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JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

“A FRIEND OF TAX COLLECTORS AND SINNERS”: AN INTERTEXTUAL READING OF
LUKE’S JESUS ACCORDING TO DIVINE IDENTITY AND YHWH SHEPHERD
LANGUAGE

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To my parents,
Who have taught and encouraged me to love the Lord with my whole heart, soul, strength, and
mind (Lk. 10:27).

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ABSTRACT

Luke's Gospel has been heralded as the Gospel for the outcast. This study suggests a biblical-theological approach to Luke's depiction of Jesus that may guide an interpretation of Jesus' person and activity. This study assumes an intertextual reading of Luke and identifies qualities and activities that he possesses and assumes according to Old Testament texts. Old Testament prophetic texts and Second Temple Jewish texts detailing YHWH's intentions to return as Shepherd to his scattered and exiled people are examined. Luke's birth narrative and accounts of dynamic moments in Jesus' ministry (Lk 15:1-7; 19:1-10) are read in light of this intertextual relationship, and divine identity concepts and creedal rhythms are suggested as components of a framework that contributes to an understanding of Luke's Jesus in light of the larger movement of Israel's Scripture. Ultimately, it is suggested that this reading of Luke presents Jesus as possessing the identity of YHWH Shepherd.

CHAPTER 1: PROSPECTUS

Introduction

Luke's Gospel uniquely presents Jesus as the God of the outcast. This narrative, woven together with threads gathered from the tapestry of Israel's history, indicates that YHWH is at work in ways promised. Luke paints a vivid picture of Jesus' birth, but the figures he features first are not those in the stable. Luke anchors the story of Jesus in the stories of those around him. An old, heartbroken priest and his wife and a young, unmarried woman are those through whom the promise is being realized. When YHWH arrives in the person of Jesus, the news is first announced to a group of unnamed shepherds and, within religious Israel, first celebrated by a righteous, devout man and elderly, prayerful woman. Jesus enters into this community and accomplishes the fulfillment of YHWH's promises. His activity is startling, but when Luke's reader hears in the words of these characters the resounding echoes of Israel's own Scripture, trends in Luke's narrative that may seem unusual are proven to be anchored in history and weighted with prophetic meaning. Luke draws his reader's eyes back centuries to look again at individuals, moments, and interactions in Israel's history, as if to remind her of the divine promises that inspired the hope that is realized among Luke's characters.

Luke's echo of Old Testament texts and his emphasis on lowly individuals seems to contribute to his larger theological purpose, and what is seen in the birth narrative is microcosmic of what is actualized throughout the story. At key moments in Jesus' ministry, the hope expressed in the birth narrative is actualized. By acting as the God of the outcast, needy, and humble, what exactly is Jesus doing? Why does Luke systematically present Jesus in this way, and why does he recall familiar language and stories to do so? Meaningful studies have been undertaken to answer these questions, but a question that is yet unanswered revolves around

Luke's particular presentation of Jesus in light of Old Testament depictions of the Divine Shepherd toward a scattered flock.

At key moments in Israel's history, YHWH is likened to a Shepherd and Israel to his flock. "The imagery of God as Shepherd of his people was a religious metaphor traditionally associated with the Exodus."¹ In Psalm 78:2, God's shepherding of Israel is recounted. He led and guided the people through the wilderness "like a flock," defending them against the threat of their enemies and bringing them to safety despite their fears. In the wilderness wanderings, Moses was the agent through whom YHWH shepherded Israel (Ps. 77:20, 78:52, 80:1). YHWH fulfilled the duties of shepherd by providing for them protection (Deut. 23:14; Num. 10:35, 14:7-9), provision of food and rest (Ex. 16:33; Ps. 105:40-41; Isa. 63:14; Num. 10:33), and guidance (Ex. 15:13; Deut. 32:12; Hos. 11:4; Ps. 77:19-20; 78:14, 53-54; 80:1. Yet this metaphor, and the relationship between YHWH and Israel that it represents, is not confined to the wilderness period. Psalm 80:2, written during the period of the divided kingdom, addresses YHWH as Shepherd, asking him to hear his flock crying out to him for deliverance and provision.

The prophets adopt this language and interpret Israel's condition and hope for restoration according to the shepherd motif. When a leader was placed over Israel in authority, he was tasked with the responsibility of acting as a shepherd to the people, a type of under-shepherd according to YHWH's ultimate rule. Frequently, these shepherds failed. Prophet after prophet laments the pitiful state of the flock, condemning the wicked leaders for disregarding the weak, scattered, injured, and starving among them (Jer. 23:1; Jer. 25:34-38; Zech. 10:1-3; Ezek. 34:1-

¹ Allen, Leslie C. *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 302. In Psalm 23, a metaphor that had characterized God's relationship to the nation depicts his relationship to the individual. God is Shepherd of the nation because he is Shepherd of the individuals within it.

10), and though they had temporary charge over YHWH's flock, YHWH promised to one day return to properly Shepherd and reclaim his flock (Ezek. 34:11-22; Jer. 2:12-13; 23:1-3; 31:10-14; Zech. 10:1-12; Isa. 40:10-11; Mic. 2:12-13). When he returned as Shepherd, YHWH would seek, gather, rescue, and restore his flock. The promises of YHWH through the words of the prophets secured Israel's hope that YHWH would remedy their plight.

The specific description of these promises indicates his intention to do this not entirely through an emissary, but by personally visiting his people as their Shepherd (Ezek. 34:1-24; Jer. 23:1-8).² The prophetic promises state that YHWH will replace these wicked leaders with his righteous Davidic-Shepherd who will tend her, but first, YHWH would personally visit his people and do the work of restoring and redeeming what was lost, broken, and despised. While the Davidic-King does the corresponding work of tending to the flock as shepherd, the prophetic passages articulating the motif indicate that the fulfillment of YHWH's promises are not fully realized until first, YHWH himself has come as Shepherd to seek, pursue, rescue, bring back and save his scattered flock. The restoration of YHWH's flock would be accomplished not by an agent, but by YHWH's himself.³ This study seeks to demonstrate that Luke presents Jesus as YHWH Shepherd in fulfillment of Old Testament promises, and Luke's emphasis on Jesus' ministry to the outcast may be better understood along these lines.

² These passages distinguish between the unique Shepherding work of YHWH and the subsequent work of his under shepherd.

³ Kenneth E. Bailey, *Good Shepherd: A Thousand-Year Journey from Psalm 23 to the New Testament* (InterVarsity Press, 2014), 143.

Purpose

Two topics attract much attention in Lukan studies: 1) Luke's unique presentation of the person of Jesus,⁴ and 2) Luke's emphasis on Jesus' activity toward the outcasts in society.⁵ This study examines how Luke's narrative draws on a motif originating in Israel's Scriptures. To that end, it identifies intertextual language and allusions that cast Jesus as YHWH Shepherd. The shepherd motif unites both Luke's Christology with his depiction of Jesus' activity to the lost. While much work has been done exploring Luke's Christology through his use of titles and implicit characterization, the Christological picture of Jesus as possessing the divine identity of YHWH Shepherd within Israel's midst has not been thoroughly explored. The motif of Jesus as possessing the identity of YHWH Shepherd provides context for Luke's emphasis on the outcast, and it accounts for this emphasis along Christological lines.

This study explores the ways in which the narrative of Luke's Gospel presents the person and activity of Jesus as the fulfillment of YHWH's prophetic promises to personally return as YHWH Shepherd over his flock. In Luke, the depiction of Jesus as the God of the outcast reveals him also as the Divine Shepherd of the prophetic promises. He is not merely the Davidic-Shepherd, but he is God incarnate, the YHWH Shepherd, who has specifically come to regather, restore, and redeem YHWH's scattered flock. This study traces Luke's presentation of Jesus as the embodiment of YHWH's promises that he would personally return to Israel as their Shepherd.

⁴ Christopher M. Tuckett, 'The Christology of Luke-Acts,' in *The Unity of Luke-Acts*, ed. J. Verheyden; BETL, 142 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 139. Tuckett states, "Luke does not present a single Christology but rather a whole variety of Christologies."

⁵ The parables of Luke 15 have been noted by scholars as a window into Luke's theology. Manson calls them a microcosmic "Gospel for the outcast." Thomas W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus as Recorded in the Gospels According to St. Matthew and St. Luke* (London: SCM Press, 1957), 282.

Sarah Harris has contributed a valuable work in this subject area.⁶ She contextualizes Jesus' ministry to the outcast through a recognition of Jesus as the promised Davidic-Shepherd King. Harris traces shepherd language and motifs throughout the narrative, centering her argument on key moments within Luke's story.⁷ With the shepherds in the birth narrative as the story's catalyst (2:8-18) and Jesus' interaction with Zacchaeus as the climax (19:10), Harris traces Jesus' activity throughout Luke as a realization of God's promises to send his under-shepherd, his Davidic Shepherd, to seek and save the lost within Israel.⁸ The narratological movement of Luke's story can be understood along those terms, she argues.⁹ In this way, Jesus' pursuit of the outcast is understood according to promises of a Davidic-Shepherd King. What Harris stops short of doing, though, is an important component that the relevant prophetic passages emphasize and what this study pursues.

Before establishing this Davidic Shepherd over his flock, YHWH promised that he himself would come to them to accomplish the work of a Shepherd (Ezek. 34:11-24; Jer. 23:3-6; Jer. 31:1-; Mic. 7:14-20; 2:12-13; 5:1-4; Zech. 10:1-2; Isa. 40:10-11). In so doing, YHWH the Shepherd would seek, rescue, gather, and restore his flock. The prophetic books clearly established the idea of future Divine shepherding of Israel. Israel suffered from improper and wicked leadership imposed upon them by their leaders, those responsible to act as their shepherds. These wicked Shepherds abused the flock they had been entrusted to tend. YHWH's prophets condemn their wicked mismanagement, remind them that Israel is God's flock, and

⁶ Sarah Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016).

⁷ *Ibid.*, 41-52, 83-105, 117-151. The key moments attracting Harris' closest examination are Luke 1-2, 4:18-19, 10:3, 12:32, 15:1-7 and 19:10.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 153-7.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 124-5.

declare that one day, God would return to judge them for their failure and negligence (Ezek. 34:1-10; Jer. 23:1-2; 25:34-38). YHWH would return as Shepherd not only to judge the wicked over Israel, but also to judge the wicked within his flock, and to gather, restore, and rescue the needy and preserve a remnant.

Having examined the language of the Shepherd prophetic passages, this study argues the Lukan Jesus as not merely the Davidic-Shepherd, but the eschatological, YHWH-Shepherd. In this way, Luke's Christology is linked in quality and in character to his theology. Luke's reliance on the grand story of God's activity with his people is evident from his Gospel's beginning. According to Richard Hays, Luke's subtle use of Israel's Scriptures is only appropriate. "There is only one reason why Christological interpretation of the OT is not a matter of stealing or twisting Israel's sacred texts: the God to whom the Gospels bear witness, the God incarnate in Jesus, is the same as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Either that is true, or it is not."¹⁰ Luke shows this to be unequivocally true. Luke's narrative depicts Jesus as Israel's God. This work aims to uncover a layer within Luke's narrative that has not been diligently examined. Uncovering this layer includes understanding the ministry of Jesus to the outcast and linking his activity to the very identity of YHWH; it is by tracing this intertextual cord that the reader more fully recognizes that in Jesus, YHWH has visited his people to fulfill his promises.

Luke's unique characterization of Jesus as the God of the lowly and outcast is found to be in line with the Shepherd tradition of Israel's Scriptures, where YHWH promises to return to Israel as her Shepherd. This promise, scattered at key points throughout the Old Testament, has descriptive elements that Luke depicts Jesus as fulfilling. This study proceeds under the assumption that Luke had available to him Israel's Scriptures. The opening chapters of the

¹⁰ Richard Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2014), 109.

Gospel, replete with Old Testament language,¹¹ indicate that he was both familiar and conversant with them.¹² Familiar Scriptural motifs and echoes repeatedly present the unfolding events as the fulfillment of specific promises that were intended to produce the very hope possessed by Luke's characters; the words of the narrator and those in the mouths of the characters echo ancient language and recall familiar promises. Luke not only engages with Israel's stream of tradition as he describes the events of Jesus' birth, but he enters it and directs the reader's eyes both downstream and upstream to make clear the ways in which these narrated events featuring Jesus are the continuation and culmination of history. This study explores the ways in which the presentation of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd is embedded within the narrative.

Method

This study employs narrative critical methodology in its examination of the Gospel as a narrative unit, out of which emerges a presentation of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd, God in Israel's midst, who is found accomplishing the regathering and restoration of his flock. Luke's self-proclaimed purpose is a narratological report of fulfilled divine events (1:1-4), and he accomplishes his purpose by interpreting the events of Jesus' birth and ministry through Old Testament language and motifs.¹³ His emphasis is on the events and particular people among and through whom God is working. Their "stories are related within larger narrative sequences," and

¹¹ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 124-127. dissects the language of both Mary's (1:46-55) and Zechariah's (Lk. 1:67-79) songs and finds within them language of redemption, restoration, mercy, forgiveness and promises of God's remembrance that originated in Israel's scripture.

¹² Allan Black, "'Your Sons and Your Daughters will Prophesy...': Pairing of Men and Women in Luke-Acts," *Scripture and Tradition: Essays on Early Judaism and Christianity*, Ed. Patrick Gray and Gail R. O'Day (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 199. Luke, "immersed in prophetic texts concerning the restoration of Israel," contextualizes the nature of Israel's hope within Israel's scriptures.

¹³ John Nolland, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, Word Biblical Commentary 35A (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 102.

their “interest transcends their individual deeds. Luke is concerned with how these events...are understood as divine affairs...’that have been fulfilled among us.”¹⁴ Luke communicates the fulfillment of these divine affairs by adopting, echoing, reframing, and transforming language and images of Israel’s Scripture.¹⁵ Luke’s ideal reader identifies Old Testament texts in the shadows of the Gospel writer’s unfolding narrative and finds within that system a compelling picture of Jesus as the promised Divine Shepherd.

Intertextual study begins by identifying and tracing literary features that indicate echoes and motifs in the text. It is held that echoes detected by Luke’s implied reader were first constructed by the author.¹⁷ As a result, “speaker and audience, in the cave of the text and the tradition, can hear the same echo.”¹⁸ Echoes mine the field of intertextual meaning, often with minimal or implicit linguistic clues. “The echo can refer to the intertextual discourse invoked by the codes and conventions as well as by minimal linguistic clues, intended by the author, which enable both author and readers to engage in dialogue as they participate in reinterpreting the tradition.”¹⁹ How, then, can a study reliant upon implicit markers of intertextual tradition be thoughtfully and responsibly employed? While the reader cannot get into the mind of Luke and prove intent, the cumulative number of echoes and the persuasive effect of the motif on the

¹⁴ Joel B. Green, *Luke as Narrative Theologian: Text and Topics* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 56.

¹⁵ Peter Mallen, *Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke-Acts* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 14-15.

¹⁷ Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (London: Yale University Press, 1989), 26. Hays describes an echo as “a metaphorical way of talking about a hermeneutical event, an intertextual fusion that generates new meaning.” Criteria for determining the existence of an echo are given below.

¹⁸ Young S. Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

narrative indicates thoughtfulness and arguably, intentionality. As Hays puts it, “readers are required to interpret the intertextual relations in light of the narrative’s unfolding plot.”²⁰

With that in mind, the study is guided by certain standards. Here, Hays’ enumeration of intertextual echoes is instructive. For Paul, Israel’s Scriptures were the “narrative framework for interpretation,”²¹ and the same is found to be true for Luke. Hays’ approach instructs this study, the core of which “lies in the application of the concept of ‘dialectic,’ ‘discourse,’ or ‘narrative’ to the inter-textual relation.”²² Hays gives seven guidelines for determining and recognizing an intertextual echo: availability, volume, recurrence, thematic coherence, historical plausibility, history of interpretation, and satisfaction.²³ Especially for the purpose of Lukan studies, Brawley offers the appropriate challenge that while the satisfaction of Hays’ criteria of volume is determined by the text’s verbal correspondence to the precursor text, allusions can also be identified in their replication of “form, genre, setting, and plot of their precursor.”²⁴ These markers are helpful determiners in this study of Luke’s Gospel, which has been found to be dependent upon the Old Testament context in ways more implicit though also utterly foundational. Luke has been heralded as the Gospel that recalls Israel’s Scriptures with a brilliancy just as subtle as it is powerful. While Matthew alerts his reader to Old Testament references through formula-quotations, Luke prefers an allusive approach that Richard Hays

²⁰ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 192.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 157-8.

²² Chae, *Jesus as Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 9.

²³ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 29-32.

²⁴ Robert L. Brawley, *Text to Text Pours Forth Speech: Voices in Scripture in Luke-Acts* (Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1995), 13.

terms “promise-fulfillment.”²⁶ Luke’s ideal reader recognizes these allusions and echoes as the guide for interpreting his Gospel account, thoughtfully discerning not only what Luke is doing, but why.

Specifically in Luke, the study of intertextual replications must search deeper than “the phraseological plane,” because replications “frequently implicate the context far beyond verbal similarities, and direct correlations may serve as markers for larger contexts.”²⁷ Discourse of the text is not confined to the text itself, but rather it extends to the intertextual or discursive space “created by ‘metalepsis’ echoing between the tradition and the text.”²⁸ The reader’s goal in this study is to identify the metaleptic echo between tradition and text and to draw conclusions that are organic to this intertextual relationship. Judging the success of the endeavor will look, first, to the ways that the echoes are determined according to the guidelines stated, and second, to the ways that the conclusions reflect compliance with the narrative features to be given below. This study will trace the ways that intertextual echoes cast Jesus as possessing the divine identity of YHWH Shepherd.²⁹ Luke is found illuminating meaning within the text through the depiction of imagery and illustrative concepts that are suggested through metaleptic echoes.

²⁶ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 192.

²⁷ Brawley, *Text to Text*, 13.

²⁸ Chae, *Jesus as Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 9.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 15. In his study on the Shepherd tradition in Matthew, Chae concludes that it is both theologically and narratively likely that Jesus’ feeding of the thousands is an echo of the Shepherd tradition (Matt. 14, 15), though the narrative lacks explicit Shepherd titles for Jesus. What Chae sees in this Matthean text can be seen in spades throughout Luke. When echoes are seen and heard as indications of intentionality, against the backdrop of the larger story, Jesus’ activity, stated mission, and recognition by key characters indicate that he is fulfilling the role of Shepherd claimed by Yahweh. Regarding recognizing intentionality in these echoes, Chae writes, “if the intentionality is dismissed, then the core message in the intertextual discourse, invoked by the miracle, is deprived as well, i.e., the message concerning the identity and mission of Jesus. The echo must have its source(s), direction, and intention. It is a voice reverberating from the wall, that is, tradition. But it is not a resounding, clanging cymbal created by merely clashing tradition and readers together. What we maintain is that the speaker and audience, in the cave of the text and tradition, can hear the same echo.” What Chae maintains is likewise maintained here.

Ultimately, Luke's shepherd tradition is communicated less through explicit titles and more through language belonging to the tradition within the greater "theological history" from which the Gospel writer draws.³⁰ Luke can be found drawing on this Shepherd tradition by revealing the person of Jesus through his activity. "The implied reader with ears attuned to the tradition are supposed to realize that this is, so to speak, an acted-out text of the tradition as to the promised Shepherd."³¹ Echoes and motifs indicate where the tradition is being "acted-out," and an examination of Jesus' activity that is informed by the concept of narrative identity is instructive.

Understanding Luke's Christological presentation of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd requires a certain type of interactive reading. Behind the authorship of Luke is the ideal author who sees and guides the whole story, and receiving this revelation is the ideal reader who understands the movement and nuances of the whole and of each individual part. Umberto Eco distinguishes between two types of reader; the first type of reader grasps the content of the text and responds in accordance with the author's intention. Luke's Gospel requires a second type of reading,³³ in which Luke's narrative technique regarding his presentation of Jesus is not merely noted but his method and message understood. "The second reader delights in grasping *how* the text so encourages that response. That is, the second reader stands, as it were, over the shoulder of the author, observing his or her narrative technique, noting how an account is shaped, appreciating how it is able to effect responses in a reader."³⁴ This study seeks to stand "over the shoulder" of

³⁰ James A. Sanders, "Paul and the Theology of History," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 53-4. While Lukan Christology focused on appellations attributed to Jesus has attracted much study within scholarship, what has invited further study here is the implicit message of Lukan Christology.

³¹ Chae, *Jesus as Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 15.

³³ Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 136.

Luke in order to follow his hand and detect how his presentation and characterization of Jesus traces a picture already outlined in Israel's Scripture. When this second type of reading is applied, Luke's presentation of Jesus as the God of the outcast is found to have meaning steeped in Old Testament promises depicting YHWH as the faithful Shepherd to his scattered flock. The ability to trace these intertextual echoes and allusions and to detect the outline of this motif is crucial.

To this end, six key narrative features enumerated by Harris will be used.³⁵ First, the significance of the entire story is the cumulative total of the parts. The events and stories are meaningfully linked and are moving toward a specific goal. This study is not singularly concerned with one single text, but with each text as it contributes to the cumulative nature of Luke's narrative. Luke does not name Jesus as YHWH Shepherd, or as Shepherd at all, but the causal connections between the events and narration of Luke's Gospel cumulatively depict him as the embodiment of this figure. For meaning to emerge from individual texts, they must be studied in light of both the immediate and larger contexts.

Second, the narrative is cohesively structured.³⁶ The primary context of any one of Luke's texts is the text of the entire narrative itself.³⁷ Luke carefully and intentionally orders his account (Lk. 1:3), and the nature of the structure is significant to the narrative's movement. Deriving meaning from a text must be done with eyes on the completed text. Luke's account, from the beginning, is infused with Old Testament texts, making the Gospel narrative itself the primary context of interpretation, and Israel's Scriptures the corresponding context. Luke seems

³⁴ Ibid., 136.

³⁵ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 5.

³⁶ Ibid., 6.

³⁷ Ibid.

to interpret the events through the lens of history, and his reader should aim to do the same. This study engages in a narrative critical approach in which the text is studied as a coherent unit rather than a compilation of parts.

Third, the narrative is intentionally ordered.³⁸ Narrative direction points to meaning, and the beginning, middle, and ending of a story are often narratively strategic.³⁹ Fourth, the text contains purposeful gaps.⁴⁰ Gaps and spaces in the text allow the reader to identify implicit links and make conclusions not delineated or spoken. In this process, the reader must be able to draw on the intertextual database of the author. “No reader worth his salt will ever attempt to set the *whole* picture before his reader’s eyes.”⁴¹ The picture flashes in increments before the eyes of the reader. In this study, Luke’s reader will present a way in which Luke’s whole picture may be better understood given key movements, and key gaps, within the narrative.

Fifth, repetition plays a role. Freedman observes that repetition does not always involve a single word, but sometimes a motif or a cluster of words that, together, create a theme or concept.⁴² The role of a motif,⁴³ Freedman observes, is determined by several criteria, and these criteria will be useful in this study. First, the frequency of the motif indicates purposiveness. Second, context and appropriateness are a test of efficacy. Importance is particularly indicated if

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 81; Mark Coleridge, *The Birth of the Lukan Narrative: Narrative as Christology in Luke 1-2* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 28.

³⁹ For more on the significance of “first impressions” in narrative, see Menakhem Perry, “Literary Dynamics: How the Order of a Text Creates its Meanings,” *Poetics Today* I (1979): 35-64, 311-61; Meir Sternberg, *Expositional Modes and Ordering in Fiction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 93-112.

⁴⁰ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 8-9.

⁴¹ Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1974), 282.

⁴² William Freedman, “The Literary Motif: A Definition and Evaluation,” *Novel* 4 (1971): 123-131.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 129. Freedman defines motif as “a complex of separate parts subtly reiterating on one level what is taking place on another.”

the motif appears at a point in the narrative where it is not required or even expected, or if it appears at significant and strategic points in the narrative.⁴⁴ The more uncommon the reference, the more the reader should examine it.

Sixth, the text contains instructive echoes.⁴⁵ While frequency is an indicator of effect, the inverse is not necessarily true. Low frequency does not always indicate insignificance; frequency alone is not fully instructive. Context, or the placement of the motif at significant points in the narrative, and the coherence of the motif with the principal purpose of the narrative, are also determinative for judging the efficacy of a motif.

These criteria guide this study, which finds within Luke's Gospel the Shepherd motif from Israel's Scriptures. Luke would have been familiar with the stream of tradition out of which the Old Testament Shepherd texts arise, and these criteria are helpful in guiding the recognition of the Shepherd theme in Luke. Luke has carefully constructed his narrative, and this study identifies strands that, when woven together, may reveal a striking picture of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd.

Literature Review

This study relies on the works of many occupying various corners of the field of Lukan studies, ranging from the divine identity of YHWH and Jesus' possession of it, to Luke's reliance on Old Testament Scriptures and the specific possibility that he employs a Shepherd motif.

Richard Bauckham's work on divine identity has direct bearing on the way echoes of Old Testament texts within Luke are synthesized in this study. In *Jesus and the God of Israel*,

⁴⁴ William Freedman, "The Literary Motif," 123.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 126.

Bauckham treats divine identity as a concept, constructing a framework that he finds supported in Old Testament texts revealing the person and activity of YHWH. Bauckham relies on the relational model regarding YHWH's identity, and he applies his framework to the New Testament depiction of Jesus, arguing that Jesus is shown to share the divine identity of YHWH. Bauckham's treatment of divine identity considers aspects of Jewish monotheistic commitments reflected in Old Testament texts, and one of those components will be drawn out here and applied to the investigation of Luke's depiction of Jesus' identity. Bauckham's eschatological monotheistic category describes YHWH's practice of self-revelation through his fulfillment of his promises and his activity revealing himself to Israel and to the nations. This category, which features fulfillment of promises as a means of YHWH's self-disclosure, will find expression in Luke's revelation of Jesus.

In *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*, Mark Boda describes three creedal rhythms (narrative, creational, and relational) as a mode for YHWH's self-disclosure.⁴⁶ Boda identifies linguistic and thematic qualities of each creed and traces their appearance throughout the Old Testament. He finds that they are patterns, or rhythms, that signify occasions of YHWH's self-revelation. Luke does not employ the language of these Old Testament creeds, but he does seem to echo the theological patterns contained within them. Though Bauckham and Boda offer independent contributions in their own respective fields, Boda's three creedal rhythms will be offered as a means of detecting how an eschatological monotheistic framework seems to exist within Luke's texts.

In *Early Narrative Christology*, C. Kavin Rowe confronts traditional studies of Christology that rely on appellations alone and fail to understand the title as part of a

⁴⁶ Mark J. Boda, *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 1-83.

Christological presentation. While the titles used for Jesus are exegetically significant and instructive, when segmented from the narrative, they fill in only part of the picture. Rowe examines Luke's use of the title κύριος throughout the narrative and finds that "Jesus is the movement of God in one human life so much so that it is possible to speak of God and Jesus together as *kurios*."⁴⁷ Rowe concludes that Luke directly characterizes Jesus with YHWH as the God of Israel. Of particular significance here is Rowe's understanding of Jesus' relationship to YHWH's identities according to, what he calls, relational and functional, rather than metaphysical, depictions.⁴⁸ The visitation of YHWH occurred in Jesus in that Jesus shares an identity as κύριος, not in a blending (*vermischung*), but in a connection identity (*verbindungsidentitat*) that preserves both unity and differentiation, a dichotomy that the concept of narrative identity allows.⁴⁹ Jesus acts as only YHWH acts, and he receives worship reserved for YHWH.⁵⁰ Rowe's contribution, in summary, is his consideration of the title κύριος in light of a broader consideration of Jesus' identity as YHWH according to relational and functional concepts.

In regards to narrative identity, the works of several have been formative in this consideration of Jesus emerging as YHWH Shepherd in Luke. According to Hans Frei in *The Identity of Jesus Christ*, there is an "interlocking nature of identity and narrative for Gospel

⁴⁷ Kavin C. Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (Berlin: De Gruyter, Inc, 2006), 218.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 135. "Luke is not interested in presenting metaphysical consideration when constructing YHWH's divine identity; rather, he speaks of YHWH relationally, in light of his hierarchical position within the universe and in contrast with others who claim the same position; and functionally, with regard to how he carries out responsibilities prescribed to him by his position within his created world and his covenant with Israel."

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 201.

⁵⁰ Nina Henrichs-Tarassenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity* (New York: T&T Clark, 2016), 24.

Christology.”⁵¹ The identity of Jesus is revealed, “by the means of the story told about him.”⁵² Nina Henrichs-Tarasenkova, in *Luke’s Christology of Divine Identity*, describes how this comes about. She articulates how Luke uses both direct definition, name and titles, and indirect presentation, function and relationality, to characterize Jesus as YHWH.⁵³ Henrichs-Tarasenkova finds Luke, through this indirect presentation, encouraging his reader to understand Jesus’ identity in relation to YHWH’s and to identify the ways in which Jesus’ carries out the unique responsibilities and functions of YHWH. “Based on this we concluded that Luke characterizes Jesus as the one who shares YHWH’s divine identity fully.”⁵⁴ Henrichs-Tarasenkova’s description is consistent with what is described by Rowe, specifically that the question of narrative identity is answered with the question “who”, which is answered by the content of the story.⁵⁵ In Luke, the facts of history are strategically narrated to reveal the identity of Jesus in light of the revealed person of God.⁵⁶

Luke’s interaction with Old Testament Scriptures has been helpfully developed within scholarship.⁵⁷ Though Luke’s audience is Gentile,⁵⁸ he presents the story of Jesus as the culmination of humanity’s story as it has developed through Israel’s history. Joel Green, in *Luke*

⁵¹ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 20.

⁵² Hans Frei, *The Identity of Jesus Christ* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock), 133.

⁵³ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke’s Christology of Divine Identity*, 193.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 195.

⁵⁵ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 20.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁵⁷ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 193.

⁵⁸ Darrell Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 14-15.

as Narrative Theologian, aptly states that, “Luke self-consciously begins his narrative in the middle of the story, so to speak.”⁶⁰ That is, he seems to pick up where the Old Testament left off. In so doing, Luke picks up on themes and develops motifs that began in Israel’s Scriptures, and he depicts the unfolding events as the next act in a drama not yet complete. To detect Luke’s presentation of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd is certainly possible, then, given this understanding of the narrative movement of Luke within the broader intertextual framework of salvation history. Engaging in a study of this kind builds on a foundation laid, in large part, by N.T. Wright, who has developed and clearly articulated the concept that the story of the New Testament, the story of Jesus, is the climax toward which the entire story of YHWH and his world had been building.⁶¹

The focus must narrow to the Shepherd motif in Luke, and in this area, Harris’ contribution is substantively unmatched. Harris specifically presents the case that Luke casts Jesus as the Davidic-Shepherd King, and in doing so, she mines the fields of prophetic texts that seem to inspire Luke’s language. However, Harris interacts very little with the idea that Jesus is more than the Davidic-Shepherd King. In her limited interaction with the concept, Harris downplays intertextual links that would depict Jesus as YHWH Shepherd. One such text (Isa 40:5-11) conflates the picture of YHWH as Shepherd of the sheep and as the warrior waging war on the enemies of the flock.⁶² This combined image of YHWH Shepherd caring mercifully for the flock and acting in opposition and judgment toward wicked enemies is found here to be

⁶⁰ Green, *Luke as Narrative Theologian*, 57-58.

⁶¹ N.T. Wright, *New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 380.

⁶² Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 101.

embodied in Luke's Jesus. This is found to characterize the return of YHWH, in both the Old Testament prophetic texts and in Luke.

Harris details a careful study of the Lukan Jesus as the Davidic Shepherd King, something that has been noted but not developed within scholarship. John Nolland recognizes Jesus' self-proclaimed mission to seek and save the lost (Lk 19:10) as being "in line with the anticipation in Ezekiel 34 of God himself and [a messianic] David coming to the rescue of the lost sheep of the house of Israel)."⁶³ Whether or not Ezekiel 34 is the echo behind Luke 19:10 will be found to be beyond debate. The issue, instead, is identifying the specific figure with whom Luke links Jesus. Ezekiel 34 names both YHWH and David coming to rescue the scattered flock.⁶⁴ Is Jesus depicted as the Davidic Shepherd, as Harris argues, or is he also found embodying the identity and thus doing the work specific to YHWH Shepherd? While Harris makes a compelling case for Jesus as the Davidic Shepherd, this does not preclude the possibility that Jesus is YHWH Shepherd. In his survey of scholarship on the topic of Jesus as Shepherd in Luke, Gathercole concludes that the role of David in Ezekiel 34 has been "overplayed by scholars,"⁶⁵ and the role of YHWH underplayed. Chae conducts a study on Jesus as the Eschatological Shepherd in Matthew, and his observations are pertinent to the study done here in Luke.⁶⁶ It will be demonstrated that Luke seems to be painting a striking portrait of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd.

⁶³ John Nolland, *Luke 18:34-24:53*, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 904.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 908.

⁶⁵ Simon Gathercole, *The Pre-existent Son*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 169.

⁶⁶ Chae, *Jesus as Eschatological Davidic Shepherd* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

Overview

Luke's presentation of Jesus' person and activity can be understood according to the concept of the divine identity,⁶⁷ in which the identity of Jesus can be best understood as it is related to the identity of YHWH. In Jesus, YHWH has visited his people. This is heralded in the mouths of some of Luke's first witnesses to the supernatural event, and the realization of this visitation is recounted throughout the Gospel. The narrative of Luke details how through Jesus, YHWH has visited them in the very way that he promised. This study examines the ways in which Luke's presentation of Jesus as the seeker and savior of the lost (19:10) is the declaration that YHWH has fulfilled his promises delivered to the prophets that he would return to Shepherd his people. What is stated in summary to Zacchaeus is embodied throughout the Gospel. Though Luke uses the title "Shepherd" for Jesus nowhere in the narrative, the motif seems to emerge from the text. Jesus is shown to be not merely the Davidic Shepherd, but YHWH Shepherd. Jesus' activity throughout the Gospel may be better understood when viewed through this lens, which emerges from Luke's own language and the intertextual well from which he draws.

Chapter 2 considers that Luke's presentation of Jesus acting functionally and relationally as YHWH in Israel's midst indicates his identity as YHWH Shepherd. This presentation and characterization of Jesus can be understood according to his possession of the divine identity. Contributions made by Bauckham and Boda are synthesized and constructed into a framework that is applied to a reading of Jesus in Luke. This study will apply principles defining Boda's creedal formulas to the eschatological monotheism category described by Bauckham to comprise a standard for measuring Luke's integration of Old Testament modes of divine revelation. Luke

⁶⁷ It is essential to recognize that the prophetic books distinguish between the quality and responsibilities of YHWH Shepherd and the Davidic Shepherd. The combined work of YHWH Shepherd and the Davidic Shepherd will bring about greater results for the people than did the exodus.

demonstrates a reliance on Old Testament texts, and in subsequent chapters, the integrated framework emerging from Bauckham and Boda will be applied to Luke's texts to trace how the revelation of Jesus aligns with the Old Testament framework of YHWH's revelation. Luke is found presenting Jesus in ways beyond what is explicitly stated through Christological titles.⁶⁸ Luke's presentation of Jesus' identity should be studied according to relational and functional concepts indicating his divine identity. This chapter will consider how Luke portrays Jesus acting as Israel's Shepherd in ways distinct to YHWH. Luke's depiction of Jesus' activity can be understood as the realization of YHWH's return as Shepherd in the person of Jesus.

Chapter 3 begins with an examination of shepherd language for gods and kings in Ancient Near Eastern literature as a foundation for the Old Testament shepherd motif. The focus of this chapter is tracing the shepherd motif throughout Old Testament texts from the prophetic period.⁶⁹ The motif emerges in Old Testament texts that establish Israel's need to be led and cared for by a shepherd, and they articulate YHWH's promises to personally meet their need (Ezek. 34:11-24; Jer. 23:3-6; Jer. 31:1-; Mic. 7:14-20; 2:12-13; 5:1-4; Zech. 10:1-2; Isa. 40:10-11). The texts lament the failure of Israel's leaders to properly shepherd the nation, and as a result, the prophets proclaim YHWH's promise to visit his people as Shepherd. According to the prophets, YHWH's work as shepherd will be multiplicitous; he obligates himself to care for the weak and scattered flock and to judge the wicked ruling over them. In both Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 23, two figures emerge from the descriptions of this future divine work. It is the distinct

⁶⁸ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 5. Though the Gospel makes explicit ontological claims about the person of Jesus, this study focuses instead on Luke's depiction of Jesus through indirect characterization.

⁶⁹ Chae, *Jesus as Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 26. The occupational office and theological motif of shepherd exists before the prophetic books, but this study begins in the prophetic period. Shepherding language is not limited to the prophetic books, but it is most concentrated in the periods immediately preceding, during and after the exile.

responsibility of YHWH alone to seek, gather, restore, and reverse the conditions of his people as their shepherd (Ezek. 34:23-24; Jer. 23:4-6). After YHWH accomplishes his work as Shepherd, he will then establish his Davidic Shepherd to specifically tend them (Ezek. 34:23-24; Jer. 23:4-6). YHWH's promises anchor Israel's hope in the expectation that their Shepherd would return, and the characteristics of the flock and the Shepherd's return directly guide this treatment of Luke. The expectation for divine shepherding is also traced throughout Second Temple Jewish texts. Features that are similar and different than Old Testament features are identified. While a variety of expectations are expressed in Old Testament texts and Second Temple Jewish texts, the certain promise of YHWH's return as Shepherd is clearly articulated.

Given the conclusions drawn about Jesus' relation to the divine identity of YHWH, and given the observations made about the revelation as YHWH's identity as Shepherd to his scattered flock, Chapter 4 traces the implicit Shepherd motif in Luke's Gospel by identifying how Luke adopts, echoes, and transforms language and images from Israel's Scriptures in articulating Jesus' divine identity.⁷⁰ Luke interprets the events of Jesus' birth and ministry through an Old Testament lens, sequencing the unfolding story within the larger narrative of divine affairs. There, beginning in the birth narrative (Lk. 1-2), Luke shows Jesus possessing qualities and responsibilities specific to YHWH, particularly as he is characterized as the divine Shepherd of the Old Testament.⁷¹ Echoes of Israel's scripture create a pattern presenting the arrival of Jesus as the embodied fulfillment of prophetic promises, particularly the promise that YHWH would personally return to shepherd his people. The fusion of exile and shepherding language within several key prophetic texts echoing in Luke suggest that Jesus' arrival indicates

⁷⁰ Peter Mallen, *Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke-Acts* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 63.

⁷¹ Green, *Luke as Narrative Theologian*, 56.

the end of the exile, the regathering of YHWH's flock (Jer. 23:2, 31:9-10; Ezek. 34:13; Ezek. 36; Zech. 8:7-8, 10:2-10; Isa. 40:5-11). The examination will concentrate on the celebrated return of YHWH's presence and arrival of salvation as a realization of divine shepherding promises.

Given Luke's treatment of Scripture in the birth narrative, chapter 5 will turn to specific instances where Jesus is found fulfilling Old Testament prophecy and birth narrative declarations by acting as Shepherd. In Luke 15:1-7 and 19:10-17, and in their related texts, Luke can be found presenting Jesus as YHWH Shepherd, according to promises articulated by Old Testament prophets. By presenting Jesus, in person and activity, as YHWH Shepherd, Luke seems to be indicating that Jesus is in possession of the divine identity. To demonstrate this, Jesus' ministry is contextualized according to Old Testament promises describing YHWH's relationship to those who share characteristics of characters in Luke's narrative. In Jesus' direct outreach to lost individuals and in the reactions of his opponents, Old Testament texts reverberate. By depicting Jesus as YHWH Shepherd, Luke provides an intertextual context for Jesus' pursuit of the outcast and needy within his Gospel and he establishes fundamental continuity between the unfolding events and the history of YHWH's relationship with Israel. Jesus is found embodying the identity of YHWH Shepherd.

CHAPTER 2: YHWH, JESUS, AND THE DIVINE IDENTITY

Introduction

Echoes and reminiscences of the Old Testament narrative acts as a medium through which the identity of Jesus is revealed in Luke's Gospel.⁷² While Luke does assign to Jesus significant appellations, he frequently uncovers layers of Jesus' identity through less explicit means. Luke's treatment of Jesus' identity extends beyond his use of Christological titles. It is neither the exclusive use of titles nor the exclusion of them that creates the most compelling argument regarding Jesus' identity. The identity of Jesus is revealed in and through Luke's narrative, whereby Jesus is shown to share YHWH's identity through his functional and relational qualities and activities. Instances of narrative convergence will be examined in the following chapters, and it is essential, first, to recognize the ways that Luke makes use of the unfolding narrative to present Jesus as the possessor of YHWH's identity.

The method guiding this study combines the contributions of Richard Bauckham, as it relates to divine identity, and Mark Boda, as it relates to creedal rhythms of Old Testament theology. Bauckham treats YHWH's divine identity according to his unique characteristics that are revealed through his activity. Bauckham names creational monotheism, eschatological monotheism, and cultic monotheism as the core expressions of Jewish monotheistic belief. In this study, Bauckham's eschatological monotheism will be applied to Luke's text according to

⁷² Hays, Richard B. *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 193. As stated in chapter 1, Hays defines an echo as "a metaphorical way of talking about a hermeneutical event, an intertextual fusion that generates new meaning," Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 26. Hays' seven guidelines for recognizing an intertextual echo are availability, volume, recurrence, thematic coherence, historical plausibility, history of interpretation, and satisfaction. As Brawley concludes, echoes and allusions may satisfy the standard of volume not only by cohering in form exactly to the precursor text but by replicating the form and context of the precursor text. Brawley, *Text to Text Pours Forth Speech: Voices in Scripture in Luke-Acts* (Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1995), 13. This is a helpful distinction. Luke's reliance on Old Testament texts is consistently implicit throughout his narrative. Thus, the assertion made here that he implicitly uses the Shepherd motif is consistent with both the standards of an echo and Luke's broader narrative style.

further categories derived from Boda's three creedal traditions. Mark Boda finds the narrative, character, and relational creeds at the core of Old Testament theology. The principles of each of these creedal rhythms will be found to further express eschatological monotheistic belief as it seems to appear in Luke. This chapter will apply Boda's description of Old Testament creedal formulas to Bauckham's portrayal of eschatological monotheism for the purpose of comprising a standard for measuring Luke's integration of Old Testament categories within his portrayal of Jesus as possessor of the divine identity. The presence of these categories according to this standard will be the focus of chapters 4 and 5, which examine the presence of the Old Testament shepherd motif within Luke's narrative.

Based on findings regarding Jesus' possession of the divine identity according to this monotheistic concept, Jesus' identity as it appears in Luke will be examined in the final section of this chapter. After briefly surveying the explicit claims made about Jesus through titles, Luke's indirect characterization of Jesus according to the divine identity will be examined. It will be concluded that Luke indicates Jesus' possession of the divine identity and thus presents Jesus as ontologically, functionally, and relationally tethered to YHWH.⁷³ Jesus' relationship to the divine identity will be explored conceptually here before it is specifically treated (in chapters 4 and 5) according to Luke's depiction of Jesus' as YHWH Shepherd of Old Testament prophetic texts (chapter 3).

⁷³ Larry Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 102-119. Larry Hurtado asserts that the New Testament presentation of Jesus as the unique agent of God would have been accommodated by the divine agency category in Judaism, though the exaltation of Christ in the Christian tradition betrays a fundamental mutation from Jewish categories. Luke seems to present Jesus as both *acting as* God and *being* God.

Divine Identity

Though the term “identity” is not named or defined in the Bible or in ancient literature, it is intuitively expressed. The concept is central and determinative for Israel’s understanding and experience with YHWH.⁷⁴ Richard Bauckham explains that it was more important in Jewish monotheistic belief to understand “*who* the one God is, rather than what divinity is.”⁷⁵ Israel’s God was identifiable, first, by his covenant relationship with his people. He made his name known to them by describing his character and unique identity and by expressing it through his activity in Israel’s history.⁷⁶ The person of YHWH, the *who* of YHWH’s identity, was revealed to his people through his activity among them. In addition to being identifiable through his covenant relationship with Israel, YHWH was also identifiable according to his unique relationship with all of reality as the sole and supreme Creator and Ruler.⁷⁷ According to YHWH’s covenant relationship with his people and his relationship with all things as Creator and Ruler, YHWH is distinguished as the one and true God, unique from all others.⁷⁸ The whole of reality has been created by him and subjected to him, and he interacts with his created world in expressed revelations of his nature.⁷⁹ One of the ways that YHWH reveals his identity is by fulfilling his promises to his people and ultimately fulfilling his redemptive plan among all

⁷⁴ Nina Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke’s Christology of Divine Identity* (New York: T&T Clark, 2016), 23, 57, 63.

⁷⁵ Bauckham, *Jesus and God of Israel*, 183.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 184. Neh. 9:6; Isa. 37:16; 40:26; 42:5; 45:18; Ps. 33:6, 9; 96:5; 100:3; Prov. 3:19; Amos 4:13

⁷⁹ Crispin Fletcher-Louis, *Jesus Monotheism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2015), 26.

nations.⁸⁰ This concept, described by Bauckham as eschatological monotheism, will come into clearer focus below.

Bauckham articulates the way that Jesus' possession of the divine identity is conceptually feasible within first century AD Jewish monotheistic belief by identifying Jesus with the one God of Israel. It is not by relegating Jesus to semi-divine intermediary status that the gospel depiction of him is understood, but by recognizing how he shares the divine identity of YHWH.⁸¹ Before Luke's depiction of Jesus' identity can be studied, Bauckham's treatment of the divine identity (particularly as it relates to eschatological monotheism) and Boda's treatment of Old Testament theology according to three creedal expressions will be examined and offered as a framework for understanding how Luke seems to be treating Jesus' identity. Mark Boda finds Old Testament theology emerging from creedal formulas within the text, and he finds a revelation of God's person and redemptive plan through those three creeds, which he calls rhythms of the heartbeat of Old Testament theology.⁸² The narrative creed, character creed, and relational creeds will be found to contribute to a framework for conceptualizing the divine identity that Bauckham describes, particularly in relation to eschatological monotheism.

Bauckham's eschatological monotheism posits that as Creator and Lord, YHWH fulfills his promises to Israel and in so doing, he establishes his universal kingdom and reveals himself

⁸⁰ Luke's depiction of the nature of Jesus' relationship to YHWH seems to present Jesus in two roles, both as the agent of YHWH (Lk 4:18-19) and as YHWH himself. As YHWH agent, Jesus carries out divine functions. Luke also seems to be presenting Jesus as acting in accordance with characteristics that are unique to YHWH. In that case, Jesus not only represents YHWH as an agent, but he possesses the identity of the YHWH. Old Testament texts in chapter 3 and Lukan texts in chapters 4 and 5 will demonstrate this likelihood. For discussion on agency/ontology and Jesus' identity, see Larry Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); Larry Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015); Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

⁸¹ Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 182.

⁸² Mark J. Boda, *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 7.

to the nations. In order to specifically detail how YHWH goes about relating to Israel in this promise-fulfillment context that anticipates eschatological culmination, Boda's three Old Testament creedal formulas will be considered. Ultimately, Luke's text, particularly his presentation of Jesus as YHWH's Shepherd, will be studied to determine if Luke's narrative reflects this monotheistic commitment and presents Jesus in categories and relational contexts (particular to YHWH) that arose first from the Old Testament narrative. Given the prominence of Old Testament texts on the narrative and theological landscape of the Gospel, Luke seems to invite such considerations. Before Luke's own treatment of the divine identity is explored, attention will first be paid to Bauckham's treatment of the divine identity and Boda's treatment of three credal rhythms.

YHWH and the Divine Identity

Bauckham uncovers the construct of divine identity as a concept existing within the framework of Old Testament texts. YHWH is supreme over all lesser beings, a fact evidenced through the narrative of Israel's history, and as such, he is Creator and Ruler over all things.⁸³ His work creating and ruling over all is ultimate and a manifestation of his unique identity, and his supremacy over creation characterized his unique divine identity in Jewish thought (Isa. 44:24).⁸⁴ Searching for the key to understanding Jewish monotheism, Bauckham narrows his focus to the fundamental teaching that the one God is unique, existing "in a class of his own."⁸⁵ YHWH's identity and unrivaled power places him in a category above and beyond all other created things. Bauckham's view identifies two distinctive features within the Second Temple

⁸³ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 85.

⁸⁴ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 213.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 71, 176.

Jewish monotheistic belief. The first is YHWH's unique covenantal relationship with Israel. He has revealed himself to Israel as YHWH, and he has revealed his character to Israel through his acts in her history. The second is YHWH's unique relationship with "the whole of reality," as Creator and Ruler of all.⁸⁶

Bauckham characterizes Jewish monotheism according to these commitments. He calls it creational monotheism (YHWH alone created the whole of reality out of nothing), eschatological monotheism (YHWH alone will fulfill his promises to Israel and establish his universal kingdom by revealing himself to the nations), and cultic monotheism (YHWH alone is worthy of worship).⁸⁷ Israel's commitment to YHWH was grounded in the very identity of their God, whose expressions of unrivaled power and ability in all things were manifestations of his unique being. Israel's monotheistic commitment was philosophically and theologically mandated by the true otherness of YHWH.⁸⁸

Bauckham finds that the early Christian movement "very consciously" framed Christological monotheism according to the Jewish theological aspects of creational, eschatological, and cultic monotheism.⁸⁹ Rather than studying "divine essence or nature" to determine the substance of monotheistic belief and its bearing on understanding Jesus' identity, Bauckham turns to the primary category of divine function as it is acted out in the narrative.⁹⁰ He asks, in other words, if Jesus functions in a way that is unique to YHWH, and he finds that he does. Bauckham specifically examines the letters of Paul and finds that Paul seems to be

⁸⁶ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 183.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

⁸⁸ Isa. 45:5; 44:6.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 185. By doing so, they expressed a high Christology while preserving monotheism.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 185.

reformulating Christological monotheism as Jewish monotheism.⁹¹ What Bauckham sees in Paul's letters will be found to be true in Luke.

More specifically, Bauckham's category of eschatological monotheism, combined with Boda's three creedal formulas, will be used to conceptualize Luke's presentation of Jesus as it relates to the Shepherd motif. When Luke's presentation of Jesus is studied through the filter of eschatological monotheism, Jesus' activity fulfilling YHWH's promises to Israel becomes significant. Though Boda does not explicitly interact with the concept of divine identity like Bauckham does, he does present categories related to the Old Testament revelation of God that will be used here to further define eschatological monotheism as it appears in Luke. His treatment may uncover part of the framework of divine identity that Bauckham has identified. Boda finds Old Testament creedal formulas to be core expressions of "the heartbeat of the OT" in that they reflect the reality of God's identity, frequently revealed through his activity.⁹² The narrative, character, and relational rhythms reflect God's person and plan, encapsulating the theology of the Old Testament in formulaic statements.⁹³ Each rhythm has unique components that contribute to the revelation of God's person and redemptive work. Those features will be summarized below, and the potential features that each of these forms may possess in Luke will be described.

⁹¹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 185.

⁹² Boda, *Heartbeat Old Testament Theology*, 7. The following interaction with Boda's creedal formulas will not be exhaustive. It is intended to summarize the essential components of each creed as it relates to its bearing on Luke's presentation of Jesus' identity with a Jewish monotheistic framework.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 53.

The narrative rhythm describes the nature of YHWH and his redemptive story according to YHWH's finite past action at specific moments in history.⁹⁴ This rhythm identifies these core events, particularly the Exodus and the Conquest, as God's foundational actions that fundamentally reveal his identity and the redemptive story of Israel. The narrative rhythm finds the story of Israel to be a mode of communicating Old Testament theology. More pointedly, it finds the story of Israel to be the context for the advancement of God's redemptive purposes, which forms the substance of Old Testament theology.⁹⁵ Boda finds the full form of the narrative creed to thoughtfully bind the historical experiences of the past to the historical experience of the present according to God's self-revelation. Stated simply, this rhythm of the Old Testament theological heartbeat, as Boda puts it, finds Israel's story as the context for theology because it is within the story that God's personal revelation and redemptive activity occurs. If Luke is in the stream of the narrative creeds as described by Boda, this study will find Luke presenting Israel's story as the context for his presentation of Jesus. If he is in this stream, he should use language referring to core redemptive and revelatory events in Israel's history in his presentation of Jesus.

