup> Cf. W. Trilling, *Das Wahre Israel – Studien zur Theologie des Matthäusevangeliums* (München: Kösel Verlag, 1964<sup>3</sup>), p. 46; Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, pp. 9ff.

<sup>155</sup> F. Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament* (ET Studies in Biblical Theology 47; London: SCM Press, 1965).

<sup>156</sup> Hahn, *Mission*, p. 64.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, and cf. n. 3.

<sup>158</sup> Trilling, *Das Wahre Israel*, pp. 32ff.

<sup>159</sup> Hahn, *Mission*, pp. 65f.

<sup>160</sup> Hahn, *Mission*, p. 66.

it is only thus that the modification of the enthronement pattern becomes intelligible. For the words about authority in 18b are not a direct saying about the act of enthronement, but one of revelation which makes known the exaltation that has been accomplished.<sup>161</sup>

According to Hahn, Dan. 7.14 is not the primary text underlying Matt. 28.18–20 because, ‘the concept of exaltation does not hang together causally with the early Christian expectation of the Son of Man’s return’.<sup>162</sup> He argues that Ps. 109 (LXX) rather than Dan. 7.14 (LXX) is the primary influence on the enthronement theme underlying Matt. 28.18–20. For Hahn, the background is to be found rather in royal messianology where Ps 109 (LXX) has been particularly influential on Hellenistic Jewish Christianity’s ideas about the lordship of Christ (cf. Phil. 2.9–11; Rev. 14.6–7).

Turning to the redactional verb, μαθητεύσατε, Hahn asks if Matthew has used this to replace an original term of proclamation.<sup>163</sup> He also suggests further evidence for Matthean redaction in the baptismal formula and the fact that Matthew has replaced the OT theme of ‘subjugation of the nations’ with the post-Easter mission to the Gentiles, although, for Matthew, this remains linked to Jesus’ teaching about the observance of the law.<sup>164</sup>

The main weakness in Hahn’s case is that he stresses, incorrectly, Matthew’s intention to link the lordship of Christ, expressed in the ἐξουσία saying, and the promise of Christ’s abiding presence with the disciples. Rather the link for Matthew is with missionary

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<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> Hahn, *Mission*, p. 67.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

activity as is clearly the case with Matt. 28.19–20 where v. 19a (οὐν) provides the syntactical link with what follows in vv. 19b-20. Also, Hahn's case that Ps. 109 (LXX) rather than Dan. 7.14 (LXX) is the primary OT text influencing Matthew here is considerably weakened by the fact that his argument depends on the incorrect assumption that Matthew is here stressing the idea of enthronement rather than a (post-enthronement) mandate from the risen Christ for the church to engage in universal mission. As we concluded in our discussion of Michel and Jeremias above, so we must again emphasise here, enthronement is all about the act of bestowal of power, and Matthew's christological starting point in v.18 is that *Jesus already possess* πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῶ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

For C.H. Dodd,<sup>165</sup> Matt. 28.16–20 (along with Matt. 28.8–10 and John 20.19–21) is a 'concise' type of resurrection narrative<sup>166</sup> which relates only the essentials of the pericope and which is characteristic of folk-tradition where an often repeated story is refined down to its essentials.<sup>167</sup> Here Dodd makes the point:

The inference is that narratives of this 'concise' type ... are drawn directly from the oral tradition handed down by the corporate memory of the Church, and consequently they belong to a deposit which was deeply cherished and constantly repeated because it was bound up with the central interests of the Christian community.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> C.H. Dodd, 'The Appearance of the Risen Christ: An Essay in Form Criticism of the Gospels', in *More New Testament Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968), pp. 102-133. This essay was first published in 1957 as one of a series of essays in memory of R.H. Lightfoot and this earlier date is important for our sensitive understanding of the positive contribution (and limitations) of Dodd's contribution to the debate at this point.

<sup>166</sup> Dodd, 'The Appearance of the Risen Christ', p. 102.

<sup>167</sup> Dodd, 'The Appearance of the Risen Christ', p. 103.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

Taking Matt. 28.8–10, 16–20, and John 20.19–21 as examples, Dodd identifies a number of formal characteristics giving a common pattern which is variously developed by the evangelists. These are:

- a. The situation: Christ's followers bereft of their Lord.
- b. The appearance of the Lord.
- c. The Greeting.
- d. The Recognition.
- e. The Word of Command.

The table below shows how Dodd develops his thesis.<sup>169</sup>

<b>Mt 28. 8-10</b>	<b>Mt 28. 16-20</b>	<b>Jn 20. 19-21</b>
<b>A.</b> The Women were on the way from the Tomb to the Disciples.	The Eleven Disciples went to Galilee, to the Mountain appointed as rendezvous.	Late on Sunday evening the Disciples were gathered with closed doors [for fear of the Jews].
<b>B.</b> Jesus meets them.	Jesus approached.	Jesus stood in the midst.
<b>C.</b> He said Χαίρετε. <sup>170</sup>		He said Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν.
<b>D.</b> They approached, grasped His feet, and did Him reverence.	When they saw Him they did reverence, though some doubted.	The disciples were very glad when they saw the Lord.
<b>E.</b> Go and announce to my brothers that they are to go to Galilee and they will see me there.	Go and make disciples of all nations.	As the Father sent me, so I send you.

<sup>169</sup> Dodd, 'The Appearance of the Risen Christ', p. 105.

<sup>170</sup> Dodd notes here that Χαίρετε is the usual greeting in Greek, whilst εἰρήνη ὑμῖν represents the normal greeting in Aramaic. He suggests that, given an underlying Aramaic tradition, the word could be the same in both.

A major strength of Dodd's approach is that in his form-critical analysis he does take account of vv. 16–17 which, as we have seen, sets the Matthean context for what follows in vv.18–20. Verse 18b begins with a christologising of the fact of Jesus' resurrection by alluding to enthronement language found in Dan. 7.14, thus establishing Jesus' resurrection as the pre-supposition for his possession of ἐξουσία. Dodd notes that all three of the pericopes he deals with end with a 'commissioning', but that in Matt. 28.20 the resurrection narrative has been used to introduce a form of church order comparable with Matt. 18.15–20.<sup>171</sup>

By and large I would agree with Dodd's form critical analysis, although I believe he is open to criticism in two areas. Firstly, Dodd has made more of the word of greeting than the evidence warrants, and his case is weakened by the fact that the word of greeting is missing altogether from Matt. 28.16–20 as well as from the later Mark 16.14–15. More importantly, Dodd's placing of fear/doubt together under a single form-critical classification is highly questionable. Here, and elsewhere in the appearance tradition, these two elements serve different (and separate) literary purposes. The fear/alarm theme is common to supernatural appearance stories in the NT featuring angels as well as christophanies.<sup>172</sup> In each case the fear theme is presented as an appropriate reaction by human beings to a supernatural appearance and is often, but not always,<sup>173</sup> accompanied by a word of re-assurance.

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<sup>171</sup> Dodd, 'The Appearance of the Risen Christ', p. 106.

<sup>172</sup> Here I am using christophany in a general sense to include all appearances of the risen Christ.

<sup>173</sup> See, for example, Matt. 28.4.

In other words, form-critically in the gospels the fear theme serves a different purpose to the doubt theme which also features in the appearance tradition. Dodd is the first to draw attention to the element of doubt in those resurrection accounts he designates 'concise', and this is an important insight which has led some scholars to conclude that in the bare mention of an element of doubt in Matt. 28.17 we have 'a genuine historical echo'.<sup>174</sup> However, it is important to note that the element of doubt occurs separately from the element of fear in the appearance tradition, and is dealt with in a way which, unlike the element of fear, requires more than just verbal reassurance.<sup>175</sup> In terms of tradition-history, 'doubt' may well have belonged to the earliest *stratum* of the tradition, but form-critically it serves to inform the reader that the risen Jesus appeared in a form qualitatively different to that of an angel or spirit/ghost.<sup>176</sup>

A further important development in the form-critical debate about the *Gattung* of Matt. 28.16-20 is to be found in the more recent work of scholars who have sought parallels to Matthew in OT commissioning stories. Here, most notably, the work of W. Trilling,<sup>177</sup> and B.J. Malina,<sup>178</sup> followed by the more comprehensive contribution of B.J. Hubbard.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 124. For a list of scholars who favour this position and those against see p. 392 n. 124.

<sup>175</sup> E.g. the words of commission following Matt. 28.17 in Matt. 28.18; the proof from Scripture during the walk to Emmaus, followed by the disciples recognition of the risen one in the breaking of the bread (Luke 24. 13-35; John 21.12-13); the invitation to touch the risen Jesus (Luke 24. 36-40; John 20.19-20, 24-28), followed by his eating with the disciples – a sure proof that the heavenly person before them was not an angel (cf. Tobit 12.15-19). See further my discussion in chapter five.

<sup>176</sup> As we shall see below, Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, p. 62, identifies the fear theme as a reaction to the presence of God or his angel in eight of the OT commissionings he examines but in no case is there a conflation of fear/doubt (cf. Gen. 17.3, 28.16f.; Exod. 3.3, 6; Num. 22.31; 1 Kings 19.13; Isa 6.5; Ezek. 1.28).

<sup>177</sup> Trilling, *Das Wahre Israel*.

<sup>178</sup> B.J. Malina, 'The Literary Structure and Form of Matt. XXVIII.16-20', *NTS* 17 (1970), 87-103.

<sup>179</sup> Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, pp. 9ff.

Trilling argues that, form-critically, Matt. 28.18–20 contains a three-fold pattern of revelatory word, command, and promise which corresponds to the ‘Schema der alttestamentlichen Gottesrede’.<sup>180</sup> In a number of instances elements identified by Trilling occur in the book of Deuteronomy<sup>181</sup> which, Trilling points out, has close affinities with Matthew’s gospel.<sup>182</sup> However, a major weakness in Trilling’s case is that none of the OT examples he cites contains all three elements of the *Gottesrede* together. Nevertheless, Trilling has introduced into the discussion the possibility of Matthew being influenced by commissionings of individuals found in the OT.

In his paper on the form of Matt. 28.16-20 Malina<sup>183</sup> criticises the idea of Matt. 28.18–20 being dependent upon OT commissionings, and is especially critical of the idea of Matt. 28.18b<sup>184</sup> being dependent upon Dan. 7.14 (LXX)<sup>185</sup> on the basis that the evidence for verbal similarity is not conclusive enough to suggest a ‘relationship of literary form’, (i.e. an enthronement or coronation form) which would then serve for an understanding of the whole pericope.<sup>186</sup> Malina, like Dodd, does look at the pericope as a whole and distinguishes between the question of the form of vv. 18–20 and the question of the form of vv.16-20, although he concentrates on the literary form of vv. 18–20 and never really explains his view on the literary form of the whole passage (vv. 16–20) as it now stands at the close of the First Gospel.<sup>187</sup>

<sup>180</sup> Trilling, *Das Wahre Israel*, p. 48.

<sup>181</sup> E.g. the revelatory word of Deut. 5.6 followed by commandments which are to be obeyed; the promise to Joshua of God’s presence (Deut. 31.5-8; 31.23).

<sup>182</sup> Trilling, *Das Wahre, Israel* p. 49.

<sup>183</sup> Malina, *op. cit.*

<sup>184</sup> ἔδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῶ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

<sup>185</sup> ἔδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία.

<sup>186</sup> Malina, ‘The Literary Structure and Form of Matt. XXVIII.16-20’, p. 88.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. especially pp. 101-103 where, although the subheading refers to the literary form of vv. 16-20, he

As an alternative to OT models suggested by others, Malina argues that the OT model being used here by Matthew is the decree of Cyrus in 2 Chron. 36.23<sup>188</sup> which itself is a variant of the basic OT messenger form, an example of which can be found in Joseph's message sending for Jacob to join him in Egypt (Gen. 45.9–11). Following C.

Westermann's literary analysis of Gen. 45.9–11 and 2 Chron. 36.23,<sup>189</sup> Malina concludes that the primary OT model used by Matthew is an official decree form (vv. 18b–20)<sup>190</sup> which also displays 'overtones' of a classic OT 'proof pattern',<sup>191</sup> all of which translates into the following literary form for Matt. 28.18–20.<sup>192</sup>

- (i) Messenger formula: here refashioned as narrative introduction to Jesus' decree (v. 18a)
- (ii) Narrative: statement of authority expressing the basis of the obligation for the command that follows (v. 18b).
- (iii) Command: a community regulation expressing the law-duty-custom of a specific group of persons (vv. 19-20a).
- (iv) Motivation: same as in II Chron. (v. 20b)

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concentrates entirely on vv. 18b–20.

<sup>188</sup> Malina, 'The Literary Structure and Form of Matt. XXVIII.16–20', p. 91f.

<sup>189</sup> C. Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* (ET London, SCM Press, 1967), pp. 106–110.

<sup>190</sup> Following 2 Chron. 35.23, elements of the decree form are: (a) Statement of authority; (b) Reason for command; (c) Command proper (Malina, *op. cit.*, p. 93).

<sup>191</sup> Main elements in the classic proof pattern are: (a) Prophetic message formula (Thus says YHWH); (b) Motivation (I have seen etc.); (c) Announcement of salvation (I shall give into your hands...); (d) Proof formula (And you shall know that I am YHWH) [Malina, 'The Literary Structure and Form of Matt. XXVIII.16–20', p. 95].

<sup>192</sup> Malina, 'The Literary Structure and Form of Matt. XXVIII.16–20', p. 94.

In addition to the presence of formal literary parallels, Malina's reason for suggesting 2 Chron. 36.23 is that, just as Matt. 28.16–20 closes Matthew's gospel, so the Jewish scriptures end with 2 Chron. 36.23. This is somewhat surprising since, as K. Stendahl has shown, Matthew's church almost certainly used the LXX, which, unlike the MT, ends with Malachi.<sup>193</sup> More importantly, J.P. Meier has pointed out that an examination of the three texts in question reveals a considerable number of dissimilarities as well as the similarities identified by Malina<sup>194</sup> and concludes that overall the evidence suggests that, 'Cyrus is not the answer'.<sup>195</sup>

This brings us to the work of B. J. Hubbard who provides us with the most detailed investigation to date into the problem of the *Gattung* of Matt. 28.16–20.<sup>196</sup> Hubbard argues that the structure of the closing verses of Matthew's gospel conform to a 'Hebrew Bible commissioning *Gattung*'. Hubbard bases his case on the evidence of twenty seven OT commissionings of patriarchs and prophets and identifies seven formal elements which, he argues, form the OT commissioning *Gattung* on which Matt. 28.16–20 is based.

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<sup>193</sup> See, K., Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968<sup>2</sup>), who concludes: 'The dominant use of the LXX, however, shows the authority of the LXX as the accepted edition of the O.T. in everyday church life' (Stendahl, *op. cit.*, p. 205). More recently, this widely held view based on Stendahl's careful analysis of the use of the OT in Matthew's gospel has been criticised by G.N. Stanton, 'Matthew's Use of the Old Testament', in *A Gospel For A New People: Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1992), pp. 346–363, and especially pp. 353–363. Stanton, who concentrates on redactional passages in Matthew's gospel—an approach developed since Stendahl's study—argues that the results of his analysis of Matthew's redaction of OT quotations in Mark and Q, suggest that it is no longer certain that the LXX was 'Matthew's Bible' (Stanton, *op. cit.*, p. 355).

<sup>194</sup> For details see, Meier, 'Two Disputed Questions', p. 419. See also, Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, p. 22.

<sup>195</sup> Meier, 'Two Disputed Questions', p. 419.

<sup>196</sup> Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, pp. 31–66.

In its most complete form, the seven elements of the OT commissioning form identified by Hubbard are:<sup>197</sup>

- (i) circumstantial introduction [time, place etc];
- (ii) confrontation [deity/commissioner confronts those commissioned];
- (iii) reaction [often fear/unworthiness];<sup>198</sup>
- (iv) commission [individual told to undertake a task which involves assuming a new role in life, e.g. that of a prophet];
- (v) protest [in 13 pericopes the individual responds to commission by claiming they are unworthy to accomplish it or they question the commissioner in some way];
- (vi) reassurance [24 pericopes contain words of reassurance];
- (vii) conclusion [commission usually concludes in a more or less formal way].

Having identified the existence of an OT commissioning *Gattung*, Hubbard then suggests that the following common (proto) tradition underlies the commissioning scenes in Matt. 28.16–20; Luke 24.36–53; Mark 16.14–20; John 20.19–23:

- (i) Confrontation (Jesus appears to the [eleven] disciples);
- (ii) Reaction (gladness mixed with disbelief);
- (iii) Commission (preach [the gospel] to all nations, [baptise] in my name for the forgiveness of sins);
- (iv) Reassurance (I will send the Holy Spirit upon you).<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> For a full analysis, see Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, pp. 61–66.

<sup>198</sup> It is worth noting here that the element of ‘doubt’, as it occurs in the NT appearance tradition, is not part of the OT element of ‘reaction’ identified by Hubbard here.

<sup>199</sup> Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, p. 128.

From here, Hubbard applies his findings to Matt. 28.16–20 as follows:<sup>200</sup>

Introduction	verse 16	Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them
Confrontation	verse 17a	And when they saw him ...
Reaction	verse 17b	... they worshipped him; but some doubted
Confrontation	verse 18	And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
Commission	verses 19-20a	"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you;
Reassurance	verse 20b	" ... and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

In a review of Hubbard's published dissertation, H. K. McArthur,<sup>201</sup> whilst acknowledging the value and clarity of Hubbard's contribution, rightly questions whether the seven elements Hubbard identifies as being present in the OT commissioning are

<sup>200</sup> Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, p. 67f.

<sup>201</sup> In *CBQ* 38 (1976), pp. 107–108.

sufficiently distinctive to justify the claim to a specific commissioning *Gattung*.<sup>202</sup> Here I must agree with McArthur who points to the rather general nature of Hubbard's *Gattung* when he writes,

Would not most of them [the elements identified by Hubbard in his OT commissioning *Gattung*] appear in almost any narrative in which an authoritative X meets Y for a significant exchange?<sup>203</sup>

Further problems arise when Hubbard attempts to apply his OT commissioning *Gattung* to Matt. 28.16–20. This pericope contains only five out of the seven elements and, furthermore, the element of confrontation occurs twice (vv. 17a and 18) being interrupted by the element of reaction (v. 17b). Although the OT passages examined by Hubbard do contain elements of commissioning, McArthur sees no reason to designate them specifically *commissioning* stories rather than, for example, angelophanies or theophanies.<sup>204</sup> It may be noted here that J.E. Alsup, in an equally detailed analysis of all of the appearance stories,<sup>205</sup> relates Matt. 28.16–20 to anthropomorphic theophanies found in the OT and intertestamental literature and designates it a 'Group Appearance *Gattung*'.<sup>206</sup> In other words, it could just as easily be argued that Matthew drew on the post-Easter appearance story tradition which already contained a form of commissioning by the risen Jesus, redacting it in the direction of an OT commissioning.<sup>207</sup> Indeed,

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<sup>202</sup> McArthur, *CBQ* 38, p. 108.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>205</sup> J.E. Alsup, *The Post-Resurrection Appearance Stories of the Gospel Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1975).

<sup>206</sup> Alsup, *The Post-Resurrection Appearance Stories*, pp. 211 ff., and see especially the 'Text Synopsis' attached to the back of the book. Noted also by McArthur, p. 108.

<sup>207</sup> So Meier, 'Two Disputed Questions', p. 423. Alsup, *The Post-Resurrection Appearance Stories*, p. 212, notes that where the element of commissioning occurs, '... the words of the resurrected One are cast entirely in the style, vocabulary and theological intention of the three evangelists [Matthew, Luke and John]

Hubbard himself argues convincingly for the existence of just such a primitive apostolic commissioning which Matthew has redacted in line with the OT commissioning tradition.<sup>208</sup>

How, then, might we conclude our discussion of the question of the *Gattung* of Matt. 28.16–20? Just as v. 18b may well echo Dan. 7.14, in order to establish the idea of Jesus' exaltation, so also the OT commissioning *Gattung* identified by Hubbard may also be echoed here. At the end of the day the evidence for a particular literary form providing an exact model for Matt. 28.16–20 is not conclusive and, therefore, can only provide a speculative starting point as to Matthew's purpose. More importantly, Meier is surely right when he points out that there is a tendency when applying *Gattungen* to Matt. 28.16–20 to ignore the post-resurrectional nature of the epiphany and not to allow this to enter into the choice of *Gattung*.<sup>209</sup> It is for this reason more than any other that we must conclude with Meier that the reason why no single *Gattung* proposed so far adequately fits Matt. 28.16–20 is that the pericope is primarily *sui generis* in that whilst Matthew is dependent upon traditional material, in its present form, Matt. 28.16–20 is largely the product of Matthean redaction.<sup>210</sup> The point is well made by Meier who writes:

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in question'.

<sup>208</sup> Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction*, pp. 98–133.

<sup>209</sup> Meier, 'Two Disputed Questions', p. 423.

<sup>210</sup> Meier, 'Two Disputed Questions', p. 424.

It is precisely this interplay, this dialectic, between tradition and heavy redaction, that has produced a pericope so idiosyncratic that it defies the labels of form criticism.<sup>211</sup>

### *Conclusions.*

Arising out of the debate about *Gattung*, we can begin by making some basic conclusions about Matt. 28.16–20. We can say that Matthew is basing the concluding verses to his gospel on traditional material which linked appearance stories with the idea of commissioning the (eleven) disciples and, form-critically, the pericope echoes (but no more) commissionings found in the OT as well as the idea of enthronement and receipt of universal authority found in Daniel 7.

Traditionally, there was a strong element of doubt and recognition present as well as an element of fear normally associated with epiphanies which for the NT is the *genus* of theophanies (Mark 1.9ff.; 9.22ff), christophanies (Mark 6.45ff. and Jn 6.16–21), the resurrection appearances, Paul's conversion (Acts 9.4-16), pneumatophanies (Acts 2), and angelophanies (e.g. Luke 1.11, 26; 2.9 etc.).<sup>212</sup> However, given the largely redactional nature of the pericope, the lack of consensus as to *Gattung* and its *sui generis* nature, we are forced back to an examination of the words of commission themselves within the context of Matthew's gospel as a whole.

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<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>212</sup> R.N. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* (Guildford & London: Lutterworth Press, 1977), p. 53.

Strength is added to this conclusion by two further factors. Firstly, James Dunn, picking up on conclusions already drawn by Bultmann and Dibelius, argues that there is no evidence in the earliest strata of the tradition that the early Palestinian church knew anything about a Gentile mission – either that or they chose to ignore a specific command of the risen Jesus to go to πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.<sup>213</sup> The clear indication here is that Matt. 28.16–20, as it now stands, reflects a later situation facing Matthew and his church, and may be said to reflect, ‘a later perception of the missionary task’.<sup>214</sup>

Secondly, we have seen that Matt. 28.16–20 is cast as a resurrection appearance with Jesus’ enthronement as the Risen One already presupposed in his declaration of universal authority. This leads me to conclude that Matthew’s emphasis in 28.16–20 is to be understood as christological only to the extent that here christology serves primarily as the authoritative context for building the church through universal mission.

The complexity of issues raised by my discussion of the *Gattung* of Matt. 28.16–20, and its relation to the rest of Matthew’s gospel, demonstrates clearly the inappropriateness of the homogenising approach to the NT evidence normally taken by the Third Wave. In what follows, I shall seek to demonstrate how the Third Wave’s lack of critical rigour in their handling of the NT evidence lacks the necessary historical, literary, or contextual sensitivity appropriate to the nature of the biblical material, resulting in a naïve understanding of the NT evidence which is subsequently inadequate for informing a

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<sup>213</sup> Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways*, pp. 118.

<sup>214</sup> Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways*, p. 293 n.3.

contemporary paradigm for faith and *praxis* based upon the experience of Jesus and the first Christians.

The concluding verses in 28.16–20 form the climax to Matthew’s gospel and bring together key Matthean themes, such as mission/universalism, discipleship and christology, which figure throughout the gospel<sup>215</sup> and, as such, the Great Commission has a clearly literary role in relation to the gospel. For example, what light does Matthew’s presentation of Jesus and the disciples cast upon the way we are to understand the risen Jesus’ post-Easter commission to make disciples, and how is this related to the injunction to teach them all that Jesus commanded as a whole? It is to these and other key Matthean themes that I will now turn.

## §7. MATTHEW, JESUS AND DISCIPLESHIP.

### *Introducing the issues.*

Absolutely central to the Third Wave’s paradigm for contemporary Christian discipleship is their understanding of Matthew’s Great Commission but, given its integral literary relationship to the gospel as a whole, how are we to understand this? As we have seen, the Third Wave claim that Jesus’ commissionings of his disciples in the synoptic gospels

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<sup>215</sup> See especially D.R. Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), pp. 109–128.

and Acts have continuing validity for the church today in that they provide an ongoing mandate for all Christians who, they argue, are to be regarded as inheritors of the ministry of Jesus and the early church. However, is it really the case, as the Third Wave argue, that whilst authority to heal is not mentioned specifically in Matt. 28.18–20 it may be assumed to be implicit on the grounds that this authority had already been granted to Jesus' disciples when he sent them out on mission (Matt. 10.1, 5–10; Mark 6.7–13; Luke 9.1–6 cf. Luke 10.1–20) – an understanding of the Great Commission, that has proved particularly contentious.<sup>216</sup>

I have already made the point that the Third Wave's homogenising approach to the NT evidence they present simply will not do. Therefore, as I engage here with the Third Wave and the evidence they present from Matthew's gospel in support of their case, I will seek to identify what results are yielded by a more scholarly approach to the evidence. How far does Matthew intend his portrayal of the disciples to be paradigmatic, and what are the characteristics of Christian discipleship that emerge? Is there any evidence that Matthew implies for his readers a place for signs and wonders and the miraculous in the post-Easter mission of the church? Does Matthew intend the Great Commission to be understood to include authority to heal as the Third Wave claim?

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<sup>216</sup> See for example the critique of the Third Wave position set out in Smedes, (ed.), *Ministry and the Miraculous: A case study at Fuller Theological Seminary* which also takes an homogenising approach to the biblical evidence. For a Third Wave response, see D. Williams, 'Following Christ's Example: A Biblical View of Discipleship' in G.S. Greig and K.N. Springer, *The Kingdom and the Power* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), pp. 175–196, and in the same volume, see Appendix 3: 'Matthew 28:18–20 – The Great Commission and Jesus' Commands to Preach and Heal', pp. 399–403.

*Key Matthean themes.*

As a result of my discussion of the *Gattung* of Matt. 28.16–20 in §6 above, it has become clear that, in order to take account of the intentionality of the writer and so come to an informed understanding of the text, we cannot assume that we have simply a report by Matthew of what the risen Jesus said to his disciples. Even with a somewhat cursory reading of Matthew it is difficult to ignore the overall shape of the First Gospel where we have five major blocks of material which are reminiscent of the Pentateuch.

Furthermore, emphasis on the place of the law in Matthew can be seen in the way he presents Jesus as a new Moses figure. Throughout his gospel, the evangelist constantly reminds his readers that events concerning Jesus, or words and actions by Jesus, are in fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy (cf. 1.22; 2.15, 17, 23; 8.17; 12.17; 13.25; 21.4; 26.54, 56; 27.9). We are told that all the law is binding (5.17-19), and hypocrisy is constantly attacked (cf. 6.2, 15f.; 7.5; 15.7; 16.3; 22.18; 23.13f.; 24.51). When we ask why is this so? – we must answer because the seal of authority has been set upon these things by Jesus (7.29).

Christologically speaking, with reference to the law, Jesus is presented as a prophet in the Mosaic tradition (cf. Deut. 18.15–18).<sup>217</sup> With this thought in mind, as Jesus is shown to climb a mountain to deliver his discourse on the law (Matt. 5.1 cf. Luke 6.17), it is not difficult for readers of Matthew's gospel to see the Sermon on the Mount in the context of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, particularly in the series of antitheses which

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<sup>217</sup> Cf. G. Bornkamm, 'End Expectation and Church in Matthew', in G. Bornkamm, G. Barth and H.J. Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (ET London: SCM Press, 1963), p. 35.

begin with an authoritative Ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη ... ἔγω δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν by Jesus, (5.21–48).

At the end of the sermon, we are told that the crowds are ‘amazed at his teaching’ because he is said to teach as one who has ἐξουσία, unlike their teachers of the law (7.29). This comment about Jesus’ authority is followed immediately in the narrative by two healing stories. The first, the cleansing of the leper, which Matthew found in Mark (Matt. 8.1–4//Mark 1.40–45), shows Jesus aligning himself with Torah (Matt. 8.4 cf. Lev. 14.1ff) and the second, the healing of the Centurion’s servant, which the evangelist found in Q (Matt. 8.5–13//Luke 7.1–9), pointedly discusses the question of ‘authority’ in order to stress the legitimacy of the authority of Jesus which here is recognised even by a Gentile. In other words, Matthew may be seen here to present Jesus’ authority in terms of both word and miraculous activity.

All this in turn suggests that Matthew is not only (re)telling the Jesus tradition, but intends his gospel to be used as a reference point by his church for what it means to be a follower of Jesus and how they should apply Jesus’ teaching to their own situation. Matthew clearly has a high regard for the law, as taught by Jesus (cf. Matt. 5.17–19), and he is keen to point out the way in which law-keeping relates to δικαιοσύνη ‘righteousness’<sup>218</sup> for Jesus’ followers (Matt. 5.20). Matthew’s extensive use of the verb ποιεῖν ‘to do’ indicates that, for the First Evangelist, law-keeping is clearly an active process where only those who do the will of the Father will be called great/enter the

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<sup>218</sup> δικαιοσύνη occurs seven times in Matthew (3.15; 5.6, 10, 20; 6.1, 33; 21.32) against once in Luke (Luke 1.75) and twice in John (John 16.8, 10).

kingdom of heaven (5.19; 7.21; 19.16f.; 25.40, 45). Those who fail to keep the law are accused in Matthew's gospel of being ἀνομία 'lawless' (7.23; 13.41; 23.28). This term occurs only in Matthew and is clearly his own formulation.<sup>219</sup> These, and other issues relevant to my investigation arising out of the complexity of Matthew's gospel will be discussed further as we proceed.

In the Great Commission (Matt. 28.19), Jesus tells the eleven disciples to go and make disciples (μαθητεύσατε) and this imperative naturally begs the question, 'How, according to Matthew, are we to understand the role of the disciples and the nature of discipleship?' For example, is Matthew only interested in the disciples insofar as they accompanied Jesus during his earthly ministry? Alternatively, is there evidence to show that in his presentation of the disciples, Matthew uses them to provide a paradigm for what it means to be a disciple of Jesus for his church and, by extension, the church to the 'end of the age' (Matt. 28.20)?

In redaction-critical studies of Matthew's gospel that examine Matthew's understanding and presentation of the ministry of Jesus and his disciples, two major tendencies have emerged. The first is described as 'historicizing' and the second in terms of 'transparency'. I will begin by looking at these two approaches to understanding the role of the disciples in Matthew. From here, I will examine the way in which Matthew's various concerns shape his presentation of the role of the disciples, and particularly the way in which the authority attributed to Jesus is understood in relation to the

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<sup>219</sup> Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, p. 247. For a comparison with Luke's 'hellenizing' ἐργάται ἀδικίας (Mt 7.22–23//Lk 13.25–27) see, R.H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1982), p. 132f.

disciples/church through two case studies: the mission of the Twelve (Matt. 10.1, 5–8); and the pericope in which Peter is given the keys to the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16.17–19).

### *Historicizing.*

A major proponent of the idea of historicizing as a way of understanding Matthew's view of history is Georg Strecker who, in his essay, 'The Concept of History in Matthew',<sup>220</sup> aimed to present a redaction-critical study of Matthew's concept of history as it related to his presentation of the Jesus tradition. Strecker argues that Matthew's understanding of history was governed by his second generation perspective and that his presentation of the Jesus tradition was aimed at serving the needs of his community as it faced the theological situation brought about by the delay of the parousia.<sup>221</sup>

Strecker writes:

The first inference from our recognition of the theological-historical background of the synoptic redactions is that there was a '*historicizing*' of the traditional material by the redactor Matthew.<sup>222</sup>

What exactly is meant by 'historicizing'? For Strecker, historicizing means that Matthew deliberately set out to give the appearance of history to the Jesus tradition by using both chronology and geography to provide an historical context in which to locate the

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<sup>220</sup> First published as 'Das Geschichtsverständnis des Matthäus', *Evangelische Theologie* 26 (1966) 57–74. ET in G. Stanton, (ed.), *The Interpretation of Matthew* (London: SPCK, 1983), pp. 67–84.

<sup>221</sup> Strecker, 'Concept of History', pp. 69f.

<sup>222</sup> Strecker, 'Concept of History', p. 70.

tradition.<sup>223</sup> For example, Strecker interprets Matthew's use of the formula, ἀπὸ τότε as being one which the evangelist deliberately inserts to act as a chronological 'sign post' (Matt. 4.17; 16.21; 26.16). Strecker also points to Matthew's identification of Mark's reference to Capernaum (Mark 2.1) as Jesus' 'own town' (Matt. 4.13 cf. 9.1) where the Evangelist also identifies the house in which Jesus heals the paralytic (Mark 2. 1–12 pars.). Strecker concludes that, 'originally topological ideas have become geographically limited'.<sup>224</sup>

More importantly, Strecker argues that Matthew uses OT quotations to indicate that the 'promises of God have found fulfilment in the life of Jesus.'<sup>225</sup> From here, Strecker suggests that since the quotations are linked to temporal and geographical statements which mark different stages in Jesus' life, together with biographical details (e.g. performance of miracles or entry into Jerusalem). He explains:

This means that Matthew uses formula-quotations to interpret the history of Jesus as unique event, temporally and geographically distant from his own situation.<sup>226</sup>

Strecker notes that Matthew is the only evangelist to restrict the mission of the disciples to Israel, although Matthew himself is clearly aware of the universal mission of the church (Matt. 28.18–20) and argues that this can only be explained in terms of Matthew reflecting the historical situation in the lifetime of Jesus and the disciples. Strecker concludes that Matthew understood history in terms of three periods or epochs, the time

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<sup>223</sup> Strecker, 'Concept of History', p. 70.

<sup>224</sup> Strecker, 'Concept of History', pp. 71f.

<sup>225</sup> Strecker, 'Concept of History', p. 72.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*

of preparation, the time of Jesus and the time of the church,<sup>227</sup> and that both Jesus and the disciples belong to ‘... a unique, unrepeatable, holy, and ideal epoch in the course of history.’<sup>228</sup> Indeed, the disciples are very much a part of the ‘uniqueness’ of this central epoch, and Strecker is keen to argue that this is particularly emphasised by Matthew when he restricts the term μαθητής to the Twelve although, as France points out, this is not always the case (cf. 8.19, 21; 10.42).<sup>229</sup> Also, as I will discuss further below, Matthew’s use of the verb, μαθητεύω<sup>230</sup> is used to describe the continuing mission of the church.<sup>231</sup>

Against the Third Wave, it should be noted here that the unique time-conditionedness of the activity of Jesus and (especially) the disciples, according to Strecker’s view, suggests that the miracle-working activities associated with the disciples and their being commissioned to take part in Jesus’ mission to the ‘lost sheep of the house of Israel’ could not have been intended by Matthew as paradigmatic for his church and its mission to all nations. How, then, did Matthew intend the tradition to remain relevant for his church and their own particular social and historical context? According to Strecker, Matthew has subjected the tradition to a process of ‘ethicization’, an example of which can be seen in Matthew’s insertion of the μὴ πορνεία clause in Jesus’ teaching on

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<sup>227</sup> An understanding of history attributed to Luke some years earlier by H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte Der Zeit* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1953), ET *The Theology of St. Luke* (London: SCM Press, 1960).

<sup>228</sup> Strecker, ‘Concept of History’, p. 73.

<sup>229</sup> G. Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, pp. 191–193. Strecker, ‘Concept of History’, p. 73; R.T France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1989), p. 261.

<sup>230</sup> This verb occurs elsewhere in the NT in Acts 14.21 but is only used as an imperative here by Matthew.

<sup>231</sup> France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher*, pp. 261ff., who argues *contra* Strecker that μαθητής as used by Matthew is ‘a term which is appropriate to all who follow Jesus, past, present and future’.

divorce (Matt. 5.32; 19.9; cf. Mark 10.11f.) and a reversal by Matthew of the prohibition by Jesus on oath-taking (Matt. 5.33–37; cf. 23.16–22).<sup>232</sup>

Strecker concludes that for Matthew, Jesus' mission is characterised primarily by his proclamation of an ethical demand which signifies the presence of the eschatological reign of God. This proclamation, which has been redactionally shaped by Matthew to meet the institutionalising demands of his community, continues during the period of the church and it is this which provides the continuity between the past time of Jesus and the present time of the church, until the 'end of the age' (Matt. 28.20).<sup>233</sup>

On this reading of Matthew, the paradigm he intends for the church as it relates to the manifestation of the presence of the kingdom of God, is to be found in the continuing ethical proclamation of the church. Strecker's understanding of Matthew as 'historicizing' his tradition, with Jesus and the disciples as belonging to a holy and unrepeatable past, leaves little or no room for a Third Wave paradigm which sees the church's continuing proclamation of the kingdom of God being accompanied by signs, wonders, healings and exorcisms. However, as we shall see, a more fruitful approach in terms of providing evidence in support of the Third Wave paradigm is to be found in the view that considers Matthew's presentation of the disciples in terms of transparency.

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<sup>232</sup> It should be noted here that there is no universal agreement on the interpretation of Matt. 5.33–37 adopted here by Strecker. For alternative views see R.H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art*, pp. 91–93 and D.A. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13* (Word Biblical Commentary series 33A; Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1993), pp. 126–129.

<sup>233</sup> Strecker, 'Concept of History', p. 79.

*Transparency.*

The alternative view to Strecker's *historicizing*, which is now more widely held, is to understand Matthew's literary intentions in terms of *transparency*. This, it is argued, applies particularly to the way in which Matthew presents the disciples as primary vehicles for transparency.<sup>234</sup> It is the experience of the disciples which provides a paradigm for his church. G. Barth describes transparency in the following way:

By consistently removing the difference according to Mark between the disciples before the resurrection of Jesus and after it, Matthew again here writes the situation of the Church into the life of the disciples during the earthly activity of Jesus.<sup>235</sup>

In a similar vein, Schuyler Brown writes:

Since the term 'disciple' is not restricted to a follower of the earthly Jesus but applies to any Christian, the Matthean identification between 'the Twelve' and 'the disciples' makes the 'twelve disciples' into a transparency for the members of Matthew's own community. ... Everything addressed to the twelve disciples is intended for all Jesus' future disciples.<sup>236</sup>

It is argued that transparency can be detected in Matthew's gospel in the way in which the story of Jesus' conflict with Israel is mirrored in the experience of Matthew's own community (cf. Matt. 5.11–12; 10.23; 23.23), particularly as relationships between

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<sup>234</sup> See especially, U. Luz, 'The Disciples in the Gospel according to Matthew', in G. Stanton, (ed.), *The Interpretation of Matthew*, pp. 99–105.

<sup>235</sup> G. Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', in Bornkamm, Barth and Held, *Tradition and Interpretation*, p. 111.

<sup>236</sup> S. Brown, 'The Mission to Israel in Matthew's Central Section (Mt 9.35–11.1)', *Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 69 (1977), pp. 74f.

church and synagogue became increasingly strained.<sup>237</sup> The disciples are imitators of Jesus and, at the same time, are paradigmatic for Matthew's community and allow his readers to be contemporary with Jesus and the twelve disciples.<sup>238</sup> Their experience, particularly as described by Matthew in the mission discourse (Matt. 10. 1–42), is to reflect that of Jesus in terms of homelessness and poverty (10.9–10) and, above all, their destiny as they take up the cross (cf. Matt. 10.17–18, 23, 38f.; cf. John 9.22, 34, 35).<sup>239</sup>

Transparency is further evidenced in Matthew's re-telling of the miracle stories which are intended by the Evangelist to be 'transparent for the present'.<sup>240</sup> According to Luz, Matthew's community did witness and experience miracles themselves, although the way in which Matthew primarily intends the miracle stories to be transparent is in a 'spiritualised' way where, for example, 'blindness' refers not only to physical blindness but also to the way in which Matthew's community is led from blindness to knowledge by Jesus, unlike the Pharisees who are themselves 'blind guides' (15.14; 23.16–26).<sup>241</sup> Similarly, in Matthew, the healing of the lame man (9.2–8) becomes directly transparent in terms of the community's own experience of the forgiveness of sins.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> U. Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 64–66. For a detailed discussion of the emergence of Christianity from Judaism, see Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways*.

<sup>238</sup> Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, p. 92

<sup>239</sup> Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 77ff. For a discussion of the way in which Matthew links discipleship to following Jesus and taking up one's cross, see France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1989), pp. 262–264. See also, J.D. Kingsbury, 'The Verb *akolouthein* ("to follow") as an Index of Matthew's View of his Community', *JBL* 97 (1978), 56–73; M. Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*.

<sup>240</sup> Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, p. 66. For a detailed example, see especially, G. Bornkamm, 'The Stilling of the Storm in Matthew', in Bornkamm, Barth and Held, *Tradition and Interpretation*, pp. 52–57.

<sup>241</sup> Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 68f. Luz points out that in Jewish tradition 'blindness' can refer to spiritual blindness (p. 68). For the recurrence of Jesus healing blind persons in Matthew's gospel, see 9.27–31; 12.22–24; 20.29–34; 21.14.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*

Nevertheless, Luz argues, Matthew does not remove the miracles from the corporeal altogether, indeed it is lack of the ability to perform miracles that Luz identifies as being the reason for their ‘little faith’.<sup>243</sup> For Luz, transparency in Matthew’s re-telling of the miracle stories becomes what we might describe as a merging of two horizons – the corporeal and the spiritual as can be seen from the following:

That Jesus first healed Israel’s sick and cast out its demons is significant to Matthew not only because it thereby demonstrates that Israel truly experienced all that the Messiah is capable of accomplishing. No, the real importance lay elsewhere. For the miracles embodied a true core of the mission of Jesus and his [Matthew’s] community: ‘salvation’ – healing – takes place, if not exclusively, then at least initially in the realm of the corporeal. ... The experience undergone by Matthew and his community, initiated by Jesus’ miracles, were signs that the Lord really is with his community ‘always to the end of time’.<sup>244</sup>

If, then, we are to understand discipleship in the First Gospel as being ‘transparent’ in the sense that Matthew, ‘sees the Church as embodied in the μαθηταί’,<sup>245</sup> what are the key features, according to Matthew, that provide the essence of his intended paradigm for discipleship? Are disciples meant to be imitators of Jesus in terms of proclaiming and demonstrating, with acts of power, the kingdom of God, as the Third Wave argue? Alternatively, does Matthew present us with a more complex paradigm?

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<sup>243</sup> (Matt. 16.8; 17.14–20).

<sup>244</sup> Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew* (ET Cambridge: CUP, 1995), p. 70.

<sup>245</sup> Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, in Bornkam, Barth and Held, *Tradition and Interpretation*, p. 100, n. 2.

*The essence of discipleship according to Matthew.*

Matthew is consistent throughout his gospel in making the point that discipleship is related to the teaching of Jesus.<sup>246</sup> Discipleship is, by definition, learning (13.52; 27.57; 28.19). Disciples are to hear and understand Jesus' words (13.13–25, 51–53) and obey them (21.5, 28–32; 28.20).<sup>247</sup> As we have seen, Matthew portrays Jesus as a Mosaic prophet who fulfils the law (5.17f), interprets the law according to the 'Golden Rule' (7.12), demands action as well as words (5.20), and whose authority to teach is ratified by his charismatic activity (cf. 11.4f.).

Matthew firmly links his presentation of discipleship to δικαιοσύνη which results from doing the will of God and keeping the law, rightly interpreted by Jesus, and this is crucial for our understanding of the complexity of the Matthean paradigm of discipleship. The noun δικαιοσύνη occurs redactionally seven times in Matthew's gospel: the reason for Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist is πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνη (Matt. 3.15); the Matthean beatitudes are described as being for οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην (Matt. 5.6; cf. Luke 6.21); blessings come to those who are persecuted for ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης (Matt. 5.10; cf. Luke 6.22); Jesus' followers are not to practise their acts of piety (δικαιοσύνη) for public approval (Matt. 6.1); disciples are to seek God's kingdom first and τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ (Matt. 6.33 cf. Luke 12.31); and finally in Matt. 21.32 where Jesus, who has publicly endorsed the teaching of John the Baptist in his own preaching (Matt. 3.2 cf. 4.17) now describes it as ὁδῶ δικαιοσύνης (Matt.

<sup>246</sup> Luz, 'The Disciples in the Gospel According to Matthew', p. 105.

<sup>247</sup> Gundry, *Matthew*, p. 7. For a detailed examination of the idea of 'understanding' as it relates to the disciples in Matthew's gospel, see G. Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', in Bornkamm, Barth and Held, *Tradition and Interpretation*, pp. 105–125.

21.32).<sup>248</sup> Indeed, those who fail to display a righteousness which exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees will not enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5.20).

Jesus continually interweaves instruction to the disciples which indicates that, for Matthew, the disciples are a learning community where understanding goes hand in hand with 'little faith' and doubt (e.g. 5.1; 13.10; 15.12–20; 16.5–12; 17.10–13, 19–20; 28.17). The stress on the understanding of the disciples does not serve to idealise the disciples, but rather to accentuate the teaching of Jesus.<sup>249</sup> Indeed, Matthew's portrayal of the disciples is thoroughly realistic, rather than idealistic,<sup>250</sup> and in this they serve as an appropriate model for a church where some act righteously and others do not (Matt. 13.24–30). For Matthew, Jesus' authority to interpret the demands of the law is passed on to the disciples/community (16.19; 18.18), although there is clearly a tension in the way Matthew presents the disciples as inheritors of Jesus' ἐξουσία and as those of little faith (Matt. 10.1; 28.18–20; cf. 6.30; 8.26; 14.31; 16.8). Nevertheless, for Matthew it is, as Bornkamm asserts, 'in following Jesus that the perfection demanded by the law is fulfilled'.<sup>251</sup>

In Matt. 19.28 the evangelist inserts a saying he found in Q (cf. Luke 22.30b) in order to emphasise that discipleship is not only linked to fulfilling the law here and now, but is also linked to the promise which will be eschatologically realised. Leaving all to follow

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<sup>248</sup> For discussion the idea of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew's gospel see, for example, G. Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, pp. 149–158, 179–181; Strecker, 'The Concept of History in Matthew', pp. 74–77; B. Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew and his World of Thought* (Cambridge: CUP, 1980), pp. 13–76.

<sup>249</sup> M.J. Wilkins, *The Concept of Disciple in Matthew's Gospel: As Reflected in the Use of the Term Μαθητής* (Supp. Novum Testamentum LIX; Leiden: Brill, 1988), p. 165.

<sup>250</sup> Cf. Wilkins, *The Concept of Disciple*, p. 169.

<sup>251</sup> G. Bornkamm, 'Christology and Law', in Bornkamm, Barth and Held, *Tradition and Interpretation*, p. 29.

Jesus will bring its rewards, but discipleship is also concerned with cross-bearing and suffering. The disciples are to follow their Lord who, in his passion, has set them the example *par excellence* of the righteous person being made to suffer (Matt. 27.20; 5.11f., cf. Wisdom 1–5) and who, as the Risen One, is himself the final proof that God will vindicate and reward righteousness. According to Matthew, the righteousness which is demanded of disciples is to exceed that of the Pharisees and scribes (Matt. 5.20) as a result of obedience to all the law (Matt. 5.17–19 cf. Ps 119.141–144). Whilst he acknowledges that the scribes and Pharisees ‘sit in Moses’ seat’ (Matt. 23.2), the disciples are not to be hypocrites like them, displaying their righteousness before men (23.2). By all means tithe mint and dill (v. 23a), but Jesus’ disciples are to make sure they do not neglect the basic covenant concepts of justice, mercy and faithfulness (v. 23b). The way to righteousness for the followers of Jesus is to inwardly manifest the qualities inherent in the law, whilst outwardly meeting all its demands (v. 23c).

*Matt. 7.21–23.*

At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, the ‘Golden Rule’ (Matt. 7.12) summarises how the law is to be fulfilled by the followers of Jesus.<sup>252</sup> From here, Matthew presents us with four ‘vignettes’ which demonstrate clearly how to differentiate between true and false disciples,<sup>253</sup> and which include a dire warning, set against the context of final judgement, to those who regard charismatic activity as a defining mark of Christian

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<sup>252</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Matthew*, p. 176.

<sup>253</sup> France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher*, p. 276.

discipleship rather than obeying the commands of Jesus (7.21–23; cf. 13.36–43; 25.31–46).

The warnings are introduced in 7.13f. with a saying about entering by the ‘narrow gate’ (cf. 5.20), followed in 7.15–20 with the second vignette which has been constructed out of several independent sayings.<sup>254</sup> Here, the Matthean Jesus uses the two metaphors of wolves in sheep’s clothing and trees which fail to bear good fruit in order to illustrate the true nature of the false prophets.<sup>255</sup> It is clear that a thematic relationship exists between the false prophets of 7.15, who present themselves as members of the Christian community but whose true identities are revealed by their actions (7.16–20), and the charismatics envisaged in 7.21–23.<sup>256</sup> According to Schweizer, the false prophets referred to in 7.15 and 24.12, and whom Matthew presents as Christians who may or may not be members of his own community, are those who have turned away from the law as rightly interpreted by Jesus.<sup>257</sup> They have the appearance of being like other members of Matthew’s community but they are deceivers (7.15; cf. 7.21). In Matthew’s portrayal of a mixed community, where the ‘righteous’ and the ‘lawless’ co-exist together (13.24–30; 47–50), doing the will of the Father opens the way through the narrow gate (7.13f.) and it is only at the Last Judgement that the true nature of the false prophets will be revealed.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> R.A. Guelich *The Sermon on the Mount: A Foundation for Understanding* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1982), p. 397, argues that the tradition (Q) and Matt.R suggest two units, 7.16–20 and 7.21–23. For a discussion of the sources for Matt. 7.15–20, 21–23 see Luz, *Matt 1–7*, pp. 439–440, and Catchpole, *Quest for Q*, pp. 39–43.

<sup>255</sup> Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, p. 393.

<sup>256</sup> Guelich, *Op. cit.*

<sup>257</sup> Schweizer, ‘Matthew’s Church’, in Stanton, (ed.), *The Interpretation of Matthew*, p. 138.

<sup>258</sup> E. Schweizer, ‘Observance of the Law and Charismatic Activity in Matthew’, *NTS* 16 (1969–70), p. 225.

Strecker notes how the presence of the verb ποιῆν in Matt. 7.19, 21 and at the end of the Sermon on the Mount (7.12) stresses again the centrality of doing the Father's will, commenting that 'charismatic works are relativised and subordinated to the ethical demand'.<sup>259</sup> Just as the fate of an unproductive tree is to be cut down and thrown into the fire (7.19; cf. 3.10), so those to whom Jesus' words are directed will be revealed by their fruits (v. 20) and ultimately dealt with. Importantly, for my discussion here of the characteristics of Christian discipleship as they are understood and presented by Matthew, the object of the warning in 7.21–23 is the charismatic life of Matthew's community. Matthew is not opposed to charismatic activity as such, as the references to prophets in Matt. 5.12, 10.41 and 23.3 makes clear.<sup>260</sup> Indeed, we may note with Luz how 'überall im Urchristentum stehen Wunder im Dienst der Verkündigung und sind Zeichen der Ankunft des Gottesreichs.'<sup>261</sup>

Nevertheless, all who claim to be disciples of Jesus, whether charismatics or not, are equally bound by the injunction to obey all that Jesus has commanded (28.20a).

Discipleship for Matthew is characterised by the 'Golden Rule' (Matt. 7.12) rather than by charismatic activity and, as Strecker rightly notes, 'pneumatic mighty works cannot and ought not to be constitutive of the Christian life'.<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Strecker, G. Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount: An Exegetical Commentary* (ET Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), p. 168.

<sup>260</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Matthew*, p. 179.

<sup>261</sup> U. Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus (Matt. 1–7)*, (Evangelische-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 1/1; Zurich: Benziger Verlag; Köln: Neukirchener Verlag, 1985), p. 406.

<sup>262</sup> Strecker, *Sermon*, p. 168.

In 7.21–23, the Matthean Jesus makes his meaning indisputably clear. In 7.21, we have a recurrence of the antithetical οὐ...ἄλλ that characterises the injunctions found in Matt. 5.21–48<sup>263</sup> and which recalls again the theme of the Sermon on the Mount (5.20).<sup>264</sup> The address, κύριε κύριε in 7.21 only appears in Matthew's gospel on the lips of those who are either followers of Jesus or sincerely seeking his help, whereas during the betrayal scene in 26.25, 49 Judas call Jesus 'Rabbi', a form of address reserved by Matthew for outsiders.<sup>265</sup> In 23.34 Matthew makes it clear that Jesus will send prophets, wise men and teachers who are part of the Christian community and, as Guelich concludes, the use of κύριε here implies that the false prophets were accepted as part of the Christian community.<sup>266</sup>

In Matt. 7.22a, the phrase ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ clearly alludes to the Last Judgement and sets the scene for 7.22b–23.<sup>267</sup> The invocation of Jesus' name serves to guarantee the presence of the risen Jesus (cf. 28.20b; 18.20) and should be understood here as 'in your power'.<sup>268</sup>

Matt. 7.22 appears to borrow language from Jeremiah,<sup>269</sup> and mention of the πολλοί

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<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>264</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Matthew*, p. 177.

<sup>265</sup> R.T. France, *The Gospel According to Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1985), p. 148; A.J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 187. Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, p. 398f. also draws attention to examples of Matthew changing the form of address used by outsiders, notably Matt. 8.25//Mark 4.38 and Matt. 17.15//Mark 9.17. Luz, *Matthew 1–7*, p. 444 comments that the double use of κυρίε in the context of eschatological judgement is 'especially expressive and imploring'.

<sup>266</sup> Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, p. 399.

<sup>267</sup> Gundry, *Matthew*, p. 131; Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, p. 187; cf. G. Delling, ἡμέρα *TDNT* II, pp. 943–953. Hagner makes the point that the future tense, εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, ('will enter into the kingdom of heaven') points to the 'last judgement' (p. 186).

<sup>268</sup> Michel, 'Conclusion of Matthew's Gospel, in Stanton, 41, n. 9; Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', p. 162 and cf. H. Bietenhard, ὄνομα in *TDNT* V, pp. 276f. For a further discussion of the use of Jesus' 'name' see §28 below.

<sup>269</sup> For a detailed discussion of the allusions to Jer. 14.14 and 34.12 (Matt. 27.15), see M. Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel: The Rejected-Prophet Motif in Matthean Redaction* (JSNT Supps., 68; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 300–302 who concludes that the language of Matt. 7.22

provides confirmation of the relationship between the false prophets of 7.15 and the πολλοί ψευδοπροφήται encountered here in 7.22.<sup>270</sup> Guelich comments that the invocation of Jesus' name in the course of their charismatic ministry is also reminiscent of the earlier charge that the false prophets are like wolves in sheep's clothing (7.15) and this would again lead to their acceptance within the community, but not ultimately by the Matthean Jesus (7.23),<sup>271</sup> for whom charismatic deeds are not 'definitive pointers' to authentic faith/discipleship.<sup>272</sup>

There are two notable differences between Matt. 7.23 and its Lukan parallel (Luke 13.27) that are worth noting here. Firstly, the phrase οὐκ [ύμᾶς] οἶδα πόθεν ἐστε (Luke 13.27a; cf. 13.25) appears in Matthew in the more judicial form, ομολογήσω αὐτοῖς ὅτι Οὐδέποτε ἔγνων ὑμᾶς, reflecting the language of anathema used by the rabbis and understood in the sense, 'vous n'êtes rien pour moi ...je vous ignore'.<sup>273</sup>

Secondly, whilst Matthew's use of ἀνομία in 7.23c (cf. Luke 13.27: ἀδικία) emphasises the link with Ps. 6.8, it must also be noted that ἀνομία is a word favoured by Matthew and, in the synoptic tradition, peculiar to his gospel where it has particularly negative

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recalls the language of LXX Jeremiah chapters 33, 34, 36 but does not indicate a 'more specific derivation' (p. 302).

<sup>270</sup> Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, p. 400, suggests that there may also be an allusion here to the many false prophets mentioned in Matt. 24.11.

<sup>271</sup> Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, p. 400.

<sup>272</sup> W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew: Volume I Introduction and Commentary on Matthew I–VII* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), p. 714.

<sup>273</sup> D. Marguerat, *Le Jugement Dans L'Évangile De Matthieu* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1981), p. 199. See also, Strack-Billerbeck, 1.429, 4.293; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, p. 401; Strecker, *Sermon*, p. 167; E. Käsemann, 'The Beginnings of Christian Theology', in *New Testament Questions of Today*, p. 84. The phrase ομολογήσω (Matt. 7.23) also appears in a judgement setting as an eschatological Son of Man saying in Luke 12.8.

connotations. In Matt. 13.41 it is used again by Matthew in the context of eschatological judgement; in 23.28 it is applied in a scathing manner to the scribes and Pharisees who, like the false prophets of 7.15 succeed in disguising their true nature (cf. 23.27bf.); again in 24.12 it is linked with false prophets (24.11) who will cause apostasy in the end-time (24.12). In other words, for Matthew ἄνομία is a most serious charge that can be brought against those claiming to be followers of Jesus and is the very antithesis of all that characterises true discipleship. In light of this, it is little wonder that the ultimate fate of those so charged will be denial and banishment in the heavenly assize (Matt. 7.23).

To summarise, those who are condemned by Jesus in 7.21–23 claim to be his followers but they prize charismatic activity, including miracles and exorcisms, over and above what is required by Jesus of those who would follow him. They refuse to take the narrow gate of true discipleship and the hard road that leads to life (7.13f.). Their ultimate fate, already described in the colourful language of the ‘road that leads to destruction’ (7.13) and the tree that fails to bear good fruit being ‘cut down and thrown into the fire’ (7.19), is spelled out in the starkest way in 7.23 where their eschatological fate translates into final denial, rather than acknowledgement, by Jesus in the heavenly court (7.22, 23; cf. 10.32).

### *Conclusions.*

In my examination of Jesus and discipleship according to Matthew, we looked at two approaches to understanding the way in which Matthew intends his readers to understand

the way in which he presents Jesus and the disciples. We saw that the historicizing approach consigned Jesus and the disciples to a holy, unrepeatable past and that this left little room for the Third Wave paradigm which views the experience of Jesus and the disciples acting as a continuing model for the church. A more fruitful approach, that of transparency, regards Matthew as removing the gulf between the disciples before and after the resurrection so that all that is addressed to the disciples by Jesus during his earthly ministry is also addressed to Matthew's community who are thus able, as community, to identify with the disciples and embody their experience.

Matthew presents us with a sophisticated paradigm for discipleship. The essence of being a disciple of Jesus is to be understood in terms of learning, understanding and obeying the words of Jesus. We have seen that Matthew portrays Jesus as a Mosaic prophet who rightly interprets the law, and whose authority to teach is ratified by his charismatic activity. However, in presenting the miracles of the earthly Jesus we saw that Matthew has a tendency to spiritualise them by presenting them in terms of 'salvation', and that the Matthean Jesus is highly critical of charismatic activity that is not rooted in obedience to his teaching (Matt. 7.21–23). According to Matthew, Jesus' authority to interpret the demands of the law is passed on to his disciples (16.19; 18.18), although we saw that there was a tension in the way Matthew presents the disciples as at the same time inheritors of Jesus' ἐξουσία and those of little faith.

