

• Dinner Talk and Ideology in Luke

#335 | The Role of the Sinners

- *Conversations de table et idéologie chez Luc: Le rôle des pécheurs*
- *Tischgemeinschaften im Lukasevangelium: Die Rolle der Sünder*

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RÉSUMÉ

Ces dernières années, plusieurs monographies sur l'Évangile de Luc ont vu le jour. Les voies d'approche vont du point-de-vue de la critique rédactionnelle, avec des analyses historiques et sociologiques, à des études narratives. Tous ces travaux tentent de déterminer dans quelle mesure l'évangéliste a remodelé les matériaux dont il disposait, en particulier les traditions sur les divers groupes religieux avec lesquels Jésus entre en rapport dans le récit. La plupart des ouvrages récents considèrent que l'Évangile de Luc est un Tendenzschrift: un écrit inspiré par une tendance déterminée. Ils attribuent beaucoup d'importance aux thèmes de renversement chez Luc. Pourtant quand Esler, dans son désir de mettre en lumière l'arrière-plan social des destinataires de Luc, attache une grande importance aux repas de communion dans Luc et les Actes, il est surprenant

qu'il ne prête attention qu'aux épisodes où des non-Juifs étaient impliqués. Comment peut-on montrer que les repas de communion sont la clef de voûte de l'univers symbolique de Luc sans prendre en compte les nombreux récits qui nous présentent Jésus à table avec des Juifs, même si ce sont des péagers ou des Pharisiens?

Dans cet article, nous désirons montrer que les repas sont le cadre principal, où se révèle le contraste entre la réponse donnée à l'Évangile par les 'pécheurs' et par les 'justes'. Après une brève vue d'ensemble des renversements chez Luc, on se demandera dans quelle mesure ces scènes de repas et les matériaux qui s'y rattachent nous donnent des indications sur la technique de Luc et sur l'influence de ses préoccupations propres sur la manière dont il utilise ses sources. Nous montrerons que le renversement 'pécheurs'—'justes' est vital dans lieu de soutenir que Luc idéalisait les 'pécheurs' plus que les autres synoptiques.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Seit einiger Zeit ist in der lukanischen Forschung die Neigung, das dritte Evangelium als Tendenzschrift zu verstehen, zu beobachten. Das ist an sich natürlich nicht falsch—ein Evangelium, das nicht zugleich Tendenzschrift ist, könnte man sich nur schwerlich

vorstellen—dennoch stellt sich die Frage, wieweit Lukas seine ideologisierenden Tendenzen trieb. Anders gefragt, muß man wirklich davon ausgehen, wie so mancher Forscher impliziert, daß Ideologie notwendigerweise auf Kosten von Historizität geht? Im vorliegenden Artikel wird diese Frage verneint. Er setzt sich primär mit Neales Studie

None but the Sinners auseinander, die die oben erwähnte Meinung konsequent auf das lukanische Portrait der Sünder und Pharisäer anwendet. Neale argumentiert, diese Portraits seien historisch nicht realistisch und müßten von daher als ideologisch motiviert verstanden werden. Es habe zum Beispiel für die Pharisäer, so Neale, keinerlei Anlaß gegeben, an Jesu Tischgemeinschaft mit den Sündern Anstoß zu nehmen. Vielmehr seien die Pharisäer im lukanischen Bericht als Karikatur zu verstehen. Es gehe darum, den typischen Gegner des Evangeliums zu verkörpern. Umgekehrt seien die Sünder als für das Evangelium offene reumütige Prototypen zu verstehen. Mit der historischen Realität des Judentums im ersten Jahrhundert habe dies wenig gemeinsam. Die 'Sünder' als soziologische Gruppe habe es so gar nicht gegeben. Mit dieser Einschätzung setzt sich Neale bewußt von der traditionellen—und stark von Jeremias beeinflussten—Sichtweise ab. Das mag in gewisser Weise verständlich erscheinen, ließe sich aber nur aufgrund genauer historischer Bestandsaufnahme aufrecht erhalten. Das Konstatieren ideologischer Motive in Primärtexten reicht hierzu nicht aus. Was sowohl 'Sünder' als auch Pharisäer anbelangt, ist es zweifelsohne wahr, daß das neutestamentliche Bild konsequent selektiv ist. Dennoch läßt

sich auch nach Berücksichtigung wichtiger Datierungsfragen (Neusner) ein klares Überschneiden zwischen den Evangelien mit anderen Primärquellen feststellen. Außerdem kann gezeigt werden, daß es sehr wohl plausibel ist, wenn in den Evangelien die Pharisäer Anstoß an jeglicher Tischgemeinschaft mit den 'Sündern' nehmen. Dies ist eine natürliche Konsequenz des pharisäischen Verständnisses von religiöser Reinheit und von der Tischgemeinschaft als Ausdruck des kommenden Reiches Gottes. Es ist daher wichtig, die Herausarbeitung der narrativen Entwicklung des lukanischen Berichtes nicht mit enthistorisierender polemischer Ideologisierung gleichzusetzen. Auf diesem Hintergrund untersucht der vorliegende Beitrag die Rolle von Sündern und Pharisäern in folgenden Perikopen des Lukasevangeliums: Berufung Levis (Kap. 5), Jesu Salbung (Kap. 7), Galiläische Schlachtopfer (Kap. 13), Gleichnisse vom Finden des Verlorenen (Kap. 15), Der Pharisäer und der Zöllner (Kap. 18) und Zachäus, der Oberzöllner (Kap. 19). Es geht hierbei um das Zusammenhalten von ideologischer (= theologischer) Motivation des Verfassers und historischer Plausibilität. Zusammenfassend wird festgehalten, daß ideologische Effektivität unter anderem auch von historischer Plausibilität abhängt.

Recent years have seen the publication of numerous monographs on Luke's Gospel. The approaches adopted range primarily from socio-redaction critical work coupled with historical analysis¹ to narrative studies.² All these studies are linked by the attempt to uncover what part the evangelist played in shaping his material, particularly the traditions about the religious groups with which Jesus interacts in the story. Common to most of these more recent studies is the desire to come to terms with Luke as a

Tendenzschrift.³ Most of them devote considerable space to reversal themes in Luke. However, when Esler, as part of his important attempt to shed light on the social background of Luke's audience, has an extensive section on table-fellowship in Luke-Acts, it is astonishing that he should have focused exclusively on those episodes where gentiles were involved. How can table-fellowship be shown to be the 'central arch' of Luke's symbolic universe⁴ without taking into account the many occurrences where Jesus eats with other Jews, be they tax-collectors or

Pharisees?⁵ The present article seeks to focus precisely on this aspect as meals are the primary setting for the contrast between the response to the gospel by the *sinner*s and by the *righteous*. After a brief overview of reversals in Luke, the question will be asked to what extent these meal episodes and related material are suggestive of Lukan technique and what degree of influence Luke's interest had on his appropriation of sources.⁶ It will be argued that Luke's *sinner*/*righteous* reversals are vital for this Gospel's narrative flow, but that there is little evidence of Luke 'ideologising the sinners' to a greater extent than his fellow synoptics.⁷

1. Reversals in Luke—A Brief Survey

Luke shows significant interest in the receptiveness to the gospel message of those who were generally considered socially inferior (primarily the poor and the sick, the tax-collectors and women). Yet, there has been considerable debate about the degree to which Luke is responsible for this emphasis. Some argue that Luke did little more than to reiterate the emphasis on the poor he found in his sources.⁸ Esler criticises this view heavily and insists on the significance of the fact that Luke retains nearly all of Mark's passages which are critical of materialism or favourable towards the poor. More importantly, Luke intensifies what his sources have to say about wealth and poverty. This picture is essentially confirmed by the material peculiar to Luke.⁹ Turning to the role of women in Luke's narrative, it is again evident how Luke portrays those on the fringe of society as the main recipients of Jesus' caring attention,¹⁰ secondly as those who, at least in part, support the cause of the gospel actively,¹¹ thirdly as those who—like the disciples—had steadfastly followed Jesus from Galilee to the crucifixion¹² and lastly as those who play an important role in announcing the beginning and completion of Jesus' mission.¹³

Jesus' care for the weak is also high-

lighted by Luke where he shares in the triple tradition. Ch 8.42 points out that the daughter of Jairus was an only child, as was the epileptic son in ch 9.38.¹⁴ On a wider scale Jesus' concern for the underprivileged can be illustrated by noting his willingness to visit Samaritan villages¹⁵ and, of course, by pointing out the well known feature of ethnic universalism which is so prominent in Luke.¹⁶ Finally and most strikingly, there is the motif of the *sinner* which in this Gospel almost invariably encapsulates an individual's need combined with a receptive heart for the gospel message.¹⁷ Receptive outsiders are *in* and those who think they are *in* are in fact *out*. Such reversals lie at the very heart of Luke's narrative, especially so in two types of passages, (1) those recounting Jesus' table fellowship with sinners¹⁸ and (2) numerous parables which illustrate the soteriological reversal of expectations.¹⁹

Luke portrays a variety of different characters in his story as evidence of the reversals which the gospel brings about. Some obvious examples are Levi the tax-collector (ch 5.27–32) and the gentile centurion who shows greater faith than anyone in Israel (7.1–10; cf his colleague who truly grasps the relevance of the crucifixion—23.47). Salvation has come to the house of Zacchaeus, the chief tax-collector (19.1–10) and his colleague (18.13f). The poor widow exemplifies real giving (21.1–4); the women from Galilee are entrusted with the news of the resurrection (24.4–11). The list could be extended. The reverse applies as well: those who exalt themselves—that is usually those of high religious esteem—will be humbled (18.14). Even the disciples have to learn this: he who is considered small becomes great (9.46–8par). The kingdom is for those who are like children (18.15–7) and the greatest one among the disciples is he who adopts an attitude of servanthood (22.26f).²⁰ It is significant that whereas the disciples show no understanding of Jesus' mission, even after the third passion and resurrection prediction (18.31–34), the humble blind man near

Jericho and the chief tax-collector respond with spiritual understanding and consequently benefit from Jesus' presence (18.35–19.10).