Boda calls the character creed "a theological complement" of the narrative creed.⁹⁶ While the narrative creed looks to God's historic action as the basis for revelation, the character rhythm describes YHWH's redemptive character through his consistent activity and personal attributes.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Ibid., 21. Exod. 15:1–19; Deut. 6:21–23; 26:5–9; 29:2–9; 32; Josh. 24:2–13; Judg. 2:1–3; 6:8–10; 11:16–24; 1 Sam. 12:8; Pss. 78; 105; 106; 135; 136; Neh. 9:6–31; Jer. 2:6–7; 32:17–23; Ezek. 20:5–29.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 25.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 40–41.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 40–41. Boda makes this summarizing remark: "At the core of the character creed tradition in the OT is the declaration of Yahweh's typical redemptive activity in relation to his people, actively expressed through nonperfective verbs that focus on God's steadfast love, which entails forgiveness but also justice. These two dimensions of God's steadfast love point to his key characteristics of mercy and holiness."

A clear formula appears in Exodus 34:6-7, which contains ontological (34:6) and functional statements (34:7).⁹⁸ The creed declares God's redemptive character for Israel during a time of expressed and felt need, most frequently when the need results from a crisis created by sin.⁹⁹ These creeds speak of God as the one who delivers, and thus, God is Deliverer.¹⁰⁰ Israel learns God's character by experiencing his activity; his actions are expressions of his attributes and his nature. The character creed reveals that YHWH has not just accomplished a redemptive purpose at a point in history, but he is also made known according to his consistent and present activity which reveals his personal attributes. Israel can know God by means of the present revelation of his character that they observe and experience through his actions and expression of his attributes. If Luke is in the stream of the character creed as described by Boda, Luke should present Jesus' identity in relation to his activity in a way that mirrors the presentation of YHWH's identity and activity in the Old Testament. If this is the case, then Jesus' attributes may be a reflection his divine identity.

Finally, the relational rhythm reveals God through relational terms, namely the relational reciprocity between God and his covenant partners.¹⁰¹ Typically, the theology is expressed through copular syntactical constructions, translated as "I am/will be and you are/will be," or "He is/will be and they are/will be." Yahweh is described as God or Father, and humanity is

⁹⁸ Ibid., 33. The nouns and adjective in 34:6 communicate ontological statements, and the nonperfect verbal phrases in 34:7 communicate functional statements. God's יְהוָה is the characteristic that is given in both the ontological and functional descriptions of 34:6-7. The nonperfect clauses communicating functional statements are contrasted to the perfective and preterit forms communicating God's specific actions in the narrative creed.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 41.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 28-29.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 62.

described as people or son.¹⁰² Boda identifies YHWH's "core relational identity" as "God," which is "expressed in the context of a group that is identified as 'people.'"¹⁰³ Relationally, YHWH reveals himself as God to this people. The full reciprocal formula appears twice in the Torah and on several occasions in prophetic books.¹⁰⁴ Though the relational creed is featured in each section of the Old Testament, Boda explains that the appeal to the relationship is especially central to the message of the prophets when the status of Israel's relationship to God is considered according to covenantal standards.¹⁰⁵ The covenant relationship between God and the people is certainly denoted through relational creeds, but Boda finds reciprocal expressions defining the relational identity of God and the people to be more foundational to the creed than is the use of the word בְּרִית. The relational agreements begin with a promise, "that later is fulfilled in multiple scenes of relational agreement and then renewed in later generations."¹⁰⁶ The relational creed operates according to the durability of the relationship and the enduring nature of God's promises. Promises may span generations before finding fulfillment because the partners are bound together in an reciprocal relationship and God remains committed to his redemptive purposes.¹⁰⁷ Ultimately, revelation of God is confessed through relational terms.¹⁰⁸ If Luke is in

¹⁰² Ibid., 46.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 47.

¹⁰⁴ The full formula appears in the Torah in Exodus 6:7 and Leviticus 26:14, and in prophets in Jeremiah 31:33 and Ezekiel 36:28. Jeremiah 13:11 contains the human component of the formula, and Ezekiel 34:24 contains the divine component of the formula.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 59. Jer. 7:23; 11:4; 24:7; 30:22, 25; 31:1, 32, 33; 32:38; Ezek. 11:20; 14:11; 34:30–31; 36:28; 37:23, 27; Hosea 1:9–10; 2:23; Zech. 2:11; 8:8; 13:9.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 47.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 49.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 56, 74.

the stream of the character creed as described by Boda, Luke will be found revealing Jesus as being in reciprocal relationship with the individuals in the story as the YHWH partner of Israel's relationship. If Luke is in this stream, Jesus' relationship with the individuals will reflect the renewed and fulfilled promises specific to the reciprocal relationship between YHWH and his people.

Given that Bauckham and Boda's categories are adopted here and used to construct a framework for Luke's intertextual presentation of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd, it is important to identify how adopting and constructing such a framework is possible given their methodologies. Boda's methodology is "a selective intertextual-canonical approach."¹⁰⁹ It is selective in its scope because Boda highlights texts and topics that are structurally significant for the larger narrative and the cohesion of the Old and New Testaments. It is intertextual in its focus on "phrases, expressions, and structures" that are repeated in the Old and New Testaments, and it is canonical in its focus on texts found within the canon of his community of Christian faith.¹¹⁰ This selective intertextual-canonical approach is complementary to the method employed here, described in chapter one. This study identifies selective texts found within the same canon Boda holds, and those texts are highlighted based on their intertextual relationship to other movements in Luke's entire narrative and the narrative told in Israel's Scriptures.

Bauckham's methodology blends an historical and literary approach to Jewish monotheism and Christian claims of Jesus' divinity as they are articulated in the Israel's Scriptures, Second Temple Jewish literature, and New Testament documents. Bauckham is interested in identifying early Christology according to Jewish monotheistic beliefs to situate the

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 7.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

earliest professions of Jesus' identity, expressed in New Testament texts, within existing Jewish categories to demonstrate Jesus' possession of the divine identity. His conclusions arise out of those texts and the historical situations they reflect. Though possessing distinctive features and intentions, Bauckham's methodology is complementary to the methodology that is employed here. Bauckham's methodology is anchored in the texts that inspired, maintained, and reflected Jewish and Christian monotheistic belief. He historically and literarily analyzes Jewish and Christian texts for the purpose of identifying core tenants of belief and demonstrating the symbiotic relationship between the Jewish and Christian expressions of faith. This study operates according to this intertextual relationship and the historical foundation Bauckham uncovered.

Boda's three creeds will be viewed as lenses for framing Bauckham's eschatological monotheism.¹¹¹ Bauckham describes that eschatological monotheistic belief reflected the conviction that as Creator and Lord, YHWH fulfills his promises to Israel and will reveal his identity to the nations and establish his universal kingdom. Bauckham's treatment of the divine identity and Boda's treatment of the revelation of God through Old Testament creedal rhythms will be considered against Luke's presentation of Jesus in order to find how Bauckham's definition and Boda's creedal expressions may provide Old Testament context for Luke's presentation of Jesus. In the following chapters, Jesus is found fulfilling God's promises to Israel, and Boda's creedal categories will help define the nature of his activity as it relates to his identity. If these three creedal features are expressed in Luke, then it may be concluded that Jesus does seem to possess the divine identity, in keeping with Bauckham's eschatological

¹¹¹ Ibid., 82. Boda demonstrates the integration of the three rhythms. Having identified each of the three rhythms within Exodus 20:2/Deuteronomy 5:6, Boda finds the statements to "envelop the OT canon as a whole." Boda explains that these compact creeds developing in the Prophets and Writings, "as the action of the story, revelation of the character, and development of the relationship continue." The development of the revelation of God's identity in the prophets will be explored in chapter 3 as it relates to his activity as Israel's Shepherd.

monotheism, wherein YHWH fulfills his promises to Israel and demonstrates his deity to the nations according to familiar Old Testament creedal rhythms.

Jesus and the Divine Identity

In his gospel, Luke is found presenting Jesus's identity as "intrinsic to the unique and eternal identity of God."¹¹² His identity is not an addendum to YHWH's unique identity, but it is rather included within it. Bauckham articulates this position, relying on the relational model to explain Jesus' identity as God. Bauckham understands Jesus to be incorporated into the unique divine identity while remaining distinct from YHWH and in possession of his own unique identity.¹¹³ Jesus is not a lesser god, one supreme among lesser divine beings, but he is God, sharing the identity of YHWH.¹¹⁴ "To say that Jesus and the Father are one is to say that the unique divine identity comprises the relationship in which the Father is who he is only in relation to the Son and vice versa."¹¹⁵ Bauckham finds that the combined Gospel picture of Jesus redefines the divine identity "as one in which Father and Son are inseparably united in differentiation with each other."¹¹⁶ Kavin Rowe examines the boundaries between the Father and Son in Luke and agrees that they are not blurred. Luke directly characterizes Jesus as "the one

¹¹² Bauckham, *Jesus and God of Israel*, x.

¹¹³ Ibid., 106. John's Gospel makes this explicit in the moment that Jesus is recorded as saying, "I and the Father are one," (John 10:30), and this moment is crucial for Bauckham's divine identity.

¹¹⁴ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 87; Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "The Worship of Divine Humanity as God's Image and the Worship of Jesus", in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism*, eds. Newman, Davila, and Lewis (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 112-128. The metaphor of hierarchy within a household has been used to describe the position of gods in relation to YHWH. In the household, the identities of the members are related and thus shared, in a sense, but a hierarchy remains which inherently assigns differing levels of status to its members. If the household metaphor were applied to Jesus, his identity would be one shared with YHWH yet hierarchically subordinate to him. He would be a god higher than lesser gods, but not identified with YHWH. Bauckham's position, adopted here, should be heard in contrast to this position.

¹¹⁵ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 106.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 106.

God of Israel with YHWH,” and as such, he depicts Jesus as the unique Son of God (Lk. 1:45; 4:41), possessing YHWH’s authority, operating in his power, accomplishing his purposes, and receiving his worship.¹¹⁷

Luke’s application of YHWH’s unique characteristics as the divine Sovereign and Creator to Jesus “quite clearly and precisely” includes Jesus “in the unique identity of the one God of Israel.”¹¹⁸ Bauckham asserts that Jesus is neither an aspect of YHWH nor a servant with delegated authority. Jesus shares in the unique divine identity, evidenced by his sharing in the unique functions solely possessed and manifested by YHWH.¹¹⁹ Bauckham notes that this is not a first-century AD invention.¹²⁰ The uniqueness of YHWH, canonized by the Shema, does not disallow distinction. “The Shema asserts the uniqueness of God, not his lack of internal self-differentiation.”¹²¹ Bauckham anchors Jesus’ divinity squarely within the boundaries of “the exclusive Jewish monotheism of the Second Temple period (contra Fletcher-Louis) without collapsing the boundaries of the relationship between Jesus and YHWH (contra Laurentin).”¹²² Bauckham finds the admittedly complex concept of divine identity pervading the pages of the New Testament text. Not only is there Old Testament precedent for conceiving of Jesus’ identity in this way, but this concept also emerges out of a first-century Greco-Roman world that allowed

¹¹⁷ Kavin C. Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (Berlin: De Gruyter, Inc, 2006), 201.

¹¹⁸ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 172.

¹¹⁹ The specific ways that this argument finds substantiation in Luke is the concentration of chapters 4 and 5. There, Jesus’ activity as Shepherd is presented as demonstration that he possessed the unique divine identity.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 158, 171. Old Testament texts cast the Spirit, Word, and Wisdom as manifestations and personifications of YHWH. The Spirit, Word and Wisdom are included within the divine identity because they are hypostatizations of aspects of YHWH.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 106

¹²² Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke’s Christology of Divine Identity*, 87.

for “multiplicity to be understood as unity/oneness.”¹²³ In Luke, the divine identity of YHWH is revealed in the person of Jesus, whose oneness with YHWH is expressed sometimes through claims and, most frequently and notably, through his activity among his people. The story of Jesus, as Luke tells it, is the narrated revelation of the divine identity of God, wherein Luke is found asserting Jesus’ self-differentiated uniqueness by way of describing his activity among the people of YHWH.¹²⁴ In the following chapters, it will be demonstrated that Luke seems to be presenting Jesus as the possessor of YHWH’s divine identity through his activity as YHWH Shepherd.¹²⁵

Bauckham’s conclusions will be considered in light of Boda’s contributions, detailed above, and ultimately they will be shown to resonate with Luke’s presentation of Jesus. Luke’s texts presenting the person and activity of Jesus will be shown to distinctly echo and reflect the presentation of YHWH in Old Testament prophetic texts. Before this framework is applied to Luke, it must be considered whether the Old Testament creedal types articulated by Boda may contribute to the Old Testament stream of tradition reflected in Luke’s narrative. If the principles of these creeds can be preserved and applied apart from explicit creedal formulas, and if those principles are reflected in Luke’s presentation of the person of Jesus, then it may be concluded that Luke adopts this familiar mode of revealing the person of YHWH in the Old Testament by identifying Jesus as the possessor of the Divine Identity, as YHWH.

Luke seems to present Jesus as YHWH Shepherd in a way that reflects the eschatological monotheistic commitment of the Old Testament (as Bauckham identifies it) and in a way that

¹²³ Ibid., 85.

¹²⁴ Richard Bauckham, ‘The Future of Jesus Christ’, in Markus Bockmuehl (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 278.

¹²⁵ In this endeavor, Old Testament prophetic texts (treated in chapter 3) emerge as the background for texts revealing the Shepherd motif in Luke’s narrative (treated in chapters 4 and 5).

perpetuates YHWH's self-disclosure to Israel, attested through Old Testament creedal types (as Boda categorizes them). In the following chapters, Luke's shepherd motif will be found fitting this matrix in the following ways: 1.) The person and work of Jesus, articulated and reflected in Luke's text, is firmly rooted in YHWH's redemptive story with Israel, actualized through core events that shaped Israel's ability to know and understand YHWH. Jesus' emergence as YHWH-Shepherd is anchored in the context of Israel's story. In this way, Boda's narrative rhythm is reflected. 2.) Jesus' character and identity as YHWH-Shepherd is expressed through his actions. His seeking and saving activity on behalf of the people in the narrative is the means by which he is revealed as YHWH-Shepherd, the one who seeks and saves. Though Luke does not reflect the creedal formula expressed in key texts (Exod 34:6-7), if he can be found reflecting the theological pattern of the character rhythm (i.e. YHWH is known as the redemptive God through his regular redemptive activity and personal attributes), then Luke's presentation of Jesus may be emerging out of this Old Testament theological stream. Luke may be uncovering Jesus' identity as YHWH Shepherd by presenting him as the one who acts as Shepherd, according to established Old Testament standards. In this way, Boda's character creed is reflected. 3.) Luke presents the person of Jesus in the context of individuals and their community who reflect relationship to YHWH, and thus to Jesus. Though the formula of relational creed does not exist in Luke, relational language is found at key moments when Jesus' identity and activity is contextualized in the lives of particular individuals (1:53-55, 72-73; 15:3; 19:9).¹²⁶ Further, Jesus' activity may be viewed through the lens of YHWH's relational agreement with his people. Jesus is presented as the one fulfilling YHWH's promises to rescue and lead his people as Shepherd of his flock.

¹²⁶ In 1:52-55 and v. 72-73, Mary and Zechariah celebrate Jesus' birth as actualizing YHWH's fulfillment of his covenantal agreement and relationship with Israel. In 19:9, Jesus' activity is contextualized according to his relationship with Israel, and his actions toward Zacchaeus reflects his ability to fulfill YHWH's intentions for each member of the community.

In conclusion, if Luke can be shown presenting Jesus in a way that reflects alignment with the Old Testament theological pattern described here, then his presentation of Jesus as YHWH-Shepherd will be shown to reflect the Old Testament monotheistic matrix grounded in the Old Testament text. If these creeds are reflected in principle rather than explicit formula, Luke will be found echoing Old Testament texts in the same allusive but powerful way that he does throughout his narrative.

Based on observations regarding the Old Testament Shepherd motif made in chapter 3, chapters 4 and 5 will examine key Lukan texts that evidence Jesus' identity as YHWH Shepherd according to the creedal principles just given. These texts will align Luke's presentation of Jesus with eschatological monotheistic belief reflected in Old Testament texts. First, Luke's narrative and his treatment of the divine identity, in general, will be examined below. Through names and titles and through indirect characterization of Jesus as functionally and relationally acting as YHWH, Luke's narrative seems to present Jesus as possessor of the divine identity.

Luke's Narrative and the Divine Identity

Luke's presentation of Jesus' identity is communicated, at times, through explicit names and titles, but it is also suggested through implicit characterization. Rowe describes narrative as a medium that provides a way for a character's identity to be construed; as the story continues, the character both acts and is acted upon, and change and sameness in the character are made evident through the ongoing narrative.¹²⁷ Put simply, "identity inheres in the story."¹²⁸ Henrichs-

¹²⁷ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 23.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 202. Rowe states further, "There is no character in abstraction from the narrative to whom we have access and to whom certain qualities, titles, etc. are then applied – a sort of genie-like figure floating above the story who subsequently receives defining attributes. To the contrary, a character is formed, or – to move to theological language – revealed through the unfolding story that concurrently unfolds identity."

Tarasenkova finds Jesus' ontology revealed through his function in the narrative.¹²⁹ Hannah Arendt agrees that the reader will find answers to the question "who?" about a person to be imbedded within the story.¹³⁰ Recognizing the mere existence of an ongoing narrative and the ability to recognize change and sameness in the life of Israel and activity of YHWH is work that better positions Luke's reader to perceive Jesus' identity and activity in light of YHWH's. This is most clear when the Gospel is read how Luke seems to intend, in continuity with Israel's Scriptures (Lk 1:1-4).¹³¹ Frei finds within the Gospels "an irreducibly complex pattern of interrelation between God's action and that of Jesus."¹³² The nature of that pattern is, of course, the core issue. Here, Jesus will be found fulfilling YHWH's responsibilities and functions with the distinct and unique ability to carry them out. When Jesus' identity, defined relationally and functionally, is found to be rooted in YHWH's, Jesus is seen to share in the divine identity. This revelation of Jesus' identity occurs through direct and indirect presentation.¹³³

Though a narrative is too limited to detail each intricacy of a person's identity and nature, it does, in the case of Luke's Gospel, provide compelling glimpses by means of direct propositions and indirect presentation.¹³⁴ Robert W. Jenson states that narrative does not give an

¹²⁹ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 193. Henrichs-Tarasenkova's point is intentionally contra Conzelmann, who makes a crucial distinction in which Jesus is functionally but not ontologically identical with YHWH.

¹³⁰ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1958), 184-186.

¹³¹ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in Gospels*, 193.

¹³² Hans Frei, *The Identity of Jesus Christ* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock), 161.

¹³³ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 137. Direct presentation of Jesus' identity occurs through explicit claims and titles, and indirect presentation occurs through characterizing Jesus as YHWH is characterized. When Luke presents Jesus acting as YHWH is known to act, Luke may be engaging in an indirect presentation of Jesus' identity.

¹³⁴ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 20 n. 59.

exhaustive presentation of a person, but propositions about that person do require narrative.¹³⁵ In the case of Luke's Gospel, Jesus' identity is revealed not only through explicit ontological claims or declarations of prophecy fulfilled, but most substantially in and through a story that is both reminiscent of and utterly distinct from Israel's story. Luke creates "a narrative world thick with scriptural memory" with these Old Testament allusions.¹³⁶ He begins by anchoring his narrative in what had come before; he seems to pick up in the middle of a story.¹³⁷ Luke then weaves his narrative within the larger intertextual web of humanity's story, particularly as it has been realized in the life of Israel. It is not Luke's reliance upon Old Testament Scripture to formulate his presentation of Jesus that is unique; it is his particular way of going about it that is unique.¹³⁸ Evans simply states, "Scripture is used to give shape to the narrative,"¹³⁹ and this is often done subtly. Rene Laurentin observes that in shrewd avoidance of explicit claims that would have been met with accusations of blasphemy, Luke, instead, "manifested his thought concerning Jesus' divinity intuitively by way of OT allusions."¹⁴⁰ Rather than permeating his text with Old

¹³⁵ Robert W. Jenson, "Christ as Culture 3: Christ as Drama," in *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 6 (2004), 194-195.

¹³⁶ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in Gospels*, 193-4.

¹³⁷ Joel B. Green, *Luke as Narrative Theologian: Text and Topics* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 58. Green calls the Old Testament the "data bank" that Luke uses to communicate events and their meaning; Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 69. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 192. Hays calls Luke's apologetic that of promise-fulfillment due to his demonstration of Old Testament promises finding their fulfillment in Jesus. In chapter 4, the narrative framework of Luke's Gospel will be explored in regards to Luke's interaction with Old Testament Scripture. Chapters 4 and 5 will assert and demonstrate that Luke seems to rely on Old Testament texts to contextualize his presentation of the people and events of the story he tells. In that way, the people and events of his Gospel are related to people and events of Israel's history.

¹³⁸ Stanley E. Porter, "Scripture Justifies Mission: The Use of the Old Testament in Luke-Acts" in *Hearing the Old Testament in the New* edited by Stanley E. Porter (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 126.

¹³⁹ C. A. Evans, "The Prophetic Setting and the Pentecost Sermon," in *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 223.

¹⁴⁰ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 11; Rene Laurentin, *Structure et theologie de Luc I-II* (J. Gabalda Publisher, 1957), 139-40

Testament quotations, Luke's narrative "ripples with intertextuality"¹⁴¹ as he engages in a promise-fulfillment apologetic for the identity of Jesus.¹⁴² Luke begins his story by tethering it to Israel's history with intertextual strands from Israel's Scripture, and in so doing, he reveals that YHWH himself has entered the story in the person of Jesus.¹⁴³ The eye-witness testimony contained in Luke depicts the life of Jesus in ways that bear expressions of the divine identity.¹⁴⁴

When the reader's ears are attuned to the intertextual echoes permeating Luke's text, she is better equipped to study Luke's narrative and to trace the ways that Jesus is implicitly revealed as Israel's God in her midst, doing only what YHWH he has promised to do himself. One area of focus on Jesus' divine identity in Luke is the motif of 'Shepherd,' and after Jesus' possession of the divine identity is addressed conceptually in this chapter, those conclusions will direct the study of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd.¹⁴⁵ In Luke, Jesus "acts for God" because he is God. More specifically, it will be demonstrated that Jesus acts for YHWH Shepherd because he is YHWH Shepherd. An intertextual reading of the narrative is a proper framework for first recognizing the divine identity in Jesus. Then, the ways that he is found acting according to the identity of YHWH Shepherd begin to emerge.¹⁴⁶ Before attention is turned to the shepherd motif, this

¹⁴¹ Robert L. Brawley, *Text to Text Pours Forth Speech: Voices of Scripture in Luke-Acts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 3.

¹⁴² Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 192.

¹⁴³ Porter, "Scripture Justifies Mission," 118.

¹⁴⁵ Detecting these intertextual strands throughout Luke identifying Jesus according to the divine identity of YHWH Shepherd will be the focus of chapters 4 and 5 after identifying the Old Testament referents in chapter 3.

¹⁴⁶ Bock, Darrell. *A Theology of Luke-Acts*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 100. Bock compares the appearance of the nominative (*ho theos*) in Luke and Acts. It appears a total of seventy-two times between both volumes, and only twelve of those occurrences are in the Gospel. Bock hypothesizes that the difference in occurrences, "may reflect the fact that Jesus acts for God so much in Luke's gospel."

chapter will trace the ways that Luke seems to be directly and indirectly revealing Jesus' divine identity.

Jesus' Identity through Direct Presentation: Titles

Though the focus of this study is Luke's depiction of Jesus through narrative identity and indirect characterization,¹⁴⁷ rather than explicit ontological claims, a brief survey of some of the titles attributed to Jesus in Luke's Gospel will be beneficial. Though a study of Luke's use of titles is not exhaustive for the study of the divine identity in Luke, it does contribute to the cumulative picture. In Luke, Jesus is κύριος and is associated with YHWH in activity and identity. Jesus is σωτήρ and thus the conduit of YHWH's salvation for his people. Luke does not use the title θεός for Jesus, but his silence regarding the term should not be understood as a failure to portray Jesus as Israel's God. A brief overview of titles used for Jesus in Luke will establish the possibility that Jesus is explicitly identified in ways that may indicate his possession of the divine identity. Further and more robust demonstration that this is the case will take place when Jesus' identity is examined through indirect characterizations.

Κύριος

Luke favors the title κύριος for Jesus more than any other Gospel writer.¹⁴⁸ The LXX refers to God over 9,000 times with the title κύριος. Roughly two-thirds of those LXX occurrences are renderings of YHWH, God's sacred and proper name.¹⁴⁹ Throughout the

¹⁴⁷ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 5.

¹⁴⁸ Ben Witherington and K. Yamazaki Ransom, "Lord" in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 530. Luke-Acts contains 210 of the total New Testament 717 passages containing the term *kyrios*. The title appears 18 times in Mark, 80 in Matthew and 52 in John.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 527.

narrative, Luke applies this familiar title to both God the Father and Jesus.¹⁵⁰ Three of the fifteen times that the term is applied to God have no synoptic parallel (4:18-19; 5:17).¹⁵¹ Nineteen times, the term is recorded in seven parable pericopes, defining the relationship between Jesus and his listeners.¹⁵² Luke's trend is not especially unusual. Five of the seven pericopes are also recorded by Matthew. What is unique, though, regarding Luke's use of κύριος is the way that its rendering as "the Lord" is consistently present in Luke's narrative depictions of Jesus while only once on the lips of others.¹⁵³ Luke's narrative seems to be making assertions about Jesus' identity with a certainty that the characters in the narrative have yet to grasp.¹⁵⁴ As Green puts it, Jesus as Lord is known to the reader, but not always to Luke's audience.¹⁵⁵ Luke frequently refers to Jesus as κύριος within the narrative (7:13, 19; 10:41; 11:39; 12:42; 13:15, 23; 17:5-6; 18:6; 19:8, 31, 34; 22:61; 24:3),¹⁵⁶ and this pattern culminates with presentation of Jesus as the resurrected Lord.¹⁵⁷

Luke's emphasis of the term seems to serve a clear and intentional theological purpose.

Assuming that the individuals in Luke's Gospel inherently expressed knowledge of Jesus'

¹⁵⁰ Darrell Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 80. Bock identifies fifteen applications of the title to YHWH and thirty-seven to Jesus. Of the thirty-seven occurrence, twenty-one times the title is the equivalent to "master," and eleven times, it is found in the narrative framework rather than in dialogue, with the exception of Luke 24:34.

¹⁵¹ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 29. Rowe asserts that espousing the Gospel of Luke as an account with low Christology is a position that is impossible maintain. Luke's use of κύριος is a construal of Jesus' identity that aligns with that articulated by Paul and John in that Jesus is presented as "the human presence of the heavenly *kurios* of Israel."

¹⁵² Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy*, 80.

¹⁵³ Christopher Tuckett, *From the Sayings to the Gospels* (Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 582.

¹⁵⁴ Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy*, 81. The single exception occurs in Luke 24:34.

¹⁵⁵ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 652.

¹⁵⁶ Larry W. Hurtado, "Christology in Acts," in *Issues in Luke-Acts: Selected Essays*, eds. Sean A. Adams and Michael Pahl (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2021), 219.

¹⁵⁷ Darrell L. Bock, *Jesus the God-Man* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 75.

divinity when addressing him as κύριος would be a mistake. In their historical situation, the title was often no more than a vocative of address, like the terms “sir” or “master.”¹⁵⁸ Ben Witherington agrees with Rowe that when read in light of the entire narrative context, Luke and his readers recognize that Jesus is more than “sir/master”, and he uses “literary device of narrative irony” and capitalizes on the “ambivalence of the word *kyrie* to characterize Jesus in his Gospel.” Jesus is historically “sir/master”, but Luke’s repeated use of the term κύριος at key moments in the narrative emphasizes that he is also Christologically “Lord.”¹⁵⁹ Or, as Fletcher-Louis puts it, “Jesus is therefore LORD,” the one possessing the divine name YHWH, “rather than simply Lord,” one possessing a degree of authority as sir/master.¹⁶⁰ Luke is the only Synoptic writer to use the noun in the absolute sense. Several times, the narration states or describes an action done by ὁ κύριος (7:13; 10:1). Luke does not show any reticence in using the term in an absolute sense to his Gentile audience and thus implying the “transcendent religious sense of the term.”¹⁶¹ The cumulative use of κύριος throughout the narrative consistently “serves to tell the human or earthly story of the heavenly Lord.”¹⁶² That story is acted out throughout Luke’s narrative.

While the infancy narrative will be examined in detail in chapter 4, tracing the appearance of the term κύριος in Luke 1 and 2 is of importance here. At the beginning of the Gospel, κύριος is used often a predicate of God (Lk 1:6, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, 25, 28, 38, 45, 58, 66;

¹⁵⁸ Witherington and Ransom, “Lord”, 531; Bock, *Jesus the God-Man*, 74; Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy*, 80. Bock finds that on twenty-one occasions, the term is the equivalent to “master”, while eleven times, it is present as “the Lord.”

¹⁵⁹ C. K. Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 216.

¹⁶⁰ Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, 22.

¹⁶¹ Witherington and Ransom, “Lord”, 531.

¹⁶² Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 27.

2:9, 15, 22, 23, 24, 26, 39). Once Gabriel announces to Mary the birth of Jesus, the title is used of Jesus, and then of God and Jesus interchangeably. Both the angels (2:11) and Elizabeth (1:43; 2:11) acclaim Jesus as κύριος.¹⁶³ Elizabeth refers to both God and Jesus as κύριος (1:45, 43). Luke communicates an inseparability between God and Jesus through his positioning of κύριος within the narrative. The movement of the story offers culminating evidence of what the appearance of κύριος communicates from the beginning, namely the inclusion of Jesus into the identity of YHWH.¹⁶⁴ Rowe explains, “Luke positions *kurios* within the movement of the narrative in such a way as to narrate the relation between God and Jesus as one of inseparability, to the point that they are bound together in a shared identity as *kurios* (*Verbindungsidentität*).”¹⁶⁵ Bock calls Elizabeth’s use of the title for Jesus in 1:43 “quite unusual” because it is left unexplained and undefined.¹⁶⁶ Given the surrounding context that is replete with echoes and allusions that are neither explicitly explained nor defined, this may instead be seen as a Lukan pattern rather than as a surprise. The entire context saturated with echoes and allusions informs its reading and interpretation, and it alerts the reader to detect in Jesus’ life and activity what Elizabeth has already identified. Luke the narrator seems to use the term to disclose a revelation that is first insinuated (20:41-44) before it is later widely recognized after Jesus’ resurrection.¹⁶⁷ Elizabeth’s ascription of κύριος to Jesus is the first in a Lukan pattern. At his birth, Jesus possesses the unique identity of God which will later be evident in his person and his work. In

¹⁶³ Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My own Heart* (Westmont, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 2006), 199.

¹⁶⁴ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 27.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 27. Rowe offers this translation for *verbindungsidentität*: “a shared, narratively established identity in which there is unity without confusion as well as distinction without separation.”

¹⁶⁶ Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy*, 69.

¹⁶⁷ Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, 23-4. “The fact that it is only after the resurrection that it is anyone other than the narrator that adopts a fuller *kurios* Christology, suggests that Luke sees the Lord/LORD of Acts as already Lord/LORD in the gospel.”

this way, Luke 1:43 and 2:11 are glimpses of what is later more fully developed and supported.¹⁶⁸

Luke slowly but clearly etches this portrait of Jesus' identity into the story he tells. "To Luke, Jesus was not a god but *the* Lord (*o kurios* often appears in the texts – Luke 7:13; 10:1, 41; 11:39; etc.)... Thus *kurios*, which in Greek OT texts referred to God, now in turn is seen as referring to Jesus himself."¹⁶⁹ To learn the identity of κύριος in Luke is to "elicit a complex answer, one which involves both Jesus and God and not one without the other."¹⁷⁰ A microcosmic example of this larger trend exists in Luke 10. The pericope opens with Jesus, ὁ Κύριος, sending out seventy-two on mission (10:1). Jesus uses the expression Κυρίου τοῦ θερισμοῦ (10:2),¹⁷¹ which may have either κύριε Ἰησοῦς or κύριε Πάτερ as the referent.¹⁷² The title Κύριος possesses a "tensive agility" in the narrative that "creates a unity such that both Jesus and God the Father are κύριος with respect to who they are in Luke's story (i.e., the narration of their character is inseparable from their identity as *kurios*)."¹⁷³ Luke records the disciples addressing Jesus as κύριε (10:17) and Jesus addressing the Father as κύριε (10:21). In sending out the seventy-two, Jesus' mission is equated with the mission of Israel's YHWH. "The coming of Jesus... is the coming of the God of Israel, as the mission of the Lord Jesus is the mission of the Lord God."¹⁷⁴ The differentiation between the Πάτερ and υἱός is maintained within the

¹⁶⁸ Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy*, 81.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 81.

¹⁷⁰ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 21

¹⁷¹ I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke in The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 416. The gathering of the harvest is language that has its background in Old Testament texts describing the eschatological gathering of God's people (Isa. 27:12 and Joel 3:13).

¹⁷² Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 137.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 135.

unique shared identity. In Luke 10, the identification of both Jesus and God the Father as κύριος implies Luke's indication of the shared identity between Jesus and God.

In other words, Jesus shares the identity of Israel's κύριος. By employing the appellation κύριος, Bock finds Luke "tip[ping] his hand" about the identity of Jesus without explicitly stressing or explaining the assertion.¹⁷⁵ The unfolding narrative does the work of diligently substantiating the characterization. Rowe asserts that it is only through the story that the reader can know who κύριος is in Luke;¹⁷⁶ "To think about the identity of the *kurios* narratively is thus, so the exegesis will show, to be able to incorporate coherently both the clear distinction between *Theos* and *Iesous* and the indissoluble unity inherent in the story's answer to the question, 'Who is the Lord?'"¹⁷⁷ The answer to this question, informed by the presentation of YHWH's identity in the prophetic books and Jesus' identity in Luke, is articulated in the coming chapters.

Σωτήρ

Luke's reference to Jesus as σωτήρ in the birth narrative (1:47; 2:11) describes the person and mission of Jesus. YHWH was known to Israel as Savior,¹⁷⁸ and here, Jesus arrives as the conduit and personification of salvation.¹⁷⁹ The salvation accomplished by Jesus will be that of national and spiritual deliverance.¹⁸⁰ Zechariah's *Benedictus* celebrates the imminent salvation as affecting the rescue of YHWH's people from their enemies according to his ancient promises

¹⁷⁵ Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy*, 82.

¹⁷⁶ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 19, n. 63.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 21-22.

¹⁷⁸ The term σωτήρ occurs in the LXX to describe the salvation accomplished both by human agents and by YHWH. The term appears as a noun for YHWH, and it refers to his actions for Israel in the past and the description of his activity for Israel in the future. The term appears in texts including Ps 62:5, 6; 79:9; Isa 45:15, 21; 62:11.

¹⁷⁹ Bock, *Luke-Acts*, 185.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 185

(1:71-73). Jesus' arrival as *Savior* accomplishes the merciful plan of God on behalf of Abraham's descendants. In the *Magnificat*, Mary also associates the salvation with mighty acts of deliverance that fulfill promises made to Abraham and his descendants, and this salvation will result in the reversal of fortunes for those humble and proud (1:47-55). Assigning to Jesus the title σωτήρ indicates that YHWH's promised plan of redemption and restoration is being accomplished.

Θεός

Luke's reluctance to use the title θεός for Jesus should not be understood as a failure to make a claim about Jesus' divinity.¹⁸¹ The title θεός did not have a personal, univocal meaning in Luke's first-century Greco-Roman world.¹⁸² It is important to trace Luke's use of titles in order to characterize YHWH's divine identity, and it is essential to do so with an understanding of the inherent limits of the pursuit. "God' is not YHWH's name. Therefore, the study of YHWH's divine identity cannot be limited to the word study of θεός; rather, it has to be rooted in the study of discourse concerning the character YHWH, whether or not it contains the word *Theos*."¹⁸³ Luke refers to Jesus as υἱός θεός on multiple occasions, including in the announcement of Jesus' birth, his temptation in the wilderness, and during his trial (1:35; 4:3, 9; 22:70).¹⁸⁴ Certainly, Jesus has a unique relationship with YHWH the Father.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology*, 5.

¹⁸² Ibid., 5; M. M. Thompson, "God" in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 316. In the Gospels, though, the word never denotes another deity other than the creator God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the people of Israel. In the Gospels as in the Old Testament, the generic nature of the term is qualified by descriptive phrases and appellations that are unique to YHWH. It is the descriptive characterizations that "bind God closely to the identity, history and worship of a specific people."

¹⁸³ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 89 n. 1.

¹⁸⁴ Bock, *Theology of Luke-Acts*, 188.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 189.

Though Luke does not directly give to Jesus the predicate θεός, the characterization is found indirectly within the narrative. It is through Luke's portrayal of Jesus, acting functionally and relationally as Israel's God, that the title θεός may come into focus. If Luke is found characterizing Jesus as he characterizes YHWH, then the narrative, by means of indirect characterization, is making the claim that just as YHWH is God, so too is Jesus God.¹⁸⁶ "Thus, the question of whether Luke presents Jesus as God goes beyond mere mention of a personal name or title/predicate, i.e., *telling*, and is rooted in the story as it unfolds before the eyes of Luke's readers, i.e., *showing*."¹⁸⁷ The depiction of Jesus as Israel's God extends beyond the use of titles, even the title θεός. Study of the narrative will trace pericopes where claims about Jesus' divine identity are indirectly acted out, and the cumulative examination of the Gospel unit will find Luke's characterization of Jesus as God quite convincing. This is the concentration of the following chapters where it will be clear that Luke predicates to Jesus what uniquely characterized YHWH. Titles represent an implicit characterization of Jesus as Israel's God that can be found pervading the narrative, and therefore, the study of Luke's presentation of Jesus' identity should move from titular identifications to implicit characterizations.¹⁸⁸

Jesus' Identity through Indirect Characterization: Function and Relation

Though Luke includes titles in his Gospel, his revelation of Jesus' identity is not reliant upon those titles. Luke does portray Jesus as Israel's Lord and Savior and the embodiment of Israel's God, but as Hays observes, he does this not by expressing a motif, but by relying on the

¹⁸⁶ Henrichs-Tarassenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 5-6.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

Gospel's intertextual relation to the Old Testament as "the narrative foundation" for all other motifs, as "the one that explains and integrates them all."¹⁸⁹ Luke is found relying on "implicit means of characterization in depicting his/her characters."¹⁹⁰ Just as Luke depicts the unfolding events of his narrative as familiar echoes of Old Testament events and promises, so too does he present the striking picture of Jesus as one who is the aggregate of Old Testament reminiscences of Israel's God.¹⁹¹ While individual pericopes contribute to the revelation of Jesus' identity, texts should not be removed atomistically from the whole. Individual texts contribute to a cumulative intertextual platform that extends throughout the narrative. The functional and relational revelation of Jesus' identity is accomplished through "descriptions of what a character does and says and how he/she is like or unlike other characters,"¹⁹² and these reverberate from the narrator himself and in the mouths of his characters.¹⁹³

The revelation of Jesus' person is acted out in the narrative. The narrative unfolds cumulatively and is best understood when both the Gospel unit and the Old Testament Scriptures upon which Luke relies are read retrospectively.¹⁹⁴ Hays concludes, "We cannot adequately estimate Luke's understanding of Jesus' identity simply by studying Christological titles or by isolating direct propositional statements; rather, we come to know Jesus in Luke only as his

¹⁸⁹ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 243.

¹⁹⁰ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 21.

¹⁹¹ Thompson, "Jesus and his God", 43. Thompson states, "So much of the picture of God in the gospels reflects core convictions found in the Old Testament and in early Judaism."

¹⁹² Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 21.

¹⁹³ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 192.

¹⁹⁴ David C. Steinmetz "Uncovering a Second Narrative: Detective Fiction and the Construction of Historical Method," in *The Art of Reading Scripture*, edited by Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 54-65.

narrative identity is enacted in and through the story.”¹⁹⁵ The medium of narrative is Luke’s means by which he reveals the identity of Jesus.

Luke assigns YHWH’s responsibilities and functions to Jesus, who shares that exclusive and superior position as his Son. Luke then “indirectly characterizes Jesus as one God of Israel together with YHWH when he shows that Jesus is able to carry out YHWH’s responsibilities and functions.”¹⁹⁶ Luke does not blend the identities of Father and Son, but instead unites the two distinct persons according to the single divine identity. C. F. D. Moule calls the Synoptics “the last place where one would look for philosophy,” yet he finds that they confront each reader with this question: “Who and what is this, who, while genuinely human and apparently making no explicit claims (or, at most, speaking with the utmost reserve) about his status, nevertheless acts with a native authority which is nothing other than the authority of God, and who seems to identify himself as the *locus* of God’s sovereignty?”¹⁹⁷ Luke affects an indirect presentation of Jesus as sharing the identity of YHWH through functional and relational means. Ontological identity is frequently asserted through functional and relational evidence. Luke does not downplay Jesus’ ontological identity as God, but the ontological reality is more robustly revealed functionally and relationally. The relational model of identity, “characterized by its emphasis on narrational and embodied understanding of identity, will be surprisingly at home in the premodern world of Luke-Acts.”¹⁹⁸ In both Hellenistic and Jewish thought surrounding the time of Luke’s

¹⁹⁵ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in Gospels*, 244.

¹⁹⁶ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke’s Christology of Divine Identity*, 152

¹⁹⁷ C. F. D. Moule, ‘The Borderlands of Ontology in the New Testament’ in *The Philosophical Frontiers of Christian Theology*, Brian Hebblethwaite and Steward Sutherland, editors (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 8.

¹⁹⁸ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke’s Christology of Divine Identity*, 63.

writing, an individual's identity was understood less through abstract classifications and more through a display of "overt, publicly recognized activities and behavior."¹⁹⁹ Jesus is found possessing the ability to promise and accomplish what is unique to YHWH.

While scholars including Hans Conzelmann insisted on a functional-ontological dichotomy when characterizing Jesus' identity, such a distinction need not be maintained. Conzelmann maintained the ontology-vs.-function category and found Jesus functionally, but not ontologically, identified with God.²⁰⁰ Henrichs-Tarasenkova joined the rank of scholars who has pushed back against the dichotomy between functional and ontological identity. Henrichs-Tarasenkova surmises, contra Conzelmann, that "Luke does not make a distinction between Jesus' function and ontology. Rather, when he speaks of Jesus' actions, he discloses who Jesus is, i.e., his identity, and when he speaks of Jesus' functioning as God, he characterizes Jesus as God."²⁰¹ Oscar Cullmann also detects a "functional Christology" within the New Testament. He finds that Christ's nature is not viewed independently of his function. Christ's functional divinity implies his unique divinity.²⁰²

In addition to maintaining a functional-ontological dichotomy in his treatment of Lucan Christology, Conzelmann had other reasons for rejecting the identification of Jesus with God. Conzelmann's dismissal of the notion that Jesus is God was due, in part, to his inability to find a home for such high Lucan Christology within the theological construct of Second Temple

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 80; 76. This was true not only for conceptions about YHWH's identity, but also for conceptions of identity within the community of Israel. "The *ontology* of an Israelite was defined *relationally* through his/her commitment to YHWH and, therefore, his/her belonging to a particular tribe, clan, and household, and *functionally* through his/her ability to carry out his/her obligations."

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 9.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 10.

²⁰² Oscar Cullmann, 'The Reply of Professor Cullmann to Roman Catholic Critics,' *SJT* 15 (1962), 41-42.

Judaism. Conzelmann raises an issue that has not been left unanswered in scholarship. Benjamin Sommer agrees that though the New Testament presentation of Jesus as God is not expected, it is allowed by the Jewish monotheistic system.²⁰³ He finds it “perfectly Jewish” to maintain the simultaneous existence of God’s earthly presence and heavenly manifestation. On a grander, philosophical level, Bauckham’s articulation of the divine identity is instructive here, both in terms of Second Temple Jewish thinking and modern interpretation. As already discussed, Bauckham makes the compelling cases that the New Testament depiction of Jesus is one in which he, as the unique Son of the Father, shares his unique divine identity and thus acts in ways reflective of his status. The differentiation between the persons of Father and Son within the divine identity is granted. The life and ministry of Jesus fits, as N.T. Wright puts it, “into the intertextual and intercommunal space between the worldviews” of first-century Judaism and early Christianity, as “decisively *similar* to both the Jewish context and the early Christian world, and at the same time importantly *dissimilar*.”²⁰⁴ The concept of divine identity as it exists in Jesus helps to bridge the gap between the two.

The disassociation between functional and ontological identity seems to be inconsistent with Luke’s own report of the relationship between “being and doing.”²⁰⁵ In Luke 6:43-45, Jesus instructs his followers to identify a person according to the words and works they produce, just as a tree is identified according to the fruit on its branches. This standard for identification and judgment is not reserved for Jesus’ followers. Clues to Jesus’ own identity are to be found in his

²⁰³ Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 135. Sommer claims, “No Jew sensitive to Judaism’s own classical sources, however, can fault the theological model Christianity employs when it avows belief in a God who has an earthly body as well as a Holy Spirit and a heavenly manifestation, for that model, we have seen, is a perfectly Jewish one.”

²⁰⁴ N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 132.

²⁰⁵ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke’s Christology of Divine Identity*, 9.

words and works. Through his disciples, the imprisoned John the Baptist inquired of Jesus whether he was the Coming One (7:20). John's question evokes language of Psalm 118:26, the Hallel psalm sung on occasion of Passover and Festival of Tabernacles, both of which celebrated Israel's liberation. The celebrations expressed and inspired future hope for liberation from oppressive rule through the agent of a coming king. Rather than making an explicit ontological, self-revelatory claim in response to John, Jesus says, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard" (Lk. 7:22); the conditions of the blind, lame, leper, deaf and dead have been reversed. Jesus' command indicates that John and the disciples possessed a framework to make ontological judgments about Jesus' identity based on his functional and relational identity.

This framework is not invented by Luke.²⁰⁶ Jesus' response echoes Isaiah's motifs describing the end of the exile and the future eschatological restoration. In echoing these promises, Jesus affected in his listeners their recollection of prophetic promises that YHWH would personally come and establish his kingdom among his restored people (Isa. 35:5-6a). It may be that Jesus regarded his functional activity among the needy to be compelling and sufficient evidence for conclusions, informed by Old Testament promises, to be drawn about his divine identity. The revelation of YHWH through functional and relational categories and activities that Luke is found employing is a familiar Old Testament phenomenon. Block mines the prophetic texts of Ezekiel to uncover revelations about YHWH, and he asserts that Ezekiel does not reveal the person of YHWH through "sublime poetry on the attributes of YHWH or lofty lectures on his personality."²⁰⁷ Instead, YHWH discloses his character by presenting

²⁰⁶ The ability of Israel's God to predict the future served as proof of his ontological identity as the One God. YHWH's ability to predict the future (Isa. 48:3-8) is in contrast to idols' inability (Isaiah 41:22).

²⁰⁷ Daniel I. Block, *By the River Chebar: Historical, Literary, and Theological Studies in the Book of Ezekiel* (Cambridge, UK: James Clarke & Co, 2014), 32.

himself on the stage of history. Through his activity, and more specifically, his interaction with his people and his performance on their behalf, Israel gains knowledge of YHWH's person and a third dimensional depiction of his character.

The Old Testament texts that Luke mines tell how Israel had come to know YHWH this way. At the Exodus, they discovered who YHWH was because they saw him at work. (Exod. 20). The prophets exhorted Israel to heed the words of their God who had proven himself to be the one they could trust because only he could predict their future and provide for their needs (Jer. 16:14-15). This same trend, that Israel's God is the one who acts, is traced throughout Luke. The person of Jesus is described in explicit terms at times, but the most compelling revelations of his unique person take shape when his activity is studied because it is through his activity that his character and identity are unveiled. Jesus' identity is revealed over time, through the unfolding of Luke's account.²⁰⁸ Jesus' activity among Luke's characters displays, in living color, the divine activity of YHWH in their midst.

Conclusion

YHWH's divine identity was examined in this chapter because conclusions drawn here will inform the way that the following chapters engage with the concept of divine identity, first through an examination of Old Testament prophetic texts (chapter 3) and then by discovering echoes of those texts at particular moments in Luke's narrative (chapter 4 and 5). The interaction with the concept of YHWH's divine identity engaged with here was intended to establish the possibility that Luke presents Jesus as the unique One who possesses the divine identity of YHWH. The person of YHWH emerges from the narrative. Through explicit titles and indirect characterizations of Jesus, Luke seems to be presenting Jesus as not only an agent of YHWH, but

²⁰⁸ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology*, 8.

as ontologically YHWH. To make this discovery, Boda's narrative, character, and relational creeds were applied to Bauckham's eschatological monotheistic belief (YHWH will fulfill his promises to Israel and reveal his identity and redemptive purposes to the nations) to create a standard for determining Luke's integration of Old Testament divine identity concepts within his presentation of Jesus. The treatment of the divine identity accomplished in this chapter will lay groundwork for the construction of Luke's treatment of Jesus as Shepherd in the following chapters. In chapter 3, Old Testament texts detailing the shepherd motif will be examined, as they relate both to YHWH and his shepherd agents. Those texts will become the background for detecting the shepherd motif in Luke's narrative, when the divine identity standard will be applied in chapters 4 and 5. Ultimately, Jesus' activity in Luke may be viewed according to the relationship between YHWH and his people (relational creed), whereby YHWH promises to return as their Shepherd and act in a way that would reveal his character to them (character creed) according to his past actions in Israel's story (narrative creed). In these ways, Jesus will be found fulfilling the promises of YHWH because he is found possessing the divine identity, in keeping with Jewish eschatological monotheistic belief.

CHAPTER 3: ISRAEL'S SHEPHERD TEXTS

Introduction

In chapter 2, the concept of divine identity was examined and it was determined that an understanding of Jesus' identity in Luke can be contextualized within a study of the divine identity. Bauckham's eschatological monotheism category was considered according to Boda's three creedal rhythms of Old Testament theology to comprise a way of identifying Luke's integration of Old Testament divine identity categories in his presentation of Jesus as possessing the divine identity of YHWH. YHWH's divine identity was often revealed to Israel through his redemptive acts, and Boda's narrative creed (YHWH's past action in core events revealed his nature), character creed (YHWH's present, redemptive activity results from his identity; he delivers because he is Deliverer), and relational creed (YHWH is known according to his relational identity, bound to Israel in a reciprocal covenantal relationship) are categories for detecting the ways that YHWH is found revealing himself to Israel. Boda's contributions provide context for detecting how Bauckham's eschatological monotheism is reflected in Old Testament texts. This chapter will trace how YHWH has bound himself to Israel in a reciprocal relationship, wherein he has committed to acting redemptively in their circumstances in keeping with his redemptive activity in their history. To that effect, this chapter will study one particular role that YHWH embodies to reveal himself and accomplish his redemptive purposes.

One way that YHWH's divine identity is revealed in Old Testament texts is through his promised return to rescue and save his exiled people, and one of the motifs used to describe him, in person and activity, is the shepherd motif. In light of this chapter's findings, Jesus' person and activity as depicted in Luke will be understood according to the motif of YHWH Shepherd. YHWH's promises to personally return to exiled Israel as the Shepherd to his scattered flock will

be found to echo in Luke and indicate that Jesus' person and activity can be understood according to his identity as YHWH Shepherd. Before engaging with the ways that Jesus seems to be embodying the identity of YHWH Shepherd in Luke's birth narrative (chapter 4) and in key moments of his ministry (chapter 5), the prophetic texts must be examined in order to see a clear depiction of characteristics and activities specific to YHWH's identity as Israel's Shepherd.