How does Matthew envisage the way in which Jesus' delegated authority works? Are we to understand that, like Jesus, the disciples, as inheritors of Jesus' ἐξουσία, are also to

expect that their authority to teach is to be ratified by charismatic activity? In order to answer these questions I will turn to an examination of two ‘case studies’ from Matthew’s gospel where we have important examples of delegated authority: the sending out of the Twelve on mission to Israel (Matt. 10.1ff.), and the giving of the keys of the kingdom to Peter (Matt. 16.18–20).

#### §8. THE DISCIPLES’ MISSION TO ISRAEL.

Having seen that Matthew’s paradigm for discipleship is much more complex than the paradigm presented by the Third Wave, I am now in a position to present the first of our two case studies, the commissioning and sending of the twelve disciples out in mission to Israel (Matt. 10.1, 5ff). In light of Matthew’s being the only evangelist to insist on the disciples’ mission being to Israel only, we will ask, are there indications in the mission discourse which suggest that Matthew intends the discourse to be transparent for his church? How does the ἐξουσία granted by Jesus to the disciples as he commissions them to go only to Israel compare to that given to the eleven disciples by the exalted Lord in the Great Commission (Matt. 28.16–20)? How, if at all, does the restriction in Matt. 10.5f. to go only to the ‘lost sheep of the house of Israel’ help us to understand the extent of the authority delegated to the disciples in the Great Commission, and are the Third Wave correct in their assumption that the emphasis remains the same both here and in the Great Commission, i.e. to proclaim and demonstrate with acts of power the presence of the kingdom of God? Is the continuation of ἐξουσία to heal and exorcise (and even raise

the dead)<sup>274</sup> clearly implied in the Great Commission? Alternatively, does the evidence here favour opponents of the Third Wave for whom the granting of ἐξουσία to the disciples by Jesus is regarded as being strictly limited to an ‘unrepeatable holy past’?

Half a century ago, T.W. Manson wrote that, ‘The mission of the disciples is one of the best-attested facts in the life of Jesus’.<sup>275</sup> There are four accounts in the synoptic gospels of Jesus sending his followers out on mission and each account begins with a specific commission (Matt. 10.1–16; Mark 6.7–11; Luke 9.1–5; Luke 10.1–12) all of which have been shown by F. Hahn to derive from just two sources (Mark 6.7–12 and Luke 10, derived from Q).<sup>276</sup>

Matthew’s account conflates material concerning the mission of the Twelve found in both the Markan and Q traditions. Whilst my particular concern here is with Matthew’s account, and especially how his redactional activity throws light on our understanding of his intended meaning in the context of his gospel as a whole, nevertheless it is helpful for us to note here elements that were already present in the tradition which Matthew has used.

In his reconstruction of the Q version of the mission charge, David Catchpole argues strongly that Matthew found the prohibition not to go the Gentiles or Samaritans in his Q

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<sup>274</sup> J. Wimber, *Power Evangelism* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1992<sup>2</sup>), pp. 182–185.

<sup>275</sup> T.W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1957), p. 73. See more recently, G.H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993), pp. 122–127.

<sup>276</sup> Hahn, *Mission*, pp. 41–46. See also Jeremias, *Theology of the NT*, p. 231.

source, where it was an editorial construction.<sup>277</sup> Graham Twelftree detects an original pre-Easter *Sitz im Leben* for Jesus sending his followers out in mission and that, originally, preaching the kingdom would have included exorcism for Jesus and his disciples.<sup>278</sup> Alternatively, according to Dunn, Matthew retains here the limited view of a mission to Israel only envisaged by the pre-Easter Jesus.<sup>279</sup>

The second of Matthew's major discourses is located in the 'central section' of his gospel (9.35–11.1),<sup>280</sup> where the mission to Israel plays a pivotal role in Matthew's relating of the story of Jesus and his disciples. Choosing twelve disciples clearly has an eschatological significance for Israel and her traditional twelve tribes (cf. Matt. 19.29//Luke 22.29f.),<sup>281</sup> and they now participate in the distinct eschatological mission of Jesus to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Matt. 10.5 cf. 15.24).<sup>282</sup> Matthew widens the discourse from the mission charge itself, which he locates in the historical situation of Jesus and his earthly ministry, to include material that is clearly intended for the ongoing missionary situation affecting his community in the post-Easter situation and where the disciples of Jesus share both his mission and his suffering (cf. Matt. 10.16ff.).<sup>283</sup>

<sup>277</sup> D.R. Catchpole, *The Quest for Q* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993), pp. 151–188. See esp. p. 171 where Catchpole re-constructs the prohibition in Q as follows: εἰς ὁδὸν ἐθνῶν μὴ ἀπέλθητε, καὶ εἰς Σαμαριτῶν μὴ εἰς ἐλθῆτε.

<sup>278</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 125.

<sup>279</sup> Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, p. 250.

<sup>280</sup> Identified by Brown, 'The Mission to Israel in Matthew' signs and wonders Central Section', pp. 73–90.

<sup>281</sup> Through his editorial activity, Matthew identifies Mark's οἱ δώδεκα with the disciples who become οἱ δώδεκα μαθηταί. See M.J. Wilkins, *The Concept of Disciple in Matthew's Gospel*, p. 133. See also, J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, p. 234. See also J. Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*, p. 21.

<sup>282</sup> Cf. B.F. Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1979), p. 157.

<sup>283</sup> Cf. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, p. 26–267.

In the summary of Jesus' first preaching tour (Matt. 4.23 //Mark 1.39),<sup>284</sup> Matthew adds διδάσκων in v. 23 (cf. Mark 6.6b) which, as we have seen, is a key concept for Matthew in terms of christology. It is also important for our understanding of the narrative progression through which Matthew leads his readers in terms of understanding the transparent role of the disciples who provide a model for his own community (cf. Matt. 10.1 and 28.20). To Mark's κηρύσσω Matthew adds an explanatory τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας (cf. Luke 4.43) and he changes Mark's exorcism (καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια ἐκβάλλων) to healing (καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ἐν τῷ λαῷ). According to Kingsbury, the reference to healing in the summary of Jesus' activities demonstrates for the reader that in Jesus the power of the kingdom has arrived<sup>285</sup> and it is this very ἐξουσία which Jesus imparts to the disciples as he sends them out on mission to Israel. There are clear similarities here and in 9.35 with the mission charge to the disciples in Matt. 10.1, 5–8 which help to mirror for Matthew's readers the activities of Jesus in those of his disciples.<sup>286</sup> However, we must not just see here an emphasis on 'power evangelism'.<sup>287</sup>

In Jesus' commission to his disciples to go out in mission to Israel we find that they are to reflect Jesus' own ministry of announcing the dawn of God's rule and, in their charismatic activity, reflect the miracles of Jesus which have been described in the

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<sup>284</sup> For examples of Matthew's fondness for including summaries, see Matt. 8.16–17; 12.15–16; 15.29–31; 19.1–2; 21.14.

<sup>285</sup> J.D. Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 105. See also pp. 128ff.

<sup>286</sup> Matt. 9.35 is virtually a repeat of 4.35 acting here as a precursor to the Beelzebul controversy in 12.22ff (cf. 9.34) and to the activity of the disciples of proclaiming to Israel the kingdom of heaven with healings and exorcisms.

<sup>287</sup> Cf. Springer and Greig, *The Kingdom and the Power*, p. 359f.

preceding chapters 8–9 even to the point of raising the dead.<sup>288</sup> However, it is important to note that at this stage in Matthew’s story, ‘teaching’ remains the preserve of Jesus, the disciples are to continue to develop their understanding under Jesus’ tutelage and be ‘discipled’ by him in preparation for the commission they will receive from the risen Lord and the authority they are to exercise in his abiding presence (Matt. 28.18–20; 16.16–20; 18.18–20). Nevertheless, are there indications in the mission discourse which suggest that Matthew intends the discourse to be transparent for his church?

At first glance it may well appear that the ἐξουσία granted to the disciples to perform miracles as they go out on mission to Israel is limited to the mission of the disciples during the lifetime of Jesus, but as we read the mission discourse in Matthew there are indications that the Evangelist intends here also to provide a model for mission for his church rather than just a narrative account of what happened, as in Mark 6.12f.<sup>289</sup> Unlike Mark 6.7–30 and Luke 10.1–20, where the disciples are actually sent out by Jesus, here in Matthew’s gospel, following a long discourse on mission, the narrative makes it clear that it is Jesus himself who then sets out to teach and preach the good news (Matt. 11.1).<sup>290</sup>

Indications that the mission discourse is intended by Matthew to be transparent for his own situation can be seen where he inserts a ban on taking payment (Matt. 10.8b) which is reflected elsewhere in the life of the early church and in rabbinic Judaism where the

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<sup>288</sup> Cf. Matthew’s ἄρτι ἐτελεύτησεν ‘has just died’ (Matt. 9.18) with Mark’s ἐσχάτως ἔχει (Mark 5.23) ‘is at the point of death’.

<sup>289</sup> Cf. Luz, ‘The Disciples in the Gospel According to Matthew’, p. 108.

<sup>290</sup> Luz, *Theology of Matthew*, p. 76.

prohibition refers to teaching torah.<sup>291</sup> The connection in rabbinic Judaism between payment and teaching the law may also reflect the contemporary interests of Matthew and his church particularly when, in terms of Matthew's narrative, the delegated authority to teach is reserved for the post-Easter situation.

Further indications of transparency can be seen in vv. 9–10 where the ban on provisions is updated by Matthew to meet the needs of an ongoing situation where itinerant missionaries have a right to expect hospitality and nourishment (10.10b).<sup>292</sup> In 10.17–25 the missionaries are warned that they will be persecuted as part of their witness to the Gentiles (cf. 10.5f.); warnings are given about division of families (= Mark 13.12) which is indicative of the apocalyptic woes to be expected at the end of the age (2 Esdras 5.9; 6.24; 13.31; Jubilees 23.19; 2 Baruch 70.3; Enoch 56.7; 99.5; 100.1).<sup>293</sup> Both in their charismatic activity and in their suffering, followers of Jesus identify with their Lord (10.25b; 10.38) and their suffering is emphasised in the anachronistic imagery of cross-bearing (cf. 16.24) which also indicates that Matthew intends his mission discourse for disciples of his own day.<sup>294</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> 2 Cor. 11.7; cf. 1 Cor. 9.3–18; Didache 11–12; Aboth i,13; iv,7 and especially Der.Er.Z. iv,2 where we read: 'Teach the Law gratis, and take no fee for it: for the words of the Law no fee must be taken, seeing that God gave the Law gratis. He who takes a fee for the Law destroys the world'.

[ET in C.G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974), p. 128.]

<sup>292</sup> Here τῆς τροφῆς is Matt.R. Cf. Mark's ban on taking bread (Mark 6.8) followed by Luke (Luke 9.3)

<sup>293</sup> L. Sabourin, 'Traits Apocalyptiques dans L'Évangile de Matthieu', in *Science et Esprit* XXXIII/3 (1981), 362, who comments: 'Le conflit social figure souvent dans les représentations apocalyptiques des tribulations de la fin des temps'.

<sup>294</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, p. 292; Gundry, *Matthew*, p. 200. M. Davies, *Matthew* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), p. 85 points out that the cross does not otherwise come into view in Matthew's gospel until 16.21. J.C. Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), p. 158 views Matt. 10.38 as a 'clear anticipation' addressed to the disciples alone and 'integrated into the plot'. Whatever the case, as Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, p. 293 points out, it is clearly a call to 'radical obedience that entails self-denial'.

We have seen that there are clear indications that the disciples' ministry is to parallel closely that of Jesus and this identification of the disciples with the ministry of Jesus extends transparently to the experience of Matthew's own community as it engages in mission. I will now turn to the question of what seems to be intended by Matthew in the ἐξουσία granted to the disciples in Matt. 10.1. More precisely, how does the ἐξουσία granted by Jesus to the disciples, as he commissions them to go only to Israel, compare to that given to the eleven disciples by the exalted Lord in the Great Commission (Matt. 28.16–20)? How, if at all, does the restriction in Matt. 10.5f. to go only to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel' help us to understand the post-Easter extent of the ἐξουσία given by the risen Jesus to the disciples? Are the Third Wave correct in their assumption that the emphasis remains the same in both commissionings?

### *Matthew's Use of ἐξουσία*

Is there anything in Matthew's use of ἐξουσία which indicates that he intends his readers to understand his meaning and application of the word differently in the pre and post-Easter situations? What evidence is there in support of those who say that Jesus' final commission the Eleven includes the authority to heal?

In ordinary Greek usage ἐξουσία can mean the ability to perform an action without hindrance. It can also mean the right to do something, or the right over something, and is often used in connection with the authority given by the king. The word ἐξουσία can be

translated in the NT in a number of ways, depending on context.<sup>295</sup> The ἐξουσία of Jesus comes from God, is connected in the synoptic tradition and Acts with the idea of commissioning and is shared by Jesus' disciples, particularly in connection with the proclamation of the nearness of the kingdom of God and the power to heal and perform exorcisms.<sup>296</sup> The word occurs nine times in Matthew's gospel<sup>297</sup> and is used in terms of both the limited authority of the earthly Jesus and the unlimited authority of the exalted Lord (7.29; 9.6; 21.23ff.; 28.18).

The first occurrence of ἐξουσία in Matthew's gospel is in 7.28f. where he follows Mark closely (Mark 1.22; cf. Luke 4.32). Matthew uses this saying from Mark as an authoritative finale to the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus' ἐξουσία astonishes (ἐκπλήσσω) the crowds.<sup>298</sup> In his omission of Mark 1.23 it could be argued that here Matthew clearly intends his reference to the ἐξουσία of Jesus to be closely linked to his teaching alone.<sup>299</sup> However, Matthew's succinct telling of the story of the healing of the Centurion's servant (Matt. 8.5–13 cf. Luke 7.1–10) serves primarily to remind his readers that Jesus, like the Centurion, is a man under authority (Matt. 8.9). In Matt. 9.2–8 Jesus heals a paralytic where again, the healing is used as a context for a further amplification of Matthew's presentation of the ἐξουσία of Jesus. In this healing story, Matthew shifts the focus from the healing itself to the even more extraordinary fact that Jesus has

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<sup>295</sup> See, for example, J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* vol. 2 (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989<sup>2</sup>), p. 92.

<sup>296</sup> For a full discussion of ἐξουσία in Greek, Jewish (LXX) and NT usage, see W. Foerster, *TDNT* II, pp. 562–574.

<sup>297</sup> Nine times in Mark, fifteen times in Luke and seven times in Acts.

<sup>298</sup> ἐκπλήσσω occurs four times in Matthew's gospel (7.28; 13.54; 19.25; 22.33) where in each case the astonishment is in reaction to Jesus' teaching.

<sup>299</sup> Cf. with Mark's rather different context where Jesus' ἐξουσία to teach is closely linked with and demonstrated by his ἐξουσία over unclean spirits.

ἐξουσία to forgive sins, something to be borne in mind when making judgements about how Matthew intends his readers to understand the scope of the mandate to the Eleven standing behind their commission at the conclusion of Matthew's gospel

In Matt. 10.1 Jesus delegates his ἐξουσία to the twelve disciples before commissioning them and sending them out on mission to Israel. The focus of the delegated authority here is very clearly on healing and exorcism and is linked in vv. 5–6 with proclaiming the nearness of the kingdom of heaven. Mark uses ἐξουσία only as ἐξουσίαν τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν ἀκαθάρτων (Mark 6.7) or in the context of sending out the twelve, ἐξουσίαν ἐκβάλλειν τὰ δαμόνια (Mark 3.15). Matthew deliberately widens the scope of the ἐξουσία given to the disciples here by adding to Mark's 'unclean spirits' the 'formulaic'<sup>300</sup> θεραπεύειν πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν. This expansion reflects an earlier description of the ministry of Jesus (Matt. 9.35 cf. Luke 9.1) and serves to emphasise the fact that, for Matthew, the disciples are in solidarity with Jesus in their sharing of his ἐξουσία and mission, as well as in the accusations referring to the source of their ἐξουσία (Matt. 10.25b)!

It could be argued, against the Third Wave, that in the restriction to go only to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel' we should understand the disciples' mission and delegated authority to heal and exorcise as belonging strictly to the past and not intended by Matthew to be applicable to the church. For example, Hagner grants that the commands would have been understood literally in Jesus' day, but asserts (without evidence!) that

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<sup>300</sup> So Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, p. 265.



the commands to heal and exorcise would have been taken in a 'spiritual sense' in Matthew's day, being understood as what happens to individuals when they receive and accept the good news of the kingdom. He concludes, 'The Commission in its literal terms applied fully only to the apostolic age'.<sup>301</sup>

However, we have seen already, the restriction only to go to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel' was probably in Matthew's source material, and throughout the mission discourse there are clear indications that Matthew is addressing his own community. This being the case, the evidence does not suggest that Matthew necessarily intends to restrict ἐξουσία here to an unrepeatable past event in the life of Jesus and his disciples which must now change in light of a different understanding and application of ἐξουσία in the post-Easter situation.

Perhaps more telling here is the fact that Matthew often presents Jesus' miracles as fulfilment of OT prophecy (e.g. Matt. 8.17; 11.5–6; 12.18–21) and so christologically associated with the mission of the earthly Jesus. Also, in his use of the 'son of David' title in connection with the miracle stories (9.27; 12.23; 15.22; 20.30–31) Matthew shows that the miracles are a demonstration of Jesus' messiahship and, therefore, to be interpreted as part of the fulfilment of Jesus' specific mission to the people of Israel which, as Luz points out, changes for Matthew's community in the post-Easter situation.<sup>302</sup> Nevertheless, we have seen both how Matt. 10.24f. serves to identify the

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<sup>301</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, p. 271f. See also, for example, Smedes, *Ministry and the Miraculous*, p. 29f.; P. May, 'Focus on the Eternal' in J. Goldingay, (ed.), *Signs, Wonders and Healing* (Leicester: IVP, 1989), pp. 39f.; J. Goldingay, 'Analysing the Issues', in *Signs, Wonders and Healing* pp. 179f.

<sup>302</sup> Luz, 'The Disciples in the Gospel of Matthew', p. 107. See also Luz, *Theology of Matthew*, p. 71f.

charismatic activity of the disciples with that of Jesus and how the mission discourse itself provides a ‘transparent window’ for viewing the mission to the Gentiles.<sup>303</sup>

When the question about Jesus’ authority is raised by his opponents (Matt. 21.27 cf. Mark 11.27–33 par.), Matthew again editorially places the focus on Jesus’ teaching (v. 23 cf. Luke 20.1) but it should also be noted that in his retention of Mark’s ταῦτα ποιῆις Matthew clearly expects his readers to take account of the events of the preceding day (21.1–16 and esp. v. 14). Finally, we have Matt. 28.18–20 where again, the emphasis is on the universal mission of the church to make disciples (μαθητεύσατε) and initiate them into the community (βαπτίζοντες αὐτούς) and now, significantly, for the first time the disciples are given what has previously been reserved for Jesus, ἐξουσία to teach πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν.

Given what appears to be a clear and intended emphasis on delegated authority to teach in the Great Commission, is the ἐξουσία to heal and exorcise also implied in the Great Commission? Alternatively, does the evidence here favour opponents of the Third Wave for whom the granting of ἐξουσία to heal and exorcise to the disciples by Jesus is to be understood as being strictly limited to an ‘unrepeatable holy past’? At this stage we can only answer the question in part.

As we have seen, Matthew clearly emphasises Jesus’ teaching ministry throughout his gospel, especially as it relates to law-keeping and the superior righteousness which comes

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<sup>303</sup> Cf. Catchpole, *The Quest for Q*, p. 166.

from obeying Jesus' ethical demands. We have also seen how Matthew does not particularly emphasise just healing and exorcism in relation to the ἐξουσία of Jesus. When he is not focusing his readers' attention on Jesus' ἐξουσία to teach, he widens our understanding to take account of the disciples' charismatic activity which mirrors that of Jesus but which again is described in more comprehensive terms than merely casting out of evil spirits. Matthew's portrayal of the ἐξουσία of Jesus includes the authority to forgive sins and it is perhaps here that we find a further indication that the authority delegated to the followers of Jesus is intended by Matthew to include activities beyond just those specifically described in the words of the Great Commission.

*The theme of forgiveness.*

In chapter one, I raised the question of forgiveness being linked in the gospels to Jesus' ἐξουσία and charismatic activity. I must now ask, is there evidence that Matthew considered the forgiveness of sins to be part of his community's ongoing activity reflecting both the ministry of the earthly Jesus and an acknowledgement of the continuing presence of the exalted Lord?

Again in chapter one, we saw that for some the Third Wave case is weakened by their not taking account in their understanding of ἐξουσία the authority of Jesus to forgive sins. In defence of the Third Wave position, Williams points out that forgiveness is not included in the summaries we have of Jesus' ministry in the gospels.<sup>304</sup> However, against

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<sup>304</sup> D. Williams, *The God Who Reigns* (Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1989), p. 126 and again in Williams, *Signs, Wonders and the Kingdom of God*, p. 111.

Williams, we noted that evidence for the place of the forgiveness of sins in the ministry of Jesus amounts to more than explicit incidents where sins are forgiven.<sup>305</sup> We also saw in §7 that ‘transparency’ was the most fruitful approach to understanding Matthew’s presentation of Jesus and the disciples. Matthew omits the reference to ‘forgiveness of sins’ in his description of the preaching of John the Baptist (Matt. 3.2 cf. Mark 1.4) but ensures that it is transparently present in the ministry of the Matthean Jesus (e.g. 6.12–15; 9.2–6; 18.23–35; 26.28).

Most importantly, forgiveness is explicitly taught to the disciples who, as we have seen, are presented by Matthew as a learning community who transparently ‘embody’ the church.<sup>306</sup> In Matt. 18.18 the authority to forgive sins is widened to the community<sup>307</sup> where it is linked to the community’s authority to ‘bind and loose’ given earlier to Peter (16.19). Finally here, we should note Matthew’s redaction to the words of institution at the Last Supper where he adds to Mark’s Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν (Mark 14.24) the words, εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν (Matt. 26.28b) which appears to be a clear indication that, linked with Matt. 18.18, Matthew’s church practised the forgiveness of sins within a community context and this was (at least) one of the ways in which they experienced the presence of the exalted Jesus (Matt. 18.20; 28.20).

<sup>305</sup> See further, for example, Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, p. 113f

<sup>306</sup> Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, p. 100, n. 2.

<sup>307</sup> So Schweizer, *The Good News According to Matthew* (ET London: SPCK, 1976), p. 491.

*Conclusions.*

I began here by asking how far we may regard the sending out of the Twelve on mission by the earthly Jesus as being transparent for Matthew's church? I also asked, how far, if at all, does the restriction in Matt. 10.5f. help us to understand the extent of the authority delegated to the disciples by the exalted Jesus in the Great Commission, and are the Third Wave correct to assume that the emphasis remains the same in both cases? In other words, is the continuation of ἐξουσία to heal and cast out demons clearly implied by Matthew in the Great Commission?

In my examination of Matt. 10.5f. we saw that the effect of choosing twelve disciples and authorising them to go only to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel' was to show that they shared in the earthly Jesus' eschatological mission. The restriction to go only to Israel could be viewed as Matthew's placing this incident firmly in an unrepeatable past. However, we saw that the restriction was probably already present in Matthew's source material, and noted that Matthew widens the missionary discourse to include material clearly intended for the ongoing missionary situation facing his community where they continue to share not only in Jesus' mission, but also in his suffering (cf. 10.16ff.). This indicates that the mission of the Twelve is to be regarded as being, to some degree, transparent for Matthew and his church but in a modified way, at least, by the universal outlook reflected in 28.18. I also suggested that a further modifying factor appears to be that Matthew often presents Jesus' miracles as fulfilment of OT prophecy, something which suggests their being located by the evangelist in the historic past, that is unless it

can be shown that this is in some way modified by the promise of Jesus' abiding presence (28.20).<sup>308</sup>

In terms of Matthew's understanding of ἐξουσία, as it relates to the earthly Jesus, we saw that this was presented by Matthew primarily in connection with Jesus' authoritative teaching and authority to forgive sins, and that explicit validation of Jesus' authority in these two spheres is to be found in his charismatic activity. In light of this, to what extent can we say Matthew understands the way in which Jesus' authority is delegated to the church? We have seen how authority to teach was the sole preserve of Jesus until the post-Easter commissioning of the Eleven (28.18). We have also seen evidence to suggest that Matthew's community actively practised forgiveness (18.18) and that this was probably linked in some way to the idea of 'binding and loosing' (16.19). There are also further indications in Matthew's redaction of the words of institution that forgiveness of sins played an important part in his community's life together.

This now brings me to my second case-study, Matt. 16.13–20. In this final section I will ask, what further evidence is there for Matthew's understanding of the extent to which Jesus' delegated authority is operative in his church?

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<sup>308</sup> See further §9 below.

§9. PETER AND THE KEYS OF  
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (Matt. 16.18–20).

Whilst much of Matthew's treatment of Peter is the result of his editing Peter into his source material,<sup>309</sup> there are three particular Petrine cameos (Matt. 14.28–31; 16.16b–19; 17.24–27) which serve to promote Peter as a central character within the First Gospel. In other words, it is clear on any reading of Matthew's gospel that Peter plays a central role, acting as both a typical disciple and spokesman for the group.<sup>310</sup> In what follows I will concentrate on Peter's role in Matt. 16.18–20 in order to see what further light this pericope sheds on our understanding of how Matthew views the nature of the delegated authority to be exercised by his community and to ask how, if at all, it supports the Third Wave's contention that the authority delegated to the church by the Matthean Jesus includes authority over the demonic.

Following an examination of the key-imagery found in Matt. 16.19, I will look at what I consider to be the most likely ways Matthew intends his readers to understand the nature of the delegated authority to 'bind and loose'. Finally, I will suggest how this in turn sheds further light on the extent and scope that Matthew includes in his idea of ἐξουσία

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<sup>309</sup> Gundry, *Matthew*, p. 61; Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, p., 76. See for example, Matt. 4.18 where Matthew adds the explanatory note, τὸν λεγόμενον Πέτρον which serves as a first indication of the special (representative) role Peter is to play in Matthew's gospel. Schweizer's comment that, 'Simon is introduced from the very beginning as "Peter", probably because the readers know him by this name', does not really take account of the element of anticipation in the narrative at this point of the role Peter will take later in the First Gospel. See Schweizer, *The Good News According to Matthew*, p. 75.

<sup>310</sup> Cf. Matt. 14.28–31; 15.15; 17.24–27; 18.21f. See further, for example, Gundry, *Matthew*, p. 9; U. Luz, 'Das Primatwort Matthäus 16.17–19 aus Wirkungsgeschichtlicher Sicht', *NTS* 37 (1991), 422 and 427; Luz, *Theology of Matthew*, p. 94; Wilkins, *The Concept of Disciple in Matthew's Gospel*, p. 143f.

as it informs his paradigm for discipleship and its outworking in his community's sharing in the ἐξουσία of the exalted Jesus.

In Matt. 16.19, we read:

δώσω σοι τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ ὅ ἐὰν δήσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ὅ ἐὰν λύσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

Reference to the 'keys of the kingdom of heaven' occurs only in Matthew's account of Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16.13-20//Mark 8.27-30//Luke 9.18-21). In fact, Matthew's expansion of his Markan source is quite considerable throughout this pericope. According to Mark (8.27b) Jesus asks simply, 'Who do men say that I am?', whereas Matthew identifies Jesus directly with the Son of Man (Matt. 16.13b). Matthew also adds a reference to Jeremiah (v. 14), where Mark refers simply to Elijah/one of the prophets (Mark 8.19). Jesus then directs his question to the disciples and immediately following Peter's answer, 'You are the Christ', Matthew adds 'the son of the living God' (v. 16b). From here the first evangelist continues with his special material which refers in verse 19a to the 'keys of the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. 16.17-19).

There is general agreement that Matt. 16.19b,c, which is repeated in Matt. 18.18, forms a parallelism indicating its Semitic origin, and which could also indicate its possible dominical origin.<sup>311</sup> Peter frequently acts as spokesman for the disciples/community

<sup>311</sup> R.E. Brown, K.P. Donfried and J. Reumann, (eds.), *Peter in the New Testament* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1974), p.96. Also, J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, pp. 20–35 who notes the strongly Semitic character and poetic rhythm when the *logion* is translated back into Aramaic. O. Cullmann, *Peter:*

(Matt. 15.15; 17.24–27; 18.21f.; cf. 14.28–31)<sup>312</sup> and in verse 19a, Jesus' promise to Peter of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which are clearly linked to the authority to 'bind and loose', is peculiar to Matthew's gospel. The representative nature of Peter's role is further evidenced when this authority is widened in 18.18 where it is Matthew's ἑκκλησία that has authority to 'bind and loose'. Here we need to ask, to what does this authority relate within the context of Matthew's gospel? Does it include authority to make definitive teaching pronouncements and to forgive sins, as we saw was the case with Matthew's understanding of Jesus authority? If so, can we also assume that the authority delegated to the disciples/church will also be validated through miraculous activity? Is there any evidence connected with the idea of 'binding and loosing' to suggest that healings and/or exorcisms might be envisaged?

### *Isaiah 22.22.*

It is often maintained by commentators that in verse 19a the keys of the kingdom of heaven should be viewed as being synonymous with the 'key of David' referred to in Isaiah 22.22,<sup>313</sup> and that Matt. 23.13<sup>314</sup> confirms this interpretation.<sup>315</sup> In Matt. 23.13 the Evangelist does use the verb κλείω and, therefore, indicates

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*Disciple, Apostle, Martyr* (ET London, SCM Press, 1953), p.176 does not rule out the possibility of the *logion* having originated with the historical Jesus. See further: Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus*, pp.185ff.; M. Wilcox, 'Peter and the Rock: A Fresh Look at Matthew xvi.17-19', in *NTS* 22 (1975/76), 73-78; B.P. Robinson, 'Peter and his Successors: Tradition and Redaction in Matthew 16.17-19', *JSNT* 21 (1984), pp. 85-104; C. Rowland, *Christian Origins* (London: SPCK, 1985), p.153; J. Marcus, 'The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom (Matt. 16.18-19)', *CBQ* 50 (1988), pp. 443-455.

<sup>312</sup> Cf. T.L. Donaldson, 'Guiding Readers—Making Disciples in Matthew's Narrative Strategy', in R.N. Longenecker, (ed.), *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), p. 32.

<sup>313</sup> A reference to the authority as royal steward to be conferred upon Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, who replaced Shebna during the reign of King Hezekiah.

dependence upon the key imagery which occurs both in Isaiah 22.22 and Matt. 16.19a. This link is strengthened further by the connected idea of ‘binding and loosing’ (Matt. 16.19b,c; cf. Isaiah 22.22) and the statement made by Jesus in Matt. 23.23 that teachers of the Law, ‘shut the kingdom of heaven against men’. However, given the important christological imagery invoked by Matthew here in his presentation of Jesus as the holder of the keys of heaven, I believe Matt. 16.19a represents a further development of the Isaiah 22.22 tradition, based upon ideas that were current in Jewish angelological traditions and which Matthew used here to heighten both the christological and ecclesiological import of the pericope.

It should also be noted here that the phrase, τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας does not occur in Matt. 23.13, a fact that serves to weaken the argument that Matt. 23.13 may be used to confirm that Matt. 16.19a refers to the ‘key of David’ found in Isaiah 22.22. I will begin by exploring this further development and from here turn to the question of its effect on our understanding of the nature and scope of the ἐξουσία which is implicit in the granting of the keys to Peter with their associated authority to ‘bind and loose’ (Matt. 16.19b, c; 18.18). In other words, it appears that here we have a foreshadowing of the Great Commission with Matthew giving his readers a glimpse of the exalted Jesus in his role as heavenly key-bearer, to whom all authority in heaven and on earth has been given (cf. 28.18), and who now passes the keys to the kingdom of heaven on to Peter as representative of the disciples and forebear of Matthew’s own community. If this is the case, then the associated sharing in the ἐξουσία to ‘bind and loose’ may be regarded as

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<sup>314</sup> Cf. Luke 11.52 and the reference to the ‘key of knowledge’.

<sup>315</sup> See, for example, Schweizer, *The Good News According to Matthew*, p.343.

particularly indicative of their experiencing the abiding presence of the exalted Jesus in the community (cf. Matt. 28.20).

*The influence of Jewish sources.*

In Matt. 16.19 the phrase, τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας is inextricably linked with the idea of exercising delegated authority, and in this there is a parallel with Isaiah 22.22.

However, in Isaiah 22.22 the authority is passed on only at the earthly level and is concerned with purely mundane affairs. In contrast, for Matthew, the authority is of heavenly origin, is concerned (at least) with the law and community discipline, and contains an explicit heavenly/earthly correspondence. These important developments suggest strongly that the key imagery used in Matt. 16.19a is best understood as being more dependent upon contemporary Jewish ideas associated with angelic key-holders, and especially the Archangel Michael.<sup>316</sup>

This being the case, we have here what appears to be a substitution of Jesus in place of Michael which makes the important christological point that the earthly Jesus is also God's heavenly plenipotentiary,<sup>317</sup> thus replacing the archangel Michael in his traditional role as God's chief agent with special responsibility for Israel, the people of God (cf.

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<sup>316</sup> For recent treatments of the relevance of Jewish angelology for the origins of Christology see especially, J.D.G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making* (London, SCM Press, 1980), pp. 149-159; C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven* (London, SPCK, 1982), pp. 94-113. See also, L.W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord* (London, SPCK, 1988), pp. 71-90.

<sup>317</sup> This substitution also serves to underline the risen Jesus' claim in Matt. 28.18 that, ἐδόθη μοι πάντα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

Matt. 10.23; 15.24; 19.28).<sup>318</sup> Of course, this substitution does not mean that for Matthew and his community the risen Jesus was an exalted angel. Rather this is an example of an early Christian community using traditions and imagery from Jewish angelology to assist them in coming to terms theologically with the exalted Christ.<sup>319</sup>

Further evidence of Matthew's tendency to use Jewish traditions and to substitute the name of Jesus in order to make a christological point can be seen in Matthew 18.20 (cf. 28.20b). Here the christological substitution appears to be based on the tradition found in *Aboth* III:3 which reads:

R. Hanina b. Teradion said: If two sit together, and words of Torah are between them, the Shechinah rests between them...<sup>320</sup>

Here the name of Jesus,<sup>321</sup> as the one who fulfils and rightly interprets Torah replaces the (pre-Jesus) Torah, and the (risen) presence<sup>322</sup> of Jesus substitutes for the *Shechinah* of God. In Berakot 6a, we have a similar saying, but this time in the context of judgement, which reads: 'Where three sit and judge, the Shechinah is in their midst' (cf. Matt. 18.28).<sup>323</sup>

In Rev. 3.7, we find that it is the *exalted Christ* who is the keeper of the keys, although here at least, there appears to be a direct dependence upon Isaiah 22.22. However, it is

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<sup>318</sup> Not also how in Matt. 27.42 Matthew's removing Mark's ὁ Χριστὸς (cf. Mark 15.32//Luke 23.35) from the words spoken by those mocking Jesus on the cross serves to emphasise more starkly for his readers Jesus' association with Israel.

<sup>319</sup> Cf. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord*, p. 74.

<sup>320</sup> Montefiore and Loewe, *Rabbinic Anthology*, p. 23.

<sup>321</sup> Cf. Schweizer, *The Good News According to Matthew*, p. 374f.

<sup>322</sup> Or (Holy) Spirit

<sup>323</sup> Schweizer, *Ibid.*

worth noting that in Rev. 3.7 Jesus is the holder of τὴν κλεῖς Δαυίδ. In Isaiah 22.22 (LXX) we have, τὴν κλεῖδα οἴκου Δαυίδ. In both instances κλεῖς is singular, whereas in Matt. 16.19a, we have the plural, τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν. The use of the plural here is possibly an indication of a closer dependence by Matthew upon traditions featuring the Archangel Michael found in 3 Baruch, rather than a direct dependence upon Isaiah 22.22, and it is worth exploring more carefully how the key-imagery found in 3 Baruch sheds light on our understanding our understanding of Matt. 16.19.

Texts of 3 Baruch have been found in both Greek and Slavonic, with the Slavonic text being a translation from a now lost original Greek text.<sup>324</sup> It has been suggested that some of the linguistic features stem from a Semitic base-text, although Gaylord points out that there are no convincing arguments for this. Rather, the evidence points to Greek being the original language of this apocalypse.<sup>325</sup>

As to date and provenance, the weight of scholarly opinion favours a Jewish provenance with evidence for Christian interpolation at various points in the text,<sup>326</sup> and with Syria being the most recently suggested place of origin.<sup>327</sup> The date for 3 Baruch is thought to be somewhere between the first and third centuries AD. According to Gaylord, evidence for 231 AD being the latest date for the apocalypse was first suggested by M.R. James

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<sup>324</sup> H.E. Gaylord (trans.), '3 [Greek Apocalypse of] Baruch', in J.H. Charlesworth, (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* vol. 1 (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1983), p. 653.

<sup>325</sup> Gaylord (trans.), '3 [Greek Apocalypse of] Baruch', p. 655.

<sup>326</sup> For detailed arguments, see Gaylord, *ibid.* See also Sabourin, 'Traits Apocalyptique dans L'Évangile de Matthieu', p. 363

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid.* and note.

who points to a probable reference to this work in Origen, *De principiis* 2,3,6.<sup>328</sup>

Nickelsburg also dates this work between the late first and early second century A.D.<sup>329</sup>

which may well indicate that the traditions preserved here were current from at least the beginning of the first century A.D., and possibly earlier.

The central angelic figure in this apocalypse is Michael who is described as commander-in-chief of the angelic host and who in Jewish tradition is firmly associated with Israel (Dan. 10.13; 12.1). He replaces YHWH as the guardian of Israel and advocate of the Jews (cf. Sirach 17.17); he leads Israel against her enemies (Ass. Moses 10.2); he descends to earth in order to accept human prayers (3 Baruch 11.4); presents the merits of the righteous to God (3 Baruch 14.2), and in this he has close affinities with Raphael in the much earlier book of Tobit (Tobit 12.12-15). Importantly here, according to 3 Baruch 11.2 Michael acts as the keeper of the keys of the gates to the kingdom of heaven. He also functions as priest in the heavenly temple.<sup>330</sup> We read:

Καὶ εἶπέν μοι ὁ ἄγγελος· Οὐ δύναμεθα εἰσελθεῖν ἕως ἔλθῃ Μιχαήλ  
ὁ κλειδοῦχος τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν.

It has been argued by J. Jeremias that 3 Baruch 11.2 is the result of a Christian interpolation on the grounds that the phrase τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν is not found

<sup>328</sup> M.R. James, *Apocrypha Anecdota* II, p. li, cited by Gaylord, *op. cit.* p. 655.

<sup>329</sup> G.W.E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah* (London, SCM Press, 1981), p. 303.

<sup>330</sup> Cf. Hebrews 7.15ff.

elsewhere in the literature.<sup>331</sup> Whilst I would agree that there is evidence for Christian interpolation throughout this apocalypse, nevertheless I would argue here that the non-Christian nature of 3 Baruch 11:2 may be deduced from the following:

(i) in Matt. 16.19a it is *Jesus* who is presented as keeper of the keys of the kingdom of heaven and, as such, is in a position to hand them on to Peter who will act as his plenipotentiary at the earthly-level, whereas in 3 Baruch 11:2 it is *Michael* rather than Jesus who is the keeper of the heavenly keys;<sup>332</sup>

(ii) given the probable dating and provenance of 3 Baruch, it is quite likely that Christian interpolators would be aware of Matthew's portrayal of *Jesus* as keeper of the heavenly keys and would hardly miss the opportunity to replace Michael with Jesus at this point.

According to 3 Baruch 11.12 Michael receives men's prayers in the fifth heaven (= Paradise)<sup>333</sup> from lesser angels.<sup>334</sup> In T. Levi 2.7–3.8, the fifth heaven is also the place to which lesser angels carry the prayers of men to the angels of the presence, of whom Michael is one. In the pseudepigraphical literature Michael, as keeper of the heavenly keys, is an angelic being who has *direct access to God* in a similar way to that ascribed to

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<sup>331</sup> J. Jeremias, *TDNT* III, p. 749. For arguments against the view that τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν is a Christian interpolation, see R.H. Charles, *APOT* ii, p. 539 and note.

<sup>332</sup> Cf. Rev. 3.7.

<sup>333</sup> Cf. Luke 23.43.

<sup>334</sup> R.H. Charles, *APOT* ii, p. 531.

Raphael in Tobit 12.15 and, significantly, by Jesus in the Q tradition (Matt. 10.32f./Luke 12.8f.)<sup>335</sup>

There are, however, important differences between the pseudepigraphical literature and Matthew's gospel which require attention. In Matt. 16.19a the keys of heaven are passed from a heavenly personage (= Jesus in the light of the coming post-Easter situation, cf. 28.18) to an earthly steward (= Peter as representative of the earthly ἐκκλησία). The authority to bind and loose is then placed in juxtaposition to possession of the heavenly keys (verse 19b,c), whereas in the pseudepigraphical literature the keys remain in the possession of the heavenly personage.

In the Rabbinic literature, we find similar ideas. In b.Sanh. 113a, Elijah is given the heavenly key by God. According to 1 Kings 17.1 Elijah prophesied that there would be a drought which only ends as a result of Elijah's prayer (1 Kings 18.42-45). The Babylonian Talmud attributes this to Elijah having been given the heavenly 'key of rain' by God and in this sense the ability to unlock what is already there in that particular heavenly repository. Here we have not only the use of heavenly key imagery, but also what may be described as a heavenly/earthly correspondence connected to the idea of 'binding and loosing'.

To summarise, the complexity of ideas associated with Michael as the bearer of the heavenly keys may well have influenced Matthew in a number of ways which help us to understand the nature and scope of the delegated authority entrusted to Matthew's church

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<sup>335</sup> Reference to angels is not present in Matt. 10.32f (cf. Luke 12.8f) but see Matt. 18.10 where angelic representatives of members of the ἐκκλησία have direct access to God.

and transparently envisaged for later Christian generations. I have argued that in Matt. 16.19a the phrase τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας was not directly dependent on Isaiah 22.22 but on the development of ideas found in contemporary Jewish sources where the heavenly keys are particularly associated with the archangel Michael who is God's chief agent with particular responsibility for Israel/the people of God, and where the authority represented by the keys has a heavenly origin.

In Matt. 16.19 the keys of the kingdom of heaven represent the authority to 'bind and loose'. In presenting Jesus as the keeper of the keys, the evangelist invokes for his readers imagery associated with the archangel Michael and thus foreshadows the heavenly/earthly authority claimed by the risen Jesus in the final commissioning scene (28.18) and which serves to underwrite the subsequent instructions given in the Great Commission. The ideas represented here by Matthew in terms of key-imagery associated with binding and loosing are clearly important for our understanding of the nature and scope of the delegated authority envisaged by Matthew as being entrusted by the risen Jesus to the evangelist's community and, transparently, to later Christian generations.

Given the close association I have suggested here between the keys to the kingdom of heaven, symbolising authority to bind and loose, and Matthew's Great Commission, what support, if any, do our findings offer for the Third Wave's contention that the Great Commission includes authority to heal? How are we to understand the nature and scope of the delegated authority to bind and loose? With these questions in mind, I will now turn to Matt. 16.19b, c.

*Binding and loosing.*

In Matt. 16.19b, c, we find that commentators are divided as to how the idea of 'binding and loosing' is to be understood. J. Marcus argues that there are contextual indications for the direction of movement (heavenly/earthly to earthly/heavenly) which are to be understood in the delegated authority to 'bind and loose'.<sup>336</sup> In Matt. 16.17 it is the Father in heaven who revealed Jesus' true identity to Peter at the earthly level, added to which the literal meaning of v. 19b, c also indicates a heaven to earth directional flow.

We read:

...whatever you (singular) bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth will have been loosed in heaven.

Marcus argues that if the use of the future perfect tense, ἔσται δεδεμένον and ἔσται λελυμένον is taken seriously then it points to a directional flow where events in heaven *precede* events on earth.<sup>337</sup>

Against this view, C.F.D. Moule<sup>338</sup> argues that ἔσται δεδεμένον seems to mean more naturally, 'shall be bound' rather than, 'shall have been bound'. Moule goes on to argue that other examples of periphrastic future perfects in the NT are not future perfects in the classical sense but should be understood as being equivalent to simple futures.<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> J. Marcus, 'The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom (Matt. 16.18-19)' in *CBQ* 50 (1988), pp. 443-455.

<sup>337</sup> Marcus, 'The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom', p. 448.

<sup>338</sup> C.F.D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959<sup>2</sup>), p. 18.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*, citing Matt. 16.19; Luke 12.52; Heb. 2.13.

Against Moule, Marcus points out that in classical Greek,

... the significance of the perfect is usually a past action with a present result.<sup>340</sup>

Marcus continues that, in his opinion, there is no need to assume that in this the NT differs from classical Greek usage and that Moule's argument is based not on grammar but on the 'natural sense' of the passage.<sup>341</sup> According to Marcus, in Matthew's gospel futures are not just intentional (I will...) but refer to, 'an apocalyptic change that will alter the entire cosmos, including the law'.<sup>342</sup>

Such an 'apocalyptic change' would be in line with an understanding of the symbolism of the heavenly keys which suggests that the earthly ἐκκλησία, represented here by Peter,<sup>343</sup> has access to a true understanding of Torah which has been eschatologically re-defined by Jesus as the new Moses and who now, as the Risen One, is the holder of all authority (Matt. 28.18). Just as in Jewish angelological tradition it is Michael who acts as God's heavenly plenipotentiary, so here for Matthew it is the risen Jesus who, by virtue of his death and resurrection, is now the holder of all authority in heaven and on earth. By handing the heavenly keys to Peter, the Matthean Jesus delegates authority to open the heavenly realm and gain insight into the true (eschatological) meaning of Torah and so ensure that the righteousness of the earthly ἐκκλησία continues to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, until the Son of Man returns (16.13b). In other words, as with

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<sup>340</sup> Marcus, 'The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom', p. 448.

<sup>341</sup> Marcus, 'The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom', p. 449.

<sup>342</sup> Marcus, 'The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom', p. 453.

<sup>343</sup> G. Bornkamm, 'The Authority to "Bind and Loose" in the Church', In Stanton, (ed.), *Interpretation of Matthew*, p. 93–5 makes the point that here Peter's role is that of teacher and guarantor through whom Matthew's community knows itself to be founded on the teaching of Jesus.

Rabbinic tradition where ‘binding and loosing’ refers to halakhic decisions about what is and what is not permitted by Torah, so here in Matthew, ‘binding and loosing’ also refers to authority to interpret the law. The authority to teach, which we saw was reserved for the earthly Jesus prior to the resurrection,<sup>344</sup> is conferred on the disciples by the risen Jesus in the final commission (Matt. 28.20a) and along with the universal missionary outlook is a striking reversal of the pre-Easter situation. In light of the Great Commission, the authority to ‘bind and loose’ is extended to include teaching members of the community to observe all that Jesus commanded (28.19). This, in turn, suggests the inclusion for Matthew of the authoritative interpretation of the law, the exercising of community discipline (18.15–20) and forgiveness of sins (18.21–22; cf. 26.28).

However, we have seen that the Third Wave regard Matthew’s understanding of the Great Commission as a filter through which they understand and interpret the other commissionings found in the synoptic gospels and Acts.<sup>345</sup> The Third Wave argue that Jesus’ instruction in the Great Commission to teach disciples all that Jesus commanded includes authority to heal and exorcise.<sup>346</sup> And so, finally here we must ask is there any evidence that supports the Third Wave in this assertion?

Interestingly, we also have a further reference to ‘binding and loosing’ that is broadly contemporary with Matthew and found in the Qumran literature (CD xiii.10) where it occurs in connection with freedom from demonic oppression and this may well also be

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<sup>344</sup> See §8 above.

<sup>345</sup> See §5 above.

<sup>346</sup> See, for example, Greig and Springer, ‘Appendix 3: Matthew 28.18–20 – The Great Commission and Jesus’ Commands to Preach and Heal’, p. 401 and Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, p. 42f.

reflected in Matthew's idea of the community's sharing in the authority of the exalted Jesus. If this is the case, then it broadens the scope of Matthew's understanding of the authority delegated to the disciples/church to include authority to heal/cast out demons. From here it would be fair to say that authority to heal/cast out demons may be assumed implicitly in the idea of delegated authority underpinning Matthew's Great Commission, and to which the abiding presence of the exalted Jesus acts as guarantor of the legitimacy of the community's authority to act (28.20b; cf. 18.20). Whilst this suggestion is attractive, based on the evidence available it must remain no more than a tentative possibility and does not provide a firm basis for the Third Wave claim that authority to heal and cast out demons is implicit in Matthew's Great Commission.

### *Conclusions.*

In this final section, we have seen that in Matt. 16.19 we have a conflation of ideas that may well have influenced Matthew and which suggest that the First Evangelist had in mind a broad scope for his community's ἐξουσία to 'bind and loose' that included authority to interpret and teach all that Jesus had commanded, authority to forgive sins, and possibly authority over the demonic.

That my analysis is correct is further borne out when we recall the important Matthean themes of Jesus as Messiah/Son of God to whom all authority now belongs (28.19), who is also the new Moses who rightly (re)interprets the law and now passes on the authority to 'bind and loose' to Peter, as representative of the wider ἐκκλησία (16.18–19;

18.15–20), in its universal mission. This confirms that whilst for Matthew the primary emphasis of the church's mission is to make disciples and teach them Jesus' commands, a secondary implication of the ἐξουσία to 'bind and lose' probably relates to power over the demonic. However, the Matthean Jesus warns of dire consequences for those who operate with the wrong priorities (Matt. 7.21–23) which, in light of what we have seen of Matthew's intentional transparency, remains as much a warning for Christians today as it did in the first century for Matthew and his community.

#### §10. CONCLUSIONS.

In concluding my review of the debate about the literary genre of Matt. 28.16–20, I noted the lack of scholarly consensus and the *sui generis* nature of the pericope. I suggested that in the source material used by Matthew for his Great Commission there was already a conflation of appearance traditions linked to the idea of the commissioning of the Eleven for mission by the risen Jesus, and that Matt. 28.16–20, as it now stands, reflects Matthew's later perception of the missionary task facing his church. I also concluded that, in terms of its literary function, Matthew's Great Commission serves as a climax to the gospel and, as such, brings together key Matthaean themes present throughout his gospel.

The historicizing approach to Matthew's gospel, which consigns Jesus and the disciples to a holy, unrepeatable past, leaves little room for the Third Wave paradigm which regards the experience of Jesus and the disciples as acting as a continuing model for the church. A more widely accepted, and fruitful, approach is that of 'transparency', which considers all that is addressed to the disciples by Jesus during his earthly ministry is also addressed to Matthew's community who are thus able to identify with the disciples and embody their experience.

Matthew presents us with a sophisticated paradigm for discipleship where the essence of being a disciple of Jesus is to be understood in terms of learning, understanding and obeying the words of Jesus. He portrays Jesus as a Mosaic prophet who rightly interprets the law, and whose authority to teach and to forgive sins is validated by his charismatic activity. However, in presenting the miracles of the earthly Jesus, we saw that Matthew's tendency is to spiritualise them, by presenting them in terms of 'salvation', and also to cast them in terms of the fulfilment of OT prophecy which might suggest that the evangelist is locating Jesus' miracle-working in the historic past. However, it is clear that, for Matthew, Jesus' authority to interpret the demands of the law is passed on to his disciples (16.19; 18.18), although there is a tension in the way Matthew presents the disciples as being at the same time inheritors of Jesus' ἐξουσία, and those of little faith.

In my examination of the mission of the Twelve (Matt. 10.5f.), we saw that the effect of choosing twelve disciples and authorising them to go only to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel' was to show that they shared in the earthly Jesus' eschatological mission.

Given the universal outlook of Matt. 28.19, the restriction to go only to Israel could also be viewed as Matthew's placing this incident firmly in an unrepeatable past. However, we saw that Matthew widens Jesus' missionary discourse to include material clearly intended for the ongoing missionary situation facing his community where they continue to share not only in Jesus' mission, but also in his suffering (cf. 10.16ff.). This indicates that the mission of the Twelve is to be regarded as being, to some degree, transparent for Matthew and his church but modified, at least, by the universal outlook reflected in 28.19.

Authority to teach was the sole preserve of Jesus until the post-Easter commissioning of the Eleven (28.18). However, in my final section, we saw that Matthew had in mind a wider scope for his community's ἐξουσία to 'bind and loose' than just community discipline and authority to teach but was also understood by Matthew as authority to forgive sins and, importantly for the Third Wave, there is evidence to suggest that we should include here authority over the demonic/miraculous. In this connection, an important qualification is to be seen in the dire warning given by the Matthean Jesus against charismatic activity that is not rooted in obedience to his teaching (Matt. 7.21–23). In light of what we have seen of Matthew's intentional transparency, this remains as much a warning for Christians today as it did in the first century for Matthew and his community.

In other words, what we have in Matthew's gospel is evidence which supports the Third Wave paradigm, but which also goes a considerable way beyond the narrow confines of

just proclaiming and demonstrating, with acts of power, the nearness of God's heavenly rule. Discipleship for Matthew is a much richer concept which involves sharing in the ἐξουσία of the exalted Jesus, making disciples and teaching all that Jesus commanded, and living lives which demonstrate the superior righteousness appropriate to followers of Jesus who claim a part in the eschatological people of God. In his paradigm of discipleship, Matthew also makes room for the expectation of suffering and persecution (Matt. 10.16–32), the forgiveness of sins (6.12, 14; 18.21f.; 26.27f.) as well as exercising authority as a community in temporal and spiritual matters. Miracles and exorcisms continue to have a part to play in the community's experience as part of the outworking of the delegated ἐξουσία entrusted to all disciples, but they are to be by no means the predominant characteristic of those who follow Jesus. Indeed, as we saw in my discussion of Matt. 7.21–23 in §7 above, Matthew clearly subordinates healings and exorcisms to doing God's will, even when they are performed in Jesus' name.

## Chapter III

### COMMISSIONING AND DISCIPLESHIP ACCORDING TO MARK

#### §11. INTRODUCING THE ISSUES.

As we saw in chapter one, the foundational NT paradigm identified by the Third Wave and which is central to their contemporary theology of signs and wonders is that of an intentional direct continuity between Jesus, his disciples and Christian discipleship today. The Third Wave argue that Christians today are commissioned to continue this ministry and the NT evidence for this can be seen in the model for discipleship used by Jesus in the gospels, particularly in his commissioning and sending the Twelve and the Seventy(-two) out in mission (Mark 6.6b-13; Matt. 10.7-16; Luke 10.1-16), and especially in the Great Commission by the risen Jesus to go out into the world and make disciples etc. (Matt. 28.16-20; Mark 16. 9-20; Luke 24.36–49; Acts 1.8).<sup>347</sup>

There is a real sense in which the Third Wave are to be congratulated for their brave appeal to the gospel tradition as a primary NT source for their contemporary model of discipleship. Particularly so when most evangelical Christians feel ‘safer’ with Paul. Nevertheless, as we saw in chapter one, important hermeneutical issues are raised

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<sup>347</sup> Considerable weight is placed on the longer ending to Mark’s gospel, despite the weight of manuscript evidence testifying to the lateness of Mark 16.9-20. This issue will be followed up in more detail in §4 below.

concerning appropriate ways to handle the NT evidence and, as we saw in chapter two, particular care must be taken when handling the synoptic gospels.

In chapter 2, we found evidence in Matthew's gospel to support the Third Wave paradigm. However, we also saw that in his paradigm of discipleship, Matthew makes room for the expectation of suffering and persecution, the forgiveness of sins and the exercising of authority as a community in temporal and spiritual matters. Miracles and exorcisms continue to have a part to play in the experience of Matthew's community but they are not considered by Matthew to be the predominant characteristic of those who follow Jesus.

Having looked carefully at Matthew's model of discipleship and especially at the Great Commission according to Matthew (Matt. 28.16–20), which is considered by the Third Wave to be the primary NT source for the church's understanding of its post-Easter commission, I am now in a position to examine further examples of commissioning and models of discipleship to which the Third Wave appeal in Mark and Luke-Acts.

Beginning here in chapter three with Mark's gospel, I will ask if the Third Wave are correct to view the evidence in Mark and Luke-Acts through what we might call a Matthean filter, or if a more critical evaluation of the evidence reveals significant differences in their content and purpose.

My contention throughout this thesis is that the homogenous approach to the text employed by the Third Wave is too simplistic and lacks the rigour necessary to take

proper account of the meaning of the text and the likely intention of the authors. Indeed, the question of 'intentionality' on the part of the NT writers (so far as we are able to discern it)<sup>348</sup> is a central issue throughout my discussion of the various commissionings and related material in the synoptic gospels and Acts, and not least here in the ensuing examination of discipleship and commissioning in Mark's gospel.

In his discussion of appropriate methods for interpreting Mark, Christopher Marshall points out that, in light of the widespread scholarly acceptance of Markan priority within the synoptic tradition, there has been over recent years an increasing number of scholars who have come to accept the need to move away from a polarisation of methods employed in the study of Mark.<sup>349</sup> The need now is to adopt an eclectic approach which is more appropriate to the 'methodological pluralism' required by the text.<sup>350</sup>

In contrast to form-criticism, with its understanding of Mark as the product of Mark's 'community', redaction-criticism understands the present form of the gospels as the work of a single author. However, the limitations of redaction-criticism for the interpretation of Mark have been ably demonstrated by Clifton Black in his examination of redaction-critical studies of the role of the disciples in Mark, and it must now be recognised that the application of *Redaktionsgeschichte* alone to the Second Gospel can be a far from precise science.<sup>351</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> See my discussion of 'intentional fallacy' in §4 above.

<sup>349</sup> E.g. form-criticism, redaction-criticism etc.

<sup>350</sup> C.D. Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative* (SNTS Monograph Series, 64; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 8.

<sup>351</sup> C. Clifton Black, *The Disciples According to Mark: Markan Redaction in Current Debate* (JSNT Supps., 27; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), pp. 17-38 and 60. For a useful article which discusses and contextualises Markan *Redaktionsgeschichte* within the history of synoptic studies see C. Clifton Black,

In his monograph, Black concentrates on the work of three representative scholars, each of whom builds on the seminal work of Willi Marxsen,<sup>352</sup> but who hold different theological presuppositions (conservative,<sup>353</sup> median<sup>354</sup> and liberal<sup>355</sup>), and arrive at rather different conclusions about the role of the disciples in Mark. The reason for this, Black insists, is due to inconsistencies in their application of redaction-critical criteria together with differing conclusions about what they judge to derive from Mark's tradition and what may be assigned to Markan redaction. Given the limitations of redaction-criticism already mentioned, it is now recognised that the interpreter of Mark must take account of the gospel narrative as a whole drawing more on insights from secular literary criticism in order to take better account of Mark's theological and literary integrity.<sup>356</sup> As I discussed with respect to Matt. 28.16-20 in chapter two, methods best suited to the interpretation of a literary text depend very much on the question of genre.<sup>357</sup> Marshall writes:

While there is much disagreement over the precise literary genre that best accommodates Mark's gospel, or whether it is in fact *sui generis*, all would agree that the fundamental category to which it belongs is that of narrative. By narrative we mean a story or an account of events and participants who move through time

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'The Quest of Mark the Redactor: Why has it been pursued, and what has it taught us?', *JSNT* 33 (1988), pp. 19-39. Here Black raises the important question (which he pursues in considerable detail in his *The Disciples According to Mark*) of the value of this approach in light of Markan priority. Arising out of his discussion of the pros and cons, Marshall gives the reader a profile of the redaction-critical method, placing it in its scholarly *Sitz im Leben*. He concludes that although redaction-criticism sought to cast light on the Evangelists' historical and social settings, and those of the communities for which they were writing, the point of entry lay with identifying the redactor's theology and from here his intended meaning.