The accumulation of such material in Luke has given rise to the debate over the extent to which the third evangelist went beyond the emphases he found in his sources. The same question now needs to be asked in relation to the reversals. The passages most pertinent to this discussion are *Levi's banquet* (5.27–32), *Jesus' anointing by the forgiven woman* (7.36–50), *Jesus' response to the Galilean slaughter by Pilate* (13.1–9), *Finding what was lost* (ch 15), *The Pharisee and the tax-collector* (18.9–14) and *Zacchaeus* (19.1–10). I propose to discuss these passages in relation to Neale's recent treatment of them. Since much of the relevant material is peculiar to Luke, the focus will be on narratological considerations.

2. The Reversals—A Lukan Ideological Contribution?

In his recent study of sinners in Luke, Neale highlighted five passages which give particular prominence to certain ἁμαρτωλοί who respond positively to the gospel: Levi in Lk 5.17–32; the sinful woman in Lk 7.36–50; the tax-collectors and sinners in ch 15.1f; the tax-collector in the parable (ch 18.9–14) and Zacchaeus in Lk 19.1–10. After a historical analysis of pharisaism and the 'am ha-aretz, he concludes that historical analysis can detect no such thing as an identifiable group of *sinners*, hence the Gospel category of *sinners* is primarily ideologically motivated. It functions as a foil to bring out the failure of Jesus' opponents, the Pharisees. Neale bases this argument at least in part on a study of the ideological role of the 'am ha-aretz as the literary rather than historical embodiment of Torah non-observance. Similarly the *sinners* in the Gospels are not historically identifiable, but—on a narrative level—the *ideological* counterpart of the Pharisees and scribes.²¹

Although one wonders whether Neale

takes the historical scepticism with which he approaches the Gospels on this matter too far,²² it is not the sole objective of this study to evaluate the historical side of Neale's investigation,²³ although the occasional remark will be made.²⁴ I propose to consider how the passages discussed by him fit into Luke's narrative flow.²⁵ What techniques did Luke employ and to what extent are we justified in regarding his portrayals of the relevant characters as ideologically motivated?

It is well known that Luke structured the beginning of his *Galilean ministry* section in such a way that the Nazareth episode (Lk 4.16–30) effectively becomes the starting point of Jesus' public ministry. This is achieved by condensing Jesus' preceding public involvement (according to Mk 1.16ff) into a typically Lukan summary (4.14f). As a result the Nazareth episode attains programmatic significance: Jesus announces his priorities: the proclamation of good news to the poor and the release (ἀφαις) of captives. There is no doubt that within Luke's story these aspects have spiritual, physical and social dimensions, as the following episodes (4.31–5.16) illustrate amply.²⁶ As the story unfolds, Luke will be advancing similar episodes, not so much to reiterate what was said already, but to increase the reader's awareness of the fulfilment of Jesus' programme set out in the synagogue of Nazareth. This was a programme which could embrace outsiders in much the same way as Elijah was sent to minister to the starving gentile widow (Lk 4.26) and as Elisha helped the respectable gentile army commander called Naaman (4.27). The astonishing component of Jesus' programme was of course precisely the fact that he included gentile outsiders in it. At this early stage, however, Jesus causes offence not by turning to gentiles, but by attending to the needs of outsiders within Israel.²⁷ Neale rightly highlights Levi as the first clear example.

A. *Levi's Party* (Lk 5.27–32)

Following Tannehill, Neale emphasises the need to see the *Healing of the Para-*

lytic (5.17–26) as the deliberate preamble to the *Calling of Levi*. The theme of Jesus' authority to forgive sins (v24) naturally prepares the way for his ongoing relationship with the sinners in the story.²⁸ Of course, this link, as indeed the entire sequence of Lk 5.12–6.11, follows Mark's account very closely. But the emphasis that there were 'Pharisees and scribes who had come from every Galilean and Judean village and from Jerusalem' (v17) is peculiar to Luke. Neale concludes that Luke here stages a dramatic public event which has nowhere near the same significance in Mark and Matthew.²⁹ This may be correct as far as the direct comparison with Mk 2.1 and Mt 1.1 is concerned, but one could argue by the same token that the omission of the multitudes (cf Mk 2.13) in v27 represents a reduction of the sense of drama which Luke attaches to the Levi scene. It is impossible to have it both ways and we are well advised not to misread minor redactional changes as ideologically motivated stage setting. There is little if any historical difference between Lk 5.17ff and Mk 2.1ff, as Mark also mentions the scribes in v6, though not in his opening verse. Given this and the likelihood that the scribes were a sub-group among the Pharisees (Lk 5.30par; cf Acts 5.34), it seems best to regard Lk 5.17 as a plausible deduction from Mark's summary passage in ch 3.7–10 (which Luke postpones until ch 6.17–9) and Mk 2.6.³⁰ The presence of the scribes in turn led Luke to bring forward Mark's reference to Jesus' 'teaching' (Mk 2.13) as well (Lk 5.17).

Two aspects are noteworthy: (1) Luke has a clear interest in the large number and the prominent nature of those present at both episodes, especially in the light of the preceding pericope where Jesus tells the leper to keep the news of his healing to himself (v14). (2) The saying about the Son of Man's authority to forgive sins (v24) is illustrated subsequently by Jesus' calling of Levi. It follows that Luke expects his readers to relate the two incidents closely. They will realise, among other things, that in the second episode the Pharisees attack Jesus

from a different angle: this time it is not his claim to authority that causes offense, but his company. It emerges not so much that Jesus' opponents failed to appreciate the demonstration of Jesus' spiritual and physical authority when he healed the paralytic, but that they gradually develop an antipathy against his person which finds expression in a variety of ways.³¹ In the story line the tension escalates almost immediately after the start of Jesus' public activities.³² At the same time there is both reiteration and progression in the content of Jesus' pronouncements: the Son of Man who has authority to forgive or release (ἀφιέναι) sins (v24), now presents himself as the one who can *and does* meet people's needs (vv31f).³³ One senses that further conflict is on the cards. So far in the narrative Jesus has done little more than to respond to the needs of those who either happened to be where he was teaching (4.33; 5.12) or who were brought to him (4.40; 5.19). Up to this point there is no indication that Jesus went out of his way to meet 'sinners'. The calling of Levi is the first incident where Jesus made such a move. However, it is not the calling as such but the resulting table-fellowship which gives rise to grumbling.

Neale again finds it difficult to avoid the impression that Luke stage-managed the scene. He cites the following observations. (1) Only Luke identifies Levi as a τελώνης (5.27)—Mark and Matthew only mention that Levi sat at the tax table. (2) The meal has become a planned δοχὴν μεγάλην. (3) Luke makes Levi the unequivocal host of the event by clarifying that they met in his (ie Levi's) house. (4) Luke mentions an ὄχλος πολὺς (v29) as compared with the less dramatic πολλοὶ in Mark and Matthew. Neale also wonders whether there was any possible scenario that could help to clarify the nature of the offence caused by Jesus. In answer to this he argues that if the feast was spontaneous, those present would have included people who were far from disreputable. On the other hand, if it was planned, Levi would have intentionally invited 'a very unseemly gathering indeed', something which 'seems somewhat unlikely' as 'dif-

ferent kinds of sinners are never found flocking together in such a way as to be openly discerned and labelled as such'.³⁴ There are, he suggests, neither political, nor legal or moral issues which could plausibly account for grumbling at Jesus. Charges such as 'why do you betray your nation?' (political), 'why are you eating untithed food?' (legal) or 'why are you socialising with the immoral?' (moral) would—if historically plausible—have been more effective than 'why do you eat ...?'. Clearly the recounted event has passed from history to ideological symbolism.

This line of argument calls for a detailed response. (1) The first, third and fourth points carry relatively little or no weight. The further identification of the host in Luke is no more than a typical narrative clarification. If there is anything unusual at all, it is Mark's failure to do the same. The introductory mention of Levi *the tax-collector* is hardly much different—Luke simply replaces the family name (cf Mk 2.14) by the profession. To regard either as 'dramatising' would be to dramatise. As for the 'setting in the story world', ὄχλος is used far too frequently by Luke³⁵ to have any dramatising effect. Similarly, the combination ὄχλος πολὺς has been used in a straightforward Lukan summary only a few verses earlier (5.15) and occurs in another summary shortly after (6.17). Also, to make much of Luke's ὄχλος πολὺς compared with Mark's πολλοὶ without duly noting Luke's omission of Mk 2.13b ('the whole crowd gathered around him and he taught them') seems rather inconsistent. (2) It is Mark, not Luke, who makes a three-fold reference to the *sinners and tax-collectors* (Matthew reproduces two of these, Luke only one). Given that Luke also omits Mark's mention of the fact that the tax-collectors and sinners followed Jesus (Mk 2.15c) and the reference to the Pharisees and Scribes seeing the meal (Mk 2.16) as well as the explicit listing of *Jesus and his disciples* (Mk 2.15b), one simply has to say that Luke streamlined rather than heightened Mark's pericope. The phrase δοχὴν μεγάλην (Neale's second point) is not

much more than a summary for some of Mark's rather densely and repetitively expressed details.³⁶ Mark uses devices such as repetition here for effect, Luke does not. (3) The one aspect where Luke does sharpen Mark's impact is when he describes Levi's response: he left everything behind, got up and followed Jesus. But that is not the bone of contention between Jesus and his opponents in any of the episode's synoptic versions. The question is, what *is* the bone of contention? The answer is found in the close ties which Luke creates between the calling episode and the debate about fasting which follows.

