

3. MATTHEW AND LUKE

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1. *Introduction*

The Gospel of Matthew has often been taken as a document that illustrates the difficult parting of the ways between Judaism and the Christian communities emerging from it into a Gentile world.¹ There certainly is a lot of evidence to suggest that the Gospel of Matthew is indeed a document reflecting quite grave differences with at least some strands of the Judaism it encountered. Even if the Gospel does not contain uncontested evidence that the break with Judaism is already a fact, it certainly looms large on the horizon. But there is also another parting that seems at least alluded to, if not present as distinctly as the conflict with Judaism. It is the conflict between the kind of Jewish Christianity proposed by Matthew and the Gentile Christianity in a Pauline tradition which abandons circumcision and the strict observance of the Law. Matthew's Gospel is written at a point in time where the evangelist can look back on the rich theology offered by its Jewish origin. However, he also looks into a future of a church that is inexorably becoming Gentile. Thus it is quite proper to speak of a parting of the ways that affected various traditions in the early church.² Matthew may have regretted this development, but the subsequent history of the Gospel and its prominent use among Gentiles like Ignatius of Antioch show that he could not stop this development. At about the same time as Matthew, the author of Luke-Acts faced a similar situation. From both the Gospel and the Acts it is quite obvious that Luke knew about a somewhat painful relationship between Jewish traditions

1. G. N. Stanton, 'Matthew's Christology and the Parting of the Ways', in J. D. G. Dunn (ed.), *The Parting of the Ways A.D. 70 to 135* (WUNT, 66; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), pp. 99–116. For a history and a critique of this concept, see A. H. Becker and A. Y. Reed (eds), *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (TSAJ, 95; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

2. 'To the abiding impoverishment of the church, the Jewish and Gentile sections of the church were going their separate ways by the turn of the century'. W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (ICC; 3 vols; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988, 1991, 1997), III, p. 722.

and the Gentile future of the greater Church. The aim of this study is, therefore, to look at the different strategies of both authors in dealing with the advent of Gentiles in their Christian communities with their Jewish heritage. This will include first and foremost a look at the approach to the Gentile mission, taking up from there issues like the observance of the Law, salvation and christology.

2. *The Gentile Mission in Matthew*

Looking at the Gospel of Matthew one cannot be but impressed by the enormous influence of Mt. 28.16-20 over Matthew's interpreters. Perhaps this was most poignantly expressed by O. Michel when he took the command of the risen Jesus to the universal mission as the key to the Gospel and went on to state, 'Seit der Erhöhung Jesu Christi fällt die Scheidewand des Gesetzes hin, wird das Evangelium zur Botschaft für "alle Völker", d. h. für alle Menschen, ohne Rücksicht auf die Gesetzesfrage'.³ Michel is basically repeating what still seems the consensus among scholars, namely that the Gospel exhibits a positive attitude towards the Gentiles and that it consequently embraced the Gentile mission without reservations. It has even been suggested that the commission to the Gentile mission concludes the mission to Israel, so that the Jews are no longer included in πάντα τὰ ἔθνη of Mt. 28.19.⁴ Still, the mission to the Gentiles comes as something of a surprise after the Gospel was concerned to portray the mission of Jesus as one to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Mt. 15.24).⁵ Such a view usually appeals to the seemingly unqualified positive appearance of the Gentiles in the Gospel.⁶ There are references to Abraham as the father of all nations, to the women in the genealogy, to the appearance of the magi, to the two fulfilment quotations in Mt. 4.15 and 12.18, to the centurion and his admirable faith surpassing that of all Israel (Mt. 8.5-13), to Jesus' visit to Gadara (Mt. 8.28-34) or Tyre and

3. O. Michel, 'Der Abschluß des Matthäusevangeliums', *EvT* 10 (1950), pp. 16-26 (26). Michel goes on to place the final redaction of the Gospel squarely within Gentile Christianity.

4. See D. R. A. Hare and D. J. Harrington, "Make Disciples of All the Gentiles" (Mt 28:19), *CBQ* 37 (1975), 359-69 and D. J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* (SP, 1; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), p. 416.

5. Thus D. A. Hagner writes, 'Now, after the death and resurrection of Jesus, for the first time the limitation of the gospel to Israel (cf. 10:5; 15:24) is removed'. See D. A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28* (WBC, 33B; Dallas: Word Books, 1996), p. 887. S. Brown speaks of the Gentile mission as a 'deus ex machina'. See S. Brown, 'The Matthean Community and the Gentile Mission', *NovT* 22 (1980), pp. 193-221 (221).