<sup>352</sup> W. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel* (ET Nashville & New York: Abingdon, 1969).

<sup>353</sup> R.P. Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve: Discipleship and Revelation in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968). See further Black, *Disciples*, pp. 65-97.

<sup>354</sup> E. Best, *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* (JSNT Supps. 4; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981). See further Black, *Disciples*, pp. 99-125.

<sup>355</sup> T.J. Weedon, *Mark – Tradition in Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971). See further Black, *Disciples*, pp. 128-157.

<sup>356</sup> Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative*, p. 14.

<sup>357</sup> See previous discussion of *Gattung* in connection with Matt. 28.16-20.

and space, a recital with a beginning, middle and end. The most fruitful literary approach to Mark, then, is one which takes seriously the narrative or story mode he uses to communicate his message, an approach which may be called *narrative criticism*.<sup>358</sup>

With respect to (implied) authorial intent,<sup>359</sup> narrative criticism assumes that Mark tells a coherent story which involves the skilful use of his tradition about Jesus and the disciples in order to create a narrative which previously did not exist.<sup>360</sup> Mark's redaction of traditional material, together with the assumed coherence and integrity of his gospel narrative, indicates a unity of story which may be entered into and experienced by the reader.<sup>361</sup> This leads me to ask here, what does Mark intend to tell his readers about Jesus and his disciples which will inform their (and our) ideas of what it means to be a follower of Jesus? It is clear that Mark portrays the disciples in both a favourable and unfavourable light. The disciples are called by Jesus to be 'fishers of men', they remain with Jesus until his arrest and are privy to Jesus' teaching about discipleship, yet they constantly show their lack of understanding. In narrative-critical terms, the reader is clearly meant to identify with the disciples who act as a foil for Jesus' teaching and afford

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<sup>358</sup> Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative*, p. 15. Cf. D. Rhoads and D. Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), p. 3.

<sup>359</sup> According to A. Stock, *Call to Discipleship: A Literary Study of Mark's Gospel* (Dublin: Veritas Publication, 1982), p. 206, the implied author of Mark is a Christian who, in narrating the public life of Jesus 'shapes his narrative to be of maximum benefit to his Christian readers'.

<sup>360</sup> Cf. Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative* 16-20.

<sup>361</sup> R.C. Tannehill, 'The Disciples in Mark: The Function of Narrative Role', in W. Telford, (ed.), *The Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia/London: Fortress/SPCK, 1985), p. 141 goes further when he writes, 'The decision of the author to write a Gospel, including the story of the first disciples, rests on the assumption that there are essential similarities between the situation of these disciples and the situation of the early Church, so that, in telling a story about the past, the author can also speak to his present.'

him the opportunity to correct their demonstrably wrong notions about true discipleship.<sup>362</sup>

According to Augustine Stock, there are several perspectives borrowed from secular literary studies which are helpful in reading Mark as a unitary narrative, an important concept being that of 'commission'. Stock explains:

A commission is accepted by a narrative character and this results in a unified narrative sequence as the narrator tells us how the character fulfils that commission or fails to fulfil it.<sup>363</sup>

This insight may be applied to Mark where Jesus receives his commission from God as Son of Man/Messiah/Son of God and the disciples receive their commission to discipleship from Jesus. Stock explains that it is common for an implied author to 'instil' or 're-enforce' values that are important for him, and a recognition of these values gives the clue to the author's purpose in writing. Importantly, he notes that a tension is set up in the narrative whenever a character acts in a way which is contrary to those values.<sup>364</sup>

When applied to Mark's gospel, we find that Jesus corrects his followers' wrong notions of discipleship, and Mark's readers are clearly intended to evaluate the disciples' behaviour in light of the words and actions of Jesus. Stock points out that an internal tension is set up in the narrative between Jesus and the disciples whenever the disciples fall short of Jesus' standard. Here the implied reader is invited by the text to give a

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<sup>362</sup> Cf. Rhoads and Michie, *Mark as Story*, p. 122f.

<sup>363</sup> Stock, *Call to Discipleship*, p. 154.

<sup>364</sup> Stock, *Call to Discipleship*, p. 154f.

negative judgement against the disciples and this in turn contributes to the external tension set up between the author's values and those of the implied reader.<sup>365</sup>

Stock finds it particularly significant that the disciples are presented in a favourable light at the beginning of the gospel, but with the appearance of signs of incomprehension in the second half of Mark's story, the disciples show self-concern, open conflict with Jesus and finally they desert him.<sup>366</sup> It is true to say, with Stock, that in the first half of his narrative Mark shows the disciples, for the mostpart, in a favourable light – answering Jesus' call, sharing his mission and being empowered by Jesus. Nevertheless, it must also be noted here that their lack of understanding in the narrative prior to Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8.27–30) has the effect of casting them in a less positive light,<sup>367</sup> and prepares Mark's readers for the negative presentation of the disciples in the second half of his gospel.<sup>368</sup>

In terms of the overall structure of Mark's gospel, the two major parts can be divided into Mark 1.14-8.26 and Mark 8.27-16.8 with the christological turning point in the story being Peter's recognition and confession of Jesus' messiahship at Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8.27-30). However, in terms of Mark's teaching about discipleship, the turning

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<sup>365</sup> Stock, *Call to Discipleship*, p. 155.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.* See also R.M. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), p. 70 and note how the reader has greater knowledge of the disciples and how in this way the author has created a gap between Jesus and his disciples and "inserted the reader in the space between them." See further, pp. 70–73, 79.

<sup>367</sup> For examples see, Mark 4.10ff. (but cf. 4.34); 4.40–41; 6.35ff., 47–52; 7.17ff.; 8.4 (in the light of 6.35ff.); 8.16ff.

<sup>368</sup> For a particularly negative view of the disciples in Mark, see, for example, T.J. Weedon, 'The Heresy that Necessitated Mark's Gospel' in Telford, *The Interpretation of Mark*, pp. 64–77; for a conflicting view cf. Tannehill, 'The Disciples in Mark', pp. 386–405, re-published in Telford, *Interpretation of Mark*, pp. 134–157. More recently, Malbon-Struthers, *In the Company of Jesus: Characters in Mark's signs and wonders Gospel* (Louisville, Kentucky: John Know Press, 2000), p. 119 has claimed that Mark's gospel does not set out to discredit the disciples themselves but false views of discipleship that regard it as 'either exclusive or easy'.

point comes a little later at 8.31-33 where, in the face of Jesus' teaching that the Son of Man must suffer and Peter's objection to this, Jesus' rebuke in v. 33b is particularly significant. From this point in the gospel, the key to a right understanding of discipleship is clearly to view discipleship from Jesus' own self-sacrificing, heavenly perspective rather than a power-seeking, earthly perspective.

Unlike the Third Wave paradigm, Mark's teaching on discipleship covers more than just the calling, commissioning and empowering of the disciples to perform exorcisms, healings etc. Indeed, Mark's explicit teaching about discipleship is concentrated in the second half of his narrative and linked to three passion predictions (Mark 8.31-33; 9.30-32; 10.32-34). Here the disciples are presented in a largely negative light and their ideas about discipleship are radically turned around by Jesus.

With the above in mind, in what follows I will examine Mark's view of commissioning and discipleship. In particular I will look at: the call of disciples and their being sent out in mission; Mark's central section (8.27-10.45); the endings of Mark's gospel and what they add to (or detract from) Mark's model of Christian discipleship. The key question for us here will be, what is the paradigm for discipleship which Mark presents for his readers, and how does this compare with the Third Wave paradigm as it is informed by their appeal to evidence in Mark's gospel?

## §12. JESUS CALLS AND COMMISSIONS HIS DISCIPLES.

The idea of being called by Jesus is foundational for the paradigm of discipleship which Mark unfolds throughout his gospel. We may assume that Mark is writing for readers who are already followers of Jesus and who can identify with Jesus' disciples as they read the gospel. The paradigm which Mark presents to his readers is concerned with the consequences of discipleship and how that shapes and affects the lives of those individuals who aspire to being true followers of Jesus.<sup>369</sup> The primary informant for this paradigm is Jesus himself who in his obedience and loyalty to God's call as well as in his teaching of the disciples, acts as the basis for the pattern of discipleship presented here by Mark.<sup>370</sup>

At the beginning of Mark's gospel we have a summary statement describing Jesus' activity and message following the arrest of John the Baptist (Mark 1.14f.). Marshall argues for the paradigmatic significance of this summary statement which provides a pattern for others in the story to emulate.<sup>371</sup> This is demonstrated by Mark in the way in which the role of the disciples is presented as an extension of Jesus' role unfolding from their call to follow Jesus (1.16-20; 2.14); their being commissioned to share Jesus' ministry (cf. 1.14f); their preaching the same message as Jesus and casting out demons

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<sup>369</sup> Cf. J.R. Donahue, *The Theology and Setting of Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* (The 1983 Pere Marquette Theology Lecture; Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1983), p. 14.

<sup>370</sup> Paul Danove, *The End of Mark's Story: A Methodological Study* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), p. 213, recognises the important connection between christology and discipleship in Mark where 'a proper understanding of discipleship requires a proper understanding of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of Man who must suffer, be rejected, be put to death, and rise on the third day'. In similar vein, Robert Tannehill, 'The Disciples in Mark', p. 143, writes, "In important ways Jesus represents the positive alternative to the failure of the disciples. He not only calls the disciples to save their lives by losing them and to be servants, but he follows this way himself."

<sup>371</sup> Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative*, p. 39.

(6.12; 3.14 cf. 1.39).<sup>372</sup> Robert Meye notes how in 1.17; 3.13-19 and 6.7-13, 30 Mark develops the link between Jesus and his disciples.<sup>373</sup> Donahue also concentrates here in his study of discipleship in Mark when he examines the three narratives of call and commissioning of the disciples, pointing out that despite the negative portrayal of the disciples, especially later in the gospel, Jesus nevertheless calls, commissions and grants them the same ἐξουσία as himself in order to empower them to go out and share in his mission as his agents.<sup>374</sup>

The nature of discipleship can be detected in the pattern of the call itself which comes at the initiative of Jesus and demands total allegiance.<sup>375</sup> This makes the final desertion of Jesus by the disciples all the more shocking for the reader in that it is not only an abandonment of his person, but of all that is implicit in their divine call to share with him in the eschatological family of God. However, the shocking nature of the reality of their desertion has already been softened somewhat by Mark for his readers with Jesus' prediction in 14.27 and by the promise of restoration in 14.28. According to Marshall, Jesus' calling of his disciples is analogous to YHWH's calling of the prophets in the OT and, as such, displays for Mark's readers Jesus' unique messianic authority.<sup>376</sup> Jesus' interpretation of the demands of God with respect to family ties, property and response to the call to discipleship is made exclusively in the light of the imminent coming of the

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<sup>372</sup> Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative*, p. 40.

<sup>373</sup> See his discussion in R.P. Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1968), pp. 106-110. Paul Danove, notes the generation of a model of discipleship developed by Mark as follows: 1.16-20; 3.13-19; 6.6b-32; 8.27-30; 8.34-9.1; 9.35-41; 10.42-45; 13.5-37.

<sup>374</sup> Donahue, *Theology and Setting* 12. L. Hurtado, 'Following Jesus in the Gospel of Mark – and Beyond', in Longenecker, (ed.), *Patterns of Discipleship*, p. 18, has noted that this sharing with Jesus by the disciples is underlined philologically throughout the gospel by Mark's use of plural verbs. See also, C.H. Turner, 'Marcan Usage: Notes, Critical and Exegetical, on the Second Gospel', *JTS* 26 (1925), pp. 225-231.

<sup>375</sup> J.D. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), pp. 89f.

<sup>376</sup> Marshall, *Faith as a Theme* 137. See further, Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, pp. 67-71.

kingdom of God. The position has been summarised succinctly by R. Bultmann who writes:

Now is the last hour; now it can be only: either – or. Now the question is whether a man really desires God and His reign or the world and its goods; and the decision must be drastically made.<sup>377</sup>

In the Old Testament we have the example of Elisha's being called to follow Elijah (I Kings 19.19-21) where the prophet Elijah finds Elisha working on the family farm, ploughing with a team of oxen (I King 19.19a). Elijah asserts his claim over his prospective disciple by symbolically casting his mantle upon Elisha (I Kings 19.19b). Before going with Elijah, Elisha requests permission to say goodbye to his family, and his request is granted. Before leaving, Elisha distributes his belongings amongst his people (I Kings 19.21). In comparing this OT account with the call of the disciples we find that like Elijah, Jesus takes the initiative in calling his disciples (c.f. I Kings 19.19; Mark 1.17; 2.14), but whereas Elisha takes time to settle family matters (I Kings 19.21) there is no time permitted for those whom Jesus calls to be his disciples (Mark 1.19b).<sup>378</sup>

Amongst the rabbinic schools like those of Hillel and Shammai, it was the pupil who first approached his teacher. Here we have a fundamental difference with our Old Testament example and, as K.H. Rengstorf has pointed out, it is a fundamental mark of the disciple

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<sup>377</sup> R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* vol. I (ET London: SCM Press, 1952), p. 9.

<sup>378</sup> In the Q tradition this is presented even more strongly when Jesus refuses permission to attend to even the most pressing family matters (Matt. 8:21-22//Luke 9:59-60). For a detailed discussion of this pericope see Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, pp. 3–15.

in the Jesus tradition that the initial call should come from Jesus himself.<sup>379</sup> The prospective rabbinic disciple is not in any permanent way committed to the Rabbi of his choice and a degree of movement from Rabbi to Rabbi was common whereas with Jesus there is a permanence in the relationship, which naturally follows the total commitment he demands of his disciples.

In the case of a pupil who belongs to one of the rabbinic schools, the honour which attaches itself to such a pupil is shared by his family.<sup>380</sup> In the case of the gospel tradition, family ties are not only relegated to a subordinate position in the face of a call by Jesus, they are completely overridden – a theme we find developed in Mark in the demand for solidarity with both the person of Jesus and with other members of the Christian community. Hengel suggests that the best parallels to Jesus and his disciples are to be found in the charismatic-prophetic-eschatological contexts.<sup>381</sup> Theissen goes further and suggests that not only was Jesus a ‘charismatic wanderer’ but that the role of charismatic wanderer was prominent in the early years of the post-Easter communities.<sup>382</sup>

Discipleship for Mark has mission as its purpose and this can be seen both in the early missionary activity of Jesus and that of the disciples (Mark 1.14), and then envisaged in the post-Easter situation (cf. Mark 13.10; 14.9).<sup>383</sup> We see this particularly in the

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<sup>379</sup> K.H. Rengstorf. *TDNT* IV, p. 444.

<sup>380</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>381</sup> Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, p. 67 and see further pp.16–37, 71f. Also see *Didache* 9.

<sup>382</sup> G. Theissen, *The Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity* (ET Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), p. 190. Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (London: SCM, 1983), p. 190, also views Jesus as a charismatic healer in the same vein as Honi the Circle Drawer (first cent BCE) and the Galilean, Hanina ben Dosa (first cent CE). He writes: ‘Hanina ben Dosa also combined miracles and wisdom teaching – at the same time being uninterested in legal regulations. That makes him comparable to Jesus’.

<sup>383</sup> Cf. Kingsbury, *Conflict*, p. 91.

appointing of the Twelve (Mark 3.13-19) and their being sent out in mission by Jesus (6.6b-13). Following the call of his first disciples, Mark establishes the authority of Jesus' teaching both in the presence of the disciples and before the synagogue congregation in Capernaum with his description of Jesus exorcising the man with the unclean spirit (Mark 1.23-27). It has been noted how Mark's positioning of this pericope at the beginning of Jesus' ministry indicates both its paradigmatic and programmatic nature.<sup>384</sup> During the course of the exorcism, Mark establishes again Jesus' messianic identity in his being recognised by the unclean spirit (Mark 1.24 cf. 1.1, 11). Following the healing, Mark concludes by describing how those who witness the exorcism are 'all amazed' (v. 27a) not just by the exorcism but by its function as authoritative validation of Jesus' teaching.<sup>385</sup> When the disciples are sent out to proclaim Jesus' message to Israel, they too will receive similar validation of their message (cf. Mark 6.7, 12f.).

In Mark 3.13-15 it is sometimes argued that we are alerted to the importance of the event by Mark's locating the scene on a mountain.<sup>386</sup> In terms of establishing a pattern for the commissioning of the Twelve, we should note the important link between call and

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<sup>384</sup> Cf. Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 57.

<sup>385</sup> That the conclusion to this pericope (Mark 1.27b-28) is Mark's, is suggested by the typically Markan vocabulary and grammar, although the description of the crowd's amazement may have been a stereotype conclusion to a miracle story which Mark found in his tradition. Cf. Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 59.

<sup>386</sup> Donahue, *Theology and Setting*, p. 16 notes the importance of the scene by its location on a mountain. See also, for example, Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, p. 93 and Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1993), p. 163. For the suggestion that the mountain here may be a deliberate reflection of the OT idea that the mountain top was a place of revelation, see Guelich, *Mark*, p. 156, W.L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (NICNT Commentay Series; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1974), p. 132 and E. Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark* (ET London: SPCK, 1976), p. 81. D.E. Nineham, *Saint Mark* (The Pelican Gospel Commentaries; Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 115 goes further suggesting deliberate Sinai typology here (cf. Exod. 19.3-6). Against these various suggestions, τὸ ὄρος could simply be Mark's way of indicating the 'hill country' as opposed to the previous location on the shores of Galilee (cf. 3.17ff.), so V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to Mark* (London/Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1966<sup>2</sup>), p. 129 and C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (Cambridge: CUP, 1959), p. 126.

commission,<sup>387</sup> a pattern which is repeated in the call/commission of Paul in Acts (Acts 9.1-18). In the appointing of the Twelve, Mark's use of ἀποστέλλειν probably reflects OT usage. Martin Hengel notes that the verb *salīah* is translated ἀποστέλλειν in the LXX and suggests that in the fusion between the Jesus tradition and community formulations as they appear in the gospel tradition of the sending out of the Twelve, there is evidence of a 'conscious awareness' at this point of the continuity between Jesus' activity and that of the later activities of the community.<sup>388</sup>

### *The Role of the Twelve in Mark.*

The role of the Twelve in Mark has been seen as something of a problem in that Mark uses two principal terms for those who follow Jesus: δώδεκα (15 times) and μαθητής (46 times).<sup>389</sup> In earlier studies Bultmann, for example, considered all references to the Twelve as redactional and secondary<sup>390</sup> whilst Robert Meye took the opposite view, considering references to the Twelve as traditional.<sup>391</sup>

An important aspect of Mark's presentation of the Twelve is their pointing towards a strong communal aspect to discipleship. This may be understood in terms of the Twelve representing the twelve tribes of Israel as the eschatological people of God or that the Twelve originate in the post-Easter situation as witnesses to the resurrection and thus

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<sup>387</sup> Noted by Best, *Following Jesus*, p. 181 and a point to which we will return in our examination of Luke-Acts.

<sup>388</sup> Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, p. 83.

<sup>389</sup> Donahue, *Theology of Discipleship*, p. 5

<sup>390</sup> Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p. 345

<sup>391</sup> Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve*, p. 228.

represent for Mark the 'nucleus of a new community'.<sup>392</sup> The situation is further complicated by the fact that Mark portrays the Twelve as having both a positive and negative roll. For Mark the Twelve, are accorded special status by Jesus and they also appear to serve as representatives of Jesus' wider circle of followers which, as we have seen, also extends to Mark's readers. According to Hurtado, the failures of the 12 are also representative of the failures of the larger group of Jesus' followers and so, he concludes:

Thus no distinction between the Twelve and the larger circle of disciples as to blameworthiness need be postulated in Mark, and no attempt need be made to play off the Twelve against another group of disciples that might represent alternative factions of early Christians.<sup>393</sup>

In assessing the role of the Twelve, are we to assume that they were considered leaders of the community and, if so, how are we to understand the way in which their leadership functions for Mark? In two passages (Mark 3.13–19 and 6.7–13) it is clear that the Twelve are depicted as missionary leaders<sup>394</sup> whereas elsewhere in the gospel they are representative disciples and bearers of Jesus' teaching (6.34; 13.3ff., 13 and cf. 13.31).

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<sup>392</sup> Donahue, *Theology of Discipleship*, p. 7.

<sup>393</sup> Hurtado, 'Following Jesus', p. 17. A minority of scholars, most notably Weedon, insist that Mark was written for a polemical purpose which involved discrediting the Twelve who represented a false understanding of Jesus as a 'divine man' whose miracle-working powers are the key to understanding the nature of his messiahship. Mark saw this view as heretical and set out to discredit the Twelve who, according to this view, are the founding figures of the *theios aner* christology to which Mark is opposed. See further, Weedon, *Mark – Tradition in Conflict*. For a discussion of Mark's presentation of the disciples as 'fallible' and Jesus' correctives being strengthened by the behaviour of minor characters in the narrative see E.S. Malbon, 'Fallible Followers: Women and Men in the Gospel of Mark', *Semina* 28 (1983), pp. 29–48.

<sup>394</sup> E. Best, *Mark: The Gospel as Story* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1983), p. 49.

*Commissioning and Sending out the Twelve.*

The evidence suggests an historical mission taking place during the ministry of Jesus, probably to Israel only<sup>395</sup> and the source material here is most probably pre-Markan.<sup>396</sup>

Following the parable discourse, Mark picks up again on 3.13ff. and presents Jesus as widening his ministry (6.7ff.). In 6.6a Jesus has been rejected by his family and neighbours in Nazareth whose attitude towards Jesus is described negatively by Mark as τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν and Jesus' inability to perform acts of power is stated quite starkly by Mark, not repeated by Luke (cf. 4.16-30) and toned down considerably by Matthew (cf. Matt. 13.58). What follows is best understood in terms of following on from Jesus' rejection at Nazareth and his then moving out in mission to the surrounding villages<sup>397</sup>

Implicit within the idea of being sent is that the ones who are sent are not just given a specific task, but act as legally empowered to exercise the authority of the sender. In this case, the apostles are commissioned by Jesus to a designated extent (3.14f.) to share in his own ministry, as it is described in this part of Mark's story, to proclaim the kingdom of God and to have authority to heal and exorcise.<sup>398</sup> However, as we shall see, Mark is at pains later in his story to ensure that his readers are made aware that such charismatic activity is not what is particularly characteristic of his model of discipleship. It is also worth noting that even here Mark foreshadows what is to come later when he introduces

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<sup>395</sup> So Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, p. 74. There is also a mission tradition in Q (Luke 10.1-12//Matt. 9.37-38; 10.7-16). It is worth noting here with Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 198, that although Matt. 10.8 has δαίμονια ἐκβάλλετε it is not present in Q and L.

<sup>396</sup> M.D. Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (London: A & C Black, 1991), p. 155.

<sup>397</sup> Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, p. 303, though we should note here Gundry's comment that Mark has a preference for starting new pericopes with 'topographical' movement'. See Gundry, *Mark* p. 306.

<sup>398</sup> Cf. D.R.A. Hare, *Mark* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), p. 48.

a negative note to his description of Judas as 'Ιούδαν Ἰσκαριώθ, ὃς καὶ παρέδωκεν αὐτόν (Mark 3.19).

In Mark's narrative, the reader is already aware that Jesus' own authority has been amply demonstrated in both his teaching and exorcisms (Mark 1.21-32; 2.1-12; 3.1-12). Now, having given the apostles authority – Jesus' own authority to cast out demons – the validity and source of that authority is immediately called into question not only by the religious authorities from Jerusalem, but even by Jesus' own family (3.21-22).<sup>399</sup>

Mark's introduction to the Beelzebub controversy is quite shocking for the reader. Jesus returns home only to be thought mad by his family who seek to restrain him (3.21 cf.

John 10.19–21). It has been argued that Mark's use of ἐξέστη here refers not to Jesus but to the crowd<sup>400</sup> but this is unnecessarily forced and does not take account of Mark's careless use of αὐτοῦ.<sup>401</sup> Mark's purpose here is clearly to emphasise that the source of Jesus' authority over demons is a heavenly one and is firmly connected with his proclamation of the kingdom of God (v. 29), against those who accused him of being in league with Satan.<sup>402</sup> Jesus' community of disciples who are his (eschatological) family (cf. 10.28-30 and 3.31-35), points beyond itself for the reader to the (Mark's) post-Easter community.

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<sup>399</sup> We should note here that although the phrase used to translate 'family' here (οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ) can also mean adherents most commentators understand this as a reference by Mark to Jesus' family. See, for example, C. S. Mann, *Mark* (The Anchor Bible vol. 27; New York: Doubleday, 1986), p. 252.

<sup>400</sup> See Henry Wansborough, 'Mark 3:21 – Was Jesus out of his mind?' *NTS* 18 (1972), pp. 233-235 and D. Wenham, 'The Meaning of Mark 3:21' *NTS* 21 (1975), pp. 295-300.

<sup>401</sup> So Mann, *Mark*, p. 252. R.H. Gundry, *Mark*, p. 168, points out that Mark can hardly be referring to the crowd because in verse 34 they are designated by Jesus as his true family.

<sup>402</sup> Here it may be that we have evidence of a lingering accusation against Jesus and the source of his charismatic powers. Cf. Mann, *Mark*, p. 252;

The purpose of commissioning of the Twelve<sup>403</sup> is set out by Mark (vv. 14b-15) as (i) to be with him (v. 14b); (ii) to be sent out to proclaim the message (v. 14c); (iii) to have authority to cast out demons (v. 15). For Mark, the Twelve are both disciples and apostles, intimates of Jesus and members of his wider (eschatological) family. As disciples, they are naturally described as being with Jesus in order to learn from him before being sent out as his representatives in mission.<sup>404</sup> In verse 14c, the Twelve are sent out to proclaim (κηρύσσειν) what was presumably the same message that Jesus proclaimed of the imminent kingdom of God, and to have authority over demons. Mark makes it clear that the Twelve also share in the authority which lies behind Jesus' own mission. Their mission is an extension of Jesus' own ministry (cf. 6.1 with 1.14-15; 6.30 with 1.21-22 and 6.6; 6.13 with 1.34; 3.10 and 6.13 with 1.34, 39).<sup>405</sup> The only parallel lacking between Jesus and the Twelve is in the use of oil to anoint the sick and this probably reflects the practice of the post-Easter community (cf. Jas 5.14). In other words, Mark makes it clear that the ones being sent out in mission truly represent the sender and this, in turn, provides a sense of continuity between Jesus' activities and those of the community, particularly with reference to mission.<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>403</sup> Here I am concerned with the role of the Twelve as it relates to Mark's model of discipleship rather than their eschatological role as it relates to the restoration/renewal of Israel. For a discussion of the issues raised see, for example, E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM, 1985), esp. pp. 95–116, and more recently, N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SPCK, 1996), p. 300 who notes: 'The very existence of the twelve speaks, of course, of the reconstitution of Israel; Israel had not had twelve visible tribes since the Assyrian invasion in 724 BC, and for Jesus to give twelve followers a place of prominence, let alone to make comments about them sitting on thrones judging the twelve tribes, indicates pretty clearly that he was thinking in terms of the eschatological restoration of Israel.'

<sup>404</sup> Cf. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, p. 128.

<sup>405</sup> Noted by Kingsbury, *Conflict*, p. 95.

<sup>406</sup> Cf. Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, p. 83.

*The Mission of the Twelve.*

In 6.7 Jesus commissions the Twelve and imparts to them a share in his own kingdom ἐξουσία. Unlike Matthew (28.19), this is not explicitly extended to the post-Easter situation,<sup>407</sup> although in 14.9 we have Jesus referring to the gospel being proclaimed in the whole world. Jesus' authoritative summoning of the Twelve προσκαλεῖται is reflective of his earlier calling of the disciples and reflects Mark's depiction of his, in Hengel's term, charismatic authority. More importantly here, it also serves to emphasise for the reader the idea that being summoned and sent out in mission by Jesus is paradigmatically associated with Jesus' own authority to preach and cast out demons, and that the missionary task has a special role in the community over and above the more general call to discipleship.

This is also further emphasised by the sending out of the Twelve in pairs (δύο δύο). The sending out of the missionaries in pairs reflects post-Easter missionary activity and serves to bear out the paradigmatic nature of this tradition for later missionary activity in the church (cf. I Cor. 9.5-6; Acts 8.14; 13.1f.; 15.22, 39f.)<sup>408</sup> but is also reflective of Jewish ideas about the need for more than one witness for testimony to be valid (cf. Deut. 17.6; 19.15).<sup>409</sup> This is further borne out by the fact that the instructions which follow the commissioning of the Twelve (vv. 8–11) only make sense in terms of itinerant missionary work and were probably practised by Mark's own community. This militates against a paradigmatic intention by Mark in terms of what is characteristic for discipleship *per se* although, as I have indicated, is very possibly meant to serve as a model for later itinerant

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<sup>407</sup> See my discussion of the endings to Mark's gospel in §14 and §15 below.

<sup>408</sup> So Donahue, *Theology of Discipleship*, pp. 18f.

<sup>409</sup> See, for example, Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 198, Taylor, *Mark*, p. 303 and Mann, *Mark*, p. 292.

missionary activity where the emphasis appears to be on rules governing the practice of hospitality rather than on casting out demons (cf. Didache 9).<sup>410</sup>

At the end of the mission charge Mark inserts a summary (vv. 12-13) which tells the reader that the Twelve preached a message of repentance and that the success of their mission is clearly indicated by the many exorcisms and healings they performed. It is this very success described particularly with the words, καὶ δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλλον (v. 13a) which makes their lack of ability to perform an exorcism in Mark 9.14-29 all the more interesting in terms of Mark's model of discipleship. If, as the Third Wave argue, power to perform exorcisms is integral to the NT paradigm for discipleship rather than, as I have argued here, the evidence in Mark examined so far indicates that exorcisms performed by the disciples belong more naturally with missionary activity, why do the disciples who have just been described as extremely successful missionary-exorcists have difficulty with a single exorcism? What is Mark saying to his readers in 9.14-29 and what does it say about the paradigm for discipleship which his gospel promotes?

### *Conclusions.*

How, then, are we to understand the paradigm for discipleship which Mark presents for his readers in the mission of the Twelve? For example, are there signs here that Mark intends the mission of the Twelve to serve as a paradigm for the sending out of missionaries by his own community? It is worth noting that in 6.30a Mark describes the successful missionaries as ἀπόστολοι which is used here by Mark not to describe a

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<sup>410</sup> In M. Staniforth, trans., *Early Christian Writings: The Apostolic Fathers* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968).

church office but in the context of mission.<sup>411</sup> Best asks what place 6.30 holds for Mark and concludes that, unlike the central section (Mark 8.27–10.45) with its concentration of teaching about discipleship aimed at his readers/every Christian, this pericope acts as an example for missionaries sent out by the church. This being the case, we might conclude that the paradigm which Mark presents here for his readers is not aimed at Christians *per se* but applies to Christians engaged in mission. For Mark, signs and wonders are envisaged as being primarily given to authenticate the mission of the church and its message rather than being an integral, everyday part of his paradigm for discipleship. If this is the case, then it calls into serious question the Third Wave paradigm, at least from a Markan standpoint.

The very success of the mission of the Twelve and their participation in the missionary deeds/ἐξουσία of Jesus serves to make the Twelve's subsequent lack of understanding and hardness of heart all the more ironic,<sup>412</sup> and is indicative of the point Mark then emphasises throughout the rest of his gospel, namely that success in proclaiming the kingdom of God and acts of power do not necessarily either lead to a proper understanding or correct practice of true discipleship.

In demonstrating that the disciples are chosen by Jesus and are sent out in mission as his empowered representatives, Mark has set the stage for his central section. In contrast to the more spectacular activities of healing and exorcism which marked the successful mission of the Twelve, he now sets forth what he clearly considers to be the more

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<sup>411</sup> E. Best, *Following Jesus*, pp. 193.

<sup>412</sup> Cf. Mark 6.52; 7.18; 8.14-21 8.17-18.

important aspects of his paradigm for discipleship, in contrast to the negative example of the Twelve.

### §13. MARK'S CENTRAL SECTION AND TEACHING ON DISCIPLESHIP.

The majority of scholars recognise that Mark's critical presentation of the disciples, and especially the Twelve, is not meant to merely attack them but serves as a device to enable Mark to present his understanding of the true nature of Christian discipleship as articulated and modelled by Jesus. Mark's portrayal of the disciples is somewhat negative throughout, although the first major section of Mark's gospel (1.1–8.26) also presents some of the more positive aspects of the evangelist's portrayal of the disciples who are called and commissioned by Jesus to witness and participate in his saving power.<sup>413</sup>

According to Best, in using the disciples' mistakes as a device to allow Jesus to issue corrective teaching, Mark is following a literary precedent already well established by stories of philosophers in the ancient world who also teach through their followers' failure to understand. Also, it should be noted that a teacher was held to be responsible for the actions of his followers. Therefore, if Mark in emphasising the failure of Jesus' disciples left his readers with the impression that the disciples were failures, then this

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<sup>413</sup> Donahue, *Theology of Discipleship*, p. 22.

would also reflect on Jesus himself who would also be included in that failure.<sup>414</sup> It could be argued that this is clearly not the case with Mark where the disciples' failure is immediately overridden by the heavenly figure's message of restoration in 16.7 where the women are told to go and tell Peter and the other disciples that Jesus is risen and will meet them in Galilee. Nevertheless, the narrative ends in 16.8 not with the delivery of the message of restoration by the women but enigmatically with their silence.

In the second half of the narrative, Mark portrays the disciples in an increasingly negative light ending finally in Jesus' betrayal by one of the Twelve and his being abandoned by the rest of the disciples. Typically, this is summed up by Graham Stanton who writes:

The careful reader of Mark can hardly fail to notice that the weakness, failures, and even the stupidity of the disciples seem to be underlined, even though Jesus frequently takes pains to clarify and expound his teaching for them.<sup>415</sup>

So far, the summary passages in Mark 1.14–8.26 have presented Jesus as preacher, teacher, healer and exorcist, and the disciples, as those called to be with him (1.16–20; 3.13–14), regard Jesus in these terms (1.21–22, 32–34, 38–39). Prior to 8.27 Mark has depicted the disciples as engaging in the same activities of preaching (3.15; 6.12), teaching (6.30), healing (6.13) and exorcism (3.15; 6.7).<sup>416</sup> After their previous success as missionaries (cf. 6.13) why did Mark present the disciples in such a negative light, particularly in his central section, and what does this say to the contemporary church in

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<sup>414</sup> So Best, *Mark: Gospel as Story*, p. 47. See §14 below for a discussion of Mark 16.1–8.

<sup>415</sup> G.N. Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 46.

<sup>416</sup> J.D. Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), p. 93.

terms of Mark's presentation of the disciples as a post-Easter paradigm for the church?

Donahue argues that the key to understanding the disciples in Mark is found in the dynamic tension which exists between the text and the reader.<sup>417</sup> Here, in narrative terms, we have the clue to Mark's treatment of the disciples in his central section where Jesus' correctives on the true nature of discipleship overrule the misunderstandings of the disciples and are aimed not just at the disciples themselves, but at Mark's own community and, by extension, serve to inform the wider church's understanding of what it means to be a true follower of Jesus.

*Teaching on authentic discipleship.*

The central section of Mark, which extends from 8.27 to 10.45,<sup>418</sup> depicts Jesus journeying to Jerusalem (cf. 8.27; 9.33; 10.17, 32, 52) and provides the setting for a right understanding of Jesus' forthcoming passion and, in light of this, teaching about what it means to follow Jesus.<sup>419</sup> In exercising control over the ordering of his material, Mark was able to shape the gospel story in ways which give positional emphasis to subjects especially important to him. This applies particularly to the teaching on discipleship which is grouped around three passion predictions<sup>420</sup> made by Jesus in Mark's central section and which are crucial to what Mark wants to say to his community.<sup>421</sup>

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<sup>417</sup> In Donahue, *Theology of Discipleship*, p. 29.

<sup>418</sup> Cf. R.T. France, *Divine Government: God's Kingship in the Gospel of Mark* (London: SPCK, 1990), p. 49.

<sup>419</sup> R.T. France, *Divine Government: God's Kingship in the Gospel of Mark* (London: SPCK, 1990), p. 49.

<sup>420</sup> Cf. Mark 8.31–33 with 8.34–38; 9.31–32 with 9.33–37; 10.35–40 with 10.41–45.

<sup>421</sup> Cf. Best, *Mark: Gospel as Story*, p. 54, also Tannehill, 'The Disciples in Mark', p. 148.

The journey can be divided into three stages, each marked by a passion prediction with the repeated pattern of Jesus predicting his forthcoming death and resurrection and the disciples failing to accept any notion of suffering on the part of Jesus or to understand his subsequent corrective teaching on discipleship. This, in turn, is particularly significant for Mark's readers, for whom Jesus is presented as the primary paradigm for discipleship. Therefore, if Jesus is required to suffer in furtherance of the kingdom of God, then suffering will also be required of his followers (8.31; 9.31; 10.33). As Hurtado notes succinctly,

Just as Mark emphasises that a proper understanding of Jesus requires doing justice to his crucifixion as the culminating revelation of his mission and significance, so Mark insists that discipleship must be conformed to the pattern of Jesus' own ministry of obedience and sacrifice.<sup>422</sup>

Mark underlines the importance of this section for his readers' understanding of the true nature of discipleship at key points in the narrative. Throughout the narrative, we encounter the theme of following Jesus 'on the way'.<sup>423</sup> Two healings of blind persons whose eyes are opened by Jesus provide an overall narrative framework (8.22–26; 10.46–52), with the second of these healings ending with Bartimaeus following Jesus 'on

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<sup>422</sup> Hurtado, 'The Gospel of Mark', in Burgess and McGee (eds.), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, p. 578.

<sup>423</sup> Best, *Disciples and Discipleship: Studies in the Gospel According to Mark* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), p. 6. R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing; Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 2002), p. 339 points to the recurrent use of ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ and related language in 8.27; 9.33–34; 10.17, 32, 52.

the way' (10.52).<sup>424</sup> During the dramatic transfiguration scene the heavenly voice orders those accompanying Jesus to 'listen to him'.<sup>425</sup>

Although the teaching on discipleship and suffering is aimed at the disciples, in 8.34 Jesus calls the crowd and addresses them along with the disciples indicating that, for Mark, Jesus' subsequent foundational teaching for a right understanding of discipleship is to have a more universal application.<sup>426</sup> In this regard, Boring suggests that the crowd represents the church,<sup>427</sup> whereas Gundry argues that Mark intends the crowd to represent non-Christians who are 'summoned to Christian discipleship'.<sup>428</sup> More cautiously, Schweizer suggests that the inclusion of the crowd indicates that the teaching is conditional upon 'everyone' who would follow Jesus.<sup>429</sup>

In the three passion announcements (8.31; 9.31; 10.33f.) Jesus' teaching points firmly to his own forthcoming suffering and sacrificial service, thus providing the model upon which Jesus' followers must be prepared to base their discipleship (esp. 8.34–35; 10.45).<sup>430</sup> Whilst the three passion predictions with their appended teaching on discipleship vary in detail, each emphasises that for the Markan Jesus authentic

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<sup>424</sup> Marshall, 'Faith as a Theme', p. 123. A. Stock, *Call to Discipleship: A Literary Study of Mark's Gospel* (Good News Bible Studies, 1; Delaware: Michael Glazier; Dublin: Veritas Publications, 1982), p. 148 makes the point that here the restoration of sight by Jesus should be understood in terms of 'salvation'.

<sup>425</sup> Tannehill, 'The Disciples in Mark', p. 149.

<sup>426</sup> Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, p. 25. France, *Mark*, p. 339 draws attention to Mark 4.10 where Jesus also addresses the wider circle of those who are with him when making an important revelation, on this occasion about the nature of parables.

<sup>427</sup> M.E. Boring, *Sayings of the Risen Jesus: Christian Prophecy in the Synoptic Tradition* (SNTS Monograph Series, 46; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 200.

<sup>428</sup> Gundry, *Mark*, p. 452. For a similar view see Anderson, *Mark*, p. 217.

<sup>429</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 175.

<sup>430</sup> Tannehill, 'The Disciples in Mark', p. 148; Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, p. 6; France, *Mark*, p. 339.

discipleship cannot be understood apart from his passion and the fact that suffering is God's way for them.

Following Peter's messianic confession at Caesarea Philippi (8.27–30; 31–33; 34–35), which is the decisive turning point in Mark's gospel,<sup>431</sup> Jesus makes the first passion prediction where he tells of his forthcoming suffering, crucifixion and resurrection (8.31) and which is completely misunderstood by Peter, despite his recent insight into Jesus' messianic status. Jesus' strong rebuke of Peter in 8.33 and the accusation by Jesus that his earthly perspective is quite inappropriate for understanding Jesus' words opens the way in the narrative for the first block of teaching on discipleship (8.34f.). The key to understanding the different perspectives being presented here by Mark can be seen in the final phrase of Jesus' rebuke to Peter at Caesarea Philippi when he gives his reason for the sharpness of the rebuke as, ὅτι οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων (Mark 8. 33b). It is through these conflicting heavenly/earthly perspectives that the reader is to understand and identify with Jesus' correctives on the true nature of discipleship.

In Mark 8.34 we have the first of the three pericopes where Mark emphasises the idea that following Jesus is inextricably tied to suffering and self-denial, characterised by cross-bearing and losing one's life in order to gain it (Mark 8.34bf.).<sup>432</sup> For the disciples this is a far cry from the triumphal proclamation and exorcisms which Mark describes in 6.13. That what follows is intended by Mark to apply also to his readers can be seen

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<sup>431</sup> J.D. Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), p. 133.

<sup>432</sup> Best, *Mark: Gospel as Story*, p. 28.

from the open-ended warning in 8.38, thus widening further the scope of those being addressed to more than just the disciples or the crowd whom Jesus addresses in the narrative.<sup>433</sup> Stock suggests that Mark has deliberately delayed teaching about discipleship linked to suffering until this point so that in addition to the teaching itself, linked with the three passion predictions, Jesus may be seen to be pointing the way as he journeys towards Jerusalem.<sup>434</sup> Jesus' teaching 'on the way' about self-denial and taking up one's cross clarifies how his death and resurrection is to be understood (8.31),<sup>435</sup> and the application of this understanding is fundamental to Mark's view of discipleship.<sup>436</sup> In other words, Mark makes it abundantly clear to his readers that authentic discipleship inevitably and inexorably involves denial of self and taking up one's cross (8.34f.).<sup>437</sup>

According to Cranfield, Mark's use of the aorist imperative of ἀπαρνέομαι indicates that a once and for all decision to sever the former relationship with self-interest is being required here by Jesus.<sup>438</sup> The finality of the abandonment of is then graphically illustrated in the invitation to take up one's cross (8.34b),<sup>439</sup> and here France is correct to insist that we should not attempt to 'domesticate' the saying.<sup>440</sup> In 8.35f. we have a

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<sup>433</sup> Hurtado, 'Following Jesus', p. 11.

<sup>434</sup> Stock, *Call to Discipleship*, pp. 140f., 146.

<sup>435</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 175; Hagner, *Mark 8:27–16.20*, p. 24.

<sup>436</sup> France, *Mark*, p. 339 draws attention to ὀπίσω μου used alongside ἀκολουθέω in 8.34 and elsewhere by Mark (1.18; 2.14) and comments that here we have a 'basic condition' of discipleship. For a detailed discussion see Best, *Following*, pp. 33f. and 36–39.

<sup>437</sup> Cf. H.C. Waetjen, *A Reordering of Power: A Socio-Political Reading of Mark's Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), p. 146.

<sup>438</sup> Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 281f. Cf. France, *Mark*, p. 340.

<sup>439</sup> Best, *Mark: Gospel as Story*, p. 87. Cf. Gundry, *Mark*, p. 452 who argues that the placement of this saying between the first passion prediction and the transfiguration is so that Mark's audience would not be scandalised by the cross.

<sup>440</sup> France, *Mark*, p. 340, and see Best, *Following*, pp. 38f. for different views on the meaning here. For a discussion of the figurative use of the idea of cross-bearing, see J. Schneider, *TDNT VII*, pp. 577–579. For a detailed study of crucifixion in the Roman world see M. Hengel, 'Crucifixion' [republished] in *The Cross of the Son of God* (ET London: SCM Press, 1986), esp. pp. 114–155.

‘reversal of values’ where the result, paradoxically, is that the self-abandonment demanded of those who would follow Jesus results their finding their (eternal) life.<sup>441</sup>

Following on from Peter’s messianic confession at Caesarea Philippi, the reader is confronted with an even more powerful revelation of Jesus’ true identity in the transfiguration (Mark 9.2-8). After this there can be little doubt as to who Jesus really is for he has already been identified for the reader’s benefit in 1.1 as ‘Son of God’ and again at his baptism as ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός (1.11), words which are repeated here by the heavenly voice adding, significantly for Mark’s readers, ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ, indicating that from this point in the narrative the reader (as they identify with Jesus’ disciples) is to pay special attention to the words of Jesus.

After the transfiguration scene (9.2–8), where Moses and Elijah appear together with Jesus (9.4f.), we have a block of linked material which discusses the eschatological significance of the appearance of Elijah (9.9–13) and which links the discussion to Jesus’ forthcoming passion (9.9, 12b). In 9.14–29 there is an extended narrative describing the disciples’ failure to exorcise a boy with a spirit which I discuss further below. The second passion prediction occurs in vv. 30–32 and is followed by further teaching about discipleship.

Taking the initiative,<sup>442</sup> Jesus asks the disciples what they were discussing amongst themselves, but they refuse to answer (9.33f.). For Mark’s readers, the disciples’ attitude

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<sup>441</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 177.

<sup>442</sup> Cf. Mark 8.1, 27 where Jesus also takes the initiative.

is still far from reproducing the humility previously demanded by Jesus of his followers in 8.34f. Their reluctance to answer appears to reflect the fear that they felt in the face of Jesus' second passion prediction (9.32) and their lack of understanding as well as perhaps hinting that the disciples are undergoing a dawning realisation that Jesus' demand for authentic discipleship necessitates a reversal of the earthly values to which they are still clinging—a conflict that speaks to the human condition.

Jesus, who has (presumably) discerned that the disciples were discussing amongst themselves the issue of status, responds in 9.35a by sitting down, calling the Twelve<sup>443</sup> and teaching them further about the contrary values of the kingdom.<sup>444</sup> In 9.35b Jesus responds to the issue of status in a direct and unequivocal way where earthly values are again turned upside down. The contrast is between first and last and this contrast is further emphasised by being ἔσχατος πάντων and πάντων διάκονος. Gundry comments that πάντων in both cases 'universalises' the contrast.<sup>445</sup> If 'first' and 'last/servant' are to be associated with rank and influence in society,<sup>446</sup> then the contrast with διάκονος as a person without any rank, particularly when taken with πάντων, is stark indeed.

In my discussion of the role of the Twelve in §12 above, I noted that any pre-eminence assigned to the Twelve as authority figures by Mark's narrative should be understood

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<sup>443</sup> In contrast to the disciples and crowd addressed in 8.34ff.

<sup>444</sup> See also, for example, Mark 4.1; Luke 4.20; 5.3; Matt. 5.1; 12.41, 43; cf. 23.2. For the association of sitting and teaching see discussions in, for example, Gundry, *Mark*, p. 190f., 508, 517; Hagner, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, p. 61; Taylor, *St. Mark*, p. 404.

<sup>445</sup> Gundry, *Mark*, p. 509.

<sup>446</sup> So Hagner, *Mark 8:27–16.20*, p. 61 who suggests that πρῶτος here should be understood in term of rulers, aristocrats, chief priests.

primarily in terms of their being sent out in mission and accompanying Jesus.<sup>447</sup> It is this very question of pre-eminence within the community of Jesus' followers that is dealt with explicitly by Mark in 10.32ff. We have seen that seeking pre-eminence and rank at the earthly level is not considered by Mark to be a characteristic of the authentic discipleship which is to be modelled on the example of Jesus, as can be seen most explicitly in the third passion prediction (10.32–34) and the teaching on discipleship that follows (10.35–41, 42–45).

Attached to Jesus' final passion prediction in Mark's central section (10.32–34) is the story of the request for preferred status from James and John (10.35–45) which reflects the concerns raised previously in Mark 9.33. In 10.32–34 James and John engage with Jesus in an extended discussion asking for preferred status when Jesus comes 'in his glory'.<sup>448</sup> According to Taylor, the phrase ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου refers to the parousia,<sup>449</sup> and Cranfield cautions that ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου is to be distinguished from the kingdom of God, commenting that at this point the disciples are 'apparently thinking of the Messiah's rule' (cf. Acts 1.6).<sup>450</sup> In light of the disciples' continued failure to grasp what Jesus is talking about when he refers to his forthcoming passion<sup>451</sup> or to understand his teaching on the nature of true discipleship, the reference here to the parousia seems odd. However, the important point here is that the two brothers' request for pre-eminence in the coming messianic kingdom clearly reflects the nature of their expectation of the messianic 'glory' that is to come, rather than the messianic suffering just described for the third time by

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<sup>447</sup> See my discussion of the role of the Twelve above.

<sup>448</sup> Cf. Matt. 20.20 where it is the mother of James and John who approaches Jesus with the request.

<sup>449</sup> Taylor, *Mark*, p. 440 and see also Mann, *Mark*, p. 412.

<sup>450</sup> Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 337.

<sup>451</sup> This despite 8.31; 9.12, 31; 10.33-34; cf. especially 9.32.

Jesus (10.32f.). The presumption of the sons of Zebedee angers the other disciples (10.41) and this provides Jesus with a further opportunity to address the question of authentic discipleship, anchoring his teaching firmly in the model that he himself provides (10.45).

Jesus' teaching in 10.42–44 is most explicit. Appealing to Jewish antipathy towards Gentiles, and to their common knowledge of society indicated in the words οἶδατε,<sup>452</sup> Jesus points out that their lust for status and pre-eminence is more characteristic of the pretentious behaviour associated with their views of leadership and the behaviour of their 'great men', which recalls the disciples' earlier discussion amongst themselves in 9.33f. In other words, the model to follow is not that found amongst the rulers of the Gentiles, which would be very evident to the apostles and members of Mark's community as they moved out in mission and established Christian communities amongst Gentiles.<sup>453</sup> Now the injunction of 9.35, where the first must be last and servant of all, is applied again with ἔσχατος (9.35) being explicitly defined as δοῦλος in 10.44 which in turn is ultimately defined in 10.45.<sup>454</sup> In 10.43 μέγας has replaced the πρῶτος of 9.35 but the contrast remains rooted in the alternative characteristic of service (10.43) which is then further amplified by Jesus in 10.44. Initially, Jesus' contrast is between greatness and taking on the role of a servant (10.43). In 10.44, Jesus' words recall his use of πάντων in 9.35 but draw an even more shocking contrast in that for those who seek a pre-eminent position

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<sup>452</sup> Gundry, *Mark*, p. 579.

<sup>453</sup> Gundry, *Mark*, p. 479 is correct to note how the 'great ones' in 10.42 reflects the discussion about greatness reported in 9.34 and looks forward to 10.43. See also W. Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark: A New Place and A New Time* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), pp. 45–66 who argues that in Mark's gospel the Gentile mission is anticipated through Jesus' activity in Gentile territory.

<sup>454</sup> Gundry, *Mark*, p. 580.

within the community of Jesus' followers, the role of διάκονος must be downgraded further to that of πάντων δούλος (10.44), a person without any claim to rights over even their own life.<sup>455</sup>

Finally, the λύτρον saying in 10.45 brings the characteristics of humble service outlined in vv. 42–44 into relationship with the example of Jesus himself, thus providing a fitting conclusion to this long section which began in 8.27 and which teaches the alternative values and attitudes that are to characterise authentic discipleship in the church. Although Jesus acts as the exemplar of true discipleship *par excellence* for Mark, there is an important distinction made here which would not be lost on Mark's readers in that only Jesus is called upon to give his life as λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν (10.45b).<sup>456</sup> Indeed, the culmination of Jesus' mission is to give his life for others.<sup>457</sup> As Gundry succinctly comments:

Thus the Marcan apologetics of miraculous ability, of didactic authority, and of predictive power metamorphose into an apologetic of beneficial service. The Cross will not bring shame to its victim but salvation to his followers.<sup>458</sup>

To summarise, the disciples, who have thus far shared in Jesus' ministry, must now abandon their earthly values and adopt the heavenly values, characterised by suffering and self-denial, which Jesus advocates for all who would follow him. And yet, despite

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<sup>455</sup> Cf. Best, *Following Jesus*, p. 126 and Gundry, *Mark*, p. 581 who notes the contrast between the personal character of service associated with διάκονος and the obligatory character of service associated with δούλος.

<sup>456</sup> Best, *Following Jesus*, p. 127. Mann, *Mark*, p. 410 understands this as 'ransom for the community' thus reflecting Isa. 53.10–12 LXX.

<sup>457</sup> P. Achtemeier, *Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), p. 98.

<sup>458</sup> Gundry, *Mark*, p. 581.

Jesus' teaching on what is required for authentic discipleship, in 14.32ff., at the crucial point of Jesus' need for their support, his closest disciples fall asleep whilst he agonises in the garden, and matters worsen when one of the Twelve betrays him and the rest desert him.

*Mark 9.14–29; 38f.*

Returning to Mark 9, of particular interest here due to both their subject matter and positioning by Mark are two important pericopes which follow Jesus' first and second passion predictions (Mark 9.14–29 and 9.38–41). Both pericopes involve Jesus' disciples and are concerned with exorcism. As if to further emphasise the relative unimportance of signs and wonders for true discipleship, in the first incident Jesus and his companions are confronted with when they descend the mountain of transfiguration is a failure on the part of the other disciples to cast out a dumb spirit from a boy. In the past, some commentators have suggested that the tradition which Mark uses here in 9.14–29 originally comprised two separate stories<sup>459</sup> or possibly two versions of the same story.<sup>460</sup> Others, such as Cranfield, have not thought it necessary to presuppose more than one form of the tradition used by Mark.<sup>461</sup>

For our present purposes I am concerned only with the pericope as it appears in Mark's narrative at this point. Whatever may have been the pre-Markan case, both pericopes (9.14–29 and 9.38–41) now serve to counterbalance the exorcistic successes described in

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<sup>459</sup> E.g. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p. 211.

<sup>460</sup> E.g. Taylor, *According to St. Mark*, p. 396 and Schweizer, *Good News According to St. Mark*, p.187.

<sup>461</sup> Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 299.

6.13. For Mark's readers, the failure of the disciples to cast out the dumb spirit in the face of unbelief (9.19) was foreshadowed earlier by Jesus' experience in Nazareth (6.5f.). The disciples' failure to cast out the spirit from the boy appears in stark contrast to the success they enjoyed when they were sent out in mission by Jesus.<sup>462</sup> This raises for us the possibility that Mark is intending here to say something of conclusive importance about the relationship between discipleship and exorcism/signs and wonders.

Following my discussion of the commissioning and sending out of the disciples in mission (Mark 3.13-15; 6.6-13), I concluded that the paradigm for discipleship which Mark presents for his readers is one which depicts the Twelve as οἱ ἀπόστολοι sent out by Jesus to preach the message of the kingdom and whose success in doing so is described particularly with the words, καὶ δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλλον (Mark 6.13a). This makes their inability to perform a single exorcism here all the more interesting in terms of Mark's model of discipleship. Do these passages (Mark 9.14-29; 38-41) bear out the Third Wave argument that power to perform exorcisms is integral to the NT paradigm for discipleship? Alternatively, is Mark using these two incidents to ensure that such spectacular 'power encounters' are to be viewed as having their place in the church's ministry (i.e. usually exercised in the context of mission) but as not being of first importance in terms of his paradigm for true discipleship?

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<sup>462</sup> So, Gundry, *Mark*, p. 487. Also, Nineham, *Mark*, p. 245. Best, *Following Jesus*, p. 69 thinks that Mark is drawing attention to the disciples' failure in order to pick up from 3.15 and 6.7 and to say more about how exorcisms are to be performed.

*The Boy with the Spirit (Mark 9.14–29).*

The pericope begins with Jesus, Peter, James and John returning from the mountain of transfiguration and re-joining the other nine disciples. On seeing Jesus, the crowd are described as being awestruck. It has been suggested that the reason for this was because Mark was seeking to link Jesus' transfiguration with the OT tradition of Moses' face glowing after he returned from receiving the law on Mount Sinai (Exod. 32-33).<sup>463</sup> It is argued that the use of ἐξεθαμβήθησαν (v. 15) to describe the crowd's reaction on seeing Jesus approach may be accounted for by the whiteness of Jesus' garments and so provide the reader with an allusion to the Moses tradition. To posit such a link seems to me both speculative and unnecessary as Mark's narrative has clearly moved on to another subject – that of further instruction of the disciples.<sup>464</sup> Indeed, it seems more likely here that the crowd's astonishment is due more to Jesus' unexpected, opportune arrival on the scene.<sup>465</sup>

When Jesus arrives, the nine are surrounded by a large crowd arguing with some scribes. Although Jesus asks what the argument is about, the substance of the argument is never described.<sup>466</sup> Instead, the story is re-directed by the father's interjection when he explains that he had brought his son to Jesus in order that the dumb spirit which possessed the boy might be exorcised.<sup>467</sup> In the absence of Jesus himself, the father's request of the disciples is perfectly reasonable. The disciples would be regarded as Jesus'

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<sup>463</sup> Best, *Following Jesus*, p. 68.

<sup>464</sup> So Best, *Following Jesus*, p. 68.

<sup>465</sup> So, Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 300.

<sup>466</sup> This may be a further indication that Mark is fusing more than one story from his tradition.

<sup>467</sup> Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 301 comments that πρὸς σέ indicates the father's original intention to bring his son to Jesus.

representatives and, therefore, possessors of Jesus' power to exorcise and heal (cf. Mark 6.13).<sup>468</sup> Jesus' charge of faithlessness in v. 19 is addressed to all and, as I indicated earlier, we have here a similar situation of unbelief to the one which had faced Jesus in Nazareth (cf. Mark 6.3). Jesus' response on that occasion was to move on because time was short (Mark 6.6), whereas here the instruction to pray probably reflects the post-Easter situation facing Mark's own community.<sup>469</sup>

The demon's powerful grip on the boy is described graphically in the story and this serves to emphasise for the reader Mark's main point that all things are possible for faith.<sup>470</sup> Faith is the necessary characteristic for those about to be healed and faith expressed in prayer a necessary characteristic of Jesus' followers. This is especially so when they are engaged in the difficult ministry of exorcism.<sup>471</sup> In v. 23 the faith under discussion is 'faith that prays'<sup>472</sup> and Mark makes it clear for his readers that discipleship, healing and exorcism in the post-Easter situation is to find its power-base in prayer. In other words, any share in Jesus' ἐξουσία which is enjoyed by his disciples is not theirs to control as they will but only becomes available to them from God through prayer.<sup>473</sup>

Therefore, for Mark it is fair to say that so far as Jesus is concerned, signs and wonders

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<sup>468</sup> Noted by Lane, *Mark*, p. 332.