While there is a definite link between the *Calling of Levi* and the preceding *Healing of the Paralytic*, the more important connection is between the former and the following *Fasting* episode (vv33–9). In contrast to Mark, Luke adopts a variety of measures to tighten this link. (1) Mark's narrator's point that the disciples of John and those of the Pharisees were fasting (Mk 2.18) is dropped. As a result the Pharisaic attack on Jesus in Lk 5.33 forms part of the previous conversation—the debate is one and the same, but the contrast between the sumptuous meal and the question of fasting is much sharper. (2) The *eating and drinking* motif (v30) is deliberately repeated in v33 (in Mk 2.18 the disciples simply 'do not fast'), thus further strengthening the point just made. (3) The double saying in vv31f ends on the need for repentance. This provides a natural point of contact for the following verses: Jesus' ministry is continuous with John's stern call for repentance recounted earlier (cf 3.8). There is evidently a measure of overlap between the motifs of this part of Luke and those contained in ch 3.7–18.³⁷

Having tightened the connection between vv27–32 and vv33–5, Luke heightens v33 and streamlines v34. According to v33 John's disciples and the Pharisees fast 'frequently and offer prayers' (ie while fasting?). The contrast between *eating and drinking* and *fasting* is thereby increased further. The surprising reference to prayer underlines that

spirituality is used as a key argument in the conflict. As for v34, Mark's redundant answer to the rhetorical question in v19 is omitted and, more importantly, the rhetorical question itself ('Can you make the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them?') becomes more confrontational in that it is now addressed to the Pharisees³⁸ directly, but also because it accuses them implicitly of forcing others to fast (ie rather than to celebrate as Levi and his fellow sinners did). All this suggests that Luke's understanding of this episode was that the heart of the matter between Jesus and his opponents was the question of people's responses to the bridegroom. The distinction of characters or groups in the narrative is directly related to these responses: the sinners' response so far was positive; the Pharisaic response is hostile and the response by John's disciples is subject to John's advice to return to Jesus and to verify whether he is the one they had waited for (ch 7.18f). As soon as they follow his advice, Jesus responds urging them that 'blessed is he who takes no offense at me' (v23). After their departure he continues by accusing the Pharisees and Scribes publicly of rejecting John's baptism. This means that they are evidently unable or unwilling to accept either John's stern message of repentance or the celebrations brought about by the release of those who did repent.³⁹ In this way ch 7.18–35 confirms that the issue of table-fellowship is closely tied up with the need to respond humbly to God's messenger. As if the point needed further illustration, Luke inserts the next table-fellowship scene, the *Anointing by the Woman*, at precisely this point.

To sum up, Jesus' conflict with his opponents is about their response to his person and mission. Luke makes it clear that from Jesus' point of view this is a spiritual conflict that revolves around the need for repentance. From the Pharisaic point of view it appears to be a conflict of power in more ways than one. First, Jesus invaded their power base or home ground (cf what could be called the 'synagogue motif' in ch 4.16–44) and will continue to

do so.⁴⁰ Secondly, Jesus enjoys considerable public support (Luke's ὄχλος emphasis!) and even starts to appoint his own disciples. Levi's readiness to leave everything behind and to arrange a party for his colleagues and Jesus embodies the superior appeal of Jesus. Thirdly, the Pharisees and Scribes are accused by Jesus of having arrogantly rejected John's baptism, thus annulling God's wisdom. At the same time Jesus tacitly challenges them whether they are sick after all (vv31f). Fourthly, as part of the inner-Jewish first century struggles for power bases the Pharisees may well have been engaged in attempts to ostracise and thus force into religious compliance those who are economically 'robbers, evil-doers, adulterers and tax-collectors' (Lk 18.11).⁴¹

Who, then, spoiled Levi's party? Neale's answers appears to be 'Luke' (or at least Luke's narrator). Luke's answer (along with Mark's and especially Matthew's—cf 9.13!) is 'the Pharisees and their Scribes'. The Pharisees' answer is of course that there should not have been a party in the first place. What is clear is that there is little reason to propose that Luke was any more implicated in 'ideologising' Levi and his friends than the other synoptics who give essentially the same answer: the Pharisees and their Scribes have a problem not only when he eats with sinners (v30), but quite simply *when he eats*. Jesus and his disciples are not supposed to eat, that is to celebrate the advent of the kingdom, they are supposed to fast and pray (v33). That would also solve the problem of having no food available on a Sabbath; hence there would be no need to 'harvest' (ie rub in the hand—cf ch 6.1f) first. With so much food talk in Luke's source at this point (ie Mk 2), it is hardly surprising that Luke could not resist extending the wine metaphor (ch 5.39) as well. He does so in line with his earlier emphasis on drinking (cf 5.30). Is Neale referring to observations such as these when he concludes that Levi's feast 'receives a unique treatment from Luke which heightens their [ie the events']

significance in the story compared to the other Gospel writers?⁴²

When the controversies recounted and tied together by the evangelists are seen as part of a string—as they are clearly intended—it emerges that neither Jesus nor his opponents are *primarily* preoccupied with the tax-collectors and sinners *as such*. The fact that Jesus sides with and even recruits from the latter merely compounds the Pharisees' annoyance with him. Of course, the contrast between the sinners' celebration party and the Pharisaic call for fasting and prayer could not be greater, but in v19 the Pharisees attack not the sinners but Jesus, or, to be precise, his disciples. There is no need to read Luke's interest in this conflict and its spiritual cause as evidence of the historical implausibility of the narrative's ideology. The ideological force of all three synoptic accounts depends precisely on their basic plausibility.⁴³ When Luke streamlines and at times heightens Mark's story line, his purpose is not to intensify the ideological clout of the participating personae in Mark's plot, but to arrive at a narrative which coherently emphasises the interplay of responses to Jesus' person and the unfolding conflict over Israel's power base.⁴⁴

B. Tears of Anointment (Lk 7.36–50)

The pericope of the sinful woman who anoints Jesus' feet with her tears and uses her hair to wipe them off is only reported in Luke. It seems right, therefore, to pay attention to its placing within Luke's narrative. The immediately preceding co-text focuses on John the Baptist's disciples who come to Jesus to enquire whether he is the one they had been waiting for. The uncertainty about Jesus' identity is highlighted by the repeated 'Are you the one who is to come or are we to wait for another?' (vv19f). Luke also supplies the summary comment that at the time Jesus had been releasing people from sicknesses and evil spirits (v21), before rejoining Q with its emphasis on the need to respond appropriately to Jesus' ministry (v23). This sets the tone

for the entire chapter: happy is anyone who does not take offence at Jesus. Evidently this is not only a suitable summing up of the experience of the centurion (vv1–10) and even the crowd attending the raising of the widow's son (vv11–7), it also serves as a preview of the expression of gratitude for the forgiveness of sins received by the sinful woman (vv36–50).

Kilgallen, as part of his welcome reinforcement of Fitzmyer's argument that the woman had received forgiveness prior to her entering the house of Simon,⁴⁵ points out that if Luke expected his readers to pick up this point, he had to provide clues other than the purely grammatical ones.⁴⁶ He rightly notes that the answer is to be found in the special material in vv29f. As the sole focus on John shows, this Lukan summary not only reiterates the opposite responses by various groups of people, it especially reminds the reader of the nature of John's baptism, a major theme as early as the opening chapters of the Gospel. John will bring back many of the Israelites to the Lord (1.16); he will prepare a people for the Lord (1.17); he will give his people knowledge of salvation (1.77); he preached a baptism of repentance *for the forgiveness of sins* (3.3). At that point Luke inserted in the triple tradition a reference to the tax-collectors who came to be baptised with this baptism. The following annunciation of Jesus by John, which Luke essentially received via Q, is summarised in typically Lukan fashion by a reference to John's exhortations and *proclaiming of good news* (v18). From all this it is evident that John's baptism of forgiveness of sins is of paramount importance in Luke's narrative. It is to this general framework that the anointing by the sinful woman has to be related. Quite possibly the reader is to understand John's baptism as the occasion of the forgiveness of her sins. It is the suggestion that those who sought and received John's baptism (as the sinful woman may well have done) enjoy God's forgiveness of sins which the Pharisees evidently find impossible to accept. They are even less prepared to show the type of

affection which Levi and the forgiven woman afford to Jesus.

What has emerged so far has a number of corollaries. (1) Simon and those with him (vv49) misunderstand the woman's affection at least partly because they are not aware of the link between her prior forgiveness and John's baptism. Luke, however, provides that link for the reader by way of vv29f. (2) When those at the table wonder about the identity of this Jesus who forgives sins (vv49), they fail to realise that Jesus' response to the woman is little more than confirmation of John's baptism. This ties in well with the earlier accusation by Jesus that many of those who went to see John misunderstood his mission (vv24–9). (3) Luke's portrayal of the forgiven woman functions primarily to show how God's righteousness as expressed through John and Jesus finds confirmation (vv35). The main emphasis is therefore on the fulfilment of God's purposes, not on the portrayal of the Pharisees as a stylised religious category of God's ideological enemies.⁴⁷ It is of course true that one does not necessarily rule out the other, but it is difficult to find evidence that Luke was at pains to bring out the Pharisees' ideological inadequacy any more than his fellow evangelists. The summary in vv29f has a different aim altogether, namely that of filling in for the reader the background needed to appreciate how the following episode of the *Forgiven woman* fits into the narrative flow. The forgiven woman is not only the responsive sinner,⁴⁸ but an illustration of how Jesus' ministry is directly continuous with that of John the Baptist. Simon failed to come to terms with two realities: yes, Jesus is a prophet (he knows about the woman's prior repentance/ forgiveness), and yes, the woman's display of gratitude was genuine and acceptable. By supplying vv29f Luke facilitated the readers' understanding of the episode in Simon's house.