After briefly surveying the relationship between shepherd language and kingship in the Ancient Near East, this chapter will detail the ways that prophetic books and Second Temple Jewish texts express the expectation that YHWH will personally return to Israel as Shepherd. Though the Jewish people were scattered during the sixth century BC exile, they were promised a return to the land. This return, envisioned by the prophets, depicted comprehensive restoration that far exceeded even the experiences of those who did return and reinhabit the land. The prophets' descriptions of Israel's return from exile are linked to YHWH's arrival to save and restore his people. YHWH pledges himself to his people in promises describing the certainty of his return. One of the ways he is depicted is as the returning, saving Shepherd of Israel.

YHWH is explicitly named as Israel's shepherd on several occasions, but most often, it is his activity among his people that reveals his identity as their shepherd. The prophets condemn Israel for rebelling against YHWH, and they describe moments in the future when YHWH will return as Shepherd and enact their transformation.²⁰⁹ Though the prophets speak to a nation under judgment that is incurably sick and hopelessly lost, they declare YHWH's promise to seek, find, restore, and redeem them. Promises of YHWH through the words of the prophets secured Israel's hope that YHWH would come to shepherd them personally. Though the shepherd motif

²⁰⁹ Isa 40:11; Jer 23:1-8; 30:12-18; 31:8-34; Ezek 20:34-43; 34:2-24; 37:19-28; Mic 2:12-13; 7:14-20; Zech 10:1-12; 11:4-17; 13:7-9

is not expressed in an entirely uniform way throughout prophetic texts, patterns regarding YHWH's identity and activity as Shepherd do emerge.

The focus of this chapter is on prophetic texts from Israel's Scripture that depict YHWH as Israel's Shepherd to an exiled people. Second Temple Jewish texts containing shepherd language are also examined. Second Temple Jewish texts denoting YHWH as Shepherd will be compared to Old Testament texts for the purpose of discovering the nature of the expectations for YHWH's intervention as Shepherd on behalf of Israel. The Old Testament shepherd motif expresses YHWH's relationship to Israel as Shepherd to the flock, and it binds them together according to YHWH's promises. The texts that will emerge from this chapter will frame the remainder of the study in that they paint an image of YHWH that Luke seems to be envisioning for Jesus. Luke's narrative will be found to contain echoes indicating that Jesus' identity and activity can be understood according to the Old Testament depiction of YHWH as Shepherd. To that end, this chapter will establish the Jewish monotheistic expectation, reflected in Old Testament prophetic texts and Second Temple Jewish literature, that by nature of his identity as Shepherd to Israel, YHWH would return to them and affect the restoration of his flock.

Kings as Shepherds in the Ancient Near East

The designation of "shepherd" for a god or king is attested in a variety of ancient Near Eastern works spanning time and region. The title dates to the Sumerian King list and perhaps to the founding of the monarchic institution of kingship.²¹⁰ The title for gods and kings reflected the power they exercised over those dependent on them for care and protection, just as sheep depended on their shepherd. To be the shepherd-god or shepherd-king was to possess and yield

²¹⁰ Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 280

ultimate power for the betterment of the nation, a task specially attuned to care for those requiring provision and care. The Mesopotamian sun god and god of justice, Shamash, was praised as a shepherd of all things below him, and the Egyptian sun god, Amon, is called a shepherd because he feeds his people by bringing herds to pasture.²¹¹ The authority of the gods is reflected in the kingship, who exercised emissary rule over the people.

The understanding of the king as shepherd is an ideology that can be traced as early at 2450 BC to the reign of Lugalzagesi of Sumer and his contemporaries.²¹² King “Urukagina of Lagash claimed that the god Ningirsu owned his state and that the king had been chosen as a shepherd to administer the city on behalf of the gods and the people.”²¹³ This ideology is reflected in the monarchy period.²¹⁴ The Code of Hammurabi attests to the Babylonian belief that the king saw himself as a god-appointed shepherd over the people.²¹⁵ Likewise, the Neo-Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (625-561 BC) uses shepherd language to describe his own rule.²¹⁶ In the ancient records of Assyria, King Sennacherib (c. 700) is described as a great and mighty who rules favorably over the people.²¹⁷ The shepherd-ruler concept is reflected in Semitic

²¹¹ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 1292.

²¹² Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 721.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 722.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 722.

²¹⁵ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, 280.

²¹⁶ Stephen Langdon, *Building Inscriptions of the Neo-Babylonian Empire: Part 1, Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1905), 83. “I Nebuchadnezzar, the righteous king, faithful shepherd who leads the peoples, director of the regions belonging to Bel, Samas, and Marduk, the contented, seeker after wisdom, regardful of life, exalted one who wearies not, caretaker of Esagilia and Ezida, son of Nabopolassar king of Babylon am I.”

²¹⁷ Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My own Heart* (Westmont, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 2006), 66; Daniel Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylon 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1926), 48. Sennacherib is called “prayerful shepherd (ruler), worshipper of the great gods; guardian of the right, lover of justice, who lends support, who comes to the aid of the needy, who turns (his thoughts) to pious deeds.”

works including *Odyssey* (IV. 542) and *Iliad* (1.263).²¹⁸ The well-established Ancient Near Eastern tradition denoting gods and kings as shepherds is powerfully reflected in the Old Testament, where the motif is both explicitly and implicitly applied to YHWH.²¹⁹

YHWH's People in Exile

YHWH's promises to shepherd Israel should be contextualized according to Israel's status as YHWH's people, a rebellious nation facing frequent judgment. In keeping with the covenant promise of blessings and curses (Lev 26; Deut 28), Israel was taken into exile as punishment for her sin (Ezek 39:23). Despite facing the actualization of the prophets' looming threats of exile, Israel was not left hopeless. The nation faced judgment but not utter abandonment. The prophets assure Israel that their reciprocal relationship with YHWH and his covenantal faithfulness guarantees hope for restoration. The prophets direct Israel's gaze back to the nature of YHWH that he revealed through his activity at the exodus. He is the God who does not forget or neglect his people. The same God who made a path for his people through the sea would bring Israel back to the land and deliver them from exile.²²⁰ He would ransom Israel, enabling her to live in proper relationship to him (Isa. 51:9-11).²²¹ YHWH would do for Israel what he foretold through the mouths of the prophets, forgiving Israel's sins, bringing her back to

²¹⁸ J.G.S.S. Thomson, *The Shepherd Ruler Concept in the OT and Its Application in the NT*, *Scottish Journal of Theology*, vol.8, issue 4 (Dec. 1955), 406.

²¹⁹ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, 285

²²⁰ The prophetic message to Israel, summarized briefly here and detailed below, appears to possess characteristics of each of Boda's three creedal rhythms: YHWH had revealed himself through acts of past deliverance (narrative creed), and he would act in similar redemptive ways again (character creed), according to his covenantal relationship with them (relational creed), to affect their restoration, keep his promises, and make himself known. In these ways, YHWH would fulfill his promises and reveal himself not only to Israel, but to the nations. In that way, features of Bauckham's eschatological monotheistic category are reflected.

²²¹ L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 118.

himself, and renewing the covenant.²²² He would be their God, and they would finally be his redeemed people.

The exile connotes more than historical occasions of Israel's captivity and desolation. Exile and new exodus language in the prophetic books are covenantal movements that signal the quality of Israel's relationship with YHWH. The exile connotes spiritual death, and promises for a new exodus spark hope for renewed life.²²³ The way that the prophets describe the arrival of YHWH and the nature and effects of his salvation will have direct bearing on an historically and theologically minded reading of Luke in later chapters. First, the nature of the Israel's exile and YHWH's promised return as presented in Old Testament texts will be summarized in order to establish the context for YHWH's depiction as Shepherd.

Hope for YHWH's Return

The people whose ancestors were once delivered out of Egypt by the mighty hand of YHWH find themselves, centuries later, in bondage again because of their persisting unfaithfulness.²²⁴ The quality of the exile was so severe that the prophets depict it as a reversal of the exodus (Hos. 8:13, 9:3; Jer 40-43).²²⁵ Yet, interspersed throughout the lament over Israel's sin and the description of divine judgment in Jeremiah 30-31 are multiple salvation oracles (30:5-11; 30:18-31:1; 31:2-6, 7-14, 16-22). In terms that portray their return as a new exodus,

²²² Wright, N.T. *Exile: A Conversation with N. T. Wright* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 47.

²²³ L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New* (Downers Grove, Il.: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 116.

²²⁴ Louis Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos: Jeremiah as Symbolic Tapestry* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 93.

²²⁵ Robert P. Carroll, "Jeremiah, Intertextuality and Ideologiekritik," *JNSL* 22 (1996), 28. Carroll understands the exile as not only a reversal of the exodus, but a reversal of salvation history.

YHWH declares that he will restore Israel (Hos. 2:14-15; Jer 50:33-38; Isa 4:5-6; 10:26-27; 11:15-16; 35:6-8; 43:1-2, 16-21; 44:27-28; 51:9-11; 52:12-13).²²⁶

Though the physical return to the land was accomplished, in part, in 538 BC, Israel still suffered the effects of the exile.²²⁷ The prophets describe a greater-than-exodus deliverance, but the return from Babylon fell short as a “subdued and tragic parody of the original exodus.”²²⁸ What YHWH did for Israel at the exodus, “the crucial backdrop for Jewish expectation,” he would do again, but to a greater and more glorious degree.²²⁹ Yet, the events before and after the exile are paralleled in Jeremiah 26-45.²³⁰ Though the people returned to the land, the post-exilic restoration described by the prophets awaited fulfillment. The comprehensive restoration described in Jeremiah 30-33 does not reflect the experiences of post-exilic Jews dwelling in the land. Return from exile meant much more than returning to the land; it meant returning to YHWH. A population of Jews fled to Egypt and others remained exiles in Babylon, but even those who returned as a remnant in the land perpetuated the same sins that sent them into exile because they still possessed the same corrupted hearts. A true return would require YHWH to act

²²⁶ Gary Yates, “New Exodus and No Exodus in Jeremiah 26-45 Promise and Warning to the Exiles in Babylon,” *Faculty Publications and Presentations* (2006), 4.

²²⁷ Wright, N. T. *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 138-9. Wright hears in Paul’s writings an expression of this same understanding: Israel’s exile persisted through the time of the physical return. Paul expressed it, Wright asserts, not as a fringe or casual interpretation of the events, but as an expression of what many first-century Jews believed. More specifically, Wright asserts that the exile began at Sinai (Deut 27-32), and YHWH’s promise to bring the people back from exile was accomplished through the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus (Rom 6-8:11; 10:5-13; Gal 3:10-14). Wright finds that Paul “has firmly anchored his inaugurated eschatology in the story of Israel that has reached its *telos* in Jesus, particularly in his death and resurrection,” 140. Wright’s view that the exile persisted into the time of the events described in the Gospels is adopted here.

²²⁸ L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New* (Downers Grove, Il.: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 122.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 121. YHWH’s return and the deliverance promised in the new exodus would reveal Israel’s God to a degree beyond what was revealed at the exodus from Egypt.

²³⁰ Yates, “No Exodus and New Exodus,” 12.

on Israel's behalf, and that is exactly what is depicted. YHWH promised to accomplish for them new exodus deliverance that surpasses the deliverance experienced by their ancestors (Jer 23:1-8). Isaiah 40-66 contains descriptions of this greater-than deliverance. YHWH will personally deliver Israel from bondage, providing streams in the desert, guiding them through the wilderness to a victorious entry into Jerusalem. In the new exodus, Israel's days of wandering will be no more. YHWH's redemptive activity would affect their restoration and reveal himself to Israel.

The prophets wrote that one day, the restoration of the people would be marked by the reign of YHWH (Isa 52:7), the inauguration of his salvation (52:10), and the return of his glory to Zion (Ezek 43:1-7; 48:35).²³¹ The return from exile that the prophets envisioned would begin with YHWH's return to Jerusalem. Only then would Israel be fully liberated from oppression. Essentially, as Wright puts it, "YHWH would finally become king, and would do for Israel, in covenant love, what the prophets foretold."²³² YHWH's return would be Israel's first sign that their exile was over and their salvation was imminent. At the time of the people's return from exile, the Jews in the land continued in the same sins, and YHWH had not returned to Zion and thrown off their oppressors to be their ruler and bring the promised effects of his salvation.²³³ The end of the exile is associated with the cessation of sin (Dan 9:24).²³⁴ The prophets kept in Israel's view the future-oriented vision of YHWH's return (Mal 3:1-4; Isa 40:3). The day of

²³¹ Wright, N.T. *New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 269. "Not until YHWH acted decisively to change things and restore the fortunes of his people would the exile be at an end. At the present time, the covenant people themselves were riddled with corruption, still underserving of redemption," 272.

²³² N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 127.

²³³ N. T. Wright, *Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 57, 60; Yates, "New Exodus and No Exodus," 11.

²³⁴ John Hill, "'Your Exile Will Be Long: The Book of Jeremiah and the Unended Exile,'" in *Reading the Book of Jeremiah: A Search for Coherence*, edited by Martin Kessler (Winona Lakes, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 160.

YHWH's coming would dawn, and Israel would be permanently delivered, forgiven, and restored within his kingdom which would extend to the nations.

The return to the land near the end of the sixth century BC was “a dim foretaste of the new exodus.”²³⁵ This was not the deliverance promised. “Holy prophets, continued to hold before Israel the still future-oriented message of past prophets: the day of Yahweh's advent would dawn. Yahweh would visit his people for a final and permanent deliverance, establishing his kingdom of life and peace among the nations.”²³⁶ Israel's “merely geographical exile in Babylon,” was but a component of her real, enduring exile.²³⁷ They were in the land, but in the truest sense, they were still in exile. The state of their national and spiritual life attested to this reality. Israel will still under Roman rule, and she was still unable to circumcise her rebellious heart and obey YHWH wholeheartedly (Jer 4:4). In a brief challenge to opponents of the view that the exile persisted in the first-century AD world, Wright writes:

Would any serious-thinking first-century Jew claim that the promises of Isaiah 40-66, or of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or Zechariah, had been fulfilled? That the power and domination of paganism had been broken? That YHWH had already returned to Zion? That the covenant had been renewed, and Israel's sins forgiven? That the long-awaited ‘new exodus’ had happened? That the second Temple was the true, final and perfect one? Or in other words – that the exile was really over?²³⁸

It is important to recognize that the perspective of a perpetual exile does not emerge only in retrospect. N.T. Wright firmly asserts that most Jews of the first-century period believed that Israel's exile was still in progress.²³⁹ John Hill agrees, calling it “a fundamental belief in Second

²³⁵ L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 122.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ Wright, *Justification*, 60.

²³⁸ Wright, *Jesus and Victory of God*, xvii-xviii.

²³⁹ Wright, *New Testament and People*, 268.

Temple Judaism” that Israel, though living in the land, remained in a state of exile.²⁴⁰ According to Wright, “nobody in Jesus’ day would have claimed” otherwise; “nowhere in Second Temple literature” is it expressed that the exile was over and restoration had occurred.²⁴¹ There is no literature from the post-exilic period asserting that the return in 538 BC accomplished the fulfillment of these promises. In fact, the opposite is expressed.²⁴² Many Jews believed that Israel’s great deliverance, spoken of by the prophets, would clearly be “promise-fulfilling divine action.”²⁴³ The visions and promises of the prophets had not yet been fulfilled. Wright asserts that if asked “where are we?” many first-century Jews, would have answered, “in language which, reduced to its simplest form, meant: we are still in exile.”²⁴⁴ Josephus asserts that many Jews read the words of Gabriel to the prophet Daniel and calculated that the exile would last centuries, through their present day (Dan 9).²⁴⁵ Though Israel had geographically returned from exile, in the truest sense, they had not. The geographic exile had ended, but Israel’s exile from

²⁴⁰ Hill, “Your Exile Will Be Long,” 149.

²⁴¹ Wright, *Exile*, 45.

²⁴² CD 1.3-11; Tob 14.5-7; Bar. 3.6-8; 2 Macc 1.27-9. For discussion, see Wright, *New Testament and People*, 269-70; Hill, “Your Exile Will Be Long,” 159-160. Of course, the diversity within the Second Temple Jewish community requires a nuanced treatment regarding the prevalence of any pervading belief. Wright asserts that Pharisees and Essenes, in particular, saw their current condition through an exile framework. Wright also deals with Second Temple Jewish texts (Ben Sira, Judith, the books of Maccabees and, briefly, Josephus’ works) that seem, at least at the outset, as “exceptions to the rule” of a continuing exile in keeping with the promises and curses outlined in Deuteronomy. What the reader finds is that the belief in a perpetual exile seems to pervade writings from this period, fueling an expectation that Israel required, and was promised, radical deliverance at the hand of YHWH. Wright, *Exile: A Conversation*, 31-34.

²⁴³ Wright, *Justification*, 57; Roger T. Beckwith, “Daniel 9 and the Date of Messiah’s Coming in Essene, Hellenistic, Pharisaic, Zealot and Early Christian Computation,” *Revue de Qumran* 40 (1981), 521-42.

²⁴⁴ Wright, *New Testament and People*, 268. William Blake states the confounding state simply: “Whether this is Jerusalem or Babylon, we know not.” Hill, “Your Exile Will Be Long,” 161.

²⁴⁵ Josephus, *Jewish War*, 6.312.

YHWH and the blessings of the covenant persisted.²⁴⁶ “Israel’s god had not returned to Zion,”²⁴⁷ but when he did, the exile would end, and the effects for Israel would be transformative.²⁴⁸ The promises of the prophets had yet to be realized.

Effects of YHWH’s Return

Before YHWH would return, he would use oppressive rule and enemy nations as conduits of divine judgment designed to discipline Israel for her perpetual rebellion (Deut 28:36-46). It was YHWH who literally scattered the people in exile, but just as YHWH promises judgment on the nations who were the agents scattering and oppressing his people (Jer 29:4), YHWH promises judgment on his scattered flock and the shepherd leaders within Israel who should have tended to them (Ezek. 11:16–17; 20:41; 34; Zech 10:9).²⁴⁹ YHWH promises to gather and rescue his people them from the strong hands of their oppressors (Jer 31:11).

YHWH’s people had been suffering under wicked leadership, scattered and weak like a helpless flock of sheep (Jer 23:1-2). Unwilling to endure their mistreatment forever, YHWH pledges to personally return to his flock to punish the shepherds and tend to his own (Jer 23:3). When he returns, he will reverse the conditions of both the nation and their leaders. The shepherds did not attend to Israel in care, and as a result, YHWH will attend to them in punishment (23:2). YHWH will then place over his people, “a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land” (Jer. 23:5b), who will be called “The Lord Our Righteous Savior” (23:6).” They will “fear no more or be dismayed” (23:4). When YHWH

²⁴⁶ Hill, “‘Your Exile Will Be Long,’ 158.

²⁴⁷ Wright, *New Testament and People*, 269.

²⁴⁸ Wright, *Justification*, 60.

²⁴⁹ Wayne Baxter, *Israel’s Only Shepherd: Matthew’s Shepherd Motif and His Social Setting* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012), 154.

returns as Shepherd, the remnant that was scattered under the failed leadership of Israel's shepherds will be gathered to the fold, and those who were floundering will be fruitful and flourish (23:3). This promised salvation, characterized by the restoration of the flock and judgment on the wicked shepherds, is of such unparalleled quality that it supersedes even the Exodus (23:7-8). YHWH will intervene in a radical way, delivering his people, because they require his personal and direct intervention. The flock is both hopelessly guilty and irreversibly ill. Yet, when YHWH, Israel's true Shepherd, arrives, he will reverse their conditions (Ezek. 34:1-10; Jer. 23:1-2). Those beyond healing (Jer 30:12) will receive healing, and the outcasts (30:17) will be claimed as the people of YHWH (v. 22). YHWH will bring back the captives (31:23), and like a shepherd, he will gather his scattered and wandering people (31:10, 22). He will deliver and redeem them from "the hand of one stronger" (31:11). YHWH himself will "turn their mourning into joy" and exchange their sorrow for comfort (31:13). Jeremiah heaps one promise upon another to describe the reversals that Israel should anticipate when YHWH returns.²⁵⁰ Reversal language denotes the scope of this salvific restoration.

The description of this transformation is not unique to Jeremiah. The prophets link the eschatological salvation accompanying YHWH's return to the transformation of Israel, both internally and externally. When Israel's God returns, he will shepherd Israel, reverse her conditions, forgive her sins, and save her (Isa 40:11). With care as her shepherd, he will bring her back to himself, tend to the weak, and restore Israel's joy (Jer 31:10). YHWH's shepherding care on behalf of Israel will produce a response of joy (31:12). The reversal of Israel's situation and the response of joy are linked in Jeremiah's texts. YHWH will restore his community by

²⁵⁰ Charles L. Feinberg, "Jeremiah" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel* vol. 6, Frank E. Gaebelien, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1976), 568.

seeking the lost and outcasts, binding up the wounded, strengthening the weak, and feeding the hungry.²⁵¹ Israel is instructed to “sing with joy” to YHWH and pray “YHWH save (יְיָ) your people, the remnant of Israel” (31:7).

The effect of the restoration brought about by Israel’s returning Shepherd is comprehensive reversal. YHWH makes this promise: “I will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice rather than sorrow. I will satisfy the priests with abundance, and my people will be filled with my bounty” (31:13-14). One promise follows another, guaranteeing that YHWH will gather and watch over his people, saving them and restoring to them joy and abundance.²⁵² YHWH will ensure that their deliverance is permanent by establishing a new covenant with Israel (Jer 31:31-34; 32:38-41) that would both set the terms and provide the means for their obedience.²⁵³

Israel will enjoy the peace and joy of this promised restoration forever because this time, she will have perfect leadership and a new covenant. Jeremiah links the reversal of Israel’s conditions, the markers of the inaugurated salvation, with the establishment of the new covenant (31:31-37). Ultimately, YHWH will come and bring Israel’s salvation, a term, in Israel’s language, that “encapsulates the entire future hope.”²⁵⁴ Though this future hope did envision liberation from oppressive rule and the ability to function and worship in the land as an

²⁵¹ Young S. Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 91. Chae notes that This picture of YHWH’s Shepherding priorities paints “an unusually compassionate shepherd unique when compared to ANE shepherd imageries.”

²⁵² Charles L. Feinberg, “Jeremiah,” 568.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 414. While there is no resounding consensus on the dating of Jeremiah 30-33, it is clear that the content of these promises anticipates fulfillment beyond a physical return to the land. The restoration that Jeremiah details includes a transformation in Israel’s physical and spiritual condition (, which is something that a return from exile would not accomplish. While the return from exile fulfilled these promises in part (cite), Israel was entitled to expect future deliverance.

²⁵⁴ Wright, *New Testament and People*, 300

independent nation, Israel's most cruel oppressor must first be defeated. Israel's fundamental sin problem must be addressed. The defining characteristic of the new covenant is the guarantee of its enduring success: the deliverance would be an "inward, spiritual exodus"²⁵⁵ accomplished by the forgiveness of sins.²⁵⁶ The deliverance that will accompany the inauguration of the New Covenant will supersede the deliverance of the exodus (31:32) because YHWH will shepherd his people (30:10), and his law will be inscribed on his people's hearts and minds, and they will become a new people, devoted to YHWH (31:33). Isaiah 40-66 also announces the good news of Israel's coming salvation. YHWH will reveal his glory (Isa 40:5) and pay for Israel's sins (40:2). Israel will not need to fear because her God has come in power and with "a mighty arm" (40:9-10). He will come in judgment and mercy, as a shepherd to his flock, for the specific purpose of enacting their rescue (40:11).²⁵⁷ This is the work of the God of Israel.²⁵⁸

According to Wright, the forgiveness of sins and restoration of Israel indicate the end of exile; forgiveness and restoration are two sides of one coin.²⁵⁹ Until Israel was forgiven from her sin, salvation was elusive and restoration impossible. "Forgiveness was an eschatological blessing; if Israel went into exile because of her sins, then forgiveness consists in her returning: returning to YHWH, returning from exile."²⁶⁰ The end of exile, in the truest sense, would mean

²⁵⁵ Morales, *Exodus Old and New*, 119.

²⁵⁶ Wright, *New Testament and People*, 300.

²⁵⁷ Laniak, *Shepherds after My own Heart*, 125. Isaiah 40-66 has been called the "gospel of joy" because of the joyous news of YHWH's arrival and the description of his salvation that it contains.

²⁵⁸ Isaiah 40 contains a strong statement about the incomparability of YHWH (40:25).

²⁵⁹ Wright, *New Testament and People*, 300. Wright asserts, "the promise of forgiveness and that of national restoration were thus linked causally, not by mere coincidence.

²⁶⁰ Wright, *Jesus Victory of God*, 434.

the forgiveness of Israel's sins, the defeat of her enemies, and the return of her God.²⁶¹ Israel required a fundamental transformation of the heart, and it could only be brought about by YHWH's direct intervention. He would intervene, the prophets promised, and when he does, Israel's conditions will be reversed, and she will be transformed into a people faithful to her merciful God. When YHWH deals with Israel's sin problem, she will be released from the very depths of her captivity. One of the motifs that the Old Testament prophetic texts use to depict YHWH fulfilling these promises and accomplishing these tasks is the motif of YHWH as Israel's Shepherd. YHWH's identity as Israel's Shepherd and the specific tasks he obligates himself to accomplish on her behalf will be explored below in order to be prepared to examine, in later chapters, the ways in which Jesus is presented in Luke as embodying the Divine Identity as YHWH Shepherd to an exile people.

YHWH as Shepherd in Old Testament Texts

“Shepherd” was one of the oldest and most familiar designations for YHWH.²⁶² The explicit title is used for YHWH in four locations (Gen 49:24b-25a; Ps 23:1a; 80:1-2; Ecc 12:9-10).²⁶³ In the final blessing he pronounces on his sons, Jacob reflects on the faithful presence of YHWH as their steadfast guide (Gen 48:15b-16a) before calling him “the Mighty One of Jacob, the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel” (Gen 49:24). The identity and success of the nation is attributed to YHWH's shepherding presence with them. Most frequently, the shepherding motif is applied to YHWH's person and activity though the explicit title is not mentioned. Through a

²⁶¹ Wright, *Exile: A Conversation*, 45.

²⁶² Lamar Eugene Cooper, *Ezekiel*, vol. 17, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 300-301

²⁶³ Baxter, *Israel's Only Shepherd*, 49-50.

description of his activity, YHWH is identified as Shepherd of Israel at key moments throughout their history. Wayne Baxter provides an informative account of verbs with pastoral connotations that denote YHWH as Shepherd without the titular use of the term “shepherd,” (*raah*): “e.g. *nachah* (‘lead’, ‘guide’) in Exod 13:17-21; Deut 32:12; Neh 9:12; *nachah* (‘lead’, ‘guide’) in Exod 15:13; 2 Chron 32:22; Isa 49:10; *asaph* (‘gather’) in Isa 49:5; Mic 2:12; 4:6; *yatsa* (‘go out’) in Isa 37:32; Ezek 20:38; and *bo* (‘lead out’) in Jer 30:3; Zech 10:10.”²⁶⁴ YHWH was the one who led, guided and gathered the people, and when they went out, it was under his leadership. His activity reflects his identity as Israel’s Shepherd.

While the wilderness generation was not the first to know YHWH as Shepherd, they experienced his shepherding presence in a unique way. YHWH was the one who led them out of Egypt, guided them through the wilderness with his personal presence, and affected their protection and provision. Timothy Laniak identifies characteristics of YHWH’s presence with his people: protection (Deut 23:14; Num 10:35, 14:7-9), provision (physical provision of food Ex 16:33; Ps 105:40-41, and provision of rest Isa 63:14; Num 10:33), and guidance (Ex 15:13; Deut 32:12; Hos 11:4; Ps 77:19-20; 78:14, 53-54; 80:1 (*nhl, nhh* [guide], *msk, nhg* [led])).²⁶⁵

While YHWH was Israel’s Shepherd, the motif is also applied to human rulers placed over YHWH’s people.²⁶⁶ The people of Israel are likened to a flock that YHWH, their Shepherd, often entrusted to emissary leaders who were to act as under-shepherds. From Israel’s pre-monarchical past through the era of kingship, the shepherd metaphor was used in reference to

²⁶⁴ Baxter, *Israel’s Only Shepherd*, 52 f. 45

²⁶⁵ Laniak, *Shepherds After My Heart*, 79-87.

²⁶⁶ Baxter, *Israel’s Only Shepherd*, 43. “Kings and leaders often were called “shepherds” in the ancient Near East (see Isa 44:28; Jer 2:8; 10:21; 23:1–6; 25:34–38; Mic 5:4–5; Zech 11:4–17). These ‘shepherds’ were more than military-political leaders. They bore a primary responsibility for the moral and spiritual direction of the nation.” Cooper, *Ezekiel*, 298.

Israel's judges, civil leaders, kings and prophets, as well as to Gentile rulers and military rulers (Num 27:17; 2 Sam 7:7; 1 Cor 11:2; 1 Chr 17:1, 6).²⁶⁷ Moses is repeatedly tasked with shepherding Israel, his authority derived from his status as under-shepherd to YHWH. While YHWH used Moses as his servant and agent in the process of leading Israel to the land, Israel's Scriptures repeatedly name YHWH as the nation's Shepherd. "Moses is the *extension* of God's rule in their lives, the *means* of their provision, the *agent* of their deliverance."²⁶⁸ Moses was the shepherding instrument through whom God led his flock (Isa 63:11), but it was to YHWH that the flock belonged, and he was their chief shepherd (Ps 77:20; 78:52).²⁶⁹

The king, functioning according to the same pattern, could lead and serve the people because he was perpetuating YHWH's leadership.²⁷⁰ These leaders were expected to be properly positioned and related to God, the true King, and to cooperate in his shepherding tasks.²⁷¹ The appellation "shepherd" is morally and spiritually neutral; it does not indicate faithfulness or a spiritual uprightness, and thus, it is not reserved for leaders who properly administer their role. Kings as wicked as Ahab and as God-pleasing as David are named shepherds (1 Kgs 22:17; 2 Chron 18:16; 1 Sam 13:14). David succeeded where Ahab failed (2 Sam 5:2b; Ps 78:70a, 71-72).²⁷² Both kings were personally appointed by YHWH to be king and shepherd over Israel and were expected to execute YHWH's rule through theirs.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 44, 55.

²⁶⁸ Laniak, *Shepherds After My Heart*, 87.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 91. "You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron," Ps. 77:20. "Then he led out his people like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock," (Ps. 78:52).

²⁷⁰ W.G. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), 229. In Numbers 27:17, Moses prays for God appointment of a leader to prevent the people from wandering like sheep without a shepherd. "The phrase 'sheep without a shepherd' was a useful description of people without a (good) king."

²⁷¹ Cooper, *Ezekiel*, 300-301.

²⁷² Baxter, *Israel's Only Shepherd*, 44.

Often, Israel lacked effective leadership and turned to their divine King to intervene. In Psalm 80:1, Israel petitions their Shepherd YHWH for help. “On the basis of the same imagery, moreover, the most familiar Psalm 23 can be seen, not as an isolated poem, but as a full statement of a recurrent metaphor for Yahweh.”²⁷³ The kingship and shepherding motifs are fused in this Psalm. YHWH is trusted to lead, restore, dwell with, provide for and anoint his sheep. His sheep trust him to accomplish for them what is essential to their survival but out of their power to achieve.²⁷⁴ While some of Israel’s leaders, like Moses and David, were submitted to YHWH’s rule, many operated according to their own wills. Regardless of human leadership, YHWH remained Israel’s ultimate and authoritative King and Shepherd of the nation, the ruler and owner of the flock.²⁷⁵ The Psalm expresses Israel’s dependence upon YHWH.

YHWH Shepherd: Prophetic Books

The shepherd motif is featured prominently in prophetic books. Frequent and theologically significant occurrences of the YHWH Shepherd motif occur in the periods of time surrounding the exile.²⁷⁶ During the exilic period, and the years preceding and following it, Israel is frequently referred to as a “scattered” people (Jer 23:1-2; Ezek 34:5; Jer 30:11; Jer 31:10; Ezek 20:23, 34). Their condition, though, is not permanent. Though YHWH is the one who scattered them in judgment, the prophets describe future hope when God will visit his flock as their

²⁷³ Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 260. There, David articulates the shepherd responsibilities of YHWH.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 260.

²⁷⁵ Baxter, *Israel’s Only Shepherd*, 56. “For the biblical authors, YHWH embodies the ideal shepherd: he gathers the lost flock, leads them to abundant pasture, and carefully watches over them to protect them from danger. A Jewish-national restoration outlook also undergirds a number of ‘YHWH as a Shepherd’ passages (e.g. Ps. 80:1-2; Ezekiel 34).”

²⁷⁶ Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of Old Testament*, 260. Brueggemann identifies that the most important uses of the Shepherd metaphor for YHWH as those appearing in the exile.

faithful and attentive Shepherd, gathering them once again to safety and restoring them to a state of flourishing (Isa 40:11; Jer 31:10; Ezek 34).²⁷⁷ In these prophetic texts, various details are given regarding YHWH's shepherding activity among Israel. These specific details will be examined. In sum, it will become clear that YHWH promises to return as Israel's Shepherd and act decisively on their behalf, and he pledges subsequently to install his Davidic Shepherd over his flock. The prophetic texts dictate distinctions between YHWH and his Davidic under-shepherd. YHWH will reveal himself to his covenant people and fulfill his promises by acting again in redemptive ways. Specifically, he will arrive as their Shepherd.

Promises that YHWH will return as Israel's Shepherd must be contextualized within the pattern of the failure of the leaders charged with Israel's care. YHWH trusted Israel's leaders to assume the responsibilities of shepherds over his people, and the judgment Israel experiences in the prophetic period is attributed, in part, to failure on the part of Israel's leaders. The prophetic books lament the failed shepherd leadership of Israel and the resultant conditions of the divided, exiled nation. Repeatedly, the prophets condemn Israel's shepherds. While the prophets' condemnation of Israel's shepherds includes the monarchy, it does not end there. The collective ruling class of Israel is under the divine microscope.²⁷⁸

Prophets, like kings, are identified as shepherds because of their charge to lead Israel, and YHWH's prophets declare judgment on Israel's shepherd-rulers who failed. Recognizing his responsibility to influence the spiritual trajectory of Israel, Jeremiah defends his ministry as a shepherd (Jer 17:16), and Isaiah and Zechariah rightly denounce unfaithful prophets as failed

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 260.

²⁷⁸ Baxter, *Israel's Only Shepherd*, 44 n. 14. Ezek. 19:11 and Isa. 3:1-4 use "rod" (*shebet*) and "staff" (*mashal*) to symbolize the ruling class of Israel.

shepherds (Isa 56:10a, 11b; Zech 11:5).²⁷⁹ It is these spiritual shepherds, YHWH's faithful prophets, who deliver the divine message that judgment will come to unfaithful shepherds and rebellious sheep. Messages of judgment are quickly met with proclamations that salvation will come through the arrival of YHWH Shepherd and his Davidic appointee.

Isaiah 40-66

As a unit, Isaiah 40-66 details the restoration that YHWH and his Servant will accomplish for Israel, which will begin with YHWH's return as Shepherd. Isaiah 40 proclaims a timeless message of eschatological salvation, the revelation of YHWH's glory and the establishment of his kingdom.²⁸⁰ The comfort announced in 40:1 emerges as a message of substantive hope because it is linked to YHWH's arrival. The news of YHWH's return is good news because his activity on their behalf reflects his nature. When YHWH returns to shepherd his people (40:6-11), his glory will be seen (40:3-5), and payment for her sins will be made (40:2). Promises of the return of YHWH's glory are prevalent throughout the book and determinative for Isaiah's prophecies.²⁸¹ The return of YHWH's glory denotes the return of his presence (Isa 40:3-5). As a direct result of the Lord's coming, his glory is revealed, and this is good news for "all flesh" (40:5).²⁸² God's saving purposes for the whole world are in view,²⁸³

²⁷⁹ Baxter, *Israel's Only Shepherd*, 49.

²⁸⁰ Gary Smith, *Isaiah 40-66*, vol. 15B, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2009), 91; John Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40-55: A Literary-Theological Commentary* (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 4. Goldingay notes the lack of specificity regarding the geographical or chronological setting of Isaiah 40 and suggests that the nature of salvation proclaimed there is timeless. Thus, the scope of this promise extends beyond the physical exile.

²⁸¹ John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 40-66* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 52. The word glory appears thirty-seven times throughout Isaiah.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 52.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 52.

and this is only accomplished when he personally visits his people. The concept of divine visitation is so prevalent that Oswalt, reframing the prophet's own words, summarizes the essence of Isaiah's message as, "'Look, it's God'" (40:9).²⁸⁴ The good news of the Lord's arrival is to be heralded in Zion; it is to be proclaimed loudly in Jerusalem. As a result, his people should experience comfort in place of fear because they know the one who has come.

Isaiah goes on to describe the manner of YHWH's arrival. With a mighty hand comes his arm (יָרֵךְ) to rule and administer justice (40:10), but his strength and power neither dilute nor compromise his compassion. With the same arm (יָרֵךְ) he carefully gathers up his lambs, tenderly carrying them and gently leading them (40:11). Toward his flock, he exudes care, tenderness, and attentiveness. The work done here is done by the YHWH. He will be their ruler and their shepherd who will deliver, rescue, and restore them.²⁸⁵ The type of rescue and restoration promised here is not conceptually new. Just as God delivered Israel from Egypt with his "mighty hand" (Exod 3:20, 6:1), he promises again to restore his people with the might of his arm. New-exodus deliverance is in view. The self-revelation of YHWH occurred through the extension of his mighty arm through the events of the exodus. In a similar way, he will display his power and glory again and make himself known in a new exodus deliverance of his people.²⁸⁶ The language of the prophets inspired hope for future deliverance that was reminiscent of YHWH's activity in the past. Ultimate deliverance and salvation are linked to the returned

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 54.

²⁸⁵ Smith, *Isaiah 40-66*, 93. "Since God has not yet appeared in power to care for his sheep (40:9–11), this verb should be understood as a prophetic perfect that refers to things that will be fulfilled in the future."

²⁸⁶ Morales, *Exodus Old and New*, 154.

presence of YHWH.²⁸⁷ When he comes as Shepherd, he will successfully seek, gather, restore, and reverse the conditions of his people.²⁸⁸ While in ancient Near Eastern references, descriptions of the king as shepherd are commonly “somewhat self-congratulatory,” the Shepherd whom Isaiah describes here is sacrificial. YHWH, Israel’s Shepherd, will act according to his compassion.²⁸⁹

In Isaiah 49, the specific effects of YHWH’s return as Shepherd are reframed and applied to the person of the Servant.²⁹⁰ Those previously held as captives will be led, protected, and provided for in the face of scorching wind and sun and threats of hunger and thirst (49:9-10). The servant gathers and brings back Israel.²⁹¹ Though Isaiah 49 does not name YHWH as shepherd, it describes the deliverance that he, through his Servant, will accomplish for his captive people in shepherding language found elsewhere in the prophets.²⁹² “[The Servant] is the concrete means

²⁸⁷ Smith, *Isaiah 40-66*, 97. The nature of this deliverance and salvation appears to be both ultimate and eschatological given the revelation of God’s glory to “all flesh” and the transformative nature of God’s arrival among his people.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 355. “Using the imagery of sheep being cared for by a shepherd (cf. 40:9–11), the Servant promises these people that they will have plenty to eat (9b). They need not worry about food or drink or surviving in the hot sun (10a); “surely, truly” (kî, omitted in NIV) they can be certain that “the one who is compassionate to them” (mērahāmām), God himself, will lead his sheep to fresh water (10b).”

²⁸⁹ Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 40-66*, 55

²⁹⁰ *Psalms of Solomon* seems to align with the picture presented in Isaiah 49, where YHWH accomplishes the restoration of Israel and the nations through his emissary.

²⁹¹ Smith, *Isaiah 40-66*, 355. Smith recognizes the “near” and “far” fulfillment of this prophetic text. “Although some who returned from Babylonian exile may have thought that their movement back to the land was a partial fulfillment of this prophecy, this prophecy points to a much greater event in the future when many people from all corners of the earth will experience God’s compassion, provisions, and guidance when he provides his salvation. Interestingly, the text never says where these people will come to (there is no reference to Jerusalem). The text is only clear about whom they will come to, and that is really what is most important.”

²⁹² Ibid., 349. “These eschatological promises [Isa. 49:7-11] focus on God’s final spiritual restoration of many people from every corner of the globe.” The Servant will be the restorer of Israel and a light to the Gentiles, gathering them back to YHWH (49:6). He will not be the only means of disseminating YHWH’s salvation throughout the earth, but he will the salvation.

by which God's relationship with Israel is embodied and manifest."²⁹³ Here, too, it is YHWH's compassion on his afflicted ones that drives him to deliver and comfort them (49:13).

Jeremiah²⁹⁴

Through his prophetic mouthpiece Jeremiah, YHWH pronounces woes on the leaders placed as shepherds over Israel.²⁹⁵ Rather than attending (פָּקַד) to God's flock, the sheep of his pasture, the shepherds scattered (פָּרֵץ), destroyed (אָבַד), dispersed (פָּרֵץ) and drove (נָדַד) the flock away (Jer 23:1-2). For this failure, God promises to slaughter the shepherds with the ferocity of a lion (Jer 25:34-38). The same God who scattered Israel in exile will now gather them and watch over them as a shepherd watches his flock (23:3; 31:10b). He will raise up a ruler from among them to faithfully lead them (30:21b), in contrast to their leaders whose disregard for the flock resulted in their scattering (10:21; 13:20; 23:2-3; 25:34-38).²⁹⁶ YHWH personally does the work of Shepherd because the flock belongs to him.²⁹⁷

Jeremiah 23

YHWH uses Jeremiah to deliver the warning that the entire leadership system within Israel is under divine condemnation. The shepherds receiving Jeremiah's woe pronouncement

²⁹³ Christopher Seitz, *The Book of Isaiah 40-66*, vol. 6, New Interpreter's Bible (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2001), 430.

²⁹⁴ Terence E. Fretheim, *Jeremiah*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 2002), 1-2. The book of Jeremiah contains the words of Jeremiah delivered to Israel before the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon in 587 BC and immediately after it. The passages being examined here is one which makes precise dating difficult because of its lack of specific historical reference

²⁹⁵ Walter Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 205.

²⁹⁶ Fretheim, *Jeremiah*, 432.

²⁹⁷ Feinberg, "Jeremiah," 517.

includes Israel's kings, prophets, and priests (23:1,11).²⁹⁸ They destroyed God's flock directly, through oppression, and indirectly, through failed leadership. Since the shepherds over Israel had not "attended" (פָּקְדוּ) to the flock, the Lord would "attend" (פָּקַד) to them for the evil they had done (23:2). With this play on words, YHWH confronts Israel's shepherds with the pronouncement that they would pay for their unfaithfulness toward his flock.²⁹⁹ Since they did not bestow care on the flock, God would bestow punishment on them. YHWH holds the people responsible for their personal rebellion, but he reserves particular judgment for the leaders, the shepherds, who created the conditions for such rebellion. He holds the shepherds fundamentally responsible for the waywardness of the flock. The shepherds oppressed the flock, destroying some and leaving the rest vulnerable. By leading the nation into idolatry and the resultant Babylonian captivity, the shepherds scattered them in exile.³⁰⁰ The flock needed to be restored to safety, security, and flourishing, and YHWH promises that rather than delegating this responsibility again, he will personally see to its completion.³⁰¹ YHWH will gather them and bring them home. The one who scattered the flock and drove them away will now personally gather the remnant³⁰² and bring them back (23:3).³⁰³

²⁹⁸ Feinberg, "Jeremiah," 517.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 517.

³⁰¹ Brueggemann, *Commentary on Jeremiah*, 206.

³⁰² F. B. Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, vol. 16, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 216. "The Lord would assume the role of shepherd and gather the remnant of his flock from all the places he had driven them. The remnant is a major theme in the Book of Jeremiah (mentioned nineteen times) the remnant is that part of Israel that will remain after God's purging through punishment."

³⁰³ Jeremiah 23:2 states that the shepherds drove the flock away, while 23:3 attributes their scattering to YHWH. Just as YHWH said he would fight against Judah by using the Babylonians to execute his judgment, here, too, both divine and human causes are at work.

The language YHWH uses in reference to scattered Israel emphasizes his personal regard for their compromised status and his direct involvement in their deliverance. YHWH calls Israel “the sheep of my pasture” once (v. 1), “my flock” four times (29:14; 31:8, 10; 32:37), and “my people” over forty times.³⁰⁴ They are his, so he pledges that “I myself” will gather them back (23:3). Literarily, the emphasis is placed on YHWH as the subject of the activity.³⁰⁵ The Lord is Chief Shepherd,³⁰⁶ and “the gathering from exile will be God’s own action.”³⁰⁷ After gathering them as their Chief Shepherd, the Lord would install new shepherds over them.³⁰⁸ This greater act of salvation, when YHWH personally visits his people to rescue and reclaim them, will supersede the Exodus (23:7-8). Here, YHWH reaffirms his kingship and claim on his flock.

Jeremiah 30

Jeremiah 30 opens “The Book of Comfort/Consolation,” a collection of oracles beginning with Jeremiah 30 and ending in 33.³⁰⁹ Here, the warnings of judgment are punctuated with glimmers of hope. Jeremiah articulates YHWH’s message of divine comfort and hope to the exiled people in which he promises to save and restore his remnant.

Without YHWH’s words of comfort, Israel would be unable to emerge from its place of despair. Yet, he does deliver words of comfort whereby he reaffirms his commitment to shepherd his people. While all others to whom Israel had turned had forgotten her, not caring for or

³⁰⁴ Fretheim, *Jeremiah*, 325.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 325.

³⁰⁶ R. K. Harrison, *Jeremiah and Lamentations: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 21, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 122.

³⁰⁷ Brueggemann, *Commentary on Jeremiah*, 206.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 206.

³⁰⁹ Fretheim, *Jeremiah*, 2.

seeking her, YHWH would remember. The word for “care for/seek”, *שָׁרַץ*, “is commonly used with shepherd imagery to describe the shepherd’s seeking out and caring for sheep (see Ezek 34:2–16, esp. vv. 6, 8, 10–11, where *dāraš* occurs).”³¹⁰ YHWH will attend to Israel as a faithful shepherd returning to his neglected flock.

The physical exile and punishment Israel experiences is described as sickness from which they will not naturally recover.³¹¹ Though their wounds and injuries are incurable (30:12), YHWH tells Israel that he will miraculously “restore [her] to health and heal [her] wounds” (v. 17).³¹² The rhetorically powerful shift from the hopeless description of Israel’s state in v. 12-15 and the positive promise of restoration in v. 16-17 is theologically instructive. YHWH will graciously reverse the conditions of their sin and claim and restore an outcast people (v. 17). He intervenes not in spite of their rebellious and broken condition, but because of it. It is precisely because Israel has been neglected and mistreated that Yahweh is moved to act. He will seek and care for a people that “no one cares for (or seeks out),” (v. 14a).³¹³ The Lord’s recognition of their outcast status is a causative statement justifying his intervention.³¹⁴

Jeremiah charts YHWH’s move from indignation to compassion.³¹⁵ Israel’s helplessness and YHWH’s compassion are focal points of Jeremiah’s prophecy. “The last line of v. 17

³¹⁰ Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, 264.

³¹¹ Walter Brueggemann, *Returning from the Abyss*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2022), 84.

³¹² *Ibid.*, 84. “The wonder of the structure of the poem is that it moves from ‘incurable’ (vv. 12-15) to ‘restore health’ and ‘heal’ (v. 17).”

³¹³ Walter Brueggemann, *The ‘Uncared For’ Now Cared For* in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. 104, n. 3 (Sept. 1985), 423.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 425.

³¹⁵ Brueggemann, *Returning from the Abyss*, 93. Brueggemann observes the inverted portrayal in Jeremiah 30-33 of YHWH toward his people.

intensifies the helplessness yet one more time, in order to appreciate the stunning help of Yahweh. Israel is called ‘outcast,’ that is, exiled, banished, driven out. And the final word echoes again v. 14a, ‘no one cares for’ (or seeks out).”³¹⁶ The diagnosis of Israel’s incurable condition anticipates messages of further doom, but first, YHWH promises a reversal in their situation because he regards them with compassion (v. 18). The language portrays Israel as a flock abandoned by her shepherds, a stark contrast to the treatment she will receive from YHWH Shepherd. He will diligently and successfully pursue his flock and reverse her conditions.

Jeremiah 31

Jeremiah 31 opens with a reminder of YHWH’s everlasting lovingkindness toward Israel. Again, he finds Israel in a place of desperation, and he reassures her with specific promises to rescue her. YHWH details the deliverance that he will personally achieve. He will gather his people from the north, and from the ends of the earth (v. 8). Those who are weak no longer need to fear, because he will tend to the vulnerable, namely the blind, lame, and pregnant (v. 8). Knowing their points of weakness, he will deal tenderly with his people. He will guarantee their provision and ensure their safety, leading them by “streams of water” and “on a level path where they will not stumble” (v. 9). Though he scattered this exiled nation, he promises now to gather and watch over them as a shepherd does his flock (v. 10b).³¹⁷ In the description of this regathering, YHWH uses language of fatherhood (31:9) and of shepherding (v. 10) to describe his tender, personal, and attentive care for Israel.³¹⁸

³¹⁶ Brueggemann, *The ‘Uncared For,’* 423.

³¹⁷ Baxter, *Israel’s Only Shepherd,* 52

³¹⁸ Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah,* 284. Brueggemann finds the two metaphors of fatherhood and shepherd to be theologically significant. “The language necessary to this overwhelming picture requires two metaphors. On the one hand, language of ‘lead,’ ‘brooks of water,’ and ‘straight path’ evokes the picture of the good shepherd who seeks out the lost and brings them home (v. 9; cf. Isa. 40:11). On the other hand, the reference to the

The language used here stresses the compassionate intervention of YHWH which will bring about the transformation in the people's condition. YHWH will "gather" (קָרַץ) the scattered exiles, a key promise in the restoration of the people (31:8) "They will be given power and legitimacy, which they themselves do not possess. The faithfulness of God makes possible a great homecoming procession of those valued by God whom the nations have devalued (cf. Isa 35:3-6; 43:5-7)."³¹⁹ YHWH "ransomed" (פָּדָה) and "redeemed" (לָאָץ) Jacob from a hand (יָד) too strong for him (v. 11). Though the nation's enemies were stronger than Israel, they are no challenge for YHWH, who assumes the responsibility of their deliverance and brings them to safety.³²⁰ "Again the shepherd image is invoked for the One who seeks and saves the lost...In v. 7 we have already had the verb 'save' (*y-sh-*), and now in v. 11 we have a 'ransom' (*pdh*) and 'redeem' (*q'l*)."³²¹ As their Shepherd, YHWH will rescue, seek, ransom, redeem, and save his scattered flock.

YHWH will affect their redemption, and the reversal of their physical condition will be reflected in the reversal of their internal condition. He will "turn" (הִפְתֵּךְ) "mourning" (*ebel*) to "joy" (שִׂמְחָה), and his "comfort" (נַחֵם) will transform their "sorrow" (גִּיּוֹן) into "rejoicing" (הִשְׂמֵחָה) (v. 13). YHWH intervenes, and he "has power to move against mourning and sorrow, the mood

'first-born' suggests an Exodus motif (cf. Exod. 4:22), concerning the one especially valued and beloved, who receives God's special protection, care, and gifts. The shepherd who protects is the father who valued. The metaphors are particularly telling because the community of the firstborn is constituted by the disabled. The two metaphors together bespeak a situation in which the last ones become the first ones; that is, the disabled ones become the firstborn. The 'father' of the 'first-born' takes those 'orphaned' by the process of exile and makes them a home (cf. Hos. 14:3b)."