<sup>469</sup> Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 301 thinks that the charge is directed primarily at the disciples whose lack of faith had been highlighted by their failure. Alternatively, it could be argued that Mark's redactional activity at 9.14 and 28f. which focuses the reader's attention on the disciples, may also indicate that originally the accusation of faithlessness now directed at the disciples/crowd was originally directed at the father who was seeking healing for his son (cf. Mark 2.5; 5.36 for friends of the sick person and 5.34 and 10.52 for the sick person themselves). So Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 94.

<sup>470</sup> A theme which Mark is to develop further (cf. Mark 11.20-25). For a discussion of 'faith' in Mark, see M.A. Beavis, 'Mark's Teaching on Faith', *Biblical Theology Bulletin* vol. xvi (1986), pp. 139-142.

<sup>471</sup> Best, *Following Jesus*, p. 69 concludes here that 'the father's faith in v. 25 is linked so lightly to the need for the healing of his child that its understanding as "saving faith" stands out'.

<sup>472</sup> Lane, *Mark*, p. 335 and see discussion in Beavis, 'Mark's Teaching on Faith', pp. 139-141.

<sup>473</sup> Cf. Mann, *Mark*, p. 371 and Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 189. Nineham's, suggestion (*Mark*, p. 245) that the conclusion to the story reflects the early church's difficulty with some exorcisms and this being attributed to 'spiritual deficiencies' on the part of the exorcists seems less likely to me.

are firmly linked to christology (i.e. Jesus' identity as messiah/son of God), whereas for Jesus' followers signs and wonders are primarily functional and, as we saw in 6.13, their successful outworking is normally linked to mission.

From here we may conclude that the thrust of this pericope, within the overall context of Mark's teaching on discipleship, serves to show that the earlier spectacular successes on the part of the disciples sent out by Jesus in mission should not be regarded by Mark's readers as the everyday norm for the church. Signs and wonders have their place in the church's mission but, compared to the essentials that characterise true discipleship, such power encounters are of relatively little importance. That this is the case, is further evidenced, not only by the clear correctives to false ideas about discipleship in Mark's central section, but also by the incident involving the strange exorcist (9.38-41) to which I will now turn.

#### *Another Exorcist (Mark 9.38-41).*

It is difficult to see why this incident has been placed here by Mark, interrupting as it does the flow of Jesus' discourse on becoming like a child (9.35-37, ff.).<sup>474</sup> However, the climax in v. 41 indicates that the pericope is concerned with right attitudes towards Jesus<sup>475</sup> which links with the same theme expressed in v. 37 and the clear allusion there to disciples as missionaries representing Jesus as he, in turn, represents God.

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<sup>474</sup> For a full discussion of the original *Sitz im Leben* for this pericope see Gundry, *Mark*, pp. 519-524.

<sup>475</sup> Mann, *Mark*, p. 377.

In this pericope Mark concludes his teaching on exorcism as it relates to discipleship and in so doing may well be reflecting a contemporary problem for his church.<sup>476</sup> It has been argued that Mark is primarily drawing attention to the disciples' narrow and exclusive understanding of Jesus' mission in that they saw themselves as a narrow, authorised circle of Jesus' followers who were (alone) commissioned to confront Satan.<sup>477</sup>

However, this seems unlikely in view of Mark's concentration in his central section on the meaning of true discipleship. What then does Mark intend to say about discipleship in this pericope?

John's complaint is significant here<sup>478</sup> for it does draw the reader's attention back to the fact that only the Twelve had been commissioned by Jesus to cast out demons in his name, which explains why John and his fellow-disciples<sup>479</sup> had tried unsuccessfully to stop him. As Lane notes, the irony here is that the disciples had so recently proved incapable themselves of casting out the dumb spirit from the boy.<sup>480</sup> It is true that in verse 39 Jesus' rebuke is in response to the disciples' intolerance because, as Jesus

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<sup>476</sup> In Acts 19.13ff. it is evident that the early church was concerned with incidents of non-Christians using the name of Jesus to heal and perform exorcisms (cf. Acts 8.18ff.), see further discussion in chapter five below. Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 309 rejects the view that this pericope is a product of the early church on the grounds that such a tolerant attitude as that displayed by Jesus was unlikely in the early church and that the association with John suggests a traditional origin. Both he and Taylor, *Mark*, pp. 407, find no reason to suppose that Jesus' name was not also used by others during his lifetime.

<sup>477</sup> Lane, *Mark* 343.

<sup>478</sup> This is the one occasion in Mark where John plays a special role on his own which for Eduard Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 194 indicates their strong link with the Dominical tradition. In a recent study of the 'anatomy of envy' as it occurs in Mark's gospel using insights from cultural anthropology and the evidence of ancient sources, Hagedorn and Neyrey suggest that John's motivation here is envy of a rival and that in forbidding the other exorcist to use Jesus' name the disciples were showing loyalty to their patron. By refusing to react, Jesus models an alternative approach to the quest for honour which characterises the value-system of their culture where Jesus' disciples simply do not participate in honour-seeking. See further, A.C. Hagedorn and J.H. Neyrey, 'It was out of envy that they handed Jesus over (Mark 15.10): The Anatomy of Envy and the Gospel of Mark', *JSNT* 69 (1998), pp. 15–56 and especially p. 48.

<sup>479</sup> Note εἰδομέν and ἐκωλύομεν in verse 38 and see further, Marshall, *Faith as a Theme*, pp. 157f.

<sup>480</sup> Lane, *Mark*, p. 343.

himself points out, the use of his name by the exorcist indicates a lack of hostility towards Jesus and his ability to perform miracles.<sup>481</sup> The exorcist clearly does not belong to Jesus' circle of followers or for that matter Mark's community. Nevertheless, his use of the name of Jesus indicates that he is by no means anti-Christian and Jesus' response here is reflected elsewhere in the NT by Paul.<sup>482</sup>

Mark's point here appears to be that exorcism in Jesus' name need not necessarily involve (true) discipleship<sup>483</sup> and, as such, should be regarded by his readers as being of relatively minor importance in terms of what characterises true discipleship.<sup>484</sup> Nevertheless, a right attitude towards Jesus and those who follow him (v. 41) is important, as has already been pointed out in v. 37. What remains of minor importance here is the ability to perform exorcisms in the name of Jesus which have little, if anything, to do with being either a true disciple of Jesus or even being commissioned by him for mission. Rather, Mark is keen to convey to his readers that right attitudes are what characterise true discipleship and so provide a paradigmatic legacy for the church of his day of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

### *Conclusion.*

In Mark's central section we have seen that the evangelist's critical presentation of the disciples is not meant to merely attack them but serves as a device to enable Mark to

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<sup>481</sup> Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 310 who also points to a similar sentiment expressed by Caesar in Cicero, *Lig.* xi and suggests that Jesus' response in v. 40 may reflect a contemporary popular saying.

<sup>482</sup> Cf. Gal. 6.10.

<sup>483</sup> This certainly appears to be the case with Matthew (cf. Matt. 7.21).

<sup>484</sup> Cf. Hooker, *Mark*, p. 229.

present his understanding of the true nature of Christian discipleship as articulated and modelled by Jesus. Jesus' correctives on the true nature of discipleship overrule the disciples' misunderstandings and are aimed not just at the disciples themselves, but at Mark's own community and, by extension, serve to inform the wider church's understanding of what it means to be a true follower of Jesus.

We have seen how the earlier spectacular success of the disciples when they are commissioned and sent out on mission by Jesus is not to be regarded by Mark's readers as the everyday norm for the church. Rather, Mark's view appears to be that signs and wonders have their place in the church's mission but, compared to the essentials that characterise discipleship, such power encounters are of relatively little importance.

To summarise, Christian discipleship, according to Mark, requires utter commitment, a servant spirit, willingness to suffer and a focus not on religious orthodoxy<sup>485</sup> but on doing the will of God – all characteristics modelled by Jesus himself and which Mark wants to emphasise as part of the 'messianic corrective' which may be understood as the primary goal in his proclamation of 'the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God' (Mark 1.1).

We are now in a position to evaluate how the short and longer endings to Mark's gospel (Mark 16.1–8 and 9–20) contribute to the Evangelist's presentation of disciples.

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<sup>485</sup> In Mark's gospel represented by the religious orthodoxy of the Pharisees.

#### §14. THE ENDING OF MARK (Mark 16.1–8).

The vast majority of NT scholars now believe that Mark intended to end his gospel at 16.8, against the idea that the original ending of Mark's gospel is now lost or that the so-called longer ending (Mark 16.9–20) was penned by the Second Evangelist. Former arguments against the possibility of Mark intending to end his gospel at 16.8 have been based on the understanding that it was not possible to end a book or even a paragraph with γάρ,<sup>486</sup> but evidence for this has been produced by R.H. Lightfoot<sup>487</sup> and more recently Paul Danove<sup>488</sup> and Thomas Boomershine.<sup>489</sup>

A further argument against Mark having ended his gospel at 16.8 is that the ending demands a resurrection appearance (cf. 16.7) but, argues Hooker, Mark's readers clearly knew the final outcome (their community being founded on resurrection faith) and so it is quite feasible that Mark intended to involve his readers and their knowledge of the outcome as he ended his gospel.<sup>490</sup> On a slightly different tack, David Catchpole argues that the ending at 16.8b is wholly in line with an established tradition which belongs to

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<sup>486</sup> See, Hooker, *Gospel According to Mark*, p. 391.

<sup>487</sup> R.H. Lightfoot, *The Gospel Message of Mark* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), pp. 80–97.

<sup>488</sup> P. Danove, *The End of Mark's Story*.

<sup>489</sup> T.J. Boomershine and G.L. Bartholemew, 'The Narrative Technique of Mark 16.8', *JBL* 100/2 (1981), 213–223. In a subsequent article, Boomershine ['Mark 16:8 And The Apostolic Commission' *JBL* 100/2 (1981), pp. 197–211] sets out to show that 16.8 gives a coherent ending to Mark in light of the preceding narrative providing a 'climactic reversal' of the messianic secrecy motif in Mark and is in line with the endings of the other gospels in that Mark too ends with an apostolic commissioning to 'proclaim the gospel'.

<sup>490</sup> Hooker, *Gospel According to Mark*, p. 392.

the structure of epiphany.<sup>491</sup> Alternatively, Burdon bases his argument in favour of the ending at 16.8 on the fact that chapters 13 and 16 make it clear in their different ways that the disciples of Jesus now live in the time of the 'absent Christ' and they are to engage in mission whilst awaiting the parousia.<sup>492</sup>

In seeking a purpose for the ending of Mark's gospel N.Q. Hamilton, who regards Mark's christology from a Hellenistic, θεῖος ἄνθρωπος viewpoint, argues that the empty tomb narrative was a deliberate creation by Mark who was seeking to satisfy Greco-Roman expectations which would have been aroused by his Son of God christology where his empty tomb would suggest a removal, indicative of the expected fate of a hero, rather than a resurrection.<sup>493</sup> A similar view was put forward by E. Bickermann who argued that Mark's empty tomb should be understood in terms of a 'translation' which would not require a resurrection appearance.<sup>494</sup>

Against this viewpoint, Bolt argues that Mark 16.1–8 does not fit the pattern of empty tomb translation stories in either the Hellenistic traditions or inter-testamental literature. Rather Mark's story clearly points to Jesus' resurrection on the grounds that Mark goes to great pains to ensure that his readers understand that Jesus had joined the ranks of the dead (15.42–47) rather than avoiding death by translation or apotheosis.<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>491</sup> D.R. Catchpole, 'The Fearful Silence of the Women at the Tomb: A Study in Markan Theology', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 18 (1977), p. 9.

<sup>492</sup> C. Burdon, 'Such a Fast God – True and False Disciples in Mark's Gospel', *Theology* 7/34 (1987), pp. 89–97.

<sup>493</sup> N.Q. Hamilton, 'Resurrection Tradition and the Composition of Mark', *JBL* 84 (1965), p. 418.

<sup>494</sup> E. Bickermann, 'Das leere Grab', *ZNW* 23 (1924), 218–291, see especially pp. 286ff.

<sup>495</sup> P.G. Bolt, 'Mark 16.1–8 The Empty Tomb of a Hero?', *Tyndale Bulletin* 47 (1996), p. 37.

From a narrative point of view, Mark's readers have already been forewarned of the possibility of a resurrection appearance to the disciples in Galilee (14.28).<sup>496</sup> With this in mind, the need for continued vigilance has been stressed in Gethsemene (14.32–42). The promise of 14.28 is now repeated in 16.7 where the context of the former saying (14.27) about scattering of shepherdless sheep would be dramatically recalled by Mark's readers. In 16.8 Boomershine identifies three emotional responses of the women (fear, astonishment, and trembling) which, he concludes, are positive. However, the flight of the women and their failure to obey the angel's command to report back to the disciples are negative,<sup>497</sup> although Mark's readers would condemn the women's action whilst having sympathy for their fear in the face of an angelophany. In other words, any negative reader-response to the women intended by Mark is to their *response* rather than to the women themselves, and that any interpretation of the end of Mark's gospel must take account of this.<sup>498</sup>

According to Marxsen, the primary motif at the end of Mark's gospel is the tension between speech and silence which he links with the messianic secrecy theme in Mark.<sup>499</sup> Marxsen argues that the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection by the angel (16.6f.) is a reversal of the secrecy theme in light of the delay of the parousia.<sup>500</sup>

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<sup>496</sup> Best, *Mark: Gospel as Story*, p. 55 notes interestingly here how the idea of Jesus going ahead of the disciples links back to 10.32.

<sup>497</sup> Cf. the negative use of ἔφυγον in Mark 14.50–52 to describe the desertion of the disciples and the flight of the naked young man.

<sup>498</sup> T.E. Boomershine, 'Mark 16:8 And The Apostolic Commission', pp. 200–205.

<sup>499</sup> Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, pp. 111–116.

<sup>500</sup> Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, p. 113.

Reginald Fuller builds on Marxsen's proposal of a tension between proclamation and silence. After discussing the three types of conclusion normally associated with the abrupt ending of Mark at 16.8<sup>501</sup> Fuller settles for the latter pointing out that Mark 9.9 had already pointed forward to the resurrection as the '*terminus ad quem* for the preservation of the messianic secret'.<sup>502</sup> Based on conjecture that Mark did not have to hand a resurrection tradition on which to draw, Fuller argues that Mark was, therefore, unable to narrate such a tradition.<sup>503</sup> In light of 9.9 (cf. 9.31 and 10.33f.) 16.7 simply points forward to appearances to the disciples and Peter as the basis for the inauguration of the church's mission.

Both Marxsen and Fuller are primarily dependent on a redaction-critical analysis of Mark 16.7 for their conclusions. Using the same redaction-critical approach, David Catchpole arrives at a very different conclusion. He points out that in Mark 14.27 Jesus predicts that all the disciples will become deserters, and this is exactly what happens in 14.50.<sup>504</sup> However, in 16.7 we have the promise of reversal and restoration for all the disciples, including Peter. Catchpole argues that it is precisely this reversed situation from 14.50 that 16.7 is intended by Mark to confirm, thus placing the formerly disloyal disciples in a more positive light post-Easter. According to Catchpole, 'the perspective which shows in

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<sup>501</sup> Accidental premature conclusion due, for example, to the death of the author; the Mutilation Hypothesis where an original ending beyond 16.8 and in fulfilment of 16.7 has been removed/lost before it reached either Matthew or Luke; the deliberate conclusion hypothesis where Mark intended to end his gospel at 16.8. See further R.H. Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives* (London: SPCK, 1980<sup>2</sup>), pp. 24–25.

<sup>502</sup> Fuller, *Resurrection Narratives*, p. 67.

<sup>503</sup> Fuller, *Resurrection Narratives*, p. 67. In my view this seems highly unlikely in light of, for example 1 Cor. 15.5ff.

<sup>504</sup> Catchpole, 'The Fearful Silence of the Women at the Tomb', p. 4.

16.7 sees contact with Jesus as cancelling the failures of the past and opening up a new and hopeful era'.<sup>505</sup>

Catchpole argues further that the probable background to 16.7–8 envisaged by Mark involves stories of heavenly beings 'on the move' and offers examples such as Gen. 16.1f., 4–14; 18.1–16a; 19.1–23; Tobit 5.4ff.; Mark 6.45–52; Luke 24.13–35, of which, he concludes, Mark 16.7–8 is simply another example.<sup>506</sup> In light of this understanding of Mark 16.7, Catchpole argues that Mark would not have envisaged that the message did not reach the disciples. The fear motif attributed to the women in 16.7 clearly indicates a 'heavenly manifestation' and suggests that Mark 16.8b can be interpreted in the light of 'established tradition' which, in turn, suggests that the reaction of the women in 16.8 (fear and silence) is appropriate both to the angelic appearance (16.5) and the message they receive (cf. 16.8a).<sup>507</sup> From here, Catchpole concludes that the expectation to be taken from the messenger's words in 16.6b (he has been raised) is that Mark's readers are to expect a further epiphany when the risen one restores Peter and the other disciples and re-commissions them (cf. 16.7).<sup>508</sup>

As we saw earlier, Clifton-Black has warned against over dependence upon the results of a redaction-critical approach to Mark's gospel. Boomershine<sup>509</sup> argues that the narrative structure of the ending (16.1–8) is built on Mark's passion narrative and the earlier

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<sup>505</sup> Catchpole, *Ibid.*

<sup>506</sup> Catchpole, 'The Fearful Silence of the Women at the Tomb', p. 5.

<sup>507</sup> Catchpole, 'The Fearful Silence of the Women at the Tomb', p. 9.

<sup>508</sup> Catchpole, 'The Fearful Silence of the Women at the Tomb', pp. 9f.

<sup>509</sup> Boomershine, 'Mark 16.8 And The Apostolic Commission', pp. 208f.

passion/resurrection predictions and, based on the hypothesis that Mark intended his work to be read aloud, concludes:

...Mark's final comment [ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ], the shortest and most enigmatic of his concluding comments, provokes his listeners to reflect on the future response of Jesus' followers, including themselves, to the commission to proclaim the gospel.<sup>510</sup>

This analysis by Boomershine, based on an interplay of sophisticated narrative techniques used by Mark and a public (dramatic?) presentation of the end of the gospel, is too conjectural in my view. The most commendable aspect appears to be the attempt, based on the assumption that Mark intended to end his gospel at 16.8, to link the ending with an apostolic commission which is stated in more explicit terms in the other gospels and was clearly known to Paul (1 Cor 15.3–7). That Mark was aware of the Gentile mission seems clear from the indications of a post-Easter proclaiming of the gospel which appear in his narrative (cf. 8.35; 10.28–31; 13.5–23; 14.9). What is not clear is that Mark was aware of a similar commissioning of the Eleven along the lines of Matt. 28.16–20. And so, we are left with a positive proclamation of the resurrection to the women (16.6), followed by an angelic commission to the women indicating re-instatement of the disciples and Peter together with a repeat in 16.7 of Jesus' promise in 14.28 that after the resurrection he would meet the disciples in Galilee. The fear and silence of the women in 16.8 provides a climactic conclusion to the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection and emphasises its epiphanic nature. Discipleship, in light of Mark's conclusion here is not primarily characterised by spectacular charismatic activity although, as we have seen, this

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<sup>510</sup> Boomershine, 'Mark 16.8 And The Apostolic Commission', p. 210.

does have its place particularly when the church engages in mission. The model of discipleship which Mark's readers are left with here is one where, despite weakness, misunderstanding and failure, the disciples are called again by the risen Jesus to continue to follow him on the way.

#### §15. THE LONGER ENDING TO MARK'S GOSPEL (Mark 16.9–20).

Finally, we turn to the so-called longer ending to Mark's gospel (16.9–20) which is one of the most frequently cited references to Mark by the Third Wave in support of their paradigm for signs and wonders being integral to contemporary discipleship. Here, it is argued, we have a further confirmation of the Great Commission in Matt. 28.16-20.<sup>511</sup>

Although opinions as to the authenticity of these verses vary they are, nevertheless, often considered authoritative in terms of providing evidence which (at least) reflects the experience of the early church and gives further confirmation of Jesus' mandate to his disciples to exercise a ministry of signs and wonders which continues to apply to the contemporary church.

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<sup>511</sup> For an earlier example which reflects the homogenous conservative evangelical approach often employed by the Third Wave see A. Cole, *Mark* (Tyndale Commentary; Leicester: IVP, 1961), p. 260 who comments on Mark 16.15-16 as follows: "This is the great commission which, Matthew xxviii.16-20 tells us, was delivered in the hills of Galilee".

For example, K. Bottomly, who holds a postgraduate degree in theology from Princeton, cites Mark 16.17–20 as evidence that Jesus commissioned all his disciples to ‘do power ministry’.<sup>512</sup> More specifically, John Wimber understands the post-Easter commission in Mark 16.14–20 as being entirely consistent with the disciples’ ‘training’, adding:

I find it remarkable that many Western Christians are surprised by the emphasis on signs and wonders in this commissioning.<sup>513</sup>

To be fair, Wimber acknowledges that some have challenged the ‘genuineness’ of Mark 16.9–20 but he, nevertheless, continues:

This raises a question: Why was such a text added – if it were, as the evidence suggests (but does *not* confirm) – in the second century? ... why did Iranaeus cite Mark 16:9? And why did Justin refer to Mark 16:20 as authoritative?<sup>514</sup>

For Wimber, the inclusion of these verses in many manuscripts is best explained in terms of their reflecting the experience of the early church which is also the position adopted by another Third Wave writer, Sam Storms.<sup>515</sup> More cautiously, Wagner and Pennoyer, whilst conceding that the longer ending to Mark’s gospel dates from the first half of the second century AD and is, therefore, a later addition to the gospel, maintain that these verses reflect:

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<sup>512</sup> K. Bottomly, ‘Coming out of the Hangar: Confessions of an Evangelical Deist’, in Greig and Springer, (eds), *The Kingdom and the Power*, p. 273.

<sup>513</sup> Wimber, ‘Power Evangelism: Definitions’, p. 27.

<sup>514</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>515</sup> *Ibid.* and cf. C. S. Storms, ‘A Third Wave View’, p. 214.

... an early post-biblical understanding of Jesus' post-resurrection commission to His disciples and to all "those who believe" (Mark 16:17), which, as the manuscript evidence suggests, was widely accepted in the Early Church.<sup>516</sup>

Similarly, Greig points out that:

The wide dissemination of the long ending, seen in the manuscript evidence, suggests that the Early Church readily agreed that Jesus' commission to the disciples did include the expectation that supernatural signs would accompany the preaching of the gospel.<sup>517</sup>

For Jack Deere, Mark 16.20 provides evidence from the experience of the early church that the purpose of miracles is to authenticate the 'message about Jesus'.<sup>518</sup> Whilst conceding that the majority of NT scholars do not consider the longer ending to be an original part of Mark's gospel which, he believes to be now lost, he nevertheless can write:

At the very least...these verses reflect what the early church thought about the purpose of miracles, even if these verses are not considered part of the original Scriptures.<sup>519</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> Wagner and Pennoyer, *Wrestling with Dark Angels*, p. 401. Here it seems to me that the 'wide acceptance' was of Mark 16.9-20 as part of Mark's gospel rather than necessarily indicating a wide acceptance of the content of these verses as reflecting the experience of those Christians who assumed that Mark 16.9-20 formed the legitimate ending to their copy Mark's gospel.

<sup>517</sup> Greig and Springer, (eds), *The Kingdom and the Power*, p. 167, n. 25. Greig makes special mention of the gift of tongues with reference to Mark 16.17 but makes no mention of 16.18a!

<sup>518</sup> Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, p. 103.

<sup>519</sup> Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, p. 277.

Finally, John Goldingay, a highly respected evangelical scholar who has himself been deeply influenced by the charismatic renewal in the UK and is now on the staff at Fuller Theological Seminary, rules Mark 16.9–20 ‘out of court’ as NT evidence for the church being expected to continue the healing ministry undertaken by Jesus during his lifetime and by the apostles on the grounds that it does not belong to the original gospel, as attested by the most reliable manuscript evidence, and he concludes:

We can hardly use it [Mark 16.9–20] to establish a point not made elsewhere in undisputed parts of Scripture.<sup>520</sup>

What, then, are we to make of Mark 16.9–20? How, if at all, is the longer ending related to the rest of Mark’s gospel? How do these verses reflect the Great Commission (Matt. 28.16-20)? Do these verses provide any legitimate evidence for the Third Wave paradigm for contemporary discipleship, most importantly here from a Markan standpoint?

Whilst the earliest manuscripts support the conclusion of Mark at 16.8<sup>521</sup> many early manuscripts do contain Mark 16.9-20. For example, Taitien’s Diatessaron (c. 140 AD) knew this ending and Irenaeus († 202 AD) accepted verses 9-20 as part of Mark’s gospel.<sup>522</sup> Lane argues that the form, language and style of these verses militate against

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<sup>520</sup> J. Goldingay, ‘Conclusion: Analysing the issues’, in J. Goldingay, (ed.), *Signs, Wonders and Healing*, p. 180.

<sup>521</sup> The two earliest parchment codices are Vaticanus (B) and Sinaiticus (a)). See also miniscules 304 and 2386. Noted for example in Lane, *Mark*, p. 601 and H. Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark* (London: Oliphants, 1976), p. 358.

<sup>522</sup> *Hear.* iii.x.6.

Markan authorship<sup>523</sup> and in text-critical terms, the majority of scholars would argue that Mark 16.9-20 can be shown to be secondary. However, evidence of early patristic witness to the longer ending means that these verses were attached to the end of Mark's gospel at the latest by the beginning of the second century.

In discussing later additions to NT manuscripts, G. Theissen comments,

The conclusion of Mark with its summary of Easter appearances, mission charge and ascension (Mark 16.9-20) is ... a secondary addition. Within this passage a revelation saying of the risen Christ, the so-called Freer Logion, appears after 16.14 in the Codex Freerianus.<sup>524</sup>

This logion appears in the gospel ms W (from Egypt, 4th or 5th cent) and is quoted by Jerome c. Pelag. II.15 and is reflective of a number of other NT passages noted by J. Jeremias who provides a translation of this saying in NT Apoc. I, 189 as follows:

[*Mark 16:14*: Afterward he appeared to the eleven as they reclined at table and reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, for they had not believed those who had seen him after he rose] And they excused themselves with the word, "This aeon (age) of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who through the unclean spirits does not allow the true power of God to be comprehended. Therefore," they said to Christ "reveal your righteousness now." And Christ replied to them, "The measure of the years of Satan's power is filled up. But other

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<sup>523</sup> A C D K L W X D Q P y f 28 33 274 565 700 892 1009 latt sy c p h pal coppt. Omitted by a B k sys and by some mss of arm. eth. and geo. For further discussion of the manuscript evidence see, for example, Lane, *Mark* 604. and Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 471. A particularly comprehensive survey is to be found in W.R. Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark* (SNTS Monograph Series 25; Cambridge: CUP, 1974), pp. 3-75.

<sup>524</sup> G. Theissen & A. Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (ET London: SCM, 1998), p. 56.

fearful things draw near, also (for those) for whom I, because they have sinned, was delivered to death, that they might turn back to the truth and is no more in order to inherit the spiritual and imperishable glory of righteousness (preserved) in heaven.”

The passage then continues with verse 15: “Now go into all the world ...”<sup>525</sup>

It has been suggested that these verses may have been used as a catechetical summary for some time before being attached to Mark’s gospel.<sup>526</sup> Others suggest that because vv. 16-20 is largely composed of fragments found in the other gospels and Acts, they are to be understood as a carefully constructed ‘rounding off’ of the gospel.<sup>527</sup> More importantly, Morna Hooker points out that, although vv. 9-20 are clearly an attempt to ‘complete’ the gospel, these final verses do not deal with the questions posed by Mark 16.1-8 in terms of the women’s silence and Jesus’ promise to meet with the eleven in Galilee (cf. Matt. 28.16f.).<sup>528</sup> Finally, an examination of the vocabulary of Mark 16.9-20 proves somewhat inconclusive in that it shows that these verses include 16 words not used previously by Mark<sup>529</sup> although, according to W. Farmer, verses 9, 11, 13, 15, and particularly v.20 do use vocabulary found elsewhere in Mark.<sup>530</sup>

<sup>525</sup> J. Jeremias, ‘The Freer Logion’, in E. Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha* vol. I (ET London: SCM, 1963), pp. 188-189 and see notes 1-9 for possible NT echoes noted by Jeremias.

<sup>526</sup> Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 472. See also Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 374. Anderson, *op. cit.*, considers them to have originally been an independent appearance story which was then later attached to Mark’s gospel in order to bring it into line with the other gospels. See also, C. L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels* (Leicester: Apollos, 1997), p. 75.

<sup>527</sup> See, for example, Bas van Iersel, *Reading Mark* (ET Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), p. 216.

<sup>528</sup> Hooker, *Mark*, p. 389.

<sup>529</sup> These include: πορεύομαι (16.10, 12, 15); πενθέω (16.10); θεάομαι (16.11, 14); ἀπιστέω (16.11, 16); ἕτερος (16.12); μορφή (16.12); ὕστερος (16.14); ἕνδεκα (16.14); παρακολουθέω (16.17); ὄφιν (16.18); θανάσιμος (16.18); βλάπτω (16.18); ἀναλαμβάνω (16.19); συνεργέω (16.20); βεβαιόω (16.20); ἐπακολουθεω (16.20). See P.L. Danove, *The End of Mark’s Story: A Methodological Study* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), pp. 122-124.

<sup>530</sup> Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*, p. 103. For a comparative analysis between Mark 1.1-16.8 and 16.9-20 see pp. 83-103.

In addition to the evidence against the authenticity of vv. 9-20, the problem has been compounded further by the rather surprising ending of Mark's gospel at v.8 which commentators have often refused to accept as the original ending intended by Mark.<sup>531</sup>

As already discussed, my own view is that Mark intended to end his gospel at 16.8 and that the longer ending is not part of Mark's gospel. Mark has presented his readers with a portrait of the disciples as progressively uncomprehending and self-seeking who finally betray, desert and deny Jesus. Then with consummate artistry Mark leaves his readers with a promise of re-instatement in light of the resurrection (16.7) and the possibility (already foretold in 13.10) that the disciples will be commissioned once again to engage in the mission of Jesus – it only remains for Mark's readers to fill in the gaps for themselves from what they knew to be the case.

However, on the grounds that my primary concern here is to follow up the evidence presented by the Third Wave in support of their NT paradigm for contemporary discipleship, I shall take account here of the longer ending (16.9–20), in order to make decisions about how these (secondary) verses may, or may not inform further our understanding of discipleship as we understand it from a Markan perspective.

I will examine the text of Mark 16.9–20 in the following sections: the appearance to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16.9–11); the appearance to the two travellers (Mark 16.12–13); the commissioning of the Eleven (Mark 16.14–18); the ascension and the heavenly court (Mk 16.19–20).<sup>532</sup>

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<sup>531</sup> See discussion in §3 above.

<sup>532</sup> Previously identified by Taylor, *Mark*, p. 610.

*The Appearance to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16.9–11).*

9 Ἀναστὰς δὲ πρωτὶ πρώτη σαββάτου ἐφάνη πρῶτον Μαρία τῇ  
Μαγδαληνῇ, παρ' ἧς ἐκβεβλήκει ἑπτὰ δαιμόνια. 10 ἐκείνη πορευθεῖσα  
ἀπήγγειλεν τοῖς μετ' αὐτοῦ γενομένοις πενθοῦσι καὶ κλαίουσιν· 11  
κἀκεῖνοι ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ζῆ καὶ ἐθεάθη ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἠπίστησαν.

The writer of these verses almost certainly knew Luke's gospel and was possibly familiar with John's gospel.<sup>533</sup> The appearance to Mary Magdalene clearly begins *de novo* taking no account of Mary's earlier appearance at 16.1. Instead, she is introduced here as if for the first time,<sup>534</sup> as the one from whom Jesus had cast out seven demons, which echoes Luke 8.2 and is an entirely superfluous explanatory note (cf. Mark 15.40, 47; 16.1) for Mark himself clearly did not need to include (or perhaps did not know) such an explanatory note about Mary.<sup>535</sup> The statement in verse 11 about the disciples' disbelief at hearing female testimony to the resurrection is also reminiscent of Luke (cf. Luke 24.11) where the women's story is dismissed as an 'idle tale' and may also reflect the more general theme of disbelief found in Matt. 28.17 and John 20.25. All the indications here are that vv. 9–11 were not written by the author of Mark and thus have no direct bearing

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<sup>533</sup> Taylor, *Mark*, p. 610. In addition to the echo of Luke 8.2, Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 375 suggests that these verses may be dependent on John 20.11-18. Cf. also Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 472. Nineham, *Mark*, p. 451 grants that this may be possible but contends that it cannot be shown that the author of the long ending of Mark was familiar with John's gospel.

<sup>534</sup> The clumsiness of the connection with vv. 1–8 is noted by most commentators. See, for example, Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 472.

<sup>535</sup> Cf. Matt. 4.18 where Matthew adds an explanatory note about Simon, τὸν λεγόμενον Πέτρον - here a first indication of the special representative role Peter is to play in Matthew's gospel. For Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 375, this is a clear indication that this was not written by Mark who may well not have been familiar with the story of Mary's exorcism by Jesus. Also ἐκβάλλειν παρά is not found elsewhere in the NT. Noted by Taylor, *Mark*, p. 611.

on Mark's view of discipleship. What we may have here is a first indication of the writer's concern about unbelief in the Easter story either in his own community or more generally in the church of his day (16.11).

*The Appearance to the Two Travellers (Mark 16.12–13).*

12 Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα δυσὶν ἐξ αὐτῶν περιπατοῦσιν ἐφανερώθη ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ πορευομένοις εἰς ἀγρόν· 13 κἀκεῖνοι ἀπελθόντες ἀπήγγειλαν τοῖς λοιποῖς· οὐδὲ ἐκείνοις ἐπίστευσαν.

In verse 12, the Greek verb 'appeared'<sup>536</sup> is not the same as that normally used in the primitive kerygmatic formula of 1 Cor. 15.3-5; 1 Cor. 15.6-8<sup>537</sup> although, interestingly, it does occur in John 21.1,14 which may also be a later addition to the original text of John's gospel which appears to end quite naturally at John 20.31. The narrative at this point clearly echoes Luke 24.13–35 although neither the vocabulary or style is Markan.<sup>538</sup> Taylor notes that the phrase μετὰ ταῦτα occurs frequently in John, but is not used by Mark.<sup>539</sup>

Of rather more interest is the phrase, ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ which, according to Taylor, suggests that Jesus appears here in a different form from that in which he appeared to

<sup>536</sup> ἐφανερώθη (lit. 'he was manifested').

<sup>537</sup> E.g. 1 Cor. 15.5 ὡφθη Κηφᾶ (lit. he was seen by Cephas).

<sup>538</sup> Cf. for example, Taylor, *Mark* 611 and Schweizer, *Mark*, p. 375.

<sup>539</sup> *Ibid.*

Mary in v. 9<sup>540</sup> but Schweizer maintains that the difference is intended to differentiate between the appearance of the earthly Jesus and the appearance of the risen Jesus here to Mary Magdalene.<sup>541</sup> Cranfield argues that the description of the risen Jesus during the walk as being ἐν ἑτέρῳ μορφῇ probably reflects Luke 24.16, understood in terms of the subjective experience of those to whom Jesus appeared, rather than that Jesus literally took on a different form.<sup>542</sup> In verse 13 we again have a stress on the motif of disbelief, which was clearly important for the author of the longer ending.<sup>543</sup> Again, so far as the theme of discipleship is concerned, we learn very little except that we have a further indication of the writer's concern with unbelief (16.13).

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<sup>540</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>541</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 375.

<sup>542</sup> Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 472. See also Nineham, *Mark*, p. 451. It should be noted that Luke appears to be conscious of the need to make it clear that the risen Jesus was both recognisable apart from subjective experience, and not either a ghost (24.37-43) or an angel (Acts 12.15). John also makes the same point with the risen Jesus, although on this occasion Jesus is not described as eating the fish (cf. John 21.1-14). For evidence of heavenly beings appearing in an unrecognisable form but only pretending to eat cf. Tobit 12.11-19.

<sup>543</sup> See below on v. 14 for further comment on this issue.

*The Commissioning of the Eleven (Mark 16.14–18).*

14 Ἐπεὶ [δὲ] ἀνακειμένοις αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἑνδεκά ἐφανερώθη καὶ ὠνείδισεν τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν καὶ σκληροκαρδίαν ὅτι τοῖς θεασαμένοις αὐτὸν ἐγηγεμένον οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν. 15 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει. 16 ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς σωθήσεται, ὁ δὲ ἀπιστήσας κατακριθήσεται. 17 σημεῖα δὲ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ταῦτα παρακολουθήσει· ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου δαιμόνια ἐκβαλοῦσιν, γλώσσαις λαλήσουσιν καινάις, 18 [καὶ ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν] ὄφεις ἄροῦσιν καὶ θανάσιμόν τι πίωσιν οὐ μὴ αὐτοὺς βλάβῃ, ἐπὶ ἀρρώστους χεῖρας ἐπιθήσουσιν καὶ καλῶς ἔξουσιν.

In verse 14 the writer stresses for the third time the unbelief of the disciples to the point where the same risen Jesus who is about to commission them, upbraids them for their unbelief. Schweizer suggests that the unbelief and hardness of heart reflects Mark's theme of blindness of the disciples,<sup>544</sup> but Anderson argues that it reflects Luke 24.38 and serves as a rebuke aimed at lack of Easter belief in the writer's church, or more widely, and points out that Mark 16.14 is the only occurrence in the appearance tradition of Jesus upbraiding the disciples for their failure to believe those to whom he had already appeared.<sup>545</sup> Once again I would note that the evidence points to a lack of belief in the early apostolic witness in the writer's own church or perhaps the wider Christian community to which the writer belonged and that he felt it necessary to provide a longer

<sup>544</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 375

<sup>545</sup> Anderson, *Mark*, p. 359 and more strongly, Nineham, *Mark*, p. 451. Taylor, *Mark*, pp. 611f., notes that ἀπίστα is a word Mark himself uses in the context of hostility towards Jesus (cf. Mark 6.6; 9.24) and comments further: "So strong a rebuke can be understood only by the supreme importance attached to the Resurrection by the writer, who has in mind the conditions of his own day."

(polemical) ending to Mark's gospel in defence of the apostolic witness.<sup>546</sup> If this is the case, then we have an important clue to the way in which the writer intends his readers to understand his addition to the ending of Mark's gospel.

Following his rebuke, the risen Jesus commissions the disciples to go into all the world, reflecting the universalism already latent in Mark 13.10 and 14.9 as well as that found elsewhere in the church (Matt. 28.19f.; cf. Rom. 1.8; Col. 1.23).<sup>547</sup> Here the appropriate response to believing the good news is baptism (16.15; cf. Matt. 28.19; Acts 2.38)<sup>548</sup> and at this point the writer delivers his *coup de grâce* against Easter scepticism, namely that those who believe will be saved but those who do not believe will face eschatological condemnation.

From here in vv. 17-18, and most importantly for the Third Wave, we find a list of 'signs' that will accompany those who believe.<sup>549</sup> Taylor's suggestion that the idea of signs (σημείον) accompanying/following (ἀκολουθέω) is Johannine (cf. John 14.12) is not convincing. In John 14.12 the writer refers to 'works' (ἔργα) rather than signs (σημεία) and in Mark the idea that signs are a legitimate validation of Jesus' ministry/message is treated in a wholly negative fashion (Mark 8.11, 12; 13.22). In the case of Mark 13.4 the

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<sup>546</sup> At this point, Codex W includes the so-called Freer Logion but this is a later interpolation into the longer ending. Although, interestingly, the interpolator's purpose appears to be to provide an explanation for the 'unbelief' which figures so prominently in Mark 16.9-14. Note also here how the later copyist responsible for the 'Freer Logion' shows respect for the disciples by defending them which is often lacking in the earlier gospel tradition.

<sup>547</sup> Anderson, *Mark*, p. 360 notes rightly that here the universalism found in Matthew's commission gives way to a narrower and exclusivist formula.

<sup>548</sup> Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, p. 390.

<sup>549</sup> Taylor, *Mark*, p. 612. Anderson, *Mark*, p. 360 suggests that the promise of charismatic gifts to those who believe suggests the writer belonged to a church which considered such practices to be 'ongoing marks of authentic Christian faith'.

sign given is not a miraculous healing or exorcism of the type described in Mark 16.16-20 but a very negative prophetic utterance by Jesus.

In 16.17a, exorcisms and healing have already been attributed to Jesus' disciples (Mark 3.15; 6.13 and others (cf. Mark 9.38-41). As I noted above, Mark also mentions the use of oil by Jesus' disciples, reflecting the practice of the early church, but which is lacking here (Mark 6.13; Jas. 5.14f.; but cf. Acts 28.8). In 16.17b glossolalia is mentioned but is not found elsewhere in the gospel tradition, although it is mentioned elsewhere in the NT as part of the experience of the early church (see for e.g. Acts 2.3f.; 10.46; 19.6; I Cor 12.28).

In 16.17c,d: handling snakes probably reflects Acts 28.3f. (cf. Luke 10.19 and possibly Isa. 11.8) but drinking poison with impunity is not mentioned elsewhere in the NT.<sup>550</sup> At this point we have clearly moved away considerably from what we have identified in Mark's gospel as his intended paradigm for discipleship towards the very model of discipleship which Mark condemns! Morna Hooker summarises the position succinctly when she writes:

The emphasis now is on the mighty works for their own sake, as demonstrations of the power of Christ's name – the Lord ... confirming their message through the signs that accompanied them (v. 20) – rather than as an integral part of the gospel.

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<sup>550</sup> Taylor, *Mark*, p. 613 mentions several post-NT references to characters drinking poison without harm. Some extreme contemporary Christian sects (e.g. snake handlers in southern Appalachia) handle deadly snakes in their religious gatherings, H.D. Hunter, 'Serpent Handling', in Burgess and McGee, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, p. 777 writes: 'The principle [sic] text is Mark 16:18, and none of those people know, or would believe, that this is not part of the original text of the Gospel of Mark.' This practice, together with drinking poison, is conveniently forgotten by the Third Wave when referring to the longer ending of Mark in support of contemporary paradigms for discipleship!

Like Jesus, the disciples are to cast out demons and heal the sick; but, unlike him, they are to speak in tongues and be preserved from physical danger.<sup>551</sup>

*The Ascension and the Heavenly Court (Mark 16.19–20).*

19 Ὁ μὲν οὖν κύριος Ἰησοῦς μετὰ τὸ λαλήσαι αὐτοῖς ἀνελήμφθη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ. 20 ἐκεῖνοι δὲ ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν πανταχοῦ, τοῦ κυρίου συνεργοῦντος καὶ τὸν λόγον βεβαιοῦντος διὰ τῶν ἐπακολουθούντων σημείων.

Again here the vocabulary and ideas are post-Markan. The name ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς is not used elsewhere in the gospels although it is used frequently in Acts and (less frequently) by Paul who prefers the fuller designation, ‘the Lord Jesus Christ’<sup>552</sup>. The ascension recalls similar scenes in Luke and Acts (Luke 24.51; Acts 1.9f.) but Schweizer’s comment that v. 19 also echoes OT language associated with the heavenly ascension of Elijah goes too far (I Kings 2.11).<sup>553</sup> Linked to Jesus’ ascension in verse 19 is a heavenly court scene where Jesus is described as sitting down at the right hand of God (cf. Ps 110.1) and which is common elsewhere in the NT (see for example, Acts 7.55f.; Rom. 8.34; Eph. 1.20; Col. 3.1; Heb. 1.3; 8.1; 10.12; 12.12; I Pet. 3.22; Rev. 3.21).

The longer ending closes with a summary which depicts the ascended Jesus continuing to help his disciples from his heavenly throne as they go out in mission which may well be

<sup>551</sup> M. Hooker, *Mark*, p. 390.

<sup>552</sup> E.g. 1 Cor. 1.3 etc.

<sup>553</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 378. The ascension of Elijah is depicted in particularly graphic language which is totally absent here.

derived from Matt. 28.20b (as well as the work of the Spirit described in Acts) although Matthew has previously made it clear how this works in relation to Christ's teaching and the community's missionary activity.<sup>554</sup> The final part of verse 20 is of particular interest here because it suggests that καὶ τὸν λόγον βεβαιούντος διὰ τῶν ἐπακολουθούντων σημείων is firmly linked to the missionary activity of the eleven and it is this going out in mission which forms the real conclusion for the writer of the longer ending.<sup>555</sup>

### *Conclusion.*

To conclude, the longer ending does reflect (probably unintentionally) aspects of Mark's presentation of missionary activity and its association with exorcism and healings, but this is also reflected elsewhere in the NT and is here not particularly Markan. So far as what is integral to the model of discipleship we have found in the Second Gospel, we have seen that Mark himself takes great pains to point out that signs and wonders are not central to his presentation of discipleship, nor should they be regarded as the primary informant for a Markan paradigm (and by extension a contemporary paradigm) for discipleship. At best, Mark 16.9-20 summarises what may be found elsewhere in the NT and needs to be understood apart from the rest of Mark's gospel. In other words, Mark 16.9-20 simply will not bear the weight placed upon it by Third Wave commentators. Rather, Mark's contribution to our contemporary understanding of Christian discipleship reminds us that there are other, more profound aspects to the example Jesus articulates and models for any who would follow him.

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<sup>554</sup> See my previous chapter for a discussion of this point.

<sup>555</sup> Cf. Schweizer, *Good News According to Mark*, p. 378.

## § 16. CONCLUSIONS.

Having concluded at the end of §15 that Mark 16.9–20 is not original to Mark and, as such, will not bear the weight placed upon it by Third Wave commentators, how are we to sum up our findings in this chapter? In §11 we saw that in his narrative Mark portrays the disciples in both a favourable and unfavourable light. In narrative-critical terms, the reader is clearly meant to identify with the disciples who act as a foil for Jesus' teaching and afford him the opportunity to correct their demonstrably wrong notions about true discipleship. Yet, unlike the Third Wave paradigm, Mark's teaching on discipleship concentrates on more than just calling, commissioning and empowering of the disciples to perform healings and exorcisms.

In §12, I argued that the paradigm which Mark presents for his readers in the commissioning and sending out of the Twelve on mission is not aimed at Christians *per se* but applies to Christians engaged in mission. For Mark, signs and wonders are envisaged as being primarily given to authenticate the mission of the church and its message rather than being an integral, everyday part of his paradigm for discipleship. We saw that the earlier spectacular success of the disciples when they are commissioned and sent out on mission by Jesus is not to be regarded as normative by Mark's readers.

Rather, Mark's view appears to be that signs and wonders have their place in the church's mission but, compared to the essentials that characterise discipleship, such power encounters are of relatively little importance.

In §13, I looked in some detail at Mark's central section where we saw that the evangelist's critical presentation of the disciples is not meant to merely attack them, but serves as a device to enable Mark to present his understanding of the true nature of Christian discipleship as articulated and modelled by Jesus. The Markan Jesus' correctives on the true nature of discipleship, characterised by a willingness to face suffering and to serve others rather than self, overrule the disciples' misunderstandings and are aimed not just at the disciples themselves but at Mark's own community and, by extension, serve to inform the wider church's understanding of what it means to be a true follower of Jesus.

With respect to (implied) authorial intent, we saw in §11 that narrative criticism assumes that Mark tells a coherent story which involves the skilful use of his tradition about Jesus and the disciples in order to create a narrative which previously did not exist. Mark's redaction of traditional material, together with the assumed coherence and integrity of his gospel narrative, indicates a unity of story which may be entered into and experienced by the reader. With this in mind, I turned in §14 to what most scholars consider to be the ending to Mark's gospel and found there that Mark leaves us with a positive proclamation of the resurrection to the women (16.6), followed by an angelic commission to the women indicating re-instatement of the disciples and Peter together with a repeat in 16.7 of Jesus' promise in 14.28 that after the resurrection he would meet the disciples in Galilee. The fear and silence of the women in 16.8 provides a climactic conclusion to the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection and emphasises its epiphanic nature.

Discipleship, in light of Mark's conclusion here, is not primarily characterised by spectacular charismatic activity although, as we have seen, this does have its place particularly when the church engages in mission. The model of discipleship which Mark's readers are left with here is one where, despite weakness, misunderstanding and failure, the disciples are called again by the risen Jesus to continue to follow him on the way. This is a model of discipleship that would have brought comfort to Mark's community and, by extension, serves to inform the wider church's understanding of what it means, from a Markan perspective, to be a true follower of Jesus.

**Chapter IV**  
**THE MINISTRY OF JESUS, COMMISSIONING AND DISCIPLESHIP**  
**ACCORDING TO LUKE**

**§17. INTRODUCING THE ISSUES.**

Of the three synoptic evangelists Luke is unique in providing us with a second volume in addition to his gospel in which he narrates the early experience and missionary progression of the post-Easter church, beginning in Jerusalem and ending with Paul's arrival in Rome. In light of the substantial amount of material in Luke-Acts that is relevant to my present investigation, I will examine the evidence for Luke-Acts over the next two chapters. Here in chapter four, I will begin by looking at Luke's presentation of commissioning and discipleship in his gospel, concentrating on the period of the earthly ministry of Jesus. In chapter five, I will progress to the post-Easter period, examining the post-Easter commissionings of the disciples by the risen Jesus in Luke's gospel and in Acts, and from here I will consider Luke's understanding of the role of signs and wonders and their relationship to discipleship as he presents it in Acts.

Turning to Luke's gospel, we find that Third Wave commentators rely heavily on the commissioning and sending out of the Seventy(-two) disciples, which occurs only in the Third Gospel (Luke 10.1–20), for support of their paradigm for contemporary discipleship. This, when taken together with the mission of the Twelve (Luke 9.1–6, 10a), is considered pivotal by Third Wave commentators for confirmation of their

argument that Jesus intended to share his ministry of proclaiming the kingdom of God and demonstrating its manifest power with signs and wonders not just with the Twelve, but potentially with all Christians. This, they argue, is evidenced further by the subsequent activities of Christians described in the book of Acts. Referring particularly to the contemporary practice of signs and wonders, Charles Kraft of Fuller Theological Seminary writes:

Practice confirms belief. Jesus taught his disciples first through example. ... Then he sent them out to practise it for themselves (Luke 9.1–6; 10.1–12).<sup>556</sup>

Opinions differ occasionally within the Third Wave as to the way in which the NT evidence should be understood and applied today. For example, in discussing the mission of the Seventy(-two), Jack Deere acknowledges that this may have been a temporary mission with a temporary empowering, but nevertheless goes on to argue that Luke's inclusion of the mission of the Seventy(-two) militates against Jesus' intention that the power to heal and exorcise be restricted just to the apostles. Less cautiously, Bottomly argues that Jesus sent out the Twelve and Seventy(-two), 'to preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick and to demonstrate the power of God to reclaim His kingdom'.<sup>557</sup> In other words, the primary purpose of the missions of the Twelve and the Seventy(-two) was to demonstrate God's miraculous power. But is this really Luke's intention here?

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<sup>556</sup> Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity with Power*, p. 87.

<sup>557</sup> Bottomly, 'Coming out of the Hangar', p. 265.

In his rejection of dispensationalist arguments for the cessation of signs and wonders at the end of the 'apostolic age' (whenever that was!), Don Williams also relies heavily on Luke 9.1ff./Matt.;10.1ff., followed by Luke 10.1ff. as NT evidence against any understanding which restricts the performance of signs and wonders to the Twelve. Williams, who regards the sending out the Seventy(-two) as being of special importance for the Third Wave's case, rejects the suggestion that the two missions were limited in terms of objectives<sup>558</sup> and argues on the basis of Luke 10.1ff. that Jesus' intention was clearly to share his ministry more widely than just with the Twelve.<sup>559</sup> He concludes on the evidence of Luke 10.16 that Jesus intends his disciples to become 'extensions of himself'.<sup>560</sup> In support of his case, Williams quotes J. Jeremias with approval when he writes:

Authority over the spirits recurs constantly in the mission sayings and is virtually a characteristic of them.<sup>561</sup>

Here Williams concludes that Jesus deliberately set out to reproduce his 'kingdom ministry' (i.e. proclaiming the kingdom of God with signs and wonders) in his disciples, and after Pentecost, throughout the church.<sup>562</sup> However, it must be noted here that Jeremias makes a further important point which Williams ignores. According to Jeremias, Luke 19.19f. pars. belong to early pre-Easter tradition, and differ markedly from the (post-Easter) mission charge to the early Christian missionaries in that their

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<sup>558</sup> Ignoring here the fact that in Matthew's gospel Jesus specifically limits the missionary activities of the Twelve to the 'lost sheep of Israel' (Matt. 10.5).

<sup>559</sup> D. Williams, *Signs Wonders and the Kingdom of God* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Vine Books, 1989), pp. 125–127.

<sup>560</sup> Williams, *Signs Wonders and the Kingdom of God*, p. 129.

<sup>561</sup> Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, p. 95.

<sup>562</sup> Williams, 'Following Christ's Example', p. 183.

message is characterised by its *christological content*.<sup>563</sup> Williams ignores here any sensitivity to Luke's programme of unveiling epochs of salvation-history as a key to understanding the Evangelist's narrative progression as it unfolds in his two volume work.

In other words, any NT model of discipleship which is put forward as a contemporary paradigm for Christians today must take account of the post-Easter perspective shared by all the NT writers, and which naturally colours all that they wrote. Discipleship in the post-Easter situation, as we have already seen from our examination of both Matthew and Mark's gospels, is to be understood as being much more than just emulating Jesus in his proclamation of the kingdom of God, healings and exorcisms. These aspects of Jesus' earthly ministry are assumed by the synoptic evangelists to a greater or lesser extent, but only along with the more central aspects of discipleship which Jesus models, such as servant-leadership and, for Luke, (daily) cross-bearing (Luke 9.23; cf. Mark 8.34//Matt. 16.24). Any contemporary model of Christian discipleship which aims to reflect accurately the paradigmatic intentions of the writers of the synoptic gospels cannot afford to be overly selective but must take account of how each evangelist provides answers to the question: 'What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus?'

As I have argued, empowerment to perform signs and wonders is very definitely subsumed, so far as Matthew and Mark are concerned, under the primary christological focus for the church's proclamation that Christ is risen and the implications this has both for the message and nature of Christian discipleship. It is in the light of this core

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<sup>563</sup> Jeremias, *op. cit.*, p. 95, italics mine.

christological focus for the church's mission that a foretaste of God's resurrection power becomes manifest in healings, exorcisms and other signs and wonders which may, from time to time, accompany the outworking of the Great Commission.

Traditionally, for Pentecostal and charismatic Christians Luke-Acts has been a primary source for what may be considered normative for contemporary understandings of the role and activity of the Spirit in the life of the church today. Third Wave commentators have also placed much weight on selected material in Luke-Acts but, as I shall seek to demonstrate in what follows, Luke also has his own particular view of miracles and their place in life of the church.

#### §18. OVERVIEW OF DISCIPLESHIP IN LUKE.

In order to be sensitive to the Lukan context for the questions I am asking, I will first sketch briefly an overview of discipleship according to Luke. What are Luke's chief concerns in his presentation of the disciples and discipleship? Does the evangelist offer clues about these concerns through his handling of his source material? Can particular paradigmatic themes, which relate to Luke's view of discipleship, be detected?

*Luke's use of his sources.*

According to Fitzmyer, Luke's shift in salvation-historical perspective, from the imminent eschaton to the longer term present, enabled the evangelist to present his own particular view of discipleship as a model to be followed by his readers as they came to terms with the delay in the parousia and the need to continue to function in the world as followers of the Way.<sup>564</sup> It is clear that Luke's redactional activity demonstrates a pragmatic approach to discipleship that is geared to following Jesus in the longer term.

Two examples of this tendency in Luke's handling of Q can be seen in his presentation of the Beatitudes (Luke 6.20b–26//Matt. 5.3–12), and in his expansion of the sayings concerning the conditions for following Jesus (Luke 9.57–62//Matt. 8.18–22).

Matthew's Sermon on the Mount contains nine 'blessings' which spiritualise the qualities required of Jesus' followers. In contrast, Luke's Sermon on the Plain has only four 'blessings' plus four 'woes' all of which provide a much starker presentation of the mundane conditions facing disciples on a day-to-day basis. For Matthew, the qualities which attract God's blessing are being 'poor in spirit', and 'hungering and thirsting after righteousness' (Matt. 5.3, 6), whereas Luke is clearly much more concerned with conditions likely to face disciples in his own generation, such as actual poverty and hunger (Luke 6.20, 21). Both evangelists are conscious of the likelihood that disciples will be persecuted (Luke 6.22–23//Matt. 5.11–12), but again Luke is more explicit about

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<sup>564</sup> J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I–IX* (Anchor Bible Series 28; New York: Doubleday, 1981), p. 235.

the form persecution is likely to take in terms of exclusion and followers of Jesus being considered evil.<sup>565</sup>

A second example occurs in the second half of the Q material that sets out the conditions required of those who would follow Jesus (Luke 9.59–62//Matt. 8.21–22). Luke's version is expanded so that the person who requests permission to go and bury his father (Luke 9.59//Matt. 8.21) is not only told to 'leave the dead to bury their own dead', which is probably best understood as reflecting an earlier sense of immediacy present in Q, but is also told by the Lukan Jesus to go and 'proclaim the kingdom' which, for Luke, is very much an ongoing missionary task for disciples of Jesus (cf. Acts 8.12; 19.8; 20.25; 28.23, 31). Similarly, in Luke 14.26 those who would follow Jesus are told that their attitude to family ties, in contrast to their commitment to following Jesus, must be one of hatred.

Marshall maintains the view that the use of *μισέω* here should be understood in terms of 'loving less' rather than hatred.<sup>566</sup> However, Nolland, who accepts that the language is typical of Semitic hyperbole (e.g. Prov. 13.24; cf. Gen. 29.30–33), insists that the language of hate used in Luke 14.26 is intended to be understood 'with all seriousness' (cf. Ps. 139.21–22; 1QS 1:10; 9:21).<sup>567</sup> However, from the context of cross-bearing (14.27) and counting the cost prior to making the radical commitment demanded by Jesus

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<sup>565</sup> I.H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978), p. 252 suggests that Luke is referring here to social ostracism (cf. 1QS 5.18) rather than the practice of exclusion from the synagogue (cf. John 9.22) which was instituted in AD 85).

<sup>566</sup> Marshall, *Luke*, p. 592.

<sup>567</sup> J. Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34* vol. 35B (Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1993), p.762. J. Denney, 'The Word "Hate" in Luke xiv.26', *Exp.T* 21 (1909–10), p. 41, draws attention to similar ideas contained in a war song of Tyrtaeus (v. Bergk, *Poetae Lyrici Graeci*, ii. P. 15) which compares a man's life in battle with 'his enemy' for the honour of Sparta and 'the black doom of death as dear as the beams of the sun'.

(14.28–33), it is clear that Luke intends his readers to understand the thrust of Jesus' words in the sense of 'renunciation'<sup>568</sup> as a pre-requisite for discipleship.