The fact that Luke leaves the reader in no doubt which character to identify with⁴⁹—whether this be called *Tendenz* or, in this particular case *defamiliarisation of norms*⁵⁰—is essentially unrelated to the

question of historical plausibility. Yet Neale's discussion gives the strong impression that Lk 7 is but part of a narrative construction in which ideology takes over from and goes at the expense of history.⁵¹ 'Luke's religious categories are absolute.'⁵² A more modest but probably more realistic appraisal of the situation is to note that Luke skillfully inserted some extra material (vv36–50) at a point which made narrative sense and also that he employed one of his well known summaries (vv29f) to help the reader appreciate the point of the story line. Doubts may be expressed as to whether Luke's concern to supply his Q material with narrative asides and background information (7.3–6, 20f, 29f) ought to be exploited in the way suggested by Neale. It is commendable to consider narratives as wholes.³⁵ But conclusions about the ideological emphases of Luke's story such as 'now [ie. in ch 7] the "sinner" has been shown to be the proper object of forgiveness'⁵⁴—as if that had not been the case in Luke's earlier chapters and indeed in the synoptic parallels—or 'Luke's intentional development of a sympathetic view of the "sinner" is unique among the Gospels',⁵⁵ ought to be consistent with the source—and redaction critical realities. There is neither enough evidence that they are, nor does Neale seem interested in comparing Luke's ideological interests with those of Mark and Matthew. One might even suggest that some of the points which he establishes as further developments in Luke's advancing story line appear much less dramatic or deliberate when compared with earlier episodes recounted in the Gospel. I strongly suspect that such comparisons are needed to put Luke's 'ideologising' into perspective. The point may be illustrated briefly.

(1) As mentioned above, Mark's fascination with the response of sinners and especially the combination *tax-collectors and sinners* in the *Levi* pericope (2.15f) is stronger than that of Luke. (2) In the same pericope, Jesus' response to the lack of the Pharisees' concern is not a peculiarly Lukan motif, but one which is brought out rather more decisively by

Matthew (9.13a–cf 20.1–16, especially v15). (3) Luke is not primarily interested in sinners *as such*, but in sinners who humbly accept their need for repentance. Accordingly Luke does not only report about repentant tax-collectors, he also makes a point of emphasising that John's baptism of repentance and forgiveness was for the people at large and that it was indeed the people at large who responded (3.7.10.15.21).⁵⁶ Similarly the third evangelist highlighted Peter's initial humility: he falls on his knees and acknowledges his sinfulness (Lk 5.9), a detail found only in Luke's version. Similarly the centurion who sends for Jesus' help for his servant: here Luke is more interested than Matthew in the fact that despite his 'attested worthiness' (cf the extra information supplied in vv3–5) the centurion insists twice on his unworthiness (vv6f). In view of these early examples in the narrative of common (and well respected!—cf the centurion) people who respond humbly to John's and Jesus' message there can be no question of 'Luke's sinner' evolving from a despised element of society to a sympathetic figure.⁵⁷ Such a conclusion results from a rather selective reading of Luke's early chapters. Luke's sinner, far from being by definition a despised member of society, appears to be 'Mr Average': he loves those who love him; he does good to those who do good to him and he lends to those from whom he hopes to receive back (Lk 6.32–4). What he needs is what the people at large, the fisherman Peter, the centurion whose servant was ill, the tax-collectors and their armed assistants all need: spiritual humility in responding to God's messenger. Luke has various ways of expressing this. The beatitudes may not be explicitly for the poor *in spirit*, as in Matthew, but they are explicitly addressed to Jesus' disciples (Lk 6.20). Levi may for Luke be a good example of a responsive sinner, but Luke leaves no doubt that this is because he responded to Jesus' call for *repentance* (Lk 5.32), not because of his profession or despised status. The same is true of Peter, as we saw. Turning to the centurion, he also becomes a model of spiritual humility not because

he was a gentile *as such*, nor because he enjoyed a good reputation among local Jews, but because he displayed more faith than those in Israel (Lk 7.9).

All these examples are vital for our discussion because they reflect Lukan emphases. Luke's reversals have a distinct spiritual element to them. Not to respond to Jesus in the way these people had done was tantamount to ignorance or even arrogance. It was this implication of the gospel which historically may have incensed the Pharisees about Jesus' table-fellowship with the sinners as much as anything.⁵⁸ John's preaching had made it perfectly plain that responses to Jesus fell into the 'either or' category (Lk 3.16f). Jesus' calls for repentance as in ch 5.31f were in effect invitations, to the Pharisees as well,⁵⁹ to join his (table-)fellowship with forgiven sinners. Having said that, this emphasis, as much as it is present in Luke (6.36), is also important in Matthew (9.13). Luke's spiritual reversals are not an ideological novelty, although it would be true to say that in comparison with Mark, who emphasises such reversals primarily in relation to discipleship, Luke is more interested in what could loosely be termed 'conversions'. This is above all a different pastoral emphasis. Ideological it may be—all matters of faith are—but it is no more or less so than the interests of his fellow evangelists.

C. Galilean Blood (Lk 13.1–9)

The examples given above show how in Luke people from varied backgrounds serve to illustrate the need for responding humbly to the challenges set out by John and Jesus. They also show (*pace* Neale) that we are well advised not to oversimplify any development in the presentation of sinners in Luke's narrative. A text which is again only found in Luke and which emphasises precisely the fact that *all* are sinners, and therefore *all* need to repent is Lk 13.1–9. Jesus is told about a number of Galileans who, while performing their sacrifices, had been killed by Pilate. Jesus senses a hidden agenda, namely the implication that the slaughter

must have been divine punishment for severe sinfulness. Having pointed out a further example (the falling tower of Siloam which killed eighteen) Jesus brings home the fact that the lesson to be learned from these examples is not one of graded sinfulness, but one of a universal need for repentance *because all are sinners*.⁶⁰ The argument is moved a step further in the immediately following parable: not to bear fruit equals wasting good soil and ultimately means having to be cut down. This clearly recalls John's similar message in ch 3.17: the one coming after John already holds the winnowing fork in his hand—he is ready to dispose of the chaff in the fire and only holds back a little while (ch 13.9).

Neale quite rightly makes the observation that this text functions to include the reader in the religious category of those who need repentance.⁶¹ When he goes further to suggest that this is a deliberate *development* in the storyline,⁶² his argument becomes somewhat confused. He notes that the term *sinner* 'so far in Luke has been negative' and 'a term of derision' (Neale is thinking of Levi, the sinners in ch 6.32–4 and the sinful woman), clearly implying that this use of the term gradually changes in favour of a more positive understanding. On the other hand he includes the Galileans killed by Pilate and those killed by the falling tower (ch 13.2–4) and even those into whose hands the son of man will be delivered (ch 24.7). Given these last two references, there does not appear to be much development as far as the negative connotations of the term *sinner* are concerned. In ch 24.7 the term is as much one of derision as it was in chs 6.32–34 and 13.2,4, as Neale himself concedes.⁶³ Despite this Neale argues that Jesus' response following the report of the Galilean slaughter by Pilate represents the point where two views of the sinner 'are now beginning to meld into one.'⁶⁴ However, this is difficult to reconcile with his attempt to see this 'development' as part of Luke's reversal motif, particularly as he concedes that even in ch 13.2,4 'sinners' is 'a pejorative term

with which one would not readily identify oneself.'

One is left wondering whether there really is anything substantially new about 'the sinners' in ch 13. Can we say with Neale that 'the total reversal of conventional thinking that has just been advanced in 13.1–5 ... produces a most unexpected result: now it is the "sinner" and not the 'righteous' to whom salvation has come'⁶⁵? Has this not been obvious all along? It appears that Neale's assessment of the matter is guided to a great extent by his view that the portrayal of the sinners and the Pharisees in Luke is essentially ahistorical and hence ideologically motivated. This leads him to attempt to discover the dynamics of the text. The tempting question is whether less historical scepticism on his part would have enabled him to come to a more coherent appreciation of Luke's narrative. More specifically, does what we know of the use of language by groups competing to represent true Israel—of which the Pharisees were undoubtedly one, the Qumranites another—square with Luke's own assumptions?

Neale is right to point out that historically the Pharisees would have had little reason to object to Jesus' involvement with sinners if all he had tried to achieve was to bring back the lost. However, the real question is, back to what? And by what mechanism? Is it a case of bringing them back into the framework of the Pharisaic understanding of law(s) and covenant? Into the sphere of influence of the Temple cult? Was not the problem the Pharisees had with 'the sinners' precisely that Jesus offered a way back into the people of God *without* subjecting the repentant sinners to a framework of graded holiness? Jesus' simple non-differentiating approach (he ate with sinners and Pharisees alike) and his call to repentance which was tied up with his own person was the essential part of his proclamation. This approach to sinners which bypassed the religious framework endorsed by the Pharisees proved unacceptable for many of them.⁶⁶ This explains at least in part Luke's emphasis on the

confrontations between Jesus and his opponents over his fellowship with the sinners.⁶⁷ A further reason is likely to be found in Luke's (and Mark's—cf 2.17) awareness of the fulfilment character of Jesus' ministry to the outcast.⁶⁸ Whatever other reasons there may have been, Luke's main concern is to illustrate that people's need for repentance is irrespective of socio-religious background. Everyone needs a reversal which is both spiritual and individual in nature. This theme of spiritual reversals, as Neale rightly argues,⁶⁹ dominates chs 13 and 14 and culminates in ch 15.

D. Too many parties? (Lk 15)

It is no secret that Lk 15 is a carefully structured section which consists of an introductory setting (vv1–3), followed by three parables (vv4–7,8–10,1–32) which revolve around the same theme: *that which was lost is found*. The setting pictures the Pharisees and Scribes who are yet again annoyed at Jesus' table-fellowship with the sinners. The three parables evidently relate to this setting. What is perhaps less well appreciated by commentators is the central or pivotal position this chapter occupies within Luke's journey section (9.57–19.27). Before engaging with Neale's assessment of this chapter I propose to demonstrate the significance Luke attached to ch 15.

It used to be fashionable to regard Luke's journey section as a prime example of *theological* (rather than historical) *geography*.⁷⁰ Others have chosen to detect a possible chiasmus as the major structural framework.⁷¹ Apart from the difficulty that these suggestions by and large suffer from significant incongruencies,⁷² one wonders how Luke's intended readers were expected to recognise such intricate structures. The alternative for the commentator is to suggest a more simple arrangement which, at least in its basics, may have been deliberate. As with any such proposal, the purpose has to be the *description of what is there* rather than the claim that the author necessarily had this very structure in mind. I suggest that

Lk 9.51–6 should be regarded not so much as the beginning of the journey narrative (as is normally done), but as a summary transition between the Galilean ministry and the journey narrative which briefly mentions Jesus' time in Samaria. The journey narrative proper falls into three main sections, with an emphasis in sections I and III on discipleship:

- I. Basics of Discipleship (9.57–13.17)
- II. Kingdom Reversals (13.18–16.31)
- III. More Basics of Discipleship (17.1–19.27)

It appears that sections I & III oscillate between material dealing with discipleship (D), ie those who are 'in', and material about non-disciples (N), ie those who are not.