³¹⁹ Ibid., 284.

³²⁰ Ibid., 285.

³²¹ Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, 272. Ransom (*pada*) denotes the transfer of ownership and redeem (*gaal*) indicates deliverance and restoration.

dictated by the exile.”³²² Though they strayed, “turning” (שׁוּמָה) from God, they “repented” (נָחַם) (v. 19); when God “restores” (שׁוּב) them, turning them back to himself, they will “return” (שׁוּב) to him (v. 18). God remembers his people with “compassion” (רַחֵם) (v. 20), yearning for him to “turn” (שׁוּב) back to him (v. 21). YHWH inverts and transforms the people and their condition.³²³ Having turned from God, they wander to their own destruction, and God exhorts them to “set up road signs” and follow the path back to him (v. 21). The nation has become characterized by its propensity to be a turning and wandering people, but when YHWH “brings them back from captivity” (v. 23), he will work within and among her. Then, they will be characterized by faithfulness (31:31-34). This internal transformation is the mark of the new covenant, when the law will be “in their minds” and “on their hearts” (v. 33), and they will know their God, and their sins and wickedness will be forgiven and forgotten (v. 34).

In essence, by restoring their fortunes, YHWH gives to the people the “life, destiny, and well-being that belong to [their] identity as YHWH’s people.”³²⁴ Jeremiah 31 contains YHWH’s promises to deliver exiles, and Brueggemann explores the ways in which the nature of the promise is not exhausted by a single fulfillment in Israel’s history.

As the promissory text embodies God’s self-commitment, so the promissory text lingers in the exilic and postexilic community as an anchor for faith and hope in the context of fickleness and despair. That is, the text is not a prediction, but it is a promise to which Israel clings because of Israel’s confidence in the promise-maker. The promissory text is not ‘used up’ or exhausted in any fulfillment or partial fulfillment, but continues to stand, in situation after situation, in generation after generation, as a witness and testimony to what God intends that has not yet come to fruition.³²⁵

³²² Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah*, 286.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 286.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 274.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 267.

The theological grounds for YHWH's promissory claims are two-fold. First, he is faithful to his people and to his promises (31:28), and he is powerful to accomplish his intentions. Their obstinacy does not prevent him from acting, but "God's fidelity emerges with fresh power out of God's hurt and yearning for his people."³²⁶ Israel's God is faithful and he is powerful, and he promises to meet her in her waywardness and, like a father and a shepherd, to bring his sons and daughters, his beloved and wayward flock, back home. He is moved to compassion because he "remembers" his people. "The two infinitive absolutes of 'remember' and 'have mercy' indicate the power of God's positive resolve. The God who *utterly remembers* is the God who *utterly has mercy*."³²⁷ In Jeremiah 31, YHWH directs his power and compassion to Israel and details the nature of the restoration he will achieve.³²⁸ Their rescue will be wholistic and will result in the reversal of the internal conditions that produced the symptoms of physical rebellion. YHWH will save Israel, forgiving her sins, and redeeming and remaking her according to the terms of his gracious new covenant.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel outlines the divinely ordained procedure of Israel's restoration. In oracles of judgment and restoration throughout Ezekiel, YHWH claims Israel as "my people,"³²⁹ and ten times, "my flock."³³⁰ By administering judgment and grace, YHWH makes himself known as

³²⁶ Ibid., 266.

³²⁷ Ibid., 288.

³²⁸ Israel's confidence in the promises made in this text are anchored in YHWH's past redemptive actions, his present and future activity, and their current reciprocal relationship.

³²⁹ Ezek. 13:9,10, 18, 19, 21, 23; 14:8, 9; 21:17[12]; 25:14; 33:31; 34:30; 36:12; 37:12, 13; 38:14, 16; 39:7; 44:23; 45:8, 9; 46:18.

³³⁰ Daniel I. Block, *By the River Chebar: Historical, Literary, and Theological Studies in the Book of Ezekiel* (Cambridge, UK: James Clarke & Co, 2014), 50. Ezek. 34:6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, 31.

their God, the owner of the flock.³³¹ Ezekiel presents YHWH at work, and Israel should recognize him according to his activity. “YHWH is by definition a God who acts. Ezekiel offers no sublime poetry on the attributes of God or lofty lectures on his personality. As in the events associated with Israel’s original exodus from Egypt (Ex. 1-15), knowledge of his person and character is gained primarily by observing his performance.”³³² YHWH’s activity identifies him as the holy, faithful, and long-suffering One who personally and intimately judges, purges, and cleanses Israel. Though their active rebellion betrayed their rejection of his leadership, Ezekiel prophecies that YHWH will return to them in lovingkindness, compassion, and justice, stooping to rescue his wayward people as their Shepherd. The intervention they need is that which only YHWH can achieve.³³³

Block identifies six main features of YHWH’s future new-exodus deliverance of Israel that is described throughout Ezekiel. YHWH will:

- (1) gather the scattered people (Ezek. 11:16–17a; 20:41; 34:11–13a, 16; 36:24a; 37:21a);
- (2) bring them back to their cleansed land (11:17b–18; 20:42; 34:13b–15; 36:24b; 37:21b);
- (3) “revitalize his people spiritually, renewing his covenant with them, giving them a new heart, and infusing them with his Spirit, so that they may walk in his ways (11:19–20; 16:62; 34:30–31; 36:25–28; 37:23–24);”
- (4) restore and reinstate the dynasty of David as a means of blessing and protection (34:25–29; 36:29–30; 37:26; 38:1—39:29);
- (5) bless the nation and secure them in the land (34:25-29; 36:29-30; 37:26; 38:1-39:29);
- (6) “establish his permanent residence in their midst and re- order the worship of the nation (37:26b–28; 40:1—48:35).”³³⁴

³³¹ Ibid., 32. The grace of YHWH extends to his people even in the exile, where he purges them rather than forsaking them, and goes with them rather than abandoning them. “When YHWH acts in judgment against his people, it is not primarily in order to punish them, but in order that they and the world might know him. The same is true of his restorative actions on behalf of Israel.”

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Principles reflected in Boda’s character and relational creeds are central to the promises made here.

³³⁴ Block, *By the River Chebar*, 39.

YHWH pledges to do the following for his people: gather, bring home, and revitalize his people, renew his covenant and renew their hearts, reinstate his Davidic leader, bless them, and dwell in their midst.

Ezekiel emphasizes the fact of YHWH's return to Israel and the nature of the restoration he will personally accomplish for them as their deliverer.³³⁵ He will arrive as Israel's Shepherd. As Shepherd, he will seek, gather, restore, and lead Israel home.³³⁶ To seek and restore Israel is YHWH-Shepherd's work.

In Ezekiel's visions, it is YHWH who affects peace and righteousness among the people he has gathered. Israel's hope depends on the promise that YHWH will personally visit his people and shepherd them. After he rescues his people, YHWH will install a Davidic Shepherd over them to perpetuate the effects of the new age marked by YHWH's arrival as Shepherd, but Ezekiel clearly depicts YHWH alone as the one who personally accomplishes Israel's restoration by seeking, gather, and restoring the flock.³³⁷

Ezekiel 20

The historical account of the nation's unrelenting sinfulness catalogued in Ezekiel 20 outlines a contrasting picture of the people's waywardness and YHWH's faithfulness.³³⁸ YHWH's promises to redeem Israel will require judgment, but Israel is invited to know and believe his word based on YHWH's revelation in their history and his commitment to their covenantal relationship. The history of Israel's rejection of YHWH is described here according

³³⁵ Ibid., 41.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Cooper, *Ezekiel*, 199. Ezekiel 20 compliments the treatment of Israel's sin patterns in Ezekiel 12-19 and 23.

to stages of habitual rebellion. First, YHWH chose Israel, and though they refused to abandon their foreign gods, he graciously delivered them from slavery (Ezek 20:5-9). In the second phase, YHWH brought the people into the wilderness where he bound himself to them in covenant and dictated the conditions by which they would experience his blessings, but again, they broke his terms. They did not enter the land (20:10-17). Yet in the third phase, YHWH expressed his grace once again to a new generation who responded by habitually choosing the path to death well-worn by their fathers (20:18-26). Finally, the people were brought by YHWH into the land, but even once in possession of the promise, they persisted in the same patterns of idolatry and wickedness that held them in bondage. Israel is called “a household of revolt” (2:3; 5:6), who blasphemes YHWH’s name and arouses his anger (20:27, 29). Ezekiel’s rehearsal of Israel’s history in Ezekiel 20-24 legitimizes the pronouncements of judgment he delivers.

While the present generation to whom Ezekiel delivers his message bows under the weight of covenant curses, it remains true that YHWH has neither permanently abandoned his people nor withdrawn his promises. Ezekiel prophesies that the “incubation period” of the exile will produce a new community, a faithful remnant who humbly responds to divine judgment and cooperates in his new work.³³⁹ The current period of exile (20:30-31) will be followed by another stage when God will confront Israel in the wilderness of exile, judge, and purge her, and bring her into “the bond of the covenant” (20:37).

Israel’s cycle of human rebellion and divine judgment will be broken when YHWH brings about new exodus-type deliverance for the people through a series of divine initiatives

³³⁹ Block, *By the River Chebar*, 37.

(20:34-38).³⁴⁰ As he did for their ancestors enslaved in Egypt, YHWH will bring his exiles out (וְהוֹצֵאתִי) with “a mighty hand and an outstretched arm” (בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרוּעַ נְטוּיָה) (20:34).³⁴¹ The effect of YHWH’s mighty intervention, the type first known by Israel at the Exodus, will be his return to rule over them.³⁴² His first act will be to lead them into the wilderness for purging judgment. YHWH will isolate them from the nations and directly encounter them in a “face-to-face” (פְּנִים אֶל־פְּנִים) meeting where they will be forced to deal with him directly (20:35).³⁴³

Third, YHWH will deliver the idolatrous over to their fate and cause faithful Israel to “pass under the staff,” and be brought into covenant (20:37).³⁴⁴ The phrase, “pass under the staff” is an idiom that “derives from the custom of a shepherd standing at the entrance of the fold and using his rod to count, examine, and sort his sheep...By having the sheep (the Israelites) pass under the rod Yahweh identifies the rebels and isolates them from those who participate in the covenant proceedings.”³⁴⁵ The phrases “I will make you pass under the staff” is literarily parallel to “I will bring you into covenant,” suggesting that YHWH’s covenant people are those whom he claims in shepherd possession.³⁴⁶ By returning to rule his covenant partner, YHWH will return as

³⁴⁰ Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 366. Fishbane states that 20:34-38 describes “a theological reconciliation and historical closure of the most profound sort.”

³⁴¹ According to Fishbane, Ezekiel’s language is an explicit echo of Exodus 6:6-8. Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York: Schocken, 1979), 131-132.

³⁴² Block, *The Book of Ezekiel Chapters 1-24*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 650. This is Ezekiel’s only mention of divine kingship.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 651. *Panim el-panim* recalls the way Moses used to meet with God (Exod. 33:11; Deut. 34:10)

³⁴⁴ John B. Taylor, *Ezekiel: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 22, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1969), 158.

³⁴⁵ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 1-24*, 651-2. The phrase occurs as a shepherding idiom in Jeremiah 33:13, and in Leviticus 27:32, it describes the process of choosing animals to be presented to YHWH in sacrifice.

³⁴⁶ Ralph H. Alexander, “Ezekiel” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel*, vol. 6, Frank E. Gaebelin, ed., (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 838.

Shepherd. Having brought his people into the new covenant, and having purged from among them the rebellious sheep, YHWH will have gathered to himself a cleansed flock that acknowledges his name in all sincerity.³⁴⁷ They will look with shame on their past rebellion (20:43) and look to YHWH in whole-hearted devotion.³⁴⁸ In a miraculous intervention reminiscent of the Exodus, YHWH will rescue Israel. As their Shepherd, YHWH both provides for and protects the sheep.³⁴⁹ Ezekiel 20 emphasizes that YHWH is the single figure rescuing and regathering Israel, and it details the ways in which YHWH will reveal himself as Shepherd according to his redemptive work anchored in Israel's history and covenant relationship with him.³⁵⁰

Ezekiel 34

With greater detail, Ezekiel 34 further dictates the deliverance YHWH will achieve for his flock when he returns to shepherd them.³⁵¹ Deliverance is announced in 34:2-10, the nature of the deliverance described in v. 11-22, and the goal explained in v. 23-31.³⁵² YHWH's response to the wicked shepherds and the condition of the flock is twofold. First, YHWH

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 838. It is for the sake of his name and the survival of the nation that YHWH endures with Israel through these periods of chastisement, purging and judgment. Ultimately, the nation is restored to the land because she has been restored back to God, Israel's Lord (20:38-44). Block, *By the River Chebar*, 37.

³⁴⁸ Taylor, *Ezekiel*, 158; Block, *Ezekiel 1-24*, 655.

³⁴⁹ John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 2, "Israel's Faith" (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 666.

³⁵⁰ Andrew T. Abernethy and Gregory Goswell, *God's Messiah in the Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020), 115 n. 3.

³⁵¹ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, 276. Block calls the thematic, linguistic and structural similarities between Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 23 "too specific to be accidental." Though Ezekiel adheres to Jeremiah's prophecy, "signs of adaptation and reinterpretation are evident in his downplaying the status of David while highlighting the role of Yahweh, and in his incorporation of elements from Lev. 26."

³⁵² Ibid., 274.

confronts Israel's wicked shepherds and reverses the effects of their mismanagement of the flock. Second, he removes them from the shepherding roles and replaces them, first with himself, and subsequently with his Davidic Shepherd.³⁵³ Chae calls Ezekiel 34-37 "the richest text regarding the Davidic Shepherd tradition in the OT and probably in the Second Temple period as well... Moreover, Ezekiel's programmatic vision that the returning presence of the eschatological Shepherd is followed by YHWH's appointing the Davidic Shepherd left an indelible mark on various revisions of the tradition."³⁵⁴ The details of this vision, specifically the nature of YHWH's shepherding return and activity and that of his Davidic Shepherd, is the focal point here.

Ezekiel pronounced woes on the shepherds of Israel who did not tend (רָעָה) the flock, but only provided for themselves. At the expense of the flock, the shepherds fed and clothed themselves by slaughtering the very ones for whom they were responsible (34:3). They failed not only in these normal shepherding responsibilities (34:2-3), but they also failed in remedial responsibilities including lending special care to the unwell and lost (34:5-6).³⁵⁵ YHWH condemns them for not "strengthening the weak," "healing the sick," "binding up the wounded," or "bringing back and searching for the lost." Instead, they rule "harshly and severely," (34:4). The shepherds are held accountable for "crimes of commission and crimes of omission."³⁵⁶

³⁵³ Chae, *Jesus as Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 380. "Thus, his seeking the lost and healing the sick means the judgment upon their wrongdoings (Ezek. 34:1-22)."

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 171.

³⁵⁵ Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, 2721.

³⁵⁶ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, 283.

After YHWH condemns the prophets and announces that he will remove them as leaders, he announces that as owner of the flock, he will return to take over as shepherd (34:11-16).³⁵⁷ Ezekiel 34 identifies three aspects of YHWH's shepherding activity. First, having denounced Israel's failed leadership, he pledges to personally achieve for Israel what the wicked shepherds neglected. YHWH's restoration begins with "an exchange of leaders."³⁵⁸ He will reverse the condition of the neglected flock by seeking the lost, attending to the injured, bringing back the strays, and caring for the weak. In 34:4, the evil shepherds are condemned for neglecting "the sick", "the injured," "the straying," and "the lost," and in 34:16, YHWH declares that he will personally attend to "the lost," "the straying," "the injured," and "the sick." The inverted ordered emphasizes the contrast between the evil shepherds and YHWH Shepherd.³⁵⁹ Having pursued and restored the vulnerable within the flock, he will further protect them from the vulnerabilities of having been scattered and lost (34:12-13).

Third, having seen to the well-being of his flock, YHWH will judge between sheep: "between the fat and the strong" (34:16), "between sheep and sheep, between rams and male goats" (34:17), "between fat sheep and lean sheep (34:20), "between sheep and sheep" (34:22). Duguid identifies the weak and fat rams and goats as "the broader class of leaders of the community, who had oppressed the weak with violence" and selfishly tended to their own needs and desires at the expense of the flock.³⁶⁰ Ezekiel distinguishes between shepherds under judgment and fat sheep under judgment. The shepherds refer to former kings, and the fat sheep

³⁵⁷ Cooper, *Ezekiel*, 298.

³⁵⁸ Paul House, *Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 341.

³⁵⁹ Baxter, *Israel's Only Shepherd*, 53 f. 48

³⁶⁰ Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 121.

refer to the ruling class.³⁶¹ With this threat of judgment on the “fat sheep” who abuse the “lean sheep” (34:20), “the positive image of shepherd turns harsh and negative; the shepherd looks harshly on exploitative sheep, and distinguishes between strong, abusive sheep, and vulnerable, weak sheep. Thus the good shepherd attends especially to the most vulnerable sheep – this case, needy exiles.”³⁶² The needy state of the flock invites YHWH’s compassionate intervention.

In a series of twenty-five promises, YHWH repeatedly commits himself to seeking³⁶³ and meeting the needs of the flock.³⁶⁴ “The unique feature of this text is that Yahweh the divine patron regathers the sheep himself.”³⁶⁵ YHWH is the one who gathers his sheep (34:11-16), separating them in judgment (34:17-22) and creating the remnant. Ezekiel’s oracle is distinct from regular woe oracles in that “the unexpected insertion of *my flock (so’ni)* in v. 6 betrays Yahweh’s and the prophet’s primary concern. The abused sheep are Yahweh’s flock, not the rulers.”³⁶⁶ They would be called to answer for the ways that they have mistreated the flock and mismanaged their delegated authority. Yet, the term denotes more than ownership; it also denotes endearment. Yahweh’s tone deviates from the familiar sound of judgment pronouncements to reiterate that he has neither forgotten nor abandoned his people. The one who scattered the exiles pledges to personally gather them back.

³⁶¹ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, 282.

³⁶² Brueggemann, *Theology of Old Testament*, 260.

³⁶³ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, 289. Seek” in v. 11 (בִּקֶּר) may mean “examine” or “seek the welfare of.”

³⁶⁴ Cooper, *Ezekiel*, 301.

³⁶⁵ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, 291; House, *Old Testament Theology*, 341.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 284.

In effect, Ezekiel 34 announces the return of YHWH's kingship over his people.³⁶⁷ His presence among the flock symbolizes the very presence of YHWH and the "the reign of YHWH in the glorious new age."³⁶⁸ By gathering the scattered flock, guaranteeing their safety, and establishing his servant as shepherd over them, YHWH demonstrates both his enduring compassion for his people and commitment to his covenant. Once the flock is restored and a remnant preserved and purified, the goal of the restoration, the reestablishment of the covenant, is the work now at hand.³⁶⁹ According to Chae, "Ezekiel's vivid and rich shepherd imagery revises Israel's idea of monarchy."³⁷⁰ Out of pity for his flock and commitment to his flock and to his covenant, YHWH returns as Shepherd.³⁷¹

Having reclaimed, collected, and restored the faithful remnant of his flock, YHWH places them under Davidic leadership and under his new covenant guaranteeing their peace, flourishing, and protection (34:20-31).³⁷² Though related, it is important to observe how the roles of YHWH-Shepherd and Davidic Shepherd are distinct in identity, sequence, purpose, and function. "In this arrangement, YHWH is the divine patron of the people; David is his representative and deputy,"³⁷³ the one representing YHWH's presence among the people.³⁷⁴ The

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 277.

³⁶⁸ Daniel I. Block, *Beyond the River Chebar: Studies in Kingship and Eschatology in the Book of Ezekiel*, (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2013), 82.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 83.

³⁷⁰ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 171.

³⁷¹ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, 306. Block makes this statement regarding YHWH's commitment to his covenant. "Ezekiel declares Yahweh's true goal in his salvific activity: that the family of Israel might realize the presence of God among them, and the reestablishment of the covenant relationship between them and their God."

³⁷² House, *Old Testament Theology*, 341

³⁷³ Block, *Beyond the River Chebar*, 82.

³⁷⁴ Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, 301.

Davidic Shepherd is to tend YHWH's flock. The Davidic Shepherd will be ruler over YHWH's people, and unlike the wicked, self-serving leaders throughout Israel's history, he will tend to them faithfully because he is the servant of YHWH.³⁷⁵ The appellation "my servant" further accentuates his subordination to YHWH.³⁷⁶ He rules over them as "prince," as one having been "called from their ranks to represent them," while also operating in the tangential power of YHWH.³⁷⁷ The role of the Davidic Shepherd is to tend the flock, perpetuating YHWH's rule over them.³⁷⁸ "The ruler will be appointed by YHWH himself, as is consistent with Ezekiel's theocratic emphasis, and this ruler's installation only takes place *after* the rescue has been achieved by the Divine Shepherd."³⁷⁹ The responsibility of the Davidic Shepherd is to tend those whom YHWH gathered.

According to Ezekiel 34, the significance of the Davidic Shepherd-King and the scope of his role is dependent upon his relationship to YHWH and the work he accomplishes on behalf of his flock. It is YHWH who personally seeks, gathers, and restores his people and finally leads

³⁷⁵ Block, *Beyond the River Chebar*, 42. In this way, "Ezekiel's oracle against Israel's kings in 34:1-10 shares the theocratic vision of Deuteronomy, in which the king's primary role is to represent YHWH by embodying covenant righteousness and promoting the well-being of those in his charge."

³⁷⁶ Abernethy and Goswell, *God's Messiah Old Testament*, 116.

³⁷⁷ Block, *Beyond the River Chebar*, 82. The title "prince" (נָשִׂיךְ) is given to the Davidic Shepherd (34:24), YHWH's servant (37:25), who perpetuates the rule of YHWH and exercises power deriving from him. His relationship to YHWH and to YHWH's people suggests that he may be the Messiah. The term נָשִׂיךְ is perhaps used to position this figure in relation to YHWH. In 40-48, the נָשִׂיךְ is not identified with David or called YHWH's servant, but he has distinct privileges and responsibilities related to the temple and leading the people (44:1-4; 46:1-3, 8-10, 12). In each case, perhaps the term accentuates both the elevated, authoritative identity and role of the messianic figure while also accentuating the kingship of YHWH, Abernethy and Goswell, *God's Messiah Old Testament*, 119-122.

³⁷⁸ Alexander, "Ezekiel," 913-914. In light of the Gospels, Alexander makes this commentary on Ezekiel 34: The Lord would accomplish the flock's deliverance "by appointing one true and responsible Shepherd for his people: the Messiah, his servant David (vv. 23-24). The Lord would be Israel's God; his servant David, the Messiah, would be Israel's Ruler on earth after he restored Israel to her land. Two members of the Godhead were clearly discerned with varying functions."

³⁷⁹ Abernethy and Goswell, *God's Messiah Old Testament*, 116.

them back home (34:11-22). While the role of the Davidic Shepherd is essential for the completion of Israel's restoration, Ezekiel 34 features YHWH Shepherd in a much greater role.³⁸⁰ YHWH's own language makes this plain: "I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep...You are my sheep" (v. 15, 31). There are certain shepherding responsibilities that are YHWH's alone. The Davidic Shepherd "plays no part in the restoration of the nation. He neither gathers the people nor leads them back to their homeland."³⁸¹ While Jeremiah 23 speaks of the Davidic King as "an agent of peace or righteousness,"³⁸² Ezekiel attributes these qualities and activities directly to YHWH. The role of YHWH as Shepherd is the centerpiece, and the role of the Davidic figure is less prominent and judicial, in that he is responsible for "maintaining social equity and the care of the vulnerable (in line with Jeremiah's portrait of the future Davidic ruler in Jer 23:5)."³⁸³ He perpetuates YHWH's care over the outcast, neglected flock that YHWH personally found and brought back home. "In short, the rescue of the endangered flock by YHWH precedes the sanctification of the flock by the Davidic Shepherd-Appointee."³⁸⁴ It is after YHWH gathers and restores his remnant and reestablishes justice among them that he installs his Davidic appointee as shepherd and prince over them (34:23-24; 37:21-28).³⁸⁵

Ezekiel 34, then, presents clearly defined figures and roles of YHWH Shepherd and his Davidic Shepherd appointee. Once YHWH's work of gathering and rescuing his scattered flock is complete, he installs his chosen Davidic Shepherd as ruler over the flock. It is only after

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 115.

³⁸¹ Block, *Beyond the River Chebar*, 82.

³⁸² Ibid., 82.

³⁸³ Abernethy and Goswell, *God's Messiah Old Testament*, 122.

³⁸⁴ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 302.

³⁸⁵ Block, *Beyond the River Chebar*, 69.

YHWH fulfills his tasks as of seeking, healing, and judging the flock as eschatological Shepherd that the restored nation is placed under the leadership of the Davidic Shepherd.³⁸⁶ The shepherd motif as it is described in Ezekiel 34 will be shown to be specifically featured in Luke's texts, and the creedal components of the promises that defined YHWH's activity will be shown to define Jesus' activity.

Ezekiel 37

In Ezekiel 37, the Son of Man prophecies according to a vision portraying YHWH's future revival of Israel. The deliverance described by Ezekiel is a vivid scene of restoration. The new exodus restoration is described as resurrection from the dead (Ezek 37:12-13). After bringing to life dry bones through the Spirit,³⁸⁷ YHWH will place his servant David over the unified nation as shepherd and king.³⁸⁸ Abernethy and Goswell suggest that the appellation "king" over "prince" here "highlights the restoration of Israel's national status in line with the general ANE expectation that an independent nation has its own king."³⁸⁹ The emphasis on Davidic shepherding in this passage, then, is the result of the divine eschatological shepherding accomplished by YHWH that is described in Ezekiel 34. When YHWH returns as Shepherd to Israel and seeks, gathers, and rescues her in new exodus deliverance, the people will know him to an even greater and more transformative degree than before because of the nature of the

³⁸⁶ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 352.

³⁸⁷ Taylor, *Ezekiel*, 1997b. There are many interpretive options for this passage that, for the sake of space and maintaining focus, will not be explored here. Taylor sees the dry bones representing Israel in exile.

³⁸⁸ Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 194. Allen finds the designation *melek* in 37:25-28 to "underline the monarch's subordination to Yahweh, the real king who vicegerent he was, and to distinguish his rule from an expression of absolute, tyrannical power."

³⁸⁹ Abernethy and Goswell, *God's Messiah*, 118.

revival (37:12-14).³⁹⁰ Whether David is called shepherd (34:23; 37:24), prince (34:24) or king (37:22, 24), the consistent title David is assigned is YHWH's servant (34:23, 24; 37:24, 25). As his servant, David faithfully rules over YHWH's restored flock and assures their obedience. As Renz suggests, "Israel's obedience and security are closely connected with the reign of the Davidic king."³⁹¹

YHWH's kingdom will rule according to the conditions and provisions of the new covenant, and the Davidic Shepherd will perpetuate YHWH's rule. The conditions expressed in this chapter awaited complete fulfillment beyond the return from Babylon.³⁹² Ezekiel 37:15-28 articulates thirteen promises that YHWH makes to Israel, describing his determination to seek, gather, remake, revive, restore, reclaim, and save his people. After YHWH has accomplished this rescue and restoration of his lost and scattered flock, he will establish his servant David as king, perpetuating his rule and enforcing his decrees. For these purposes, Ezekiel 37 is significant in its articulation of YHWH's future plans for Israel and are contingent upon his personal intervention and that culminate in his installation of his Davidic Shepherd.

Micah 2:12-13 and 7:14-20

In all three sections of Micah that express hope and promises of salvation (2:12; 4:6-8; 5:4), the shepherd motif occurs.³⁹³ The salvation oracle in 2:12-13 comes after condemnations on

³⁹⁰ The chief aim of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt was not merely their physical liberation, but the revelation of God to his people and to the nation of Egypt. YHWH would make himself known through these mighty acts. While Pharaoh previously mocked Moses' warnings (Exod 5:2), he and the entire nation were confronted with the terrifying revelation that what they had been told was true: Pharaoh, Egypt, and the people of Israel "will know I am Yahweh" (Exod 6:7; 10:1-2; 14:4, 18). Israel would learn that no one is like YHWH (Exod 15:11).

³⁹¹ Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 1999), 116.

³⁹² Cooper, *Ezekiel*, 327.

³⁹³ Allen, *Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah*, 398; Kenneth L. Barker, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, vol. 20, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 131.

Judah's false prophets. In contrast to these wicked shepherds, the divine Shepherd that Israel is promised will gather the remnant and lead them through the city gate (2:13).³⁹⁴ The activity of YHWH is described here as that of a shepherd; he will gather and bring back his scattered sheep, his remnant. Having gathered them, he will lead them as their King (2:13). In each aspect of salvation promised, both in YHWH's promise to gather Israel and in the description of the deliverance, the initiative and leadership of YHWH is stressed.³⁹⁵

Like sheep into a pen, YHWH gathers the scattered exiles. The same words, "gather" (אָסַף) and "assemble/bring together" (קָבַץ) that are used here (2:13) are used again in 4:6.³⁹⁶ Though Judah has found itself in a place of chaos and judgment, it also finds itself within "the orbit of God's traditional role in relation to his people. They are like a flock of frightened sheep."³⁹⁷ They are under the direct threat of wicked men, but Micah declares that YHWH hears "their cries of terror, their sheeplike beatings," and YHWH their Shepherd would deliver them as he had in the past (Ps 78:52ff; 80:1).³⁹⁸

YHWH's mighty acts of deliverance in the past are prototypes for future deliverance, and in Micah 7:14, the prophet extols YHWH to return as Shepherd over his people and employs

³⁹⁴ Barker, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 69–70. The fulfillment of this promise is understood by some to have taken place when Jerusalem was delivered from King Sennacherib's siege in 701 BC, and by others as the return from Babylonian exile. The fulfillment is also expected by some to anticipate "the final regathering and salvation yet to come in the eschaton." Given the incomplete physical return from exile, the enduring need for Israel to experience YHWH as King, and similar messages of hope scattered throughout the prophets that possess an eschatological tone, "the scope of the passage probably extends beyond restoration from exile to the Messianic Kingdom. Perhaps the hope envisaged here is fulfilled progressively (cf. 5:2–4)."

³⁹⁵ Allen, *Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah*, 301.

³⁹⁶ "'In that day,' declares the Lord, 'I will gather the lame; I will assemble the exiles and those I have brought to grief. I will make the lame my remnant, those driven away a strong nation. The Lord will rule over them in Mount Zion from that day and forever,'" Micah 4:6-7.

³⁹⁷ Allen, *Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, 302.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 302

“exodus theology” as the paradigm for the deliverance that Israel requires.³⁹⁹ The result of YHWH’s shepherding activity would be exodus-type deliverance. In the same way that YHWH displayed his wonders through the deliverance of his people from their enemies, Micah pleads with him to again act on their behalf (v. 15). Using the very language that YHWH used in his self-revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai (Ex 34:6-7), Micah extols God as the one who pardons and forgives transgression, and whose compassion and mercy triumph in the face of their sin (7:18-19). In keeping his promise that God made first to Abraham (7:20), YHWH will be faithful to his flock, his people, his inheritance (7:14). YHWH’s faithfulness, forgiveness, compassion, and mercy will be the hallmarks of divine deliverance in the future just as it was in Israel’s history.⁴⁰⁰ In this salvation oracle, the shepherding activity of God toward the remnant is linked most directly to the spiritual restoration of the people. God’s shepherding activity actualizes his compassion and faithful love through the pardon and forgiveness of their sins (7:18-20).

Zechariah

Zechariah describes the wholesale rebellion of both Israel and her leaders. Israel’s leaders exercised utter neglect of their responsibilities toward YHWH’s flock, and rather than rejecting them, Israel’s rejected YHWH as Shepherd. YHWH’s judgment is directed toward both the wicked leaders and the wicked flock, yet he articulates his intentions to rule in righteousness over them and to restore them. Ultimately, it is the shepherd whom YHWH appoints over the flock who falls under the sword of YHWH’s judgment, and while the majority of the flock is

³⁹⁹ Ibid., 399; Barker, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 131.

⁴⁰⁰ The relationship between YHWH’s past redemptive activity and his current and future actions for his covenant people reflects the way that Boda’s creedal categories are organically integrated in Old Testament texts. Israel is to know YHWH as the one who will accomplish his promises and reveal himself and his redemptive purposes (eschatological monotheism) because he has made himself known in these ways.

scattered and killed, a remnant remains to receive YHWH's covenantal mercy. The rebellion of Israel and the failings of Israel's shepherds stand in contrast to the enduring faithfulness of YHWH and the righteousness of his shepherding rule over them.⁴⁰¹

Zechariah 10:1-12

Zechariah expresses the theme woven throughout the prophets that YHWH will judge Israel's leaders and restore her to righteous rule. In Zechariah 10, YHWH's anger burns against the shepherds of Israel who are corrupted by dishonesty and selfishness, and he promises first, to punish the leaders (10:2-3), and then to personally "care for his flock" (10:3). The effects of his presence among them are restorative. He will strengthen, save, restore (10:6), gather (10:7, 10), redeem (10:7) and allow the scattered peoples to return (10:9), and to live securely (10:12). When YHWH replaces Israel's shepherds, Israel's conditions are reversed.

Zechariah 11:4-17

Israel wandered as lost sheep because of their wicked leaders, the worthless shepherds, and YHWH promises to judge both the leaders and the rebellious nation. YHWH appoints the prophet to act as Israel's shepherd to accentuate to the people the wickedness of the leadership they preferred to YHWH's leadership (11:4-9). Just as they rejected YHWH's rule, the people rebelled against the shepherding rule of the prophet, and the prophet symbolically reveals that they have been cut off from YHWH's "favor" (11:10). Their rejection of the prophet, communicated by their offer to pay for his leadership for the low price of a slave, was a rejection

⁴⁰¹ Scobie, Charles H. H. *The Ways of Our God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 308.

of YHWH, and their union with him is broken (11:14).⁴⁰² In rejecting YHWH Shepherd, the people reject YHWH King, and they choose their own destruction.⁴⁰³

Zechariah 13:7-9

In an act of mercy and judgment to deal with Israel's sin, YHWH must purify Israel. YHWH strikes the shepherd whom he appoints over Israel with his sword of judgment, and the sheep are scattered (13:7). The shepherd is "no ordinary leader...[he is] the Lord's special representative on earth, doing God's bidding by advancing his kingdom."⁴⁰⁴ While two-thirds of the flock would be killed, it is YHWH's appointed shepherd rather than the flock who comes under the weight of YHWH's divine wrath. In a shocking reversal, Zechariah articulates hope for Israel. A remnant of one third would survive, be purified, and be restored in covenantal relationship with YHWH (13:9).⁴⁰⁵ Like the prophetic book that comes before him, Zechariah expresses YHWH's promises to return to his scattered people as the Shepherd to his flock, and he anchors their hopes in his past redemptive activity, his promises to act again to redeem them

⁴⁰² Richard Alan Fuhr, Jr. and Gary E. Yates, *The Message of the Twelve* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016), 291.

⁴⁰³ Andreas J. Kostenberger and Gregory Goswell, *Biblical Theology* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2023), 258. Goswell finds shepherd and king paralleled in Zechariah 11:5-6

⁴⁰⁴ George Klein, *Zechariah: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* (B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 567. For discussion on the identity of the shepherd in relation to YHWH, see Klein, *Zechariah*, 568-9. For this purpose, what is most important to note is the rebellion of Israel toward YHWH's direct and indirect rule and the description of his response.

⁴⁰⁵ Wright, *Jesus Victory of God*, 599. Matthew and Mark apply this text to Jesus (Matt 26:31; Mark 14:27). In terms of contextualizing Jesus' quotation of Zechariah 13:7 within the development of Zechariah's prophecies from chapter 9 through 14, Wright states: "Zechariah 9 focuses on the king riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, as the agent of the return from exile and the renewal of the covenant; Zechariah 14, which celebrates the coming of YHWH and his kingdom, ends with the Temple being cleansed of traders. There should be no doubt that Jesus knew this whole passage, and that he saw it as centrally constitutive of his own vocation at the level not just of ideas but of agendas." Wright finds the shepherd motif intricately connected to the theme of the return from exile marked by YHWH's return. The fusion of these themes is detected in Luke and is instructive for the treatment of Luke's texts in chapters 4 and 5.

in accordance with his character and identity, and his commitment to be the faithful partner in their reciprocal covenantal relationship.

YHWH as Shepherd in Second Temple Jewish Literature

Shepherd language in Second Temple Jewish documents both rehearses and repurposes what is expressed throughout the Old Testament. The expectations regarding YHWH's shepherd rule over Israel is specifically attuned to biblical uses of the motif. Revelation of YHWH as Shepherd is linked to his attributes, observable through his activity. YHWH is repeatedly likened to Israel's shepherd in Second Temple Jewish documents, and his mercy and compassion are the divine attributes most clearly and commonly highlighted. To that end, the literature contains "overtones of Jewish-national restoration" that seem to adopt Old Testament language, particularly from Ezekiel.⁴⁰⁶

Hope during this time expressed the expectation that YHWH would return to his task as eschatological Shepherd, and he would accomplish the restoration and healing of fractured and wounded Israel (CD-A 13:9, 4Q521 2, 2:12; 4Q504 1-2, 2:14; *Apoc. Ezek.* 5).⁴⁰⁷ Often, YHWH's return as Shepherd is related to his appointment of a righteous Davidic Shepherd over Israel. The distinction between the identities and roles of YHWH Shepherd and the Davidic Shepherd is clearly maintained in certain documents (4Q521, 4Q174 and *An. Apoc.* 90), though it is conflated in others (*Ps. Sol.* 17-18). The existence of shepherd language in Second Temple Jewish documents is not decidedly unusual, but distinctive features do exist. As in Old Testament texts, the literature treated below will express hope in YHWH's fulfillment of his promises to act redemptively toward Israel as Shepherd.

⁴⁰⁶ Baxter, *Israel's Only Shepherd*, 74.

⁴⁰⁷ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 172.

Qumran Scrolls

While the Dead Sea Scrolls do not reflect an entirely uniform portrait of the expected eschatological deliverer, patterns of belief can be traced. 4Q174, 4Q521, 4Q252 and 4Q504 each articulate the expectation that YHWH, as Shepherd, will arrive to gather his flock and then appoint his chosen ruler over them. Tasks belonging to YHWH Shepherd in Old Testament texts (Jer 20; Ezek 34) are ascribed to messianic figures in Qumran documents (1QSb 5:20-29, CD-A 13:7-12). The expectation for YHWH's rescue of his people varied even within the Qumran community, and it is instructive to identify where dependence upon or deviation from the Old Testament shepherding motif exists.

4Q504 expresses the expectation for YHWH to shepherd his flock. 4Q504 records prayers that draw from a reservoir of familiar Old Testament language. The prayers are set in the familiar "Deuteronomistic sin-exile-return pattern" while also "draw[ing] heavily" from Ezekiel's language (20; 34:25-31) to present Israel as a nation in a perpetual exile.⁴⁰⁸ Anticipation of deliverance inspires a vision of hope where, like Ezekiel describes, YHWH will return as shepherd to his wayward flock and will heal and restore them to himself before then appointing his Davidic Shepherd to reign as their Prince.

4Q252 similarly features Israel's eschatological Shepherd arriving among Israel and gathering together his scattered and mistreated flock before appointing his Davidic Shepherd over them to execute his peaceful and righteous reign and lead the people in obedience.⁴⁰⁹

4Q174⁴¹⁰ also describes YHWH's promised activity as Shepherd with details that reflect a

⁴⁰⁸ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 131.

⁴⁰⁹ The description of the Davidic Shepherd is reminiscent of Jeremiah 23:1-5. 4Q252 contains features similar to Jeremiah 23:1-5, Ezekiel 34:23-24 and 37:24-25, *Ps. Sol.* 17-18 and *An. Apoc.* 90:17-18.

⁴¹⁰ Florentino Garcia Martinez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds. vol. 1, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 352-353.

dependence on Ezekiel. The scroll directly quotes Ezekiel 44:10 in 1. 16-17 and, more important to this study, it describes a pattern of deliverance that aligns with Ezekiel's description in 34-37. The scroll states that first, YHWH's presence will return to Israel and rescue her from her enemies, and subsequently, he will appoint his Davidic Shepherd over his restored flock.⁴¹¹ Both the identities of the shepherd-deliverers and the order in which they accomplish their tasks are consistent with Ezekiel's description.⁴¹² YHWH Shepherd will seek, save, rescue, and restore his flock, and then he will appoint his Davidic Shepherd over the flock to tend and lead them in keeping with YHWH's rule.

4Q521 describes the eschatological rescue of YHWH's people using shepherding language. Their eschatological deliverance would be accomplished through the intervention of YHWH and his anointed one. Specific shepherding tasks enumerated in 4Q521 2, 2.5-13 are explicit characteristics of YHWH's shepherding activity. It is YHWH who will free prisoners, give sight to the blind, heal the wounded, and raise the dead (2. 8, 12). He will "consider the pious and call the righteous by name" (2. 5). He will "proclaim good news to the poor and ... he will lead...and enrich the hungry" (2.12-13).⁴¹³ "The eschatological pastoral tasks of mercy listed in 4Q521 1. 5-12 ... are assigned to YHWH who will eventually establish his anointed over his restored flock. He is the one who will guarantee the Lord's perpetual presence through his role as Teacher of the law."⁴¹⁴ The anointed one is YHWH's appointee to exercise YHWH's

⁴¹¹ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 137.

⁴¹² Block, *By the River Chebar*, 39. The six features of YHWH's new-exodus deliverance of Israel that Block finds in Ezekiel are found in this text.

⁴¹³ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 307. Chae uses "1" to reference fragment 2. "In the case of 4Q521, it is the likely that the subject of the shepherding mission described in 1. 10-13 is the Lord himself as 'his anointed' would follow him for the succeeding stage of the restoration (1. 5-14)."

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 366.

authority and execute shepherding tasks (2. 1-2) after YHWH Shepherd has tended to his flock (2.5-14).

What is found in 4Q521 2, 2.1-14 is consistent with Ezekiel's pattern that YHWH personally arrives to shepherd his flock before installing his Davidic shepherd over them to perpetuate YHWH's shepherding activity among them. The anointed one assumes the restorative role of shepherd over the restored community, but only after YHWH personally tends to the poor, needy, and outcast.⁴¹⁵ As a consequence of YHWH's compassionate care of his flock, the anointed one is appointed to reign over those whom YHWH has rescued and preserved. The anointed one sounds like the Davidic Shepherd of Micah 5:1-4, and though his role is fundamental to the salvation of the community, "it is YHWH himself who is envisioned to bring about 'the eternal kingdom' to the pious" (1. 7; cf. 2 Sam 7:14-15). YHWH will bring it about through the following activities: 'freeing prisoners, giving sight to the blind, straightening out the twisted (4Q521 1. 7; cf. Isa 35:4-6; 61:1-2).'⁴¹⁶ The arrival and activity of YHWH Shepherd precedes the installment of his Davidic appointee, and the eschatological figures are distinguished in identity, characteristics, timing, and role.

CD-A 13:7-12⁴¹⁷

In CD-A 13, YHWH's intervention on behalf of his community is denoted in shepherd language, and hope is expressed for an Overseer who will adjudicate his rule and law in perpetuation of YHWH's fatherly and shepherding care. CD-A 13 details the restorative duties of

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 143.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 270.

⁴¹⁷ Steven D. Fraade, *The Damascus Document* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 113-116.

the Overseer over God's community, and the work featured in this study because of shepherding language used of YHWH and the description of the Overseer's tasks. The hope for the community is anchored in belief that YHWH will have fatherly compassion and pity toward his people and will "watch over (them) in all of their distress as a shepherd does his flock" (CD-A 13:9). Hope that YHWH will act redemptively on their behalf is linked to their reciprocal relationship. YHWH's compassion toward his community is described through shepherd language. The Overseer is the one through whom YHWH accomplishes his eschatological mission of restoring and administering justice within his reunited community.⁴¹⁸ CD-A 13:7-12 seems to frame the role of the Overseer as Ezekiel frames that of the Davidic Shepherd.⁴¹⁹ He will successfully instruct and lead the congregation according to YHWH deeds (13:8, 16). He will "examine" those who join the congregation, ensuring that those who join are those who can do so diligently and honestly (13:11). He will give special care to those who are oppressed and crushed (13: 10). These descriptions imply discrimination toward the disingenuous and judgment toward the dishonest. YHWH appoints the Overseer of the congregation who will execute YHWH's rule over the camp.

4 Ezra⁴²⁰

Similar to the Qumran literature reviewed above, 4 Ezra refers to the shepherd motif, and here, the figures of shepherd and Davidic delivers seem to be distinct. The shepherd motif in 4 Ezra seems to be confined to texts that are isolated from later ones describing the expected

⁴¹⁸ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 148. Significantly, "CD-A 13:9 may be one of the few Second Temple texts that attests to the healing aspect of the eschatological shepherd's tasks (cf. 4Q504 1-2, 2:14; 4Q521 2, 2:12; *Apocryphon of Ezekiel* 5)."

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 148.

⁴²⁰ Michael D. Coogan, ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha*, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 331. 4 Ezra was likely written near the end of the first century AD.

Davidic deliverer, who is presented as a militant figure with specifics that are “devoid of shepherd imagery” (4 Ezra 12:32-34).⁴²¹ The shepherd, on the other hand, is the one for whom the nations awaiting salvation must expect (2:34).⁴²² He gives “everlasting rest” to the nations, and his coming is indicative of the end of the age (2:34). As a result of Israel’s refusal to obey him (1:24), YHWH laments the spiritual adultery of his people and extends his hand of mercy to the nations (4 Ezra 1:24). He will turn to the other nations and offer to them his “name” to affect obedience and faithfulness, and thus, an indiscriminating offer of salvation is in view.

Apocryphon of Ezekiel

Apocryphon of Ezekiel clearly identifies YHWH as the compassionate and attentive shepherd to Israel. Dated between the first century BC and the first century AD,⁴²³ the fragmentary scroll makes explicit use of Ezekiel 34 and further states that YHWH’s return as Shepherd will result in his nearness to his people. He will feed them and be as near to them as the clothes they wear (*Apoc. Of Ezek.* frag. 5).⁴²⁴ Ezekiel’s promise that YHWH will gather and feed his stray flock is reiterated in this text.⁴²⁵

⁴²¹ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 159. The Davidic deliverer is depicted as a militant figure, similar to what is described in 4Q285 and 2 *Baruch*. The fact that the Davidic figure is militant in administering justice and saving the remnant is not a disqualifying characteristic for shepherd rule. The Old Testament prophets feature judgment as an aspect of shepherding. What is significant, though, is the distinction that seems to be suggested between the shepherd and the Davidic figure. Israel is told to wait for her shepherd, a title commonly used for YHWH, and the texts describing the activity of the Davidic ruler do not adopt shepherd imagery, and thus the presentation of the Davidic ruler’s judgment does not seem to be suggestive of the judgment of the shepherd. Ultimately, two figures seem to be promised in 4 Ezra.

⁴²² “Therefore I say to you, O nations that hear and understand, ‘Wait for your shepherd; he will give you everlasting rest, because he who will come at the end of the age is close at hand,’” 4 Ezra 2:34.

⁴²³ J.R. Mueller and S.E. Robinson, “Apocryphon of Ezekiel,” in J.H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. Volume I: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 487.

⁴²⁴ Baxter, *Israel’s Only Shepherd*, 71.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 71. “Further, the author of the text clearly takes up Ezekiel’s Jewish-national perspective, when he speaks of YHWH gathering the strays, feeding them on his holy mountain, and being their shepherd.”

Psalms of Solomon

Psalms of Solomon, dated toward the end of the first century BCE,⁴²⁶ is concerned with kingship and YHWH's utilization of his agent, the descendent of David, to actualize and adjudicate his rule and reign.⁴²⁷ Though the *Psalms of Solomon* does not contain extensive, explicit interaction with the Old Testament shepherd motif, there does seem to be an incorporation of the motif into the text's articulation of messianic expectation.⁴²⁸ This study will trace key Old Testament prophecies that describe the eschatological shepherd figures: YHWH Shepherd and his Davidic Shepherd appointee.

Psalms of Solomon maintains the distinction between God the King and his emissary the Messiah, who, under the Kingship of God, is king of the people (17:1, 3-4, 34). In *Psalms of Solomon*, the author anticipates God's judgment of the wicked and salvation of the righteous. He details the ways that God will rule as King through the agent of the Messianic Son of David (17:21, 32). This Messiah figure is the apocalyptic king executing the dynamic rule foretold in the Davidic Covenant. He accomplishes the final salvation of his subjects.⁴²⁹ The militant messiah of *Psalms of Solomon* 17-18 is one who will "destroy the unrighteous rulers, to purge Jerusalem from Gentiles" (17:22), "smash the arrogance of sinners," "shatter all their substance

⁴²⁶ Michael Lattke, "Psalms of Solomon," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 853.

⁴²⁷ Daniel M. Gurtner, *Introducing the Pseudepigrapha of Second Temple Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020), 350. The text is concerned, specifically, with messianism during the Masmonean rule.

⁴²⁸ Daniel Gurtner states that "the Psalms of Solomon is widely regarded as one of the most important sources for a conception of the messiah in Second Temple Judaism," *Ibid.*, 349. Nathan Johnson calls it "clearly messianic and eschatological" (1:5, 8, 15; 2:1, 21; 4:4, 6, 13). Nathan C. Johnson, *Rendering David a Servant in Psalm of Solomon 17.21*, *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 26.3 (2017), 239 f. 13.

⁴²⁹ James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, Vol. 2. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2019), 646.

with an iron rod,” and “destroy the unlawful nations with the word of his mouth” (v. 24).⁴³⁰ The Messiah manifests God’s kingdom to the world, both in overthrowing and judging gentile enemies and in ruling over the purified remnant of the Jewish nation who has been led back home along with gentile nations (17:30-31; 11; 8:28). Their land will be divided among the nation according to the tribal system (17:28), and having been purged, both Jerusalem and the Temple will function as the holy, sanctified location of God’s rule (17:30). Gentiles will see the glory of God and serve under his rule (17:31-32). Notably, the Davidic Shepherd, under the divine direction of YHWH, does not have purely nationalistic aims. YHWH’s appointed king will rule in the eschaton and direct his compassion to both Israel and the nations (17:19-25, 34, 41).⁴³¹

Since, as Chae aptly puts it, “allusions to Ezekiel’s Davidic Shepherd abound” in *Psalms of Solomon*, it is informative to trace where the shepherd motif conforms to the Old Testament pattern and where it diverges. YHWH Shepherd pledges to personally gather his scattered flock (34:4, 12), and when the regathering and rescuing operation has been completed, he will appoint his Davidic Shepherd to tend to and teach his restored people (34:23-24). The effects will be YHWH’s continued presence among his remnant (37:26-28) and the fulfillment of his promises to bless them (34:25-31). In *Psalms of Solomon* 17, the distinction of the shepherd persons and roles does not exist with such clarity. The two figures seem to be conflated.⁴³² The psalmist

⁴³⁰ Richard S. Hess and M. Daniel Carroll, eds, *Israel’s Messiah in the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 98. “Qumran’s expectation of a conquering royal messiah is not distinctive, but appears to be consistent with the Jewish messianic and eschatological traditions from the time of Qumran (as seen especially in the *Psalms of Solomon* 17-18), through the New Testament period, and on into the time of the rabbis.”

⁴³¹ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 124. YHWH will fulfill his promises to redeem Israel and reveal himself to the nations.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, 119.

ascribes to the single Davidic ruler duties and characteristics of Ezekiel's YHWH and Davidic Shepherds. Chae notes that the Son of David "executes both roles, though more emphasis is placed on the leading rather than the rescuing of the flock."⁴³³ Given the value placed on *Psalms of Solomon* in Second Temple treatment of messianic expectation, identifying areas of congruence and divergence with Old Testament patterns is noteworthy.