Perhaps the most significant example of the way in which Luke's redaction of his sources sharpens his presentation of discipleship is his addition to Mark 8.34 of καθ' ἡμέραν (9.23). For Mark, the attitude of the disciple is to be one of initial self-renunciation, exemplified in the metaphorical image of the condemned person taking up their cross.<sup>569</sup> However, for Luke discipleship is understood as being lived out in the context of an ongoing situation and, for this reason, it is little wonder that for Luke disciples of Jesus must first count the cost of completing their course (cf. 14.28). The demand by the Lukan Jesus for his disciples to 'take up their cross' (14.27) is a commitment to self-denial which he has already made clear must be renewed on a daily basis (9.23).

### *Jesus and his followers.*

It is clear from reading both Luke and Acts that the Third Evangelist has a particular view of discipleship which, through his narrative, he aims to present to his readers in terms of ideal qualities to be attained by those who are disciples of Jesus of Nazareth. In the gospel, Luke uses Jesus as the pre-eminent exemplar. As Talbert notes, Jesus is the supreme paradigm for Luke as both the originator and example of a way of life which disciples must emulate.<sup>570</sup> In Acts, we see further examples of ideal discipleship

<sup>568</sup> Cf. O. Michel, *TDNT* IV, p. 690f., and Marshall, *op. cit.*

<sup>569</sup> Cf. Marshall, *Luke* p.374.

<sup>570</sup> C.H. Talbert, 'Discipleship in Luke-Acts', in F.F. Segovia, (ed.), *Discipleship in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), p. 74.

presented by Luke primarily through the apostles and other leading characters, all of whom may fairly be described as Luke's 'heroes of the Spirit'.<sup>571</sup>

Luke's gospel depicts Jesus having crowds of followers, both men and women, all of whom Luke regards as disciples (6.17; 10.1; 19.37). As Freyne notes, Luke is the only evangelist who clearly speaks of large numbers of disciples.<sup>572</sup> In 6.17 Luke mentions a 'great crowd' of disciples (ὄχλος πολὺς μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ) who are part of a greater multitude of the people, and in 19.37 Luke tells us that Jesus is greeted by a 'multitude' of disciples (τὸ πλῆθος τῶν μαθητῶν). Like his fellow synoptic evangelists, Luke concentrates on the Twelve but he also indicates his widening of the circle of disciples which gathers around Jesus by mentioning a number of women who are followers of Jesus, some of whom he actually names (Luke 8.1–3; 24.10).<sup>573</sup> Importantly, Mary Magdalene and the other women are portrayed by Luke as exhibiting loyalty to Jesus as an ideal quality of discipleship.<sup>574</sup>

From the outset, when the Twelve are chosen they are named 'apostles' by Jesus. Private instruction given to the disciples by Jesus, which is characteristic of Mark, is played down by Luke who creates scenes where instruction given by Jesus to his disciples takes place in the presence of a larger group such as the crowd (12.1; 20.45) or a larger group

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<sup>571</sup> I will follow up the implications of this for Luke's understanding of the purpose of signs and wonders and their relationship to discipleship in Acts in chapter five.

<sup>572</sup> S. Freyne, *The Twelve: Disciples and Apostles* (London and Sydney: Sheed and Ward, 1968), p. 208.

<sup>573</sup> Ben Witherington, 'On the Road with Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and Other Disciples – Luke 8.1–3', *ZNTW* 70 (1979), p. 247, makes the point that for Luke women are also called to be disciples and witnesses. However, Luke clearly has some residual difficulty with the idea of women as witnesses (cf. Luke 24.10–11)!

<sup>574</sup> Witherington, 'On the Road', p. 244.

of Jesus' disciples (e.g. Luke 6.17, 20).<sup>575</sup> This may well reflect Luke's ecclesiology where leaders operate within the wider community and are recognised for special tasks by that community (e.g. Acts 1.15ff; 6.2ff; 13.1ff.). Freyne perhaps overstates the case when he maintains that the instruction about disciples striving to be like their teacher given in Luke 6.40 is aimed specifically at the Twelve as 'leaders', for there is no evidence to suggest that the explicit context to disciples in general given in 6.1 and 17 has changed. It is true that, following a night of prayer (6.12) Jesus chooses the Twelve from amongst his wider circle of disciples, but immediately following this Luke explicitly sets the Sermon on the Plain before 'a great crowd of his disciples' as well as crowds of onlookers from the surrounding districts (6.17).

Beginning in the gospel with the ministry of John the Baptist in 3.1–6, Luke points embryonically towards two key themes which are central to his presentation of discipleship in the gospel and Acts: proclamation of the message of God, and the universality of the gospel.<sup>576</sup> Jesus sends out his newly appointed and empowered apostles to proclaim the kingdom of God (Luke 9.1–2), and in Luke's gospel alone, this missionary activity extends to a larger group chosen from those who follow the Lukan Jesus. Here Jesus appoints Seventy(-two) of his disciples to act as emissaries, sharing in his mission of healing, exorcism and proclamation of the kingdom of God, as he makes his way towards Jerusalem (10.1). This exemplifies further the requirement upon disciples to preach the kingdom of God with a universal perspective which is central to Luke's story of the expansion of the church in Acts.

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<sup>575</sup> Freyne, *The Twelve: Disciples and Apostles*, p. 209.

<sup>576</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, 'Taking Up the Cross Daily: Discipleship in Luke-Acts', in (ed.), *Patterns of Discipleship*, pp. 57f.

*The Journey Theme.*

As Sweetland has observed, it is a characteristic of Luke's understanding of discipleship that it involves a journey – from Galilee to Jerusalem (the gospel) and from Jerusalem to 'the ends of the earth' (Acts).<sup>577</sup> In Luke's gospel the disciples follow Jesus along the road from Galilee to Jerusalem. Fitzmyer notes how Lukan redaction indicates that this is also paradigmatic, in a figurative way, for his readers.<sup>578</sup> He writes:

...for Luke Christian discipleship is portrayed not only as the acceptance of a master's teaching, but as the identification of oneself with the master's way of life and destiny in an intimate, personal following of him.<sup>579</sup>

The idea of following Jesus is presented by Luke as both a model (the gospel) and a metaphor (Acts), where Jesus' disciples are described as followers of the Way (Acts 9.2; 19.9, 23; 22.4, 14, 22; cf. 18.25, 26). According to Fitzmyer, Luke uses ἀκολουθεῖν as a generic term for people who physically follow Jesus (e.g. Luke 7.9; 9.11; 18.43; 22.10, 39, 54; 23.27; Acts 12.8, 9; 13.43; 21.36), as a metaphor for discipleship (Acts 9.23, 49, 57, 59, 61; 18.22, 28), and in a corporate sense in Acts where the primitive Christian community are designated followers of 'the way' (ἡ ὁδός).<sup>580</sup> The link between following Jesus and being a witness is brought out particularly in Acts when Judas' place is taken by Matthias whose primary qualification is that he is a witness to the earthly ministry and resurrection of Jesus (Acts 1.22). This idea of bearing witness is an important aspect of discipleship for Luke and is emphasised at the end of the gospel

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<sup>577</sup> D.M. Sweetland, 'Following Jesus: Discipleship in Luke-Acts', in E. Richard (ed.), *New Views on Luke and Acts* p. 109.

<sup>578</sup> Fitzmyer, *Luke*, p. 241.

<sup>579</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>580</sup> Fitzmyer, *Luke*, p. 242.

(Luke 24.48) and is then carried forward as a central theme in Acts (1.8; cf. 2.32; 3.15; 5.32; 10.39–41; 13.31).<sup>581</sup>

### *Material Possessions.*

There is also an emphasis in Luke's gospel that reflects God's Old Testament bias towards the poor, which is brought out in a number of ways. Beginning with Jesus' 'Nazareth manifesto' (Luke 4.18–19), it also manifests itself in parables about the rich and poor (e.g. 12.13–21; 14.15–24; 16.19–31) as well as in other material (e.g. 1.52–53; 6.20–21, 24–25; 14.12–14; 18.18–25). It has been argued that the communal aspect of discipleship that manifests itself explicitly in Acts is foreshadowed in the gospel at 8.1–3 and is further implied in the two missions (9.1–6; 10.1–24).<sup>582</sup> Jesus' disciples are those who have left everything for the sake of the gospel (18.28) and, when the early post-Easter community is formed in Jerusalem, they share their material possessions (Acts 4.44–45; cf. 5.1–11) and explicitly meet the needs of the poor (Acts 6.1).<sup>583</sup>

Elsewhere in his gospel Luke makes it clear that Jesus' disciples are to help others (10.25–37); be persistent in prayer (11.5–13; 18.1–8), have a right attitude to possessions

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<sup>581</sup> Fitzmyer, *Luke*, p. 243.

<sup>582</sup> Talbert, 'Discipleship in Luke-Acts', p. 72.

<sup>583</sup> For a detailed discussion of Luke's attitude to material possessions see, for example, M. Hengel, *Property and Riches in the Early Church: Aspects of a Social History of Early Christianity* (ET London: SCM, 1974); L. T. Johnson, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977); P.F. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

and true riches (12.13–34; 16.19–31) have a proper attitude to serving God (19.11–27), and reflect in their attitude to others God's love for the lost (15.8–10, 11–32).<sup>584</sup>

The above brief sketch of Luke's understanding of the qualities required in followers of Jesus, provides us with a Lukan context for a more detailed examination of issues which are raised by the Third Wave's understanding of contemporary discipleship and signs and wonders, and the way this understanding is informed by the idea of commissioning and signs and wonders in Luke-Acts.

#### §19. THE COMMISSIONING OF JESUS.

In examining Luke's presentation of the baptism and commissioning of Jesus, my purpose here is two-fold. Firstly, to provide an important Lukan context for the sending out of the Twelve and the Seventy(-two) in mission. Secondly, I will ask, in what ways, if at all, can we say that Luke's portrayal of the baptism of Jesus is intended to be paradigmatic for the church?

It could be argued on structural grounds that Q contained an account of Jesus' baptism in order to link John the Baptist's ministry with that of Jesus, as well as to introduce the Q temptation narrative (Matt. 4.1-11//Luke 4.1-13).<sup>585</sup> The two minor agreements are:

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<sup>584</sup> R.N. Longenecker, 'Taking Up the Cross Daily', p. 67.

<sup>585</sup> For discussion see, Catchpole, *The Quest for Q*, p. 76; L.E. Keck, 'The Spirit and the Dove', *NTS* 17 (1970-71), 58-59; Marshall, *Luke*, p. 150; Turner, *Power from on High*, p. 189f., n. 5.

(i) Luke and Matthew's use of ἀνοίγω rather than Mark's σχιζομένους to describe the opening (rending) of the heaven(s);

(ii) Luke and Matthew's use of ἐπ' αὐτόν when describing the descent of the Spirit in preference to Mark's more forceful εἰς αὐτόν.

However, it is also held that these two minor agreements against Mark by Matthew and Luke are the result of coincidence rather than dependence upon a non-Markan source.<sup>586</sup>

In the case of both Luke and Matthew, we can say that ἀνοίγω in this context reflects common usage associated with apocalyptic literature in the Old Testament and inter-testamental literature.<sup>587</sup> Also, it can be argued that there is evidence for both Matthew and Luke playing down Mark's more colourful language.<sup>588</sup> In other words, the deviations from Mark 1.9–11 may be said to reflect the interests of both Luke and Matthew rather than Luke's use of a wholly non-Markan source.

Luke has made a number of redactional changes to his Markan source but few of them contribute significantly to an understanding of Luke's presentation of the baptism of Jesus as being intentionally paradigmatic for informing subsequent generations of Christian *praxis*. Luke arranges his narrative so that the reader is told of the imprisonment of John the Baptist before the evangelist relates the story of Jesus' baptism and pneumatic anointing. Hans Conzelmann made much of this feature, claiming that it should be understood in terms of Luke's understanding of salvation-history where John

<sup>586</sup> See, for example, Fitzmyer, *Luke I-IX*, p. 479; Menzies, *Early Christian Pneumatology*, p. 147; G.O. Williams, 'The Baptism in Luke's Gospel', *JTS* 45 (1944), pp.31–33.

<sup>587</sup> For a detailed discussion see Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 52–54, 78, 358–368.

<sup>588</sup> So Menzies, *Early Christian Pneumatology*, p. 147 and n. 2.

the Baptist and Jesus belong to two separate epochs.<sup>589</sup> More recently, Conzelmann's tightly drawn three-epoch *heilsgeschichtlich* hypothesis has been criticised at several points.<sup>590</sup> In any case, it should be noted that Luke shows a distinct narrative tendency elsewhere to neatly round off his narrative concerning the activities surrounding one major character before moving on to another.<sup>591</sup> Nevertheless, Conzelmann's basic three-epoch scheme with the middle period covering Jesus and his earthly ministry to Israel<sup>592</sup> is a helpful aid to understanding Luke's redactional interests here.

Luke begins by placing Jesus' baptism in the context of his being identified with others associated with the Baptist's repentance movement and explicitly shows Jesus (following the example of other baptismal candidates?) praying after his baptism.<sup>593</sup> Luke tells us that Jesus' baptism took place ἐν τῷ βαπτισθῆναι ἅπαντα τὸν λαὸν (Luke 3.21). Eduard Schweizer suggests that Luke's intention here is to show that the word which comes to Jesus declaring him to be 'Son of God' occurs in the presence of 'all the people'.<sup>594</sup> However, this assertion is not altogether supported by the evidence. Luke's contextual reference to ἅπαντα τὸν λαὸν is perhaps better understood in terms of Jesus' identifying himself, and his mission, with the people of Israel/God.<sup>595</sup>

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<sup>589</sup> Conzelmann understands Luke's salvation-historical scheme in terms of three distinct epochs of: the period of Israel; the period of Jesus; the period of the Church. Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, *passim*.

<sup>590</sup> See, for example, I.H. Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1970). For a critique of Conzelmann with reference to John the Baptist and the three epochs see, S. G. Wilson, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts* (Cambridge: CUP, 1973), pp. 60–67.

<sup>591</sup> See for e.g. Luke 1.80; 3.19–20; 24.50–53; Acts 1.9; 12.17.

<sup>592</sup> Viewed less rigidly than Conzelmann's Satan-free period (Luke 4.14–22.3).

<sup>593</sup> Cf. T. Levi 4.2. Luke's presentation of prayer and discipleship is discussed further below in §20.

<sup>594</sup> E. Schweizer, *The Good News According to Luke* (ET London: SPCK, 1984), p. 79.

<sup>595</sup> Apart from two occasions (Acts 15.14 and 18.10) where the context makes it clear that Gentiles are being included in the people of God, Luke always uses the singular λαός to refer to Jews only. Cf. Wilson, *Gentile Mission*, p. 35.

Schweizer's suggestion about the significance of the heavenly voice is again not entirely supported by Luke's narrative which suggests rather that the events following Jesus' baptism (i.e. the descent of the Spirit and the heavenly commissioning) occurred in the context of a subjective vision following prayer (cf. Luke 10.18; Acts 10.9ff). Therefore, it appears here that Luke is emphasising Jesus' strong identification and solidarity with (the people of) Israel/God within the overall context of his being commissioned by God.<sup>596</sup>

This understanding is strengthened further when viewed as part of the wider narrative where Jesus returns to Nazareth in the power of the Spirit and identifies himself with Isaiah's prophecy, thus setting the agenda for his earthly ministry (Luke 4.18–19; cf. Isa 61.1–2a).

The context here for the Nazareth pericope clearly focuses on the key Lukan theme of the power of the Spirit, and Luke introduces Jesus' public ministry by presenting him as a spirit-empowered teacher/healer whose mission is to proclaim YHWH's Jubilee. Twelftree notes that an important clue to Luke's understanding of Jesus' ministry is to be found in the close connection Luke makes between Jesus' ministry of teaching and healing and his being anointed with the Spirit.<sup>597</sup> It is, therefore, all the more shocking for Luke's readers when, after initial approval (Luke 4.22), Jesus' countrymen become so outraged by his assertions that they seek to kill him (4.29f.).

The underlying narrative purpose appears to be that Luke wants to establish his motif of the rejection of Jesus from the outset. If this is the case, then it clearly mitigates against a

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<sup>596</sup> Cf. R.L. Brawley, *Luke-Acts and the Jews* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1987), p. 23.

<sup>597</sup> G.H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle worker*, p. 146.

paradigmatic understanding of Luke's portrayal of Jesus' baptism and pneumatic anointing. They should rather be understood as being, for Luke, a unique event in salvation-history. In other words, from the outset Luke has established for his readers the uniqueness of the earthly ministry of Jesus within salvation-history. This in turn cautions against any cavalier tendency to treat the words and actions of the Lukan Jesus as normative for today. That is not to say that Luke does not provide clear models for Christian discipleship in his presentation of Jesus and those with whom he interacts. It is simply that any claim for a Lukan paradigm which may be considered normative for today must be measured against the 'given' of the unique place which the earthly Jesus and the apostles hold for Luke in salvation-history.

In his portrayal of the baptismal scene, mention of Jesus praying following his baptism may possibly reflect later Christian baptismal practice, but more likely is placed there by Evangelist to emphasise:

(i) the importance of prayer for Luke (Luke 3.21; 5.16; 6.12; 9.18, 28-29; 11.1; 22.41; 23.46; Acts 1.24; 6.6; 8.15; 9.11; 9.40; 10.9; 11.5; 12.12; 13.3; 16.25; 20.36; 21.5; 22.17; 28.8);

(ii) to establish the link between prayer and heavenly visions (Luke 1.10ff.; 9.28-36; 22.39-46; Acts 1.14; 2.1ff.; 10.9ff.; 12.55ff.);

(iii) to show that prayer is the precursor for receiving or being empowered by the Spirit (Luke 11.13; Acts 1.14; 2.1-4; 2.21,39; 4.23-31; 8.15-17; 22.16).

Immediately following the baptism of Jesus, the descent of the Spirit is described, followed by the verbal commissioning. The eschatological significance of these events is considerably heightened by Luke when he replaces the more graphic Markan verb, σκίζω (Mark 1.10) with the stylised apocalyptic introduction, ‘and behold, the heaven(s) were opened’ (Matt. 3.16//Luke 3).<sup>598</sup> Luke’s use of the verb, ἀνοίγω indicates that he is also aware of the apocalyptic significance of the event from his knowledge of LXX parallels,<sup>599</sup> although, being more concerned here with the descent of the Spirit, he does not expand this in quite the same vivid way as the First Evangelist. Luke describes more objectively the descent of the (Holy) Spirit and God’s voice with a view to emphasising for his readers the reality of the experience.<sup>600</sup>

In verse 22, as heaven opens, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ‘descends in bodily form as a dove’.

Again, this is different to Mark’s absolute τὸ πνεῦμα although we might expect Luke to use ‘Holy Spirit’ which occurs twelve times in his gospel and forty one times in Acts.<sup>601</sup>

However, there is nothing here to suggest that Luke is presenting a paradigm for the

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<sup>598</sup> Matthew uses the more usual plural form, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἤνεώχθησαν οἱ οὐρανοί ... (see, for example, Ezekiel 1.1 LXX; T. Levi 18.6f.; T. Judah 24.2) whereas Luke uses the singular τὸν οὐρανὸν (Luke 3.21).

<sup>599</sup> In discussing the eschatological role of the Spirit, Dunn, ‘Baptism in the Spirit: A Response to Pentecostal Scholarship on Luke-Acts’, p. 21, makes the important point, also relevant here, that whilst Luke was very familiar with the LXX, it is doubtful that he had detailed knowledge of either Jewish apocalyptic writings, Qumran literature or Rabbinic tradition as these do not appear to inform his theological background to the same extent as the LXX.

<sup>600</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Luke*, p.78. J. Nolland, *Luke 1–9.20* vol. 35A (Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1989), p.161. This appears to be a Lukan tendency. See, for example, Luke’s description of the risen Jesus’ appearance to the apostles (Luke 24.36–51 and esp. vv.39–43) and Peter’s escape from prison (Acts 12.6–17 and esp. vv.7 and 9) discussed further below in chapter five.

<sup>601</sup> Cf. Mark four times; Matthew five times; John three times. Of the 12 occurrences in Luke, all except four occurrences – Luke 3.16 (=Mark 1.8//Matt. 3.11), Luke 11.13 (= Q cf. Matt. 7.11), Luke 12.10 (= Mark 3.29//Matt. 12.32), and Luke 12.12 (= Mark 13.11) – are unique to Luke.

experience of receiving the Spirit.<sup>602</sup> Luke's emphasis is rather on Jesus being anointed with the Spirit in fulfilment of Isaiah 61.1 (cf. Luke 4.18).

So far, I have suggested there may be some evidence in Luke's portrayal of the baptism of Jesus for a paradigm for Luke's community that is illustrated by the Evangelist's portrayal of Jesus at prayer following baptism and before receiving the Holy Spirit, but no more than this. Indeed, Luke's paradigmatic intentions here appear to stress the centrality of prayer as the natural precursor to important events. As such, the significance of Jesus' prayer here should be taken in context with other similar examples of prayer which occur in Luke and Acts. In Luke's use of the term 'Holy Spirit' there is a parallel with the post-Easter experience of Jesus' followers, but not a direct paradigm. In the case of Jesus' pneumatic anointing, there is a unique fulfilment of OT prophecy which at best foreshadows, but is not necessarily paradigmatic for, the expectation<sup>603</sup> and experience of the post-Easter community (Acts 2.4 and *passim*).

That this is the case, seems to be confirmed further by Luke's description of the Holy Spirit descending σωματικῶ ἔδει. There has been much speculation about the intended meaning of the dove-imagery found in all four gospel accounts (Mark 1.10; Matt. 3.16; Luke 3.22; John 1.32) but there is no consensus.<sup>604</sup> Whatever the original meaning of this imagery, Luke's use of graphic language may be understood as foreshadowing his equally graphic wind and fire imagery at Pentecost (Acts 2.2f.).<sup>605</sup> In other words, we

<sup>602</sup> So Nolland, *Luke* (35A), p. 161.

<sup>603</sup> Acts 1.5. Cf. Matt. 28.19; John 20.22.

<sup>604</sup> For a summary of the many suggestions see, Marshall, *Luke* p. 153f., and for a much fuller treatment see, Keck, 'The Spirit and the Dove', pp. 41-67.

<sup>605</sup> Schweizer, *Good News According to Luke* p. 78f., suggests that the more graphic and corporeal descent

may say no more than what happened to the disciples at Pentecost was foreshadowed or 'patterned after Jesus' experience at Jordan'.<sup>606</sup>

As a further counterbalance against the danger of overshadowing the uniqueness of Jesus' baptism and reception of the Spirit in order to force Luke's paradigmatic intentions, it is worth looking briefly at two suggestions (out of many) which have been made concerning the underlying meaning behind Luke's use of dove-imagery. Both suggestions serve to highlight the uniqueness of the event for Luke. These are: (i) the dove as a symbol for Israel; (ii) the dove as understood in the Greco-Roman world.<sup>607</sup>

#### *The dove as a symbol for Israel.*

Although the origin of the dove-like visual form recorded by the Evangelists is yet to be satisfactorily explained,<sup>608</sup> given the likely dominical origin<sup>609</sup> of the tradition, an original Semitic background seems almost certain.<sup>610</sup> In Jewish tradition the dove was a symbol for Israel<sup>611</sup> and it has been suggested that Mark (Mark 1.10), invoking the

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of the Spirit in bodily form as described by Luke is typical of Luke's 'special language of the Spirit' (Acts 2.4; 4.31; 10.44-46; cf. 8.17-19).

<sup>606</sup> B. Aker, 'New Directions in Lukan Theology: Reflections of Luke 3:21-22 and Some Implications', in P.E. Elbert, (ed.), *Faces of Renewal* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1988), p. 123.

<sup>607</sup> In my view, Marshall is too dismissive of Luke's possible understanding and use of dove-imagery by Luke in terms of it being aimed by Luke at the Greco-Roman world on the grounds that the imagery should be understood in terms of a Semitic background. Although an original Semitic background seems likely, Marshall is even more dismissive of the view that the dove is a symbol for Israel (Marshall, *Luke*, p. 153).

<sup>608</sup> Nolland, *Luke*(35A), p. 161.

<sup>609</sup> As a visionary experience of Jesus (cf. Luke 10.18). So, for example, Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 65.

<sup>610</sup> Against L. Morris, *The Gospel According to Luke* (Leicester: IVP, 1974), p. 99, who allows that in Rabbinic sources the dove was a symbol for Israel but who, nevertheless, insists here that the dove-imagery must be taken as a piece of early Christian symbolism rather than something taken over from Jewish or Hellenistic sources. It must be noted here that Morris offers no arguments to substantiate his claim.

<sup>611</sup> Strack-Billerbeck I, 123-125. Cf. Hos 11.11; Ps 68.13; 74.19. Midr. Cant. 1:15 (93b); 2:14 (10a). Commenting on the phrase: 'As the wings of a dove covered with silver', the writer of Midr. Ps. Lxviii, 13

servant imagery of Isaiah 41.2, intended his readers to understand that with the reception of the Spirit, Jesus became the representative of Israel,<sup>612</sup> which fits well with Mark's idea of Jesus as the suffering servant (cf. Mark 10.45//Matt. 20.28). However, this does not guarantee that Luke understood the dove-imagery found in his Markan source in the same way, although it would fit well with Luke's efforts to restrict the ministry of Jesus to Israel (cf. Luke 7.1-10//Matt. 8.5-13), and it is tempting to think that Luke could be drawing particular attention to the descent of the Spirit in dove-like bodily form as a symbol of Israel to underline the fact that Jesus' (unique) mission was to Israel.

*Dove symbolism in the Greco-Roman world.*

According to C.H. Talbert, Luke's description of the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\tilde{\omega}\ \epsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\epsilon\iota\ \acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \pi\epsilon\rho\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\grave{\alpha}\nu$  would evoke for his Greco-Roman readers the Roman use of the flight of birds to discern the omens – good or bad.<sup>613</sup>

For the Holy Spirit to come to Jesus in the form of a dove would say to Mediterranean hearers that Jesus was beloved of God.<sup>614</sup>

This is certainly in line with the heavenly affirmation  $\acute{\omicron}\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\eta\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  which follows the descent of the Spirit and again serves to emphasise the uniqueness of the occasion whilst

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asks, 'Why is *Israel* compared to a dove?' [Montefiore & Loewe, (eds.), *A Rabbinic Anthology*, p.261. Italics mine.]. In Pseudo-Philo (possibly to be dated as early as 135 BC, although most probably during 1st century AD - see further D. J. Harrington, 'Pseudo-Philo', in J. H. Charlesworth, (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* vol. 2 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985), p.299.) we find in retelling the OT story of the ninth judge of Israel, Jephthah (Jgs 11.1-12), Ps-Philo 39:5 reads: 'And the people said to him [Jephthah], "Let the dove to which Israel has been compared teach you..."'

<sup>612</sup> So Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, p. 30.

<sup>613</sup> C.H. Talbert, *Reading Luke* (New York: Crossroad, 1984), p. 40.

<sup>614</sup> *Ibid.*

at the same time drawing a parallel with the graphic imagery describing the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2.2f.) which now speaks of eschatological judgement (cf. Luke 3.16//Matt. 3.11).

### *Conclusions.*

In this section I set out to answer the question, 'In what way, if at all, can Luke's description of Jesus' baptism be considered as paradigmatic for the church?' For the Third Wave, the idea of Jesus being commissioned presupposes NT evidence for a linear development from Jesus to the contemporary church. Just as Jesus was commissioned to his messianic task (Mark 1.9-11 pars.), so he in turn commissioned his followers both during his earthly ministry (Mark 6.6-13 pars.; Luke 10.1ff.) and following the resurrection (Matt. 28.16-20; Mark 16.14-20; Luke 24.49; John 20.19-23; Acts 2.1ff.). This linear understanding of the NT evidence provides the Third Wave with a paradigmatic bridge between Jesus and the faith and *praxis* of the contemporary church, particularly in terms of empowerment to perform signs and wonders being considered a normative experience for contemporary discipleship. My argument throughout this thesis is that the legitimate contemporary application of biblical paradigms requires a sensitivity to the evidence and the intentions of the authors (so far as these can be discerned) which can only result from a critical handling of the text.

According to Luke's account of the baptism of Jesus, the evidence suggests that Jesus' commissioning for ministry at Jordan was portrayed by Luke as an experience unique to Jesus and, consequently, a unique event in salvation-history. Also for Luke, Jesus'

pneumatic anointing marks him out as the representative man in terms of his receiving the Spirit.<sup>615</sup> Whilst Jesus' pneumatic anointing foreshadows, to a certain extent, the experience of his adherents at Pentecost, Luke's description of Jesus' baptism is not intended by him to provide a paradigm that should be considered normative for the church. Rather it has the effect of establishing, from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, the unique place held by the earthly Jesus in the salvation-historical scheme that overarches Luke's two volume work, and already allotted to Jesus by Luke in the birth narrative when he tells us that Jesus was conceived by the Spirit (1.39).

## §20. LUKE AND THE TWELVE (LUKE 6.12–16).

Luke's rendering of the call of the first disciples appears in Mark and Matthew in a different form (Luke 5.1–11, cf. Mark 1.16–20//Matt. 4.18–22). Evans maintains that the whole section (Luke 5.1–6.11) is of 'fundamental importance' for our understanding of Luke's treatment of discipleship in Luke-Acts.<sup>616</sup> Perhaps most significantly, from Luke 5.1 onwards we read of occasions when Jesus begins to share his ministry of preaching, healing and exorcism with chosen disciples (Luke 9.1–6, 10; 10.1–20) and these occasions foreshadow for Luke's readers the way in which his ministry will eventually extend beyond Israel to the whole world through the agency of the apostles and other chosen men of the Spirit.

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<sup>615</sup> Cf. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, p. 41.

<sup>616</sup> C.F. Evans, *Saint Luke* (London: SCM, 1990), p. 287 who notes particularly the principal role of Peter and his companions in both the gospel and the life of the early church (Luke 8.51; 9.28, 54. Acts 3.1; 4.13; 8.14ff.; 12.2) and especially Peter as the leader of the apostolic band and missionary to the Gentiles (Luke 9.2; 22.31; Acts 2.14–37; 5.29; 10–11; 15.14).

In his narrative, Luke has delayed the calling of the Twelve in order to establish for his readers the beginning of (and *raison d'être* for) Jesus' ministry (4.14–44). Jesus directs the fishing activities of the putative disciples with its miraculous results and thus demonstrates the δύναμις at work in him, and which Luke's readers already know is effective in exorcisms and healings.<sup>617</sup> Luke has highlighted this feature of Jesus' ministry for his readers from 4.14 when Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returns from the wilderness to Galilee and begins to gain a reputation as a teacher and healer (4.15, 23). Following his rejection in Nazareth, Jesus returns to Capernaum where he continues to teach and perform exorcisms (4.31 ff.). In concluding the story of the healing of the man with an unclean spirit, Luke uses the questions raised by the crowd about the nature of Jesus' authority to perform exorcisms as a rhetorical device for his readers (4.36). For Luke, it is important to establish that Jesus is a man under authority and this is made clear throughout his gospel,<sup>618</sup> with the nature of this authority being debated more fully in Luke 11.14–23 (cf. 20.1–8). Just as Jesus is presented by Luke as a man under authority, so too are those whom Jesus commissions to share in his authority (cf. 9.1; 10.1, 19; 24.49). In other words, the idea of being 'under authority' is the key to understanding the way in which Jesus' disciples share his ministry, including their being empowered to perform signs and wonders.

As we shall see in chapter five, this idea of authoritative commissioning and divine call also features in the life of the post-Easter community which Luke depicts in Acts. After

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<sup>617</sup> Cf. L.T. Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1991), p. 89.

<sup>618</sup> E.g. Luke 4.32, 36; 5.24; 7.7b–8.

Pentecost, it is the apostles together with the Jerusalem congregation they lead, who use their authority to commission selected members of their community (Acts 6.2–6), although in the case of Paul his defining commission comes from the risen Lord himself (Acts 9.3ff.; 22.6ff.; 26.12ff. cf. 1 Cor. 9.1). On other occasions it is the local congregation, acting under the prophetic direction of the Spirit who commission individuals for mission (Acts 13.1–3). In the various post-Easter commissionings described by Luke, the evangelist provides us with a strong echo of his earlier presentation of Jesus as a ‘man under authority’ (cf. Luke 7.8f.), particularly through the prominence given to the name of Jesus in the healing and subsequent discussion in Acts 3–4.<sup>619</sup> However, the important point to bear in mind here is that in Acts Luke reserves the performance of signs and wonders to a select few who receive an authoritative commission. Signs and wonders are not, so far as Luke-Acts is concerned, performed by any other members of the Christian community. In terms of contemporary application, I will argue that the evidence from Acts suggests a model where individuals are commissioned by their local congregation in whom the authoritative voice of the Spirit of Jesus rests.<sup>620</sup>

Luke first introduces his readers to Simon-Peter when Jesus visits Simon’s house and heals his mother-in-law (4.38-39). By re-ordering his text in this way,<sup>621</sup> Luke gives the impression that Simon was already known to Jesus. Leaney’s suggestion that Simon was already a disciple has the effect of rendering Luke’s deliberate re-ordering of his source

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<sup>619</sup> Discussed further below in chapter five.

<sup>620</sup> Acts 13.1–3 and cf. especially vv. 2b–3.

<sup>621</sup> Mark waits until Jesus has called his first disciples – Simon, Andrew, James and John – before relating the healing of Simon’s mother-in-law (Mark 1.16–20, 29–30).

material somewhat redundant and must, therefore, be rejected.<sup>622</sup> Following the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, Luke tells us that Jesus heals many and his true identity as Messiah and Son of God is acknowledged by the demons which he has cast out (cf. Mark 1.32-33). Thus it is only after Jesus' reputation as a teacher, healer and exorcist has been firmly established by Luke that his narrative turns to the call of the first disciples. Importantly, Luke adds to his Markan source for the story of the call of Peter (Mark 1.16–20) the element of a 'divine call'. This element of divine call was present in the commissioning of Jesus, discussed above, and is a characteristic of Lukan commissionings here and in Acts.<sup>623</sup> In order to heighten the dramatic effect, Luke adds to his setting for the call of Jesus' first disciples, the story of the miraculous catch of fish, which is also found in a different form in the 'appendix' to John's gospel (21.1–8) where it introduces an extended resurrection appearance.<sup>624</sup> In using the miracle-story as his context, Luke associates this important call to discipleship with a revelation to Peter of the divine authority of the one who is calling him and his companions to follow him (5.1–11 and esp. v. 8). In a similar way, later in Acts, Paul's call to discipleship is also accompanied by a heavenly revelation that guarantees the authoritative nature of Paul's vocation. Confronted with their respective revelations of Jesus' heavenly authority, both Peter and Paul fall to the ground.<sup>625</sup> By the time we reach Luke 6.12, Jesus has an expanded band of followers from which he is able to choose the Twelve.

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<sup>622</sup> A.R.C. Leaney, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1958), p. 124.

<sup>623</sup> Discussed further below in chapter 5.

<sup>624</sup> Cf. John 20.31 which appears to indicate the original ending of the Fourth Gospel. For a detailed discussion of Luke's calling of the disciples within the context of the miraculous catch of fish, see Jean Delorme, 'Luc v.1–2: Analyse Structurale Et Histoire De La Rédaction', *NTS* 18 (1971–72), pp. 331–350.

<sup>625</sup> Noted by Evans, *Saint Luke*, p. 28 who points out that similar language is used in Luke 5.8 (προσέπεσεν) and in Acts 9.4 (πεσών).

Luke concludes both his call narrative here, and the call of Levi in 5.27–31, by referring to themes that he considers important for the rest of his narrative. In 5.9 the amazement of the onlookers is indicative of Jesus' divine authority; the reference in 5.10 to 'catching people' foreshadows the missionary activity which is integral to the ministry of Jesus in the gospel and that of his followers in Acts; the immediacy of the response of Peter and his companions in leaving everything and following Jesus, together with Levi's response to Jesus' call to repentance, illustrate what is, for Luke, the appropriate response by disciples to Jesus' call to follow him (cf. 14.33; 18.28).<sup>626</sup>

Although Luke has introduced Jesus' ministry in terms of teaching, healing and exorcism, Luke also makes it very clear throughout his gospel and Acts that discipleship amounts to much more than proclaiming the kingdom and performing signs and wonders. As we have already seen, in presenting Jesus to his readers as a model or paradigm for discipleship, Luke clearly shows Jesus to be a teacher concerned with the personal qualities of those who would follow him. In so doing, the evangelist deliberately uses the wider context in which he sets the call of the first disciples to emphasise prayer as an important characteristic of discipleship. Jesus is presented by Luke as a man of prayer and here he serves as a paradigm for his followers.

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<sup>626</sup> In contrast to the rich ruler portrayed later in 18.18–25 and cf. vv. 28–30.

*Prayer and discipleship.*

In Luke's gospel προσεύχομαι and προσευχή occur 47 times whereas they occur only 17 times in Matthew and Twelve times in Mark.<sup>627</sup> In addition to occasions where material on prayer occurs elsewhere in Luke's sources, there are also a significant number of occasions when Jesus is found at prayer which occur only in Luke.<sup>628</sup> Luke's didactic theme of prayer continues to be exemplified in the life of the early church<sup>629</sup> Lane notes a number of occurrences of thematic parallels between the prayers of Jesus in Luke's gospel and the prayers of the early church in Acts.<sup>630</sup> He gives as examples the following striking literary parallels of the way in which Jesus' words of resignation to the will of God (Luke 22.42) are echoed by Paul's companions in Acts 21.14, and Jesus' words at the point of death (23.46) are echoed by Stephen, the first Christian martyr, as can be seen below.

Luke 22.42Πάτερ ... τὸ σὸν θέλημα ...γινέσθωLuke 23.46καὶ φωνήσας φωνῇ μεγάλῃ

[ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν:] Πάτερ ... ἐξέπνευσεν

Acts 21.14Τοῦ κυρίου τὸ θέλημαγινέσθωActs 7.60ἔκραξεν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ

κύριε ... ἐκοιμήθη

<sup>627</sup> T.J. Lane, *Luke and the Gentile Mission: Gospel anticipates Acts* (European University Studies 571; Frankfurt am Main: Petr Lang, Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1996), p. 66.

<sup>628</sup> Luke 3.21; 5.12–16; 6.12–16; 9.18–22, 28f.; 22.32; 23.34; cf. 11.5–8; 18.1–8; 9–14.

<sup>629</sup> For example, Acts 1.12–14, 24–25; 2.42, 46–47; 4.23–31; 6.2–4, 6; 7.59–60; 8.14–17, 22; 9.11, 13–14, 17, 40; 10.19; 12.5, 12; 13.1–3, 48; 14.23; cf. 16.13–16; 20.36; 21.5; 22.17–18; 24.11; 28.8.

<sup>630</sup> Lane, *Luke and the Gentile Mission*, p.67. Examples include prayer and reception of the Spirit (Luke 3.21f.; Acts 1.12–14; 2.1–4; 4.31; 8.15) and prayer before making a decision (Luke 6.12–13/Acts 1.15–26; 6.1–6).

The importance of prayer for Luke can be seen from the beginning of Jesus' ministry where only according to Luke does Jesus pray at his baptism (3.21). From here, Luke 'punctuates' Jesus' ministry with the same motif at other key points throughout his gospel (e.g. 5.16; 6.12; 9.18, 28-29; 11.1; 22.42, 44-45; 23.46).<sup>631</sup> Following the call of the first disciples and the healing of the leper (5.12-14), Luke inserts another summary of Jesus' activity with an interesting biographical reference to Jesus' habit of withdrawing to quiet places to pray (5.16). In doing this, Luke clearly uses Jesus as an example to inform Christian discipleship. Again, prior to Jesus' selecting the Twelve from his wider circle of followers, Luke tells us that Jesus spends the night in prayer (6.12).<sup>632</sup>

It has been suggested that in setting the scene in the mountains, Luke is alerting his readers to the importance of what is about to take place. According to Green, Luke's topographical setting suggests that he is reflecting the practice found in the OT where mountains are often the location for theophanies and divine revelation.<sup>633</sup> In contrast, Evans suggests that the location is to be understood theologically rather than topographically, the reference being to a new Sinai.<sup>634</sup> Alternatively, it may be that the mountains here are simply a descriptive representation of the 'deserted places' referred to in Luke's previous intriguing comment in 5.16. Whatever the case may be, there can be no other conclusion than that Luke's emphasis on prayer in the ministry of Jesus is clearly intended to have a didactic purpose for his readers.

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<sup>631</sup> Johnson, *Luke* p. 69.

<sup>632</sup> This all-night prayer vigil is indicated by Luke's use of *διανυκτερεύων* which only occurs here in the NT (cf. Job 2.9c LXX), noted by D. L. Bock, *Luke 1:1 – 9:50* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1994), p. 540.

<sup>633</sup> J.B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Michigan/Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1997), p. 258.

<sup>634</sup> Evans, *Saint Luke* p.319. Italics mine.

Green suggests that for Luke the night of prayer, which precedes the appointment of the Twelve, provides a model for the idea of the divine will being discerned through prayer.<sup>635</sup> This model is further demonstrated in Acts, for example, when the Seven are appointed in order to enable the Twelve to devote themselves to ‘prayer and serving the word’ (Acts 6.4), when Peter is imprisoned the community gather together to pray (12.12), and when Paul and Barnabas are commissioned as missionaries by the church in Antioch (13.3).<sup>636</sup>

Again, in Luke’s gospel Jesus tells a parable which occurs only in Luke and makes the point that persistence in prayer is necessary in order to effect a change in the circumstances (Luke 18.1–8). Elsewhere in the gospel, Jesus makes similar points about the need for persistence in prayer (11.5–8, 9–13). Persistence in prayer is then demonstrated in Acts when we are told that, following the death of James and Peter’s subsequent imprisonment, the church gathered together and offered earnest prayer to God on Peter’s behalf (Acts 12.5). They continue in prayer, not knowing of Peter’s escape until he arrives at the home of John Mark where they are gathered (Acts 12.12) and even then can hardly believe that their prayers have been answered (Acts 12.15).

For my purpose here, the overriding point is not so much that prayer occurs frequently in Luke-Acts, or that it is an important Lukan theme (although both are true); its importance

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<sup>635</sup> Green, *Gospel of Luke*, p. 258. For Luke’s view of the need for persistence in prayer see especially Luke 18.1–8 (cf. 22.46).

<sup>636</sup> For a detailed analysis of prayer in Luke-Acts see Alison A. Trites, ‘The Prayer Motif in Luke-Acts’, in Talbert, *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, pp. 168–185.

here lies in the fact that Luke persistently focuses on prayer in his gospel and Acts. By doing so he shows it to be an important characteristic of discipleship and this alone alerts his readers to the fact that Luke has more to say about discipleship than just mission, healing and exorcism.

### *The Twelve as Apostles.*

So far, I have argued that in his presentation of the calling of the Twelve Luke makes significant editorial changes to his source material, all of which throw light on Luke's presentation of Christian discipleship. Unlike Mark and Matthew, and in addition to his redactional reference to Jesus praying, Luke makes it clear that the Twelve have been chosen (ἐκλεξάμενος) from amongst a larger group of Jesus' followers (6.13, 17). Luke also makes it clear that the call of the Twelve, together with their authoritative designation as ἀπόστολοι, comes from the earthly Jesus, although at this point in the narrative Luke's readers do not yet know what it means to be an 'apostle'.

Luke makes it clear that from the moment of their institution, the Twelve are designated ἀπόστολοι by Jesus so that its associated ideas of commissioning and representation are present for his readers from the outset.<sup>637</sup> As Luke's narrative unfolds, the evangelist follows his Markan source in using the designation 'the Twelve' when

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<sup>637</sup> For discussion of the background and meaning for the NT idea of apostleship see, for example, F.H. Agnew, 'The Origin of the New Testament Apostle-Concept: A Review of Research', *JBL* 105/1 (1986), pp. 75–96; Rengstorf, *TDNT* I, pp. 398–447; C.K. Barrett, *The Signs of an Apostle* (The Cato Lecture 1969; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972); J.A. Kirk, 'Apostleship Since Rengstorf: Towards A Synthesis', *NTS* 21 (1975), 249–264.

Jesus first sends his disciples out on mission (Luke 9.1//Mark 6.7).<sup>638</sup> When the Twelve return, Luke also follows Mark this time naming the disciples as apostles. Apostles clearly have a missionary function but not all missionaries are called apostles by Luke – most notably the Seventy(-two) sent out on mission in Luke 10 remain for Luke the Seventy(-two) (Luke 10.1; 10.17), although this group almost certainly includes the Twelve.<sup>639</sup> In Luke 11.1 the apostles are linked with the prophets, indicating both their role (as the Twelve) in eschatological Israel and, later in Acts, in the suffering of church leaders for the sake of the kingdom (Acts 12.2ff.).

In Acts 1.2 there is a reiteration of Luke 6.14 where Luke reminds his readers that the apostles were chosen by Jesus and are the recipients of the dominical teaching, prior to Easter through the person of Jesus, and now, διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου. The importance of the Twelve, both as the founding representatives of the church and keepers of the authoritative, dominical tradition, as well as representatives of the new Israel is emphasised again by Luke in Acts 1.25–26 where he describes the election of Matthias as taking place in order to restore the depleted membership of the apostolic group from eleven to twelve. The election of Matthias is described explicitly by Luke in terms of apostleship, and is central to his understanding of what qualifies a person to be a founding pillar of the church.

As numbers are added to the early Jerusalem community, the focus of their life together is on the apostles' teaching (Acts 2.42 cf. Matt. 28.20) as well as prayer and communal

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<sup>638</sup> Matthew's redaction of Mark, τὸς δώδεκα μαθητὰς (Matt. 10.1), avoids the formal title.

<sup>639</sup> For further discussion see §22 below.

meals. Also, for the first time in Acts, we are told that signs and wonders are a feature associated with the church in Jerusalem, but focussed explicitly on the apostles as agents of God's δύναμις rather than on the wider circle of disciples who have experienced the outpouring of the Spirit and form the body of the community. It is the apostles who are empowered with δύναμις to perform signs and wonders (Acts 2.43) and, as I will discuss further below, it is precisely this combination of πνεῦμα and δύναμις that Luke regards as being (a) effective in the performance of signs and wonders and (b) limited to the apostolic band and specifically named heroes of the Spirit who figure as pioneering characters in his narrative of the expansion of the church's mission from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth/Rome (Acts 1.8; 28.11ff.). These various editorial changes show that for Luke the appointment of the Twelve is divinely inspired and carries an authority that goes back to Jesus himself.

Commentators have pointed out that Luke's use of the noun, ἀπόστολος in contrast to Mark's use of the verb (followed by Matthew), suggests that Luke was introducing his own ideas at this point.<sup>640</sup> Luke has already made it clear that the verb ἀποστέλλω carries with it the sense of being 'sent with a commission' (Luke 1.19, 26; 4.18, 43).<sup>641</sup> As Green aptly puts it, the naming of the Twelve as apostles here is a 'prolegomenon to

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<sup>640</sup> See, for example, J. Dupont, 'Le nom d'apôtre a-t-il été donné aux douze par Jésus?' *L'Orient Syrien I* (1956), 267–290 and 425–444 and especially 435ff., followed by S. Freyne, *The Twelve: Disciples and Apostles* (London and Sydney: Sheed and Ward, 1968), p. 93.

<sup>641</sup> Johnson, *Gospel of Luke*, p. 103. In the Q tradition, the significance of appointing the Twelve appears to be the inauguration of the new Israel with the apostles corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22.30//Matt. 19.28 cf. James 1.1). According to G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1962), pp. 17f. similar ideas are reflected in the way the Qumran community was divided.

<sup>641</sup> Green, *Gospel of Luke*, p. 259.

instruction in discipleship'.<sup>642</sup> But more than this, having Jesus designate the Twelve as apostles at this point in Luke's narrative serves at least two purposes: (a) it establishes the appointment of the Twelve as apostles firmly in the earthly ministry of Jesus, and this will be of particular significance for Acts (cf. Acts 1.12ff.);<sup>643</sup> and (b) it also alerts Luke's readers, even at this early stage, that the Twelve are somehow set apart from the rest of Jesus' disciples of whom, according to Luke, there were many more than just the Twelve.

### *Conclusion.*

The unique status attributed to the Twelve as 'apostles' by the Lukan Jesus must act as a cautionary note for any exegesis which views the apostles as little more than examples of an intentional model of discipleship which primarily emphasises the performance of signs and wonders. To do so ignores not only the fuller presentation of Christian discipleship found in Luke-Acts, but also ignores Luke's obvious concern to establish the idea of authority within the church being derived from the earthly Jesus himself. As a result, those whom Jesus appointed to succeed him act as guarantors of that authority to succeeding Christian generations.

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<sup>642</sup> Green, *Gospel of Luke*, p. 258.

<sup>643</sup> *Contra* G.B. Caird, *The Gospel of Saint Luke* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), p. 100 who suggests that Luke is guilty here of an anachronism

§21. THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE (Luke 9.1–6).

Immediately following Jesus' choosing of the Twelve as a discrete group from amongst the much larger group of disciples (6.13; cf. 6.17), Luke continues his narrative by emphasising Jesus' power to heal as he ministers to the crowds of both disciples and onlookers (6.17–19). In this summary statement of Jesus' activities in the area of Tyre and Sidon, we get a useful insight into Luke's understanding of Jesus' healing ministry (6.18b). Firstly, whilst elsewhere Luke brings out the importance of exorcism for Jesus' healing ministry,<sup>644</sup> he does not appear to differentiate to any marked degree between physical healing and exorcism – both are healed/cured (6.18).<sup>645</sup>

Secondly, we are told that as healing takes place, power (δύναμις) goes out from Jesus (6.19). It appears, then, that for Luke, it is Jesus' δύναμις through which the miracles are performed.<sup>646</sup> According to Schweizer, Luke understands the Spirit in typically Jewish terms as the Spirit of prophecy.<sup>647</sup> Consequently, Schweizer argues, Luke never attributes signs and wonders to the Spirit preferring to associate healing power with either the person of Jesus himself, or faith in the name of Jesus, and later with objects

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<sup>644</sup> Graham Twelftree notes, for example how in the healing of Peter's mother-in-law the Lukan Jesus rebukes the fever, an action which is a characteristic of an exorcism (4.39). Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker*, p. 176.

<sup>645</sup> Noted by Twelftree *ibid.* who makes the further point that '...amongst the gospel writers Luke has the least clear distinction between healing and exorcism ... he in effect gives all sickness a demonic and cosmic dimension'.

<sup>646</sup> Twelftree, *ibid.* and p. 392 n. 35, notes that of the four places where Luke attributes Jesus' miraculous power to his δύναμις, three are redactional (Luke 4.36//Mark 1.26; Luke 5.17//Mark 2.2; Luke 6.19//Mark 3.10; cf. Luke 8.46//Mark 5.30).

<sup>647</sup> E. Schweizer, 'The Power of the Spirit: The Uniformity and Diversity of the Concept of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament', *Interpretation* 6 (1952), pp. 264–268. E. Schweizer, *TDNT* VI, pp. 407 and 409; *The Holy Spirit* (ET Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), pp. 58–60.

associated with the disciples such as a shadow or handkerchief (cf. Acts 5.15; 19.12).<sup>648</sup>

However, *contra* Schweizer, Twelftree points to several occasions when Luke uses δύναμις and πνεῦμα together (e.g. Luke 1.17, 35; 4.14 cf. Acts 1.8; 4.7, 8; 10.38)<sup>649</sup> and in Luke 1.17 and Acts 10.38 particularly we have examples of πνεῦμα and δύναμις acting together in close association. Twelftree concludes, rightly, that ‘miracles are to be attributed directly to the Spirit or to the power of the Spirit.’<sup>650</sup>

From Luke 6.20, there follows an extended teaching section on characteristics of discipleship which is aimed at the wider group of Jesus’ disciples (6.20–49),<sup>651</sup> followed by three extended healing narratives (7.1–10, 11–17, 35–50) with a response to the question posed by the Baptist’s disciples and Jesus’ comment on the significance of John inserted at 7.18–35. Chapter 8 begins with Jesus continuing to proclaim the kingdom of God accompanied by the Twelve together with some named women who provide material support for the itinerant group (8.1–3). Following Mark’s order, Luke includes the parable of the sower (8.4–15) and the lamp under a jar (8.16–18). Jesus’ response to his family about true kinship in light of the kingdom of God (8.19–21) occurs earlier in Mark (3.31–35). Luke continues to follow Mark’s order with a series of miracles, the stilling of the storm (Luke 8.22–25//Mark 4.35–41), the healing of the Gerasene demoniac (Luke 8.26–39//Mark 5.1–20), and the healing of Jairus’ daughter and the

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<sup>648</sup> Schweizer, *TDNT* VI, p. 407.

<sup>649</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker*, p. 171. Turner, *Power from on High*, p. 211 n. 78 draws particular attention to Luke 4.14 where the description of Jesus’ returning in the power of the Spirit ‘reveals the impossibility of Schweizer’s claim that Luke makes a clear distinction between πνεῦμα ... and δύναμις, attributing speech to the former and miracles to the latter’.

<sup>650</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>651</sup> Freyne, *The Twelve*, p.68f., notes here how, in contrast to Mark, Luke’s account of the appointment of the Twelve is presented as an introduction to the Sermon on the Plain which is addressed to the extended group of Jesus’ disciples in contrast to Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount which is a contrasting of old and new demands of the law at the crowd (cf. Matt. 5.1ff.).

woman with a haemorrhage (Luke 8.40–56//Mark 5.21–43). These last three healing stories prepare the way for the empowering of the Twelve for mission in 9.1ff.

In chapter nine, Luke begins by focusing the reader's attention on the relationship between Jesus and the Twelve. In sharing his ministry here, Jesus prepares the way for further teaching about discipleship which occurs throughout the rest of the gospel. In Luke's sources there are two accounts of Jesus commissioning, empowering and sending the Twelve out on mission – one in Mark (6.7–13), and one in Q. Matthew uses both sources in his account of the sending out of the Twelve, whereas Luke depends primarily on Mark for his account of the sending out of the Twelve, and material from Q for his unique account of the sending out the Seventy(-two) in Luke 10.1–20 (cf. Matt. 9.37f.; 10.7–16; 11.21–23). It seems likely, therefore, that the sending out of the disciples on mission by Jesus goes back to a single dominical tradition<sup>652</sup> and this clearly has implications for our understanding of the significance of the sending of the Seventy(-two) in Luke's narrative which I consider in §22 below.

In this pericope, Luke relies on Mark's order for the commissioning of the Twelve (Luke 9.1–6, 10//Mark 6.6–13, 30). In Mark's account there is an emphasis on exorcism with the Twelve being given ἐξουσία over unclean spirits/demons (Mark 6.7; 6.13), and Mark concludes his narrative in verse 13 by saying that the disciples cast out many demons and healed the sick by anointing them with oil.<sup>653</sup> How, then, are we to understand Luke's purpose here and the way it relates to his understanding of Christian discipleship? Does

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<sup>652</sup> See for example, Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament*, pp. 41–46 and Marshall, *Luke*, p. 350.

<sup>653</sup> The reference to anointing the sick with oil appears to reflect later Christian practice (cf. James 5.14).

Luke have a more far-reaching didactic purpose, other than simply giving a paradigmatic example of Jesus empowering the disciples to perform signs and wonders? Is Luke's purpose perhaps related more to informing his readers at an early stage in his two-volume work about the nature, authority and purpose of the apostolic band and other heroes of the Spirit who are the evangelist's central characters in Acts?

In sending the Twelve out on mission, the Lukan Jesus extends his ministry into the whole region whilst at the same time commissioning and empowering the apostles to be his personal representatives.<sup>654</sup> It is true that here we have at least superficial evidence for the Third Wave's case, in that the apostles can be described as sharing in Jesus' ministry of proclaiming the kingdom of God and performing signs and wonders. However, without further qualification, such an interpretation of the evidence is misleading. In context, Jesus' empowering the disciples here is a necessary corollary of their being commissioned for this particular mission.<sup>655</sup> In other words, at this point in Luke's narrative the commissioning and empowering of the Twelve is better understood in a more discrete sense. So far as Luke's didactic intent is concerned, this can be little more than a foreshadowing for his readers of what is to come later in the post-Easter situation.<sup>656</sup>

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<sup>654</sup> Bock, *Luke 1:1–9:50*, p. 818.

<sup>655</sup> For the combination of 'preaching and healing', see, for example, Luke 4.18, 40–44; 6.17–18; 8.1–2.

<sup>656</sup> Cf. Marshall, *Luke*, p. 350., and for a detailed discussion of the relationship between signs and wonders and preaching in Acts see L. O'Reilly, *Word and Sign in the Acts of the Apostles: A Study in Lukan Theology* (Rome: Cura Pontifical Universitatis Gregorianae, 1987).

To Mark's ἐξουσία, Luke adds δύναμις to describe the power given to the Twelve enabling them to preach and heal (9.1). This combination reflects precisely the same power exercised by Jesus himself (4.14, 36; 5.17; 8.46; 16.19).<sup>657</sup> That for Luke this empowering is also firmly connected with mission was foreshadowed in 5.10 when Jesus informed Peter that he would be 'catching men' (νῦν ἀνθρώπους ἔση ζωγρῶν).<sup>658</sup> Luke does not appear to see a clear distinction between healings and exorcism, 'since both constitute liberation from diabolical bondage'.<sup>659</sup>

This raises the question whether the apostles' empowerment was just for this occasion? Marshall thinks not, arguing that Luke's use of the aorist ἔδωκεν, rather than Mark's ἐδίδου, does not provide sufficient grounds for it to be argued that Luke intended this to be an empowering just for this occasion. Nevertheless, Marshall concedes that Luke's context does suggest just such a one-off occasion.<sup>660</sup> Also, there are clear indications elsewhere in Luke's gospel that the evangelist views this commission as being of limited duration together with their accompanying endowments of ἐξουσία and δύναμις (Luke 9.40 cf. 24.49 and Acts 1.8).<sup>661</sup>

These indications are strengthened further in relation to the mission of the Seventy(-two) when account is taken of Luke 22.35–38 where Jesus deliberately rescinds the prohibition on taking purse, bag or sandals on mission, clearly emphasising the changed situation

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<sup>657</sup> Bock, *Luke 1:1–9:50* p. 814 correctly notes that this power (δύναμις) to heal will be retained by the Twelve in Acts and extended to others (Acts 3.1–10; 6.8; 8.5–13; 13.9–12; 14.8–15; 15.12; 19.11–16) where their message will have the added dimension of proclaiming Jesus as the risen mediator of their miraculous abilities which are evidence of the promised kingdom of God.

<sup>658</sup> Green, *Gospel of Luke*, p. 436.

<sup>659</sup> Green, *Gospel of Luke*, p. 358.

<sup>660</sup> Marshall, *Luke*, p. 350f.