- I. Basics of Discipleship
 - D Duties and Privileges (9.57–11.13)
 - N **Warning** to Pharisees: Hypocrisy (11.14–54)
 - D *Spiritual and Material* Commitment (12.1–53)
 - N **Warning** to People: Hypocrisy (12.54–13.17)
- III. More Basics of Discipleship
 - D Forgiveness and Faithfulness (17.1–19)
 - N **Judgement** by the Son of Man (17.20–18.8)
 - D *Spiritual and Material* Humility (18.9–19.10)
 - N **Judgement** on Jesus' Enemies (19.11–27)

Whether or not Luke had such a structure in mind cannot be demonstrated and remains subject to debate. However, insofar as the above is an adequate reflection of what we find in the text, it seems clear that the journey section revolves around a number of core elements. (1) Discipleship is a matter of *commitment*. (2) The fact that failure to heed warnings about hypocrisy and ultimately the failure to become a committed disciple entails judgement. (3) The lesson that spiritual and material commitment are inter-related issues needs to be learned. It can now be seen how section II fits into the sequence of thought:

II. Kingdom Reversals

Spiritual Reversals (13.8–14.35)

The Lost will Be Found (15)

Material Reversals (ch 16)

The one recurring theme of sections I & III, that is *Spiritual and Material Commitment*, also forms the backbone of section II. Ch 15 forms the topical centre of Luke's journey section. Confirmation that Luke indeed attached considerable significance to this material comes from the fact that the setting he supplies for it (vv1–3) recalls with table-fellowship a major element of the overall storyline ever since Levi's banquet (5.29; 7.36; 11.37; 14.1.7.15). In the light of this it is not surprising to find Jesus using a parable (*The Prodigal Son*) which ends on the motif of a banquet. If the three parables relate directly to the *Sitz* provided by Luke in the opening verses, as is obviously the case,⁷³ this fact may be significant. After the return of the prodigal son, when the father puts on a celebratory meal, the older son refuses to attend (v28). From the point of view of the older brother there should have been no banquet of celebration (v30); if anyone deserved such festivities, it was the older brother himself (v29). Despite this attitude, the father attempts to persuade him to join the celebration (vv28, 32).

Although there is no need to push every detail in the story (or better three stories: vv11–20a, 20b–24, 25–32) to its allegorical limit, the sheer amount of seemingly redundant detail implies, first, a deliberate emphasis on the desperate situation from which the prodigal escaped, secondly, the harshness of the older brother and thirdly, the overflowing generosity of the father. Given this intended correspondence between the characters in the parable and those in vv1–3, the following conclusion is probably justified: whereas Jesus is reported more often to have dined with Pharisees than with tax-collectors and sinners, the former nevertheless continued to dwell on the offensiveness of the latter (vv1f and 28–30). In Luke's story the foremost problem of the Pharisees in relation to Jesus' social contacts was

therefore not a feeling of being sidelined by Jesus, although that remains a possibility, but of not being willing to allow the sinners to celebrate with the repentant sinners. Quite apart from the Pharisees' estimation of their own position (v29), they evidently could not accept that the sinners (v30) were no longer to be regarded as such (v32). In this way the parable reflects the tension that pervaded Simon's dinner with Jesus when the sinful but forgiven woman bursts in to express her gratitude to Jesus. Instead of celebration she met with obstinacy and protest on the part of Jesus' host. The host is portrayed as having effectively turned table-fellowship—normally a celebratory symbol—into a court of justice. Ironically he did so at the very point when the meal could have fulfilled its potential for celebration, that is when the forgiven woman burst in. The parable of the prodigal son exemplifies this very point: when the lost are found there will not only be table-fellowship (v2), but celebrations in heaven itself (v7). Story world (ch 7.35ff) and parable (ch 15.1f, 25–32) are at this point almost congruous. The latter reiterates the former.

The closing conversation in the parable between the father and the older son has to be interpreted as a tacit appeal to the Pharisees to join the celebrations after all. This raises the question whether Jesus' opponents are fit to partake in such celebration. Ironically, of course, they are not, certainly not from Jesus' perspective. Even if we could not infer this from the older brother's failure to understand the father's grace, one could still turn back to the programmatic saying in ch 5.31f: Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. There can be little doubt that Jesus' opponents to whom this saying was addressed would have picked up the underlying OT motif of God, the good shepherd who seeks the lost and helps the sick (Ezek 34.16). The implication of Jesus' justification along the lines of this good shepherd imagery is not an acknowledgement of the Pharisees' righteousness, but the recognition that they who object to his ministry to the

sinners are in fact bad shepherds. This has been brought out rather more explicitly in ch 11.37–54par.⁷⁴ Those who fail to join in heaven's celebration (cf vv2,7) may not have much to celebrate.

E. The Pharisee and the Tax-collector (Lk 18.9–14)

Any study of Luke's ideology has to come to terms with the portrayal of the Pharisee and the tax-collector in the Temple. Opinion is divided as to the extent to which their encounter should be regarded as an ideologically motivated caricature.⁷⁵ It seems to me that this discussion has not paid sufficient attention to the nature of parables. Parables function as well as they do precisely because they play on the ideological awareness of the recipients. In this regard parables are no different from most modern films. To expect parables to be free from ideology is as much beside the point as the assumption that it is possible or desirable to watch fiction without taking sides. Hence it makes little sense to regard this particular parable either as an attempt to draw a historical picture or, alternatively, as an unwarranted caricature. Parables would not be parables if they worked like that. The secret of a successful parable lies in the merging of historical presuppositions on the part of the intended audience with an ideological element of surprise or challenge. The result is by definition neither pure historical description nor sad caricature.⁷⁶ Ideology and historicity must not be played off against each other on the basis of a parable story, instead they feed on each other. The interpreter's task is to identify the intended readers' or hearers' response to the portrayal of the main characters and, secondly, the ways in which those responses are challenged by the author of the parable.

What, then, are the main challenges posed by this parable? Luke's co-textual clues are compelling: first, the original recipients of the spoken parable are described in such a way (v9) that their identification with the main characters in the parable becomes unavoidable. This is

no different from ch 15.1f in relation to the remainder of that chapter. Secondly, v14 not only forms a bracket with v9, thus tying in the parable with Jesus' audience, it also reiterates the reversal phrase used in ch 14.11, where it also functioned as the conclusion to a parable pericope on reversals from humility to glory and vice versa. The setting, to be sure, is slightly different. The first parable (14.7–11) was addressed to the theologians (ie Scribes) and Pharisees present at a Pharisee's dinner party to which he had invited Jesus, the latter to 'some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others'. The main challenge to the implied readers of Luke's Gospel must have been this: in ch 14 it would have been tempting to envy the status of Jesus' hosts, yet to do so would be spiritually counterproductive. Ch 18.9–14 reinforces this message by no longer allowing any sense of envying those who may have socio-religious reasons to 'trust in themselves'. The focus is here more firmly on the spiritual tension between arrogance and humility, not on the movement from social esteem to spiritual humiliation. The reader is left to wonder who these self-trusting people might have been, and there may well be an implied suggestion here that they might represent people from any social stratum, conceivably even the reader himself, not just the dining Pharisees and theologians of ch 14.⁷⁷ Neale is right when he sees a link between chs 14 and 18, but whether this parable brings the expectation and reversal motif as such 'to its ultimate expression' is quite another matter.⁷⁸ More important is the recognition that Luke has extended the scope of the repentant sinner's implied challenge to the reader by avoiding mention of the social categories of Jesus' audience. The lack of reference to any table-fellowship is equally significant. For most Pharisees table-fellowship had assumed the quality of a model or even preview of the kingdom. In ch 14 the symbolic invitation into the kingdom is set in the context of table-fellowship. Here the scope and appeal of the invitation is widened simply by the

absence of any Pharisaic table-fellowship setting. Instead, the setting is now the Temple, a place where the Pharisee and the sinner had equal access.

I have already pointed out that the question of whether or to what extent Luke substitutes ideology for historicity, runs counter to the nature of a parable story. However, there are a number of features in the text which have been used for such a line of argument. They include the question of the artificiality of the setting proposed by Luke (v9), the literary arrangement of the parable itself (six antitheses of behaviour⁷⁹) and the cultural background as evident from non-Biblical primary sources. The literary arrangement of the parable is probably the weakest criterion of the three in that it should be understood as a fairly standard feature of the parables.⁸⁰ The question of the artificiality of the setting suggested in Lk 18.9 also should not be given undue weight. This is clear from the inconsistency inherent in the argument that the proposed setting is at one and the same time too 'artificial' to be historical and yet not 'concrete' enough to make a historical quest fruitful.⁸¹ This leaves the rabbinic evidence, particularly the instruction on what one should pray on entering the *Beth ha-Midrash* contained in a *gemara* (*bBer* 28b):

Our Rabbis taught: on entering what does a man say? 'May it be Your will, O Lord my God, that no offence may occur to me, and that I may not err in a matter of *halachah* and that my colleagues may rejoice in me and that I may not call unclean clean and clean unclean, and that my colleagues may not err in a matter of *halachah* and that I may rejoice in them'.

On his leaving, what does he say? 'I give thanks to You, O Lord my God, that You have set my portion with those who sit in the *Beth ha-Midrash* and You have not set my portion with those who sit in [street] corners, for I rise early and they rise early, but I rise early for words of Torah and they rise for frivolous talk; I labour and they labour, but I labour and

receive a reward and they labour and do not receive a reward; I run and they run, but I run to the life of the future world and they run to the pit of destruction.