There are substantial similarities between the presentation of the Davidic Shepherding figures in Ezekiel and *Psalms of Solomon*. In both accounts, YHWH places the Davidic Shepherd over Israel (Ps. Sol. 17:42; Ezek 34:23; 37:24), and the Davidic figure's leadership affects faithfulness among YHWH's people (Ps 17:41; Ezek 37:24). Throughout the Old Testament prophets, YHWH's compassion is a fundamental characteristic motivating his redemptive intervention on behalf of Israel. The same is attested in Second Temple Jewish works (*Ps. Sol* 17-18, *An. Apoc.* 89-90, 4Q521 and 4Ezra 2).⁴³⁴ *Psalms of Solomon* depicts the Davidic Shepherd accomplishing the rescue of Israel according to YHWH's spirit of compassion (*Ps. Sol.* 17:34b, 41, 45). The Davidic Messiah of the *Psalms of Solomon* does not radically depart from the Old Testament Davidic Shepherd tradition that chronicles his arrival after YHWH's eschatological judgment of Israel's wicked shepherds and the nations.⁴³⁵

Though these similarities exist, it is important to identify where *Psalms of Solomon* deviates from Old Testament texts, particularly Ezekiel 34. While *Psalms of Solomon* recognizes that it is YHWH who is King (17:34), it ascribes to the Davidic ruler shepherding responsibilities (leading the flock in righteousness and tending to the sick [17:40]), that Ezekiel ascribes to

⁴³³ Ibid., 118.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 171

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 123

YHWH Shepherd. Ezekiel prophecies that YHWH will rescue his flock from enemies before placing over them his Davidic appointee as shepherd (Ezek 34:17-22). In *Psalms of Solomon*, this task is assigned to the Davidic Shepherd.⁴³⁶ Chae notes a divergence from Ezekiel's tradition that differentiates YHWH and the Davidic Shepherd before he recognizes that "for the remainder of the psalms, the picture coheres with the Davidic Shepherd at the end-time whose role is primarily to sanctify the eschatological people as set out in Ezekiel 34-37 (cf. *An. Apoc.* 90:17-18)."⁴³⁷ In sum, the Davidic Shepherd of *Psalms of Solomon* exercises rule over the gathered flock of YHWH in a way that is congruent to Ezekiel's portrait. The substantial difference is that in *Psalms of Solomon*, the Davidic Shepherd rules after having gathered the flock, and in Ezekiel 34, and other key Old Testament texts (Isa 40:11; Jer 23:3; 30:10; 31:10; Ezek 34:11-15; Mic 2:13), it is YHWH who gathers them. Symmetry to Ezekiel abounds, though the portraits are not identical. Yet, while Ezekiel's vision depicts a scattered Israel gathered by YHWH Shepherd and placed under the righteous leadership of one Davidic Shepherd, in *Psalms of Solomon*, it is both Israel and the nations that come under the unifying leadership of the Davidic Shepherd.⁴³⁸

Conclusion

This chapter traced YHWH's promises to return to his exiled flock to rescue them, reveal himself and accomplish his redemptive purposes as Shepherd. Eschatological monotheistic Jewish belief expected YHWH to reveal himself and fulfill his promises, and prophetic texts detailing his identity and activity as Shepherd explain one of the ways that he will do so. YHWH

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 120.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., 123.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 171. Daniel M. Gurtner states that *Psalms of Solomon* paints the portrait of an "undeniably political and nationalistic" Davidic Messiah who reigns over Jerusalem and his liberated people, having subjugated the gentiles and shepherded particularly the pious in holiness and righteousness. Gurtner, *Introducing the Pseudepigrapha*, 350.

bound himself to Israel according to their reciprocal covenantal relationship, and he promised that they would receive future revelation of him when he acted according to his relational responsibilities. He would return to them as Shepherd to his sheep. The relational rhythms of Old Testament theology emanate from these prophetic texts, which assure Israel of their future hope because they anchor declarations of YHWH's promises in their reciprocal relationship, and they describe his activity as a derivative from his identity as Shepherd.

Throughout the Old Testament, YHWH's ownership of Israel and his care in leading, providing for, and protecting her is described with shepherding language. The flock that he so faithfully tended, though, wandered away from him, suffered under the leadership of wicked human shepherds, and lived in a state of exile. Old Testament prophets record YHWH's promises to return as Israel's shepherd and administer judgment to the rebellious and extend compassionate care to the needy. While the return of YHWH as shepherd is described with a variety of language by the prophets, certain elements emerge as central to the promise. Israel's revelation of YHWH was to be informed by his redemptive activity on their behalf in the past, and despite the judgment of the present, they would come to know him in a deeper way as their Shepherd when he would return to gather and save them. In that way, they would know him more fully as their Shepherd, and they would be his flock.

Old Testament texts express various components of the motif, but certain elements are central. YHWH promises to return as Shepherd, and his tasks include seeking, gathering, healing, and restoring his scattered, wounded, and sick flock. He will judge the wicked over and among them, and after creating his remnant, he will delegate shepherding authority to his servant, David. Second Temple Jewish literature employs this shepherd motif, and a variety of interpretations are reflected, but ultimately, it can be concluded that Israel was instructed to

expect YHWH's personal return to his fractured and scattered people. His return will result in the transformation of Israel's condition, and it will inaugurate the eschatological new covenant and installation of the Davidic Shepherd. YHWH will return as Shepherd to his people, and he will restore and save his flock.

YHWH's identity as Shepherd, and the reality it entails, directs the study of key texts depicting Jesus' person and activity in Luke. It directs, in particular, the realizations made regarding the significance and implications of Jesus' birth as told in Luke's birth narrative (chapter 4) and the outworking of this reality that is encapsulated in key moments in Jesus' ministry (chapter 5). Jesus' identity and activity as it is expressed in Luke's birth narrative will now be found to possess qualities that identify Jesus as the YHWH Shepherd of Old Testament and Second Temple Jewish texts. YHWH revealed himself to Israel as Shepherd in Old Testament texts, and in Luke, Jesus is found possessing the YHWH Shepherd identity and accomplishing the fulfillment of his redemptive promises to his covenant people. As a result, Luke seems to be presenting Jesus not as a Davidic Shepherd figure, the emissary ruler of YHWH, but as YHWH Shepherd himself.

CHAPTER 4: SHEPHERD MOTIF IN LUKE'S BIRTH NARRATIVE

Introduction

Chapter 2 approached the topic of divine identity and explored the ways that YHWH's identity was revealed and understood within Israel. Boda's creedal formulas were applied as a means of further articulating Bauckham's eschatological monotheistic category to determine how, first, YHWH's divine identity was understood, and, second, how Luke seems to be portraying Jesus in similar categories. It was concluded that if Luke identifies Jesus' person and activity in ways that mirror Old Testament categories for YHWH, it may be that he is presenting Jesus as possessor of the divine identity. Conceptually, it seems possible that Luke is reflecting Old Testament portrayals of YHWH in his presentation of Jesus.

The concept of divine identity took specific shape in chapter 3, when Old Testament texts describing the state of Israel and the person and plan of YHWH were examined, and YHWH as Shepherd emerged as one form of his self-disclosure. Old Testament texts and Second Temple Jewish material articulated a variety of expectations for Israel's deliverance as a needy flock, but certain features emerged as prominent. Namely, YHWH will return as Shepherd to his flock, and he will accomplish their redemption according to his past activity and his promises for the future. In these ways, echoes of Boda's creedal rhythms are sensed. YHWH had been known to Israel as Shepherd (narrative creed), and his active redemptive work further revealed him as Shepherd (character creed), as YHWH acted according to his role as partner in the reciprocal relationship with his scattered flock (relational creed). Echoes of these creeds were observed in YHWH's promises, articulated by the prophets. YHWH personally promises to return to Israel and to seek, gather, and restore his flock, reversing their conditions and defeating their enemies. When he does, YHWH will be revealed to a greater degree than before, and his people will be enabled to

reciprocate covenantal faithfulness. The shepherd motif expresses the expectation of eschatological monotheism, and it contains elements of creedal theological rhythms in that it is linked to YHWH's finite actions in history, his present activity as revelation of his identity, and his reciprocal relationship with his people. YHWH's promises to return as Israel's Shepherd and to affect her restoration and transformation are found to have bearing on a reading of Luke's birth narrative. Identifying the ways that Luke seems to be presenting Jesus as YHWH Shepherd is the focus of this chapter.

This chapter will establish that the narrative framework of Luke's birth narrative finds its grounding in Old Testament Scripture. Israel's Scripture is Luke's textual and thematic reservoir. Language describing the nature and effects of Jesus' birth echoes prophetic descriptions of the nature and effects of YHWH's promised intervention as Israel's Shepherd. The YHWH Shepherd motif, expressed in Old Testament texts, seems to be expressed in Luke's narrative as an interpretive tool for understanding the identity and activity of Jesus. To demonstrate the existence and relevancy of the shepherd motif in the birth narrative, and to identify Jesus with divine identity of YHWH Shepherd, attention will be paid to key pericopes in Luke's birth narrative that describe the individuals receiving news of Jesus' birth. First, individuals in Luke's birth narrative will be found to reflect those who exist in relationship with YHWH and those to whom YHWH Shepherd's promises of restoration were made. Second, the characters' responses to divine intervention seem to indicate the expressed fulfillment of YHWH's promises to rescue his flock. Luke articulates the reversal language that the prophets associate with YHWH's return. Birth narrative characters recognize that Jesus' birth fulfills YHWH's promises to return to his people and to affect their restoration. Individuals in Luke's birth narrative possess characteristics and celebrate the nature of the divine intervention to a degree that may indicate that in Jesus,

YHWH the Shepherd has returned to Israel as promised. This chapter intends to demonstrate that echoes of Old Testament texts depicting YHWH's identity and promised activity as Shepherd seem to find initial fulfillment among the characters in Jesus' birth narrative. These promises will be found to take their final forms at key moments in Jesus' ministry, the subject of chapter 5.

Narrative Framework of Luke's Birth Narrative

Old Testament Scripture will be used as the framework for the study of Luke's narrative because Luke presents his narrative as the latest chapter in the ongoing story chronicling YHWH's dealings with Israel.⁴³⁹ The birth narrative opens (1:5) like the beginning of a prophetic book (Isa 1:1; Jer 1:2-3; Jos 1:1; Amos 1:1; Mic 1:1; Zeph 1:1).⁴⁴⁰ Forms of πλήθω, πληρώω, and πληροφορέω appear 11 times in the first two chapters of Luke, indicating that the implicit allusions and echoes are intentional and purposeful in indicating the fulfillment of Scripture.⁴⁴¹ Bock finds that Luke presents Jesus' birth as the "inauguration and culmination of a program of promise" that YHWH extended to Israel through the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants and the promised new covenant.⁴⁴² The reader sees the outlines of Abraham and David in the shadows of the characters featured in Luke's birth narrative, but those ancient figures are not alone.⁴⁴³ So, too, do other familiar Old Testament passages echo in the early pages of Luke's narrative, not because Luke primarily employs explicit fulfillment language to describe what he is doing, but

⁴³⁹ Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 191.

⁴⁴⁰ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 63.

⁴⁴¹ Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 192. Πλήθω: Lk. 1:15, 23, 41, 57, 67, 2:6, 21, 22; πληρώω: Lk. 1:20, 2:40; πληροφορέω: Lk. 1:1.

⁴⁴² Darrell Bock, *A Theology of Luke-Acts* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 448. Jesus' arrival is contextualized according to YHWH's reciprocal relationship with his people.

⁴⁴³ See Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 53-55 for comparisons between Genesis 11-21 and Luke 1 and 2.

because he uses the Old Testament as the source, background, and foundation for what he builds in his narrative.⁴⁴⁴ Luke enlists Old Testament texts to develop patterns and motifs throughout his gospel, beginning in the birth narrative.⁴⁴⁵ It contains thematic and linguistic parallels to several stories in Israel's history. In order to identify the ways that the prophetic Shepherd motif, specifically, is at work in the birth narrative, echoes of Israel's Scripture that tether Luke's narrative to Israel's history will be identified in order to demonstrate that Luke depicts unfolding events as continuations and fulfillments of Israel's story.

Luke brings the reader back to the period of the patriarchs, exodus, wilderness wanderings, United Kingdom, and exile, with the greatest unifying features being the promises of YHWH to Israel. Luke anchors Jesus' identity and future mission in the larger story of Israel.⁴⁴⁶ The abundance of allusions and echoes within the early chapters of Luke indicate that Luke is directing his reader to notice more than one or two lines of symmetry.⁴⁴⁷ This chapter

⁴⁴⁴ R. E. Brown, *Birth of the Messiah* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 268-75, 319-28, 420-24; Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 57. Green hears Daniel 7-10 and Genesis 27-30 in Luke 1:5-2:52; Zeph 3:14-17 in Luke 1:26-33; 2 Sam 7:12-16 in Luke 1:32-33; Micah 4:7-5:5 in Luke 2:1-14.

⁴⁴⁵ Richard B. Hays and Joel B. Green, "The Use of the Old Testament by New Testament Writers," in *Hearing the New Testament*, ed. Joel B. Green, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 1598f.

⁴⁴⁶ Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary: Introduction and 1:1-2:47*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 438. In doing so, Luke seems to be reflecting the principles of the narrative and relational creeds. Jesus is introduced according to YHWH's redemptive acts in the past, and according to his covenantal relationship with his people.

⁴⁴⁷ The six key narrative features guiding the detection of the Shepherd motif begin to be expressed in the first pages of the Gospel. First, this study recognizes that the significance of the story is the cumulative total of its parts, and Luke's story is linked to Israel's story. Therefore, the birth narrative is part of the larger story. Second, the emphasis on fulfillment in the birth narrative is significant given that a narrative is cohesively structured, and third, intentionally ordered; the beginning of Jesus' story will be shown, in chapter 5, to be linked to later events in a way that is narratively strategic. Fourth, gaps in explicit language within Luke's text is found to possess theological significance. The reader is directed to the intertextual database that is his background and enabled to identify implicit links to other key moments in the story. Fifth, repetition of words and concepts is significant, and the birth narrative repeats language referring to promises fulfilled and hope and joy expressed. Sixth, echoes within the text are instructive. This study hinges on that conviction. The Shepherd motif is revealed through intertextual echoes. Determining the efficacy of the Shepherd motif, revealed through intertextual echoes, will be done according to the standard outlined in chapter 1 (frequency, context, and relevance). The frequency of concepts related to YHWH's Shepherd return begins in the birth narrative and will be shown to culminate in Jesus' ministry. Contextually, the motif will be found at strategic points in the narrative. In this chapter, echoes of the motif at the beginning of the

will detect texts in Luke's birth narrative that echo prophetic passages studied in chapter 3 for the purpose of drawing conclusions about Luke's depiction of Jesus. It will be demonstrated that Luke's introduction of Jesus' identity and activity can be understood according to YHWH's divine identity as Israel's Shepherd, who personally promised to rescue and save his scattered, exiled flock.

Luke's narrative world is formulated according to a familiar ethos built around the promises and activity of God. This "eschatology of divine promise," according to Bock, is the controlling idea of Luke's narrative.⁴⁴⁸ Rowe asserts, "it has become well-known in contemporary Lukan exegesis that Luke 1-2 displays a remarkable concern for continuity with the events, prophecies, and promises of the history of Israel."⁴⁴⁹ Luke presents the events surrounding Jesus' birth as the most recent, climactic moment in Israel's salvation history.⁴⁵⁰ Here, Luke tells of God interacting with his people in a way that is new and unexpected, yet surprisingly similar to what Israel had been conditioned to expect from brief snapshots memorialized in Old Testament Scripture.⁴⁵¹ The Old Testament is Luke's "data bank" that he draws from to construct a narrative that weaves echoes and allusions from other texts, events, and individuals in Israel's history.⁴⁵² These echoes are so central to the shape of the narrative that

Gospel contribute to a framework for approaching the remainder of Luke's text. Finally, the relevance of these echoes will be shown to have significant purpose for the narrative and theological development of Luke's text.

⁴⁴⁸ Bock, *Theology of Luke and Acts*, 448.

⁴⁴⁹ Kavin C. Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (Berlin: De Gruyter, Inc, 2006), 32.

⁴⁵⁰ Joel B. Green, "The Problem of a Beginning: Israel's Scriptures in Luke 1-2," in *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 4 (1994): 61-85.

⁴⁵¹ Robert L. Brawley, *Centering on God* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), 30.

⁴⁵² Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 69.

Nils Dahl concludes that Luke must have been intentionally writing “the continuation of the biblical history.”⁴⁵³

Luke does not seem to rely on any single referent or divine promise to serve as the interpretive pattern for the birth narrative events. Instead, he creates a narrative unit that is “a complex network of echoes of other texts.”⁴⁵⁴ These references are implicit and sometimes subtle, but given Luke’s consistently implicit use of the Old Testament as his framework for interpreting the events of his narrative, they should be noticed. Attention should be devoted to indications that Luke is echoing, reframing, and interpreting promises and images from Israel’s Scripture.⁴⁵⁵ Luke’s use of the Old Testament is not rigid, and he seems to avoid strict typological presentations of his characters.⁴⁵⁶ Instead, the Old Testament seems to be the context for his narrative, and the events of the narrative are told “to disclose a single skein of events.”⁴⁵⁷ As Rowe puts it, “The hallowed past extends into the hallowed present even as this present reaches backward into the past. The promises and their fulfillment for a single narrative grounded in the God of Israel’s act in Jesus.”⁴⁵⁸ The events that Luke describes and the

⁴⁵³ Nils A. Dahl, “The Story of Abraham in Luke-Acts,” in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, eds. Leander Keck and J. Louis Martyn (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 153.

⁴⁵⁴ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 69.

⁴⁵⁵ Allen Black, “‘Your Sons and Your Daughters will Prophesy...’: Pairing of Men and Women in Luke-Acts,” in *Scripture and Tradition: Essays on Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Patrick Gray and Gail R. O’Day (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 199; Joel B. Green, *Luke as Narrative Theologian: Text and Topics* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 56; Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (London: Yale University Press, 1989), 26; Peter Mallen, *Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke-Acts* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 14-15.

⁴⁵⁶ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 33.

⁴⁵⁷ Paul Minear, “Luke’s Use of the Birth Stories,” in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 129.

⁴⁵⁸ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 34.

characters he introduces will be shown to be anchored in a story that began in Israel's Scriptures. The birth of Jesus is propelling the narrative forward to its promised culmination.

Nearly as soon as Luke's reader discovers symmetry between one of his characters and another from Israel's history, a slight shift occurs, a different similarity emerges, and a new comparison can be made.⁴⁵⁹ In a similar way, Luke reminds his reader of one divine promise before giving voice to another. Luke draws the reader into the Old Testament world, and "scripture is used to give shape to the narrative."⁴⁶⁰ Rowe calls the background that Luke creates "atmospheric resonance" where "characters and events of the Old Testament are everywhere present and nowhere mentioned."⁴⁶¹ In the birth narrative, the interplay between many voices from Israel's past resound, layered one upon another, in a fresh, new context.⁴⁶² Though explicit references are few, "the infancy narrative is bathed in biblical ambience."⁴⁶³ Luke's ability to draw on familiar metaphors and build on familiar promises without explicit references is theologically purposeful. It is within the Old Testament "echo chamber"⁴⁶⁴ that YHWH's

⁴⁵⁹ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 56. The birth narratives of both John and Jesus parallel stories in Genesis, particularly the account of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac. Green notes the flexibility of the parallels: "He can move easily from character to character in his employment of the Genesis story – thus, for example, Zechariah is like Abraham, but so is Mary; Zechariah is like Sarah, but so is Elizabeth; John is like Isaac and Ishmael; and so on. This demonstrates that Luke is making no straightforward typological argument here." Green's point is well taken. Allusions instruct the reader that divine activity is again at work in familiar ways without tethering the unfolding events to only one referent.

⁴⁶⁰ Craig A. Evans, "The Prophetic Setting of the Pentecost Sermon," in *Luke and Scripture*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1993), 223.

⁴⁶¹ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 33.

⁴⁶² Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 57. For this reason, Green finds it generally unnecessary, and often impossible, to determine the precise source of an allusion to the exclusivity of other references.

⁴⁶³ Francois Bovon, *Luke the Theologian* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005), 118. Bovon goes on to write, "Luke seems concerned to prolong the OT discourse and introduce the reader who, at the outset of his reading, learns that the beginning is not the true beginning and has been preceded by other divine events."

⁴⁶⁴ Richard B. Hays and Joel B. Green, "The Use of the Old Testament by New Testament Writers," in *Hearing the New Testament*, ed. Joel B. Green, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 1598g.

covenant promises to exiled Israel resound. Given Luke's approach to Scripture, the reader must have ears carefully attuned for echoes to prophetic texts studied in chapter 3 in order to see the image of YHWH Shepherd outlining the figure of Jesus. As chapter 1 stated, the goal here is to peer over Luke's shoulder, as it were, to detect how Luke's presentation of Jesus and the unfolding events of Luke's narrative are directly reflective of the story outlined in Israel's Scripture.⁴⁶⁵ The individuals in the birth narrative indicate the fulfillment of YHWH's promises to gather and rescue his people as their Divine Shepherd.

Luke's Birth Narrative

Luke's narrative opens with Israel under oppressive rule (Lk 2:1-2). The prophets depicted that in the age to come, YHWH, who may seem distant, would renew the world. While wicked prosper in the present age, and not even Israel keeps the Torah faithfully in covenantal obedience, in the age to come, YHWH will serve to the wicked the judgment they have earned, and he will transform his people into "YHWH's true humanity," enabling them to possess genuine and abiding faithfulness.⁴⁶⁶ The inauguration of the age to come features "the much wider and far more frequent expectation of a great reversal within the space-time world," when YHWH will vindicate his people and set things right under his kingship.⁴⁶⁷ Based on interaction with the text done in chapter 3, Wright's view of the persistence of the exile is assumed here. The treatment of Luke's birth narrative will assert that the characters celebrate the

⁴⁶⁵ Hays' criteria for identifying an echo, and Harris' approach to reading the narrative, explained in chapter 1, guide the interpretation of Luke's text done here.

⁴⁶⁶ N.T. Wright, *New Testament and the People of God*, Vol. 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 300. Fulfillment of this, the ability to walk holy and righteously, is expressed in *Benedictus* (Lk 1:75).

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 300. Wright asserts that the age to come does not specifically center around Messianism, but on the more comprehensive hope of YHWH's rule and its implications.

accomplishment of YHWH's promises that are associated in Israel's Scripture with his return, and one imagery of that return is YHWH as Shepherd. The rule of YHWH, the submission or defeat of the nations, and the transformation of his people are markers of the inbreaking of the age to come. The language in Luke's birth narrative indicates that the birth of Jesus marks the dawning of the promised time when YHWH Shepherd arrives to accomplish the rescue and transformation of his exiled people.

The Conditions of the Characters

Luke's narrative opens with a picture of humble characters set against a vivid background of dominating, antagonistic political rule. The characters of Luke's birth narrative exemplify the piety of Israel, anchoring YHWH's intervention into Israel's story within a context of faithful obedience.⁴⁶⁸ The characters through whom YHWH works, and those to whom he reveals his work, represent those whom he came to rescue and save. Ultimately, though, YHWH is the primary actor in the birth narrative. The mouths of the characters express praise that YHWH is advancing his work and moving Israel's story toward its goal in a recognizable way. At first glance, the characters who receive the highest praise in Luke's narrative are inconspicuous, but when the birth narrative is read back in light of the unfolding story, they are a microcosmic representation of Jesus' ministry as Luke tells it. Like YHWH's scattered flock that the prophets describe, the characters in the birth narrative require YHWH's intervention and experience and celebrate the transformational and restorative effects of his arrival. They will receive revelation of YHWH according to Jesus' activity in their midst and according to their relationship with him.

⁴⁶⁸ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 61. "Portraits of Jewish piety appear in references to prayer, worship, fasting, and expectant waiting (1:10, 13, 25, 46-55, 69-79; 2:13, 14, 20, 25, 37, 38)."

Zechariah and Elizabeth

The reversal of conditions that the prophets described is experienced by the first characters Luke introduces. Zechariah the high priest and his wife Elizabeth are righteous before YHWH (1:6), yet they lack the divine blessing of children and therefore live in disgrace before the people (1:7, 25). The life of Zechariah and Elizabeth betrays a dissonance between their righteousness and lack of blessing. Due to her lineage, as a descendant of Aaron, and her marital status, a wife of a priest, Elizabeth possesses admirable status, and yet her inability to bear a child causes her disgrace and relegates her to a position of lowly status among her people.⁴⁶⁹ Luke's narrative draws the reader into the heartbreak of their confounding situation, one which resounds with echoes of those already lived several times over in Israel's past (Gen 15-18, 21; 1 Sam 1).⁴⁷⁰ The narrative prepares the reader to witness a reversal brought about by the mighty hand of God (1:51) when he acts on behalf of his people, both by vindicating this righteous couple now, and later, the righteous remnant that they represent.⁴⁷¹ Their circumstances may suggest divine disregard or disfavor, but YHWH's purposes are at work.⁴⁷² Zechariah and Elizabeth receive blessing from the hand of YHWH (Jer 31:14; Lk 1:67-79), for he has "lifted up the lowly" (1:52). YHWH is reversing the conditions of the people and fulfilling promises associated with his return to his flock.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 61.

⁴⁷⁰ Zechariah and Elizabeth resemble Abraham and Sarah (Gen 15-18, 21), who were also righteous but childless before God's intervention. There are also echoes of Hannah's story (1 Sam 1) in the birth narrative. For a discussion, see N.T. Wright, *New Testament and the People of God*, 379-81; Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 48-51.

⁴⁷¹ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke's Christology of Divine Identity*, 94.

⁴⁷² Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 63

At the time of Zechariah's interaction with Gabriel in the Temple, "the worshippers" (1:10), or "the people" (1:21) are gathered outside praying.⁴⁷³ "The people," representing the nation, picture faithful and expectant Israel. At the hour of sacrifice, a faithful remnant is found praying at the temple. The content of their prayers is not specified, but "if analogy with other prayers at the time of sacrifice in the LXX are any indication, then we may assume that these prayers are on behalf of the nation of Israel."⁴⁷⁴ The Jews described and introduced in the birth narrative are pious and righteous, and they are concerned for "divine intervention on behalf of Israel."⁴⁷⁵ They exist in relationship with YHWH, and as a result, they had been trained by the prophets to pray for and to expect YHWH to act.⁴⁷⁶

The narrative presents a surprising contrast between the readiness of this man and woman to receive from YHWH. While Elizabeth believes YHWH's promise and accepts the terms of his intervention (1:25), Zechariah challenges Gabriel's words by voicing his unbelief (1:18).⁴⁷⁷ It is not Israel's priest who is the model of believing faith or the example for faithful Israel. It is his elderly wife. Green remarks, "the dramatic crescendo turns the tables on Zechariah, chosen priest, in favor of Elizabeth."⁴⁷⁸ Luke's reader must be mindful of this strange inversion because it is found as evidence of YHWH's arrival in Jesus. The reversal of conditions described by the

⁴⁷³ Ibid., 71, f. 32.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 71.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., 71.

⁴⁷⁶ Wright, *New Testament and People*, 271. Wright describes the perspective of waiting and praying Israel this way: "Outside the walls of Israel there was evil, and her god would defeat it. Inside, sheltered behind the religious boundary-markers that...played so important a part in the whole story, Israel waited in faith and hope, in puzzlement and longing."

⁴⁷⁷ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 81.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid., 63

prophets is a defining characteristic of YHWH's return, and one of the ways it is depicted is as YHWH Shepherd's return to Israel to bring about the reversal of the conditions for his flock.⁴⁷⁹

Indications that the reversal is taking place plays out throughout Luke.⁴⁸⁰

Luke states Elizabeth and Zechariah's need in the text, only implying that behind this couple stands an entire nation in dire need.⁴⁸¹ YHWH's solution to their childlessness is "caught up into the larger need of Israel for the reign of its God."⁴⁸² When YHWH remembers and acts on behalf of this righteous couple, he is remembering and acting on behalf of his righteous remnant. Revelation is linked to the reciprocal relationship between YHWH and his people. A close reading of Luke's text bears out this reading of YHWH's remembering and acting.

Etymologically, "Zechariah" means "Yahweh remembers."⁴⁸³ YHWH remembers the community because he remembers the individuals that compose it. Zechariah and Elizabeth represent faithful Israel, and they are not alone. The characters featured in Luke's birth narrative represent faithful Israel who experience a transformation in their circumstances as a result of YHWH's activity in and through Jesus, who is presented in a way that associates him with YHWH not only in activity but in identity.

⁴⁷⁹ Isa 40:11; Jer 23:1-8; 30:12-18; 31:8-34; Ezek 20:34-43; 34:2-24; 37:19-28; Mic 2:12-13; 7:14-20; Zech 10:1-12; 11:4-17; 13:7-9.

⁴⁸⁰ If Jesus is the agent of the reversal that was promised to come directly from the hand of YHWH, then Luke may be presenting Jesus as possessing the divine identity. The reversal that is linked to Jesus' identity and activity is seen not only in the birth narrative (Lk 1:51-53), but in key moments of Jesus' ministry that chapter 5 will detail.

⁴⁸¹ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 73. Wright finds Luke highlighting the oppressed status of the nation. "The little beleaguered nation looked out at the military might of Rome and the cultural power of Greece, felt both of them making painful and lasting inroads into her national life," Wright, *New Testament and People*, 271.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, 76.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, 73.

Mary

As a couple, Mary and Joseph are found to be obedient citizens under Rome's rule (2:1-5) and faithful Jews observing the law (2:22-24; 39, 41).⁴⁸⁶ Johnson describes Mary and Joseph's humble social status, as "transients, equivalent to the homeless of contemporary street people."⁴⁸⁷ As an individual, Mary is introduced without mention of her family ties or personal background. She is a young woman with no special claim, but she has found favor with God (1:28, 30). Mary describes herself as lowly (1:48), indicating her spiritual status more than her societal status. She positions herself as God's faithful servant (1:38). Mary, a young woman lacking distinction, expresses faith that positions her as YHWH's servant in a full embrace of his incomprehensible plan.⁴⁸⁸ She is raised her from a state of lowliness to one of blessedness.⁴⁸⁹ Like Elizabeth, she stands in striking contrast to Zechariah the priest, who not only fails to match Mary's faith but is struck dumb to silence his unbelief.⁴⁹⁰ "These points of dissimilarity bespeak something profound about the focus of God's redemptive initiative in the Third Gospel and portend the joy with which 'the little people' will receive divine favor."⁴⁹¹ Both Elizabeth and Mary, on individual levels, undergo "a startling transposition of status,"⁴⁹² and YHWH's dealing

⁴⁸⁶ Sarah Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 62. Luke records that they journey to Jerusalem to present Jesus in the Temple.

⁴⁸⁷ Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina, edited by Daniel J. Harrington (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2006), 52.

⁴⁸⁸ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 84.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁴⁹⁰ Luke warns the reader that YHWH will deal discriminatingly with the community.

⁴⁹¹ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 84.

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*, 61.

with Zechariah indicates that he will deal discriminatingly within his community. Jesus' birth is good news for the lowly, whose conditions will be reversed as a result of his arrival.

Shepherds

In an indication of the scope and transformational effects of Jesus' mission, unnamed shepherds receive a revelation of the glory of God and angelic proclamation of Jesus' birth. The birth narrative consistently shows that YHWH is the one orchestrating movement and events in the narrative.⁴⁹³ He alone possesses true power, and when the time arrives for Jesus' birth, he bypasses the locus of political power and influence and sends his army of angels to announce the news to lowly shepherds.⁴⁹⁴ The birth of Jesus is announced not to Caesar Augustus and his imperial force, but to shepherds. In response to the angel's pronouncement, the shepherds agree with one another to go to Bethlehem to see the one about whom they had been told (2:15). They are pictured as obedient receivers of YHWH's word (8:15).⁴⁹⁵ The glory that had been confined to the Temple and inaccessible to the average Israelite appears in the shepherds' field (Exod 40:34-38; 1 Kg 8:10-11; 2 Chr 5:2-14; Ezek 44:4). It is to these lowly and marginalized that the glory of God is revealed.

YHWH's favor to the lowly of society is a motif that Marshall finds "undoubtedly present" in the birth narrative before it takes clear shape in the remainder of Luke.⁴⁹⁶ While various views exist regarding the importance of the shepherds in the birth narrative,⁴⁹⁷ the

⁴⁹³ Though Mary and Joseph were driven to Bethlehem by a royal decree, it is YHWH who is orchestrating the events in keeping with centuries-old prophecy (Mic 5:2-5).

⁴⁹⁴ Harris, *Davidic-Shepherd King*, 70.

⁴⁹⁵ Mark Coleridge, *The Birth of the Lukan Narrative* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 146.

⁴⁹⁶ Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek New Testament Commentary (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), 108.

prevailing view is that they exemplify the lowly people to whom YHWH promises mercy and salvation.⁴⁹⁸ Johnson calls the shepherds “low-esteemed laborers.”⁴⁹⁹ Green agrees, adding that they are also “outsiders,”⁵⁰⁰ and he suggests that the narrative’s building emphasis on the lowly implicitly anticipates the pivotal role that they play. Coleridge sees in the shepherds an example of the marginalized throughout Luke’s Gospel who express belief in contrast to those in loftier positions who doubt, or oppose, YHWH’s activity.⁵⁰¹ Bock agrees that the appearance of the shepherds in the birth narrative is significant because they highlight the eschatological reversal taking place, or as Harris calls it, the “realignment” that reflects the eschatological reality.⁵⁰² These views are found to be complementary. The shepherds do certainly seem to represent the lowly and marginalized, the outsiders and the forgotten, who are contrasted with the prideful and powerful.⁵⁰³ They are the personal recipients of the news that promised salvation has come. As a result, and in light of the eschatological movement within the narrative, Bock and Harris’ views are found to find support. Luke’s shepherd pericope indicates the fulfillment of eschatological reversal and radical realignment according to the inbreaking of YHWH’s salvific reality. Unnamed shepherds are directed, by the proclamation of heaven’s angels, from their humble

⁴⁹⁷ For summary, see Harris, *Davidic-Shepherd King*, 52-53.

⁴⁹⁸ Harris, *Davidic-Shepherd King*, 62.

⁴⁹⁹ Johnson, *Gospel*, 52

⁵⁰⁰ Green, *Gospel*, 132. Green finds them to be outsiders in two ways. First, they are outsiders to the birth family and prefigure the redefinition of family. Second, they are of low regard.

⁵⁰¹ Mark Coleridge, *The Birth of the Lukan Narrative* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 153. Though Zechariah experiences the blessing of YHWH’s intervention, he also represents those who respond in doubt.

⁵⁰² Darrell Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 213; Harris, *Davidic-Shepherd King*, 63.

⁵⁰³ This contrast is clearly visible in both the songs of the birth narrative, examined below, and in key encounters in Luke’s narrative, examined in chapter 5.

position over sheep to the manger as guests of Israel's newly born Deliverer. The reversal of conditions is reflective of the nature of the identity and activity of Jesus as YHWH in Israel's midst. Further, the shepherds' presence in the birth narrative may be significant in terms of eschatological expectations detailed by Bauckham. The Jewish eschatological monotheistic belief that he describes was defined by the fact that Israel knew YHWH to be the one who would fulfill his promises to Israel and reveal himself to those both within and outside of the covenant relationship. Luke's narrative depicts the accomplishment of this expectation in the birth narrative, which details the revelation of YHWH both to those explicitly identified as covenant partners (1:54-55, 72-73) and those who express no claim to his promises, like the shepherds. Jesus seems to be the one fulfilling eschatological monotheistic expectations.

Simeon and Anna

Like Zechariah and Elizabeth (1:6), Simeon (2:25) and Anna (2:36-38) are pious, aged, righteous, and devout, and Luke depicts them in relation to the temple and awaiting eschatological salvation.⁵⁰⁴ They receive revelation of YHWH's purposes and promises to Israel, and they exemplify characteristics of those to whom YHWH's shepherding care extends.⁵⁰⁵ This elderly man and woman receive comfort and gladness at the arrival of Jesus (Jer 31:13; Lk 2:29-30, 38). Simeon receives the consolation for which he waits (Lk 2:25; Jer 31:13), and Anna, previously fasting and praying, now praises YHWH for sending Israel's redemption (Lk 2:38; Jer 31:13). Simeon and Anna find that in Jesus, YHWH is intervening on behalf of his people as he promised.

⁵⁰⁴ Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 118; Green, *Luke*, 150.

⁵⁰⁵ Brown, *Birth of Messiah*, 466.

Simeon

Simeon reflects proper standing before YHWH and his response to Jesus reveals an understanding of YHWH's eschatological activity. Simeon is righteous (δίκαιος) and devout (εὐλαβής) (2:5). Δίκαιος is a term used to describe Job (Job 1:1, LXX), Zechariah (Lk 1:6) and Cornelius (Acts 10:22), and εὐλαβής⁵⁰⁶ refers to “the spiritually sensitive God-fearer, the faithful law-abider.”⁵⁰⁷ Simeon embodies faithfulness and blamelessness, and he expresses theocentric anticipation. He awaits “consolation” (παράκλησιν), a term that draws on Isaianic context and conveys divine restoration (Isa 40:1-2; 49:13; 51:3; 57:18; 61:2; 66:13).⁵⁰⁸ The consolation of Israel would include YHWH's intervention to rescue Israel from her enemies and usher in the age of peace that characterizes YHWH's rule.⁵⁰⁹ Simeon's expectations for the future fulfillment of promises is anchored in his relationship with YHWH and the revelation of YHWH's actions in Israel's history.

Having seen Jesus, Simeon declares that he has seen YHWH's salvation (σωτήριον) (2:30). Compared to the other Gospel writers, Luke disproportionately uses the terms σωτήρ, σωτήριος and σωτηρία. “Salvation” as a noun occurs eight times in the Gospel, with six usages occurring in the first two chapters (1:47, 69, 71, 77, 2:11, 30). The frequency of this language establishes a primacy effect; that Luke establishes Jesus as Savior in the birth narrative and prepares the reader to understand this function worked out programmatically throughout the

⁵⁰⁶ Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007), 2.753. In secular literature, εὐλαβής describes the ideal statesman, who was “conscientious and cautious.”

⁵⁰⁷ Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 238.

⁵⁰⁸ Green, *Luke*, 145.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 145.

remainder of the narrative.⁵¹⁰ Simeon's prayer (2:29-32) outlines what the reader of Luke will find throughout Luke's text. Jesus is the agent of salvation (Lk. 2:30-32; Isa. 40:5; 49:6) who will cause division within Israel (Lk. 2:34-35; Isa. 8:14).⁵¹¹ The consolation of this salvation is contingent upon YHWH's confrontation with his enemies and his triumph over them.

This concept is crucial to the depiction of YHWH as Shepherd. The prophets depicted that YHWH Shepherd would confront the shepherds about their treatment of his flock (Ezek. 34:10, 17, 20; Jer 23:1-8). The relationship between consolation and confrontation is a theme within the birth narrative songs and will be shown to be a prominent aspect of Jesus' ministry in chapter 5. Simeon's words suggest an understanding that Jesus was not only a Servant of God,⁵¹² but that his coming meant the coming of YHWH; he fulfills both roles.⁵¹³

Simeon proclaims Jesus to be "a light to be a revelation to the Gentiles" (Lk 2:31-32). It was the marker of Israel's identity and the source of their security that the glory of God dwelled in the Temple (1 Kg 8:10-11; Ezek 44:4). The glory of God shone to the shepherds (2:8-9), and here, Simeon stands in the Temple and declares Jesus to be God's glory.⁵¹⁴ The experiences of these birth narrative characters indicates that Jesus' birth marks the personal revelation of YHWH. The prophets promised that YHWH would "pour out" his Spirit on his people (Joel 3:1-5) and would produce in them permanent repentance made possible by YHWH's visitation to his people (Zech 12:10-14; Jer 31). In the narrative account describing Simeon, the Spirit is

⁵¹⁰ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 75.

⁵¹¹ Mallen, *Reading and Transformation*, 100.

⁵¹² Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 239.

⁵¹³ Baxter, *Israel's Only Shepherd*, 145-6, makes this point after examining Jesus' therapeutic ministry to the crowds in Matthew against the description of YHWH's future shepherding care of Israel and his promises to install a Davidic Shepherd over them. He finds Matthew depicting Jesus as "uniquely the Shepherd of God's people Israel."

⁵¹⁴ Brown, *Birth of Messiah*, 453.

mentioned three times in three verses (2:25-27). Simeon understands the birth of Jesus to be the fulfillment of the promises that he awaited.

Anna

The text stresses Anna's advanced age, her devotion to YHWH, and her faithful response to the inbreaking rule of God.⁵¹⁵ Anna is a widow "advanced in years" (προβεβηκυῖα ἐν ἡμέραις) (2:36), either eighty-four years old or a widow for that long. She responds to the birth of Jesus by speaking of the "redemption" (λύτρωσιν) of Jerusalem (2:38), a synonym for consolation.⁵¹⁶ She anticipates further divine revelation through acts of redemption. She is a prophetess, never leaving the temple, but residing there with constant fasting and prayer (2:37). Green understands fasting as "a form of protest, an assertion that all is not well."⁵¹⁷ Given the language that she uses, and the "eschatologically charged narrative environment," it may be that Anna's praying and fasting is an entreaty for YHWH to visit Israel and deliver her from oppression.⁵¹⁸ The oppression seems to be of a particular nature. Wright asserts that "fasting spoke of Israel still in exile."⁵¹⁹ Though mention of fasting is not unusual in the Old Testament, another similarity between Luke 1-2 and Daniel 7-9 may suggest that the echo here is intentional. Before receiving the vision of Gabriel and the word of the seventy sevens, Daniel was found petitioning YHWH for deliverance with prayer and fasting (Dan 9:3). An additional link to the exile may exist in the

⁵¹⁵ Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 123.

⁵¹⁶ Green, *Luke*, 152. Outside of Luke (1:68; 2:38), λύτρωσιν occurs only once more in the New Testament (Heb 9:12).

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁵¹⁸ Green, *Luke*, 151.

⁵¹⁹ N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God: Christian Origins and the Question of God*, vol. 2 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 435.

text. Bauckham finds this type of connection entirely within the realm of possibility given the intertextual world that Luke creates and the relationships between texts that he establishes. He aptly notes that Luke's echoes not only bring his texts into relationship with Old Testament texts, but they "also bring many such texts into relationship with one another in traditional or fresh ways."⁵²¹ Luke seems to expect competency in perceiving these relationships. If this relationship does exist, Luke seems to be indicating that just as YHWH intervened to deliver and rescue his people in response to Daniel's prayers, he is again returning to deliver and rescue in response to Anna's prayers. The nature of that deliverance far supersedes past deliverance, but Luke's text seems to indicate that YHWH is working in new ways according to familiar patterns.

Interestingly, Luke notes that Anna is from the tribe of Asher.⁵²² She is the only Jewish character in the New Testament said to belong to one of the northern tribes of Israel, one of the lost ten tribes.⁵²³ Luke's inclusion of this detail has sparked questions in scholarship. It is "puzzling" to Brown, "unclear" to Stein, and bearing "no apparent significance" to Green, with whom Fitzmyer agrees.⁵²⁴ Bauckham, though, finds the mention of this tribe both instructive and significant. He suggests that Luke intends to link Anna with the exiled community. The tribe of Asher was in the western region of Galilee along the Phoenician coast. It is assumed that when Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria conquered the northern kingdom, the inhabitants of Asher were

⁵²¹ Richard Bauckham *Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 54-55.

⁵²² Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 3, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 106.

⁵²³ Bauckham, *Gospel Women*, 77a; Jacob Mann, "Anna, 'a Prophetess of the Tribe of Asher' (Luke ii. 36)," *The Expository Times*, Vol XXVIII, 7 (April 1917), 43-44.

⁵²⁴ Brown, *Birth*, 441; Stein, *Luke*, 117-118; Green, *Luke*, 151; J. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), 431.

deported along with the other neighboring territories, but a population from Asher seemed to have survived in the region.⁵²⁵ As a member of this tribe, Anna, residing in the Temple, has effectively returned from the diaspora.⁵²⁶ She has relocated from the Galilee region to Jerusalem, the expected epicenter of YHWH's visitation and eschatological activity, to await the redemption of the nation from enemy rule.⁵²⁷ In that way, this elderly widow, a prophetess, represents an exiled nation awaiting the return of Israel's ruler, YHWH, who has promised to bring about their restoration.⁵²⁸

Luke's birth narrative characters can be understood according to individuals and patterns from Israel's history, and their recognition of YHWH's activity in Jesus may reflect characteristics of Old Testament theology, revealed through creedal rhythms. Their conditions and responses to Jesus' birth indicate that they are the people of YHWH who were given the promises of YHWH's return. The characters who receive acclamation from YHWH in the birth narrative indicate that the faithful who find favor with YHWH may be unexpected, and yet they align with the picture painted by the prophets. They are the disenfranchised and those on the outskirts of society who are confronted by the hopelessness of their scattered and weak conditions and the wickedness of the age, and they expect, anticipate, and rejoice over YHWH's direct intervention in the person of Jesus. In that way, they align with the picture of YHWH's scattered flock described by the prophets.

⁵²⁵ Bauckham *Gospel Women*, 77b.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*, 77e.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, 77c.

⁵²⁸ Richard Bauckham, "Anna of the Tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36-38), *Revue Biblique*, vol 104, 2 (April 1997), 161-191. Bauckham observes that Anna's "temple-centered piety and eschatological hope" is paralleled in the book of Tobit.

Expressions of Salvation

The depictions, reactions, and experiences of the individuals in the birth narrative give evidence that the effects of YHWH's arrival in Jesus is a reality. More specifically, the birth narrative songs echo language linking the birth of Jesus to the prophetic description of YHWH's arrival as Shepherd. The characters in Luke's birth narrative are depicted as members and representatives of faithful, pious Israel who require YHWH's direct intervention as promised by the prophets. Though they are Jews living in the land, they remain under antagonistic rule. When these characters react to the birth of Jesus, they seem to realize that they are witnessing the inbreaking of eschatological deliverance in keeping with prophetic promises.⁵²⁹ The specific language that they use echoes the language describing the restoration coming by the hand of YHWH Shepherd. The language of rejoicing that Mary and Zechariah express over the birth of Jesus casts themselves and those they represent as YHWH's flock who will be gathered, tended, restored, and redeemed by their Shepherd.

Though the term "shepherd" is absent from their songs, the composite texts reflect the motif that is woven throughout the prophetic books to give hope to a rebellious and exilic people. Mary's and Zechariah's songs each act as a "narratological 'time out,'" causing the readers to pause and consider the significance of the events before the narrative progresses.⁵³⁰ Luke drills down past the events, whether in Israel's past, present, or future, to uncover the rich meaning. Hermeneutically, the story that Luke has been telling is brought to a halt with each song, and the reader is invited to contemplate, along with the characters, the meaning of these events, and to trace the hand of YHWH that is accomplishing mighty works by revealing himself and fulfilling

⁵²⁹ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 59.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, 98.

his promises. The mélange of images in birth narrative songs project the “irreducible quality” and magnitude of the work of YHWH to which the characters are participants and witnesses.⁵³¹ Language used by Mary and Zechariah tether the first century AD world to the promises that YHWH will return to Israel as Shepherd, and the reader is presented with evidence that what was promised to an exiled people is being fulfilled in Jesus.

Magnificat

The divine favor shown to Mary, personally, is representative of the favor coming to Israel. Her song, “a virtual collage of biblical texts,”⁵³² anchors Mary and her community within Israel’s history and associates their experiences with the deliverance YHWH has enacted in the past. Remarking about the scriptural allusions in the Magnificat, Nolland notes that “OT motifs and language are used in a fresh coinage which evokes more generally the whole thought world of OT faith and declares its eschatological fulfillment,”⁵³³ in YHWH’s current activity. Mary celebrates that Jesus has come to deliver his people, and Luke’s narrative goes on to detail the nature of that deliverance. YHWH’s work affects a deliverance so transformative that it is described in the hymn as a reversal of Israel’s situation (Lk 1:49, 51-53).

Mary’s *Magnificat* follows the structure of the hymn of praise, containing 1) an introduction praising God, 2) body containing the motives for praise, and 3) conclusion.⁵³⁴ The motives for praise include, first, YHWH’s attributes; he is mighty (1:49, 51), holy (v. 49), and merciful (v. 50). YHWH’s activity also motivates praise; he has favored the humble and

⁵³¹ Ibid., 120. Green identifies the following images in the language of Luke 1 and 2: divine visitation, Exodus, Jubilee, New Covenant, illumination.

⁵³² Ibid., 84.

⁵³³ John Nolland, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, vol. 35a, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 74.

⁵³⁴ Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 356.

humbled the proud (v. 51-53). In the conclusion, YHWH's attributes and deeds are praised according to the ways in which YHWH is fulfilling his promises (v. 54).⁵³⁵ Mary's song uses verbs in the anterior position, with YHWH as the subject.⁵³⁶ It is YHWH who is in control of the events and circumstances of his people, and the realization of his inbreaking kingdom is coming into focus. The action celebrated is wholly his, and the birth of Jesus is the catalyst and embodiment of YHWH's eschatological work.⁵³⁷

Like Jeremiah, Luke identifies joy as the proper response to YHWH's restoration of his downtrodden and scattered people (Jer 31:13). Gabriel greets Mary with, "Rejoice" (Χαῖρε) (1:28), which may be interpreted as either a common greeting or an invitation to rejoice.⁵³⁸ Responses of joy are frequent in the birth narrative (1:28, 44, 46, 58; 2:10).⁵³⁹ The joyful responses of Mary, Zechariah, and Simeon reflect the eschatological importance of the unfolding events. These are no ordinary births.⁵⁴⁰ Jeremiah's language of restoration, joy and redemption is taken up by Luke (Jer 31:12-14). Mary "rejoices in God my Savior" (1:47). She celebrates not only the effects of YHWH's visitation on her situation (1:46-47), but she subsequently praises YHWH that he has "filled (ἐνέπλησεν) the hungry with good things" (Lk. 1:53). Having seen the reversal of her personal situation, Mary expands her view to the community that she represents. YHWH is meeting the many needs of his people. He is acting in accordance with his promises to

⁵³⁵ Ibid., 356.

⁵³⁶ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 99.

⁵³⁷ Ibid., 100.

⁵³⁸ Ibid., 87. Gabriel's greeting is reminiscent of greetings other greetings when YHWH's divine action is described, and the recipient's proper response is rejoicing (Zeph 3:14-15; Zech 9:9; Joel 2:21).

⁵³⁹ Ibid., 74.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid., 74.

his people. While Mary speaks in first person at the beginning of the song (v. 47-49), she widens her view to “those who fear him, from generation to generation,” (v. 50) and finds YHWH’s merciful activity is expended for the lowly (ταπεινούς) and hungry (πεινῶντας) (v. 52-53). He has not forgotten his servant, Israel (v. 54).⁵⁴¹ Mary represents the faithful for whom YHWH is now actively working. Reversal is envisioned for the community. The “Mighty One” (1:49) will reverse the conditions of the humble and the proud. Reversal language denotes the scope of this transformation.

Mary praises YHWH’s attention to the “low estate/humiliation” (ταπείνωσις) of his servant. The same term is used several times in the LXX to describe the lowliness of Israel suffering under oppressive rule (Deut 26:7; 1 Sam 9:16; 2 Kgs 14:26; Ps 136:23-24).⁵⁴² The history of the term in the Old Testament places Mary and her “affirmation of God’s saving act squarely in the context of the lowliness experienced by Israel under foreign domination in its past and at the time of Mary’s Song in Luke’s narrative world (v. 5).”⁵⁴³ The lowliness of Mary is but a representation of the lowliness of YHWH’s covenant people. YHWH has now acted to deliver them from this state (1:52-53), not out of obligation but out of merciful care.⁵⁴⁴ In his mercy, YHWH will exalt the lowly and humble; the inverse, then, must also be true. YHWH positions himself against those who delight in wielding their own power in self-sufficiency, ambition, and pride (1:51-53). Mary’s language echoes Old Testament concepts, motifs, and

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., 103.