6. A good example of such a position is B. Byrne, 'The Messiah in Whose Name "The Gentiles Will Hope" (Matt 12:21): Gentile Inclusion as an Essential Element of Matthew's Christology', *ABR* 50 (2002), pp. 55-73.

Sidon (Mt. 15.21-29) where he heals the daughter of the Canaanite woman, to the Gentiles as part of the kingdom of God in Mt. 21–22, to whom the kingdom may be given after it has been taken from the Jews (Mt. 21.43), and finally to the confession of faith of the centurion under the cross (Mt. 27.54). Some scholars have argued that the affinity for the Gentiles goes so far that Matthew can no longer be considered a Jewish writing.⁷ But even if one retains the majority view of the Gospel as a writing born out of a Jewish milieu, the Gentile mission can still be viewed as a result of the conflict with competing Jewish groups. These positions would at the same time often assume that the Jewish mission proposed in Mt. 10.5 and in 15.24 had come to an end or was at least unsuccessful.⁸

One attempt to challenge the assumption that Matthew takes a positive attitude towards Gentiles or a mission to them has been made by D. C. Sim.⁹ Sim contends that when one looks at the relevant passages in detail it is quite hard to discern a positive attitude towards Gentiles at all. He divides the passages above into two groups and adds a third group of sayings that are hostile to Gentiles. The first group concerns passages that have traditionally been taken as indicators of Matthew's liking for the Gentiles. But Sim points out that these passages may not be concerned with the religious affiliation of the characters appearing in the narrative. This is certainly right with regard to the women in the genealogy,¹⁰ and Sim's case with the fulfilment quotation in Mt. 4.15-16 is equally convincing. In Mt. 4.15 the expression ὁ λαός ὁ καθήμενος ἐν σκότει probably does not refer to Gentiles or a coming mission to Gentiles but to the beginning

7. See, for example, K. W. Clark, 'The Gentile Bias in Matthew', *JBL* 66 (1947), pp. 165–72; P. Nepper-Christensen, *Das Matthäusevangelium: Ein judenchristliches Evangelium?* (ATDan, 1; Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget, 1958); J. P. Meier, *The Vision of Matthew: Christ, Church and Morality in the First Gospel* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979). This thesis has not reached anything near a scholarly consensus. The latest proponent of this theory is P. Foster, *Community, Law and Mission in Matthew's Gospel* (WUNT, 2.177; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004).

8. An example of such a position pushed to its extreme is given by Brown, 'The Matthean Community and the Gentile Mission'. He proposes that the Matthean community relocated from Palestine to Syria after the Jewish war and came into conflict with the local Jewish authorities. This made a Gentile mission highly attractive to parts of Matthew's group. Brown sees the purpose of the Gospel in the evangelist's attempt to persuade the community to engage in a mission that at the same time was still controversial.

9. See D. C. Sim, 'The Gospel of Matthew and the Gentiles', *JSNT* 57 (1995), pp. 19–48. He later refined his arguments in D. C. Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism: The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community* (SNTW; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), pp. 215–56.

10. I think that Sim's attempts to discredit the Gentile affiliation of the women is questionable. See Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, p. 218.

ministry of Jesus in Galilee, a ministry to ‘the lost sheep of the house of Israel’ (Mt. 15.24). And his words of caution against an all too easy interpretation of the quotation Mt. 12.18-21 as bringing justice and salvation to Gentiles are well justified.

Sim notes a second group of stories in the Gospel where some of the protagonists are Gentile, yet not at all drawn in a positive light. Sim includes the story of the Gadarenes and their swine (Mt. 8.28-34) and interprets it as a clear rejection of Jesus.¹¹ A second example is the story of the Canaanite woman who is portrayed much more distastefully in Mt. 15.21-28 than in Mk. 7.24-30.¹²