Traditionally commentators have seen this as evidence that the Pharisee's prayer in Lk 18.11f would have been regarded as entirely plausible and indeed laudatory in first-century Judaism.⁸² Neale complains that most commentators in fact start their quotation too late to facilitate a fair reading, namely after the sentence 'On his leaving, what does he say?' (ie near the beginning of the second paragraph above).⁸³ If the whole text (as quoted above) is taken into account, Neale suggests, it cannot possibly be regarded 'as an example of Jewish piety worthy of censure'. It is a genuine enough prayer, he continues, but it differs from Lk 18.11f 'in the underlying motivation, i.e. not self-aggrandizement but rather genuine thanksgiving that the worshipper has been spared a life of futile activity.' Neale is adamant that this prayer 'is not a caricature and is quite unlike the Lucan prayer in almost every respect' (!). He admits that there are numerous rabbinic passages that display extremes of religious bigotry, but then he assigns these to post-first-century times, though the reasons for this are not pointed out. But the decisive factor why the text should not be treated as comparable to the prayer in Luke is, as he concedes, Luke's own interpretation (vv9.14).⁸⁴

There are numerous problems with Neale's critique of the traditional understanding. First, his dating of the rabbinic evidence is circular in that it assumes what it seeks to show. Secondly, if the main difference between the *gemara* and Lk 18 is Luke's interpretation, Neale is by implication allowing for more conceptual overlap between the two texts⁸⁵ than his line of argument suggests. It could be responded that Luke's interpretation is in fact first century evidence for the type of understanding of the prayers concerned which he wishes to date much later. Thirdly, a number of rabbinic texts other than that quoted by Neale paint a picture

of a system of graded holiness which is wholly consistent with the evidence of the Gospels and sources from Second Temple Judaism.⁸⁶ One famous example of such a text is of course *tBer* 7.18, a rabbinic thanksgiving for the fact that the person praying was not made a heathen ('for heathens are as nothing before God'), a woman ('for women are not under obligation to fulfill the Law') or an uneducated man ('for uneducated men are not cautious to avoid sins').⁸⁷ It is easy to see how 'the sinners' fitted into such a graded system of purity which emanated concentrically from the Holy of Holies, the Temple, the fore-courts etc or—in terms of offices or official standing—the high priest, the priests, the Levites etc. To be more precise, 'the sinners' failed to register in any of these concentric circles—they were outside the realm of purity, either because of their trade (eg prostitutes), contact with the Roman oppressors (eg tax-collectors) or non-observance of Torah for reasons of ethnic background (ie Gentiles).

It remains to conclude that, while Lk 18.9–14 represents a narrative advance or refinement of earlier material (especially ch 14.1–11), it does so not by virtue of an ideologically motivated escalation of narrative depiction, but by means of selection, recall and focusing, thus resulting in a renewed challenge to the reader. The parable recalled by Luke typically combines an element of historical plausibility with ideological persuasion and subtlety: the one who falls into the *social* category of 'the sinners' finds exaltation precisely by conceding his state of *spiritual* sinfulness.

F. Another Party: Zacchaeus (Lk 19.1–10)

In many ways the story of Zacchaeus represents a pulling together and enrichment of numerous motifs that were prevalent throughout Luke's narrative. Here we have not just a tax-collector, like Levi, but the chief of tax-collectors (the word used is a *hapax legomenon* not just in the New Testament but in the whole of the extant Greek literature). He was at the

same time rich, like the rich young man. When Jesus invites himself to stay at the house of Zacchaeus, the latter is full of joy, like the woman who anointed Jesus. In the view of the onlookers he is also a sinful man, like Peter. As Neale rightly maintains,⁸⁸ Jesus is here depicted as fulfilling his mission as set out in the Benedictus, in his opening programmatic speech in Nazareth and in his declaration of intent at Levi's feast. The Great Commission serves to hand on to his disciples the ministry of preaching repentance and the need for forgiveness, thus bringing Luke's first volume to an end. As far as the numerous encounters between Jesus and 'the sinners' throughout the narrative is concerned, Lk 19.1–10 is in fact the last such encounter before the transition from the travel narrative (9.51–19.27) to the Temple narrative (19.28–21). The interesting observation, that this is the first time that the Gospel brings together the phrase *Son of man* with 'the sinners' material,⁸⁹ underlines the strategic significance of this pericope further.

The traditional understanding that Zacchaeus repented of his lifestyle has been challenged by those who prefer to interpret v8 as a defensive affirmation by Zacchaeus (in the face of the crowd accusation—v6) that he did not in fact fit into the mould of the 'typical' defrauding tax-collector.⁹⁰ Neale is right when he challenges this alternative on the grounds that Zacchaeus' defrauding activity (v8) cannot be construed as unintentional wrongdoing (cf Lk 3.14) and that the fourfold restitution suggested by him was prescribed in the Pentateuch not for unintentional mistakes, but for deliberate theft.⁹¹ Up to this point the historical plausibility of the picture painted has been questioned. However, there is one point where, according to some,⁹² the legendary character of the story surfaces: the fact that 'they all murmured' (v7). Neale finds it just as incredible that, historically, 'they' should have grumbled, as the claim in ch 5 that the Pharisees took offence at Jesus' meal with Levi and his friends. He decides that the reason for the grumbling in any case does not matter, since the

main point must be that Jesus alone is receptive to sinners. Support is drawn from a rabbinic parable (*B B Kam* 79b) where two robbers hosted separate banquets. One invited neither royalty nor any townspeople. The other invited townspeople, but no royalty. The parable concludes by indicating that the robber who invited townspeople, but no royalty, should receive a heavier punishment. Neale cannot detect a reason for that: the hosts, he maintains, were in trouble whoever they invited. Similarly, he maintains, the crowd reaction directed against Zacchaeus 'seems somehow irrational and bigoted to the reader'. It follows, on this view, that the episode does not function at a strictly historical level.⁹³

There is no need here to reiterate once more the arguments in favour of historical plausibility. Suffice to say that it is difficult to see how the offence might work well literarily without being historically at all plausible. If v7 is a Lukan creation which performs a purely literary function, v8 also has to be assigned to the author's redactional freedom⁹⁴ as it presupposes the grumbling crowd. After all, this is the only time that a repentant sinner verbally articulates the change brought about by his encounter with Jesus. V10 would have to be regarded as an importation from Lk 5.31f. However, if that road is taken, it becomes impossible to imagine why the pericope should have been handed down at all. It is far better to assume the tradition-historical integrity of the pericope. The grumbling crowd must have formed part of the core tradition at a pre-Lukan stage. As for the rabbinic parable cited above, it remains to observe that the likely reason for the heavier punishment for the robber who invited the townspeople but not royalty, must be that his behaviour would have been seen as an insult to the royal family rather than restitution. To argue that the robbers could not have avoided offence 'no matter what they did' is not at all convincing. Hence the comparison with the grumbling crowd in Lk 19 does not work in Neale's favour. There is nothing irrational about either text.

In sum, the story of Zacchaeus and Jesus does much to tie together a number of motifs employed at earlier points in Luke's narrative. Yet, it would be wrong to interpret it as an ideologising, non-historical portrayal intended as the culmination of a carefully constructed plot around a number of episodes which involve ever more idealised sinners. This is not to deny that the sinners assume paradigmatic significance for the readers of the Gospel and that this is due to Luke's story-telling techniques, but this is not necessarily achieved at the expense of historical plausibility.

3. Conclusion: Historicity and Ideology

A major objective of the present study was to examine whether historicity and ideology in Luke's portrayal of 'the sinners' are as mutually exclusive as has recently been claimed. Where there is overlap between Luke and his fellow synoptics, there is little evidence that Luke employed ideological subtleties at the expense of historical plausibility. As far as Luke's special material is concerned, the picture is essentially similar. There is in any case no need to play off ideology against plausibility. The former presupposes the latter. By the same token it would be unwise and simplistic to equate narratological and redactional activity by the Biblical author with a reduction in historical authenticity. In the case of Luke's portrayal of Jesus' relationship with 'the sinners' and the Pharisees, Neale has not succeeded in undermining Luke's historical credibility. If anything, the primary non-Biblical material supports his use of sociological categories such as 'the sinners'. As for the conflict between the Pharisees and 'the sinners', there is ample evidence⁹⁵ that can be used to authenticate it in essence. The next stage would be to ask how this conflict related to Jesus' preaching of the kingdom of God. Needless to say, that is not a topic that can be dealt with as part of this essay.