⁵⁴² Ibid., 103. The term can also denote the oppressed people of God.

⁵⁴³ Ibid., 103.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., 103-4.

declarations. More specifically, Mary's description of YHWH's activity matches key characteristics and activities that Israel's prophets assign to YHWH the Shepherd.⁵⁴⁵

The restoration accomplished by YHWH Shepherd features, first, the return of YHWH's presence among his flock, with whom he will deal mercifully, and second, YHWH's confrontation with Israel's wicked shepherds (Ezek 34:2-16; Zech 10:1-6; cf. Jer 23:1-8). To reside among his flock, YHWH must confront and judge the shepherds. Chae finds the confrontation of YHWH with the wicked irrevocable because "it signals the arrival of the eschatological theocracy of YHWH governing his people in view of the nations."⁵⁴⁶ YHWH's arrival marks "the eschatological divine reversal, achieved by the eschatological Shepherd compassionately and powerfully shepherding the scattered flock."⁵⁴⁷ This divine reversal, ignited by the returned presence of YHWH among his people, is the theme of Mary's song.

This time, it is not Israel, but the proud, who are scattered (1:51). The proud stand in contrast to Israel. In key shepherd texts, YHWH announces his intentions to return to his people, who like a neglected flock of sheep, are scattered and without leadership (Ezek 34:5, 11-13, 16; 36:24; 37:21; Jer 23:1-2; 31:10). Rather than being tended to by their leaders, they were treated with negligence and were scattered (Ezek 34:5; Jer 23:2). With no shepherd in their pursuit, they became prey for wild animals (Ezek 34:6).⁵⁴⁸ Israel's history, recorded by the prophets, is background for Luke's text. Now, those who exercised power over Israel must come under the

⁵⁴⁵ Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My own Heart* (Westmont, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 2006), 199. Mary's language parallels Hannah's (1 Sam 2:1-10), strongly suggest[ing] that a new king(dom) is coming and freedom from foreign rule is imminent."

⁵⁴⁶ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 91.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁵⁴⁸ While YHWH scattered the nation during the judgment of the exile (Jer 30:11), he promised to gather them back as a shepherd does his flock. He set over them shepherds who were charged with attending to them. These shepherds neglected their duties, and YHWH's remnant was scattered.

mighty hand of YHWH, who will scatter those who had carefully positioned themselves for power at the expense of the weak. He is a leader unlike those whom Israel had endured.⁵⁴⁹ He will bring “rulers down from their thrones” and, instead, “lift up the humble” (1:52).

As described by prophetic texts, YHWH’s activity results in the reversal of the conditions of his people and their oppressors. He will deliver justice to the strong and the weak. Those who have used their power to mistreat others will be destroyed, and those who have been weakened will be made strong (Ezek 34:16, 21-22; Lk 1:52-53). Instances of status reversal, seen throughout narrative, are consequential in the first two chapters of Luke. Ultimately, Luke’s interpretation of individuals and their standing before YHWH redefines “the basis by which status is determined.”⁵⁵⁰ The announcement of Jesus’ birth to shepherds is evidence that Mary’s song finds immediate fulfillment (1:52). Like young Mary, they find favor with God (1:30; 2:14).

YHWH will deal discriminatingly with the flock, administering judgment and just treatment. By describing the reversal of conditions, Mary indicates that the time of promised salvation has begun. The great reversal is not a tangential byproduct of Jesus’ ministry, but the very nature of the divine movement that was launched at Jesus’ birth, the inaugural moment of YHWH’s visitation.⁵⁵¹ He confronts the powerful, mighty, proud, and rich, relinquishing from

⁵⁴⁹ Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 47. Duguid observes that it is the quality of YHWH’s Shepherding leadership that is most unique. Israel will have a Shepherd over them again, but this time, he will lead them with strength and mercy. “According to Ezekiel 34, the expected change in Israel’s governance will be accomplished not so much through a change of nature of the *office* but through a change in the nature of the *occupant*... Only the one who is stronger can protect against the strong. Strength and service are the two features emphasized in the description of the new ruler.”

⁵⁵⁰ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 61.

⁵⁵¹ Kostenberger and Goswell, *Biblical Theology*, 445.

their grasp the weak, lowly, poor, and marginalized. The song anticipates a major Lukan theme that YHWH sets himself against this aggregated picture of the proud, mighty, and rich.⁵⁵²

For the humble, he does “great things” (1:48-49); he lifts them up (1:52), remembers to extend his mercy for generations (1:50, 54-55), fills the hungry (1:53), and acts as Israel’s help (1:54). YHWH has intervened in this way because he has remembered his covenantal promises. The remembrance motif (1:54-55) occurs throughout Scripture, when YHWH remembers the desperate conditions of an individual or group and acts on their behalf by responding to their need with merciful action in keeping with his promises.⁵⁵³ The prophets depict YHWH’s compassion as his ultimate motivation to rescue and restore his flock (Zech 10:6; Mic 7:18; Isa 40:9-11; 61:1-14).⁵⁵⁴ Similarly, Mary recognizes that YHWH has remembered his mercy to rescue his covenant people (1:54-55).

The Savior who brings merciful deliverance for his lowly servant is the same one whom Mary describes as the Divine Warrior, waging war and defeating the enemies of his people.⁵⁵⁵ This description evokes Exodus language.⁵⁵⁶ The scattering of the proud is the negative result of YHWH’s saving intervention. He personally confronts and scatters the proud, shows his strength to the rulers, and sends the rich away empty (Lk 1:50-53). He is the Mighty One who will

⁵⁵² Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 104. This is a theme throughout the narrative.

⁵⁵³ The remembrance motif exists throughout the Old Testament, and in many instances, it occurs as the divine antidote to human failure or weakness, sometimes in specific reference to the inability to conceive (Gen 30:22; 1 Sam 1:11, 19-20). In the case of both Rachel and Hannah, YHWH’s merciful gift of sons, Joseph and Samuel, respectively, was action on behalf of the women, initially, but it was also action on behalf of the nation of Israel who later experienced YHWH’s deliverance through their leadership.

⁵⁵⁴ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 92.

⁵⁵⁵ This depiction of YHWH conforms to the Old Testament tradition: Deut 10:17-18; Ps 24:8; Isa 10:20-27; Zeph 3:17.

⁵⁵⁶ Brown, *Birth of Messiah*, 360.

confront the ones exercising their own might, while mercifully attending to Israel as their covenant-keeping God. Defeating Israel's oppressors is the inverse of the divine expression of mercy to the lowly.⁵⁵⁷ YHWH is the holy and merciful Divine Warrior who performs these deeds with the "strength of his arm" (1:51). The phrase is drawn from scriptural depictions of YHWH's salvific intervention for Israel. "'His arm' is a frequent OT image for the power of God, especially manifested in the exodus [e.g., Exod 6:1-6] and in the new exodus of eschatological salvation [e.g. Ezek 20:23; Isa 51:5]."⁵⁵⁸ The power of YHWH's promised judgment on Egypt is accomplished by his "mighty arm" (Exod 6:1, 5; Jer 32:20-22), and in their song of deliverance, Moses and Miriam rejoice over that power (Exod 15:1-21).⁵⁵⁹ Other times, the phrase is used when YHWH's miraculous and gracious preservation of his creation, his people, and the promise of his eschatological salvation is celebrated (Deut 3:24; 7:19; 33:27; Ps 78:10; 88:10; 97:1; Isa 26:11; 40:10; 51:9-10; 52:10; 65:12).⁵⁶⁰ On each occasion, the phrase brings into focus the salvific power of YHWH. Mary's expectations for YHWH to fulfill his promises is linked to his redemptive work in Israel's history.⁵⁶¹

As he had done before, he will direct his people and defeat their enemies. The proud, mighty, and hungry will be scattered, brought down, and sent away in order for YHWH to exalt, fill, and help his servant Israel (1:51-53). The portraits of YHWH as the one acting in might to

⁵⁵⁷ Nolland, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, 76.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁵⁵⁹ Richard D. Patterson and Michael Travers, "Contours of the Exodus Motif in Jesus' Earthly Ministry," *Westminster Theological Journal* 66 (2004), 33.

⁵⁶⁰ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 104.

⁵⁶¹ Luke's description of Mary and his articulation of her song indicate that her reaction to the inbreaking of YHWH's salvation reflects the narrative, character, and relational creeds. She anchors her knowledge of YHWH in his redemptive activity in the past and according to his covenantal relationships with her ancestors. Now, she receives further revelation and the fulfillment of his promises through the person and work of Jesus.

defeat Israel's enemies and acting mercifully toward his people are neither conflicting nor incompatible.⁵⁶² YHWH is the divine warrior who, by nature, stands in opposition to the proud; he is also dynamically merciful, inclined to act on behalf of those who fear him and are positioned to lay claim to his promises.⁵⁶³ Mary's language indicates the redemptive nature of YHWH's activity which will involve the judgment of the wicked and restoration of the righteous.⁵⁶⁴ This description of YHWH's person and activity in Jesus mirrors what the prophets describe as the person and activity of YHWH Shepherd.

Mary's and Zechariah's songs unite the twin themes of judgment and mercy that may seem, on their face, to depict conflicting images of salvation, but that are intricately related in Old Testament texts. As Zechariah describes, YHWH visits his people to save them and enact judgment on their enemies (Lk 1:51-53, 74; Isa 40:10). "For Luke, the reconciliation of God's people and deliverance from enemies are both part of one divine movement."⁵⁶⁵ While Harris favors the depiction of Jesus as the gentle and compassionate shepherd against those of a military messiah executing judgment and vengeance, both images are conflated in Mary's and Zechariah's songs.⁵⁶⁶ Promises for YHWH's visitation to include salvation and judgment are essential in shepherding texts. The expression of judgment and mercy to forgive sins and restore

⁵⁶² Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 101, contrasts the picture of a military messiah and the therapeutic ministry of Jesus. Though the characters in the birth narrative appeal to YHWH's mercy as the basis of his intervention on Israel's behalf, they also appeal to his mighty power in defeating their enemies.

⁵⁶³ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 102.

⁵⁶⁴ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 91. Direction language is reminiscent of exodus language. "YHWH's redemptive shepherding activities have been established early as evidenced from the Exodus. 'To bring out' (cf. LXX *exago*) and 'to bring in' (cf. LXX, *eisago*) and 'going before' his flock at their head (Exod 3:8; Deut 6:23) can be regarded as semi-technical shepherd language often found in redemptive and restorative contexts."

⁵⁶⁵ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 115.

⁵⁶⁶ Harris, *Davidic-Shepherd King*, 61.

the people were threads woven into “the tapestry of divine redemption” that are “fully congruent with important strands of soteriology in Second Temple Judaism.”⁵⁶⁷ It is within this same tapestry that Luke weaves their songs.

Benedictus

The shape that the fulfillment and remembrance motifs take in Mary’s hymn feature in Zechariah’s as well. Like Mary, Zechariah praises YHWH for remembering to deal mercifully in redeeming and transforming his people according to his covenant (1:50, 72-75). Zechariah’s *Benedictus* can be divided into three strophes. In the first strophe, Zechariah begins with praise because of the visitation of God (1:68-75). The second strophe celebrates the reasons for the praise, namely God’s covenant mercy (v. 72-75), and the third strophe describes the preparatory role of John (v. 76-79).⁵⁶⁸ The divine activity that Zechariah describes in *Benedictus* is regarded as an answer to prayer, not only on behalf of Zechariah and Elizabeth as a couple, but on behalf of the nation that they represent. Zechariah recognizes that Gabriel’s message means the inauguration of YHWH’s visitation. He has visited (ἐπεσκέψατο) and performed the redemption (λύτρωσιν) of his people (1:68). Zechariah equates the visitation of YHWH with the coming of Jesus (1:68, v. 76; cf. 7:16). As Nolland puts it, “there may, therefore, be happy ambiguity about the reference of ‘Lord’ (κύριος) here.”⁵⁶⁹ Luke predicates “Lord” of both YHWH and Jesus (4:18-19; 5:17; 7:13, 19; 10:1; 13:15, 23; 17:5; 18:6; 24:3, 34). By going before Jesus, John goes before the YHWH.⁵⁷⁰ Luke’s narrative portrays Jesus enacting “what, in Israel’s scriptures, God

⁵⁶⁷ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 115.

⁵⁶⁸ Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, 390; Green, *Luke*, 115.

⁵⁶⁹ Nolland, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, 89.

⁵⁷⁰ Henrichs-Tarasenkova, *Luke’s Christology of Divine Identity*, 155. Mal. 3:1

had promised to accomplish all by himself ... He would embody in himself the returning and redeeming action of the covenant God."⁵⁷¹ Luke seems to be presenting Jesus as YHWH, the one fulfilling his redemptive promises to his people. Zechariah links the visitation of YHWH and redemption of his people as corresponding acts (1:68) with language drawn from the Old Testament reservoir. Zechariah's description of YHWH's activity recalls past revelation displayed though Exodus and exile typology. Using familiar language, Zechariah describes YHWH's present work gathering and saving together his people.⁵⁷²

The motifs of divine remembering and visitation belong in the same arsenal of texts from Israel's salvation history. YHWH's intervention at the Exodus, a response to Israel's prayer, is described as a visitation (ἐπισκέπτομαι, Exod 4:31), and it resulted in Israel's redemption (λύτρωσιν).⁵⁷³ Zechariah's use of these terms, visit and redeem, "sets Zechariah's vision of salvation squarely in the context of the Exodus."⁵⁷⁴ YHWH is pictured as the same Divine Warrior who "saved" (נַצַּחֵנִי) (ἔσωσεν) and "redeemed" (גָּאַלֵנִי) (ἐλυτρώσατο) Israel at the Exodus (Psa 106:10). At that "paradigmatic act of deliverance," YHWH visited and redeemed Israel and then created a covenant community. The language of visitation occurs again in the psalter. In Psalm 106, a "dark counterpart" to Psalm 105,⁵⁷⁵ the psalmist outlines the depths of

⁵⁷¹ Wright, *Jesus Victory of God*, 653.

⁵⁷² Mary's and Zechariah's responses reflect the principles of the narrative (their knowledge of YHWH's character is informed by YHWH's past activity), character (they receives increased knowledge of YHWH, and of Jesus, through present divine intervention) and relational creeds (YHWH's activity, through Jesus, is in accordance with his reciprocal relationship with Israel).

⁵⁷³ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 116-7. Zechariah's language builds on memories of YHWH's visitation and redemption at the exodus, and later, the Jubilee and the Davidic dynasty (Lev 25:29, 48; Isa 63:4; Ps 132:17).

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁵⁷⁵ Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, Expositors Bible Commentary, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 784. Psalm 106 is the last in Book IV of the Psalter (Ps 90-106). Book IV is read as "an extensive response to the problem of the exile and particularly of the suspension of the Davidic dynasty."

Israel's rebellion and implores YHWH to remember, visit (ἐπισκέπτομαι, Ps 106:4) and save his people.⁵⁷⁶ The psalmist likens his generation to the one who was delivered from Egypt and later rebelled in the wilderness. Like their ancestors, the generation of the psalmist also requires divine mercy in order to be saved and restored. At the Exodus, YHWH's unrelenting love and willingness to remember his covenant spared them from destruction at the hand of their enemy (Ps 106:10). The psalmist asks for the visitation of YHWH and the extension of his mercy so that Israel may be gathered again and enabled to enjoy YHWH's benefits and offer thanks and glory to God (106:47).⁵⁷⁷ Zechariah declares that YHWH's activity in the present is divine visitation like what the Exodus generation experienced and what the exile community prayerfully anticipated.⁵⁷⁸ In Psalm 106, the time of YHWH's favor is the time of salvation. When he saves, YHWH's blessings are renewed, and their conditions are reversed. Though they were alienated, they will be saved, and though they were under YHWH's wrath, they will experience his favor.⁵⁷⁹ Zechariah understands that John's birth marks the end of Israel's waiting period.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁶ Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, eds. *Psalms*, vol. 5, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 884. The rebellion of Israel in Psalm 106 is contrasted with the fidelity of YHWH in Psalm 105. Psalm 105 rehearses YHWH's miraculous activity and mercy on behalf of Israel at the exodus from Egypt. He remembered his promises to Abraham and his descendants (105:43). The ultimate purpose in initiating a covenant relationship with Abraham and his descendants, redeeming them from Egypt, and establishing them in their own land was to create a devoted and responsive people. Regarding dating and the specific referents in the psalm, Longman and Garland, *Psalms*, 885, writes, "The interpretation must focus on the theological and canonical significance of the psalm rather than on its historical referentiality, even though some make a good case for an early exilic dating." In that case, rehearsing YHWH's faithfulness to a rebellious Israel inspired hope for another deliverance.

⁵⁷⁷ VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 896. Despite the uncertain fate of Jews living both inside and outside of the land, the Psalter closes with hope for restoration and the rule of YHWH.

⁵⁷⁸ Luke's narrative reflects principles of Boda's narrative creed in that it draws on knowledge of YHWH revealed through specific acts in history.

⁵⁷⁹ Longman and Garland, *Psalms*, 887.

⁵⁸⁰ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 78. The promise that Zechariah recognizes as having been fulfilled "revolves around the direct intervention of the Lord God himself, whose coming would inaugurate the long-awaited dominion of God, shalom, peace with justice (cf. Isaiah 40)."

Parallels between Gabriel's announcement to Zechariah and moments in Israel's history extend beyond the Exodus to promises of Israel's return from exile. Wright uses the phrase "end of exile" as a summarization of the multiplicitous vision encapsulated in many Jewish minds regarding the occasion when YHWH will act within her history to free, redeem, and transform a people to himself.⁵⁸¹ Wright asserts that most second-Temple Jews hoped for new exodus deliverance, the ultimate return from exile. Then, "the story would reach its climax; the great battle would be fought; Israel would truly 'return' to her land, saved and free; YHWH would return to Zion."⁵⁸² It seems to be within this world of expectation that Luke's narrative exists. Having determined that the exile did not end when Israel returned to the land, the reader sees the persistent conditions of Deuteronomy 29, and hears the resonances of Daniel 8-9, in Luke's text.⁵⁸³ Wright concludes that as long as the exile has not ended, faithful Israel, like those in Luke's birth narrative, are found "hoping and praying that Daniel's 490 years will soon be complete, that the Messiah will come at last, and that – in Daniel's majestic language – Israel's God will act in accordance with his righteousness, his faithfulness to the covenant."⁵⁸⁴ The end of the seventy weeks of years will be a time when "everlasting justice will be introduced, vision and prophecy will be ratified, and a Holy of Holies will be anointed" (Dan 9:24). Wright's

⁵⁸¹ Wright, *Jesus Victory of God*, xvii.

⁵⁸² Mallen, *Reading and Transformation*, 14-15; N.T. Wright, *New Testament and the People*, 126-8, 209, 243.

⁵⁸³ Eugene Carpenter, "Daniel," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Ezekiel & Daniel*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, vol. 9 (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2010), 419. In his prayer, Daniel emphasizes the people's sin (he uses four distinct terms for sin), and he appeals to the mercy of YHWH.

⁵⁸⁴ N.T. Wright, *Exile: A Conversation with N. T. Wright* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 30-31.

assertion that Daniel 8-9 contextualizes the state of Israel into which Jesus enters finds substantial support in Luke 1.

Parallels between Gabriel's encounter with Daniel (Dan 8-9) and with Zechariah (Lk 1) are striking. Daniel 8-9 and Luke 1 describe the only appearances of Gabriel in both Testaments, and Brown concludes that given the parallels, "there can be no doubt that in his description of Gabriel's appearance Luke intends to evoke the atmosphere of Daniel."⁵⁸⁵ In both accounts, Gabriel appears at the time of liturgical prayer (Lk 1:10-11; Dan 9:20-21);⁵⁸⁶ Zechariah and Daniel offer prayers of distress (Lk 1:13; Dan 9:20); Zechariah and Daniel respond to Gabriel's appearance with fear (Lk 1:12; Dan 8:17; 10:7), and Gabriel tells each one not to fear (Lk 1:13; Dan 10:12); Gabriel states that he was sent to speak to the visionary (Lk 1:19; Dan 10:11); Zechariah and Daniel are struck mute (Lk 1:20, 22; Dan 10:15).⁵⁸⁷ Gabriel's message to Zechariah, and Zechariah's *Benedictus* exclaiming the implications of his message, indicate that the time of YHWH's long-awaited intervention has reached its fulfillment. In sum, YHWH has arrived, marking the end of Israel's exile. The last times have come, and YHWH will restore and gather his people.⁵⁸⁸ Zechariah rejoices over the bounty of YHWH's mercy toward his people (Jer 31:14; Lk 1:77-78), and prophetic texts are layered, one upon the other; the reader must mine Zechariah's song to discover the prophetic referents of his words.

Zechariah weaves together "a myriad of images to show the profundity" of the salvific act unfolding.⁵⁸⁹ Like he did at the Exodus, YHWH is delivering his people from their collective

⁵⁸⁵ Brown, *Birth of Messiah*, 270.

⁵⁸⁶ Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*, vol. 18, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 250.

⁵⁸⁷ Brown, *Birth of Messiah*, 271.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 270-1.

⁵⁸⁹ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 116-7.

enemies. With his strong hand (1:51), he rescues his people from the hands of those stronger than them (1:71, 74). In keeping with the covenant, YHWH rescues Israel out of his divine mercy.⁵⁹⁰ Zechariah recognizes Israel's state of oppression, and he celebrates that YHWH's visitation will result in Israel's deliverance and transformation into a people enabled to exist in proper relation to him (1:74-75, 77).

Zechariah rejoices not only in the fact of YHWH's visitation, but in its implications.⁵⁹¹ YHWH's visitation will achieve divine rescue for his people, who will be enabled to "serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness" (1:74). This language implies a fundamental alteration of Israel's condition as described by Israel's prophets, who stated that YHWH's arrival meant that his people no longer needed to fear because he will return as Israel's shepherd (Isa 40:9, 11). His scattered and fearful flock will no longer be afraid (φοβηθήσονται, LXX) and terrified (πτοηθήσονται, LXX) (Jer 23:4). YHWH comforts Israel to "fear not" because of his promise to save them and discipline the nations among whom they were scattered (30:10-11). Zechariah states that YHWH's work will enable Israel to embody these descriptions and fulfill these commands.

It is not only the lack of fear that is highlighted here, but the fundamental purpose of YHWH's return. The reversal of their outward conditions will reflect inner transformation. They will "serve him...in holiness and righteousness" (1:74). Throughout Israel's history, YHWH granted the nation freedom from oppression in order that they might properly worship him, but their freedom was superficial and short-lived. The ultimate purpose of the Israelites' deliverance

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., 117.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid., 117.

from slavery in Egypt was for them to attain freedom to worship the Lord as he desired (Exod 7:16).⁵⁹² Zechariah states the purpose and result of YHWH's visitation. He will affect the rescue of his people, and the nature of the rescue is transformative. "'To serve/worship him in holiness and righteousness,' reflects the language of Josh 24:14 which expresses Joshua's vision for the honoring of God in the promised land."⁵⁹³ Zechariah declares that YHWH will create a people who will fulfill this intention. They will be a new type of people. According to Ezekiel, a key outcome of YHWH's eschatological shepherding is the obedience of his flock.⁵⁹⁴ Under the leadership of the Davidic Shepherd, the inability of the flock to closely follow the Shepherd will be resolved because YHWH will give new hearts and his Spirit to his people (Ezek 36:16-37; cf. Zech 12:8-10).⁵⁹⁵

The new people will be defined according to the work that YHWH does to grant them "knowledge of salvation" and the "forgiveness of their sins" (Lk 1:77). Fulfillment of the prophet's promises echo loudly in Luke 2.⁵⁹⁶ The inauguration of the new covenant accomplishes the salvation of YHWH's people (Jer 23:6; Ezek 36:29; Lk 1:69), the forgiveness of their sins (Jer 31:34; Ezek 36:33; 1:77), the transformation of their hearts (Jer 31:33; Ezek 36:33-37; Lk 1:74-74), the resolve of their allegiance (Jer 30:22; Ezek 36:27; Lk 1:75), and the reversal of their condition (Jer 30:12-17; Ezek 36:27-30, 37-38; Lk 1:79). When they are saved, the people are reconciled with YHWH (Jer 31:31-34; Isa 42:6; 49:6; 60:1, 19).⁵⁹⁷ YHWH promised that

⁵⁹² Ibid., 113. Green remarks, "The purpose of deliverance is also cast in terms borrowed from the Exodus: 'that we ... might serve him.'"

⁵⁹³ Ibid., 113.

⁵⁹⁴ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 92.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid., 92.

⁵⁹⁶ Wright, *Jesus and Victory of God*, 434.

⁵⁹⁷ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 114.

when he comes as Shepherd, he would look for and rescue his flock who was scattered “on a day of clouds and darkness” (Ezek 34:12). Divine judgment shrouds the people in darkness, but when YHWH returns, the darkness will give way to the light (Isa 59-60). Zechariah draws on this motif that was associated with YHWH’s visitation when he describes the implications of Jesus’ birth. Zechariah describes the birth of Jesus as the dawning of light (Lk 1:79; 2:32). Eschatological hope of YHWH’s return was realized at the birth of Jesus.

Conclusion

The intent of this chapter was to first establish Luke’s birth narrative as a type of echo chamber for Israel’s Scriptures in order to follow the story as a continuation and culmination of divine promises. The divine intervention that Luke’s birth narrative details and celebrates possesses the Old Testament framework built by YHWH’s promises to return to his exiled people. Luke’s birth narrative seems to express principles of eschatological monotheistic belief, that YHWH would fulfill his promises to Israel and reveal himself to the nations, in its conceptual alignment with the narrative, character, and relational creedal rhythms identified by Boda.

Chapter 3 examined texts characterizing the return of YHWH to his people as a Shepherd returning to his flock, and this chapter examined the characters and events of the birth narrative to discover echoes of this motif. If Jesus is found fulfilling the claims of YHWH Shepherd and affecting the results of his personal return among the people claiming his promises, then Jesus is found possessing the identity of YHWH, the Shepherd of Israel. In Luke’s birth narrative, the reader finds Jesus acclaimed for acting as YHWH promised to act. Relationally and functionally, he seems to possess YHWH’s divine identity, and the characters in Luke’s birth narrative experience the effects of his presence among them. The prophets described the implications of

YHWH's return as Shepherd, and the birth narrative characters experience and describe these effects.

Allusions to the promises that YHWH Shepherd will return to his scattered flock, undo the effects of exile, and bring about her restoration and salvation echo in Luke's Gospel. The position of the birth narrative characters and their response to Jesus' birth aligns them with the needy, exiled people to whom YHWH pledged his return and eschatological deliverance.⁵⁹⁹ They celebrate that Jesus is and acts, "according to scripture only YHWH himself could do and be."⁶⁰⁰ The birth narrative characters seem to express eschatological monotheistic belief, and they seem to filter their understanding of Jesus' birth through Old Testament credal categories denoting YHWH's revelation. They express confidence in YHWH based on his past activity, his covenantal commitments, and his present activity among them. They see his promises to personally return and accomplish his redemptive purposes fulfilled in the birth of Jesus.

The mission of YHWH in the person of Jesus is unveiled to a humble and inconspicuous audience, but through allusions and borrowed language, Luke reminds his reader that they were identified centuries earlier as those whom YHWH would gather, restore, and redeem when he returned as Shepherd. Divine pursuit of the outcasts is previewed in the birth narrative. When read along with the remainder of Luke's narrative, the transformational experiences and joyful responses of the individuals in the birth narrative reflect divine intervention on behalf of the scattered flock that YHWH has bound himself to in prophetic promise after promise. In these ways, Jesus seems to possess the divine identity as YHWH Shepherd. Jesus' activity on their

⁵⁹⁹ YHWH's return is characterized in a variety of ways, and one way is through shepherd imagery.

⁶⁰⁰ Wright, *Jesus and Victory of God*, 653.

behalf provides a window into the comprehensive salvation and restoration that Jesus' ministry as YHWH Shepherd will include, which is the focus of chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: THE SHEPHERD MOTIF IN JESUS' MINISTRY

Introduction

The articulation of hope and expectation contained in the birth narrative directs the reader back to YHWH's promises proclaimed by the prophets. Luke's narrative details, in specific ways, how hope finds fulfillment in the person and mission of Jesus. Luke's birth narratives celebrate the realization of YHWH's promises to Israel, and at several significant moments later in the narrative, Jesus is found actualizing their hope according to a familiar depiction of YHWH as Israel's Shepherd. The shepherding motif of the prophets is found throughout Luke, and Jesus' person and mission are grounded in it.⁶⁰¹ Jesus will be identified with YHWH Shepherd, and his activity toward the outcasts of Luke's Gospel will indicate his divine identity. Luke accomplishes this in a way that is subtle but consistent with his approach. As is his custom, Luke favors textual clues of Old Testament echoes and allusions over explicit statements of Scripture's fulfillment.⁶⁰² With eyes on the intertextual relationships between Luke's text and Israel's Scripture, Luke's reader sees the picture of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd seem to emerge.

Luke depicts Jesus as the one fulfilling YHWH's promises to Israel and revealing himself to the nations, in keeping with Jewish eschatological monotheistic expectation. To do so, Jesus' identity is contextualized according to YHWH's past actions in Israel's history according to principles expressed in the narrative creed, and Jesus' activity toward the outcasts of society is presented as a means by which his identity is revealed, in keeping with principles of Boda's character creed. Jesus' actions indicate his identity because he acts according to YHWH's reciprocal relationship with Israel, reflected in the relational creed. Indications of these creedal

⁶⁰¹ I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 138-9; Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke* (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 1221-2.

⁶⁰² Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 192.

rhythms are detected at key moments. Though many texts are considered, two texts are the primary focus of this study: the lost sheep and faithful shepherd parable of Luke 15:1-7 and the Zacchaeus pericope of 19:1-10.⁶⁰³

The lost sheep and faithful shepherd parable of Luke 15:1-7 will be shown to contain indications that Jesus is the YHWH Shepherd promised by the prophets.⁶⁰⁴ The effect of the parable's textual and thematic allusions to prophetic shepherding texts, particularly Ezekiel 34, suggests that Luke's text draws on YHWH's promises to return as Israel's Shepherd. When Jesus embodies the Shepherd's identity and advances his mission, Jesus is found to possess the divine identity. When the parable is read against the backdrop of Jesus' relationship to outcasts (15:1) and the negative reaction of the religious leaders (15:2), depicted both in the immediate setting (15:1-2) and in the setting of the larger narrative, the outline of YHWH Shepherd in the image of Jesus seems to emerge (Isa 40:11; Ezek 34). While the religious leaders grumble about Jesus' activity, the tax collectors and sinners are found to belong to Jesus as participants in his divine mission. Luke contrasts key players, religious leaders, sinners, and Jesus, in a way that seems to draw on prophetic shepherding texts. Luke 15:1-7 will be shown to contain indications that Jesus is the faithful Shepherd, whose role and relationships are informed by the depiction of YHWH the Shepherd of the prophets.

The same shepherd motif detected in Luke 15:1-7 is advanced and articulated with intertextual precision in Luke 19:1-10. Considering the observations made in Luke 15:1-7

⁶⁰³ For the sake of space and detailed focus, several related accounts ((5:27-32; 13:10-17; 18:9-14, 18-29, 35-43) are discussed as they relate to 19:10.

⁶⁰⁴ Prophetic texts including Isaiah 40, Jeremiah 30, 31, Ezekiel 20, 34, 37, Micah 2, and Zechariah 10 describe YHWH's promise to return to Israel, those scattered like a helpless flock of sheep, and to restore and rescue them as their Shepherd. The motif of YHWH's personal rescue of his people as Shepherd is an image sketched by various texts, and the motif is seen in Luke. In particular, Luke's texts reflect an intertextual relationship to Ezekiel 34.

regarding the depiction of Jesus as Ezekiel's YHWH Shepherd, the strong shepherd motif found in Luke 19:1-10 is significant, not only for the Zacchaeus pericope, but for the wider Lukan narrative. The Zacchaeus' pericope will be shown to contain textual and thematic markers that tether it to multiple stories in the surrounding texts. It acts as a representative story for Jesus' activity throughout Luke, and Zacchaeus emerges as an unexpected figure who is perfectly positioned as a lost sheep of Israel. Jesus defines his mission with precise shepherd language, and he restores Zacchaeus in a way that suggest a fulfillment of YHWH's promises to his sheep. The intertextual relationship between Luke 19:1-10 and Ezekiel 34 is dynamic. The pericope presents a visualization of Jesus' activity and mission, and given the text's relationship to prophetic shepherding texts and related texts within the narrative, Jesus is found to possess the identity of Israel's YHWH Shepherd.

Together, Luke 15:1-7 and 19:1-10 will present a unified depiction of Jesus' divine identity as YHWH Shepherd and a corresponding defense for his mission to the outcasts. In this regard, the person and mission of Jesus is rooted in YHWH's promises to personally shepherd his flock. The combined effect of this study intends to shed light on the image that seems to emerge: Jesus is YHWH Shepherd. In fulfillment of birth narrative celebrations and realizations, Jesus will be found to embody the role and fulfill the responsibilities that prophetic shepherding texts reserve for YHWH.

Luke 15:1-7: The Lost Sheep and the Faithful Shepherd

Luke 15:1-7 is the first of three parables that form a unit. The lost parables of Luke 15 are united textually, thematically, and structurally (Lk 15:3-7, 8-10, 11-32). Each story moves from the main character possessing, losing, recovering, and restoring what is lost, and each story

concludes with the character rejoicing with exaggerated celebration.⁶⁰⁵ The parable of the lost sheep (15:3-7) will be the focus here because of its direct relationship to the shepherd motif, but it is helpful to recognize shared characteristics of the three parables. Taken together, the pericope (Lk 15:1-32) acts as an apologetic for Jesus' mission to the outcasts seen throughout the Gospel and a message of warning to the religious elite.⁶⁰⁶ The message that resounds throughout the entire unit is heard powerfully in Luke 15:1-7. The parable of the lost sheep will be shown to confront the religious leaders and challenge their mistreatment of the tax collectors and sinners based on its theological, and Christological, presentation of Jesus' person and activity.

The intertextual links between the parable of the lost sheep and Israel's Scripture suggest that Jesus is YHWH Shepherd. His activity reflects the prophesied divine plan that the birth narrative celebrates. In accordance with that plan, the religious leaders are submitted to divine judgment for failing to act as Israel's faithful shepherds (Ezek 34:2-10). It will be demonstrated that the parable contains echoes to decisive moments in Israel's history (Ex. 16) and, most importantly, to the prophetic description of Israel's future with YHWH (Ezek 34). Ultimately, these echoes anchor the activity of Jesus in the promised activity of YHWH toward his scattered flock.

The Setting of Luke 15:1-2 as the Interpretive Key of Luke 15:1-7

The setting of Luke 15:1-2 is an interpretive key for the lost parables that follow.⁶⁰⁷ The parable is situated in the middle of Luke's travel narrative (9:51-19:44), which contains narrative

⁶⁰⁵ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 568.

⁶⁰⁶ N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 533.

⁶⁰⁷ Kenneth E. Bailey, *Finding the Lost* (St Louis: Concordia Publishing House), 91; David A. Neale, *None but the Sinners: Religious Categories in the Gospel of Luke* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 154; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina, edited by Daniel J. Harrington (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical

and discourse material that presents the sinners, tax collectors, and outcasts as humble and welcome recipients of Jesus' ministry (5:8, 29-30; 7:36-50). The lost parables as a whole, and the parable of 15:3-7 in particular, offer a response to the objection raised by the Pharisees and scribes regarding Jesus' relationship with tax collectors and sinners (Lk 15:1-2).⁶⁰⁸ The setting positions the following parables to respond.

The setting of the lost parables (15:1-2) anticipates a further subversion of the religious categories of the sinner and the righteous. Harris is right in her careful treatment of the setting: "establishing what Luke is saying in the setting and how this informs the parables is essential for the reader to understand the parable of the faithful shepherd."⁶⁰⁹ 15:1-2 establishes the Pharisees and scribes as the primary audience for Jesus' parables.⁶¹⁰ Green asserts that the parable must be read in its local co-text as a response to the Pharisees and scribes who object to Jesus' mission and table fellowship with sinners.⁶¹¹ Given Luke 15:1-2, Harris suggests that the three lost parables are specifically designed to "challeng[e] the religious leaders as to their non-acceptance and welcome of toll collectors and sinners."⁶¹² Further still, Neale concludes that Jesus' purpose is to justify his activity toward sinners against the charge of the Pharisees, and to present a countercharge against them for failing to do the same.⁶¹³ In order to detect this purpose, the

Press, 2006), 239; Stephen Curkpatrick, "Parable Metonymy and Luke's Kerygmatic Framing," in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*. vol. 25 (2003), 289-307; Sarah Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 96 f. 75.

⁶⁰⁸ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 568

⁶⁰⁹ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 93

⁶¹⁰ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 572.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, 575.

⁶¹² Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 94.

⁶¹³ Neale, *None but the Sinners*, 155.

parable should be heard as a response to the objection of the Pharisees and scribes to Jesus' relationship with the outcasts of religious society, tax collectors and sinners.

Identifying the Characters: The Shepherd, the Sinners and the Righteous

Given this setting, the parable provides an implicit contrast between the identities and activities of Jesus and the Pharisees and scribes, and this contrast is contextualized by the shepherd text of Ezekiel 34. In keeping with the prophetic shepherd motif, Luke's text seems to depict the parable's faithful shepherd in a way that compares him to Jesus and contrasts him to the religious leaders. While the tax collectors and sinners are treated as outsiders by the religious leaders, they are represented by the lost sheep, claimed by the shepherd. The religious leaders are depicted pejoratively, both as those who have failed in the shepherd's task and those who breed division and rebellion within the flock. The tax collectors and sinners parallel YHWH's flock, and the Pharisees and scribes parallel the unfaithful shepherds, while Jesus is the faithful shepherd, both of the parable (Lk 15: 4-6), and of Ezekiel's prophecy (34:10-31). Jesus' person and activity is contextualized according to the description of the parable's faithful shepherd. Intertextual links will tether Jesus' identity to the identity of YHWH, Israel's Shepherd, who sees the mistreatment of his flock and responds by returning as their shepherd and removing failed shepherds as their leaders (Ezek 34).⁶¹⁴

The Shepherd: An Embodiment of Jesus' Mission, a Fulfillment of YHWH's Promises, and a Foil to the Religious Leaders

Multiple intertextual and thematic markers in Luke's text will contribute to the argument that the relationship is strong between Luke 15:1-7 and prophetic shepherd texts, particularly

⁶¹⁴ The Luke 15 pericope is best understood when the parable is read in light of YHWH's reciprocal relationship with Israel.

Ezekiel 34. Jesus instructs the religious leaders to identify as shepherds by introducing the parable with the rhetorical question, “which one of you” (Τίς ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ὑμῶν, 15:4).⁶¹⁵ Of all of the parables in Luke,⁶¹⁶ the parable of the faithful shepherd is the only one where the audience is explicitly invited to identify with the main character.⁶¹⁷ The invitation for the Pharisees and scribes to identify with the shepherd in the parable does not reflect cultural norms; it was unlikely that first-century Jewish religious elite would even consider being an unclean shepherd.⁶¹⁸ Jesus’ invitation seems to be better understood by Scripture’s depiction of Israel’s leaders as shepherds. The identification of Pharisees and scribes as shepherds is consistent with the shepherd motif of the prophets. Ezekiel and Jeremiah condemn the leaders of Israel as unfaithful shepherds who failed to seek the lost sheep (Jer 23:1-8; Ezek 34:1-16). Green, Bailey, Klein, Blomberg, Harris, Beale and Carson agree that the Pharisees and scribes, highly trained in Scripture and thus familiar with the good-bad shepherd contrast in Jeremiah 23:1-8 and Ezekiel 34:1-16, would have recognized echoes of the shepherd texts in Jesus’ words and recognized the parable as a critique of their leadership as shepherds over Israel.⁶¹⁹ The Pharisees and scribes

⁶¹⁵ Craig Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 180; Green, *Gospel*, 573.

⁶¹⁶ Lk. 8:4-15; 10:25-37; 12:13-21; 13:18-19; 14:15-24; 15:1-7, 8-10, 11-32; 16:1-9; 18:1-8, 9-14; 19:11-27; 20:9-19

⁶¹⁷ Klyne Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 102. It is this unclean trade that YHWH identifies with in describing his compassionate and tender care for his people.

⁶¹⁸ Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 102. Snodgrass summarizes the treatment of shepherds in Jewish sources. “*B. Sanhedrin 25b* lists herdsmen among those ineligible to be witnesses and associates them with tax collectors, and *b. Baba Qamma 94b* says that it is difficult for shepherds to repent and make restitution.” *Midrash Ps. 23:3* says “R. Jose bar Hanina taught: In the whole world you find no occupation more despised than that of the shepherd, who all his days walks about with his staff and his pouch. Yet David presumed to call the Holy One, blessed be He, a shepherd!”

⁶¹⁹ Green, *Gospel*, 575; Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 91; Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, 180; Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 93; G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 341.

would have possessed the theological framework to recognize the familiar motif in Jesus' parable, and according to this motif, it is Jesus, and not them, who is the faithful shepherd.⁶²⁰

The rhetorical question introducing the parable implies that the shepherd's active search and joyful celebration over the recovery of a lost sheep is the proper response of a good shepherd (15:4-6). Luke's setting presents Israel's grumbling leaders as a foil to this picture (15:2). Jesus pursues those whom they treat as outcasts (15:1-2), and they have already been shown to be opponents of him and his mission. The setting presents the Pharisees and scribes pejoratively especially considering the Old Testament prophetic context. The parable is confrontational on several levels. In light of the larger narrative unit, Green finds two foci emerging from the parable (15:3-7): the parable acts as an apologetic legitimizing Jesus' ministry and condemning the activity of the religious leaders.⁶²¹

Jesus defends his ministry to the outcasts as a manifestation of YHWH's own mission. Luke seems to rely on the Old Testament scriptural motif to defend Jesus' activity as a specific fulfillment of divine promises. Jesus is found welcoming and pursuing outcasts, or those who exist on the margins of social and religious society and outside of the care of their leaders.⁶²² According to Old Testament prophecies, this group is not outside of YHWH's care. Instead of perpetuating their marginalization, YHWH describes the extent to which he will go to seek and gather his scattered flock, restoring them and bringing them back to the home and community where they belong (Jer 23:3, 8; Ezek 34:10-16).⁶²³ In light of this shepherding material in the

⁶²⁰ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 104.

⁶²¹ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 569. Green finds these foci emerging from each of the three parables (15:3-7, 8-10, 11-32). The focus here is the way in which they emerge from the first parable of the lost sheep.

⁶²² Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 64.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*

prophets, Wright asserts that Luke's three lost parables are designed "to validate and vindicate Jesus' own activity in taking the initiative and seeking out the lost."⁶²⁴ Green agrees, stating that "the positive response (i.e., repentance) of the toll collectors and sinners (i.e., the lost) as they gather around Jesus constitutes a restoration of the lost that calls for celebration (i.e., table fellowship)."⁶²⁵ The parable of the lost sheep reveals the nature of Jesus' mission and the antagonistic position occupied by the Jewish religious elite.⁶²⁶

In addition to contextualizing and defending his person and activity according to YHWH's promises, Jesus offers a rebuke to the religious authorities and a warning for them to reorient their activity according to his mission toward the lost.⁶²⁷ While the unrighteous community's interest in Jesus is shocking to the senses of the religious elite, what appears to be more disturbing to them is Jesus' approachability and his explicit welcome of the outcasts. The Pharisees and scribes are outraged and offended by this dynamic, but given Old Testament echoes, the parable of the lost sheep will be shown to directly confront both their attitude and their failure. While the Pharisees condemn the people as sinners, intentionally live at a distance from them, and grumble about Jesus' reception of them, the lost sheep parable features a shepherd who pursues the lost at his own expense and expresses joy over recovery.⁶²⁸ The setting and the parable that follows starkly contrast the faithful shepherd to the grumbling Pharisees and

⁶²⁴ Wright, *Jesus and Victory of God*, 255.

⁶²⁵ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 569.

⁶²⁶ Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 62.

⁶²⁷ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 569.

⁶²⁸ Jacob Neusner, *Law as Literature* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1983), 340. Jacob Neusner points out that since the Pharisees lived among the ordinary population, their purity-rules and food laws were that much more important, as an essential means of distinguishing the Pharisees from the rest of the population.

scribes.⁶²⁹ Given the prophetic shepherd texts, they grumble because they are unfaithful antagonists of YHWH's mission. In contrast to the religious leaders, the shepherd's response to the lost aligns with the activity of Jesus, and ultimately, given the Old Testament echoes, the activity of YHWH. The shepherd texts of the prophets reveal that the Pharisees and scribes bear fateful similarities to the unfaithful shepherd leaders over Israel and the wicked among the flock (Jer 23:1-2; Ezek 34:2-10, 17-19). As a result, they are confronted with implicit warnings of imminent, eschatological judgment.

The Sinners and the Righteous: An Inversion of Religious Categories

While the Pharisees and scribes are positioned as unfaithful shepherds inviting judgment, the sinners and tax collectors are positioned as faithful disciples and true members of the flock. Luke 15:1-7 reads like a text acting out Jesus' instructions to welcome "the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind" (14:13; cf. 14:21; 16:20).⁶³⁰ The lost sheep parable is set within the context of Jesus hosting sinners (ἁματωλός, Lk 15:2), a term that Luke uses more than any other synoptic writer.⁶³¹ Luke uses the term eighteen times to Matthew's five and Mark's six. Four of Luke's usages occur in passages that have synoptic parallels (Lk. 5:30; Mk. 2:15; Mt. 9:10; Lk. 5:32; Mk. 2:16; Mt. 9:13; Lk. 7:34; Mt. 11:9; Lk. 24:7; Mk. 14:14; Mt. 26:45), while fourteen occur in passages unique to Luke. Sinner language is featured at strategic moments in the narrative. Four usages are found in the Sermon on the Plain (6:32, 33, 34 [twice]), and six usages occur within pericopes featuring Jesus' relationship with a sinner (5:8; 7:37, 39; 13:2; 15:1, 2, 7, 10; 18:13; 19:7). Significantly, two key mission statements contained in the Gospel

⁶²⁹ J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, volume 2 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 1076.

⁶³⁰ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 569.

⁶³¹ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 104.

are fixed in a “sinner pericope” (5:32; 19:10).⁶³² While all people are sinners (13:1-5), Luke uses the term to feature certain individuals as they are related to the person and mission to Jesus.

“Sinners” are scattered throughout Luke’s Gospel, and Jesus’ interaction with them is often shocking to the religious authorities. Luke often uses the term to communicate that Jesus’ mission is inverting the expected social order. For instance, a woman, a sinner (ἁματωλός) is forgiven rather than Simon the Pharisee (7:36-50), and a tax collector, lamenting his identity as a sinner (ἁματωλῶ), is justified rather than a member of the religious elite (18:13-14).⁶³³ On each occasion, the sinner becomes the protagonist, and her/his humility immediately precedes forgiveness. Society’s order is reoriented when those assumed to be righteous are the sinners, and a sinner is positioned to receive forgiveness and restoration within Jesus’ community. Luke has prepared his reader to see those who claim righteousness inverted with those labelled as sinners. This juxtaposition of the sinner and the righteous is reflected in Luke 15:1-7.⁶³⁴

The lack of repentance language in these parables and in the Zacchaeus pericope is perhaps better understood according to the shepherd motif of Ezekiel. YHWH-Shepherd’s pursuit of the lost and their restoration is the emphasis in Ezekiel 34 rather than the flock’s need to repent and be forgiven. While it is implied, given other related passages (Jer 31), it is not the only and immediate emphasis in the shepherd texts. Luke seems to be adopting this same emphasis in his depiction of Jesus’ pursuit of the lost. The steadfast, compassionate pursuit of Jesus and the neediness of those whom he seeks is central. It is because of his pursuit of the lost that repentance and restoration are possible, and required, but that does not always seem to be

⁶³² Dwayne H. Adams, *The Sinner in Luke*, The Evangelical Theological Society Monograph Series (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2008), 90.

⁶³³ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 97.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

Luke's emphasis in these passages. In Jesus' pursuit, he welcomes society's outcasts to a degree that implies forgiveness and restored fellowship. It is his pursuit and the fact of their restoration that seems to be Luke's main concern rather than the process required. Bailey suggests that the parable reveals repentance to be "acceptance of being found."⁶³⁵ It is a return to YHWH, initiated and accomplished by him.

The sinners and tax collectors represent the object of Jesus' mission. They also stand as representatives of his community. In the preceding narrative (14:25-35), Jesus describes faithful discipleship, and the tax collectors and sinners are aligned with disciples of Jesus. In the previous pericope, Jesus characterizes disciples as faithful listeners (Ὁ ἔχων ὅσα ἀκούειν) (14:35). Luke uses the same language in the setting of the parable when he introduces the tax collectors and sinners as those who have gathered around to hear (ἀκούειν) Jesus (Lk 15:1).⁶³⁶ Evidently, those who are "oriented toward discipleship" (14:26-35) are not the Pharisees and scribes, who grumble about Jesus' activity, but the tax collectors and sinners who are determined to hear (ἀκούειν) him (15:1).⁶³⁷ Though they are outcasts, they respond to Jesus' invitation (14:15-24) and possess an identity marker that Jesus expects of his community.

The Pharisees and scribes specifically grumble that Jesus receives and eats with sinners (ἀμαρτωλοὺς προσδέχεται καὶ συνεσθίει αὐτοῖς, 15:2). The sinners and tax collectors represent the unclean, irreligious, and unrighteous, and Jesus' pursuit and welcome of them is customary in Luke (5:8; 7:37, 39; 18:13; 19:7).⁶³⁸ In the setting of Luke 15, Luke makes this point

⁶³⁵ Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 69, 85. Isaiah 40-55 emphasizes returning to YHWH.

⁶³⁶ Nolland, *Luke*, 770.

⁶³⁷ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 570.

⁶³⁸ Fitzmyer, *Gospel According to Luke*, 1076.

particularly clear: “Now all the tax collectors and sinners were drawing near to him to hear him” (Ἦσαν δὲ αὐτῷ ἐγγίζοντες πάντες οἱ τελῶναι καὶ οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ἀκούειν αὐτοῦ, 15:1). Luke’s use of πάντες is likely hyperbolic, emphasizing the extent of Jesus’ relationship with the outcasts of Jewish religious society (15:1).⁶³⁹ By not only eating with the tax collectors and sinners but hosting the meal himself (15:2), Jesus indicates that society’s outcasts are not on the outside of the divine mission. Bailey observes that while a nobleman in the East may have extended generosity to the needy, even feeding them, he would not eat *with* them. Doing so would indicate intimacy and fellowship in explicit defiance of social standards.⁶⁴⁰ Luke depicts Jesus treating “these unclean, contemptible persons of ignoble status, as though they were acceptable, as though they were his own kin.”⁶⁴¹ The treatment Jesus offers them is an inversion of what they have received from the religious leaders.

The sinners and tax collectors drawing near to Jesus serve as an aggregate picture of the “humble” and “hungry” who Mary proclaimed would be exalted and satisfied (1:52-53). Mary’s description of eschatological salvation that is articulated in the birth narrative reflects prophetic promises that YHWH will feed his sheep. In YHWH’s promises to return as Shepherd contained in Old Testament texts, he describes gathering and feeding his hungry sheep and delivering judgment on the shepherds who only tended to themselves (Ezek 34:10, 14). Mary’s proclamation that the hungry would be satisfied and the rich sent away empty (1:52) seems to find partial fulfillment in Luke 15. Luke explicitly emphasizes Jesus’ practice of welcoming and eating with sinners, the outcast of Jewish religious society. Tax collectors and sinners, those

⁶³⁹ Neale, *None but the Sinners*, 155. Luke has used hyperbole in Lk 9:43 and 13:17. The use of hyperbole for emphasis indicates that the account is a type-scene, Tannehill, *Narrative Unity*, 106.