<sup>661</sup> Cf. R.H. Stein, *Luke* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1992), p. 267.

faced by Luke's post-Easter readers. Whilst I discuss this pericope further in §22 below, the importance of these verses for our understanding of the way in which Luke differentiates between the epochs in salvation-history (i.e. then and now) should not be overlooked here. They appear only in Luke and their significance is heightened considerably by the fact that they act as a conclusion to Luke's account of the Last Supper. Prior to Jesus' earlier rejection by Israel, there was no need for the missionaries to make long-term provision, nor did the eschatological immediacy of the situation which characterised Jesus' earthly ministry warrant such provision. In the post-Easter situation, however, the apostles face an indeterminate period now characterised by a diminishing sense of immediacy and the church's missionary endeavours must now take a longer term view with the subsequent need to make provision for an extended period of missionary activity.<sup>662</sup> If, as seems likely, Luke also envisaged the Twelve being part of the Seventy(-two),<sup>663</sup> the commissioning and empowerment of the Twelve on this occasion is perhaps best understood as being limited for the duration of their mission with the apostles receiving a further commissioning by Jesus when they were sent out later as part of the larger group. This is borne out in Luke's account of the disciples' failure to heal the boy possessed by a demon (Luke 9.37–43a pars.), where Luke emphasises dramatically the disciples' inability to cast out the demon by having the father 'beg' the disciples to act<sup>664</sup> rather than simply asking them to cast it out as is the case with Luke's Markan source.<sup>665</sup>

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<sup>662</sup> Evans, *Saint Luke*, p. 805.

<sup>663</sup> See §22 below.

<sup>664</sup> ... ἐδεήθη τῶν μαθητῶν (Luke 9.40).

<sup>665</sup> ... εἶπα τοῖς μαθηταῖς σου ἵνα αὐτὸ ἐκβάλωσιν (Mark 9.18).

Luke follows Mark's order, placing this incident immediately after the Transfiguration (Mark 9.2–10 pars.). The significance of the incident for Luke may be discerned further by noting Luke's omissions from his Markan source. Luke clearly wants to focus his readers' attention on the person of Jesus. By omitting Jesus' comments about John the Baptist and Elijah (Mark 9.11–13), Luke brings this incident into even closer relationship with his account of the Transfiguration.<sup>666</sup> The narrative effect of the disciples' failure acts as a salutary counterbalance to the heavenly glory just revealed on the mount of transfiguration.

As Jesus descends the mount of transfiguration, he is confronted with a situation where his disciples, although only recently given power and authority by Jesus 'over all demons and to cure diseases' (Luke 9.1, 6), are unable to cast out the unclean spirit. Far from exercising a ministry modelled on that of Jesus, as they had during their recent mission, the disciples now find themselves powerless to act. The reader, in contrast to the portrayal of the post-Easter activities of the apostles in Acts, is left to make a negative comparison between the disciples' recent success following their being *specifically commissioned* by Jesus (Luke 9.6) and their present impotence.

Had Luke wanted to promote the model of discipleship claimed by Third Wave commentators he could easily have done so here, but the changes he has made to his Markan source indicate otherwise. Luke omits any mention of the reason for the disciples' failure being due to the difficulty of this specific case or, more surprisingly for Luke, lack of prayer (cf. Mark 9.29). Rather, Luke's focus here is clearly on Jesus

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<sup>666</sup> See, for example, Marshall, *Luke*, p. 389 and Evans, *Saint Luke* p. 422.

himself whose glory has just been revealed on the mount of transfiguration. In these present circumstances, Jesus acts with authority so that the boy is cured and God's glory is again revealed through Jesus (9.43a).<sup>667</sup>

Luke is not interested here in promoting signs and wonders as a characteristic of the ministry shared between Jesus and his followers. He illustrates this point clearly in 9.49–50 where exorcism using Jesus' name as a powerful talisman may be practised with effect even by those who are not disciples.<sup>668</sup> And again, in 9.51–56, where the immature attitude to deeds of power evidenced by Jesus' closest confidantes borders on the ridiculous. Having thus put deeds of power into a proper perspective, Jesus' explanation of what is demanded of his followers in 9.57–62 hits Luke's readers all the more forcibly and prepares the way for a series of Jesus' instructions to his disciples as he journeys towards Jerusalem (cf. 11.1–13; 12.22ff.; 16.1–13; 17.1–10, 22ff.).

As Jesus prepares to send the Twelve out on mission in 9.1–6, Luke describes the disciples as being given ἐξουσία and δύναμις to exorcise and heal. These are exactly the same attributes used in previous Lukan summaries to describe the ministry of Jesus (Luke 4.36; 5.17; 6.19; 8.46). They also serve to prefigure the post-Easter experience of the apostles (Luke 24.49. Acts 1.5, 8; 2.1ff.).<sup>669</sup> According to Bock, Luke is unique in combining the two terms δύναμις καὶ ἐξουσίαν where Luke's addition of δύναμις

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<sup>667</sup> Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34* (Word Biblical Commentaries, 35B; Dallas: Word Incorporated, 1993), p. 507 notes that only here does Luke use the Greek words ἐκπλήσειν (to astonish) and μεγαλειότης (majesty/magnificence) in connection with a healing story.

<sup>668</sup> See my discussion of this pericope in §13 above.

<sup>669</sup> Noted, for example by Freyne, *The Twelve*, p. 94. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* p. 436 notes also how Luke has earlier alerted his readers to the fact that Peter would be catching people and concludes that here the apostles are empowered for mission.

emphasises the action and appears to underline the fact that the apostles have been commissioned to take a full share in Jesus' ministry on this occasion and (in the name of Jesus) to perform exorcisms and healings.<sup>670</sup>

It has been argued that, historically, the disciples were probably involved in exorcism prior to Easter.<sup>671</sup> However, Luke's narrative makes no firm distinction between healing and exorcism as both are perceived in terms of releasing captives (cf. Luke 4.18) but, as I have argued, Luke does make a firm distinction between the earthly ministry of Jesus and the ministry of the church in the post-Easter situation. The apostles will be empowered in a fuller way by the Holy Spirit in the post-Easter situation. This, in turn, suggests that the two occasions when the disciples are sent out on mission by Jesus in Luke's gospel are to be regarded as discrete incidents where the focus is on Jesus' earthly ministry rather than providing evidence that the part played by Jesus' followers indicates a normative state of affairs where most, if not all, of Jesus' followers are empowered to perform signs and wonders. Even in Acts, Luke makes this clear in the way he restricts the miraculous to a chosen few 'men of the spirit'.<sup>672</sup>

As we have seen, in Luke 9.1, where the apostles are given δύναμις and ἐξουσία over demons and to cure diseases as they are sent out by Jesus to proclaim the kingdom of God, we have a combination of proclamation (word) accompanied by the miraculous. However, it should also be noted that, in salvation-historical terms, in this first mission

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<sup>670</sup> Bock, *Luke:1 – 9:50*, p. 813.

<sup>671</sup> See for example, Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, p. 124.; Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, p. 95; Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, p. 73f.

<sup>672</sup> For the term 'men of the spirit' and for a discussion of their significance for Luke-Acts see L. T. Johnson, *Literary Function of Possessions*, pp. 38–60.

the apostles' role is significantly different from their forthcoming role in the post-Easter situation depicted in Acts. In the gospel, they are sent out as participants in the earthly mission of Jesus to Israel, whereas in Acts, with its universal missionary perspective, they receive heavenly δύνμις to facilitate their empowered witness beyond Israel to the 'ends of the earth' (Luke 24.47; Acts 1.8; cf. 28.16, 30f.).<sup>673</sup> It should also be noted that the ἐξουσία and δύνμις associated with this commission does not extend to Luke 9.37 where the disciples (apart from Peter, James and John) are unable to exorcise the boy with a demon and where the expectation, presumably based on past performance, on the part of both the boy's father and the disciples themselves was that they would be able to do so.

In Luke 9.2 Johnson insists rightly that ἀπόστειλλω must be taken in its fullest meaning since the Twelve have already been designated 'apostles' by Luke's Jesus and they will be called apostles again when they return.<sup>674</sup> Leaney even suggests that the phrase κηρύσσειν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἰᾶσθαι (Luke 9.2) not only summarises the ministry of Jesus himself but for the Twelve should be regarded as a 'formula of apostleship'.<sup>675</sup> Johnson argues further for the *prophetic* nature of the apostolic role where the apostles succeed Jesus as bearers of the Spirit, and that this is clearly foreshadowed here when the Twelve, as apostles, engage in the same activities as Jesus himself.<sup>676</sup> Again, this does not necessarily invite the assumption that, at this point in

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<sup>673</sup> C.K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles vol. 1: Acts I–XIV* (Edinburgh: The & The Clark, 1994), p. 81, points out that 'to the ends of the earth' is a stock phrase indicating that the mission will be universal.

<sup>674</sup> Johnson, *Gospel of Luke*, p. 145. Cf. Luke 9.10a/Mark 6.30 but omitted by Matthew.

<sup>675</sup> Leaney, *Gospel According to St. Luke*, p. 160.

<sup>676</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.* p. 145.

Luke's narrative, the Twelve play anything more than a unique and formative role foreshadowing their forthcoming role in life of the early church. In addition, if we accept Johnson's argument for the prophetic nature of the apostolic role, including empowerment to perform signs and wonders, then the evidence in Acts suggests that this often goes hand in hand with missionary activity. If this is the case, it would also explain why in Acts, Luke restricts the practice of signs and wonders to the apostles and to a few select individuals who are specifically commissioned by the apostles (e.g. Acts 6.1–6), or by the risen Lord (e.g. Acts 9.1ff) or by a local congregation (e.g. Acts 13.1–3) to exercise a similar prophetic/missionary role within the early church.

### *Conclusions.*

We have seen that the Twelve play a unique role as apostles for Luke, providing the link between the church and the earthly Jesus and thus providing the dominical *imprimatur* for Luke's presentation of Jesus and the early church. However, we have seen here that the clear implications are that the authority and empowering of the commission by the earthly Jesus to the apostles was given on this occasion for a discrete purpose and was, in all likelihood, regarded by Luke as being of limited duration.

The commissioning, empowering and sending of the Twelve is not intended here by Luke to serve as a normative paradigm for what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, but is presented by Luke as a foreshadowing of the missionary activity to which the church will be called in the post-Easter situation by the risen and exalted Jesus, and which is the

subject of Luke's narrative in Acts. In other words, Luke's purpose here is not to present a model of discipleship which sees every Christian being called to emulate Jesus and the apostles in performing signs and wonders, rather the evangelist makes it clear that such a ministry is reserved for those individuals who are called and commissioned for this prophetic ministry which, in Acts, is normally exercised in the context of the expanding mission of the church and its post-Easter proclamation.

## §22. SENDING OF THE SEVENTY(-TWO).

### *Introduction.*

As we have already seen, Luke's two mission accounts of the Twelve followed by the Seventy(-two) are of particular importance for the Third Wave's case. Noting the order in which signs and wonders accompany the missionary activity of first Jesus, then the Twelve, then the Seventy(-two), Williams concludes that Jesus deliberately provides a model for Christian discipleship which implies that the performance of signs and wonders is not intended to be restricted to a chosen few but to be regarded as normative for Christian discipleship from the first century to the present day.<sup>677</sup> As I argued in §21 above, a more critical reading of Luke's narrative leads to the conclusion that Luke regarded the empowering of the Twelve to perform healings and exorcisms by Jesus as a temporary measure firmly aligned to their mission. I also concluded that, at best, for Luke's readers this mission foreshadows the widening missionary activities of the church

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<sup>677</sup> Williams, 'Following Christ's Example', p. 183.

after Pentecost. We must now ask whether a similar conclusion is called for in the case of the mission of the Seventy(-two)?

Whilst the appointing of the Twelve by Jesus and his sending them out on mission occurs in all three synoptic gospels, the commissioning and sending out of Seventy(-two) emissaries by Jesus from his wider group of followers is unique to Luke's gospel. Why has only Luke included this second mission in his gospel? Does the account of the mission of the Seventy(-two) support the Third Wave's view that Luke intends to show here that Jesus deliberately widens the authority to heal and perform exorcisms beyond himself and the Twelve to include the wider circle of his followers, presumably on a permanent basis, and therefore, by implication, to all Christians? In other words, is the mission of the Seventy(-two) intended by Luke to provide a paradigmatic example of discipleship accompanied by signs and wonders which confirms the Third Wave's claim that the performance of signs and wonders are normative for discipleship today? Alternatively, does such a reading of the text represent a misunderstanding Luke's narrative purpose? Does the evidence suggest, *contra* Williams, that the mission of the Seventy(-two) had a more discrete purpose in Luke's narrative, as we saw was the case with the mission of the Twelve?

Ferdinand Hahn has shown that Luke's two mission accounts are derived from two sources, Mark and Q.<sup>678</sup> As I noted in §21 above, Luke based his account of the mission of the Twelve primarily on Mark, whereas Matthew's version of the same mission conflates material from both Mark and Q. Whilst it may be true that the two accounts in

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<sup>678</sup> Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament*, pp. 41–46. Cf. Also Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, p. 231.

Mark and Q go back to a single mission tradition,<sup>679</sup> we must ask here why Luke alone, who normally avoids doublets, included two missions in his narrative, one of which is strikingly unique to his gospel? Was the mission of the Seventy(-two) intended by Luke to be paradigmatic for the post-Easter church?

### *Seventy or Seventy-two?*

Conflicting manuscript evidence has resulted in much debate about the actual number of disciples we should read here, 'seventy' or 'seventy-two'?<sup>680</sup> The manuscript evidence is inconclusive either way and arguments in favour of seventy or seventy-two have rested on conclusions drawn about the likely OT background underpinning Luke's narrative at this point. It is argued that the number Seventy(-two) is symbolic of the Gentile nations,<sup>681</sup> and thus foreshadows the forthcoming Gentile mission in Acts. Alternatively, the appointment of this extended band of missionaries from amongst Jesus' disciples reflects OT passages where Moses appoints seventy helpers to assist him.

In support of 'seventy', there are two symbolic references in the OT. Firstly, the seventy elders who attend Moses at Sinai (Exod. 24.1) are appointed to share Moses' burden of ministry and are empowered for the role by sharing in the Spirit given by God to Moses (Num. 11.1f. Cf. Exod 18.21–23; Deut. 1.9–18). It is also argued that the heavenly

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<sup>679</sup> So, for example, Marshall, *Luke*, p. 413.

<sup>680</sup> For a full discussion of the textual variants supporting seventy and seventy two, see B. M. Metzger, 'Seventy or Seventy-two Disciples?' *NTS* 5 (1958–59), 299–306. Metzger concludes that the evidence for both seventy and seventy-two is so evenly balanced that this textual problem cannot be satisfactorily resolved and that both '70' and '72' were widely used in the early manuscript tradition.

<sup>681</sup> Cf. Gen 11. As Metzger rightly notes, *op. cit.*, p. 303, the number adds up to 72 in the LXX.

council of *bênê elohim* which the LXX translates as οἱ ἄγγελοι, numbered 70 and that the number of Gentile nations was also 70 (Gen 10; Jubilees 44.34), possibly based on the account of God dividing the nations in Deut 32.8. Interestingly, there are also occasions in contemporary Jewish literature where we read of the appointment of 70 individuals who are sometimes accompanied by a further twelve or seven associates.<sup>682</sup>

Alternatively, according to the Letter of Aristeas there were 72 translators of the Septuagint made up from six honourable men from each of the twelve tribes of Israel<sup>683</sup>

The LXX itself suggests the number of nations in Gen 10–11 was 72, confirmation of which is found in the number of princes and kings in the world recorded elsewhere in 3 *Enoch* 17.8; 18.2–3; 30.2.<sup>684</sup>

Evans maintains that Luke's use of the phrase, ὁ κύριος ἀνέδειξεν in 10.1 reflects a technical meaning 'to authorise or appoint to an office' in the church and so is meant by Luke to reflect a later, post-Easter situation.<sup>685</sup> This seems to me unlikely. Apart from the fact that there is no evidence for this in Acts where, initially at least, any latent idea of 'office bearers' is confined by Luke to the apostolic band, followed by Stephen and his

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<sup>682</sup> The following references are noted by Evans, *Saint Luke*, p. 445. Josephus, *The Life*, 52–57 (Loeb Classical Library edition, p. 23), where Josephus tells us of twelve leading Jews from Caesarea who accompany 70 envoys from Ecbatana back to Caesarea. In *Jewish War II* 569–574 (Loeb Classical Library edition, p. 543), Josephus tells us of the appointment of 70 mature men who are appointed magistrates over the whole of Galilee together with seven individuals in each city who would adjudicate over less petty cases whilst referring more important cases to the seventy. Again in *Jewish War IV* 332–338 (Loeb Classical Library edition, p. 99), Josephus describes the appointment of 70 leading men by the Zealots to act as judges in mock trials and courts of justice.

<sup>683</sup> Letter of Aristeas 46–50 in Charlesworth, (ed.), *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* vol. 2, p. 16.

<sup>684</sup> All noted by Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53* (Grand Rapids; Michigan: Baker Books, 1996), p. 1015 who opts for the originality of 72 missionaries in Luke 10. However, Bock down-plays the symbolism of the number arguing that the significance of the pericope lies in the fact that Jesus expands his missionary activity beyond the Twelve (cf. p. 994).

<sup>685</sup> Evans, *Saint Luke* p. 444.

Hellenist colleagues.<sup>686</sup> It should also be noted that Luke's use of the post-Easter title κύριος to refer to Jesus is something that occurs throughout Luke's gospel (e.g. 7.13, 19; 10.1, 39, 41; 11.39; 12.42; 13.15; 17.5, 6; 18.6; 19.8, 31, 34; 22.61; cf. 24.3). Although the evidence for seventy or seventy-two remains inconclusive, whichever the preferred number, most are agreed that the mission of the Seventy(-two) was intended by Luke to be a symbolic prefiguring of the church's post-Easter mission beyond Israel.

Susan Garrett argues against this prevailing view.<sup>687</sup> In discussing two LXX passages which may inform Luke's second mission (Gen 10.2–31; Num. 11.16.–25), Garrett argues that if Luke had Gen 10 in mind then the appointing of the Seventy(-two) would symbolise the Gentile nations to which the passage refers. Alternatively, she argues, Num. 11.16–25 contains a number of features which would appeal to Luke including Moses typology (cf. Acts 3.22; 7.37), the appointment of Seventy(-two) helpers, and empowering for service through sharing Moses' endowment with Spirit and its resultant charismatic activity (Num. 11.25).

Garrett prefers this second option where Jesus' appointment of the Seventy(-two) reflects Moses sharing his ministry with appointed helpers.<sup>688</sup> In either case, the number 70 or 72

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<sup>686</sup> It is only later in Acts 11.30 that elders are mentioned in connection with the Jerusalem church, and from Acts 14.23 we learn that it was Paul's custom to appoint elders in the churches he established as part of his missionary activities. In Acts 15.2, when Paul, Barnabas and other members of the church in Antioch are sent to Jerusalem in order to clarify issues of table fellowship between Jews and Gentiles, ἀπόστολοι and πρεσβύτεροι are mentioned together by Luke in connection with the leadership of the Jerusalem church.

<sup>687</sup> Susan R. Garrett, *The Demise of the Devil: Magic and the Demonic in Luke's Writings* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), pp. 47–59.

<sup>688</sup> Johnson, *Gospel of Luke* p. 167 also argues that Moses typology is reflected here.

remains uncertain.<sup>689</sup> Garrett concludes, rightly in my view, that the Lukan context does not suggest a wider mission to non-Jews but a localised mission that precedes Jesus to various towns on his journey to Jerusalem. More widely, Luke may have intended a foreshadowing of the mission of the post-Easter church when many would receive the Spirit with its resultant charismatic endowments (Acts 2.1 ff).<sup>690</sup> Nevertheless, as I indicated above, the fact remains that for Luke the church's mission in Acts is entrusted not to the many who have received the Spirit as evidence of their participation in the post-Easter manifestation of the kingdom of God, but to a chosen few apostles and other heroes of the Spirit.

Was the mission of the Seventy(-two) intended by Luke to be a paradigmatic for the post-Easter church? It seems not, for the following reasons, which I will discuss below: (a) the Twelve were clearly included by Luke in the larger mission of the Seventy(-two), and this has implications for our understanding of (b) Luke 22.35f. and the distinction made by the Lukan Jesus during his valedictory discourse at the Last Supper between the situation governing the mission of the Seventy(-two) and the situation about to face the apostles following Jesus' death; and finally, (c) evidence from Luke's narrative of the mission itself.

*(a) The Twelve as part of the mission of the Seventy(-two).*

Are we to understand that the Twelve were included by Luke in the sending out of the Seventy(-two)? The NT situation is complicated by the fact that in some manuscripts καί

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<sup>689</sup> Garret, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>690</sup> *Ibid.*

is inserted before ἐτέρουσ<sup>691</sup> which gives the sense of the Seventy(-two) being in addition to the Twelve.<sup>692</sup> Conzelmann thinks that the Twelve are excluded from the Seventy(-two) and suggests that they stayed with Jesus for the duration of the mission.<sup>693</sup> However, the evidence does not support Conzelmann's conjecture that the Twelve stayed with Jesus as 'sharers in the "anabasis" as his closest companions'.<sup>694</sup> Fitzmyer argues that the most natural reading is that ἐτέρουσ indicates the Seventy(-two) *excludes* the Twelve.<sup>695</sup> The problem here is that taking an exclusive view weakens considerably any symbolic significance associated with the numbers seventy or seventy-two. Bock for example, argues that whilst ἐτέρουσ refers to a group outside the apostolic band, when taken with Luke 22.35–38 it is clear that the Twelve went with, or were part of the larger group.<sup>696</sup>

It is also clear that Luke has written his accounts of the two missions using material from Mark and Q both of which were concerned with the mission of the Twelve. Again, this fact, taken together with Luke 22.35–38, leads to the conclusion that the Twelve formed part of the Seventy(-two). This being the case, their empowerment in Luke 9.1 is best understood as being specifically for that particular occasion, with the Twelve receiving a second commissioning/empowerment when they were sent out again as part of the larger mission of the Seventy(-two). Also, as we have seen, we cannot avoid the fact that Luke 22.35–38 forms part of Jesus' valedictory discourse at the Last Supper and would hardly

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<sup>691</sup> E.g. a, A, C, D, K, W, X. For full list see UBS Greek Text 3rd edition, p. 250 n. 1

<sup>692</sup> Fitzmyer, *Luke x-xxiv* p. 845. Marshall, *Luke* p. 414 asserts that the insertion of καί before ἐτέρουσ agrees with Lukan style.

<sup>693</sup> H. Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, p. 67 n.1.

<sup>694</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>695</sup> Fitzmyer, *Luke x-xxiv* p. 845.

<sup>696</sup> Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, p. 994. For a similar view see also Nolland, *Luke 35B* p.550.

be an occasion for a careless mistake by Luke.<sup>697</sup> It should also be noted here that Luke deliberately changes Mark's μετὰ τῶν δώδεκα to οἱ ἀπόστολοι in 22.14 (par. Mark 14.17; cf. Matt. 26.20 where Matthew also follows Mark). This Lukan redaction suggests that, for Luke, this is an important reversal which is to be carried forward into the post-Easter situation via the authoritative apostolic tradition. Therefore, when Jesus reverses his previous instructions about not carrying bags, sandals etc. when engaging in mission (cf. Luke 10.4) the meaning is clear: the missionary instructions (and empowerment) given earlier were inspired by the eschatological immediacy of the situation which characterised the earthly ministry of Jesus; times have since changed and the former instructions (together with accompanying empowerment) are no longer appropriate for the longer-term post-Easter situation facing Luke's church. Ongoing empowerment will come after the resurrection when the Twelve and others are 'clothed with power from on high' (Luke 24.49b),<sup>698</sup> although in Acts empowerment to perform signs and wonders is restricted to a select few.

*(b) Luke 22.35–36.*

According to Green, Luke's narrative of the sending out of an 'advance party' in 9.51–56 guides our reading towards the commissioning and sending out of the Seventy(-two) so that the second mission is to be read in light of the first mission which involved only the apostles.<sup>699</sup> Green concludes that the instructions to the missionaries here and to the

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<sup>697</sup> *Contra* Nolland, *Luke 18:35–24:53* (Word Biblical Commentary 35C; Dallas: Word Incorporated, 1993), p.1075.

<sup>698</sup> Cf. Acts 1.5; 2.1ff. and note there is no evidence that all of the 120 who were present at Pentecost were empowered to perform signs and wonders. Quite the opposite. Luke reserves such empowerment for a selected band of men of the spirit. This question of Luke's restricting empowerment to perform signs and wonders to a select few in Acts will be discussed in detail in chapter five.

<sup>699</sup> Green, *Gospel of Luke*, p. 410.

Twelve in 9.1–5 provide Luke's readers with a pattern for sending followers of Jesus out in mission.<sup>700</sup> If this is the case it would, in part at least, appear to support the Third Wave view that here we have a paradigm for contemporary Christian practice, albeit firmly linked to missionary activity. However, I would argue *per contra* that the situation envisaged here by Luke is more intentionally fluid, rather than paradigmatic. This can be seen from the fact that in 22.35-36 Jesus revokes his former instructions and their sense of eschatological immediacy that characterised earlier missions in light of a new situation facing the apostles.

These two verses form part of a longer discussion (vv.35–38) that concludes Jesus' valedictory discourse at the end of Luke's version of the Last Supper. How are we to understand the ensuing discussion about buying a sword and, importantly here, the effect this discussion has on the way in which we are to understand the temporal change indicated by the phrase, ἀλλὰ νῦν (v. 36a)? I am arguing here that the commissioning, empowerment and instructions given to the Seventy(-two) were limited in the Lukan narrative to the earthly ministry of Jesus and were not intended by Luke to provide an ongoing contemporary paradigm for mission, accompanied by signs and wonders. This view is strengthened considerably if it can be shown that Luke intends the temporal shift denoted by Jesus' emphatic ἀλλὰ νῦν (22.36a) to point to a new missionary situation beyond the earthly ministry of Jesus. In order to do this, I will review briefly salient factors in the way Luke 22.35–38 has been understood by commentators.

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<sup>700</sup> *Ibid.*

These verses occur in the context of the Last Supper and only in Luke's gospel where the evangelist has shifted the emphasis away from the words of institution to the extended farewell discourse which follows (22.24–38).<sup>701</sup> My primary concern here is how we are to understand these verses in terms of Luke's narrative? More particularly, how are we to understand the temporal shift in v.36a and how is it related to mission beyond the earthly ministry of Jesus? Clearly, in order to do this, it will be necessary to take account of the enigmatic two-swords saying and the nature of the new situation to which it alludes. Whatever wider conclusion is reached, Nolland is correct in his view that it seems likely that this material has been transmitted by Luke, at least in part, as teaching on Christian mission in times of crisis.<sup>702</sup>

From as early as 22.31, Luke gives an indication of a shift in the epochs of salvation-history where Satan, not content with capturing the heart of Judas (22.3) now seeks to subject the apostles to a time of sifting (22.31). In 22.35, Jesus refers back to the sending of the Seventy(-two) and points out that, although the disciples took little in the way of provisions when they were sent out on mission to Israel, they lacked nothing but could rely on the hospitality of those to whom they were sent. Jesus then makes the emphatic point, ἄλλα νῦν indicating that the situation has changed. But how has it changed so far as Luke is concerned and what is the significance of the dialogue concerning swords (vv. 36b–38) which exegetes find so perplexing? Is it simply that in the changed situation the disciples will also face persecution and suffering because of their close association with Jesus and for this reason they must arm themselves with swords?

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<sup>701</sup> P. S. Minear, 'A Note on Luke xxii.36', *Nov. Test.* 7 (1964), p. 129.

<sup>702</sup> Nolland, *Luke* 35C, p. 1075.

According to Conzelmann, 22.35–38 is used by Luke to mark the hiatus between the mission of Jesus and that of the church. It was intended by Luke to be figurative in that the swords represent the ‘conflict, sacrifice and victory of the disciples’ in their forthcoming post-Easter mission.<sup>703</sup> Conzelmann understands the emphatic ἄλλα νῦν as a decisive indication that ‘other rules are now in force’.<sup>704</sup> In other words, in light of Luke’s understanding of salvation-history, the instructions to the Seventy(-two) were appropriate to the time in which they were given (i.e. the period of Jesus) and, as such, are to be regarded as limited in their application.<sup>705</sup> Conzelmann asserts that this reversal of the instructions for mission given to the Seventy(-two) provides us with an example of commands of Jesus that were intended only for his own contemporary situation and which are to be regarded as temporary and no longer valid in the new, post-Easter situation.<sup>706</sup> Conzelmann argues further that the arming of the disciples symbolises ‘messianic protection’ as they face the woes which will accompany the church’s mission.<sup>707</sup>

In a short paper discussing Luke 22.36, Paul Minear agrees that Conzelmann is right to recognise the importance of this final valedictory discourse between Jesus and the apostles, but goes on to argue for a shift in emphasis for ἄλλα νῦν away from Conzelmann’s tightly drawn salvation-historical scheme (i.e. period of Jesus/period of the

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<sup>703</sup> Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, p. 84.

<sup>704</sup> Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, p. 232f.

<sup>705</sup> Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, p. 233.

<sup>706</sup> Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, p. 13.

<sup>707</sup> Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, p. 233. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, pp. 241 and 294 argues in a similar vein that the change in the situation means that, like their master, the disciples will also face persecution and suffering immediately following Jesus’ passion which marks the ‘time of the sword’. For Jeremias, Luke intends the sword as a symbolic illustration of Jesus’ prophecy of the forthcoming messianic conflict which was not fulfilled. According to Evans, *Saint Luke*, p. 806 this latter assertion by Jeremias must be rejected on the grounds that it reflects badly on Luke as an editor.

church) to the Passion itself and the events preceding it.<sup>708</sup> Minear ignores the change in instructions for mission whilst concentrating exclusively on the significance of the swords. However, there is no escaping the fact that ἄλλα νῦν refers back specifically to the mission of the Seventy(-two). Whatever else the Lukan Jesus signals with the emphatic ἄλλα νῦν, there is a clear indication that, with the rejection of Jesus by Israel, the perspective on mission has changed. With that change will come the need for a new commissioning of the apostles by the risen Jesus who, following their empowerment by the Holy Spirit, will send them out to all nations (Luke 24.44–49; Acts 1.8).

Howard Marshall proposes that the contrast intended by ἄλλα νῦν is between the relatively peaceful period of Jesus' ministry and the forthcoming crisis of the Passion.<sup>709</sup> Joseph Fitzmyer regards ἄλλα νῦν as indicating a time shift which begins with the forthcoming Passion and extends into the new period of salvation-history which is about to be inaugurated. Fitzmyer also makes the important point that the Lukan Jesus is here also addressing the readers of Luke's gospel. As such, he is looking beyond the Passion to the period of the church that is indicated by the swords as a period of persecution.<sup>710</sup> By way of caution, R. Maddox makes the important point that the narrative of Acts fails to bear out the notion of the period of the church being a time of danger and distress for the disciples.<sup>711</sup> In a similar vein, S. Brown points out that Conzelmann's identifying Luke 22.36 as the point of departure between the aeons forces him to include both the

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<sup>708</sup> Minear, 'A Note on Luke xxii.36', pp. 128–134.

<sup>709</sup> Marshall, *Luke*, p. 824.

<sup>710</sup> Fitzmyer, *Luke* x–xxiv, p. 1431f.

<sup>711</sup> R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts* (Edited by J. Riches; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1982), p.154 n.136. J. Gillmann, 'A Temptation to Violence: The Two Swords', *Louvain Studies* 9 (1982), 143 makes the same point.

Passion and the age of the church in Acts as a time of πειρασμός for the apostles.<sup>712</sup> As for regarding the Passion as a time of πειρασμός, Brown makes the point that this is not so for the apostles, although it is a time of ‘sifting’ (σινιάσαι) which will only become a trial if the apostles fail to pray.<sup>713</sup> Also, it should be noted that πειρασμός is not used by Luke for the Passion nor does it occur in this sense in Acts.<sup>714</sup> Brown concludes:

The characteristic of the Age of the Church is rather the presence of the spirit, and the beginning of the Age of the Church is therefore not the passion but Pentecost.<sup>715</sup>

Whilst most are agreed that Conzelmann overstates his case, it is important to note that the conversation in Luke’s narrative at this point is looking back to an earlier period in Jesus’ ministry as well as forward to a period beyond the Passion to the church’s mission in Acts and clearly differentiates between the two. As John Gillmann notes, in Luke 22.35 the disciples’ response to Jesus’ question about their previous missionary activity, together with Jesus’ emphatic interjection of ἄλλα νῦν, prepares Luke’s readers for another sending out of the apostles which is confirmed by the issuing of new instructions that are more appropriate for a new time/situation (v.36).<sup>716</sup>

Gillmann wants to restrict the time frame indicated by ἄλλα νῦν to the Passion and thinks that Luke interpreted the crucifixion in light of Isa 53. The lawless (ἄνομία) are to be understood in terms of the language and characters who play a part in the

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<sup>712</sup> Brown, ‘Apostasy & Perseverance’, *Analecta Biblica* 36 (1969), p.11

<sup>713</sup> Brown, ‘Apostasy & Perseverance’, p. 10.

<sup>714</sup> Brown, ‘Apostasy & Perseverance’, p. 11f.

<sup>715</sup> Brown, ‘Apostasy & Perseverance’, p. 12. In a similar vein, Gillmann, ‘A Temptation to Violence’, p. 143. makes the point that the apostles are strengthened by the protection of the Spirit.

<sup>716</sup> Gillmann, ‘A Temptation to Violence’, p. 147.

Passion.<sup>717</sup> Gillmann argues that Luke's use of  $\nu\hat{\nu}\nu$  does not indicate a new mandate extending into the future but refers to the immediate situation surrounding the Passion and the fulfilment of the prophecy from Isaiah 53 quoted by Jesus in 22.37b.

For Gillmann, the quotation by Jesus from Isaiah 53 holds the hermeneutical key to understanding the pericope – the reason for the new instruction is that the scripture must be fulfilled (v.37). However, the argument fails on two fronts. First, as we have seen,<sup>718</sup> the characters whom Gillmann regards as lawless are not specifically named  $\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma$  by Luke. According to Acts, in the sermon delivered by Peter at Pentecost, the lawless ones are identified as the Roman authorities responsible for Jesus' execution (Acts 2.23). Second, Gillmann does not pay sufficient attention to the mission context that Luke uses to set up the rest of the discourse. It is in the light of what follows in the post-Easter commissioning of the apostles by the risen Jesus (Luke 24.44–49), which is taken up at length by Luke in Acts, that we are to understand the clear reference to instructions for mission which are changed by Jesus *in their detail* rather than the missionary context from which they derive.

In his narrative as a whole, Luke recognises the changed situation between the ministry of Jesus in the gospel and the post-Easter situation he portrays in Acts. As Christopher Tuckett has noted:

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<sup>717</sup> Gillmann, 'A Temptation to Violence', p. 148. Cf. Luke 22.52–53; Barabbas an insurrectionist ( $\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu$ ) and a murderer ( $\phi\acute{o}\nu\omicron\nu$ ) and Jesus being crucified with criminals ( $\kappa\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\rho\gamma\omicron\iota$ )

<sup>718</sup> Note 129 above.

... the instructions about 'ascetic' life style to be adopted by Jesus' own followers on mission during his ministry are cancelled by the Lukan Jesus himself.<sup>719</sup>

Formerly, the disciples had lacked nothing when Jesus sent them out on mission, but now the situation has changed. The apostles must fend for themselves as they move out in mission beyond the boundaries of Israel in obedience to a new commissioning and empowerment from the risen Jesus (Luke 24.44–49; Acts 1.8;).

The implications are clear in that whilst the missionary activities of the Twelve and the Seventy(-two) may in some ways foreshadow what is to follow in Acts, they are clearly not intended to provide the definitive paradigm for mission so far as Luke is concerned. Also, we should note here that in the final commissioning of his followers (Luke 24.44–49; Acts 1.6–8) Jesus insists that they must now await the necessary empowerment before venturing in mission beyond Jerusalem, a factor that is hardly necessary if the Twelve and others had already been empowered by Jesus to perform signs and wonders on a permanent basis.

*(c) The mission.*

Most of the mission charge to the Seventy(-two) is paralleled in Matthew's version of the mission of the Twelve (Matt. 10.1, 5–16) with Luke's mission charge being drawn partly from Q (vv 2-3, 8-16) and partly from either Luke's special source 'L' or Lukan redaction (vv. 4–7, 17–20).<sup>720</sup> According to Fitzmyer, in the mission charges in chapters

<sup>719</sup> C. M. Tuckett, 'The Christology of Luke-Acts' in J. Verheyden (ed.), *The Unity of Luke-Acts* (Leuven: University Press, 1999), p.136.

<sup>720</sup> Cf. Caird, *Saint Luke*, p. 144. For a full discussion, see Fitzmyer, *Luke x–xxiv*, p. 844 and F. Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament* (Studies in Biblical Theology 47; ET London: SCM Press, 1965), pp. 41–46.

9 and 10 Luke is addressing the Christian community of his own day and in order to provide them with a link between their own missionary activity and that of Jesus and his disciples.<sup>721</sup> This, Fitzmyer argues, should be understood in light of the way in which the importance of the apostles gradually decreases in the first half of Acts. Fitzmyer suggests that the significance of this 'doublet' is to be found in Jesus' widening his commission to an extended number of disciples as missionaries, rather than allowing it to remain limited to the Twelve.<sup>722</sup>

However, if Fitzmyer is correct and Luke's purpose here is to foreshadow the diminishing role of the Twelve in Acts in order to root the situation in his own day more firmly with the earthly Jesus, then it is no more than the evangelist did earlier in his narrative with the designation 'apostle' (cf. Luke 6.13). The designation by Jesus of the Twelve as ἀπόστολοι was clearly important for Luke. In Acts it is the apostles' known association with Jesus from the beginning of his earthly ministry which was the primary criterion for membership of the apostolic band thus guaranteeing the authenticity of their teaching (Acts 1.21–22 cf. 2.42).

In many respects, the mission of the Seventy(-two) resembles the earlier mission of the Twelve (Luke 9.1-6 pars.) to which Luke has added the prophetic denunciation of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum (10.13-15); a pronouncement from Q on acceptance and rejection (10.16 cf. Matt. 11.21–24); an account of return of the emissaries, including an account of Jesus' apocalyptic vision of the fall of Satan (10.17-20). Beare suggests

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<sup>721</sup> Fitzmyer, *Luke x–xxiv*, p. 845.

<sup>722</sup> Fitzmyer, *Luke x–xxiv*, p. 844.

that the mission of the Seventy(-two) is to be located *geographically* in Samaria. This, he argues, suggests a foreshadowing of the church's later mission beyond the boundaries of Israel as described in the missionary programme for the narrative of Acts (cf. Acts 1.8).<sup>723</sup> The assumption that the mission took place in Samaria is not borne out by the evidence. We can say that in narrative terms the mission of the Seventy(-two) has something of a 'Samaritan' context in the sense that we have two incidents immediately before and after the mission of the Seventy(-two) in the gospel narrative which may be intended to signal what is to come in terms of the church's mission beyond Israel (Acts 8.4ff.). However, it should be noted that the first of these (Luke 9.51–55) is entirely negative towards Samaritans, whilst the second (10.25–37) also plays on the antipathy of Jesus' hearers towards Samaritans in order to dramatically drive home the point of the parable (Luke 9.36–37).

Details of the mission itself are not given, apart from 10.17 where the disciples report their successful exorcisms in the name of Jesus.<sup>724</sup> The main body of the pericope is concerned with Jesus' instructions to his disciples and the motif of division resulting from the presence of the kingdom of God (cf. Luke 2.34)<sup>725</sup> followed by the return of the Seventy(-two) and Jesus' vision of the fall of Satan (Luke 10.17–20; 21–24). As Green points out, in proclaiming the kingdom Luke makes it clear that it is not just about human response to the message of restoration or judgement (Luke 10.8–11). It is also about

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<sup>723</sup> F.W. Beare, *The Earliest Records of Jesus* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), p. 156.

<sup>724</sup> Understood in the sense of their being Jesus' official representatives on this occasion rather than merely using his name as a powerful talisman (cf. Luke 9.49).

<sup>725</sup> Noted by Green, *Luke*, p. 411.

conflict in the heavenly realm between God and Satan and his minions (vv. 13–20).<sup>726</sup>

Having said this, Luke makes it very clear in vv. 18–20 that victory in the eschatological conflict already belongs to God.

The wider narrative context for the mission of the Seventy(-two) is that of the journey towards Jerusalem (Luke 9.51 ff.)<sup>727</sup> where Jesus, who is now on ‘the way’ to meet his inevitable prophetic fate, sends the Seventy(-two) out as emissaries as they travel together along the way.<sup>728</sup> The journey, which begins in 9.51 has taken on the character of a ‘mission’<sup>729</sup> and it is in the context of a mission along the way that Jesus commissions the Seventy(-two). In commissioning them, Jesus makes it clear that they are his representatives to the point where to reject them is to reject Jesus himself resulting in inevitable judgement to follow (cf. Luke 10.13–16).

Although Luke was largely dependent on Mark for his account of the mission of the Twelve, he omitted any mention of their being sent out ἀνὰ δύο (cf. Mark 6.7). He now applies this instruction to the Seventy(-two) emissaries who are sent on ahead of Jesus in pairs in order to give their testimony legal status under Jewish law (Deut. 19.15).<sup>730</sup> It seems unlikely that Luke omitted this detail from the mission of the Twelve on the assumption that it was implicit in the text. If this were the case, it would be more logical

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<sup>726</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>727</sup> Cf. especially Luke 9.52 where Luke has already mentioned that Jesus has sent messengers ahead of him in order to prepare the way for his arrival.

<sup>728</sup> For a discussion of the ‘way’ and its antecedents in Qumran usage, see S.V. McCasland, ‘The Way’, *JBL* 77, (1958), 222–230, and especially p. 230, who argues that ἡ ὁδός, as a designation for Christianity was derived from ‘the way of the Lord’ in Isa. 40.3 and was also used in this sense by the Qumran community (cf. 1QS 8.13–16).

<sup>729</sup> Evans, *Saint Luke*, p. 441.

<sup>730</sup> See, for example, Leaney, *Gospel According to St. Luke*, p. 176 and Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, p. 235.

to include it in his description of the mission of the Twelve and, having established the precedent, to omit it in 10.1.

On the assumption that Luke has carefully crafted his accounts of both missions, why has he inserted in 10.1 and omitted from 9.1f. a detail which his source attributed to the mission of the Twelve? In both missions the emissaries' testimony, accompanied by signs and wonders, is central (Luke 9.1f., 6; 10.8f.; cf. 10.1, 16). It is true that it was common practice, as described in Acts, for missionaries to work in pairs (e.g. Acts 13.2; 14.12; 15.27, 39; 17.14; 19.22), but this is not always the case.<sup>731</sup> Therefore, this does not necessarily lead us to the conclusion that Luke's aim here is to mirror the missionary practice of the church of his day.<sup>732</sup> In sending out the Seventy(-two) in pairs, Jesus ensures that their testimony has formal legal status which, in turn would seem to suggest that the mission of the Seventy(-two) was aimed at (or confined to?) Israel (cf. Matt. 10.5–6), and that Luke intends his readers to understand this mission, as well as the earlier appointing and sending out of the apostles, to be firmly rooted in the life and ministry of Jesus.<sup>733</sup>

In towns where the emissaries are welcomed, they are instructed to cure the sick (10.9). Healings and exorcisms are signs of the in-breaking kingdom of God<sup>734</sup> and for those who welcome Jesus' emissaries it is as though they are welcoming Jesus and, in turn, God himself for whom Jesus claims to act as an emissary (10.16). In such cases, the

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<sup>731</sup> E.g. Stephen (Acts 6.8ff.); Philip (Acts 8.4–13, 26–40), Peter (Acts 10.1ff.), Paul (17.16ff.).

<sup>732</sup> E.g. Acts 2.14ff.; 7.1ff.; 8.4ff.; 9.36ff.; 10.1ff.; 17.16ff..

<sup>733</sup> Commenting on Luke 13–15, Green, *Luke*, p. 416 writes: 'The geographical references indicate that Luke is locating the mission strongly within the temporal ministry of Jesus.'

<sup>734</sup> Bock *Luke 9:51–24:53*, p. 999.

inhabitants will receive healing instead of judgement (cf. vv. 13–15). Nevertheless, the important point remains in that the sending of the Seventy(-two) is not intended by Luke to be a paradigm for the post-Easter church's mission. This mission is unique to Luke's narrative and the role of the Seventy(-two) must also be regarded as unique to the situation in which Luke has cast them, namely that they are sent out by Jesus to prepare for his arrival at various towns as they progress with him to the dramatic climax awaiting them in Jerusalem. Beyond Luke's narrative context, we should read no more than a foreshadowing of what is to come in Acts. In other words, the text simply will not bear the weight imposed upon it by the Third Wave's argument that the mission of the Seventy(-two) provides conclusive evidence from Luke's gospel for an intentional paradigm for contemporary discipleship in terms of empowerment to perform signs and wonders.

The description of the return of the disciples also contains features which are unique to Luke and invite further scrutiny. On their return, the emissaries report enthusiastically that even the demons submitted to them as they ministered in the name of Jesus (10.17). Evans comments that this is the only occasion where the disciples make explicit use of the name of Jesus in exorcism during his lifetime.<sup>735</sup> It seems that here we have a further indication that the missionaries' empowerment on this occasion was intrinsically different from the more permanent empowerment promised by the risen Jesus after Easter (24.48–49). Dunn makes the important point that the charismatic power experienced by

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<sup>735</sup> Evans, *Saint Luke* p. 454. The only other occasion in the gospel is in Luke 9.49//Mark 9.38ff. where the disciples report another exorcist who was not a disciple casting out demons in Jesus'

the Twelve and the Seventy(-two) was not given for the upbuilding of the community in the sense of post-Easter charismatic gifts of the Spirit, but the disciples were empowered in order to share in Jesus' mission.<sup>736</sup> Dunn concludes,

It was only as they shared in his ministry that his disciples shared in his authority and charismatic power.<sup>737</sup>

We have seen in both the missions of the Twelve and the Seventy(-two), that sharing in Jesus' mission during his lifetime was preceded by his commissioning and empowering chosen individuals for a specific purpose so that receiving Jesus' emissaries was like receiving the one who had sent them. Similarly in Acts, empowerment to perform signs and wonders is restricted to the apostles and other chosen individuals who are commissioned by the risen Lord or by their Christian community. Just as the sending out in mission of the Seventy(-two) is unique to Luke, so also is the climax in Luke's narrative where, in response to the disciples' claim to have subdued demons in his name, Jesus recalls his visionary experience of seeing Satan fall from heaven in response to the missionaries' activity (10.18–20). This pericope has no synoptic parallel. Luke places the passage immediately before his description of Jesus rejoicing in the spirit, which Luke takes from Q (Luke 10.21b–22//Matt. 11.25–27). How are we to understand the significance of this apocalyptic scene in terms of Luke's narrative? How does it relate to the mission of the Seventy(-two) and their empowerment to perform signs and wonders?

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name. Presumably, we are to understand that he was successful, otherwise there seems little point in what follows (cf. verse 50f.).

<sup>736</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 80.

<sup>737</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 81.

First of all, we read in Luke 10.17 that the Seventy(-two) returned from their mission μετὰ χαρᾶς. The reason for their joy is that they have subdued demons as a result of the commissioning and empowerment they received from Jesus to act in his name. For Luke χάρις is normally associated with divine revelation (1.14; 2.10; 8.13; 24.42, 51).<sup>738</sup> This element of divine revelation is evidenced further in Jesus' response (10.18) that is also unique to Luke's gospel.

Secondly, in describing his vision of the fall of Satan, the Lukan Jesus alludes to Isaianic imagery where similar language is used to describe the fall of the king of Babylon (Isa 14.12ff.)<sup>739</sup> and goes on to link the fate of unrepentant Capernaum to the fall of Satan himself (10.18 cf. 10.15). In Jesus' vision of the fall of Satan we remain aware that this is not the final end of Satan but, what we might call the beginning of the end. Prior to this, Luke's references to evil personified are to 'the devil' (4.2–12; 8.12) whereas from this point the personification of evil which opposes the work of God's kingdom is named 'Satan' and this name continues throughout the rest of the gospel (11.18; 13.16; 22.3, 31). Satan, nevertheless, remains active at the earthly level entering Judas' heart in 22.3 and opposing the work of the church in Acts (e.g. 13.4–12; 26.18). Here Jesus' vision of Satan's fall from the heavenly realm is the direct result of the missionaries' exorcisms.<sup>740</sup>

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<sup>738</sup> Whilst the demons submit to the disciples' exorcisms both here and during the mission of the Twelve, as noted previously, this is not always the case (cf. 9.40).

<sup>739</sup> *Contra* Nolland, *Luke* 35B p. 563 and Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, p. 862. Cf. Marshall, *Luke* pp. 428f.

<sup>740</sup> Whilst the idea of the final defeat of Satan is attested strongly in post-exilic Jewish literature (e.g. 1QM 15.12–16.1; 17.5–8; 11Q Melch. 13–14; T. Levi 18.12; T. Dan. 5.10), in my view the language used here by the Lukan Jesus bears too striking a similarity to Isaiah for this allusion to be dismissed.

<sup>740</sup> Garrett, *Demise of the Devil*, p. 49 concludes that the use of the imperfect (I was watching) indicates that Satan's fall was seen by Luke's Jesus as occurring simultaneously with (and possibly even caused by) the miraculous activity of the Seventy(-two).

As Green notes, the same eschatological tension that characterises the ‘now’ and ‘not yet’ of the kingdom of God also characterises the fall of Satan.<sup>741</sup>

Jesus follows this up by confirming that the source of the disciples’ success in exorcism and authority over evil is Jesus himself (10.19). This is hardly a promise of ‘invulnerability’.<sup>742</sup> The writer of the longer ending to Mark’s gospel (16.9–20 cf. esp. v. 15) may have taken this passage from Luke (or an underlying tradition) literally or, alternatively, had Paul’s experience in Acts 28.3–6 in mind. It seems to me to be more likely that Luke is using figurative language and his reference to snakes and scorpions would be understood by Luke’s readers as symbols for evil (Ps 91.13; T. Levi 18.12; T. Simeon 6.6; T. Zebulon 9.8).

There is a sense in which the language used here by Jesus (δέδωκα - ‘I have given’; οὐδὲν ὑμᾶς οὐ μὴ ἀδικήσει - ‘nothing shall hurt you’) suggests that the authority over Satan which the emissaries have enjoyed is not confined just to this particular mission.<sup>743</sup> However, given the apocalyptic nature of the passage, Luke’s use of the future tense is more appropriate to an anticipation of Pentecost and beyond rather than indicating that the disciples’ empowerment to perform signs and wonders is already established on a permanent basis during Jesus’ lifetime. The focus of Luke’s narrative at this point is not to be found in an imputed empowerment to perform signs and wonders. Rather, it is Jesus’ corrective which provides the lesson in discipleship, taking the focus away from signs and wonders and emphasising rather the disciples’ standing before God. Again it is

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<sup>741</sup> Green, *Luke*, p. 419.

<sup>742</sup> Evans, *Saint Luke*, p. 455.

<sup>743</sup> This is the view of Nolland, *Luke 35B*, p.564 and Garrett, *Demise of the Devil*, p. 50.

emphasised by Luke that signs and wonders are not of primary importance for Jesus' disciples. Compared to any authority they may have enjoyed over Satan and his minions in the past or in the future, of overriding importance when it comes to discipleship is the fact that their names are written in heaven (10.20).<sup>744</sup>

### *Conclusions.*

During my examination of the missions of the Twelve and the Seventy(-two), I have argued that both missions are to be understood as discrete incidents portrayed by Luke during the earthly ministry of Jesus. The mission of the Twelve alerts Luke's readers to the special place held by the apostles in relation to Jesus and the dominical tradition, and subsequently as pioneers leading the initial development of the post-Easter church. The sending of the Seventy(-two), illustrates the point that any of Jesus' followers might be called to represent him and share his power. However, *contra* the Third Wave, Luke's emphasis here is not intended by the evangelist to provide a paradigm for the normative expectation of 'every disciple'. Rather, it is to be found in providing a model, which will be evident in Luke's portrayal of signs and wonders in relation to the life and mission of the post-Easter community in Acts, where individuals are called, commissioned and empowered for particular tasks.<sup>745</sup>

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<sup>744</sup> For references to God's 'book of life' see for example, Exod. 32.32f; Ps. 69.28; 87.4–6; 139.16; Dan. 12.1 and cf. Phil. 4.3; Heb. 12.23; Rev. 3.5; 13.8; 17.8.

<sup>745</sup> The implications of these conclusions will be discussed in chapter five.

## Chapter V: Part One

### THE GREAT COMMISSION ACCORDING TO LUKE-ACTS

#### §23. INTRODUCTION.

As with the extended farewell discourse which concludes his account of the Last Supper (22.24–38),<sup>746</sup> Luke has also included a more extended account of the resurrection appearances of the risen Jesus than the other synoptic evangelists. The material used is largely peculiar to Luke, although some interesting similarities to John's gospel may be noted perhaps suggesting that Luke and the writer of the Fourth Gospel had access to appearance traditions not known to (or at least not used by) Mark and Matthew (cf. 1 Cor. 15.3–8).<sup>747</sup> I will begin my examination of the Great Commission according to Luke by paying particular attention to the narrative context leading to the final commissioning scene in Luke's gospel with a view to asking why does Luke present us with these extended resurrection narratives, and how does the Emmaus story prepare his readers for the final commissioning scene at the end of the gospel?

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<sup>746</sup> For discussion of Luke 22.24–38, see §22 above.

<sup>747</sup> For a recent discussion, see Nolland, *Luke* 35c, pp. 1210–1212 and 1217f.

In preparing his readers for the final commissioning scene at the end of his gospel (Luke 24.36–49), and for the way in which the risen Jesus' words of commission are subsequently worked out in Acts, Luke's extended resurrection narratives emphasise important Lukan themes, in retrospect and prospect. For example, throughout, events surrounding the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth are to be understood in terms of the fulfilment of scripture (24.25–27, 44–47; Acts 1.16; 2.14; 18.28). This is immediately apparent in the Emmaus story where we have a reiteration of this favourite Lukan theme.<sup>748</sup> In the communal life of the church, Jesus' ongoing presence may be experienced within the context of shared meals and the breaking of bread (24.30–31, 35; Acts 2.42), as well as through the Spirit's presence in response to prayer (Acts 13.1–3).<sup>749</sup>

Luke also sets out to clarify issues concerning the nature of Jesus' resurrection state which were clearly important for the evangelist and those for whom he was writing. At key points in his narrative, Luke emphasises that Jesus' resurrection is to be understood in a corporeal rather than a metaphysical sense (24.5, 36–43; cf. Acts 1.3). It is clear that the 'materializing tendency'<sup>750</sup> present in Luke's resurrection narratives reflects a similar tendency found elsewhere in Luke-Acts.<sup>751</sup> Dunn suggests that the objectifying of the resurrection appearances by Luke may be due to an 'anti-docetic' motif.<sup>752</sup> Indeed, as I shall argue, Luke's objectifying of Jesus' resurrection state serves to establish for his

<sup>748</sup> Perrin, *Resurrection*, p. 64, and see further below.

<sup>749</sup> In Luke's gospel we saw in §20 above how the importance of prayer is emphasised.

<sup>750</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 122.

<sup>751</sup> Examples include: objectifying language used to describe the descent of the Spirit at Jesus' baptism 'in bodily form' (Luke 3.22: *σωματικῶ εἶδει*), and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2.3: *γλῶσσαι ὡσεὶ πυρός*); denying or affirming dreams (e.g. Luke 9.32; Acts 9.10; 10.10; 12.9; 16.9); confirming the reality of angelic/epiphanic experiences (e.g. Luke 1.11ff; 2.9ff; 24.4ff; Acts 1.10–11; 8.26; 12.7, 10, 11; 27.23).

<sup>752</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 122.

readers the corporeal, non-angelic nature of Jesus' resurrection body and thus establishes for Luke's readers irrefutable continuity between the earthly Jesus and the risen Lord. Finally, there is the commission to empowered apostolic witness to all nations (Luke 24.47–49; Acts 1.8), which sets out the salvation-historical programme for Luke's narrative in Acts. In addition, Luke's form of the Great Commission contains themes which are also developed later in Acts. For example, the message goes out in the name of Jesus (Acts 2.38; 3.6, 16; 4.7, 10, 12, 17–18, 30; 5.28, 40; 8.12, 16; 9.14–16, 21, 27–28; 10.43, 48; 15.14.26; 16.18; 19.5, 13, 17; 21.13; 22.16; 26.9), invites repentance (Acts 2.38; 3.19; 5.31; 8.22; 11.18; 13.24; 17.30; 19.4; 20.21; 26.20), and promises forgiveness of sins and a new relationship with God (Acts 2.38; 5.31; 10.43; 13.38; 26.18).<sup>753</sup>

#### §24. RESURRECTION AND COMMISSIONING IN LUKE-ACTS.

##### *The walk to Emmaus.*

The first appearance of the risen Jesus described by Luke is to two disciples, who are not part of the apostolic band, and who are journeying from Jerusalem to Emmaus (Luke 24.13–35; cf. Mark 16.12).<sup>754</sup> This resurrection narrative appears only in Luke's gospel where the evangelist has placed this pericope between the empty tomb narrative and his

<sup>753</sup> Noted by Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, p.1939 and H. Bietenhard, ὄνομα TDNT V, p. 278.

<sup>754</sup> E. Lohse, *Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi im Zeugnis des Lukasevangeliums* (Biblische Studien 31; Neukirchen: Kreis Moers, Neukirchener Verlag der Buchhandlung des Erziehungsverein, 1961), p. 25, comments on Luke 24.15 that the two disciples may be understood to have been following the Jewish custom of discussing *torah* and related issues as they walked along together.

final commissioning scene. Here Luke's reference to 'two of them' clearly alludes to both the wider circle of Jesus' disciples mentioned in 24.9 (καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς λοιποῖς) as well as serving to establish the forensic validity of the disciples' witness to the resurrection. By naming Cleopas, Luke makes it clear that this appearance is to disciples outside the apostolic band (cf. Acts 13.31; 1 Cor. 15.5–8). This is entirely in line with Luke's tendency to demonstrate that discipleship extends beyond the apostolic circle, and also roots the obligation on all disciples to 'bear witness' firmly in the appearances of the risen Christ.<sup>755</sup>

The journey motif used here by Luke also occurs in Acts 8.26–40 where, as Marshall notes, similar elements occur: journey motif; ignorance of scripture;<sup>756</sup> sacramental element (baptism/eucharist); sudden disappearance of interpreter of scripture.<sup>757</sup> The failure of the two disciples to recognise Jesus is attributed by Nolland to 'Satanic binding'.<sup>758</sup> However, I believe that this element of *incognito* on the part of the main protagonist (Jesus) is better understood as a reflection of a common epiphanic element where gods/angels appear at the earthly level.<sup>759</sup>

In discussing the Emmaus story, we also need to be aware of what follows in Luke 24.36–43 which Perrin describes as an 'apologetic legend'.<sup>760</sup> In Matthew's gospel, we

<sup>755</sup> Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, p. 1907.

<sup>756</sup> For a discussion of sources for Luke's theme of the fulfilment of scripture, see A. Erhardt, 'The Disciples of Emmaus', *NTS* 10 (1963/64), pp. 187–190.

<sup>757</sup> Marshall, *Luke*, p. 890.

<sup>758</sup> Nolland, *Luke* 35C, p. 1201.

<sup>759</sup> For examples outside the biblical tradition, see Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p.286 n.1.