- 1 P. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts* (Cambridge: University Press, 1987) and D. Neale, *None but the Sinners* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1991).
- 2 Very recent examples include J. York, *The Last Shall be First—The Rhetoric of Reverential in Luke*, (Sheffield Academic Press, 1991) and S. Sheeley, *Narrative Asides in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), but cf also R. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986).
- 3 When R. Dillman, 'Das Lukasevangelium als Tendenzschrift', *BZ* 38/1 (1994) 86f suggests that such an approach 'kam bisher kaum in Blick', this is indicative only of his preoccupation with German literature.
- 4 Esler, *Community*, 72.
- 5 This point was rightly raised by Neal, *Sinners*, 120f as well.
- 6 Tannehill's immensely useful discussion (*Unity*, 103–9) emphasises Luke's technique of 'recall and enrichment' whereby readers are tacitly invited to recall earlier stories with similar but less developed emphases.
- 7 The question of sources plays only a subordinate role in Tannehill's study. Neale's focus of attention is the historical plausibility (or, in his view, lack of it) of Luke's portrayal of 'the sinners'. He concludes that this portrayal is essentially ideologically motivated.
- 8 D. Mealand, *Poverty and Expectation in the Gospels* (London: SPCK, 1980), 16–20 (following H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960] 244) maintains that although Luke seems more severe than Matthew, this is probably due to his inclusion of more material and also to Matthew's tendency to abbreviate and to soften hard sayings. E. Bammel, 'πρωτος' in *TDNT*, vol VI (ed. G. Friedrich; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968) 907 even suggests that Luke has no particular interest in the destitute at all (for a critique cf Esler, *Community*, 185f).
- 9 Esler, *Community*, 165–9. For full scale investigation of the poor and possessions in Luke see D. Secombe, *Possessions and the Poor in Luke-Acts* (ed. A. Fuchs; Linz: Studien zum Neuen Testament, 1982); also Mealand, *Poverty*, 27–33.
- 10 Luke reports on two occasions how Jesus brought healing and forgiveness to women (chs 7,36–50 and 13,10–7). Both passages, along with the raising of the son of the widow of Nain (7,11–7), are peculiar to Luke.
- 11 *The Serving of Jesus by Mary and Martha* (10,38–42) and the remark that Jesus was supported in his ministry by various women (8,1–3) are again only found in Luke.
- 12 Lk 8.1–3 (L); 23.49,55 (cf Mk 15.40–7); 24.10,22–4 (v10 has parallels in all the other Gospels, but only Lk 24.22–4 refers back at length to the fact that it was the women who discovered the empty tomb).
- 13 Lk 1.39–55,60; 2.36–8; (23.27–31?); 24.8–10,22–4. Both at the beginning and near the end of the narrative the women appear to have been quicker in their recognition of the significance of John's and Jesus' impending arrival and of Jesus' resurrection than the men (1.20 and 24.11).
- 14 Marshall, *Luke—Historian and Theologian* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1970) 140.
- 15 The relevant passage (9.51–6) forms the important transition between the Galilean section of Luke (4.14–9.50) and the so-called *Journey narrative* (9.57–19.27). Luke makes the point that Jesus' movement from Galilee towards Jerusalem was *via*, not *around*, Samaria.
- 16 For a comprehensive discussion see S. Wilson, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission* (Cambridge: University Press, 1973) 29–58.
- 17 The most up-to-date treatment of this feature of Luke's narrative has been provided by Neale, *Sinners* (1991).
- 18 Note especially ch 15.1f (cf 5.29–32; 7.34; 19.7) which forms the framework for the entire chapter and which has no counterpart in the Matthean parallel (Mt 18.12–4). There is little doubt that in Luke 15 the lost sheep that is found, the lost coin and the prodigal son all stand for the sinners and tax-collectors, whereas the ninety-nine sheep (ie 'the righteous who do not need repentance') and the older son embody the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees. Other relevant meal scenes are 5.27ff; 7.36ff; 9; 10.38ff; 11.37ff; 14.1ff; 19.1ff; and possibly Luke 22.21.
- 19 Two main examples (in addition to the *Prodigal son*—ch 15.11–32) are the parables of the *Children in the market place* (ch 7.28–35) and the *Good Samaritan* (Lk 10.25–37). For further detail cf Tannehill, *Unity*, 109–27.
- 20 York, *Last* (1991) offers a full overview of

- past research and an investigation of such reversals.
- 21 Neale, *Sinners*, 68–97 argues in direct contrast to J. Jeremias, 'Zöllner und Sünder', *ZNW* 62 (1931) 293–300; N. Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, (London: SCM, 1967) 93f and M. Borg, *Conflict, Holiness and Politics in the Teachings of Jesus* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1984) 83f.
 - 21 Neale doubts whether historically there was any serious reason for the Pharisees to disapprove of Jesus' table fellowship with the sinners (who were Jews after all) or of his calling of Levi (*Sinners*, 120–9). This causes him to maintain that the portrayal of the sinners is 'merely a matter of perspective and not a matter of history at all' (p. 131). But how could 'the sinners' be used and recognised as a 'symbol for the purpose of his [ie Jesus'] ministry if their treatment by the author was historically highly implausible? Interestingly, whenever Luke demonstrates that Jesus also had table fellowship with Pharisees (7.36; 11.37f [cf Matthew's omission of a similar introduction]; 14.1—all *L*), the offence caused each time is shown to have had specific reasons (the Pharisee's need for forgiveness in comparison to the sinful woman who anointed Jesus; the question of purity in the case of the hosting Pharisee; where there is no historically plausible reason Luke takes care to point this out—cf 14.4,6). Clearly Luke's narrative world relies on historical plausibility.
 - 23 Cf F. Herrenbrück, 'Zum Vorwurf der Kollaboration des Zöllners mit Rom', *ZNW* 78 (1987) 189–93 and more recently *Jesus und die Zöllner. Historisch und exegetisch-kritische Untersuchungen* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990) who argues that as part of the first century inner-Jewish power struggles the Pharisees attempted to marginalise the economically powerful tax-collectors into submission. B. Capper, 'Review' *JTS* 43 (1992) 589–94 revives the case (refuted by J. Donahue, 'Tax Collectors and Sinners', *CBQ* 33 (1971) 39–61 at least in regard to Galilee) for 'the sinners' as those who collaborated with or are used by the Roman oppressors and who are consequently ostracised. Despite Donahue's reservations, the striking collocation in Lk 3.12–14 of the tax-collectors and the 'soldiers' (Jewish auxiliaries who assisted the tax-collectors?) is noteworthy. For combinations of *tax-collectors* with other groups of people cf also Mt 18.17 (gentiles) and 21.32 (harlots) and the rabbinic evidence discussed by Neale on pp. 72–4. Neale's response to Perrin and others (pp. 69–75) shows his disagreement, but is not strictly speaking a historical refutation.
 - 24 It is an irritating feature of Neale's approach that he dismisses the historical approach in his Introduction (p. 15), but then conducts (and eventually abandons) an extended historical search (pp. 18–97), only to arrive at the surprising conclusion that the historical facts do little to help us understand the text (p. 113).
 - 25 So does Neale, to be sure, but matters of tradition and redaction are not a major concern for him.
 - 26 It is significant that Luke follows Mark's strong synagogue motif (4.33,38,44) and even amplifies it, first by bringing forward the Nazareth episode (4.16) and secondly by re-emphasising twice in the same pericope (and therefore seemingly redundantly) that this happened 'in the synagogue' (vv20 and 28). Quite possibly this is a preview of things to come (especially vv28f): towards the climax of the story the Son of Man will eventually move towards Jerusalem and clash with the temple authorities (another aspect which Luke emphasises more than the other synoptics), but not before.
 - 27 This caused Neale, *Sinners*, 120f to tacitly question the relevance of some of Esler's work on the significance of the table-fellowship motifs for understanding Luke's Gospel and community. Esler dealt with the importance of table-fellowship from the point of view of Jewish-gentile relations, but he did not discuss in detail any of 'the sinner' material examined by Neale. This is a valid point, albeit one which is indicative of an omission not only by Esler, but also by Neale himself. If the very real possibility that the combination *sinners and tax-collectors* reflects a group of people who were ostracised because of their involvement with the Roman oppressors is taken into account, it can no longer be held with certainty that the issue of *Jews (ie here Jesus) eating with Jews* 'has no connection with the issues which confronted the church with regard to Jew/Gentile relations' (p. 121).
 - 28 Tannehill, *Unity*, 104–9.
 - 29 Neale, *Sinners*, 109. He points to a parallel in Lk 6.17 where, he argues, Luke shows the same tendency (cf Mt 5.1). Neale

- ignores that Lk 6.17 is no more public or dramatic than its Markan parallel (3.7f; cf Mt 4.25).
- 30 It is simply impossible to be certain that 'Matthew knows nothing of this special Lukan information about the setting' (p. 110). All one can say is that Matthew did not make the explicit link (as Luke did) between Mark's overall summary (ch 3,7–10) and this particular event Mk 2.1–12).
 - 31 Notice how in vv21f they 'began to think ...', whereas in v30 they immediately 'grumbled' at Jesus. In tandem with this development Jesus' response moves from two rhetorical questions (v22f) to what his opponents must have regarded as sarcasm (vv31f).
 - 32 J. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Luke* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) 85f is of course right when he stresses that despite this early escalation Jesus' opponents normally refrain from entering an all-out confrontation (a possible exception is ch 11.45); more often than not they either attack the disciples or they keep their thoughts to themselves. When the situation gets close to boiling point, it is noteworthy that their outburst is delayed until Jesus 'went outside'. The conflict gets rather more acute when Jesus approaches Jerusalem, or more importantly, the temple.
 - 33 When Jesus 'has come to ... call sinners to repentance' (perfect tense), this probably relates back to v24 where Jesus 'continues to bring release' (present infinitive). What Jesus had announced in Nazareth is now materialising.
 - 34 Neale, *Sinners*, 117 (the last of the quoted phrases Neale borrowed from Raney, 'Sinners', 580).
 - 35 For occurrences in the immediate co-text leading up to ch 5.29 cf chs 4.42; 5.1,3,15,19.
 - 36 It may be significant that Luke changed Mark's aorist to an imperfect (ἡκολούθει). The reason for this is probably to emphasise that hosting the meal was part of Levi's response to the call (so J. Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20*, [Waco: Word, 1989] 245).
 - 37 The overlap includes at least the following main components: the crowd that follows (3.7,10/5.29); the call for repentance (3.3,8/5.32); the repentant tax-collectors (3.12/5.28f) and of course the mention of John himself.
 - 38 According to Mk 2.18 the question was put by the disciples of John and the Pharisees.
- Matthew chooses to focus on the disciples of John alone (ch 9.14), but Luke gives the impression (by default) that the questioners are still the Pharisees (and presumably the Scribes) who are then addressed directly by Jesus. This probably underpins the assumption that the double saying in vv31f (with its Lukan clarification that *responding to the call* means *repenting*) was understood by Luke as an implicit challenge to the Pharisees.
- 39 This is conveniently summed up in the parable of the children in the market place. Significantly this parable uses precisely the terminology of celebration, eating and drinking.
 - 40 NB Luke's strong emphasis on Jesus involvement with the temple as soon as he arrives in Jerusalem.
 - 41 Cf Herrenbrück, 'Vorwurf', 186–99.
 - 42 Neale, *Sinners*, 133.
 - 43 Whatever the degree of identifiability of the 'historical sinners', Jesus' inclusive approach in associating with them ran counter to the Pharisaic understanding of graded holiness (cf Lev 10.10; 19.2; Neh 10.28).
 - 44 For a very helpful summary of this 'controlled conflict' until Jesus approaches Jerusalem cf Kingsbury, *Conflict*, 79ff. There is a significant difference here compared with Mark's Gospel, where the focus is more firmly on the need for the disciples to mature. In Luke the failures of the disciples are relatively less important than the need for people to respond to John's and Jesus' calls for repentance.
 - 45 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 686–92.
 - 46 For details cf J. Kilgallen, 'John the Baptist, the Sinful Woman, and the Pharisee', *JBL* 104 (1985) 675f.
 - 47 When Neale, *Sinners*, 136 speaks of a peculiarly Lukan tendency to portray the Pharisees as being non-responsive to John and Jesus on the basis of Lk 7.29f he makes too much of a typically Lukan summary, but also ignores the similar emphases in the synoptic parallels (in addition to the direct parallels cf Mt 21.31f—the fact that Matthew unlike Luke only mentions the Scribes is hardly as significant as Neale proposes—p. 136).
 - 48 Neale argues in one and the same paragraph (1) that the sinful woman and Simon represent the two extremes of the ideological spectrum, but (2) that they are prototypical (p. 147). Equally confusing is his insistence that Jesus here for the first time