⁶⁴⁰ Kenneth Bailey, *Poet and Peasant* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 143.

⁶⁴¹ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 571.

scattered on the margins, find a place of belonging, and those with comfortable positions of power, the Pharisees and scribes, find themselves dangerously separated from Jesus' work. The lost sheep of the parable represents the tax collectors and sinners (Lk 15:4), perhaps first depicted as the lost and hungry sheep of the prophets who would attract YHWH's concern and attention (Ezek 34:11-16).

Responses to YHWH's Eschatological Mission

Ezekiel's description of the lost sheep, the way they are treated by the unfaithful shepherds, and the promise of YHWH to faithfully shepherd them has been shown to suggest a fitting framework for Jesus' lost sheep parable. Several essential points of contrast have emerged from the setting and the parable itself. The characters have been identified not by their labels, but by their interaction with one another and their reaction to Jesus' mission. The parable presents an inversion of the sinners and the righteous.

Additional contrasts will continue to emerge below. Luke 15:1-7 will be shown to articulate contrasting reactions to Jesus' pursuit of the lost, pictured in the shepherd's pursuit of the lost sheep. The Pharisees and scribes grumble that Jesus receives those who they regard as outcasts, tax collectors, and sinners. By grumbling, they are blatantly opposed to Jesus' mission. In contrast, the shepherd of the parable rejoices when he finds his lost sheep, and he urges his family and friends to join him in his joy. Further interaction with the text of Luke 15:1-7 and its relationship to Ezekiel 34 will contribute to the argument that the opposition against Jesus' mission that is articulated in Luke represents opposition to YHWH's eschatological mission.

Given the ways that Jesus' identity and mission parallels YHWH's, the contrast between grumbling and rejoicing as responses to the pursuit of the lost will be shown to be instructive in several ways. The contrast identifies the religious leaders as foils and enemies to Jesus' person

and mission, and ultimately, like the rebellious wilderness generation, they are opponents of YHWH. On the other hand, the joy of the shepherd and his community mirrors eschatological joy that is first voiced in the birth narrative. The grumbling religious leaders will be contrasted to birth narrative characters who embrace YHWH's eschatological activity in keeping with prophetic promises. These intertextual markers will position the religious leaders as opponents not only of Jesus, but of YHWH, whose identity Jesus possesses and whose mission he advances.

“Grumbling” as Rebellious Opposition

By grumbling (διεγόγγυζον) about Jesus' reception of tax collectors and sinners (Lk 15:2), the religious leaders are contrasted to the shepherd in the parable and those who participate in YHWH's eschatological activity. In the New Testament, διαγογγύζω appears only in Luke, and each time, it is in “the exact same kind of setting”: here (15:2) and in the Zacchaeus pericope (19:7), treated below.⁶⁴² Each time Luke uses the term διαγογγύζω (or the related term γογγύζω, 5:30), it describes the response of the Pharisees and scribes to Jesus' activity. The language that Luke reserves for the religious leaders positions them as opponents existing outside of what he is doing.⁶⁴³ Luke is the only New Testament writer to use διαγογγύζω, but the term appears more frequently in the LXX. With one exception, διεγόγγυζον is used in reference to the exodus period (Exod. 15:24; 16:2, 7, 8; Num. 14:2, 36; 16:11; Deut. 1:27; cf. Josh. 9:18).⁶⁴⁴ More specifically, the term describes Israel's rebellious response to the YHWH's leadership, whether direct or indirect (Ps 106:25). YHWH is described as Israel's Shepherd who

⁶⁴² John O'Hanlon, “The Story of Zacchaeus and the Lukan Ethic,” in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 4 no. 12 (Sage Publications: July 1981), 2.

⁶⁴³ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 95.

⁶⁴⁴ Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My own Heart* (Westmont, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 2006), 205.

carefully led and provided for Israel (Ps. 77:20; 78:52-53; 80:1; 106:25), but the exodus generation is remembered in the Old Testament as those who grumbled and rebelled against him. While YHWH shepherds his flock, there are those who grumble against him.

The infrequency of the term *διεγόγγυζον* in the New Testament, and its concentrated usage in the LXX, suggests that an echo of Old Testament usage may be intentional. A single echo may link one idea to a larger picture through a causal chain, and here, the unusual use of the term *διεγόγγυζον* brings into view Israel's rebellious response toward YHWH their Shepherd, especially given that the parable of Luke 15:3-7 features a shepherd.⁶⁴⁵ Scholars including Evans, Moessner, Green, O'Toole, Strauss, Scobie, and Turner see Jesus' travel narrative modelling Israel's exodus journey, and the combined mention of a grumbling response and a shepherd's activity may be a significant indication that the exodus framework is instructive.⁶⁴⁶ O'Hanlon finds the intertextual relationship clear and significant, stating that, "the Exodus background to the murmuring supplies the key to Luke's thought here."⁶⁴⁷ If so, then like the wilderness generation, the Pharisees and scribes are positioned in the narrative as enemies of YHWH the Shepherd of Israel. In addition to linking the Pharisees and scribes to the rebellious

⁶⁴⁵ John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 131-49; Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 96.

⁶⁴⁶ They see Jesus portrayed as a new Moses who fulfills his duties as lawgiver, deliverer, and leader, depicted in Deuteronomy. Explicit echoes occur at the beginning of the section, when the accomplishment of Jesus' mission is described as his *ἔξοδος* (9:31), and Jesus is portrayed as an authoritative prophet like Moses (9:35). Throughout the remaining narrative, the characterization is less textually based and more analogous. They see him leading the disciples on a journey as Moses led Israel. Jesus initiates the New Covenant (22:20), and as the greater Moses, he completes his mission and brings his followers to the promised destination (23:44). C. F. Evans, "The Central Section of St. Luke's Gospel," in *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot* (ed. D. E. Nineham; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), 37-53; D. P. Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet: The Literary and Theological Significance of the Lukan Travel Narrative* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1989); Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 353-4; Robert F. O'Toole, "The Parallels Between Jesus and Moses," *Biblical Theology Bulletin: Journal of Bible and Culture* 20, iss. 1 (1990), 22-29; David Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 261-336; Charles H. H. Scobie, "A Canonical Approach to Interpreting Luke," in *Reading Luke: Interpretation, Reflection, Formation*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew, Joel B. Green and Anthony C. Thiselton (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 327-49.

⁶⁴⁷ O'Hanlon, "Story of Zacchaeus," 15.

wilderness generation, the use of the term *διεγόγγυζον* also contrasts them to faithful recipients of YHWH's salvation as depicted in the parable and the birth narrative.

The grumbling Pharisees and scribes are contrasted to the joyful shepherd (15:5-6), whose response is an explicit mirror of eschatological joy (15:7).⁶⁴⁸ Evidently, to grumble about Jesus' work is not only to align with the rebellious wilderness generation who died outside of YHWH's plan, but it is to embody an antagonistic response to the eschatological divine mission. By grumbling, the Pharisees and scribes are contrasted with the protagonist in the parable and are shown to be opposed to Jesus' mission recovering YHWH's lost sheep.⁶⁴⁹ Though Israel's leaders should embody and mimic the pursuit and joy of the shepherd, instead, they grumble and express opposition to Jesus' mission toward the outcasts (Lk 5:30; 11:39-41, 46, 52; 13:14; 15:2). They not only fail to pursue the lost as faithful shepherds, but they grumble when Jesus does so. By grumbling, the Pharisees and scribes set themselves in opposition to the divine mission while identifying with the rebellious exodus generation who grumbled against YHWH as their shepherd (Ps 76:21; 77:52-53; 79:2).⁶⁵⁰ The unbelieving Israelites grumbled about God's work in the wilderness, and in Luke, Jesus is enacting the new Exodus work of the eschatological

⁶⁴⁸ In each of the three lost parables, joy is emphasized. The shepherd, woman, and father express joy at the recovery of the lost (15:5-6, 23-24, 32). The joy of the shepherd and the woman mirrors eschatological joy (15:7, 10).

⁶⁴⁹ The pride of the Pharisees and scribes is starkly contrasted with the depiction of God as a faithful shepherd, a poor woman, and a merciful father (15:4, 8, 20).

⁶⁵⁰ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 96.

Shepherd,⁶⁵¹ only to find a remaining community within Israel still grumbling and disbelieving.⁶⁵²

“Rejoicing” as Glad Participation

The joy of the shepherd mirrors eschatological joy that Luke first introduces in the birth narrative. Eschatological joy is bound to prophetic promises stating that Israel’s period of wandering would end when YHWH visited his people and inaugurated his salvific mission. The result of his visitation and the inauguration of eschatological salvation would be transformational. Jeremiah prophesied that the consolation of YHWH’s return would transform sorrow into joy, and the shepherd motif is one way that his return is depicted (Jer 31:12). The conditions of the people would be reversed, and joy would replace their sorrow (31:13-14). Exclamations of joy are punctuated throughout Isaiah 40-66 as YHWH’s future return to Israel and activity among them is detailed (44:23; 49:13-14; 52:8-9; 61:10).

This promise of joy is actualized in the birth narrative when individuals respond to the news of YHWH’s visitation in Jesus (1:68). Gabriel introduces his message to Mary with the proclamation to rejoice (1:28), and this response becomes the shared experience of those who recognize and respond to the eschatological significance of Jesus’ birth (1:44, 46, 58; 2:10).

⁶⁵¹ Chapter 2 explored some of the ways that YHWH depicts Israel’s future hope of restoration in language that depicts the return from exile as comprehensive deliverance accomplished by YHWH himself (Jer 30:16-17; 31:7-14; Ezek 20; 37:12-13; Mic 2:12-13; 7:18-20). The same hope articulated in the prophets is expressed in Second Temple texts including 4Q504, *Apocryphon of Ezekiel* and *Psalms of Solomon*. The physical return from exile did not accomplish the scope of restoration described by the prophets, and Jesus’ activity affecting this return and restoration is found to answer the hope YHWH inspired based on his personal promise to return to his flock. YHWH’s promise to enact a new exodus, a return from exile, provides a fitting framework for Jesus’ identity and mission as Luke 15:1-7 depicts it.

⁶⁵² Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 96. The shepherd motif is employed at strategic moments in the travel narrative (Lk 15 and 19) where Luke’s unique material is concentrated. Harris observes that the reason may be this: “Perhaps Luke considered this motif as most helpful in his journey section where Jesus the Shepherd, like Moses the shepherd, led God’s people in the exodus.” The theory is supported by the proposal that the travel narrative models the exodus narrative.

Mary's song celebrates that divine mercy would be extended and the conditions of the lowly and proud would be reversed (1:48, 51-53), and the lost sheep parable indicates the realization of that reality. The lost sheep is pursued and welcomed home (15:5-6), and the religious leaders are depicted as the true outcasts because of their pride (15:2, 7). Expressions of eschatological joy at the recovery of the lost harkens back to the birth narratives, where the inbreaking of YHWH's deliverance sparked exclamations of joy that anticipated divine deliverance and consolation. Birth narrative characters realize the imminent redemption that will accompany Jesus' arrival, and their response of joy can be understood as the expected reaction among those who witness his redemptive mission at work. As promised, YHWH has visited (1:55, 68, 70), and the inauguration of his mission inspires eschatological joy. By grumbling, the Pharisees and scribes betray the fact that they are the opponents of Jesus' eschatological mission, actualized by his pursuit of the lost as their faithful shepherd.

Reading Luke 15:1-7 Intertextually

Having detected the points of contrast between the religious leaders, tax collectors and sinners, and Jesus, and having identified those on the inside and outside of his eschatological mission, attention now turns to specific features of the parable that echo prophetic depictions of YHWH's future activity on behalf of his people. These echoes are the strands that tether prophetic promises to the person and activity of Jesus in Luke. The parable offers a representative depiction of Jesus ministry throughout the gospel, and it aligns with the depiction of YHWH Shepherd of Ezekiel 34.

Luke's parable departs from Matthew's at several points that are found to be significant for the depiction of the divine mission he promotes. Allusions are detected to YHWH the Shepherd of Ezekiel 34, as well as Isaiah 40; Jesus' person and activity, illustrated in parable's

faithful shepherd, are understood according to the person and activity of YHWH. An intertextual reading of Luke 15:1-7 will be found to suggest a depiction of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd.

Luke 15:4-7 and Matthew 18:10-14

Both Matthew and Luke contain the lost sheep and faithful shepherd parable, and the purpose of noting points of contrast between the two accounts is to detect the unique features in Luke's account that may indicate purposeful depictions of Jesus, particularly as it relates to his identity as YHWH Shepherd. While Matthew states that the sheep strayed (πλανηθῆ, 18:12), Luke states that having one hundred sheep, the shepherd lost (ἀπολέσας) one (Lk 15:4).⁶⁵³ Matthew implies that the sheep is to blame, while Luke assigns blame to the shepherd. Matthew states that the shepherd will leave the ninety-nine in the hills (ὄρη, Matt. 18:12), and if he should find it (ἐὰν γένηται εὐρεῖν αὐτό), he will rejoice more than over the ninety-nine who never strayed (18:13). Luke states that the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine in the wilderness (ἐρήμῳ) rather than the hills, and the shepherd goes after (πορεύεται) the lost one until he finds it (ἕως εὗρη αὐτό, 15:4). Matthew offers the shepherd's success as a possibility, and if he does find his sheep, he will rejoice (χαίρει, Matt 18:13). Luke guarantees his shepherd's success. When Luke's shepherd finds his lost sheep, he carries it home rejoicing, (χαίρων) before calling for others to rejoice with him (Συνχάρητέ, 15:5-6).

The emphasis on the success and the joy of the faithful shepherd is stronger in Luke than it is in Matthew. In contrast to Matthew, Luke places blame on the shepherd rather than the sheep, guarantees the success of his mission, emphasizes his compassionate care of his lost one, and, above all, his personal joy and expectation that his neighbors and friends will rejoice with

⁶⁵³ The difference between Matthew's and Luke's choice of words is not in Old Testament precedence. Both words occur in Ezekiel 34:4 and 16. The difference is that Matthew assigns, or at least implies, guilt to the sheep, and Luke assigns guilt to the shepherd.

him over the sheep's recovery.⁶⁵⁴ Both Matthew and Luke mention the shepherd's personal joy over the sheep's recovery, but only Luke mentions both the shepherd's personal joy and his invitation for others to rejoice with him (Lk 15:5-6). Luke describes a community celebration (15:5).⁶⁵⁵ Luke's points of emphasis will be shown to possess significance as it relates to the text's relationship to prophetic shepherd texts.

Luke 15:4-7 and Ezekiel 34

Scholars including Green, Johnson, Adams, Bailey, Barton, Beale, Carson, and Harris identify Ezekiel 34 as the primary echo behind Luke 15:1-7.⁶⁵⁶ In Ezekiel, the shepherds are warned for not fulfilling their tasks as shepherds over YHWH's flock. Their negligence has left YHWH's sheep scattered, hungry, weak, and in danger (Ezek 34:1-10). When YHWH returns as shepherd, he will judge the wicked shepherds and reclaim and restore his lost sheep. In Ezekiel 34, YHWH describes the personal, concerted attention he will give to the needs of his sheep when he returns as their shepherd. He will personally feed the sheep that the shepherds have left hungry (Ezek 34:14), and he will secure their safety in the wilderness (ἐρήμῳ, Ezek 34:25). The shepherds were obligated to care for the sheep, and in light of their failures, YHWH reclaims the responsibility of searching for, finding, healing, feeding, and bringing back the lost sheep for himself (Ezek. 34:11-13).

⁶⁵⁴ Nolland, John. *Luke 9:21-18:34, Volume 35B*, edited by Bruce M. Metzger, et al., (HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2016), 769.

⁶⁵⁵ Laniak, *Shepherds after My own Heart*, 204.

⁶⁵⁶ They detect an analogy between the Pharisees and Israel's unfaithful shepherds of Ezekiel 34, and between Jesus and YHWH who promises to seek his sheep. Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 574; Johnson, *Gospel*, 240; Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jacob and the Prodigal* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 68-85; Steven C. Barton, 'Parables on God's Love and Forgiveness (Luke 15:1-32),' in *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*, edited by Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 204; Adams, *Sinner*, 159; Beale and Carson, *New Testament Use Old Testament*, 341; Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 103.

Several significant points of similarity between Ezekiel 34 and Luke 15:1-7 exist, and when considered together, it seems that Luke is depicting Jesus as YHWH Shepherd who fulfills his personal promises. Like Ezekiel, Luke's parable operates under the assumption that the good shepherd, having lost a sheep, would certainly seek and find it (Lk 15:4-6; Ezek 34:1-10).⁶⁵⁷ Luke's parable emphasizes the disproportionate concern and investment in the one sheep against the ninety-nine not in desperate need.⁶⁵⁸ The shepherd goes to great personal expense to seek, reclaim, and restore the lost, and though costly, his work brings joy. Several details in Luke's parable reflect normal occurrences among a shepherd and his flock. When a sheep strayed from the flock, it would helplessly and defenselessly lay down.⁶⁵⁹ It would not attempt to find its way back. The only way for the sheep to return to the flock was for the shepherd to seek it, find it, and lead it home. Often, the shepherd would be required to carry the sheep, which weighed an average of seventy pounds. This is the practice that Luke describes. The shepherd of Luke's parable leaves the flock in the wilderness (ἐρήμῳ) to find the lost sheep.⁶⁶⁰ Under these difficult conditions, the faithful shepherd bore this "burden of restoration,"⁶⁶¹ and though strenuous, it does not diminish his joy.⁶⁶²

Snodgrass finds the Luke 15 parable realistically portraying the helplessness of a lost sheep and the care of an especially good shepherd, but he finds the emphasis on celebration

⁶⁵⁷ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 574-5; Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 104.

⁶⁵⁸ Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 378.

⁶⁵⁹ Joachim Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 2003), 134; Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 102.

⁶⁶⁰ Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 74.

⁶⁶¹ Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, 148.

⁶⁶² Francois Bovon, *Lukas 3*, 27.

unusual (Lk 15:6). While the details of a lost sheep being found conform to the reality of shepherding in first century AD Israel, Snodgrass argues that it would have been unrealistic for a shepherd to call for his friends and neighbors to rejoice over the recovery of his lost sheep, especially since doing so would presumably require the provision of a meal.⁶⁶³ Snodgrass recognizes that this exaggerated emphasis on the joy of recovery and the meal it implies is intended to emphasize Jesus' glad pursuit of the lost and his habit of eating with them, especially given the setting of the parable (15:1-2).⁶⁶⁴ While the pursuit of the faithful shepherd aligns with the depiction of Jesus in Luke's narrative, it also aligns with the depiction of YHWH's activity in Ezekiel 34.⁶⁶⁵ Ezekiel 34:11-16 describes YHWH's pledge to return to his scattered and weak flock. YHWH describes the extent of his activity using a variety of verbs that paint a clear picture of the strenuous and costly nature of the task.⁶⁶⁶ Though it will require a costly mission of compassion toward his sheep and judgment toward their enemies, YHWH declares with certainty that he will restore his flock. In a similar way, the parable does not consider the cost to the shepherd as a deterrent from his responsibility to his sheep. When the parable is understood to explain Jesus' ministry, YHWH's shepherding promises come into view.

The parable's shepherd mirrors Jesus' purpose and mission while also serving as a foil for the Pharisees and scribes. Like the shepherds in Ezekiel, the leaders of Israel are situated

⁶⁶³ Craig L. Blomberg, *Contagious Holiness*, New Studies in Biblical Theology, edited by D. A. Carson (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2005), 156.

⁶⁶⁴ Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 102.

⁶⁶⁵ Jesus is revealing his identity by aligning himself with the shepherd of the parable, first, and with the YHWH Shepherd of Ezekiel 34, ultimately. Revelation of his identity is indicated according to his relationship with the lost. Principles of Boda's relational rhythm are sensed in Luke 15.

⁶⁶⁶ YHWH will search for (34:11), seek (v. 11, 12, 16), deliver (v. 12), bring out (v. 13), gather (v. 13), bring in (v. 13), feed (v. 13, 14[x2], 15), make lie down (v. 15), bring back (v. 16), bind up (v. 16) and strengthen (v. 16) his sheep.

pejoratively within the parable and the surrounding pericope (Lk 14:3, 17; 15:2; 16:14; 18:9-14; Ezek 34:2-10). The contrast between the depiction of the Pharisees and scribes in the setting and the selfless and joyful shepherd in the parable likens the religious leaders to Israel's wicked shepherds who do not care for the flock they had been appointed to lead (Ezek 34:1-6).⁶⁶⁷ If Ezekiel is Luke's background, then the Pharisees and scribes should understand Jesus' embodiment of the shepherding role to be indication that YHWH's promise in Ezekiel is being actualized; YHWH is replacing Israel's shepherds and preparing them for divine judgment (Ezek 34:10-11).

By first situating the parable within the setting of the Pharisees and scribes grumbling against Jesus' activity, and then by using the term ἐρήμω to describe the terrain where the flock resides while the shepherd pursues the lost, Luke uses language that may allude to texts describing the wilderness generation and Ezekiel's shepherd passage.⁶⁶⁸ The combined language of διεγόγγυζον and ἐρήμω recalls the rebellion of the grumbling exodus generation against the leadership of YHWH in the wilderness (Ex 16:2, 7, 8). The Pharisees and scribes resemble the rebellious generation. The mention of ἐρήμω may also be an additional echo of Ezekiel's shepherd passage (Ezek 34:25). When YHWH returns to his exiled flock, restores them, establishes the Davidic Shepherd over them and makes a covenant of peace with them, he promises that the flock will dwell in safety in the ἐρήμω (Ezek 34:25). Luke sets his shepherding scene in the ἐρήμω, where the flock is safe because of the faithful care of the shepherd (15:4).⁶⁶⁹ Luke's use of ἐρήμω may be an additional thread tethering this parable, and Jesus' activity

⁶⁶⁷ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 105.

⁶⁶⁸ ἔρημος occurs 336 times in the LXX, but only 9 times in the New Testament.

⁶⁶⁹ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 104.

throughout Luke, to YHWH's Shepherding activity described by Ezekiel. Ezekiel 34 details the judgment that YHWH will bring on both the unfaithful shepherds over Israel and the wicked among the flock (Ezek 34:17-22), and Luke may be drawing on both characterizations to reveal how, like their rebellious ancestors and generations of wicked leaders, the leaders of the Jewish religious system stand in distinct opposition to YHWH. Those whom Jesus gathers and brings back home experience the fulfillment of YHWH's promises to regather and restore his exiled people (Jer 30:16-17; 31:7-14; Ezek 20; 37:12-13; Mic 2:12-13; 7:18-20).

Luke 15:4-7 and Isaiah 40

The image of the shepherd placing the sheep on his shoulders was a practice sometimes required of a good shepherd. While mention of the practice is not unique to Luke, Fitzmyer points out that "this may be missing the point."⁶⁷⁰ By including this detail that Matthew does not, Luke draws a vivid picture of a compassionate and concerned shepherd. According to Marshall, Bock, and Harris, the image seems to be an intentional allusion to Isaiah 40:11, which describes YHWH coming with both power and compassion to "gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom," (Isa 40:11).⁶⁷¹ The verse depicts a composite image of the "idyllic pastoral picture" of YHWH the compassionate shepherd who cares for his sheep and the image of YHWH the powerful warrior bringing salvation (40:10-31). In Isaiah 40, YHWH comes with might to defeat his enemies and accomplish salvation, which involves YHWH tending, carrying, and leading his flock home as a shepherd (Isa 40:10-11). YHWH is depicted as a warrior bringing salvation with strength and authority (40:8-31). To act as Shepherd, he must conquer

⁶⁷⁰ Fitzmyer, *Gospel According to Luke*, 1077.

⁶⁷¹ Marshall, *Gospel*, 601; Bock, *Luke*, 1301; Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 101.

the threats to his flock. The larger context of Isaiah 40 contains a strong statement about the incomparability of YHWH (40:25), and Luke seems to be echoing this passage in his defense of Jesus' person and activity.⁶⁷² The combined image of YHWH simultaneously acting as mighty warrior and compassionate shepherd is not unique to Isaiah. It reflects descriptions scattered throughout the prophets of YHWH's shepherding responsibility toward his flock and their enemies (Jer 23:2; 25: 34-38; Ezek 34:20-22; Mic 2:12-13; Zech 10:3-5).

Jesus Possessing the Identity of YHWH Shepherd

Green agrees that Ezekiel 34 echoes throughout Luke 15 and concludes that Luke appears to be casting the Pharisees and scribes as the unfaithful shepherds under YHWH's indictment while presenting Jesus as the one fulfilling YHWH's role.⁶⁷³ Harris sees a strong intertextual relationship with Ezekiel 34, but she focuses her attention on Jesus' fulfillment of the Davidic Shepherd role of Ezekiel (Ezek 34:23-24).⁶⁷⁴ Though Luke does emphasize Jesus as the Davidic King (Lk 1:27, 32, 69; 2:4, 11; 18:38-41; 20:40-47), his depiction of Jesus in the divine shepherding role seems to concentrate on his fulfillment of tasks that Ezekiel credits to YHWH Shepherd (34:11-16). YHWH's arrival and the fulfillment of his tasks precedes the establishment of his Davidic Shepherd (34:23). YHWH seeks, finds, gathers, feeds, and restores his lost sheep before placing his Davidic Shepherd over them to tend them and be their shepherd. Jesus' relationship to the outcasts (gathering, feeding, restoring) is starkly contrasted to that of the religious leaders, accentuating the ways that Jesus fulfills the role of Ezekiel's YHWH Shepherd

⁶⁷² Through his activity toward the outcasts and the lost, Jesus' identity is revealed. Revelation of his identity is to be informed by YHWH's revelation in the past. This revelation is directly tied to his promises. His character is worked out in his actions (character creed).

⁶⁷³ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 575.

⁶⁷⁴ Beale and Carson, *New Testament Use Old Testament*, 342; Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 104; Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 575 n. 215.

(Lk 15:1-7). The parable seems to be contextualizing Jesus' ministry to the outcasts according to the divine prophecies that YHWH himself would condemn and overthrow Israel's wicked shepherds and arrive himself as Israel's Shepherd.

The case that Luke seems to be making (Jesus is YHWH Shepherd) has been detected in scholarship. Nolland identifies Old Testament depictions of YHWH as Shepherd (Ezek 34:11-16; Ps 23:1-3) as the background of Luke 15:1-7, also concluding that Jesus is acting in YHWH's stead: "The implication is that in some sense Jesus takes the place of God; he performs the acts of God."⁶⁷⁵ As owner of the flock, YHWH possesses the right to decide on its treatment, and what he describes in Ezekiel 34 is acted out by Jesus in Luke's narrative.⁶⁷⁶ In other words, "the conduct of Jesus is the concrete form taken by the salvific intervention of God."⁶⁷⁷

The implications are significant. In light of Ezekiel 34, Block calls Jesus' self-characterization as the "Good Shepherd" a blatantly "blasphemous identification with deity."⁶⁷⁸ By implicitly claiming the status of the faithful shepherd seeking the lost sheep, Jesus reveals that he is doing what YHWH promised to do (Ezek 34:11-16).⁶⁷⁹ Bailey concludes that the Old Testament context (especially Ezek 34:11-22) precludes the possibility that the shepherd of Luke's parable is an agent of YHWH's. Instead, he is "the one who in his person fulfills the promises of the prophets that God himself will come to his people and seek out his lost sheep."⁶⁸⁰

⁶⁷⁵ Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 378.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 378. This echo satisfies Hays' guidelines for determining an intertextual echo.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁸ Block, *Ezekiel*, 308.

⁶⁷⁹ Chae, *Jesus as Eschatological Davidic Shepherd* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 270.

⁶⁸⁰ Kenneth E. Bailey, *Good Shepherd: A Thousand-Year Journey from Psalm 23 to the New Testament* (InterVarsity Press, 2014), 143.

As a result, Bailey finds that the text “obligates the interpreter to raise the Christological question” asking what Jesus is revealing about himself and his ministry.⁶⁸¹ Green agrees, asking, “Is it possible to understand the parable not only *theologically* but also christologically? If so, Jesus would be portrayed as fulfilling the role of Yahweh in caring for the lost sheep”⁶⁸² Snodgrass also recognizes that Jesus depicts himself according to YHWH’s own character and activity. “If Jesus defends his eating with sinners by pointing to God’s character and saying God is like a shepherd searching of the lost, then he implicitly claims he is doing God’s work. At least with respect to Luke, the analogy of the shepherd refers to both the character of God and the activity of Jesus.”⁶⁸³ Harris states, in summary, “Luke 15:1-7 can thus be read as not only a reflection of God’s care for the lost, but Jesus’ care as the faithful shepherd.”⁶⁸⁴ The two appear to be synonymous.

Given the intertextual background of Ezekiel 34, the lost sheep parable does seem to invite not only a theological reading but also a Christological one, where Jesus possesses both power and compassion and is portrayed “fulfilling the role of Yahweh in caring for the lost sheep.”⁶⁸⁵ If the echo of Ezekiel 34 is as strong as it appears to be, rather than being indignant because of Jesus’ activity, the religious leaders are warned through the parable to recognize Jesus’ activity as a fulfillment of YHWH’s promises.⁶⁸⁶ Given the Ezekiel 34 echo, the Pharisees

⁶⁸¹ Bailey, *Finding the Lost*, 62.

⁶⁸² Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 575 n. 215.

⁶⁸³ Klyne Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 107.

⁶⁸⁴ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 105.

⁶⁸⁵ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 575 f. 215.

⁶⁸⁶ John B. Taylor, *Ezekiel: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 22, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1969), 215. Taylor calls it “doubtless” that Ezekiel 34 is the background for Luke 15:4.

and scribes should hear in the parable a revelation of Jesus' identity as YHWH Shepherd, a defense of his activity, and an indictment against their own.⁶⁸⁷ Tax collectors and sinners, on the other hand, should recognize that their Shepherd has come to bring them home. Jesus is presented as possessing the divine identity by appearing as YHWH, the Faithful Shepherd of Ezekiel 34.

Luke 19:1-10

The relationship between the faithful shepherd parable of Luke 15:1-7 and the Zacchaeus pericope of 19:1-10 exists on a textual and thematic level. Like the shepherd text of Luke 15, the Zacchaeus pericope will contribute to the picture of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd. The story has been regarded as an encounter that represents the message of "The Gospel of the Outcast."⁶⁸⁸ More specifically, Bock asserts that the Zacchaeus account is the story of the lost sheep being brought back to the shepherd.⁶⁸⁹ Luke 19:1-10 presents the parable of Luke 15:1-7 in living color.

On a wider scale, the Zacchaeus pericope contains a clear articulation of Jesus' mission and varied responses to his mission.⁶⁹⁰ It will be shown to possess "a summative role for the

⁶⁸⁷ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 575.

⁶⁸⁸ O'Hanlon, "The Story of Zacchaeus," 9.

⁶⁸⁹ Darrell Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 1524.

⁶⁹⁰ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 118. The Zacchaeus pericope is the last encounter in Luke's travel narrative. The placement of the Zacchaeus pericope as the concluding account of the travel narrative should be noted. The next event that Luke describes is Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem (19:28-44). If the shepherd motif is a way to understand Jesus' mission in Luke, as it is asserted here, then when Jesus is next seen entering Jerusalem, he does so as YHWH Shepherd, on his way to complete the mission that he has declared on behalf of his scattered flock. The travel narrative begins in 9:51 and ends in 19:27 with a parable. Harris identifies 4:18-19 and 19:10 as bookends of Jesus' ministry. Both texts contain a declaration of Jesus' mission, and in between, he accomplishes what he claims: the deliverance and restoration of Israel. The actualization of Jesus' claim is seen throughout Luke: 5.12-15, 17-26; 6.20-25; 7.11-16, 21-22, 36-50; 8.26-39, 43-48; 12.13-34; 13.10-17; 17.11-19; 18.18-30, 35-43.

Lukan narrative,” regarding Jesus’ pursuit of the lost as Israel’s Shepherd.⁶⁹¹ As a result, the depiction of Jesus that emerges from the text is of particular importance. Zacchaeus is like others that that the reader encounters in both parables and narrative material who occupy places on the margins of society but who receive from Jesus.⁶⁹² He is depicted as one of YHWH’s lost sheep. The story that Luke has been telling is climaxed in 19:1-10, where Jesus’ engages in, accomplishes, and explains his mission of seeking and saving the lost as YHWH Shepherd.⁶⁹³

Summative Nature of the Zacchaeus Pericope

The Zacchaeus pericope possesses characteristics that position it as a representative text for Jesus’ interaction with the outcast in Luke. As a result, the conclusions made regarding the depiction of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd in Luke 19:1-10 have implications for a wider reading of Luke’s narrative. Green notes the way that Zacchaeus is characterized in the pericope; he occupies an unusual position, balancing on both the high and low ends of society, and as a result, Luke’s reader is unable to predict the outcome of his pursuit. In many ways, Zacchaeus is at a disadvantage. Physically, he is short in stature (v. 3); spiritually, he is a sinner (v. 7). He is

⁶⁹¹ Ibid.

⁶⁹² Ibid., 124-5. Zacchaeus’ story is preceded by the parables of the widow who was persistent in the face of an unjust judge and receive justice (18:1-5) and of the tax collector who called himself a sinner, begged for God’s mercy, and was justified (v. 13-14). It is preceded by the narrative of little children being brought to Jesus to receive from Jesus (v. 15-17) and the blind beggar crying out for mercy to receive his sight and receiving it from Jesus (v. 35-43). For the sake of space, key texts (Lk 15:1-7; 19:1-10) and several accounts (5:27-32; 13:10-17; 18:9-14, 18-29, 35-43) related to Jesus’ pursuit of the lost are the focus of this study.

⁶⁹³ The six narrative features given by Harris have guided the conclusion that this text contains the Old Testament shepherd motif. This text is considered a representative text for others in Luke, and the cohesive structure of the narrative is noted, as is its intentional ordering. Gaps in the story afford the reader the opportunity to detect connections between this text and others both within and outside of Luke. The repetition of the concept of Jesus’ seeking sinners is central. The existence of the Ezekiel 34 echo, recognized in scholarship, is instructive, therefore, not only for an interpretation of this text, but for an interpretation of the cumulative whole.

wealthy (v. 2), and though he was a “chief tax collector” (ἀρχιτελώνης),⁶⁹⁴ “almost universally despised,”⁶⁹⁵ he is in a role with authority.⁶⁹⁶ An examination of several related texts will indicate that Zacchaeus does not fit into any single mold. The challenge Luke poses to the reader appears to be intentional. It prepares the reader to detect the representative role of Zacchaeus within Jesus’ wider mission. This unusual individual is an important figure in Jesus’ ministry, as Green describes in this summary statement: “After the dust settles, two complementary assertions remain: (1) the salvific agency of Jesus on behalf of those routinely excluded and (2) the determination of one’s inclusion in the family of God on the basis of a single query, Do you conduct yourself as a child of Abraham? (cf. 3:7-14).”⁶⁹⁷ The Zacchaeus pericope describes a representative portrayal of Jesus’ pursuit of the lost as Shepherd.

The pericope has an intertextual relationship to surrounding texts.⁶⁹⁸ Boda qualifies intertextual links as “allusions to characters, episodes, vocabulary” between one text and another, and links of these sorts connect the Zacchaeus pericope to other Lukan stories and firmly situate it within the preceding material.⁶⁹⁹ Narrative markers suggest that the Zacchaeus pericope is related to several pericopes that “lay an interpretive base” for understanding Jesus’ mission to

⁶⁹⁴ O’Hanlon, “Story of Zacchaeus,” 2. As a chief tax collector, Zacchaeus was positioned to cheat and rob the disadvantaged. He promises to restore anything he defrauded (συκοφαντέω). The term συκοφαντέω appears in the New Testament only here and in Luke 3:14 in a similar context.

⁶⁹⁵ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 669.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid; John Gillman, *Possessions and the Life of Faith: A Reading of Luke-Acts*, Zacchaeus Studies: New Testament (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 89, describes chief tax collector as a type of “district manager” over other tax collectors in subordination to him. The term ἀρχιτελώνης does not appear in other Greek text, so the role itself is unclear. Given the analogy with other tax collectors in Luke, Green determines that the term does indicate advanced status over other tax collectors.

⁶⁹⁷ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 668.

⁶⁹⁸ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 118.

⁶⁹⁹ Mark J. Boda, *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 5.

society's outcasts.⁷⁰⁰ As a "synopsis" of the narrative, it can be read alongside the material surrounding it.⁷⁰¹ As O'Hanlon puts it, related parables and units of teaching "throw flashes of light upon 19:1-10."⁷⁰² Those related accounts will be explored briefly below for the purpose of demonstrating the summative role that the Zacchaeus pericope serves as it relates to the shepherd motif.

Zacchaeus the Wealthy Tax Collector: Luke 19:1-2 and 5:27-31, 18:9-14, and 18:18-29

The specific depiction of Zacchaeus as a wealthy tax collector contains narrative markers that link this story with several others in Luke's account. Zacchaeus is not just one of Luke's many tax collector (3:12; 5:27, 30; 7:29, 34; 15:1; 18:10-13), but he is a rich (πλούσιος), chief tax collector (ἀρχιτελώνης, 19:2),⁷⁰³ and he is considered a sinner not only by the religious leaders, but by all (πάντες) the people (19:7).⁷⁰⁴ Yet Zacchaeus reflects an aggregate picture of the one who receives Jesus' salvation and practices humility and prompt obedience.

The Zacchaeus pericope shares similarities with Jesus' call of Matthew (5:27-31). Both Matthew and Zacchaeus are tax collectors (5:27; 19:2). Both receive a call from Jesus (5:27; 19:5), and both respond immediately and host Jesus in their homes (5:28-29; 19:6). The Pharisees and teachers of the law grumble (ἐγόγγυζον, 5:30) about Jesus' fellowship with Matthew (5:30), just as the crowds grumble (διεγόγγυζον, 19:7) about his fellowship with

⁷⁰⁰ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 124.

⁷⁰¹ O'Hanlon, "Story of Zacchaeus," 8.

⁷⁰² Ibid.

⁷⁰³ Luke 19:2 is the only location in the New Testament where this term occurs.

⁷⁰⁴ Blomberg, *Contagious Holiness*, 153.

Zacchaeus (19:7). In contrast, Matthew and Zacchaeus receive Jesus gladly (5:29; 19:6).⁷⁰⁵ Both men are called sinners by the disapproving onlookers (ἁμαρτωλός, 5:30; 19:10), and on each occasion, Jesus confirms this categorization but establishes it as the very basis for his activity. His defines his mission based on his pursuit of sinners (15:32) and the lost (19:10). Their status as outcasts is what qualified them for Jesus' pursuit. Jesus states that in pursuing Matthew, the sinner, he is fulfilling his purpose of healing the sick (5:31), and he states that in pursuing Zacchaeus, he is fulfilling his purpose of seeking and saving the lost (19:10).

Jesus' pursuit of Zacchaeus offers a resolution to the parable of the tax collector and Pharisee (18:9-14) and the encounter between Jesus and the rich ruler (18:18-29).⁷⁰⁶ The parable of the tax collector and Pharisee (18:9-14) contains narrative elements that parallel it to the Zacchaeus pericope. In both accounts, the tax collectors are humble and honest about their need (18:13; 19:3-4, 6, 8). Both men are sinners (ἁμαρτωλός, 18:13, 19:7), having been regarded pejoratively: the tax collector by the Pharisee (18:11) and Zacchaeus by the crowd (19:7). In the parable, the Pharisee believes that he is δίκαιος and is found to be ἁμαρτωλός (18:11, 14), and the tax collector confesses that he is ἁμαρτωλός is justified and shown to be δίκαιος (18:13-14). The Pharisee is proud that he is not like the tax collector, while the tax collector admits that he is "the sinner" (τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ, 18:13). This is the only place in Luke where the definite article is used with ἁμαρτωλός (18:13).⁷⁰⁷ The status of the tax collector is inverted with that of the Pharisee; the righteous one embodies sinfulness, and the sinner becomes righteous. The principle that is emphasized here will be seen in Zacchaeus' pericope as well, when a sinner, a chief tax

⁷⁰⁵ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 124.

⁷⁰⁶ O'Hanlon, "Story of Zacchaeus," 8.

⁷⁰⁷ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 121.

collector, also finds that he is within the scope of the divine mission and thus receives justification and restoration as a true member of Israel.

While the tax collector in the parable receives justification, Jesus also tells a parable of a rich ruler (18:18-29) whose experience is compared and contrasted to the experience of Zacchaeus. Both men are wealthy (18:23; 19:2), exercise rule (18:18; 9:2), and seek Jesus (18:18; 19:3).⁷⁰⁸ Though similar in condition, they have contrasting experiences with Jesus. The rich ruler evaluates himself as one obedient to the commandments (18:21), while Zacchaeus is regarded as a sinner (19:7). Jesus instructs the rich ruler to sell his possessions and give to the poor (18:22), and Zacchaeus willingly states his intent to give half of his possessions to the poor (19:8).⁷⁰⁹ Zacchaeus does what the rich ruler cannot bring himself to do.⁷¹⁰ Both men seek Jesus, but at the moment of decision, the rich ruler becomes sorrowful (περίλυπος, 18:23), unwilling to agree to the terms Jesus poses to him (18:23).⁷¹¹ In contrast, Zacchaeus becomes joyful (χαίρων,

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁹ Disagreements about whether to classify Zacchaeus' story as either a salvation or a vindication story center around the interpretation of the two verbs δίδωμι and ἀποδίδωμι. Though they both appear in the present active indicative, the verbs have been traditionally read as futuristic presents and therefore taken as indications of Zacchaeus' intent to give of his possessions and pay back money. His statement of intent has been taken as an indication of repentance and a sign of conversion. Reading the text this way classifies the account as a salvation story. This view was challenged first by Godet, whose concerns were reiterated and expanded by scholars including Fitzmyer, White, Mitchell, Lieu, Green, and Bock. For them, the narrative is a vindication account, with Zacchaeus' repentance laying outside of the narrative. One of the central purposes of the narrative is to introduce someone on the margins of society who has been sought by Jesus and included within his community. Due to space constraints, neither position needs to be adamantly accepted and defended here. The Zacchaeus pericope is examined for its relevancy to the presentation of Jesus as Shepherd, and though the salvation/vindication conversation is important, it is not directly relevant to the larger point being made here. What is most important for these purposes is a recognition of restoration accomplished by Jesus, who seeks and saves Zacchaeus, one who is lost. See Frederic Louis Godet, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke* (Germany: Hansebooks, 2020), 2, 217-8; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1220-1; Richard C. White, "Vindication for Zacchaeus?" in *The Expository Times* 91 (1979), 21; Alan C. Mitchell, "Zacchaeus Revisited: Luke 19:8 as a Defense," in *Biblica* 71, 2 (1990), 153; Judith Lieu, *The Gospel of Luke* (Epworth Commentaries; Peterborough: Epworth Press, 1997), 148; Green, *Gospel*, 672-3; Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 1520.

⁷¹⁰ O'Hanlon, "Story of Zacchaeus," 15.

⁷¹¹ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 528.

19:6) and volunteers to abide by terms of righteousness (19:8). Those listening to Jesus' response to the rich ruler ask, "who then can be saved?" (18:26). Their question is left without an explicit answer, and the fate of the rich entering the kingdom is left uncertain, not fully resolved.⁷¹² Luke has created a narrative gap in 18:18-30 that creates space for the issue to be considered.⁷¹³ This gap in the text is a narrative feature that allows for the movement of the text to advance to the culminating moment of Jesus' declaration of Zacchaeus new status (19:9-10). Were it not for this gap, perhaps the reader would not sense how great the need is for the resolution of the matter of the wealthy man's salvation. The Zacchaeus pericope is considered an answer to this looming question, when for the first time, the narrative details Jesus' positive encounter with a rich person entering the Kingdom.⁷¹⁴ At the conclusion of the Zacchaeus pericope, Jesus declares, "Today salvation has come to this house" (19:9).⁷¹⁵

Until Luke's reader meets Zacchaeus, she may assume that Jesus receives sinners and tax collectors and rejects the wealthy and powerful. Yet, as Green points out, Zacchaeus is each of these things, and so what is to be made of him? Green finds the juxtaposition intentional and theologically purposeful. "In his characterization of Zacchaeus, Luke pulls the rug from under every cliché, every formula by which people's status before God might be calculated."⁷¹⁶ What becomes clear is Luke's emphasis on Jesus' pursuit of those on the margins of society, the

⁷¹² Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 119.

⁷¹³ Kathy Maxwell, *Hearing Between the Lines: The Audience as Fellow-Worker in Luke-Acts and its Literary Milieu* (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 145.

⁷¹⁴ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 119. The narrative relationship between the two stories seems to indicate that the rich ruler pericope is an intentionally laid foundation for the Zacchaeus pericope, indicating further that the second is a salvation story.

⁷¹⁵ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 667.

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 668.

outcasts. The Zacchaeus story demonstrates that the rich are not outside of Jesus' mission. As Blomberg puts it, "just as God cares for the 'down and out' among his people, he likewise shows compassion to the 'up and out.'"⁷¹⁷ As a wealthy tax collector, Zacchaeus occupies a despised position on the margin of Jewish society, and yet he is the focus of Jesus' intentional pursuit. Jesus' pursuit of him will be contextualized not only within the surrounding context of Luke, but according to YHWH's eschatological mission of seeking his lost flock.

Zacchaeus the Disadvantaged Seeker: Luke 19:3-4 and 18:15-43

Zacchaeus' desire to "see" (ὁράω, 19:3, 4) Jesus and Zacchaeus' perseverance despite obstacles are elements within the narrative that link the Zacchaeus story to the account of the healing of the blind beggar (18:35-43), which immediately precedes the Zacchaeus encounter (19:1-10). Both take place in Jericho (18:35; 19:1), where Jesus is passing by (18:37; 19:1). Both the blind man and Zacchaeus lack the ability to see. Zacchaeus desires to Jesus, but he is prevented by his short stature and the crowd (v. 3).⁷¹⁸ Despite these obstacles, Zacchaeus persists and climbs a tree, an action that would have invited shame.⁷¹⁹ The blind man seeks the recovery of his physical sight (ἀναβλέπω, 18:41), and Zacchaeus seeks the ability to see (ὁράω, 19:4) Jesus specifically. The pursuit of both men is hindered by the crowds, which form barriers preventing their access to Jesus (18:39; 19:3). Despite the difficulty of their pursuit, both men demonstrate determination (18:39; 19:4) and a willingness to defy cultural norms and face embarrassment (18:39; 19:4). Both are welcomed and restored by Jesus, and both respond with

⁷¹⁷ Blomberg, *Contagious Holiness*, 155.

⁷¹⁸ Dennis Hamm, "Sight to the Blind: Vision as Metaphor in Luke," *Biblica*, Vol 67, no 4 (1986): 457. Physical sight as a metaphor for spiritual sight was a common metaphor in the religious literature of Luke's world. Hamm explores Luke's symbolic treatment of physical seeing, and he finds τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν in 4:18 to be the centre of the 4:16-20 chiasm.

⁷¹⁹ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 669.

joy (18:43; 19:6, 8).⁷²⁰ Luke uses the term σόζω in both accounts (18:42; 19:9) to describe the restorative and transformational effects of Jesus' mission.⁷²¹

Both Zacchaeus and the blind beggar are prevented from accessing Jesus by the crowds. By nature of their social status and physical circumstances (18:35; 19:2-3), each is considered a man of low esteem and is viewed pejoratively by the crowds. They only receive from Jesus because Jesus notices them in the crowds, seeks them, and calls them out. Jesus orders that the blind beggar be brought to him (18:40) and Zacchaeus to come down to him (19:5). The obstacle of the crowd is articulated in the text with causal force (ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου); it actively challenges Zacchaeus' quest of Jesus.⁷²²

Outworking of the Eschatological Mission

Jesus' interaction with Zacchaeus can be understood according to YHWH's eschatological promises to Israel, particularly as it relates to his identity as Shepherd. The salvific nature of Jesus' call, the quality of Zacchaeus' response, and the contrasting and confrontational response of the onlookers indicates the eschatological nature of the interaction. Having sought Zacchaeus, Jesus identifies Zacchaeus as a child of Abraham and clearly states the quality and purpose of his mission using shepherding language. Luke depicts Zacchaeus as precisely the one whom Jesus seeks in fulfillment of YHWH's plan.⁷²³

⁷²⁰ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 119-120. Harris sees a Davidic connection in each account. In 18:38 and 39 this is clear, and she finds it implicitly echoed in 19:10, determining that it is as Ezekiel's Davidic Shepherd that Jesus seeks and saves the lost. While Ezekiel's language does echo clearly in 19:10, the position held here is that it is the YHWH Shepherd motif, rather than the Davidic Shepherd motif, that resonates most clearly.

⁷²¹ The term has already appeared in multiple healing encounters throughout Luke: 7:50; 8:36, 48, 50; 17:19.

⁷²² Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 670. Green asserts that the crowd's judgment of Zacchaeus resulted in their refusal of allowing him to see Jesus.

⁷²³ Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1522.

Jesus' Command and Zacchaeus' Response: Luke 19:5-8

Jesus sees Zacchaeus, instructs him to come down and to host him as a guest at his home “today” (σήμερον, 19:5). Marshall finds that the word σήμερον may be more than a temporal reference. It may contain an eschatological element, conveying “the idea that the time has come for the fulfillment of Gods’ plan of salvation,” especially in light of the usage in 19:9 and elsewhere in Luke.⁷²⁴ Σήμερον occurs eleven times in Luke, ten of which are in the immediate context of the accomplishment of Jesus’ mission (2:11; 4:21; 5:26; 13:32, 33; 19:5, 9; 22:34, 61; 23:43). If this understanding of σήμερον is correct, then Jesus’ instruction to Zacchaeus marks their encounter as a precise fulfillment of Jesus’ eschatological mission.

In response to Jesus’ command, Zacchaeus immediately and joyfully (χαίρων, 19:6) responds. Eschatological joy in Luke “springs from an expectation or reception of salvation.”⁷²⁵ Zacchaeus’ joyful response echoes hope expressed by the prophets (Jer 31:13-14), and aligns him with those in the birth narrative who responded to the inbreaking of eschatological deliverance with joy (1:28, 44, 46, 58; 2:10), and with the shepherd of the lost parable (15:5-7), whose own joy was an embodiment of the appropriate response that mirrors eschatological joy in heaven. While Zacchaeus responds with joy, “all were grumbling” (πάντες διεγόγγυζον) over Jesus’ reception of a sinner (19:7). Joy is juxtaposed to grumbling; these responses act as diagnostics for identifying those on the right and wrong sides of Jesus’ mission.

Zacchaeus’ response of joy is a stark contrast to the reactions of those witnessing Jesus’ activity. Echoes to the wilderness generation that were heard in Luke 15:1-7 are heard again in the Zacchaeus pericope. Luke uses the hyperbolic πάντες to emphasize the scope of Jesus’

⁷²⁴ Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 697.

⁷²⁵ O’Hanlon, “Story of Zacchaeus,” 4.

opposition, and again, the ones who grumble are those who oppose Jesus' association with sinners and outcasts (15:2; γογγύζω in 5:30). The social ostracism of tax collectors was partially designed to be a deterrent for their behavior, and Jesus' defiance of this social standard and his decision to eat with tax collectors would have made him a "partner in crime" in the eyes of the crowd.⁷²⁶ To the grumbling crowd, Jesus' activity is unusual, improper, unbecoming, careless, and "tantamount to sharing in his sin."⁷²⁷ Jesus' later declaration of his mission indicates that rather than becoming unclean through contact with Zacchaeus, he has made Zacchaeus clean and restored his standing among the people of God.⁷²⁸ The grumbling Pharisees and scribes are contrasted with the rejoicing shepherd in Luke 15, and here, the crowds grumble and Zacchaeus rejoices. Once again, the outcast is shown to be the target of his mission.