<sup>760</sup> Perrin, *Resurrection*, p. 66. Similarly, C.H. Dodd, 'The Appearances of the Risen Christ', p. 112 recognises that Luke's extended recognition scene (24.36–43) serves as an apologetic for faith in the reality of Jesus' resurrection against arguments to the contrary.

have a similar piece of apologetic, but this time aimed at ‘Jewish authorities’ who claimed that Jesus’ resurrection was to be explained by the fact that Jesus’ disciples had stolen the body (Matt. 28.11–15). In Luke’s gospel, the apology is directed against any notion that Jesus has been transformed into a spiritual or angelic being. David Catchpole argues that Luke is carefully countering a view of the resurrection state of Jesus as being angelic.<sup>761</sup> Whilst I agree with Catchpole that there are some striking similarities between the Emmaus story and Tobias’ journey,<sup>762</sup> there are also other OT precedents on which Luke may have called. For example, in the book of Judges the angel who meets with Manoah says explicitly that he will not eat the food Manoah offers (Jgs. 13.15–16). In Genesis 18.8 the angelic visitors for whom Abraham has a meal prepared, the description of which is quite detailed (cf. Gen. 18.5–7), are actually described as eating the meal prepared for them whilst their host stands by. However, this passage is edited later by Philo (*On Abraham* 115–118) where Philo makes it explicitly clear that the angelic visitors, who are incorporeal, have only assumed human form (ἄσωμάτων ὄντας εἰς ἰδέαν ἀνθρώπων μεμορφῶσθαι) and therefore give only the appearance of eating and drinking (παρέχειν φαντασίαν).

By the end of the Emmaus story, Luke’s readers are aware of a number of factors which the evangelist takes up again in the final commissioning scene. These are:

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<sup>761</sup> David Catchpole, *Resurrection People: Studies in the Resurrection Narratives of the Gospels* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 2000), pp. 91, 93, argues for a pre-Lukan version of the Emmaus story which bears close similarities with Tobias’ journey with the (incognito) archangel Raphael in the book of Tobit. For Catchpole’s analysis of the Emmaus story see esp. pp. 93–102.

<sup>762</sup> E.g. travel theme; lack of recognition of Raphael/the risen Jesus; moment of revelation of true identity of travelling companion; the importance of failing to eat/breaking of bread.

- (i) events surrounding the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth are to be understood in terms of the fulfilment of scripture (24.26–27; cf. 24.44–46);
- (ii) it is the risen Christ himself who demonstrates from scripture how these events are fulfilled, thus giving heavenly authority to the theme of fulfilment (24.27; 24.45) for those who are about to bear witness;
- (iii) a shared meal provides the context in which the risen Christ may be truly recognised (24.31, 35), and this theme of using a meal as a vehicle for dispelling doubt and revealing the true nature of Jesus' resurrected state is again taken up in extended form as a precursor to the final commission (24.41b–43).

*Preparing the way for the final commissioning scene.*

Benjamin Hubbard has established that, although Luke's version of the Great Commission is not as direct as Matthew's, it nevertheless qualifies as a formal commission.<sup>763</sup> In a similar way, James Dunn writes,

It is characteristic of the resurrection appearances in the gospel that they are commissioning experiences.<sup>764</sup>

Apart from geographical location,<sup>765</sup> the actual commissions in Luke and Matthew are broadly similar in terms of emphasis in that both commissions are concerned with

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<sup>763</sup> B. Hubbard, 'Commissioning Stories in Luke-Acts: A Study of their Antecedents, Form and Content', *Semeia* 8 (1977), p. 116.

<sup>764</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 128f. who argues that the various versions of the Great Commission (Matt. 28.18–20; Luke 24.46–49; Acts 1.8) are 'expressions of later reflection'.

making disciples and have a universal perspective. The focus of Matthew's commission is on the process of making disciples and here we saw that the Great Commission should be understood along with the authority to 'bind and loose', and includes authority to teach, forgive sins and cast out demons/heal. Luke's focus, on the other hand, is on the witness of scripture to events surrounding the life and ministry of Jesus, which tends to be reflected in the sermons in Acts (e.g. 2.22ff.; 8.30–35; 13.16ff.); on repentance and forgiveness to be universally proclaimed in Jesus' name (24.47); on the fact that the apostles are to be witnesses; and on the imminent, but still future, expectation of heavenly empowerment. More importantly here, as Perrin has argued, Luke is concerned to provide a bridge between the gospel and Acts and between the life and ministry of Jesus and the apostles and Luke's own readers.<sup>766</sup> With Luke's bridge-building purpose in mind, my examination of the wording of the final commission(s) according to Luke will take account of both the commission in Luke 24.44–49 and Acts 1.8.

The text of the final appearance and commissioning in Luke's gospel clearly falls into two halves: Luke 24.36–43 which provides the connecting link with the Emmaus story, and 24.44–49 where we have Luke's version of the Great Commission.<sup>767</sup> The words linking the close of the Emmaus story with the final commissioning scene (Luke 24.35–36) give the impression that Jesus' words are to be understood as being addressed to more than just the eleven (Luke 24.33 and cf. 24.9).<sup>768</sup> At least Cleopas and his

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<sup>765</sup> Luke = Jerusalem and Matthew = Galilee (cf. Mark 16.7).

<sup>766</sup> Perrin, *Resurrection*, p. 65.

<sup>767</sup> Fuller, *Resurrection Narratives*, p. 117.

<sup>768</sup> Ταῦτα δὲ αὐτῶν λαλούντων in 24.36 is almost certainly Lukan and serves to link the final commission scene with the Emmaus story (cf. vv. 33–35). See, for example, Nolland, *Luke* 35C, p. 1212, and Marshall, *Luke*, p. 901.

companion seem to be present, and this has the effect of widening the circle of disciples/witnesses present for the final commissioning by the risen Jesus. This in turn suggests to the reader that Luke intends the final commission in his gospel, together with the admonition to wait in Jerusalem until they are clothed with heavenly δύναμις, to include more than just the apostles.<sup>769</sup> If this is Luke's intention, then the Third Wave's case for all Christians being included in the Great Commission in such a way that they are to consider empowered witness, including signs and wonders, to be a normative expectation is strengthened somewhat.

However, the difficulty lies in the fact that Luke appears to correct himself in Acts where he names only the apostles as the recipients of the final mission charge (Acts 1.2–7). In his reiteration of the Great Commission in Acts 1.8, the focus is again specifically on the apostles and the instruction they have received over a period of time through the Holy Spirit from the risen Jesus (Acts 1.2). As the Acts narrative develops it becomes clear that it is the apostles who are the transitional unifying group who ensure continuity with the earthly Jesus and his teaching during the initial expansion of the church (e.g. Acts 2.42f.; 6.6; 8.1, 14; 9.27; 15.22f.).<sup>770</sup> Also, as Luke's narrative in Acts progresses, it soon becomes apparent that not all who receive the Spirit at Pentecost, or afterwards, become active proclaimers of the gospel message of repentance and forgiveness. Nor, *contra* the Third Wave, is it presented by Luke as normative for all who are followers of the Way to engage in empowered witness accompanied by signs and wonders.

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<sup>769</sup> This is clearly the case in Acts when the disciples gather to elect a successor to Judas (Acts 1.14, 15, 20), and is again the case when Luke describes the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2.1ff.).

<sup>770</sup> This important element of continuity between Jesus and the church provided by the apostles is noted by J.D.G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Peterborough: Epworth, 1996), p.6.

As I will argue in Part 2 below, Luke clearly reserves miraculous activity for a select few leading characters as he tells his story of the expansion of the church in fulfilment of the Great Commission. According to Acts, during this initial period miraculous signs and wonders, which by definition must be considered extraordinary, are initially only performed through the apostles, and later through selected individuals rather than by every member of the wider Christian community. In other words, even when Luke's gospel narrative indicates the possibility of a more general participation by Jesus' followers in ministry accompanied by signs and wonders, Luke's emphasis is to be found in that possibility being realised only by designated individuals who are commissioned and empowered for particular tasks.

An example of this can be seen in the case of the seven *διάκονοι* in Acts 6, where the prayers and laying on of hands by the apostles/members of the Jerusalem congregation<sup>771</sup> should be seen as a commissioning and conveyance of authority.<sup>772</sup> Also, the impression given by Luke is that these men, whom he describes as being *πλήρεις πνεύματος καὶ σοφίας*, are respected and mature charismatic leaders who are recognised as such by their community (Acts 6.3–5) and thus stand out as exemplars and leaders of their group.<sup>773</sup> Again, the evidence suggests that it is not Luke's intention here to provide a paradigm for the normative expectation of all who have received the Spirit.

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<sup>771</sup> For a further discussion of this point see §28 below.

<sup>772</sup> Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Carlisle, Cumbria: William B. Eerdmans/The Paternoster Press, 1998), p. 251.

<sup>773</sup> Dunn, *Acts*, p. 83 makes the important point that the description, *πλήρεις πνεύματος καὶ σοφίας*, is in contrast with Luke's usual verbal phrase which indicates being filled with the Spirit for a particular occasion. Examples of being empowered by the Spirit for a particular occasion may be found in Acts 4.8, 31; 6.5; 7.55; 13.9.

Luke's final commissioning scene serves both as the finale to his gospel and to point the way forward to Acts. Luke's major soteriological themes are in evidence prior to their being taken up again by Luke in the Acts narrative, namely: proclamation of salvation through repentance and forgiveness of sins (Luke 1.77; 3.3; 24.47; Acts 2.38; 5.31; 10.43; 13.38; 26.18); the universal nature of the gospel (2.31–2; 24.47; Acts 1.8; 2.5; 8.1, 5–8, 14–17, 26–40; 9.15, 31; 10.1–11, 24; 13.1–2, 40–50; 15.1–29; 18.6; 22.13–15; 26.16–18, 23; 27.24; 28.28); salvation is proclaimed in the name of Jesus (Acts 2.38; 3.6, 16; 4.10, 12, 30; 8.12, 16; 10.48; 16.18; 19.5).

More to the point for the purpose of my present investigation, how are we to understand Luke's accounts of Jesus' final commissioning of the apostles in Luke 24.44–49 and Acts 1.8, and where do Luke's particular emphases lie? How do these emphases vary from the Great Commission according to Matthew? How do Luke's emphases in the gospel commission compare with those in Acts? Can we say that empowerment to perform miracles figure in our understanding of Luke's final commission, and how is this presented by Luke in the narrative in Acts? In what way, if at all, does Luke intend this material to be paradigmatic for his readers and how does this affect the Third Wave's case?

*The final commissioning scene in Luke's gospel.*

For Luke, then, it is clearly important to establish the corporeality of Jesus' resurrection body and that the risen Jesus is not a spirit/ghost/angel.<sup>774</sup> In his resurrection narratives there is a clear sense in which Luke establishes continuity between the earthly Jesus and the Risen One. Therefore, the words of commission carry at least the same authority, including potential empowerment to heal and cast out demons, as did the earlier commissions of Luke 9 and 10. Uniquely, in the case of Luke-Acts, we have not only Luke's version(s) of the Great Commission (Luke 24.44–49; Acts 1.8), but we also have the author's narrative in Acts which demonstrates for his readers how Luke understands the way in which the fulfilment of Jesus' final commission to his disciples worked out in practice.

As with Matt. 28.16–20, the final appearance of Jesus at the end of Luke's gospel serves to establish the fact of Jesus' resurrection to his assembled disciples, and to instruct them in preparation for their future missionary activity of expanding the church. Jesus appears amongst the assembled disciples just as suddenly as he disappeared from the Emmaus narrative. Nolland proposes that Luke's use of ἔστη may have links with OT stories of angelic appearances found in the LXX (e.g. Gen. 18.2; Dan. 8.15; 12.5; 1Chron. 21.15f.; cf. Tobit 5.4) and that this suggestion is strengthened by Jesus' greeting, εἰρήνη ὑμῖν (cf. Dan. 10.19; Jgs 6.23).<sup>775</sup> The assembled disciples react to Jesus' sudden appearance amongst them in ways which are classically associated with an epiphany (πτοηθέντες δὲ

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<sup>774</sup> John deals with this issue when Jesus confronts Thomas (20.24–29).

<sup>775</sup> Nolland, *Luke* 35C p. 1212. See also Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, p. 1932 who agrees that OT traditions may indicate cultural expectations about post-mortem appearances (1 Sam. 28.3–19; Isa 8.19; 19.3; 29.4).

καὶ ἔμφοβοι), and they believe they are in the presence of a spirit/ghost (ἐδόκουν πνεῦμα θεωρεῖν).<sup>776</sup>

However, as I argued above in my discussion of the Emmaus story, an important aspect of Luke's purpose in having Jesus join the two disciples in the 'breaking of bread' was to dispel their doubts and to reveal the true nature of Jesus' resurrection state. Similarly here, a careful examination of the final appearance scene in Luke and the words of commission themselves reveals a number of interesting factors pointing in the same direction. References to 'flesh and bone' in verse 39, together with the invitation to touch Jesus are all aimed to dispel the doubts expressed in verse 38<sup>777</sup> and to demonstrate that Jesus was not an ethereal spirit. In verse 41a the disciples are literally unbelieving from joy (ἀπιστούντων αὐτῶν χαρᾶς).<sup>778</sup>

Commenting on Luke 24.42, Nolland suggests that here, as well as in the Emmaus story (24.31, 35), Jesus is made known in the 'meal setting', and is rather dismissive of the idea of Jesus eating being primarily intended by Luke to be proof of the risen Jesus' corporeality and non-angelic status.<sup>779</sup> In other words, for Nolland, here as in the Emmaus story Luke uses the meal setting to explain a eucharistic theology.<sup>780</sup> Fuller takes a similar line when he suggests that Luke has located the final appearance scene

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<sup>776</sup> Bock, *Op. cit.*, p. 1948 notes that Codex D weakly attests to φάντασμα instead of πνεῦμα (cf. Mark 6.49; Matt. 14.26).

<sup>777</sup> Jesus' words, διὰ τί διαλογισμοὶ ἀναβαίνουσιν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν, reflect the doubt theme which is also present in Matthew's final commission scene (cf. Matt. 28.17).

<sup>778</sup> Nolland, *Luke 35C*, p. 1214 draws attention to the similar formulation in Luke 22.45 (κοιμωμένους αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς λύπης) where, in the garden of Gethsemane, the disciples are asleep because of grief.

<sup>779</sup> Nolland, *Luke 35C*, p. 1215.

<sup>780</sup> *Ibid.* For further attestation within the tradition of the risen Jesus eating with his disciples see, for example, John 21.13; Acts 1.4; 10.41.

within the context of a Eucharistic meal.<sup>781</sup> A similar eucharistic view is also taken by Cullmann.<sup>782</sup> Bock takes a middle line when he writes:

A meal shows that it is Jesus and not a phantom, and it also indicates table fellowship and oneness.<sup>783</sup>

However, it should be noted here that there is no indication that this is a shared or fellowship meal, but it seems clearly to be a way of establishing the corporeal status of Jesus' risen body, and although the language of angelophany is unavoidable here, the conclusion to be drawn from Luke's account of Jesus eating a piece of fish before his assembled disciples (24.43) is that Jesus is not an angel.

Having firmly established continuity between the earthly Jesus and the Risen One, Luke alerts his readers to the importance of the final commissioning of the disciples by the risen Jesus in two ways. Firstly, the opening words of the Lukan Jesus, whom the evangelist regards as a prophet like Moses (Acts 3.22; cf. Deut. 18.18), bear a striking similarity to the introduction to Deuteronomy (LXX), as can be seen from the following comparison:

Luke 24.44

οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι  
μου οὓς ἐλάλησα πρὸς  
ὑμᾶς. ἔτι ὢν σὺν ὑμῖν

Deut 1.1

οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι οὓς  
ἐλάλησε Μωυσῆς παντὶ  
Ἰσραὴλ

<sup>781</sup> Fuller, *Resurrection Narratives*, p. 109.

<sup>782</sup> O. Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship* (ET London: SCM Press, 1966), pp. 14–16.

<sup>783</sup> Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, p. 1935.

Secondly, Jesus again opens the scriptures<sup>784</sup> reminding his hearers, in similar words to those spoken earlier by the angel to the women (24.6–7) and Jesus' words to the disciples on the road to Emmaus (24.25–27), that all that has happened is in fulfilment of scripture.<sup>785</sup> In verse 46 Jesus' explicit exposition of scripture refers to his death and resurrection and leads into the mission charge in verse 47 where we have the kernel of the universal gospel message of repentance and forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus<sup>786</sup> which is to be proclaimed to all nations (Isa 42.6; 49.6; Luke 2.32; Acts 13.47; cf. Acts 10.42–43; 26.22–23)<sup>787</sup>. Alsup notes that the phrase, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, is a combination used throughout the synoptic gospels and Acts (e.g. Matt. 24.9, 14; 25.32; 28.19; Mark 11.17; 13.10; Luke 24.47; Acts 2.5; 10.35; 14.16; 17.26; 21.21).<sup>788</sup>

In verse 49 Luke gives his understanding of the missionary role of the apostles and here, but apparently not in Acts 1.8,<sup>789</sup> the role of the wider circle of Jesus' disciples. In the LXX μάρτυς is used in a forensic sense in connection with judgement.<sup>790</sup> Luke also uses μάρτυς here, and in Acts, in the forensic sense of 'witness to the facts'.<sup>791</sup> Disciples are

<sup>784</sup> Here the entire extent of the scriptures is specified by Luke (... πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωϋσέως καὶ τοῖς προφήταις καὶ ψαλμοῖς...) and, as Alsup, *Post-Resurrection appearances* p. 183 notes, this combination occurs only here in the synoptic tradition.

<sup>785</sup> As Bock, *op. cit.*, p. 1936 notes, πληρόω is a key Lukan theme which occurs throughout Luke-Acts (e.g. Luke 1.20; 4.21; 9.31; 21.24; 22.16; Acts 1.16; 3.18; 13.27).

<sup>786</sup> Cf. Luke 9.48; 10.17 (cf. 9.49); 21.8, 12, 17 and frequently in Acts, e.g. 2.38; 3.6, 16; 4.7, 10, 12, 17f., 30; 5.28, 40, 41; 8.16; 16.18; 19.2; 22.16.

<sup>787</sup> Fitzmyer, *Luke* (28A), p. 1584 suggests that the gospel message of repentance and forgiveness is the Lukan equivalent of Matthew's 'making disciples'.

<sup>788</sup> Alsup, *Post-Resurrection Appearances*, p. 183. Alsup also notes that πάντα is often omitted in Acts but the idea of universality remains.

<sup>789</sup> In Acts 1.8 Luke appears to have only the apostles in mind (Acts 1.2b), whereas in Luke 24 it is clear from the narrative that more disciples than just the apostles are included in the final commission (cf. 24.33, 36). Fuller, *Resurrection Narratives*, p. 118 maintains that in verse 48 Jesus is addressing the eleven directly. Whilst this conjecture may serve to harmonize Luke 24 with Acts 1, it is not borne out by the evidence.

<sup>790</sup> H. Strathmann, *TDNT* IV, p. 463.

<sup>791</sup> Strathmann, *TDNT* IV, p. 492.

to be witnesses, and the concept of being a witness will be an important theme throughout Acts (1.8, 22; 2.32; 3.15; 5.32; 10.39, 41; 13.31; 22.15, 20; 26.16), but note how for Luke these first witnesses have been involved in historical events and are eye witness to the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth (cf. Acts 1.21–22). The witnesses of later generations – and these include Luke’s readers – will not have this direct link to the dominical tradition. Therefore, they will have to rely instead on the apostolic authority of those who accompanied Jesus during his lifetime and who were witnesses of his resurrection – especially those who, according to Luke, were designated ‘apostles’ by Jesus from the outset (Luke 6.13).

In Luke 24.49, the disciples are commanded to stay in Jerusalem<sup>792</sup> and to await heavenly empowerment associated with the distribution of the Spirit (cf. Acts 1.8). With the words, ἐγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω Luke makes it clear that Jesus is now the dispenser of the eschatological Spirit, whereas formerly it was God himself.<sup>793</sup> The idea of being ‘clothed with power’ reflects OT usage where we also find the idea of being ‘clothed’ with power/the Spirit (e.g. Jgs. 10.34; I Chron. 12.8; II Chron. 24.20; Ps 92.1; Isa. 15.1; cf. Eccles. 17.3; Wisd. Sol. 9.17).<sup>794</sup>

Jesus’ reference to the promise of the Father is immediately clarified in verse 49 as ‘power from on high’. In Acts 1.8 the promise is explicitly associated with the dispersal of the Holy Spirit. Elsewhere in Luke-Acts δύναμις and πνεῦμα appear to be almost

<sup>792</sup> Καθίζω, lit. ‘sit’ (cf. Acts 18.11), so Marshall, *Luke*, p. 907.

<sup>793</sup> Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, p. 1943; Johnson, *Luke*, p. 403. But cf. Acts 5.32 where the source of the Spirit is again God.

<sup>794</sup> Danker, *New Age*, pp. 398–399.

synonymous (e.g. Luke 1.17, 35; 4.14; Acts 1.5, 8; 6.8; 10.38) and in this present context δύναμις may be understood as referring to ‘empowered testimony’.<sup>795</sup> Luke’s lack of explicit reference to the Spirit here is clearly deliberate and it is left to Acts to explore the significance of this heavenly empowerment where Jesus’ promise of heavenly δύναμις in Luke 24.49 becomes a baptism in the Holy Spirit in Acts 1.5 and which, in turn, is seen as the source of forthcoming empowerment in Acts 1.8. In the words of Luke’s two versions of the Great Commission there is no mention of signs and wonders, or of disciples performing miracles as part of their remit. It is also worth noting that in Luke 24.49 Jesus instructs the assembled disciples that they are to wait in Jerusalem until they receive the promise of the Father when they will be clothed with heavenly δύναμις. Without reading into the text, we cannot assume that, as with Matthew’s promise of ἐξουσία this will include power over the demonic for all disciples. In any case, our understanding here of being ‘clothed with power’ must be governed by the clarification in Acts 1.3–8 as well as Luke’s presentation of signs and wonders in the Acts narrative.

The essence of the Great Commission according to Luke may be summarised as follows:

- (i) The risen Jesus refers back to his earthly ministry and demonstrates how, in his life, death and resurrection, he has fulfilled scripture (Luke 24.44–46);
- (ii) The universal gospel message to be preached in Jesus’ name is one of repentance and forgiveness (24.47a);

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<sup>795</sup> Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, p. 1943.

- (iii) Jesus' commission is intended by Luke to be programmatic in that the universal mission begins in Jerusalem before moving out to the rest of the world (24.47b), and this missionary programme provides the narrative framework for Acts;
- (iv) The primary role of those being commissioned is to bear empowered witness to all that has gone before (24.49).

We are now in a position to examine the final commission as it occurs in Acts 1.8 and to note any points of variance between the two versions of Luke's Great Commission, particularly with a view to noting in Part 2 below how these are worked out in the narrative of Acts

*The commission according to Acts 1.8.*

The repeat of the Great Commission in Acts 1.8 serves to forge a link with the gospel, but more importantly here it clarifies and explains for Luke's readers important elements of the gospel commission. This time there is no doubt that it is only the eleven remaining apostles who are being addressed and the subsequent commissioning by the risen Jesus is for the apostles alone. As might be expected, the missionary outlook remains universal, but the successive stages of Luke's soteriological programme in Acts are now made explicit in chronological detail. This marks the progress that Luke's narrative in Acts

will take, beginning in Jerusalem where the initial outpouring of the Spirit will be experienced by the believers.<sup>796</sup>

Noting the importance for Luke of the shift in the epochs of salvation-history is of crucial importance if we are to remain sensitive to the outlook of the Acts narrative. Here Luke seeks to embrace both the eschatological reality of the post-Easter situation for the early church, together with the longer term outlook in which the church in Luke's own day must operate as a result of the delay in the Parousia.<sup>797</sup> This historical sensitivity is important for Third Wave (and other) contemporary commentators to note when seeking NT models which inform contemporary faith and *praxis*, and cautions against a too direct and uncritical correlation between contemporary experience and *praxis* and the experience of the early church as Luke portrays it in Acts. As Jervell rightly insists, any contemporary application of the Acts narrative, with its first century milieu, must remain true to the original context and meaning so far as we are able to understand them.<sup>798</sup>

In line with its commission from the risen Jesus, the infant church will expand as it moves out in mission to embrace fellow Jews in wider Judea, Samaritans and Gentiles from Jerusalem to the 'ends of the earth'. Witherington has noted that the phrase, ἕως ἑσχάτου τῆς γῆς can simply refer to 'Rome' (cf. Ps.Sol. 8:15).<sup>799</sup> This being the case,

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<sup>796</sup> J. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Anchor Bible 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), p. 199. H. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles* (ET Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), p. 7 comments, 'By means of this outline the delay in the Parousia is transferred into something positive in the course of salvation-history.'

<sup>797</sup> Brown, 'Apostasy and Perseverance', p. 12 remarks, 'The characteristic of the Age of the Church is ... the presence of the spirit, and the beginning of the Age of the Church is therefore not the passion but Pentecost.'

<sup>798</sup> J. Jervell, *The Theology of the Acts of the Apostles* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p. 128.

<sup>799</sup> Witherington *Acts*, p. 111.

then it bears out the assertion that Acts 1.8 is deliberately setting out the missionary and narrative agenda for the rest of Acts. When Acts 1.8 is taken with Luke 24.47, the universal significance of this becomes clear, as Pesch comments: "...ist nicht Rom gemeint, sondern dasselbe wie Lk 24,47: 'zu allen Völkern'..."<sup>800</sup>

In Acts 1.8a, the δύναμις which is imparted through the Holy Spirit not only makes the proclamation of the apostolic witnesses effective, it is also the source through which miracles are performed.<sup>801</sup> In Part 2, I will investigate the part played by signs and wonders in Acts, and especially the way in which they relate to discipleship and the missionary witness of the infant church.

### *Conclusions.*

In my discussion of Luke's extended resurrection narratives, we saw that it was important for the evangelist to establish the corporeal, non-angelic nature of Jesus' resurrection state so that his readers may be reassured about the continuity that exists for Luke between the earthly Jesus and the risen Lord, possibly as a defence against docetic tendencies in the church. The first disciples were witnesses to the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth (cf. Acts 1.21f.) and, as such, the truthfulness of their testimony could be relied upon. However, the witnesses of later generations, including those for whom Luke is writing, did not have the same direct link with dominical

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<sup>800</sup> R. Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 5; Neukirchen-Vluyn; Zürich: Benziger; Neukirchener Verlag, 1986), p. 70. See also, J. Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), p. 116.

<sup>801</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990<sup>3</sup>), p. 103; Jervell, *Apostelgeschichte*, p. 115.

tradition. Therefore, they will have to depend instead on the reliability of those who accompanied Jesus during his lifetime and who were also witnesses to the truth that the same Jesus of Nazareth, whose earthly ministry Luke describes in his gospel, is now also the risen and exalted Lord who has commissioned his church to bear witness to him to the ends of the earth.

Unlike the Great Commission according to Matthew where, as we saw in chapter two, the disciples are to share Jesus' authority to teach, forgive sins and cast out demons/heal, the final commission according to Luke-Acts is not so transparent. In Luke's gospel, we are left with the possibility of more than just the Eleven being 'clothed with power from on high' and, without further clarification, this might reasonably be taken to include miraculous power. However, I have argued that an appropriately critical sensitivity towards the text requires us to note the importance for Luke of a shift in salvation-historical perspective. This enables us to remain sensitive to the outlook of Acts where we encounter both Luke's view of the eschatological reality of the post-Easter situation for the early church, together with his own longer term outlook in light of the delay in the Parousia. The need for such sensitivity towards the text has a direct bearing on my engagement with the Third Wave and their tendency towards an homogenous approach to the NT evidence, and cautions against a too direct correlation between contemporary Christian experience and *praxis* and the experience of the early church as Luke portrays it in Acts.

In this respect we may note that in Acts 1.8 the commission is addressed only to the apostles and the enigmatic 'power from on high' is explained by Luke in terms of baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1.5, 8). Whilst the δύναμις imparted by the Spirit may appear to make (at least potentially) empowered witness, including signs and wonders, more widely possible, we are nevertheless faced with the problem that in Acts signs and wonders are restricted to a chosen few. As the Acts narrative progresses, it soon becomes apparent that not all who receive to Spirit become proclaimers of the word and whose activities are accompanied by signs and wonders. It is to this, and related issues that I will now turn in Part 2.

## Chapter V: Part Two

### SIGNS AND WONDERS IN ACTS AND LUKE'S HEROES OF THE SPIRIT.

#### §25. INTRODUCTION.

In chapter four, I argued that, just as Luke presents Jesus as a man under authority in his gospel, the idea of being under authority is the key to understanding the way in which Jesus' disciples share his ministry. Specifically, during my examination of the missions of the Twelve and the Seventy(-two) we saw that sharing Jesus' mission during his lifetime, together with empowerment to heal and perform exorcisms, was preceded by a commissioning of chosen individuals for a specific purpose so that Jesus' representatives carried with them the authority of their master, and that to receive them was equivalent to receiving Jesus himself.

According to Luke, in commissioning the Twelve before sending them out to share in his mission to Israel Jesus called them together and gave them δύναμις and ἐξουσία, thus enabling them to perform exorcisms and heal the sick (Luke 9.1) as they went about proclaiming the kingdom of God (9.2). In Luke 10.1 there is also a specific commissioning by Jesus of a greater number of chosen disciples. As the Seventy(-two) are commissioned by Jesus, they also receive authority with their commission, expressed through the name of Jesus, over sickness and the demonic (10.9, 17, 19). As Nolland comments with respect to Luke 10.17, the reference to Jesus' name gives expression to

‘the equivalence between the ministry of the authorised messenger and the ministry of Jesus himself’.<sup>802</sup>

Also in chapter four, I noted that Third Wave commentators consider these two commissionings in Luke’s gospel and their subsequent missions involving the performing of miracles by the disciples, to be conclusive evidence that Luke intends these events to be regarded by his readers as a paradigm for Christian ministry, involving signs and wonders, both for his own community and, by extension, for all Christians. Against this view, I have argued that the evidence suggests that this is not Luke’s intention and that the two missions in Luke’s gospel may be viewed as no more than a foreshadowing of what is to come in Acts. More generally, in concluding his detailed discussion of the miracles of Jesus in Luke’s gospel, Graham Twelftree writes:

Luke was convinced that Jesus’ ministry of miracles was to be carried on by his followers.<sup>803</sup>

This begs the question: to what extent? In other words, why, when he has the opportunity to do otherwise, does Luke restrict the performance of miraculous signs and wonders to the apostles and a small number of chosen individuals whom I have designated Luke’s heroes of the Spirit?

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<sup>802</sup> Nolland, *Luke* 35B, p. 562. A seeming inconsistency here is to be found in the story of the unnamed exorcist (Luke 9.49–50) who uses Jesus’ name, apparently successfully, without having any connection with Jesus and his followers. Marshall, *Luke*, p. 398 suggests that Luke included this pericope from his Markan source because of its connection with ‘the name’ in Luke 9.48. Nolland, *Luke* 35B, p. 524 goes further and suggests that Luke deliberately linked this 9.49–50 with the previous argument about greatness (Luke 9.46–48). In any case, Nolland is correct to observe that in Acts 8.14–24 Luke clearly remains sensitive to who may, and who may not, dispense the power of the Spirit (cf. Acts 19.13–16).

<sup>803</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker*, p. 188.

Before proceeding further, and in order to facilitate my discussion of signs and wonders and Luke's 'heroes of the Spirit' in Acts, I will begin by analysing the miraculous phenomena attributed to individuals in Acts in the table below, noting both the source of the individual's authority (commission) and a giving a brief description of the miraculous activity together with the resultant effect/consequence.<sup>804</sup>

*Analysis of Signs and Wonders in Acts.*

<u>PERSON INVOLVED</u>	<u>COMMISSIONED BY</u>	<u>MIRACULOUS PHENOMENA</u>	<u>EFFECT/CONSEQUENCE</u>
Jesus (in retrospect).	God.	Deeds of power, wonders and signs (2.22).	Validation by God.
		Healing/exorcisms (10.38).	Enhances Jesus' reputation.
Apostles.	Risen Jesus.	Many signs and wonders performed (2.43).	Numinous awe.
		Many signs and wonders and healings and exorcisms (5.12, 16).	Enhances reputation and believers added (5.13b, 14).
Peter (with John).	Risen Jesus.	Healing of crippled beggar (3.2-8).	Opportunity to speak.

<sup>804</sup> For alternative approaches, see Achtemeier, 'The Lukan Perspective on the Miracles of Jesus', p. 165 n. 22, uses a similar grouping. For alternative approaches see for example, J.A. Hardon, 'The Miracles Narratives in the Acts of the Apostles', pp. 304 -305 and F. Neiryneck, 'The Miracles Stories in the Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction', in J. Kremer, (ed.), *Les Acts des Apôtres: Traditions, redaction, théologie* (Gembloux, Belgique: Leuren University Press, 1979), pp. 170f.

Peter.	Risen Jesus.	Punishment: Ananias & Saphira (5.1–6, 7–11).	Numinous fear.
		Healing via Peter's shadow (5.15) + miraculous escape from jail (5.19f.).	Attracts populace including sick & possessed, provokes opposition, opportunity to speak (5.16, 17–32).
		Healing (9.32).	Attracts converts (9.42).
		Dead person revived (9.36–41).	Attracts converts (9.42).
Stephen.	Apostles/church.	Angelic aid to escape from prison (12.1–11). Signs and wonders (6.8).	Numinous awe (12.15f.).  Major character whose reputation enhanced for reader (6.8–7.60).
		Philip.	Apostles/church.
Philip.	Apostles/church.	Signs and great miracles (8.13).	Numinous awe/Simon's amazement and ref. back to 8.6f.
		Angel directs Philip to Ethiopian (8.26).	Ethiopian converted (8.38f.).
		Spirit snatches Philip away (8.39).	Opportunities to speak (8.40b; cf. 21.8).
		Ananias.	Risen Jesus.

Paul.	Risen Jesus	Elymas struck blind (13.11).	Convert added (13.12b).
		Healing (14.9f.).	Reputations enhanced, opportunity to speak (14.11–18).
		Exorcism (16.16–18).	Opportunity to speak, converts added (cf. below, 16.32f.).
		Miracles, healings, exorcisms through contact with items of Paul's clothing. (19.11f.).	God's validation, reputation enhanced (19.11f.).
		Healing (20.9–11).	Comfort to believers (20.12).
		Paul unharmed by viper (28.5; cf. Mark 16.18a).	Reputation enhanced (28.6).
		Healings (28.8f.).	Reputation enhanced.
Paul with Barnabas	Church in Antioch	Signs and wonders (14.3).	Opportunities to speak + validation by the Lord.
		Signs and wonders in retrospect (15.12).	Validation by God.
Paul with Silas	Jerusalem church (15.22, 40). <sup>805</sup>	Earthquake, prison doors open, chains fall off (16.26).	Opportunity to speak, converts added (16.32f.).

A number of general observations may be made in light of the above analysis each of which will be discussed further below. Firstly, individual miracles may not be explicitly designated 'signs and wonders', but it is clear that Luke uses this term as a 'catch-all' for miracles, healings, exorcisms and other miraculous phenomena all of which contribute to the overall numinous atmosphere of the Acts narrative. Secondly, each of Luke's heroes

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<sup>805</sup> Barrett, *Acts II*, p. 757 notes the singular παραδοθείς in 15.40 but argues nevertheless that Silas was almost certainly included in the commendation.

of the Spirit in Acts to whom he attributes miraculous activity have been commissioned to act with authority. Thirdly, signs and wonders in Acts normally enhance the overall numinous atmosphere of the narrative, serving generally to demonstrate God's validation of the miracle-worker and/or enhance their reputation normally with a view to creating or supporting the opportunity to preach the gospel and encourage new converts.

There are exceptions, but these are relatively few and when they do occur they also contribute to the overall numinous atmosphere of the narrative. Examples are: building shaken and fiery tongues during Pentecostal distribution of the Spirit; building shaken again during prayer for boldness to preach the gospel (4.30), and it is worth noting here the reference to signs and wonders and healing; angelic aid during Peter's escape from prison whilst awaiting execution by Herod (12.1–11); and Herod's untimely death (12.23). Two further incidents are worth mentioning here,<sup>806</sup> Peter's confrontation with Simon Magus (8.18–24), and the exorcism that backfires on the sons of Sceva (19.13–19) which also results in a general atmosphere of awe (19.17a), and a number of the residents of Ephesus becoming believers (19.17b).

With the above overview of signs and wonders in Acts in mind, I will now proceed with my investigation into the way in which Luke understands and presents signs and wonders in Acts in relation to his heroes of the Spirit.

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<sup>806</sup> Noted by Neiryneck, 'Miracle Stories', p. 171.

§26. LUKE'S PERSPECTIVE ON  
COMMISSIONING WITH POWER AND AUTHORITY IN ACTS.

We saw in chapter three in my discussion of the role of authority in Matthew's gospel that in classical Greek usage, ἐξουσία is understood as the right to do something, or authority over something which is granted by a higher power such as a king or other authority.<sup>807</sup> However, as Foerster points out, this authority (ἐξουσία) remains illusory unless it is accompanied by the power (δύναμις) necessary in order to exercise the authority that has been conferred.<sup>808</sup> From here Foerster concludes that it is 'not always possible to separate between authority and power'.<sup>809</sup> There are clear implications here for the situation we encounter in Luke-Acts.

First of all, we have seen how both δύναμις and ἐξουσία are explicitly present in the commissionings associated with the two missions in Luke's gospel (Luke 9.1; 10.1, 17, 19). Johnson notes how 'power' (δύναμις) and 'authority' (ἐξουσία) are terms used repeatedly of Jesus' ability to deal with demons and disease (cf. Luke 4.36; 5.17; 6.19; 8.46).<sup>810</sup> Jesus has the ἐξουσία to expel demons (Luke 10.19), and this ἐξουσία presupposes a divine commission.<sup>811</sup> Following Jesus' Nazareth manifesto in Luke 4.16–30, we find Luke has placed ἐξουσία and δύναμις in juxtaposition in connection with Jesus' exorcisms (4.36), having previously described Jesus' teaching as being given with 'authority' (4.32).

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<sup>807</sup> Foerster, *TDNT* II, p. 562.

<sup>808</sup> Foerster, *TDNT* II, pp. 562–63.

<sup>809</sup> Foerster, *TDNT* II, p. 563.

<sup>810</sup> Johnson, *Possessions*, p. 145.

<sup>811</sup> W. Foerster, *TDNT* II, p. 569. Cf. Luke 3.21–22 and my discussion in §19 above.

Secondly, Luke's use of the phrase, 'signs and wonders' in Acts, shows that he is conscious of the OT background, and especially the way in which signs and wonders are associated with Moses and the Exodus (Exod. 4.8–9, 17, 28, 30; 7.3, 9; 10.1, 2; 11.9–10; Num. 14.11–12; Deut. 4.34; 6.22; 7.18–19; 11.3; 26.8; 29.3; LXX Ps 77.43; 104.27; 134.9).<sup>812</sup> In the LXX δύναμις is used to describe God's mighty liberating acts on behalf of Israel (e.g. Exod. 7.3; Deut. 4.34; 28.46; 29.2; 34.11; 135.9; Isa. 8.18). Wenk rightly emphasises the point that miracles in Luke-Acts are more than God's validation of the message/messenger, as with the Exodus, they are also evidence of God's 'redemptive intervention'.<sup>813</sup> In this respect, in the OT signs and wonders are of special importance in the portrayal of Moses as a prophet (Acts 7.36; cf. Deut. 34.10–12) who is also a 'type' for Jesus' prophetic ministry which was also validated through powerful deeds and signs and wonders (cf. Acts 2.22; 10.38).<sup>814</sup> This aspect of Jesus' ministry is emphasised by Luke from the beginning of his ministry in Galilee, which the evangelist describes as being ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος (Luke 4.14).

O'Reilly argues that, through his use of Moses typology in Luke-Acts, Luke indicates that signs and wonders associated with both Jesus and his disciples are to be understood as 'inaugurating the time of eschatological salvation'.<sup>815</sup> Just as the signs and wonders of the Exodus demonstrated how YHWH was superior to the gods of those who opposed

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<sup>812</sup> Fitzmyer, *Acts*, p. 255.

<sup>813</sup> Matthias Wenk, *Community-Forming Power: The Socio-Ethical Role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), pp. 250f.

<sup>814</sup> O'Reilly, *Word and Sign*, pp. 174f; G.W.H. Lampe, 'Miracles in the Acts of the Apostles' in C.F.D. Moule, (ed.), *Miracles: Cambridge Studies in their Philosophy and History* (London: A.R. Mowbray, 1965), p. 167.

<sup>815</sup> O'Reilly, *Word and Sign*, p. 188.

Israel, so too do the signs and wonders in Acts point to the lordship of the risen and exalted Christ who is now the dispenser of the Spirit.<sup>816</sup> Similarly, as signs and wonders in the Exodus served to establish Israel as the people of God, so too are signs and wonders in Acts to be understood as being instrumental in the formation of the infant church as the eschatological people of God.<sup>817</sup> This, in turn, suggests that whilst the presence of signs and wonders in Acts serves to enhance the numinous atmosphere of Luke's narrative, they should also be understood as having a more important salvation-historical function. Therefore, it is little wonder that Luke only associated signs and wonders with those who have a recognised authoritative role to play in the missiological progress of the church.

It has been noted that parallels between the miracles of Jesus and those of the disciples in Acts indicate that, for Luke, Jesus' disciples continue Jesus' charismatic ministry.<sup>818</sup> But again the question is, how widely are we to understand this? The Third Wave argue that this is intentionally paradigmatic and aimed at all Christians who should, therefore, be encouraged to expect signs and wonders to continue to be a part of everyday Christian experience. However, the evidence in Acts, where signs and wonders are restricted by

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<sup>816</sup> O'Reilly, *Word and Sign*, pp. 186–187.

<sup>817</sup> O'Reilly, *Word and Sign*, p. 190.

<sup>818</sup> O'Reilly, *Word and Sign*, p. 182. R.B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996), p. 122 notes the following examples of miracle stories in Acts that 'mirror' similar miracle stories in Luke's gospel: Acts 3.1–10 and Luke 5.17–26; Acts 5.15; 19.11–12 and Luke 8.44; Acts 7.59–60 and Luke 23.34; and esp. Acts 9.36–43 and Luke 8.40, 49–56. See also C.H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes, and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (Missoula, Mont: Scholars Press, 1974), pp. 23f. For a discussion of the Lukan parallels between Jesus and Paul and the extensive way in which Luke has modelled Paul's career in Acts on that of Jesus in the gospel, see W. Radl, *Paulus und Jesus im Lukanischen Doppelwerk: Untersuchungen zu Parallelmotiven im Lukasevangelium und in der Apostelgeschichte* (Bern/Frankfurt: Herbert Lang/Peter Lang, 1975), esp. pp. 291–380.

Luke to the apostles and a select band of heroes of the Spirit, does not appear to support this view.

O'Reilly understands the relationship between Jesus' working of miracles in the gospel and the signs and wonders associated with the apostles and other missionaries in Acts in terms of 'prophetic succession'. He articulates this in the following way:

Jesus is the eschatological prophet-like-Moses whose 'signs and wonders' usher in the last days. The apostles and missionaries are prophets-like-Jesus who continue his mission in mighty works as well as in powerful word.<sup>819</sup>

*Luke's perspective on signs and wonders.*

Luke does not present the source for the signs and wonders performed in Acts in a systematic way. He attributes them variously to God (Acts 2.22; 15.12), the name of Jesus (4.30), and the Lord (14.3).<sup>820</sup> In Peter's speech to the crowds at Pentecost, the signs and wonders in Acts are the gift of the Spirit in the last days (Acts 2.17), and Luke's redaction of Joel's prophecy makes it clear that signs and wonders are linked with the outpouring of the eschatological Spirit.<sup>821</sup> Miracles occur in Acts in the context of eschatological expectation<sup>822</sup> and are firmly linked with the missionary activity of the

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<sup>819</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>820</sup> Cf. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 170. J.A. Hardon, 'The Miracle Narratives in the Acts of the Apostles', *CBQ* 16 (1954), p. 307 notes how Luke's central characters go to great lengths in order to ensure that those who witness signs and wonders rightly attribute them to their heavenly source.

<sup>821</sup> O'Reilly, *Word and Sign*, p. 187. See my discussion of Acts 2.14ff. below.

<sup>822</sup> Hardon, 'The Miracle Narratives in the Acts of the Apostles', p. 304f. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 163 writes: "By using the phrase [signs and wonders] so frequently Luke underlines and probably reflects the early community's feeling that they were living in 'the new Mosaic age of eschatological redemption',

church in its progress from Jerusalem into the Gentile world.<sup>823</sup> As well as having salvation-historical significance, signs and wonders are part of the landscape that contributes to the numinous atmosphere that pervades Luke's narrative of the life and mission of the early church.<sup>824</sup> They also function as God's validation of the proclamation of the gospel by those heroes of the Spirit whom he calls and commissions either through the risen Christ, or through the local Christian community.

*Luke's perspective on the miracles of Jesus.*

In his study of Luke's portrayal of the miracle-working of Jesus, Achtemeier maintains that the importance of Jesus' miracle-working for Luke can be seen from the fact that it is the miracles he performs that validate him.<sup>825</sup> For example, in Luke 4.36, the evangelist clarifies the adverbial phrase κατ' ἐξουσίαν in Mark 1.27 so that it more clearly relates to Jesus' word of command (ἐπιτάσσει) in the exorcism rather than allowing room for the alternative possibility in Mark that it relates to Jesus' teaching, καινὴ διδασχῆ.<sup>826</sup> Interestingly, Luke also adds δύναμις in juxtaposition to ἐξουσία, which is present in his Markan source (Mark 1.27b).

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characterized by the same kind of 'signs and wonders' that characterized the redemption of Israel from Egypt."

<sup>823</sup> Lampe, 'Miracles in the Acts of the Apostles', p. 178. A notable exception would be Ananias who is commissioned by the risen Jesus for the specific task of ministering to Saul/Paul during the conversion process following his encounter with the risen Jesus on the road of Damascus (Acts 9.1ff.).

<sup>824</sup> In Acts 2.43; 5.5, 11; 9.31; 19.17 Luke's use of φόβος indicates the numinous atmosphere in which the church operated.

<sup>825</sup> P.J. Achtemeier, 'The Lukan Perspective on the Miracles of Jesus: a Preliminary Sketch', in C.H. Talbert, (ed.), *Perspectives on Luke-Acts* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1978), p. 158.

<sup>826</sup> Achtemeier, 'Lukan Perspective', p. 155. Cranfield, *St. Mark*, p. 9 gives the meaning in Mark 1.27 as: 'What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even...'. (so NRSV).

Again, limiting Jesus' teaching to the introductory verses (4.31–32), Luke ensures that the reaction of the crowd is focussed on Jesus' miracle-working, and it is this which leads to the crowd's question about Jesus' teaching in 4.36a. As Achtemeier notes, here the Lukan Jesus' teaching and miracle-working together provide an 'example of Jesus' activity *en exousia*'.<sup>827</sup> A further indication of the validating power of healings and exorcisms in the Lukan Jesus' understanding of his miracle-working may be seen from his response to the Pharisees who warn him that Herod is seeking to kill him (Luke 13.31–33), and where Jesus again points to his exorcisms and healings (13.32). This idea of validation can also be seen particularly in the Lukan Jesus' response to John the Baptist's question (Luke 7.18–23//Matt. 11.2–6) where, unlike Matthew's account, the Lukan Jesus' deeds, within the context of his mission, are explicitly powerful miracles, two of which Luke uses to preface the Baptist's question (Luke 7.1–17).<sup>828</sup>

Achtemeier also points to the link between miracles and faith found in the way Luke narrates responses to the miracle-working of Jesus in the gospel, and his heroes of the Spirit in Acts, pointing in both cases to God as the power-source for the miracles.<sup>829</sup>

Jesus' miracles in the gospel have the effect of turning people to God, as indicated in the their response (e.g. Luke 5.25; 7.16; 9.43; 13.13; 17.15; 18.43), and this is also the case

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<sup>827</sup> Achtemeier, 'Lukan Perspective', p. 157. Achtemeier argues throughout that Luke's presentation of the miracles and teaching of Jesus is done in such a way as to create a balance between miracle-working and proclamation, and this balance is then carried forward to Acts where it is continued by Luke in respect of his main characters, his heroes of the Spirit. For detailed evidence of this Lukan trait, see especially O'Reilly, *Word and Sign*, *passim*.

<sup>828</sup> Cf. Matt. 11.1 which relates to teaching only.

<sup>829</sup> Achtemeier, 'The Lukan Perspective on the Miracles of Jesus', p. 158. For indications of the divine source of signs and wonders in Acts, for example God (Acts 2.22; 15.12) the name of Jesus (Acts 4.30) the Lord (Acts 14.3).

in Acts where Luke retrospectively links Jesus' miracle-working to belief that he was God's chosen agent (Acts 1.13; 2.22–23, 36; 4.27; 10.38).<sup>830</sup>

Achtemeier concludes that for Luke miracles serve to promote faith, as well as to validate Jesus in the gospel, and in the speeches in Acts, as one sent by God.<sup>831</sup> This is made explicitly clear on the two occasions in Acts when signs and wonders are associated with the ministry of Jesus during evangelistic speeches made by Peter, first to the crowd in Jerusalem following the distribution of the Spirit in the upper room at Pentecost (Acts 2.22), and secondly when Peter addresses the Gentiles of Cornelius' household and circle of friends (10.38).

*The miracles of Jesus in retrospect (Acts 2.22; 10.37f.).*

In Acts 2.22 Peter describes Jesus as being approved by God, *δυσάμεσι καὶ τέρασι καὶ σημείοις*, thus enabling Luke to make the connection for his readers between the risen and exalted Jesus who is now the subject of the church's proclamation and the Jesus presented in his gospel (Luke 4.14, 36; 5.17; 6.19; 8.46; 9.1; 10.13, 19). Now the embryonic church has received 'power from on high' its missiological activity will also be validated by God through signs and wonders. This becomes clear for Luke's readers during the course of Peter's Pentecost address, where he makes it clear that the distribution of the Pentecostal Spirit fulfils the eschatological prophecy of Joel (Acts 2.16–21).

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<sup>830</sup> Achtemeier, 'Lukan Perspective', pp. 159–60. See also, Hardon, 'The Miracle Narratives', *CBQ* 16 (1954), pp. 310ff.

<sup>831</sup> Achtemeier, 'Lukan Perspective', p. 165.

Peter's reference to Joel 3.1–5 follows the LXX closely. However, Luke has made some significant editorial changes which serve his narrative interest in signs and wonders in Acts. This can be seen from the following:

Joel 2.30

Καὶ δώσω τέρατα ἐν οὐρανῶ,  
καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς αἶμα καὶ πῦρ ...

Acts 2.19

καὶ δώσω τέρατα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ  
ἄνω καὶ σημεῖα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κάτω ...

Luke's redactional addition of 'signs on the earth below' to Joel's 'wonders in the heaven' has the effect of making Joel's prophecy foretell the signs and wonders which will accompany the ministry of Luke's heroes of the Spirit in Acts as they operate ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις (Acts 2.17).<sup>832</sup> From here Luke goes on to link, in terms of the fulfilment of scripture, the signs and wonders mentioned in Joel's prophecy with the δυνάμεις καὶ τέρασι καὶ σημείοις which had demonstrated God's approval of Jesus and his earthly ministry (Acts 2.22).<sup>833</sup> Again, in the Joel text as it appears in Acts, the normal LXX order of 'signs and wonders' is reversed and this reversal is continued here by Luke, possibly in order to emphasise the theme of fulfilment in Peter's speech.<sup>834</sup> It is also possible that Luke is emphasising the order of these validating δύνάμεις where

<sup>832</sup> The phrase 'in the last days' is also a Lukan interpolation (cf. Joel 2.28 LXX) which reads simply: Καὶ ἔσται μετὰ ταῦτα.

<sup>833</sup> F. Scott Spencer, *The Portrait of Philip in Acts* (JSNT Supps. 67; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), p. 46 concurs with Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 167 who makes the point that in the extravagant language used here by Luke, and elsewhere in Acts (8.13: σημεῖα καὶ δυνάμεις μεγάλας in connection with Philip; 19.11: δυνάμεις τε οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας in connection with Paul), Luke betrays a somewhat propagandist attitude to the miraculous in his portrayal of life in the early church. Dunn, *Ibid.* comments, '...the more eye-catching the miracle the greater the propaganda value. All this is in notable contrast to the value placed on signs and wonders elsewhere in the NT.'

<sup>834</sup> Turner, *Power from on High*, p. 273 n. 14 who points out that this order also occurs in 2.43 in connection with the apostles otherwise (with the exception of 6.8 and 7.36 where the 'Moses-[Stephen]-Jesus parallel' is again involved) Luke uses the usual LXX order of signs and wonders.

‘wonders’ are assigned to the heavenly realm, which is the source of their origin, and ‘signs’ are their earthly manifestation.<sup>835</sup>

In Peter’s speech, the assumption is clearly made that his audience were well aware of the signs and wonders performed by Jesus<sup>836</sup> and the reader is also made aware that Jesus is accredited by God in more than one way: by acts of power (δύναμεις) and signs and wonders and, supremely, by the resurrection.<sup>837</sup> Jervell remarks that christologically, Luke appears to understand Jesus’ miracles in a subordinationist sense with his miracles being presented as ‘acts of God’ performed through Jesus.<sup>838</sup> Elsewhere he writes:

Die Wunder sind Christologisch bestimmt, waren Zeichen für die Identität Jesu. Doch nicht Jesus ist der Wunderstäter, sondern Gott, der die Wunder durch Jesus tat...<sup>839</sup>

In Acts 2.22 Luke gives us a succinct summary of his understanding of the significance of the healings and exorcisms performed by Jesus during his earthly ministry and which Luke now carries forward into his presentation of signs and wonders in Acts: signs and wonders require δύναμις; God is the source of the signs and wonders performed through a prophetic individual; signs and wonders validate the ministry of God’s Spirit-filled agent – all of which is highly relevant for any contemporary understanding of the role of

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<sup>835</sup> See Turner, *Power from on High*, pp. 273f.

<sup>836</sup> Cf. Peter’s reference, ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν.

<sup>837</sup> Marshall, *Acts*, p. 75 and Witherington, *Acts*, p. 144 both make the point that this supreme mark of divine validation is simply stated by Peter rather argued for. Also, as noted by Heanhen, *Acts*, p. 180 n. 5, the ‘completeness’ of Jesus’ credentials are made plain by reference to God as author of his miraculous ministry and this, in turn, confirms Jesus as God’s ‘special agent’.

<sup>838</sup> Jervell, *Theology of Acts*, p. 20.

<sup>839</sup> Jervell, *Apostelgeschichte*, p. 145.

signs and wonders in the church today that seeks support from the narrative of Luke-Acts.

In Acts 10.37f. Peter refers to Jesus' baptism by John (Luke 3.21f.) which may also be understood as Jesus' heavenly commissioning.<sup>840</sup> In light of the occurrence elsewhere in Acts of Spirit and power in close proximity (e.g. 1.8; 6.5, 8, 10) I believe Barrett is correct to observe that here we have a hendiadys, 'the power of the Spirit' (cf. Luke 4.14) which Barrett describes in the following way, 'God bestowed the Spirit upon Jesus and as a result he was filled with power'.<sup>841</sup> Indeed, Jesus' δυνάμεις were so well known to Peter's audience that the apostle can again speak of them as God's validation of Jesus.<sup>842</sup> Furthermore, in Peter's reference to Jesus as the agent of release from Satanic bondage (10.38), Luke's readers are made more acutely aware of Jesus' involvement in the saving work of God.<sup>843</sup> As a consequence, Acts 10.36–38 makes it clear that Peter is not restricting Jesus' commission and anointing with the Spirit just to the message he proclaimed, but to the totality of his ministry, including the signs and wonders he performed (cf. Acts 7.22, 35–38).<sup>844</sup>

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<sup>840</sup> E.g. Barrett, *Acts*, vol. 1, p. 524. Conzelmann, *Acts*, p. 352; Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 358; Turner, *Power from on High*, p. 41. Turner, *Power from on High*, pp. 261ff. argues that it was here that Jesus received his anointing with power and Spirit and that Acts 10.35–38 appears to interpret Luke 4.16–30, and where the reference to Holy Spirit and power in Acts 10.38 'echoes' Luke 4.14 (cf. 4.18a).

<sup>841</sup> Barrett, *Ibid.* Turner, *op. cit.*, p. 262 writes: '...Luke understood the Spirit as the power operative through Jesus' proclamation and effective in acts expressive of his kerygma' [i.e. signs and wonders].

<sup>842</sup> Conzelmann, *Acts*, p. 353; Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 70.

<sup>843</sup> Cf. J.B. Green, "'Salvation to the Ends of the Earth'" (Acts 13:47): God as Saviour in the Acts of the Apostles', in Marshall and Peterson, *Witness to the Gospel*, p. 94.

<sup>844</sup> Cf. Wenk, *Community Forming Power*, p. 129.

*Conclusion.*

The stress in both Acts 2.22 and 10.38 is clearly on Jesus' validation by God through signs and wonders. The associated notions of power and authority, which accompany the performance of signs and wonders, are terms used repeatedly of Jesus' ability over demons and disease (cf. Luke 4.36; 5.17; 6.19; 8.46).<sup>845</sup> In a similar way, signs and wonders will feature in the Acts narrative to identify and validate Luke's prophetic heroes of the Spirit who pioneer the missionary expansion of the church (cf. 2.43; 4.16, 22, 30; 5.12; 6.8; 8.6, 13; 14.13; 15.12).<sup>846</sup>

§27. SIGNS AND WONDERS AND LUKE'S HEROES OF THE SPIRIT.

*The purpose of signs and wonders in Acts.*

It is clear from reading Acts that Luke uses the term 'signs and wonders' as a catch-all for miracles, healings and exorcisms.<sup>847</sup> The summary in Acts 2.42–47 provides us with a vignette of life in the early Jerusalem church which also serves as an indication for Luke's readers of the growth and development of the community (cf. 4.4; 5.42).<sup>848</sup>

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<sup>845</sup> See Johnson, *Possessions*, p. 145.

<sup>846</sup> Johnson, *Acts*, p. 45.

<sup>847</sup> F. Neiryck, 'The Miracles Stories in the Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction', in J. Kremer, (ed.), *Les Acts des Apôtres: Traditions, redaction, théologie* (Gembloux, Belgique: Leuren University Press, 1979), pp. 170f. analyses the references to signs and wonders in Acts as follows: Summary reports: 2.43; 5.12; 5.15; 5.16; 6.8; 8.6–7; 8.13; 14.3; 19.11; 19.12; 28.9. Healing stories: 3.1–10; 9.32–35; 14.8–10; 28.7–8. Exorcisms: 16.16–18; 19.13–19. Raising the dead: 9.36–42; 20.7–12. Liberations from prison: 5.17–21; 12.3–17; 16.25–34. Punishments: 5.1–11; 13.9–12. Nature miracle: 28.3–6. For an alternative approach, see Achtemeier, 'The Lukan Perspective on the Miracles of Jesus', p. 165 n. 22.

<sup>848</sup> M. Dibelius, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (ET London: SCM Press, 1956), p. 9f.