- pronounces forgiveness of sins to a 'sinner' (ie the woman—v48). Given ch 5.21, this is hardly a novel feature in the narrative. The distinction that in ch 5 the formula was not applied to a 'sinner' but to a paralytic is unlikely to have been on Luke's mind.
- 49 Neale, *Sinners*, 136. Neale also reflects long held suspicions among scholars (since Jülicher, to be precise) against allegorical interpretations of the parables. Consequently, when discussing the parable of the Children in the market place (v31f), he rejects any 'allegorizing' (138–40). This ignores, first, that to interpret an allegorically intended parable allegorically is not to allegorise. Secondly, this particular parable is accompanied by an allegorical interpretation in both strands of the tradition (Mt 11.18f and Lk 7.33f). Thirdly, the correspondence between the forgiven woman and the tax-collectors in v29 on the one hand and Simon and the non-responsive Pharisees (v30) on the other as well as the introduction to the parable ('to what then shall I compare the people of this generation') strongly indicate the allegorical nature of the parable. Fourthly, the fact that Jesus' interpretation attached to the parable picks up the theme of table fellowship does not—as Neale contends (p. 139f)—make the parable any less allegorical. Lastly, Jesus' use of a proverb here again has no impact on the question of whether the parable is an intended allegory or not.
 - 50 D. Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy or Friend—Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991) 221.
 - 51 In ch 5.17 Neale discovered evidence of Luke's dramatising measures in the presence of the reference to the personae present, but in ch 7.36 he detects similar evidence in the lack of time reference (p. 141). Similarly, in Luke's version of the banquet given by Levi, the deliberate construal of Levi as the typical sinner is said to be detectable in the story details supplied by Luke (pp. 114–7); here in ch 7, however, essentially the same is said of the sinful woman on the basis of the narrator's vagueness and the woman's 'decidedly "flat" character' (p. 142). Luke appears to be in a no-win situation.
 - 52 Neale, *Sinners*, 136 (cf p. 147). Although he wishes to show how Luke develops such 'absolute' categories as the story moves on, Neale later has to concede that 'the categories we have observed cannot be pressed in all cases.' (p. 164).
 - 53 A good example of this is Tannehill, *Unity* (1986).
 - 54 Neale, *Sinners*, 147.
 - 55 *Ibid.* p. 164)
 - 56 Although it is undoubtedly true that the mention of the tax-collectors who came to be baptised (vv12f) prepares the way for later episodes involving them, their mention at this point is by no means central.
 - 57 Neale, *Sinners*, 164.
 - 58 A further obvious reason is that Jesus' associations with both Pharisees and sinners did not fit their concentric understanding of graded holiness emanating from the Holy of Holies. Graded holiness on the one side and a radical mercy paradigm on the other cannot easily be harmonised due to their diverging social implications.
 - 59 This is the clear implication not only of the Banquet parable in ch 14.15–24, but also in the three parables in Lk 15, as the introductory vv1f demonstrate.
 - 60 It is nevertheless difficult to see why Neale, *Sinners*, 152 sees a need to distinguish between Luke's rationale for repentance (that all are sinners) and that given in Mark and Matthew (the advent of the kingdom) as if the two were incompatible or as if the latter was not found in Luke as well (cf Lk 3.7–10.17 and 5.33–5—the latter follows on directly from the call to repentance in vv31f).
 - 61 Neale, *Sinners*, 152.
 - 62 *Ibid.*
 - 63 *Ibid.*, p. 153.
 - 64 *Ibid.* The two views he refers to are *the sinner as a socially ostracised and theologically damned individual* and *the sinner as one with an inherent need of God* (for the latter cf 13.3.5).
 - 65 *Ibid.*
 - 66 Obviously the matter of table fellowship with sinners compounded the Pharisees' annoyance as it implied an undermining of their own understanding of (Pharisaic) table fellowship as a ritually pure micro cosmos of spiritual Israel.
 - 67 For table fellowship as a sign of granted forgiveness of the very end of 2 Kings, ie ch 25.27ff.
 - 68 Lk 5.31f and 19.10 are reminiscent of Ez 34.16, thus undergirding from the OT the need for differentiating between the activities of God, the shepherd, and the failure of Israel's spiritual leadership.

- 69 *Ibid.*
- 70 For example cf Conzelmann, *Theology* and Robinson.
- 71 K. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976) 79–82 and C. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (Missoula: Scholars, 1974) 51–6.
- 72 For instance, Talbert's version of the chiasmus (in *Reading Luke* [London: SPCK, 1982] 111f) suffers from the following serious weaknesses: (1) Virtually all of ch 14.25–15 appears to have been swept under the carpet. (2) Chs 14.7ff and 14.1ff are in reverse order. (3) Chs 10.1–24; 10.25–37 and 12.13–34 do not fit topically. (4) Ch 16.14–31 should remain with ch 16.1–13 (but the same is not true of the chiasmic counterpart). (5) Ch 17.1–19 should not be split into two units.
- 73 Even Neale, *Sinners*, 156–64 who has serious reservations against what he calls 'allegorising' is happy to concede the three-fold link between this parable on the opening verses of the chapter: God's love for the sinners is illustrated by the father; the repentant sinners correspond to the returning prodigal son and the older son represents the attitude of the Pharisees towards Jesus' readiness to celebrate to eat with the sinners. (Neale's attempted distinction between allegory and analogy [p. 163] is in practical terms negligible.)
- 74 It is therefore difficult to agree with Neale, *Sinners*, 162 that there was no irony in Lk 5.32.
- 75 C. Montefiore, *Rabbinic Literature and Gospel Teachings* (New York: Ktav, 1970) and L. Schottroff, 'Die Erzählung vom Pharisäer und Zöllner als Beispiel für die theologische Kunst des Überredens' in (eds H. Betz and L. Schottroff) *Neues Testament und Christliche Existenz* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1973) 439–61 clearly see the portrayal of the Pharisee in this text as a caricature. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1186f and Marshall, *Luke*, 677ff disagree.
- 76 A phrase used in by J. Charlesworth, *Jesus within Judaism* (London: SPCK, 1988) in relation to Lk 18.9–14.
- 77 Perhaps Tannehill's category of *recall and enrichment* as a Lukan feature might be adapted—at least in the case of Luke 14 and 18—to *recall and focalisation*.
- 78 Neale, *Sinners*, 172 here succumbs to the temptation of finding an ever increasing degree of ideologizing by Luke. In fact, he inadvertently has to revise his estimate when he discusses Luke 19.1–10 and labels that pericope also the 'fullest expression' of Jesus ministry in meeting the needs of 'the sinners' (p. 188f). One wonders how many 'fullest expressions' there might be. Could it just be that Neale exaggerates Luke's ideological tendencies?
- 79 They are conveniently set out in the Greek in Neale, *Sinners*, 170.
- 80 Pace Neale, *Sinners*, 171. An excellent introduction in the underlying mechanisms of the Gospel parables is C. Blomberg's *Interpreting the Parables* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 1990).
- 81 Neale, *Sinners*, 169 is content to conclude that 'the nature of the narrative here ... makes such [historical] investigations unnecessary'.
- 82 Cf E. Lindemann, *Parables of Jesus—Introduction and Exposition* (London: SPCK, 1966) 58–60.
- 83 Neale, *Sinners*, 174f.
- 84 *Ibid.* 176.
- 85 This is confirmed by his admission that, as a caricature, Luke's text 'must have elements of the plausible in order to be successful'. Neale confirms that Lk 18.11f 'is a plausible portrayal in many respects' (!) (*ibid.*). How can they be at the same time 'categorically different' and yet 'similar ... [in their] attitude towards piety' (174f)? The claim that the rabbinic advice given in *bBer* 28b is fundamentally different from Lk 18.11f is simply untenable.
- 86 Cf Borg, *Conflict*, 56–61 and 68–70. For an assessment of Neusner's research into first-century Pharisaism cf D. De Lacey, 'In Search of a Pharisee' in *Tyndale Bulletin* 43.2 (1992) especially 359–67.
- 87 It is well documented that caution is due when rabbinic sources are used to reconstruct first-century Pharisaism (for reasons of dating, theological filter etc). However, convergence of evidence from a variety of sources such as the Gospels, the Qumran literature, rabbinic sources, Josephus, Philo and pseudepigraphical works has to be regarded as one of the most valuable clues for such a reconstruction.
- 88 Neale, *Sinners*, 189.
- 89 *Ibid.*
- 90 R. White, 'A good word for Zacchaeus? Exegetical comment on Luke 19.1–10' in *LTQ* 14 (1979) 89–96 and Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1218–22.
- 91 Neale, *Sinners*, 185f.
- 92 *Ibid.* 183.

93 *Ibid.* 184.

94 However, cf R. Bultmann's claim that v9 must follow on from v7 (*Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970] 33f). This is

based on the change from third person (v7) to Zacchaeus' own statement (v8) and back to third person (v9).

95 Especially that collected and interpreted by Borg, *Conflict*.