In the Zacchaeus account, mirroring, in some ways, the account of the blind beggar, Jesus can be found acting as YHWH promised to act toward his flock. In Ezekiel 34, YHWH declares his intention to judge between his flock. He condemns the strong for trampling the weak and preventing them from accessing what they need (Ezek 34:17-19). YHWH's weak, sick, and scattered flock is being plundered, and he states his intention to deal discriminatingly with his flock to save the weak (34:20-21). Jesus seeks an outcast (Lk 19:2, 7; Ezek 34:12-13) who is facing obstacles and enduring mistreatment (Lk 19:3, 7; Ezek 34:5-6, 18-21). Jesus seeks him and restores him in fulfillment of YHWH's promises to seek, restore, and defend his flock against the threat of wicked shepherds and other strong and ruthless sheep (Ezek 34:2-10, 17-22). Echoes of Ezekiel indicate that Jesus' activity can be understood as a fulfillment of YHWH's

⁷²⁶ Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1521.

⁷²⁷ Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 697.

⁷²⁸ Wright, *Exile: A Conversation*, 49.

personal commitment to his flock. Green states, “in seeking hospitality with Zacchaeus, who was himself scorned by his townspeople, Jesus identifies himself with Ezekiel’s Lord, who seeks and saves the lost.”⁷²⁹ Like YHWH promised in Ezekiel 34, Jesus seeks his lost in order to save and restore them (Ezek 34:5, 13; Lk 19:10).⁷³⁰

Zacchaeus as a Son of Abraham: Luke 19:9

Luke presents Jesus’ seeking activity as integral to his salvific mission, and Jesus’ declaration that Zacchaeus is a “Son of Abraham” (Υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, 19:9) indicates the fulfillment of promises. The Zacchaeus’ pericope is the only place where Luke uses the title υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.⁷³¹ The concept, though, is expressed in Luke 3, when John the Baptist warned the crowds that those hiding behind Abraham as their source of security would find that “God can raise up children for Abraham” out of stones (3:8). His statement indicates the transformational nature and scope of God’s salvation. Only those who “produce fruit in keeping with repentance” have claim to God, and Luke’s narrative will present unexpected individuals as members of God’s family. On several levels, the Zacchaeus story is linked to the healing of a crippled woman (13:10-17), whom Jesus calls θυγατέρα Ἀβραάμ (13:16).⁷³² Jesus’ determination and action are stated (13:16; 19:10). He calls each one to himself (13:12; 19:5) and he declares the necessity of his actions (δεῖ, 13:16; 9:6), which are later summarized and explained in 19:10: “The Son of

⁷²⁹ Green, *Luke as Narrative Theologian*, 96.

⁷³⁰ Each of the three criteria for determining the efficacy of a motif are satisfied: frequency, context, and relevance.

⁷³¹ Explanation of Jesus’ mission explains his person. He is the one to seek and save the lost. To reveal this, Jesus uses relational language referring to the reciprocal relationship between YHWH and Israel (relational rhythm).

⁷³² Turid Karlsen Seim, *The Double Message: Patterns of Gender in Luke-Acts* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 44-47. The title “daughter of Abraham” occurs nowhere in the Old or New Testaments. It does occur in 4 Maccabees in the context of heroic martyrdom (14:20; 15:28; 17:6; 18:20). Green, *Gospel*, 525 n 28, notes that the crippled woman does not possess any heroic qualities, yet Jesus identifies her according to the honored title.

Man came to seek and to save the lost.”⁷³³ Searching for and recovering the lost is the purpose of Jesus’ mission to Jerusalem. The negative response of the onlookers (13:14; 19:7) is contrasted to the recipient’s response of joy and praise (13:13; 19:6). Jesus restores the crippled woman and he seeks Zacchaeus, identifying them both as members of the family of God (13:16; 19:10).⁷³⁴ Jesus not only seeks the lost flock, but he identifies with them.⁷³⁵ Each story contains clear allusions to the LXX (13:13 to Isa 45:16 and Lk 19:10 to Ezek 34).⁷³⁶

The Zacchaeus story reveals that Jesus has deconstructed all labels: sinner, poor, rich, righteous. Jesus’ identification of Zacchaeus according to the label of Abraham’s son indicates that the one who was an outcast has been given a legitimate place among the people of God.⁷³⁷ As YHWH promised first in Ezekiel 34:17 and then in Luke 3:8-9, Jesus sorts through the legitimate and illegitimate in his salvific mission. He identifies the true people of God.⁷³⁸ According to Marshall, the point of the Son of Abraham saying, “is that a Jew, even though he has become ‘a lost sheep of the house of Israel,’ is still part of Israel.”⁷³⁹ Zacchaeus’ occupation and social status has neither stripped him of his identity nor neutralized YHWH’s promises.⁷⁴⁰ The title

⁷³³ O’Hanlon, “The Story of Zacchaeus,” 2. The word appears nineteen times in Luke, eight times in Matthew, and six in Mark. O’Hanlon states that in Luke, *δεῖ* refers to the will of God and the certainty of its completion.

⁷³⁴ Revelation of Jesus is given in reciprocal relational terms (relational creed).

⁷³⁵ Wright, *Exile: A Conversation*, 49. Regarding Jesus’ identification with the lost, Wright states, “Jesus identifies himself with sinful Israel and thus contracts its uncleanness: nevertheless, when he emerges from Zacchaeus’s house to face the accusing crowd, it is not he who is unclean but Zacchaeus who is ‘a son of Abraham.’” Though lost and scattered, the flock of Ezekiel 34 belongs to YHWH, and here, Jesus likewise expresses ownership and identification with the lost.

⁷³⁶ Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1219; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1014; Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 443; Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 559; Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 725.

⁷³⁷ Green, *Luke as Narrative Theologian*, 95.

⁷³⁸ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 672.

⁷³⁹ Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 698.

recalls the birth narrative language that recognized Jesus' arrival as a fulfillment of YHWH's promises to Abraham (1:54-55, 72-73). Jesus' pursuit of Zacchaeus, his presence in Zacchaeus' home, and his declaration that Zacchaeus is a "Son of Abraham" indicates that YHWH has remembered his covenantal promises in bringing salvation (Mic 7:20). Zacchaeus is restored first to YHWH, in Jesus, and subsequently, to his community.⁷⁴¹ This is the type of salvific restoration that Ezekiel 34 describes.⁷⁴² When YHWH seeks his lost sheep, he restores them to himself and to "their own land," where they should be grazing as a flock (Ezek 34:13). As YHWH Shepherd, Jesus is at work seeking and restoring the flock, and in doing so, he restores them to their place in the community of God (19:9).

Jesus as the Seeking and Saving Shepherd: Luke 19:10

Having sought Zacchaeus and confirmed his rightful place in YHWH's community, Jesus states his mission: "to seek and to save the lost" (ζητῆσαι καὶ σῶσαι τὸ ἀπολωλός 19:10). Ezekiel 34 details YHWH's priorities as shepherd, and his tasks are listed in an inverted order against the list of the failed duties of Israel's leaders (Ezek 34:2-8, 11-22). His activity as Shepherd will begin with the last thing that the evil shepherds would trouble themselves to do: to seek. YHWH's inaugural work is seeking the lost, the most vulnerable subset of the group.⁷⁴³ To seek the lost, then, is "a catch-phrase topping the list of shepherd's tasks. Seeking the lost is how

⁷⁴⁰ Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1522.

⁷⁴¹ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 673. Whether it affects this restoration or reflects it depends on whether the story is read as a salvation or a restoration encounter.

⁷⁴² Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1523.

⁷⁴³ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 63.

the restoration will be inaugurated.”⁷⁴⁴ YHWH’s priority is his lost sheep, and when he seeks them, he finds, restores, and saves his flock.

The links between 19:10 and Ezekiel 34 are both conceptual and textual. The language of lost (ἀπολωλός, Lk 19:10) also links the account to the parables of Luke 15. In both Luke and Ezekiel, a good shepherd seeks the ἀπόλλυμι (Lk 15:4, 6; Ezek 34:4, 16, LXX).⁷⁴⁵ Zacchaeus was seeking (ἐζήτει, 19:3) Jesus in order to see him, but at the close of the narrative Jesus declares that he was the one on the quest, successfully seeking (ζητήσαι) Zacchaeus in order to save him (19:10). Seeking and saving the lost is role of YHWH Shepherd, according to Ezekiel.⁷⁴⁶ In the context of restoration and salvation, ζητέω invokes the shepherd motif of Ezekiel (19:10; Ezek 34:16, 22).⁷⁴⁷ Jesus’ seeking activity results in Zacchaeus’ salvation (σωτηρία, 19:9). Bock describes σωτηρία as “the restored relationship that one has with God when he delivers.”⁷⁴⁸ The restoration depicted here is restoration both to Jesus and to his community. Jesus seeks and restores the lost, saving them as YHWH promised to do (Ezek 34:13). YHWH’s tasks of seeking and saving are linked in Ezekiel’s shepherd text. After describing how he will go to great lengths to seek his lost sheep (34:11-16), YHWH promises to save his flock: καὶ σώσω τὰ πρόβατά μου (34:22, LXX). O’Hanlon finds that the fusion of seeking and salvation language in Ezekiel 34 “provides a shepherd background for sōsai” in

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid., 64.

⁷⁴⁵ O’Hanlon, “Story of Zacchaeus,” 18. The term also appears in Psalm 118:176 (LXX): ἐπλανήθην ὡς πρόβατον ἀπολωλός.

⁷⁴⁶ Revelation of Jesus is linked to his activity. He seeks and saves as Ezekiel’s Shepherd, and thus he is the seeking and saving Shepherd. This type of revelation reflects character rhythm principles.

⁷⁴⁷ Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 698.

⁷⁴⁸ Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:32*, 1522.

Luke 19:9.⁷⁴⁹ 19:9-10 is likely an allusion to Ezekiel 34, where YHWH is the shepherd to seek the lost (34:16) and save them (34:22).⁷⁵⁰ In Luke, Jesus is that seeking and saving Shepherd.

In addition to indicating an intertextual relationship with Ezekiel 34, the use of σωτηρία in 19:9 also tethers the pericope to the celebratory statements in the birth narrative that describe the effects of Jesus' arrival. The term σωτηρία appears in the Zacchaeus story for the first time since Jesus' birth was announced (1:69, 71, 77; 19:9). Zachariah recognizes and celebrates that the salvation brought by Jesus will distinctively feature salvation from enemies.⁷⁵¹ Jesus' statement of his mission and the description of its effects in Luke 19:9-10 presents the Zacchaeus encounter as a fulfillment of the salvific claims made in the birth narrative (Lk 1:48, 52-55, 72-73).⁷⁵² Given the relationship of the Zacchaeus pericope to related texts, and given the summative nature of the story, the man Zacchaeus is not alone. O'Hanlon finds the explanation of Jesus' mission "a fitting summary of the whole ministry of Jesus who was ordained to 'perform the mercy promised to our fathers' (1:72)."⁷⁵³ The narrative presents Zacchaeus as the representative recipient of salvation, the one to whom the "good news" has come (2:10; 4:18-19).⁷⁵⁴

Luke seems to be alerting the reader to see in Jesus, and hear in his mission statement, the image and promise of YHWH coming as Israel's Shepherd to seek and save his lost sheep

⁷⁴⁹ O'Hanlon, "Story of Zacchaeus," 17.

⁷⁵⁰ Mallen, *Reading and Transformation*, 149.

⁷⁵¹ O'Hanlon, "Story of Zacchaeus," 15. Σωτηρία is favored by Luke. It occurs once in Mark and not at all in Matthew.

⁷⁵² In that way, Jesus' identity is revealed through his activity, and his activity toward Zacchaeus is revealed according to moments in Israel's history (Lk 1-2). This indication of Jesus' identity reflects a resemblance of narrative rhythm principles.

⁷⁵³ O'Hanlon, "Story of Zacchaeus," 10.

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid.

(Ezek 34:16). Fletcher-Louis agrees that the language of 19:10 is language of a shepherd gathering his flock.⁷⁵⁵ In pursuing Zacchaeus and by stating his mission of seeking and saving the lost, Jesus indicates the present reality of YHWH's eschatological mission.⁷⁵⁶ As Green puts it, in seeking and saving Zacchaeus, Jesus is "simply fulfilling the divine will" as it is stated in Ezekiel 34.⁷⁵⁷ Jesus is the active player who seeks the lost flock and "brings them home."⁷⁵⁸ Marshall states that Jesus' declaration of his shepherding task as Son of Man "may fittingly be regarded as the epitome of the message of this Gospel."⁷⁵⁹ In the Zacchaeus' encounter, Luke focuses on the object (seeking the lost) and purpose (salvation) of Jesus' mission.⁷⁶⁰ If Ezekiel 34 is heard loudly in 19:10, then reverberations of the text may also be heard throughout the Gospel. If 19:10 does play "a summative role"⁷⁶¹ for the narrative, offering "an interpretive base"⁷⁶² as a "synopsis" for the Gospel story,⁷⁶³ then the lens of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd may be a lens for recognizing Jesus' divine identity and better interpreting Jesus' mission to the outcast accordingly.

⁷⁵⁵ Fletcher-Louis, Crispin H. *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology*, Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 238-9.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵⁷ Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 673.

⁷⁵⁸ Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 695.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 695.

⁷⁶⁰ O'Hanlon, "Story of Zacchaeus," 15.

⁷⁶¹ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 118.

⁷⁶² *Ibid.*, 124.

⁷⁶³ O'Hanlon, "Story of Zacchaeus," 8.

Confrontation and the Eschatological Mission: Lk 15:1-7, 19:1-10, and Prophetic Texts

A distinct component of YHWH's return as Shepherd over scattered Israel is his commitment to confront the wicked shepherds leading them. Taken together, the lost sheep parable (Lk 15:1-7) and the Zacchaeus pericope (19:1-10) contextualize Jesus' confrontation with opponents according to YHWH's confrontation with the shepherds (Ezek 34; Jer 23:1-2; Zech 10:2-3).⁷⁶⁴ Luke's repeated emphasis on the conflict that Jesus' ministry generates depicts Jesus' mission as one that offers both consolation to the outcasts and judgment on the leadership system (13:15-21; 15:1-31; 19:10).⁷⁶⁵ Inevitable confrontation with the enemies of the flock is a distinct component of the divine mission. To restore and reclaim the flock, YHWH must remove and judge their enemies (Ezek 34:10-19, 20-22; Jer 23:1-2; Zech 10:2-3). Jesus' mission seeking the lost is distinctly confrontational to the religious leaders. The motif is found in various prophetic texts, and the intertextual relationship with Ezekiel 34 is particularly strong. If the religious leaders are equated with the wicked shepherds of prophetic texts, as the intertextual relationship between Ezekiel 34 and Luke 15:1-7 suggests, then they will be removed and replaced to make room for the rule of YHWH Shepherd in the person of Jesus (Ezek 34:10; Lk 11:37-54). Jesus' activity also confronts the opposing crowds who will be judged like the wicked sheep among the flock (Lk 19:7; Ezek 34:20-22).

As owner of the flock, YHWH has the right to remove the failed shepherds from their position over the sheep (Ezek 34:10-19; Jer 23:1-2; Zech 10:2-3), and by simultaneously going after the lost and confronting Israel's leaders in the process, Luke seems to be indicating that

⁷⁶⁴ Green, *Luke as Narrative Theologian*, 95. Green observes, "Jesus's climactic pronouncement encourages reflection within the interpretive horizons of Luke 15 and Ezek 34." Green finds that the lost in Luke are those who have been failed by the religious leaders. He finds Luke emphasizing the mistreatment they have received rather than their own sinfulness, and as a result, he detects a clear analogy with Ezekiel 34.

⁷⁶⁵ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 324; Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 440.

Jesus has this authority because he possesses the divine identity as the YHWH Shepherd. Chae finds Jesus “[taking] up the role of YHWH the eschatological Shepherd seeking the lost and the outcast, i.e., the sinners” in Matthew.⁷⁶⁶ Luke 19:1-10 depicts Jesus doing this very thing.⁷⁶⁷ Jesus becomes Israel’s single Shepherd in the place of Israel’s failed shepherds.⁷⁶⁸ Chae finds that Jesus’ mission to the outcasts and his confrontation with Israel’s leaders “is a critical sign of the arrival of YHWH the eschatological Shepherd.”⁷⁶⁹ Based on the findings in the birth narrative, Luke 15:1-7, and 19:1-10, that declaration is asserted here.

In assuming the role of Israel’s Shepherd, Jesus is pronouncing judgment on the leaders. Neale finds that the sense of Jesus’ parables (Lk 15:1-31) and his mission to the outcasts (Lk 19:1-10) is this: “‘I will do the job correctly, I will call sinners because *you* have not!’ Jesus does not introduce a new concept of ministry but simply indicts the Pharisees for a failed responsibility.”⁷⁷⁰ Israel’s need for YHWH’s shepherding rule is a direct result of the shepherds’ failure to fulfill their responsibilities (34:2-10). The indictment of Israel’s leaders should be heard as a warning of their imminent removal. This is the scenario that Ezekiel 34 outlines: YHWH will return to Israel as Shepherd to his flock, and his first order of business will be a confrontation with the shepherds in order to remove them from their positions, deliver to them the judgment they have invited, and replace them as Israel’s Shepherd (Ezek 34:7-10).

⁷⁶⁶ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 278.

⁷⁶⁷ Based on characteristics that he identifies in Jesus, namely his pursuit of the outcasts, Chae finds Jesus taking up this role in Matthew. Though Chae’s work is concentrated in Matthew, his work regarding Jesus’ shepherding characteristics is instructive for a study of these same characteristics as they appear in Luke.

⁷⁶⁸ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 278.

⁷⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 273.

⁷⁷⁰ Neale, *None but the Sinners*, 133.

Luke's reader has seen the religious leaders and crowds positioned as antagonists of the outcasts and opponents of Jesus' mission. In contrast, Jesus embodies the shepherding role that is reserved for YHWH alone (Ezek 34:1-22). Jesus' mission to the outcasts may be understood as the fulfillment of the divine Shepherding rule that Ezekiel describes. Jesus' mission actively pursuing the lost indicates that Israel's leadership has been replaced, and given the background of Ezekiel 34, the new leader is YHWH Shepherd in Jesus.

Jesus Possessing the Identity of YHWH Shepherd

Jesus' work in 19:10 seems to be the work of YHWH himself according to Ezekiel 34.⁷⁷¹ If Luke 19:10 does indeed echo Ezekiel 34, Jesus' own mission statement must be heard within the context of YHWH's declaration. Gathercole explains, "the two elements in Luke 19:10 [seeking and saving] correspond to repeated declarations by God himself in the Ezekiel passage."⁷⁷² Like YHWH pledged to do, Jesus searches for the lost (Ezek 34:11-12; Lk 15:2-4; 19:10) and restores them, bringing them back to the flock (Ezek 34:13; Lk 15:5; 19:19:9). YHWH promised to heal the injured and strengthen the weak while bringing judgment on the sleek and strong (34:16). Luke depicts Jesus seeking, healing, and restoring the outcasts in Luke while positioning the religious leaders and opposing crowds as opponents to his eschatological mission and recipients of divine judgment.

While Ezekiel 34 does identify the person and activity of a Davidic Shepherd, the focus of this study has been the ways that Jesus' person and activity fulfill what is described of YHWH Shepherd. Chae traces the shepherd motif in Matthew and finds Jesus occupying the role of

⁷⁷¹ Simon J. Gathercole *The Pre-existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 168-9; Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53* (WBC: Waco, 1993), 90-96; Benjamin B. Warfield, "Jesus' Mission," in *Princeton Theological Review* 5, no. 8 (1915), 566.

⁷⁷² Gathercole *The Pre-existent Son*, 168-9.

Eschatological Shepherd that is described in Ezekiel 34, and his treatment of the motif is instructive for a conceptualization of Luke's material that seems to portray Jesus as YHWH Shepherd. The text presents two figures: Davidic Shepherd and YHWH-Eschatological Shepherd, and within Matthew, Chae finds Jesus acting in ways specific to each Shepherd. This is especially true in Matthew 9, causing Chae to conclude that in terms of identifying with the Eschatological Shepherd and Davidic Shepherd of Ezekiel 34, "*Jesus seems to be doing both... Jesus rescues and restores as he seeks, forgives, and heals.*"⁷⁷³ The dual shepherd roles that Chae finds Jesus occupying in Matthew also exists in Luke, where roles that were distinguishable in Ezekiel 34 are revealed in Luke to be "indistinguishable in Jesus."⁷⁷⁴ That is, Jesus is the Davidic Shepherd in Luke, as Harris argues, but he is not confined to that role.⁷⁷⁵ He is also the Eschatological Shepherd, YHWH in the midst of his sick, lost, and scattered flock. Given the emphasis that the text makes on YHWH's responsibility as Shepherd, Gathercole concludes that "the role of David in Ezekiel 34 has thus been considerably overlaid by scholars."⁷⁷⁶ While the texts identifying Jesus with the Davidic line and portraying him fulfilling the roles of the Davidic Shepherd are essential (Lk 1:32; 2:11, 20:41-44), Ezekiel's YHWH Shepherd texts seem to offer an interpretive lens for viewing Jesus' person and mission in Luke. Jesus' mission of seeking, healing, and restoring the outcast, lost, and sick, belongs squarely within the compassionate ministry of YHWH the eschatological Shepherd (Ezek 34:13-16; Lk 4:40; 5:12-13, 31).⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷³ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 277.

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁵ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 1-17, 114-115, 150-151, 153-7.

⁷⁷⁶ Gathercole, *The Pre-existent Son*, 169.

⁷⁷⁷ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 324, 363f.

The depiction of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd is especially vivid when Jesus' mission statement is read against the backdrop of Ezekiel 34. The formulation of Jesus' statement in 19:10 "echoes Yahweh's self-description in Ezek. 34:16 as the true shepherd who will seek and save the lost sheep of Israel."⁷⁷⁸ Luke unites the roles of shepherd and therapeutic healer in Jesus according to the unified depiction of these roles in the person of YHWH (Ezek 34:11-16).⁷⁷⁹ Jesus heals and gathers the lost to fulfill his purpose (5:31; 19:10), and given the intertextual and thematic links to Ezekiel 34, his purpose seems to be contextualized by the promises that YHWH would gather, heal, and restore his flock. By demonstrating the fulfillment of the promises of Ezekiel 34:1-16 through his activity toward the outcast, and by explaining his activity in his statement to Zacchaeus, Jesus proclaims that Israel's YHWH Shepherd has arrived and his eschatological rescue mission on behalf of his flock has begun.⁷⁸⁰

Conclusion

While no single Lukan text explicitly identifies Jesus as the one possessing the identity of YHWH Shepherd, Luke weaves strands of Israel's Scripture throughout his narrative in a way that allows the portrait to organically emerge. Texts revealing points of "implicit correspondences" between Luke's narrative and Israel's Scripture direct the reader to interpret intertextual relations and allow them to inform an understanding of the narrative's unfolding plot.⁷⁸¹ Luke 15:1-7 and 19:1-10 have been found to possess particular textual and thematic

⁷⁷⁸ Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament*, 354.

⁷⁷⁹ Harris, *Davidic Shepherd King*, 113. Harris aptly observes that while Mark laments that the people are without a shepherd, Luke seems to disagree, presenting Jesus as their shepherd; Bovon, *Lukas I*, 467. While Bovon states that Luke trades Mark's shepherd motif for the motif of Jesus as the therapeutic healer, no such trade seems to be made.

⁷⁸⁰ Chae, *Jesus Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 380-381.

⁷⁸¹ Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 192-193.

features that tether Jesus' person and activity to the prophet's depiction of the person and activity of YHWH, Israel's Shepherd. Ezekiel 34 is featured most clearly in the prophetic backdrop that stands behind Luke's texts. Luke paints a picture of Jesus identity and ministry that is tied, in mission and purpose, to his relationship with Israel's outcasts and Israel's leadership. The stark contrast between the groups is rooted in Luke's birth narrative, and it is found to be rooted, even more deeply, in prophetic texts depicting YHWH's return as Shepherd. Luke 15:1-7 and 19:1-10 have been particularly instructive.

Jesus' pursuit of the outcast is pictured in the shepherd figure of Luke 15:3-7, who also serves as a foil to the antagonistic religious leadership failing Israel (15:1-2). His activity is a fulfillment of YHWH's own expressed commitment to Israel, his flock. Jesus is found to possess the divine identity of Shepherd. The depiction of Jesus as the faithful Shepherd and the implicit note of confrontation with failed shepherds is contextualized by prophetic texts. A contrast emerges between the grumbling religious leaders and the joyful recipients of Jesus' activity, both in the parable itself and in the larger narrative. These reactions are of an eschatological nature. Luke seems to be presenting Jesus' person and mission, represented in microcosmic form in the parable, as an embodiment of eschatological promises regarding YHWH's visitation as Shepherd

The observations of 15:1-7 are reinforced by those made in 19:1-10. Jesus' pursuit of Zacchaeus reads as a culminating encounter between Israel's Shepherd and a scattered and weak flock composed of society's outcasts. The summative nature of the Zacchaeus pericope suggests that Bock is correct in asserting that "what Jesus does for lost Zacchaeus he also seeks for lost Israel (Matt. 10:6; 15:24)."⁷⁸² Jesus' articulation of his seeking and saving mission (Lk 19:1-10) projects a strong shepherd motif. Jesus' restoration of Zacchaeus and the declaration of his

⁷⁸² Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: Clark, 1896), 437; Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1523.

mission further anchors the pericope in the prophetic text of Ezekiel 34 and directs this reader to detect the ways that the narrative has been anticipating the revelation that Jesus is YHWH Shepherd. As YHWH promised, he has come to secure the restoration and salvation of his flock by removing wicked leaders and assuming the role as her Shepherd (Ezek 34:10-11). His promise is fulfilled in the person and mission of Jesus, the “friend of tax collectors and sinners” (7:34).

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Summary

In chapter 1, the characteristics defining the narrative critical approach in this study were defined. Hays' criteria for determining echoes, and Harris' six narrative features were identified as tools to guide reading Luke's narrative and identifying how it is tethered to Israel's story contained in Old Testament texts. Luke echoes Old Testament language throughout his text, and the focus here is on echoes of the shepherd motif in his narrative. This study has argued that Luke presents Jesus as possessing the identity of YHWH Shepherd, according to Old Testament promises articulated by Israel's prophets.

In chapter 2, Bauckham's treatment of the divine identity was examined, and his articulation of eschatological monotheism was posited as a framework for detecting Luke's use of Old Testament texts. Bauckham explains that the Jewish eschatological monotheistic belief understood that YHWH fulfills his promises and, in so doing, revealed himself to his people and to the nations. Mark Boda finds that an expression of Old Testament theology is rooted in revelatory statements of God's identity that were contextualized for Israel in terms of his activity. Boda's three creedal formulas were offered as a means by which this eschatological monotheistic framework may be understood, and the principles, anchored in Old Testament texts, seen and heard in Luke. The narrative creed establishes the story of Israel as the context for YHWH's redemptive, revelatory work. Revelation of YHWH occurs through his finite acts in history. It was asserted that if Luke is found anchoring Jesus' activity within the story of Israel and aligning him with the revealed person of YHWH, then Luke seems to be reflecting the principles of the narrative creed and presenting Jesus as possessor of the divine identity YHWH. The character creed traces the revelation of YHWH in and through his present activity. Luke's

text was studied to discern if he binds Jesus' present activity to expressions of his identity in a way that mirrors expressions of YHWH's identity and character in the Old Testament. If it can be demonstrated that Jesus' activity seems to be an expression of his nature, and thus his identity, then it was asserted that Luke will be found using a familiar framework specific to YHWH's self-disclosure and applying it to Jesus' revelation. The relational creed characterizes YHWH according to his reciprocal relationship with Israel. YHWH's identity is revealed through relational terms according to his relationship with his covenant partners. It was asserted that if Luke presents Jesus in reciprocal relationship with the individuals in the story as the YHWH partner, then he will be found presenting Jesus's identity as YHWH according to this creedal rhythm.

Though Luke lacks the creedal language found in the Old Testament texts, he is found expressing the creedal principles and theological rhythms made familiar in Israel's Scripture. Luke's narrative framework is laced with Old Testament allusions. Luke's appropriation of Old Testament motifs and language reveals Jesus' identity by aligning him YHWH's identity. If the application of this framework, and the conclusions reached, are valid, Jesus is found possessing the divine identity in so much as he fulfills YHWH's personal promises and acts as YHWH. Luke seems to indicate Jesus' possession of the divine identity less through explicit titles and more through implicit means of characterization, namely his function and his relation to YHWH and to the individuals in the text. Luke presents Jesus as the one acting as YHWH promised to act.

After establishing the relationship between YHWH's activity and his identity, chapter 3 identified texts containing specific promises made to Israel regarding YHWH's identity as Shepherd. Primary attention was given to the existence of the shepherd motif in Old Testament

prophetic texts to determine the quality of YHWH's promises to Israel. In those texts, YHWH is identified as Israel's Shepherd, the owner of the flock, who declares his intention to return to his flock to address their failures and tend to their needs. In order to see this concept at work in Luke's text, attention was given to texts containing the shepherd motif in the Old Testament and, secondarily, in Second Temple Literature.

Israel's Scriptures indicate that one way that YHWH's identity is revealed in the Old Testament is through his activity. The guiding, protecting, and providing presence of YHWH is frequently described with shepherding language. One of the ways that YHWH's identity is characterized, and one of the ways that his activity is explained, is through the motif of Shepherd. Through the motif of shepherd, YHWH revealed qualities of his character, articulated his redemptive plan and promises, and defined the nature of his reciprocal relationship with Israel. The motif is punctuated throughout the Old Testament, but it features prominently in prophetic texts. YHWH Shepherd promises to return to his scattered flock, and these promises contribute to Israel's understanding of YHWH's relationship to exiled Israel. The prophetic texts anchor promises about Israel's return from exile in promises of YHWH's return to his people. These promises extended beyond the years of physical exile because a physical return to the land was only one aspect of post-exilic restoration, and the people were told to expect more.⁷⁸³ Israel would not be gathered, restored, and remade according to YHWH's intentions until he arrived as Shepherd and reversed their conditions by his personal intervention.⁷⁸⁴ Prophetic texts depicting the nature of Israel's exile and characterizing YHWH's return to his people were examined and

⁷⁸³ N.T. Wright, *New Testament and the People of God*, Vol. 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 269. The hope for exilic restoration extended beyond a partial, physical return to the land because even after coming home, Israel remains in distress, suffering for their sins under the hands of hostile rulers.

⁷⁸⁴ Isa 40:11; Jer 23:1-8; 30:12-18; 31:8-34; Ezek 20:34-43; 34:2-24; 37:19-28; Mic 2:12-13; 7:14-20; Zech 10:1-12; 11:4-17; 13:7-9

synthesized around the motif of shepherd. In those texts, YHWH's identity is revealed as the one who will accomplish Israel's new exodus deliverance, her ultimate return from exile and return to YHWH. Israel is promised that YHWH Shepherd will rescue, restore, and save the scattered, sick, mistreated flock.

The concept of YHWH as Shepherd, and the promises associated with his identity and activity on behalf of Israel, are expressed in both Old Testament and Second Temple Jewish texts. Though the texts express a variety of expectations, there is a clear expectation that YHWH would return to Israel and would rescue and redeem his people according to his identity as Shepherd and their relationship to him as his flock. Two shepherd figures emerge from the text: YHWH Shepherd and his appointed Davidic Shepherd. Ezekiel 34 identifies the particular tasks that YHWH Shepherd commits himself to accomplishing for Israel before turning his gathered and restored flock over to the care of his Davidic Shepherd. YHWH will be the one to seek and save his scattered flock, reclaiming them from the failed shepherds over them and reversing their conditions. After he has gathered his flock, he will turn them over to be tended to by his Davidic Shepherd appointee. YHWH's arrival as Shepherd will affect their restoration, and after he has gathered and saved his flock, the Davidic Shepherd will perpetuate his rule. YHWH obligates himself to personally reclaim his scattered flock from wicked shepherds and to seek and restore them.

The texts studied in chapter 3 contribute to the Old Testament interpretive framework that was applied to Luke's narrative. In chapters 4 and 5, texts in Luke's narrative were found to contain Old Testament echoes identifying Jesus with YHWH Shepherd. The prophetic shepherd motif that depicts the nature and effects of YHWH's return is detected at significant moments in Luke's text, first in the birth narrative and later at key points in Jesus' ministry, and Jesus is

found operating according to YHWH's shepherding identity. Chapter 4 established Israel's Scripture as Luke's narrative framework. Luke echoes Old Testament texts in a way that anchors the individuals and events of his narrative in Israel's history and the promises of YHWH. Luke seems to intend that his narrative be read as a continuation of Israel's story. Luke's narrative framework is laced with allusions to the shepherd motif, and a study of his depiction of Jesus' identity that does not see the intertextual web that Luke weaves (especially with regard to this topic) is fundamentally handicapped in reading the narrative with proper insight. Luke's language reflects a close relationship with the prophets' language depicting the reality of YHWH's return. The characters seem to recognize that Jesus' birth fulfills YHWH's promises to return to his people and to affect their restoration. Chapter 4 showed how aspects of Luke's birth narrative fit within the larger narrative contained in Israel's Scriptures, and language in the birth narrative was shown to reflect fulfillment of the eschatological, salvific reversal associated with promises of YHWH's return as Shepherd. The individuals in Luke's birth narrative receive news of YHWH's intervention and they respond as beneficiaries of his return. The characteristics they possess and the language they use to celebrate Jesus' birth aligns them with those within YHWH's scattered flock who were promised restoration and salvation at the Shepherds return.

The experiences of Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary, Simeon, Anna, and the shepherds reflect the activity of YHWH on behalf of the nation, and their relationship to Jesus provides a window into the scope of Jesus' salvation and restoration that the remainder of Luke's narrative details. Zechariah and Mary seem to interpret the news of Jesus' birth through Old Testament categories used to express YHWH's revelation. They respond to the birth of Jesus in a way that seems to identify them with exiled Israel and Jesus with YHWH Shepherd. The visitation of YHWH in the person of Jesus affects the reversal of fortunes for faithful Israel as well as for

those who oppose them. The reversal of conditions that individuals in the birth narrative experience is a microcosm of what Luke will detail for those throughout the community of Israel. Both the characteristics and conditions of the individuals and their responses to Jesus' birth seem to identify Jesus with the fulfillment of YHWH's promises to return to his flock. When Luke's birth narrative is read as a continuation of Israel's story, and when it is interpreted in light of the events Luke goes on to tell, the reversal of conditions and responses of eschatological joy that the individuals in the birth narrative express seem to indicate that they recognize Jesus' birth to accomplish the return of YHWH to his people.⁷⁸⁵ In particular, YHWH's return as Shepherd in Jesus seems to be in view. Echoes of the Shepherd motif are heard in the birth narrative, and they prepare the reader to see Jesus explicitly acting as YHWH Shepherd at key moments in his ministry.

In chapter 5, articulations of eschatological joy and expected restoration that birth narrative characters celebrate find actualization in Jesus' ministry. Jesus' ministry, like his birth, is tethered to Israel's history through strands of intertextual echoes. Two key passages were examined as representative texts describing Jesus' identity and activity: Luke 15:1-7 and 19:1-10. In each pericope, Jesus is identified in a shepherd role. A reading informed by Luke's intertextual narrative framework finds Jesus specifically acting in the role of YHWH Shepherd, and thus possessing the divine identity of YHWH. 15:1-7 and 19:1-10 explain Jesus' mission and portray him as YHWH Shepherd.

⁷⁸⁵ Ultimately, the reversal that YHWH accomplishes for his flock produces a response of joy (Jer 31:10, 12). Individuals in the birth narrative express joy at the news of YHWH's intervention, and the eschatological significance of their response intensifies as Luke's narrative progresses. In chapter 5, the contrast was drawn between responses of joy among recipients of Jesus' seeking ministry and responses of grumbling among his opponents.

In Luke 15:1-7, Jesus invites the religious leaders to identify with the parable's shepherd, and echoes to Old Testament texts resound. The seeking and saving activity of the parable's shepherd aligns with Jesus' person and activity in keeping with prophecies describing YHWH Shepherd. The identities of Jesus, the outcasts, and the religious leaders in the pericope are contextualized against prophetic depictions. Luke seems to be presenting Jesus as YHWH Shepherd, and his confrontation with the religious leaders signifies eschatological judgment on Israel's wicked shepherds.⁷⁸⁶ Luke 19:1-10 was found to function as a representative text for Jesus' ministry to the outcasts in the Gospel and as an acted-out depiction of the 15:3-7 parable.⁷⁸⁷

In the Zacchaeus pericope, Jesus does the work of YHWH Shepherd according to Ezekiel 34, which echoes loudly in the 19:9. Jesus' relationship to the outcasts and to the antagonistic onlookers is contextualized according to prophetic texts describing YHWH's identity and activity as Shepherd. The intertextual relationship between 19:1-10 and other pericopes in Luke's narrative suggests that Zacchaeus represents the lost and outcasts in the Gospel, and Jesus explains his activity and his mission using YHWH Shepherd's own language. Luke seems to be using Old Testament echoes as a tool to communicate the return of YHWH Shepherd in Jesus. Jesus is doing the work that YHWH promised to do when he returned by seeking and saving the lost and accomplishing the reversal of conditions for his flock and their oppressors.⁷⁸⁸ The

⁷⁸⁶ Young S. Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 324.

⁷⁸⁷ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 1524.

⁷⁸⁸ The reversal that YHWH accomplishes for his flock produces a response of joy (Jer 31:10, 12). Individuals in the birth narrative express joy at the news of YHWH's intervention, and the eschatological significance of their response intensifies as Luke's narrative progresses. In chapter 5, the contrast was drawn between responses of joy among recipients of Jesus' seeking ministry and responses of grumbling among his opponents.

themes of social inversion and YHWH's reorientation of the lowly and the proud, found in 19:1-10, are traced to the birth narrative before finding their original referents in Israel's Scripture. Jesus' pursuit of the outcast positions the reader to witness a unique expression of Jesus identity.⁷⁸⁹ Jesus successfully seeks his lost sheep just as YHWH promised to do (Ezek 34:12; Lk 19:10) because he is found possessing the divine identity of YHWH Shepherd.

Further Study

This study stood on the collective shoulders of many in various corners of Biblical scholarship. The assertion made here that Luke presents Jesus as possessing the identity of YHWH Shepherd relied on Bauckham, Boda, and others who delineate the nature of divine identity and Old Testament theological rhythms. It relied on Block, Brueggemann, and others who decipher the words of Israel's prophets to understand YHWH's promises to return to a scattered people. It relied on Wright, Hays, and others who anchor the New Testament narrative in YHWH's story with Israel and carefully detect intertextual Old Testament echoes in New Testament language and alert the reader to see the story rapidly advancing to its culmination. It relied on Bock, Harris, and others who uncover in Luke's narrative an existing world contained in Israel's Scriptures and trace Luke's revelation of Jesus against the backdrop of familiar and ordered patterns and promises. Given this variety of influences, there are many opportunities for further study. Several will be suggested.

Wright's contributions articulating Israel's exile and eschatological hope for the return of the King were found instructive for understanding the shepherd motif that seems to exist in

⁷⁸⁹ This question, phrased in this way, is modeled after the question that Channing L. Crisler poses in his chapter "Luke's Christology in Light of Old Testament Lament Echoes," where he traces the subtext of lament in the Gospel to reveal how Jesus shares in the divine identity of YHWH. Channing L. Crisler, "'Luke's Christology in Light of Old Testament Lament Echoes'" in *New Studies in Textual Interplay* (London: T&T Clark, 2021), 141.

Luke's text. Given the relationship between the shepherd motif and the exile motif, and given the central theological concept of kingship that pervades both motifs, future study might investigate Luke's portrayal of Jesus as King according to these Old Testament concepts. If Luke does depict Jesus possessing the divine identity of YHWH, as this study has argued, in what ways does Luke offer Jesus' kingship as evidence of his divine identity? Given Luke's subtle use of Old Testament language, how might a kingship motif be subtly employed, and how might employing the methodology used here lead to its discovery? The narrative critical approach taken here examined the intertextual relationship between Luke's language and Old Testament texts, and the process of drawing theological implications from those discoveries was informed by an integrated understanding of Old Testament creedal rhythms according to eschatological monotheistic expectations. Further study to detect the presence of a kingship motif related to Jesus' identity as YHWH Shepherd may examine the criteria used here and apply that approach to the concept of Jesus as YHWH Shepherd-King returning to seek, save, and rule over his exiled flock.

Additionally, the criteria used here can be applied to an examination of Jesus' possession of priestly qualities. It has been established that Luke's narrative is ordered and strategic, and the interpretive effect of one text must be considered in light of the whole. A study of Luke's depiction of Jesus as Priest, then, may begin with the emphasis on Israel's imperfect priesthood in Luke's first chapter (1:5-22), and it may conclude with Jesus lifting up his hands and issuing a priestly-type blessing to the people Luke's last chapter (24:50). The placement of these text as bookends may be significant. In this study, Luke's emphasis on Zechariah's unbelief was juxtaposed to Mary's faith. This juxtaposition was taken as an indication that the lowly exhibit the characteristics of faithfulness and are positioned to see the transformation of their conditions.

It may also be asserted, though, that the humanity of Israel's priest is also emphasized in Luke 1 to prepare the reader to anticipate a new priest in Jesus. It was argued here that Jesus replaced Israel's leaders as YHWH-Shepherd, and further study may employ the same method to investigate how Jesus also replaces Israel's priest as YHWH-Priest. When Harris' narrative features used in this study are applied to these texts, a priestly motif may emerge. To determine if this is the case, the narrative critical approach outlined in this study can be employed in an examination of the texts in between these pericopes (1:5-22 and 24:50). The endeavor would seek to discover whether Luke does present Jesus as Priest by echoing Israel's Scripture in a way that anchors the events of his narrative in moments of history and in YHWH's promises. Further, the study may seek to identify whether Luke's narrative seems to reflect principles of Old Testament creedal rhythms and portray the revelation of Jesus as Priest in similar categories used to reveal YHWH, in keeping with eschatological monotheistic belief.

Bauckham's eschatological monotheistic category contributed to the framework used in this study, and this category is one of three that he identifies. Further study might also examine if the other Jewish monotheistic categories that Bauckham describes are part of Luke's Christological depiction. If so, it is worth identifying in what ways Luke shows evidence of Jesus possessing the divine identity according to creational monotheism (YHWH is the sole Creator and Lord) and cultic monotheism (YHWH alone is worthy of worship). Bauckham finds within Paul's language evidence of Jewish monotheism, and the principles he finds expressed in Paul may be dynamic in Luke as well. Such a discovery would reveal additional depth to Luke's Christology. If these two monotheistic categories are expressed in Luke's text, future study may pursue a comprehensive treatment of the three to detect how Luke uses language and motifs to fuse them together in his narrative. Along these same lines, given that shepherd has been shown

to be a means by which Luke may have been revealing Jesus' divine identity, further study may, considering Bauckham's articulation of the divine identity, investigate if Luke uses other titles or implicit characterizations of Jesus to present him as sole Creator, Lord, and the one worthy of worship in a way that answers Jewish monotheistic expectation.

A dynamic opportunity for further study may take the conclusions drawn here that Jesus is YHWH Shepherd and examine the explicit echo of new covenant language (22:20) as a fulfillment that Jesus is accomplishing the fullest extent of YHWH's shepherding promises. Jesus' words announce the fulfillment of YHWH's promises to establish a new covenant, and the text anchors the activity of Jesus in the history of Israel and YHWH's relationship with his people as revealed at the Passover. Creedal principles are reflected. The Old Testament text that Jesus references relates YHWH's accomplishment of his shepherding duties to the installation of this covenant. Jeremiah 31 (examined in chapter 3) describes the transformation that will occur within Israel when YHWH gathers and saves his remnant (31:7-9). The certainty of YHWH's promises to accomplish his shepherding work, and the enduring nature of the salvation he secures, is contingent upon the new covenant that he will enact (31:33-40). The fulfillment of Jeremiah's language is echoed in the birth narrative.⁷⁹⁰ This study has traced the way that Luke's Gospel has presented Jesus as YHWH Shepherd who accomplishes the fulfillment of the prophetic descriptions that Israel's Shepherd will return to seek and save his people. Though this study concluded with 19:1-10, future study might consider how Luke 22:20 is an appropriate conclusion. There, Jesus indicates that his work seeking and gathering the lost was the preliminary step in his role as Shepherd. In other words, the gathering of society's outcasts is not the ultimate goal, but rather the means to the end. The real mission is accomplished on the cross

⁷⁹⁰ Mary, a young woman, is glad (Jer 31:13, Lk 1:46-47); Simeon, the old man, rejoices (Jer 31:13; Lk 2:28); Zechariah, the priest, receives abundant blessing and is filled (Jer 31:14) with the Holy Spirit (Lk 1:67).

and in the empty tomb when Jesus reclaims humanity and makes possible new covenant restoration.

In Luke 22:20, Jesus alludes to Jeremiah 31 with more explicit language than any other Gospel writer. The message seems to be this: Jesus could seek and save them, according to prophecy, because he would fulfill YHWH's new covenant promises and deal with the persistent, unrelenting, and untamable sin condition of the scattered flock. Luke writes the story not only for Israel, but for all of humanity, who is identified as the scattered flock requiring new covenant restoration and salvation characterizing YHWH Shepherd's work. Further study may examine how the shepherd motif in Luke finds culmination in Jesus' fulfillment of new covenant promises. This is clear from 22:20, and further study may examine Luke's wider narrative to detect evidence of intertextual dependence on Israel's Scripture in development of this motif. It might engage the creedal categories considered here and find that Jesus' declaration in 22:20 relies on each of the three Old Testament rhythms, indicating even further Luke reveals Jesus' identity in categories unique to the divine identity YHWH.

Implications

If the conclusions drawn here do represent a faithful treatment of Old Testament texts and an informed reading of Luke's texts, there are resulting implications regarding how Luke's text may be properly read and interpreted. Luke's Gospel is not studied with the expectation that Luke will make use of Old Testament texts like Matthew does, as a Jewish author writing for a largely Jewish audience. The promise-fulfillment approach that Luke adopts is much more subtle. Even so, if this study has legitimately identified the existence of the shepherd motif in the Gospel, then it may be that Luke appropriates Israel's Scripture to a more fundamental degree than may otherwise be assumed. Luke is subtle in his promise-fulfillment approach, but subtlety

in method does not translate to subtlety in implication. If even Luke the Gentile expresses fundamental reliance on the movement and development of the promises and events in Israel's Scriptures, then his reader should be charged to pursue a deeper commitment to a biblical theological interpretation of Scripture.

This first implication relates to approaching Luke. Luke's narrative should not only be read with one eye on Israel's Scripture, it should also be read with one eye on what comes before and what comes after in Luke's own narrative. It should be read both backwards and forwards. When the birth narrative is read before Jesus in his ministry is encountered, the reader may detect the fulfillment of Mary's and Zechariah's expectations in the later pages of the Gospel. When the birth narrative is approached in light of later pericopes like 15:1-7 and 19:1-10, where echoes of the shepherd motif resound with relative precision (in 19:9 the echo is especially clear), those early declarations of the motif in the lives of Luke's first characters seems to echo more loudly the promises of these unfolding events. This study reinforces what others have already concluded. Luke's narrative is a web of interrelated pericopes, and to derive meaning for one pericope hinges on an understanding of the cumulative composition of the whole.⁷⁹¹

The second implication relates to hearing Luke. Luke has been heralded as the Gospel for the outcast. Jesus' special interest in those situated on the outside of society, either by virtue of their own choices (e.g. tax collectors) or their natural circumstances (e.g. women), has attracted attention in scholarship. Luke has been claimed by special interest groups, and Luke's Jesus has been heralded as one who acts in solidarity with the marginalized and in validation of their

⁷⁹¹ Bevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 279; Hays, *Echoes of Scripture* 192.

struggle. Speculations regarding Luke's theological motivation are often tied to social implications.

A variety of views exists regarding Luke's treatment of women, for instance, and social implications that result. It is recognized that Luke's treatment of women is unique, but his purpose is disputed. The primary way that Luke emphasizes the role of women is through his unique structural pairing of men and women in narrative and parable accounts. Luke's structural, linguistic, and thematic pairing of characters distinguishes his account from the synoptics; the "law of two is the characteristic feature of Lukan style."⁷⁹² Voices from the feminist left have concluded that Luke's Gospel intends the education of women, but as a means of control rather than freedom, and in order to restrict the participation of women to discreet behavior. As a result, it was concluded that rather than fully liberating women to more sophisticated roles of leadership, he demonstrates a low view of women that inadvertently perpetuates female suppression.⁷⁹³ Others hold to a hermeneutic of suspicion, claiming that Luke's account is a manipulative attempt to denigrate women and restrict them to passive and subordinate roles in ministry.⁷⁹⁴ Moderate feminist voices recognize that Luke's treatment of women cannot be pigeon-holed, because he simultaneously honors women as individuals and recipients of salvation without making the case that they have been given a radical expansion of leadership possibilities.⁷⁹⁵ Scholars across the spectrum have continued the task of decoding Luke's gender

⁷⁹² Margaret Beirne, *Women and Men in the Fourth Gospel: A Genuine Discipleship of Equals* (New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 17.

⁷⁹³ Mary Rose D'Angelo, "Women in Luke-Acts: A Redactional View," in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109, no. 3 (1990): 461.

⁷⁹⁴ This interpretative position was popularized by Schussler Fiorenza, who is in the company of other like-minded scholars deeply entrenched in feminist studies, namely Luis Schottroff and Bernadette Brooten.

⁷⁹⁵ Turid Karlsen Seim, *The Double Message: Patterns of Gender in Luke-Acts* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), 3.

pairing in order to discover the social implications for his treatment of women.⁷⁹⁶ Aside from being inconclusive, the implications seem two-dimensional and peripheral to the central, theological issue surrounding this topic. Rather than allowing the social reading of Luke to drive a theological conception of his message, his overarching theological hermeneutic should be the filter through which these passages are read and applied.

If the conclusions drawn here are legitimate, it seems that Luke is perhaps only secondarily interested in presenting an apologetic for a socio-religious interpretation of Jesus within the narrative and primarily interested in presenting an apologetic for a theological-Christological interpretation. It seems that Luke's driving purpose (Lk 1:1) colors his treatment of the marginalized. If Jesus does pursue the outcasts and the lost in Luke as a fulfillment of YHWH's personal promises to seek and save his scattered flock, then Jesus' activity should be understood along these theological lines. Given Luke's priority to offer a faithful and accurate report of the things that had been fulfilled, it is consistent that he would favor a theological, or a biblical theological, ordering of his events. This approach to Jesus' pursuit of the outcast in no way delegitimizes Jesus' genuine interest in each individual on the margin of society. It does not undercut the place that each lost-then-found person possesses at Jesus' table (5:29-32; 15:2). Rather, it lifts the eyes of the readers beyond the special interest of any one individual to the interest of YHWH, who proclaimed his intention to accomplish comprehensive restoration centuries earlier through Israel's rejected prophets. It suggests the fulfillment of these promises as the reason for his activity.

⁷⁹⁶ Constance Parvey published an essay in feminist collection suggesting that Luke's gender pairing reflects a radical change within Christianity's view of the role of women. Constance Parvey, "The theology and leadership of women in the New Testament," *Religion and Sexism*, ed. Rosemary Radford Ruether (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1974), 139-46.

This theological reading anchors the person and activity of Jesus in the person and activity of the eternal God, and it establishes that the care, selflessness, and disarming kindness that Jesus is shown to possess in Luke is not an invention of the Gentile doctor, nor is it a new and surprising revelation unique to the God-Man. It is a fresh manifestation of YHWH's eternal nature, and it is the fulfillment of his eternal plan. Luke's Jesus gives a face, a voice, hands, and feet to YHWH Shepherd. Rather than reading Luke for an examination of how his depiction of Jesus serves the agenda of a special interest group, perhaps Luke should be read for an examination of how Jesus opens for any person a window into the generous heart and dynamic plan of the God of Israel's Scriptures.

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