Members of the community devote themselves to the apostles' teaching,<sup>849</sup> to fellowship, communal meals<sup>850</sup> and holding all things in common.<sup>851</sup> Luke also states that many wonders and signs (τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα) were performed through the apostles resulting in an atmosphere of holy awe/fear (φόβος) descending on the whole community. In using this language, Luke promotes an atmosphere of religious awe and the numinous where the focus is on the apostles as the agents of signs and wonders (cf. 5.5–11; 19.17).<sup>852</sup> Barrett goes even further when he suggests that the fear-language used here by Luke indicates more than just reverence for God (cf. 9.31), it suggests fear of the supernatural.<sup>853</sup> Indeed, the text even suggests that this fear of the supernatural was not just confined to the Christian community, but also extended to all who witnessed the signs and wonders (5.12; cf. 2.43).<sup>854</sup>

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<sup>849</sup> For teaching of apostles see also, for example, Acts 4.2, 18; 5.21, 25, 28, 42.

<sup>850</sup> L.T. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 5; Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992), p. 58 regards the breaking of bread described here by Luke as more than just communal meals, arguing that, for Luke, Jesus' presence has already been indicated in the breaking of bread (Luke 24.35). See also Pesch, *Apostelgeschichte*, p. 130 who writes: 'Die koinonia ist zunächst charakterisiert durch das (gemeinsame) Brotbrechen'. J. Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (ET London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 118f. regards Acts 2.42 as outlining an early form of Christian service of worship rather than a summary of life in the early Jerusalem community. Jeremias argues further that the communal meals of the early church reflected the table fellowship enjoyed by Jesus and his disciples [p. 66]. Against Jeremias, Haenchen, *Acts*, p. 191 argues that the summaries in Acts depict all aspects of church life and are not limited just to worship. Whilst Bruce, *Acts: Greek Text*, p. 132 thinks that whilst Luke's reference to the breaking of bread probably refers to the Lord's Supper, he points out that this, together with the prayers, is also an expression of κοινωνία.

<sup>851</sup> Johnson, *Acts*, pp. 58f. understands κοινωνία here as referring to the sharing of material possessions (cf. 2.25; 4.32–37). Johnson thinks Luke has in mind the Hellenistic Greek ideal of friendship where friends hold all things in common. Alternatively, Dunn's proposal that κοινωνία here reflects Paul's idea of 'the fellowship of the Spirit' (2 Cor. 13.134; Phil. 2.1) may be more likely.

<sup>852</sup> Cf. Dunn, *Acts*, p. 35.

<sup>853</sup> Barrett, *Acts I*, p. 166; cf. Haenchen, *Acts*, p. 192.

<sup>854</sup> Witherington, *Acts*, p. 161. H.C. Kee, *To Every Nation Under Heaven: The Acts of the Apostles* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1997), p. 76. Conzelmann, *Acts*, p. 23 draws attention to the idea of fear being present within the holy congregation at Qumran (1QH 4.26).

The fear that results from witnessing the signs and wonders performed by the apostles, also suggests that the apostolic word is received as a word from God.<sup>855</sup> Max Turner notes that, as elsewhere in summary passages (Acts 2.42–47; 4.32–37; 5.12–16) Luke's focus is on the 'witness and signs of the *apostles*'. He concludes that Luke is 'entirely silent on the matter of congregational witness or evangelism by the rank and file of the church'.<sup>856</sup> This also applies to the brief summaries in Acts (cf. 6.7; 9.31; 12.24; 16.5–19.20).<sup>857</sup> In a similar vein, Johnson concludes that the clear indication is that signs and wonders were confined to the apostles who were Jesus' successors, receiving both the prophetic πνεῦμα and δύναμις that had previously been at work in Jesus.<sup>858</sup> Just as signs and wonders validated Jesus' words and ministry, so they now validate the words and ministry of the apostles. Thus if the signs and wonders associated with Jesus' ministry are to be understood in terms of what God did through him (cf. Acts 2.22) then the same link is to be made between signs and wonders and Luke's heroes of the Spirit.<sup>859</sup> This becomes explicit in the example of the healing sign which follows in Acts 3.1ff., described later in the narrative as a 'notable sign' (γνωστὸν σημεῖον) by the Jewish council (4.16).<sup>860</sup>

By maintaining a sense of the numinous surrounding the activities of the Jerusalem church, Luke shows how through signs and wonders the presence of the Lord remained

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<sup>855</sup> Cf. R. Wall, 'Israel and the Gentile Mission in Acts and Paul: A Canonical Approach', in Marshall and Peterson (eds.), *Witness to the Gospel*, p. 443.

<sup>856</sup> Turner, *Power from on High*, p. 399. Cf. Marshall, *Acts*, p. 104; Pesch, *Apostelgeschichte*, p. 175.

<sup>857</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>858</sup> Johnson, *Acts*, p. 58; cf. Fitzmyer, *Acts*, p. 271; Barrett, *Acts vol. 1*, p. 166.

<sup>859</sup> Cf. J.T. Squires, 'The Plan God', in Marshall and Peterson, *Witness to the Gospel*, p. 22.

<sup>860</sup> See my discussion in §28 below.

manifest in the community.<sup>861</sup> In 2.41 we read that 3,000 persons were added to the new Christian community and in 5.14 further large numbers of men and women joining the church in Jerusalem are described as ‘added to the Lord’ (cf. 11.24b), indicating further that it is the person of the risen Jesus whom Luke regards as still central to the life and activity of the church.<sup>862</sup>

In discussing the earliest communities’ sense of charismatic authority, Dunn argues that the principal source of that sense of authority in Acts is clearly the Spirit.<sup>863</sup> However, the evidence in Acts also suggests that commissioning is the initiatory vehicle used by Luke in Acts in order to concentrate for his readers the charismatic authority of the Spirit in selected individuals with whom he associates the manifestation of signs and wonders. In other words, even in light of the outpouring of the Spirit on all Jesus’ followers at Pentecost and beyond, the idea of the authoritative commissioning of selected individuals which we found in Luke’s gospel also extends to his portrayal of the post-Easter community in Acts. Also in Acts, we see individuals being commissioned for specific tasks, in some cases of clearly limited duration.<sup>864</sup> The implications of this for contemporary application are that, *contra* the Third Wave model where signs and wonders are almost commonplace, the evidence from Acts suggests a model where a limited number of designated individuals are set apart and commissioned, initially by the risen Jesus but then more commonly by their local congregation to whom and through

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<sup>861</sup> Dunn, *Acts*, p. 65.

<sup>862</sup> Dunn, *Acts*, p. 66.

<sup>863</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 176.

<sup>864</sup> E.g. Paul and Barnabas who are commissioned and sent out as missionaries by the church in Antioch but who later part following the completion of Paul’s first missionary journey (Acts 13.1–3; 14.26–28; cf. 15.36–41). I would also add here Ananias who is commissioned by the risen Jesus for the specific task of ministering to Paul during his conversion experience by laying hands on him in order to heal his blindness and impart the Spirit. See further §5.7 below.

whom, as Luke understands it, the prophetic and authoritative voice of the Spirit of Jesus speaks.

In his examination of Luke's presentation of signs and wonders in the early church, Dunn points out that the phrase 'signs and wonders' occurs more frequently in Acts than in any other NT document.<sup>865</sup> The positive attitude to signs and wonders shown by Luke in Acts is contrary to Jesus' negative attitude to 'signs' in the synoptic tradition.<sup>866</sup> However, in Acts, signs and wonders clearly have a missiological significance in that they produce faith in the message of the witnesses (5.14; 9.42; 13.13; 19.18).<sup>867</sup> Dunn makes the point that Luke's presentation of signs and wonders in Acts is uncritical and may appear to the modern reader of Acts as somewhat naïve (in a non-pejorative sense).<sup>868</sup> Dunn also observes that Luke supplements his frequent mention of signs and wonders with δυνάμεις (δυνάμεις μεγάλας Acts 8.13; δυνάμεις οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας Acts 19.11), and includes miracles that particularly appeal to him and contribute to the creation of an overall atmosphere of numinous awe that characterises the early Christian community in his narrative.<sup>869</sup>

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<sup>865</sup> Nine times in Acts (Acts 2.19, 22, 43; 4.30; 5.12; 6.8; 7.36; 14.3; 15.12) and no more than once in other NT documents (Mark 13.22/Matt. 24.24; John 4.48; Rom. 15.19; 2 Cor. 12.12; 2 Thess. 2.9; Heb. 2.4). Cf. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 402 n. 47.

<sup>866</sup> E.g. Mark 8.11–12 pars.

<sup>867</sup> Cf. H.C. Kee, *Good News to the Ends of the Earth: The Theology of Acts* (Philadelphia/London: Trinity Press International/SCM Press, 1990), p. 10. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, pp. 167f. notes that this is in contrast to Jesus' healings and exorcisms where faith on the part of the person being healed plays an important role in releasing the healing δύναμις of the Spirit. Even in the Peter/Paul parallel in Acts 3.16 and 14.9 the faith of the person being healed is primarily in the message.

<sup>868</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, pp. 134ff.

<sup>869</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 167

However, we saw earlier that just as signs and wonders serve to establish Israel as the people of God, so too are signs and wonders in Acts to be understood as being instrumental in the formation of the infant church as the eschatological people of God. This suggests that for Luke signs and wonders in Acts also have a salvation-historical function that goes beyond creating a numinous atmosphere for his readers. This, in turn, helps to explain why Luke does not attribute signs and wonders in a more general way to members of the community as a whole, but reserves attributing deeds of power to a limited number of accredited individuals whom he presents as having been commissioned, with its attendant notion of the conveyance of authority (ἐξουσία) to act on behalf of another.

There are two further important features closely associated with Luke's presentation of signs and wonders in Acts that recall for Luke's readers that the person concerned has legitimate authority to act, and which serve to emphasise further the way in which signs and wonders and the miraculous are restricted in Acts to a select few individuals. These are the laying on of hands and the use of Jesus' name, and it is to these that I will now turn in my final section.

## §28. LUKE'S HEROES OF THE SPIRIT: SIGNS OF AUTHORITY TO ACT.

### *Laying on of hands.*

In classical Greek, χεῖρ frequently means 'power over others' and this meaning is also present in the OT (e.g. Josh. 2.24; Jgs 3.28; 4.7, 14; 7.9, 15).<sup>870</sup> References to the 'hand of God' in the OT are frequently concerned with God's activity on Israel's behalf where he reveals his might (e.g. Exod. 7.4; 13.3, 14, 16; Deut. 5.15; 7.8; 9.26)<sup>871</sup> and, notably, with signs and wonders (e.g. Deut. 4.34; 6.21–22; 11.2–7; 26.8). In ancient Israel, the laying on of hands conveyed blessing from one person to another (Gen. 48.14) and authority (Num. 8.10; Deut. 34.9), as well as symbolically transferring the sins of the people on to the scapegoat (Lev. 16.21).<sup>872</sup> Similarly, in Lev. 24.14 the whole congregation are to 'press hands' on a blasphemer's head before carrying out the punishment of stoning.<sup>873</sup> In the OT the laying on of hands is also a sign of commissioning which is performed in front of the assembled congregation of Israel (e.g. Num. 27.18–20, 21–23; Deut. 34.9; cf. Acts 6.6; 13.3).

Healings are not normally associated with the laying on of hands in the Old Testament.

Lohse points to an exception where the LXX translates 2 Kings 5.11 as καὶ ἐπιθήσει τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ (LXX 4 Kings 5.11) although here it must be noted that the suggestion that the healer lay hands upon the affected area comes from an affronted 'patient' and the

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<sup>870</sup> E. Lohse, *TDNT IX*, p. 425.

<sup>871</sup> Lohse, *TDNT IX*, p. 427.

<sup>872</sup> D. Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (London: Athlone Press, 1956), p. 224.

<sup>873</sup> Daube, *op.cit.*, p. 227.

laying on of hands does not in fact take place.<sup>874</sup> Of more interest here is an example from Qumran where, according to 1Q Gen.Apoc. 20.28–29, the author seeks to protect Sarah’s purity whilst she is apart from Abraham in Pharaoh’s household by stating that God afflicted Pharaoh with impotence. Eventually Abraham lays hands on Pharaoh and heals him, “So I prayed for him, that blasphemer, and laid my hands upon his head. Thereupon the plague was removed from him, the evil spirit exorcised from him, and he was healed.”<sup>875</sup> Fitzmyer suggests that the presence of the language of ‘rebuke’ means that this is to be understood as an exorcism.<sup>876</sup>

The laying on of hands is also an important feature in Acts (5.12; 9.12, 17; 14.3; 28.8; cf. 3.7; 9.41). Dunn suggests that the laying on of hands may have been regarded as an act of ‘prophetic symbolism’ where the hands of the healer represented the power of the Lord that effected the healing (4.30).<sup>877</sup> It is also true to say that this prophetic symbolism extends in Acts to the formal act of commissioning of individuals by a local congregation (Acts 6.6; 13.3).<sup>878</sup>

For my present purposes, material in Acts that features the laying on of hands may usefully be grouped under three headings, all of which suggest the presence of the

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<sup>874</sup> Lohse, *TDNT IX*, p. 428 n. 23.

<sup>875</sup> M.O. Wise, (Trans.) ‘Tales of the Patriarchs: 1QapGen’, in M.O. Wise, M.A. Abegg Jnr., and E.M. Cook, (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1997), p. 75. Also noted by Lohse, *ibid.*

<sup>876</sup> J.A. Fitzmyer, ‘Some Observations on the Genesis Apocryphon’, *CBQ* 22 (1960), 284, who writes: ‘That the laying on of hands was regarded as a sort of exorcism is derived from the verb used in 1QGA 20, 28.29, *tir<sup>ʿ</sup>ar* and *ʿitg<sup>ʿ</sup>rat* (or *ʿitg<sup>ʿ</sup>eret*), whose root means “to rebuke”...’.

<sup>877</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 165.

<sup>878</sup> It is also worth noting here the congregational aspect of the election of Matthias as an apostle to replace Judas where in Acts 1.23 it is the whole community that puts forward the two candidates, Justus and Matthias (cf. Barrett, *Acts* vol. 1, p. 102).

element of authority to act on behalf of another. These are: laying on of hands as a sign of commissioning (Acts 6.6; 9.10–17; 13.3); laying on of hands and conveying the Holy Spirit (8.17–19; 19.6); laying on of hands and signs and wonders (3.7; 9.12, 17, 41; 14.3; 19.11; 28.8).

*Laying on of hands as a sign of commissioning.*

In the context of commissioning, the laying on of hands suggests the imparting of authority (ἐξουσία)<sup>879</sup> as can be seen particularly in the commissionings of the Seven in Jerusalem (Acts 6.6), and of Barnabas and Paul by the church in Antioch (13.3).<sup>880</sup> In the case of Stephen, one of Luke's heroes of the Spirit to whom 'great wonders and signs' are attributed (Acts 6.8b), the laying on of hands associated with the commissioning of the Seven appears as an expression of solidarity on the part of the apostles and the Jerusalem congregation, as well as conveying authority to act on behalf of the community (cf. Num. 27.19–23; cf. Deut. 34.9). Although Stephen is further described in 6.8 as being full of grace and power (δυνάμειως), Luke does not elaborate further. According to Conzelmann, this is because Luke does not know of any 'concrete miracles' performed by Stephen.<sup>881</sup> However, Luke has already established the nature of the signs and wonders performed by his heroes of the Spirit and Stephen's primary role in the narrative

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<sup>879</sup> Turner, *Power from on High*, p. 372. Turner identifies three paradigms for the laying on of hands in the NT: transference of power in healing; invocatory prayer for healing and/or blessing; identification, representation and transfer of authority.

<sup>880</sup> Turner, *Power from on High*, pp. 372f. correctly identifies Paul's appointment of the elders in the churches during his first missionary journey (Acts 14.23) as a form of commissioning. However, the impression given by Turner that this involved the laying on of hands is not supported by the text. According to Barrett, *Acts I*, p. 687 the verb 'to appoint' (χειροτονεῖν), originally meaning 'to stretch out the hand' to vote in the assembly, does not, as it is used here, support the idea of the laying on of hands.

<sup>881</sup> Conzelmann, *Acts*, p. 47.

is to deliver his extended speech which invokes Israel's history and refers to Moses' rejection despite his prophetic ability to perform signs and wonders in Egypt, at the Red Sea and in the wilderness (7.36),<sup>882</sup> and ends with Stephen's condemning the Temple *cultus*, resulting in his becoming the first Christian martyr. It is during Stephen's execution that, filled with the Holy Spirit (7.55) he confirms for Luke's readers Jesus' exalted status as the Son of Man who stands at the right hand of God, and then echoes the words of his master on the cross, 'Lord Jesus receive my spirit' (Acts 7.59; cf. Luke 23.46).

Prior to the appointment of the Seven the whole community, consisting of Hebrew and Hellenist Christians, are called together by the apostles in recognition of the need to select leaders from within the Hellenistic Christian community (Acts 6.2).<sup>883</sup> The reason given by the apostles for widening the leadership base is one of administration within the growing community, although the initial complaint on the part of the Hellenists about their widows being neglected (6.1) may indicate more than just the need for the apostles to delegate.<sup>884</sup> This is perhaps further borne out by the fact that the remit of these men of the Spirit (6.3b) extends beyond serving at tables<sup>885</sup> and their charismatic authority is

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<sup>882</sup> Noted by Johnson, *Acts*, p. 129.

<sup>883</sup> It is interesting to note that this is of only occasion in Acts when Luke refers to the apostles as the Twelve and, given the title's close association with Israel (cf. Luke 22.30), may well be understood to emphasise division within the community.

<sup>884</sup> The appointment of the Seven may be indicative of growing tensions within the early Jerusalem community between the two groups of Hebrews and Hellenists (cf. 1 Macc. 1.11–15; Acts 8.1b). For a discussion, see e.g. M. Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity* (ET London: SCM Press, 1979), pp. 72–80; Dunn, *Partings*, pp. 60–62; and for a detailed discussion of the encounter between Palestinian Judaism and Hellenism, see M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (ET London: SCM Press, 1974).

<sup>885</sup> Cf. Luke 22.27.

expressed in mission (6.8ff.; 8.4ff.).<sup>886</sup> It is also worth noting here that the choice of the Seven is based on their good standing within the community together with a recognition of their charismatic authority, and the choice of candidates pleases the whole community (πλήθους). The Seven are named and described as being full of the 'Spirit and of wisdom' (6.3) with Stephen being singled in 6.5 as a man 'full of faith and the Holy Spirit' (6.5).

There has been some discussion as to whether the laying on of hands in Acts 6.6 is confined to just the apostles or extends to other members of the Jerusalem community. In 6.2 and 6.4 'we' refers to the apostles,<sup>887</sup> but in 6.2 πλήθος refers to the whole community.<sup>888</sup> In 6.5 the suggestion made by the apostles pleases the whole community who then choose the candidates. In 6.6 the candidates are placed before the apostles, and Neil comments that the text is unclear at this point as to whether it is just the apostles or the whole community who lay hands on the Seven.<sup>889</sup> According to Bruce:

The ceremony in this case indicated the conferring of authority by the apostles on the seven men whom the people had chosen.<sup>890</sup>

Witherington also thinks that it was just the apostles who laid hands on the Seven,<sup>891</sup> whilst Dunn<sup>892</sup> and Barrett<sup>893</sup> argue that the most natural reading of the Greek suggests

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<sup>886</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 181.

<sup>887</sup> Barrett, *Acts II*, p. 311.

<sup>888</sup> Barrett, *Acts II*, p. 311. Also NRSV.

<sup>889</sup> W. Neil, *The Acts of the Apostles* (London: Oliphants, 1973), p. 104.

<sup>890</sup> Bruce, *Acts: Greek Text*, p. 184f.

<sup>891</sup> Witherington, *Acts*, p. 251.

<sup>892</sup> Dunn, *Acts*, p. 84 and *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 181.

that the laying on of hands was carried out by the whole community rather than just the apostles, although logistically this may have been difficult (cf. Acts 1.15; 2.41; 4.4; 5.14; 6.1a). Nevertheless, it is clear that the commissioning of the Seven was a communal affair, where the candidates' charismatic authority was recognised by all, and the laying on of hands formalised their commission and, most importantly here, the authority invested in them by the whole congregation in Jerusalem.<sup>894</sup>

We find a similar act of commissioning involving the laying on of hands and the conveyance of authority being used by the church in Antioch when Barnabas<sup>895</sup> and Paul are commissioned as missionaries (Acts 13.3). Luke elaborates the scene in 13.1f. by mentioning the names of leading prophets and teachers who are gathered together to worship and fast and to hear the prophetic word of the Spirit, among whom are Barnabas and Paul themselves. Apart from the laying on of hands indicating the transference of authority inherent in their commissioning, it is important to note both the specific nature of the commission (missionary service, cf. 13.4), and the limited duration of their commission which is completed on their return to Antioch (13.26).<sup>896</sup> This is particularly significant in light of my conclusions as to the limited nature of the commissions of the Twelve and the Seventy(-two) in Luke's gospel, and bears out my conclusion there that

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<sup>893</sup> Barrett, *Acts*, I, p. 315 asserts that there is no doubt that this is the grammatical meaning of Luke's Greek. However, given the large numbers involved (Acts 1.15; 2.41, 47b; 6.1 and esp. 4.4) there are obvious logistic difficulties and that this difficulty is recognised by the Western text where the Seven are placed before the apostles who pray and lay hands on the Seven. (Barrett, *op. cit.*, p. 316. Cf. *NRSV*).

<sup>894</sup> Cf. for example, Witherington, *Acts*, p. 251 and Haenchen, *Acts*, p. 264.

<sup>895</sup> Dunn, *Acts*, p. 173 suggests that Barnabas is mentioned first here by Luke because he 'embodies continuity with the Jerusalem church begun in 11.23–26.

<sup>896</sup> Cf. Dunn, *Acts*, p. 173 and 'Ministry and the Ministry: The Charismatic Renewal's Challenge to Traditional Ecclesiology', in *The Christ and the Spirit: Collected Essays of James D.G. Dunn* vol. 2 *Pneumatology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), pp. 305f. also notes the limited duration of this commission and that of Stephen in Acts 6.6. We may also add here the commissioning of Ananias in Acts 9 which is discussed further below.

Luke envisages a situation where individuals are called and commissioned for particular tasks. In these Acts commissionings it is important to note both the criteria used for the selection of individuals, as well as the communal aspect of the commissioning itself where it is the whole Christian community that is involved in the appointment and commissioning of the Seven (6.6) and of Paul and Barnabas (13.3) to act on their behalf. In other words, precedent is set in the Acts narrative for the ideal conditions for recognising and commissioning particular individuals for specific roles within/on behalf of the community.

*Laying on of hands and conveying the Holy Spirit.*

More briefly, there are three occasions in Acts where we see the laying on of hands involved in the conveyance of the Spirit (Acts 8.4–25; 9.1–19; 19.1–6).<sup>897</sup> For my present purpose, I would simply note here that in each case the act of laying on hands is performed by persons who have received their authority by virtue of having been commissioned.

The Samaritan Christians receive the Spirit when the apostles, Peter and John (8.17) lay hands on them. It is interesting to note that in his confrontation with Peter, we are told that Simon Magus saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands (cf. 8.13b), which Simon recognises in verse 19 as being inexorably linked to the apostles' ἐξουσία. In the case of Paul's receiving the Spirit when Ananias lays hands

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<sup>897</sup> For a detailed discussion of these passages in relation to conversion-initiation and reception of the Spirit see Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, pp. 55–72, 73–78, 83–89; and more recently Turner, *Power from on High*, esp. pp. 348–400.

upon him, we have an example in Ananias of someone who has received a specific (short-term) commission from the risen Jesus (9.10–12, 15, 17). Finally, in the case of the Ephesian Christians it is Paul, who has been commissioned by the risen Jesus and himself received the Spirit through the laying on of hands by Ananias (Acts 9.17f.), who lays hands upon them (19.6). In all three cases, the laying on of hands is by persons who have been commissioned and whose delegated authority is validated by signs and wonders (e.g. 3.1ff.; 9.12,17–19; 14.3).

*Laying on of hands and healing.*

Although in his gospel Luke faithfully reflects the substance of the miracle stories he finds in Mark, including the laying on of hands by Jesus (e.g. 4.40; 13.13),<sup>898</sup> there are other occasions when he omits this practice by Jesus from his re-telling of his Markan tradition. For example, Luke omits entirely Mark 7.31–37 with its involved description of Jesus healing the deaf man with a speech impediment. For Luke, Jesus' δύναμις is dispensed with a word or the laying on of hands.<sup>899</sup>

There are just four occasions in Luke's gospel when Jesus uses his hand(s) in healing (4.40; 5.13; 8.54; 13.3).<sup>900</sup> In Luke 4.40, following the healing of Peter's mother-in-law (4.38–39), the sick are brought to Jesus who lays hands on each of them as he heals

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<sup>898</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker*, p. 181. In summaries Jesus performs his mighty works by the laying on of hands (Mark 6.5; Luke 4.40).

<sup>899</sup> On one notable occasion, found in Luke's Markan tradition, Jesus notices that power leaves him when he is touched by a woman seeking healing (Luke 8.45f./Mark 5.30).

<sup>900</sup> For use of the healer's hands in Acts, see for e.g. 5.12; 9.12, 17; 14.3; 19.11; 28.8.

them.<sup>901</sup> In the healing of the leper (Luke 5.13), Luke follows his Markan source in describing Jesus as reaching out his hand and touching the leper as he pronounces the words of healing. Luke omits Mark's direct speech in the healing of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5.23) with its request by Jairus that Jesus should come and lay hands on his daughter so that she may be healed.<sup>902</sup> In describing the healing itself, Luke includes Mark's description of Jesus holding the girl's hand (Luke 8.54: κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς), something which also occurs during healings in Acts (cf. Acts 3.7; 9.41).<sup>903</sup> Finally, in the healing of the crippled woman, which appears only in Luke (13.10–17), Jesus is again described as laying hands upon the woman and, as he does so, she is healed immediately.

Luke follows a similar pattern in Acts except that on two occasions, one ascribed to Peter (Acts 5.14–15) and one ascribed to Paul (Acts 19.11–12), people are healed through contact with items of clothing (Acts 19.12; cf. Mark 5.30b)<sup>904</sup> or even the healer's shadow (Acts 5.15). In general terms, Luke describes signs and wonders being accomplished through the hands of (διὰ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν) the apostles (5.12), Paul and Barnabas (14.3), and Paul alone (19.11). What evidence there is in Acts for the laying on of hands being associated with specific healings shows that the healings are performed by those who have been commissioned and are acting with the authority of the risen Jesus.<sup>905</sup>

<sup>901</sup> ὁ δὲ ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ αὐτῶν τὰς χεῖρας ἐπιτιθεῖς is redactional (cf. Mark 1.32–34). Cf. also Mark 6.5 and its reference to laying on of hands which is omitted by Luke.

<sup>902</sup> Matt. 9.18b renders Mark's χεῖρας as singular (χεῖρα).

<sup>903</sup> In Acts 9.41 Peter simply helps the restored Tabitha to her feet (cf. Barrett, *Acts* vol. 1, p. 486.)

<sup>904</sup> Mark 5.30b: τίς μου ἤψατο τῶν ἱματίων, omitted by Luke (cf. Luke 8.46).

<sup>905</sup> Barrett *Acts* I, p. 486. It is worth noting here that when Barnabas and Paul are commissioned by the church in Antioch and sent out on mission (Acts 13.2), it is at the instigation of the Holy Spirit whilst worshipping the Lord and it is also the Lord who is described as the source for the signs and wonders that validate their word of witness (Acts 14.3).

On both occasions where Luke describes the laying on of hands explicitly in connection with a healing (9.17; 28.8) the healer is known to Luke's readers as a person who has been commissioned by the risen Jesus. As I noted earlier in the case of Ananias, his commission appears to have been limited to the specific purpose of ministering to Paul by healing his temporary blindness and helping him to resolve the spiritual turmoil resulting from his being confronted with the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus (9.10–18).

Towards the end of Acts, Luke describes in graphic detail Paul's journey as a prisoner to Rome. Throughout the journey, Paul continues to bear witness to the risen Jesus and, despite storms at sea and shipwreck, eventually arrives in Rome in fulfillment of his commission (9.15; 22.14f.; and esp. 23.11; cf. 1.8). During the journey, Paul and his companions avoid drowning and are shipwrecked on Malta. Upon reaching land, Paul's innocence of any supposed crime (28.4) is demonstrated to all when he shakes off the viper from his wrist (28.3–6; cf. Amos 5.19). This is followed by the healing of Publius by Paul who prays, lays hands upon him and heals him of his fever and dysentery (28.8–9), followed by Paul healing many who were sick (28.9 cf. Mark 16.18). At key points throughout the narrative Paul's charismatic authority, derived from his having been commissioned by the risen Jesus, is demonstrated.

### *Conclusions.*

As we have seen, the evidence throughout Acts confirms that the laying on of hands is inextricably bound up with the concept of delegated authority linked with

commissioning. For contemporary Christians who look to Acts for models in support of their emphasis on signs and wonders it is particularly relevant to note that throughout Acts the laying on of hands for healing is only performed legitimately by those whose authority can be recognised by Luke's readers by virtue of their having been previously commissioned.

Closely linked with the laying on of hands for healing in Acts is the idea of invoking the authority of Jesus through the use of his name. As we shall see, the healer's authority is expressed in and through the name of Jesus. Indeed, the extensive use of the name of Jesus in healings and exorcisms by Luke's heroes of the Spirit in Acts (3.6, 16; 4.7, 10, 12, 30; 16.18; cf. 19.13–17), together with the way Luke features the laying on of hands at other significant points in his narrative, may be said to act as a corollary to the idea present throughout Acts of authority exercised by a limited number of individuals being firmly linked to their call/commission, and it is only with these relatively few individuals that Luke associates signs and wonders in Acts.

### *Use of Jesus' name.*

The invocation of the name of Jesus occurs in a wide variety of settings in Acts,<sup>906</sup> and was clearly an expression of the early Christians' sense of authority and power to act on behalf of the exalted Jesus.<sup>907</sup> Of particular relevance here is the use of Jesus' name in

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<sup>906</sup> E.g. preaching/teaching /witness (4.18; 5.28, 40; 8.12; 9.27f.; cf. 19.13, 17); salvation (2.21; 9.15; 10.43); baptism (2.38; 8.16; 10.48; 19.5; 22.16); suffering (5.41; 9.16; 21.13; cf. 9.21); signs and wonders (4.30); healing (3.6, 16; 4.7; 16.18).

<sup>907</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 177.

connection with signs and wonders as validation of the authority invested in Luke's heroes of the Spirit and their word of witness. In Acts, Luke makes it clear that only individuals who have been commissioned may legitimately, and successfully (Acts 19.11ff.) invoke the name of Jesus, and the authority associated with it.

In the ancient world, a person's name was thought to express their essence and personality. In the use of the person's name, it is as though they were actually present, particularly in terms of the authority associated with their name.<sup>908</sup> For example, in Acts 4.7 δύναμις and ὄνομα are 'parallel concepts';<sup>909</sup> by invoking the name of Jesus the apostles invoked his power (cf. Acts 2.22, 10.38), and with that power the clear implication that they had the authority to act as they did.<sup>910</sup> Luke makes it clear that Jesus, as the direct representative of God, healed and cast out demons in his own right by virtue of the power and authority he had received directly from God (Acts 2.22; 10.38). In Luke's gospel we have already seen how the Seventy(-two) believed that their power and authority to heal and exorcise was operative through the name of Jesus (Luke 10.17, 19). In Acts, Jesus' followers heal by means of the same power (δύναμις) which effected Jesus' miracles, but this power is now inextricably linked with the *name* and (authority) of Jesus.<sup>911</sup>

In the narrative surrounding the first healing story in Acts and the subsequent discussion, which is particularly concerned with the authority associated with the use of the name of

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<sup>908</sup> H. Bietenhard, *TDNT* V, pp. 243–283 and esp. 276ff; Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 164.

<sup>909</sup> Bietenhard, *TDNT* V, p. 277.

<sup>910</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 177.

<sup>911</sup> Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 164.

Jesus, Luke clarifies for his readers his understanding of the relationship between signs and wonders and the invocation of the name of Jesus (Acts 3.1–10, 11–26; 4.1–31). As Fitzmyer has observed, the elements in this healing story are very similar to healing stories in the synoptic tradition, and may be analysed as follows: situation described (3.2–5); word of command to sick person (3.4,6); restorative action (3.7); cure effected (3.8); reaction of bystanders (3.9–11).<sup>912</sup>

In Luke's portrayal of Peter healing the crippled beggar, he mentions two key elements which together form a pattern for the apostolic preaching in Acts and provide a further important insight into Luke's understanding of the role of signs and wonders in the early church. Through his main protagonist, Peter, Luke raises the rhetorical question of the source of Peter's healing δύναμις (3.12) which he identified as coming through faith in the name of Jesus (Acts 3.16). In other words, Peter heals the lame beggar ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Ναζωραίου (3.6), and in his use of the name of Jesus there is a clear implication for the reader of Peter's delegated ἐξουσία, received by virtue of his having been commissioned by the risen Jesus, and it is by the authority of the name of Jesus that Peter exercises the δύναμις which effects the miracle (3.12).

Furthermore, the pattern established at Pentecost is again in evidence when the occasion brought about by the presence of signs and wonders is used by Peter to preach to the gathered onlookers<sup>913</sup> where Luke also uses the words of Peter in order to make it clear that the healing was not the result of any personal power of Peter's but was a revelation

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<sup>912</sup> Fitzmyer, *Acts*, p. 276. There are clear parallels here with Jesus' healing of the paralytic in Luke 5.17–26 and Paul's healing of the man lame from birth in Acts 14.8–18.

<sup>913</sup> Fitzmyer, *Acts*, p. 267 notes how Luke ends the healing with a typical reaction from the onlookers who witness the healing so that the miracle has its effect on the observers as well as the person who is healed. In this, the way is suitably prepared for the preaching of the word.

of the power of God through his messiah, Jesus (3.11–16).<sup>914</sup> Importantly, in the preaching that follows, it becomes clear that the miracle is not just an isolated incident but is to be understood in salvation-historical terms as part of the fulfilment of God's promises in scripture (3.11–16, 18), as can be seen from Acts 4.4 where Luke notes that the number of believers has grown to around 5,000.

As a consequence of the healing and subsequent preaching, Peter and John are arrested and brought before the Council whose questions –‘By what power (δυνάμει) or in what name (ὀνόματι) did you do this?’ (4.6)– serve to confirm the understanding of the role of signs and wonders in the church which Luke has presented in Acts 3. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, uses the occasion to repeat the gospel message and to confirm once again the name of Jesus of Nazareth as the source/authority for the healing (4.8–12).<sup>915</sup> In 4.10, in his speech, Peter re-affirms that healing, which is called a ‘notable sign’ (γνωστόν σημεῖον) in 4.16,<sup>916</sup> was effected through the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This makes it difficult for the apostles’ opponents to deny their ability to perform miracles and with it the implied authority associated with the name of Jesus. Therefore, all they can do is to attempt a damage limitation exercise by forbidding the apostles to teach in the name of Jesus to which they receive a response from Peter in 4.20 that appears to echo the words of Plato’s Socrates spoken during his trial before the Athenian court.<sup>917</sup>

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<sup>914</sup> Cf. Kee, *To Every Nation*, p. 59.

<sup>915</sup> Cf. Luke 12.12 where LkR adds to Mark a reference to the Holy Spirit in the context of being given words to say when appearing before tribunals (cf. Mark 13.11). Matthew’s reference to the Spirit of the Father speaking ‘through you’, goes even further.

<sup>916</sup> So NRSV. Barrett, *Acts* 1, p. 235 suggests that in context γνωστόν σημεῖον is better understood as a ‘publicly known’ sign.

<sup>917</sup> ‘I owe a greater obedience to God than to you; and so long as I draw breath and have my faculties, I shall never stop practising philosophy and exhorting you and elucidating the truth for everyone that I meet.’ (Plato, *Apology* 29D: ET H. Tredennick, *Plato: The Last days of Socrates* (Harmondsworth: Penguin,

Luke concludes his narrative by summarising two key aspects of the healing miracle: it was recognised by Peter and John's protagonists as a γνωστόν σημεῖον (4.16; cf. 4.22),<sup>918</sup> and witnessed by many; the healing of a crippled beggar demonstrates the eschatological restoration of the poor and outcast which was at the heart of Jesus' message of salvation (Luke 4.18f.).<sup>919</sup> In naming the miraculous cure a 'sign', Luke echoes what has been said about Jesus in connection with signs and wonders in 2.22 and clarifies further how signs and wonders, associated with the kerygmatic witness, are to be understood by the readers of Acts.<sup>920</sup>

Following the apostles' release, Luke adds what amounts to a postscript where the narrative focus is on the community at prayer (4.23–31). The prayer and praise of the community again repeats the gospel story (vv. 27–29).<sup>921</sup> Of particular interest is the suggestion in verse 30 of a partnership between the Lord and the witnesses whereby the Lord will validate their witness with signs and wonders performed through the name of Jesus. This powerful petition is followed in verse 31 with a physical manifestation of God's powerful presence<sup>922</sup> and a further filling of all present by the Spirit which

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1969), p. 61 and noted by Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, p. 197. Cf. Peter's response in Acts 19b–20.

<sup>918</sup> Fitzmyer, *Acts*, p. 304 comments that mention of the fact that the man had been crippled from birth (Acts 3.2) emphasises the fact that this was a 'notable sign'.

<sup>919</sup> Johnson, *Acts*, p. 79. Witherington, *Acts*, p. 176 suggests that in describing the healed man's reaction to his cure as 'leaping and praising God' with the use of the rare verb, ἐξαλλομαι Luke may be intentionally reflecting Isa. 35.6 LXX.

<sup>920</sup> Fitzmyer, *Acts*, p. 303.

<sup>921</sup> Fitzmyer, *Acts*, p. 310 thinks that the petition which begins in verse 29 with the words καὶ τὰ νῦν, κύριε may echo the prayer of Hezekiah in LXX IV Kings 19.19.

<sup>922</sup> Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid* 3.89–90 [ET W.F. Jackson-Knight (trans.), *Virgil, The Aeneid* (Penguin Classics; Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 77] where Aeneas prays to Apollo for a city which will provide a 'remnant of Troy', and immediately following his prayer the hill on which Apollo's shrine stood is shaken: '... scarcely had I spoken when everything seemed to tremble even the god's entrance door and laurel tree the whole hill on which we stood appeared to move and the shrine seemed to open and the tripod within to speak'. [vix ea fatus eram: tremere omnia vis repente liminaque laurusque dei totusque moveri

parallels the description given by Luke of the initial distribution of the Spirit at Pentecost followed by bold witness to the gospel<sup>923</sup> – the very thing the Sanhedrin had forbidden (cf. 4.18).

We gain further insight into how Luke understands the ways in which the invocation of the name of Jesus is to be understood in association with signs and wonders through the form of words used in the healing of Aeneas by Peter (Acts 9.32–35). The phrase Αἰνέα, ἰᾶταί σε Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (9.34) makes it clear that Peter is the delegated instrument through whom the risen Jesus effects the healing. Again, here, the healing serves the apostolic witness and results in all the residents of Lydda and Sharon turning to the Lord.

In the second half of Acts there are just two occasions that take place during Paul's missionary activities and that involve the invocation of the name of Jesus in association with signs and wonders (Acts 16.16–18; 19.13). In Acts 16.18 Luke describes for the first time in Acts a Christian exorcism when Paul successfully exorcises the girl with a spirit of divination ἐν ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. As Turner rightly points out, previously in Acts 9.34 Luke has reminded his readers of the source of the healing power that lies behind the use of the name of Jesus in connection with signs and wonders, thus showing clearly that Jesus himself is present in the sense that it is 'his authority that is exercised by his representatives in miracles and exorcisms performed in his name'.<sup>924</sup> The efficacy

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mons cicum et mugire adytis cortina recluses.]. Noted by Fitzmyer, *Acts*, p. 35.

<sup>923</sup> Barrett, *Acts I*, pp. 249f.

<sup>924</sup> Turner, *Power from on High*, p.425. For the use of the name of Jesus in the sense of 'with the authority of' see also for e.g., Barrett, *Acts II*, p. 787; Bruce, *Acts: Greek Text*, p. 361; Dunn, *Acts*, p. 221; Witherington, *Acts*, p. 495, n. 111.

of Paul's use of Jesus' name is underlined in Acts 16.18b when we are told that the demon left her at once.<sup>925</sup>

By contrast, in Acts 19.13–19 Luke recounts an incident involving some Jewish exorcists which provides a telling footnote to Luke's understanding of what constitutes the legitimate use of Jesus' name in connection with signs and wonders. The overall context for the story demonstrates how the signs and wonders performed by Jesus' agents exercising the authority associated with his name is more powerful than the magic associated with the exorcisms practised in a non-Christian context.<sup>926</sup> Luke builds up the dramatic setting by describing the sons of Sceva, who clearly have a reputation as exorcists in their own right,<sup>927</sup> as having the powerful credentials of being sons of a high priest and numbering seven.

For the Jewish exorcists, the 'name' is deprived of its inherent authority over evil spirits for two reasons: firstly, they were patently not themselves men of the Spirit, or commissioned agents of Jesus; secondly, they do not invoke the name of Jesus directly, but by proxy through invoking the name of Paul rather than as a direct (authoritative) command (19.13b). The lack of direct authority associated with the legitimate use of the name causes the exorcism to backfire and the result of the incident is that the Christian message and witness prevails. The message for Luke's readers is once again clear: the

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<sup>925</sup> Haenchen, *Acts*, p. 495f.

<sup>926</sup> This can be seen from the fact that the incident is introduced by a reference to the 'extraordinary miracles' performed through the hands of Paul (19.11) and concluded with references to the evangelistic success following on from the incident together with a putting away of previous magical practices (19.18–19), and Luke's final comment that 'the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed' (19.20 *NRSV*).

<sup>927</sup> Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracles Worker*, p. 349.

authority associated with the use of Jesus' name is not available to just anyone but is restricted to those have been commissioned and whose subsequent authority permits them to act legitimately as Jesus' authorised agents.

### *Conclusions.*

In my examination of the use of Jesus' name in connection with signs and wonders in Acts, we saw that at an early stage in his narrative Luke raises the rhetorical question about the source of Peter's power to heal (3.12). Here, and throughout Acts, Luke makes it clear that the power to heal comes from the legitimate invocation of the name of Jesus by his authorised agents. Their delegated ἐξουσία, received by virtue of their having been commissioned, qualifies them to exercise the same δύναμις that effected Jesus' miracles and which is now inexorably bound up with the name and authority of Jesus. Just as in the ancient world a person's name was thought to express their essence, the source that lies behind the use of Jesus' name is identified elsewhere in Acts as Jesus himself (9.34).

## §29. CONCLUSIONS.

In chapter four I began by noting that Third Wave commentators rely heavily on Luke's account of the commissioning and sending out of the apostles, followed by the sending out of the Seventy(-two) disciples, for support of their paradigm for contemporary discipleship with its focus on signs and wonders. They argue that Luke's inclusion of the mission of the Seventy(-two) indicates that the power to heal and exorcise is not intended by the evangelist to be understood as being restricted just to the apostles, and that this conclusion is borne out by the activities of Christians, other than the apostles, in Acts. We also saw that in rejecting dispensationalist arguments for the cessation of signs and wonders at the end of the 'apostolic age', the Third Wave conclude that the evidence from Luke-Acts suggests that signs and wonders are to be considered as normative for Christians today.

In examining the evidence for Third Wave claims in Luke-Acts, my task here, as throughout my thesis, has been to engage critically with the NT evidence in order to discover what results are yielded in relation to Third Wave claims. I began my investigation by concentrating in chapter four on Luke's presentation of commissioning and discipleship during the earthly ministry of Jesus. From here I progressed to the post-Easter period, examining the commissioning(s) of the disciples by the risen Jesus at the end of Luke's gospel and in Acts 1.8 before moving on to consider the evidence for

Luke's understanding of signs and wonders and their relationship to discipleship and the mission of the church in Acts.

I began my examination of commissionings in Luke's gospel by looking at Luke's account of Jesus' baptism and pneumatic anointing, and considering how, if at all, this event is intended by Luke to be considered as paradigmatic for the church. I concluded that Luke portrays Jesus' baptismal experience as being unique to Jesus and, consequently, a unique event in salvation-history. I also concluded that, whilst Jesus' pneumatic anointing foreshadows to a certain extent the disciples' experience at Pentecost, nevertheless, Jesus' baptism is not intended by Luke to provide a paradigm that should be considered normative for the church. Rather it has the effect of establishing, from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, the unique place held by the earthly Jesus in the salvation-historical scheme that overarches Luke-Acts, and which Luke has already allotted to Jesus in the birth narrative when he states that Jesus was conceived by the Spirit (Luke 1.39).

Following my examination of Luke's portrayal in his gospel of the Twelve, I concluded that the unique status attributed to them from the beginning as 'apostles' by the Lukan Jesus (Luke 6.13) is bound up with Luke's concern to establish the idea of authority within the church being derived from the earthly Jesus himself through those whom Jesus appointed to succeed him acting as guarantors of that authority for succeeding Christian generations. From here, I noted that this must act as a cautionary note for any exegesis

which views the apostles as little more than examples of an intentional model of discipleship which primarily emphasises the performance of signs and wonders.

During my examination the missions of the Twelve and the Seventy(-two) I argued that both missions are portrayed by Luke as discrete incidents, with the mission of the Twelve again alerting us to the special place held by the apostles in relation to Jesus and the dominical tradition, and subsequently as pioneers leading the initial development of the post-Easter church in Acts. The mission of the Seventy(-two) illustrates the point that any of Jesus' followers may be called to represent him and to share his power. However, *contra* the Third Wave, I concluded that Luke's emphasis here is not to provide a paradigm for the normative expectation of 'every disciple', but foreshadows a model that is evident in the post-Easter church, as Luke portrays it in Acts, where individuals are commissioned and empowered for particular tasks.

In chapter five, my discussion of Luke's extended resurrection narratives led me to conclude that it was important for the evangelist to establish the corporeal, non-angelic nature of Jesus' resurrection state so that his readers may be reassured about the continuity that exists for Luke between the earthly Jesus and the risen Lord. The reason being that later generations, including those for whom Luke is writing, did not have the same direct link with dominical tradition. Therefore, they will have to depend instead on the reliability of those who accompanied Jesus during his lifetime and who were also witnesses to the truth that the same Jesus of Nazareth, whose earthly ministry Luke describes in his gospel, is now also the risen and exalted Lord who has commissioned his church to bear witness to him to the ends of the earth.

Unlike the Great Commission according to Matthew where, as we saw in chapter three, the disciples are to share Jesus' authority to teach, forgive sins and cast out demons/heal, the final commission according to Luke-Acts is not so transparent. I have argued that an appropriately critical sensitivity towards Luke's narrative requires us to note the importance for Luke of a shift in salvation-historical perspective. This, in turn, enables us to remain sensitive to the outlook of Acts where we encounter both Luke's view of the eschatological reality of the post-Easter situation for the early church, together with his own longer term outlook in light of the delay in the Parousia. The need for such sensitivity towards the text has a direct bearing on my engagement with the Third Wave and their tendency towards an homogenous approach to the NT evidence, and cautions against a too direct correlation between contemporary Christian experience and *praxis* and the experience of the early church as Luke portrays it in Acts.

In this respect, at the end of Luke's gospel the evangelist leaves his readers with the possibility of more than just the Eleven being 'clothed with power from on high' and, without further clarification, this might reasonably be taken to include miraculous power. However, in Acts 1.8 the commission is addressed only to the apostles and the enigmatic 'power from on high' is explained by Luke in terms of baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1.5, 8). Whilst the δύναμις imparted by the Spirit may appear to make (at least potentially) empowered witness, including signs and wonders, more widely possible, we are nevertheless faced with the problem that in Acts signs and wonders are restricted to a chosen few.

Following my analysis of Luke's portrayal of miraculous phenomena in Acts, I made three initial observations each of which has been borne out by my subsequent discussion of signs and wonders and Luke's heroes of the Spirit. Firstly, I noted that whilst individual miracles may not be explicitly designated 'signs and wonders' by Luke, it is nevertheless clear that Luke uses this term as a 'catch-all' for miracles, healings, exorcisms and other miraculous phenomena all of which contribute to the overall numinous atmosphere of the Acts narrative. Secondly, each of Luke's heroes of the Spirit in Acts to whom he attributes miraculous activity have been commissioned to act with authority. Thirdly, signs and wonders in Acts normally enhance the overall numinous atmosphere of the narrative, serving generally to demonstrate God's validation of the miracle-worker and/or enhance their reputation normally with a view to creating or supporting the opportunity to preach the gospel and encourage new converts.

Following my examination of the laying on of hands in Acts, we saw that this is inextricably bound up for Luke with the concept of delegated authority linked to commissioning. In terms of contemporary application, this conclusion led me to point out that for contemporary Christians who look to Acts for models in support of their emphasis on signs and wonders it is particularly relevant to note that throughout Acts the laying on of hands for healing is only performed legitimately by those whose authority can be recognised by Luke's readers by virtue of their having been previously commissioned. Closely linked with the laying on of hands for healing in Acts is the idea of invoking the authority of Jesus through the use of his name. We saw that in Acts the healer's authority is expressed in and through the name of Jesus, and throughout Acts

Luke makes it clear that the power to heal comes from the legitimate invocation of Jesus' name by his authorised agents. This, together with the way Luke features the laying on of hands at other significant points in his narrative, may be said to act as a corollary to the idea present throughout Acts of the authority exercised by Luke's heroes of the Spirit being firmly linked to their call/commission, and it is only with these relatively few individuals that Luke associates signs and wonders in Acts.

## Chapter VI

### CONCLUSIONS

In this study, I set out to engage with a group of evangelical-charismatic Christians who, over recent years, have been particularly influential across the denominations in the United Kingdom with their emphasis on signs and wonders. Exponents of this form of Christian expression claim to reflect in their theology and *praxis* a biblical paradigm which they consider to be normative for the contemporary church. It has been my contention here that, in their attempts to recover and reconstruct the NT paradigm that informs their faith and *praxis*, the Third Wave, as they are known, too often take an homogenous approach which fails to engage critically with the biblical text and the important historical, literary and theological issues that arise.

From the outset, I acknowledged that the Third Wave, in common with other evangelical Christians, regard the canonical books of the NT as scripture and, therefore, having a particular authority within the church and not least when it comes to the way in which the NT writers inform contemporary expressions of faith and *praxis*. I also acknowledged that I write as an evangelical addressing an intra-evangelical issue, and that my purpose throughout has been to engage with the Third Wave in such a way that I am heard by both sides – the Third Wave and the academy.

In setting the hermeneutical agenda for this study, my assumption has been that each of the NT authors had a specific purpose for writing in a particular way and this requires us to use the insights and methodologies of biblical scholarship in order to understand as much as we can of the author's intended meaning before we can discern what the text might mean for us today. Therefore, throughout this study, I have sought to answer the primary question: As a result of the refining process involved in a properly critical approach to the biblical material and related issues, does a NT theology emerge, in relation to the place of signs and wonders in the contemporary church, that more accurately reflects the biblical evidence and, therefore, is more appropriate for informing contemporary theology and *praxis*?

My focus in this study has been on the synoptic gospels and Acts and, in terms of informing a model for the contemporary church, a number of common factors have emerged in relation to the NT writers' attitudes to the place of signs and wonders in the church, linked particularly to their presentations of discipleship, commissioning and authority in the gospels and, by Luke, in Acts.

I began with Matthew's gospel where I found evidence which supports the Third Wave paradigm, but which also goes a considerable way beyond the narrow confines of just proclaiming and demonstrating, with acts of power, the nearness of God's heavenly rule. In presenting us with a transparent paradigm for discipleship, Matthew emphasises that the essence of being a disciple is to be understood in terms of learning, understanding and obeying the words of Jesus. He portrays Jesus as a Mosaic prophet who rightly interprets

the law, and whose authority to teach and to forgive sins is validated by his charismatic activity. Authority to teach was the sole preserve of Jesus until the post-Easter commissioning of the Eleven (28.18) when the community's ἐξουσία to 'bind and loose' becomes operative and, importantly for the Third Wave, includes within it the idea of having authority over the demonic.

However, because Matthew's understanding of the authority to 'bind and loose' appears to be primarily communal (cf. 18.20), this would suggest that those belonging to Matthew's community who exercise a charismatic ministry should also consider themselves subject to the community's discipline. Indeed, we saw that charismatic activity was far from central to Matthew's concept of discipleship which also involves making disciples and teaching all that Jesus commanded, in fulfilment of the Great Commission. In addition to exercising authority as a community in temporal and spiritual matters, followers of Jesus are to live lives which demonstrate the level of righteousness that is demanded from those who claim a part in the eschatological people of God. For Matthew, any expression of discipleship which puts charismatic activity before obedience to the words of Jesus is thoroughly condemned (Matt. 7.21–23) and, in light of Matthew's intentional transparency must be considered as much a warning for Christians today as it was for Matthew's own community.

In Mark's gospel we saw that the paradigm he presents for his readers in the commissioning and sending out of the Twelve is not aimed at Christians *per se* but applies to Christians engaged in mission. For Mark, signs and wonders are envisaged as

being primarily given to authenticate the mission of the church and its message rather than being an integral, everyday part of his paradigm for discipleship. Mark's view appears to be that signs and wonders have their place in the church's mission but, as with Matthew, compared to the essentials that characterise discipleship, such power encounters are of relatively little importance.

This, we saw, is evident from Mark's central section where the evangelist's critical presentation of the disciples is not meant to merely attack them, but serves as a device to enable Mark to present his understanding of the true nature of Christian discipleship as articulated and modelled by Jesus. The Markan Jesus' correctives on the true nature of discipleship overrule the disciples' misunderstandings and are aimed not just at the disciples themselves, but at Mark's own community where a right understanding of authentic discipleship is characterised by utter commitment, a servant spirit, and a willingness to suffer for the sake of Jesus and the gospel.

Following a detailed examination of the so-called longer ending to Mark's gospel (Mark 16.9–20), I concluded that it is not original to Mark and, as such, will not bear the weight placed upon it by Third Wave commentators. However, in examining what most scholars consider to be the original ending to Mark's gospel (16.1–8), I argued that Mark leaves us with a positive proclamation of the resurrection to the women (16.6), followed by an angelic commission to the women indicating re-instatement of the disciples, including Peter, together with a repeat in Mark 16.7 of Jesus' promise in Mark 14.28 that after the resurrection he would meet the disciples in Galilee. The fear and silence of the women in

16.8 provides a climactic conclusion to the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection and emphasises its epiphanic nature. I concluded that the model of discipleship which Mark's readers are left with here is one where, despite weakness, misunderstanding and failure, the disciples are called again by the risen Jesus to continue to follow him on the way. This, I suggested, is a model of discipleship that would have brought comfort to Mark's community and, by extension, serves to inform the wider church's understanding of what it means, from a Markan perspective, to be a true follower of Jesus.

In Luke's gospel, following my examination of the missions of the Twelve and the Seventy(-two), I concluded that both missions are to be understood as discrete incidents portrayed by Luke during the earthly ministry of Jesus. The mission of the Twelve alerts Luke's readers to the special place held by the apostles in relation to Jesus and the dominical tradition, and subsequently as pioneers leading the initial development of the post-Easter church. The sending of the Seventy(-two), illustrates the point that any of Jesus' followers might be called to represent him and share his power. However, *contra* the Third Wave, I argued that Luke's emphasis here is not intended by the evangelist to provide a paradigm for the normative expectation of 'every disciple'. Rather, it is to be found in providing a model, which we saw was evident in Luke's portrayal of signs and wonders in relation to the life and mission of the post-Easter community in Acts, where individuals are called, commissioned and empowered for particular tasks.

At the end of Luke's gospel, we are left with the possibility of more than just the Eleven being 'clothed with power from on high' and, without further clarification, this might

reasonably be taken to include a wide dissemination of miraculous power. However, in Acts we saw that Luke corrects himself and the commission is addressed only to the apostles where the enigmatic 'power from on high' is explained by Luke in terms of baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1.5, 8). Whilst the δύναμις associated with the Spirit may appear to make (at least potentially) empowered witness, including signs and wonders, more widely possible, we are nevertheless faced with the problem that in Acts signs and wonders are restricted to a chosen few.

In following through the question of why, when he has the opportunity to do otherwise, does the writer of Acts restrict signs and wonders in this way, we saw that, just as signs and wonders in the OT serve to establish Israel as the people of God, so too are signs and wonders in Acts to be understood as being instrumental in the formation of the infant church as the eschatological people of God. This suggests that for Luke signs and wonders in Acts also have a salvation-historical function that goes beyond simply creating a numinous atmosphere for his readers. This, in turn, helps to explain why Luke does not attribute signs and wonders in a more general way to members of the community as a whole, but only attributes deeds of power to a limited number of accredited individuals whom he presents as having been commissioned, with its attendant notion of the conveyance of authority to act on behalf of another.

Furthermore, we saw that the evidence throughout Acts confirms that the laying on of hands is inextricably bound up with the concept of delegated authority linked to commissioning. This, in turn, has a clear implication for the Third Wave, and others, who look to Acts for models in support of their emphasis on signs and wonders. We saw

that throughout Acts the laying on of hands for healing is only performed legitimately by those whose authority can be recognised by virtue of their having been previously commissioned.

Closely linked with the laying on of hands for healing in Acts is the idea of invoking the authority of Jesus through the use of his name. In my examination of the use of Jesus' name in connection with signs and wonders in Acts, I noted that at an early stage in his narrative Luke raises a rhetorical question about the source of Peter's power to heal (3.12). We saw that Luke's narrative here, and throughout Acts, makes it clear that the power to heal comes only from the legitimate invocation of the name of Jesus by his authorised agents. Their delegated ἐξουσία, received by virtue of their having been commissioned, qualifies them to exercise the same δύναμις that effected Jesus' miracles and which is now inexorably bound up with the name and authority of the risen and exalted Jesus. Just as in the ancient world a person's name was thought to express their essence, the source that lies behind the use of Jesus' name is identified elsewhere in Acts as Jesus himself (9.34).

In support of the Third Wave paradigm for a contemporary expectation and expression of signs and wonders in the church today, my conclusions throughout this study have shown that all three synoptic evangelists leave room for signs and wonders associated with the models of discipleship they present. However, then as now, the numinous effect of signs and wonders, healings and exorcisms can all too easily detract from what the gospel writers consider to be central to their understanding of Christian discipleship, and each of

the evangelists in their own way seeks to restrict the role of signs and wonders in the church.

For Matthew, signs and wonders come under the authority of the church as a learning community that exemplifies the higher righteousness associated with obeying all that Jesus has commanded. In other words, Matthew leaves no room in his church for a charismatic antinomianism which puts signs and wonders before obedience to Jesus. For Mark, signs and wonders have their place in the church's mission but, as with Matthew, compared to the essentials that characterise discipleship, they are of relatively little importance.

Finally, in Luke-Acts, the miraculous may potentially be associated with any of Jesus' followers, but in practice is restricted to a chosen few whose authority to act is recognised by their Christian community and again signs and wonders are normally associated with the church's mission.

In terms of contemporary application of what we have learned from this study, it is fair to say that the church must remain open to God's sovereign activity which may extend to the validation of individuals and their ministries through signs and wonders, healings and exorcisms. However, signs and wonders, by definition, cannot be considered commonplace and the models for discipleship presented to us in the synoptic gospels and Acts do not encourage the expectation that signs and wonders are to be considered normative.

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