The group of sayings hostile to the Gentiles include Mt. 5.46-47; 6.7-8, 31-32; and finally 18.15-17. While the first two of these are also found in Luke and thus probably are from a tradition Matthew took over, his interest in such statements can be discerned from the last two sayings which have no parallel. In these statements an attitude or behaviour within the community is contrasted with what Gentiles do. Gentiles show love to their friends, but Jesus’ disciples are to love their enemies. Gentiles are concerned about food and clothing; Jesus’ disciples know that the heavenly Father will provide these things. Gentiles heap up empty phrases in prayer, the disciples pray the Our Father. And lastly, if someone in the community puts themselves outside of the community’s discipline, they are to be treated as a Gentile. It is interesting to note that these statements are first and foremost statements about the discipline within the community, they are not statements directly aimed against Gentiles. The Gentiles are a foil on which the demands on the community come into clearer perspective. To take these sayings as clear indications that Gentiles are ‘irreligious people’ and that ‘contact with the Gentile world should be avoided’¹³ is overstating the case.¹⁴

While his reconstruction of a community under siege from Gentile persecutors has not found support, Sim’s caution against a too easy

11. One of his arguments is that Matthew leaves out the missionary activity of the cured men in the Decapolis. Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, p. 222. Most interesting is that even though he doubles the number of the healed man, Matthew takes very little interest in the pair at all. They do not express a desire to follow Jesus, nor is there a hint that the two men go and tell either the whole Decapolis (Mk 5.20) or at least the inhabitants of their city (Lk. 8.39). The focus rests almost entirely on the destruction of the demons and the subsequent reaction of the townspeople to the report of the swineherds.

12. Sim’s treatment of the soldiers under the cross is less convincing in that he sees their confession of Jesus as the Son of God as a ‘proleptic judgment scene’ in which the torturers of Jesus recognize what punishment will befall them for their deed. See D. C. Sim, ‘The “Confession” of the Soldiers in Matthew 27:54’, *HeyJ* 34 (1993), pp. 401–24.

13. Sim, ‘The Gospel of Matthew and the Gentiles’, p. 229.

14. Criticisms have been voiced by D. Senior, ‘Between Two Worlds: Gentiles and Jewish Christians in Matthew’s Gospel’, *CBQ* 61 (1999), pp. 1–23; Byrne, ‘Messiah’, among others.

acceptance of Matthew's Gospel as a reflection of a community embracing Gentiles without reservations¹⁵ is timely. If the Matthaean community found itself in a situation where the Gentile mission was presented as enjoined by the risen Lord on the one hand, but where there also existed some reservations about Gentiles on the other, one might expect the Gospel to address this conflict. And indeed it does.

The first thing to note is what it actually is that Gentiles do in the Gospel. If one does take the women in the genealogy to be Gentiles, then one thing they do is enter into the people of Israel, contributing to the Davidic lineage. Of course the women are outsiders, but Ruth was always considered a convert to Judaism (cf. Ruth 1.15-17), while at least in later Judaism Rahab and Tamar were considered proselytes as well.¹⁶ Even though there is no such evidence for Bathsheba the thrust of any argument from the Gentile women is clear. They are integrating into a form of Judaism already in existence; they are not forming a new people of God.

This point is subtly underlined by the Gentile magi who appear out of the East.¹⁷ They form of course the contrast to faithless Herod and his court of chief priests and elders. And yet, before they can come to Jesus they have to stop in Jerusalem and consult with the Jewish experts in scripture concerning the newborn king. The point of the magi is not that they are Gentile, but that they listen to what the scriptures have to say about Jesus.¹⁸ In a sense, then, they are more faithful to the scriptures than those expounding on it, a very familiar theme from Jesus' controversies with the Jewish leaders.

A similar observation can be made about the centurion's faith that surpasses anything Jesus had experienced in Israel (Mt. 8.5-13). Obviously the story comes from tradition, since Luke reports a similar incident in Lk. 7.1-10. The original form of the story is very difficult to ascertain. For Luke the centurion is obviously a proselyte and benefactor of the Jewish community. Matthew does not report this, but adds a statement found elsewhere in Luke (Lk. 13.28-29) about people coming from East and West

15. Much of Byrne's construction of a mixed community of Jews and Gentiles making up a new people of God ignores Sim's suggestions. Byrne's interpretation of the Canaanite woman as indicating a 'change in the direction of Jesus' ministry' is not convincing at all. See Byrne, 'Messiah', p. 69 n. 43.

16. The evidence is discussed in M. D. Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies with Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus* (SNTSMS, 8; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 159-70. Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, p. 219, points out that such women were probably not models of a Law-free Gentile mission.

17. There really isn't much point in discussing whether they might be Jews, *pace* D. C. Sim, 'The Magi: Gentiles or Jews?', *HTS* 55 (1999), pp. 980-1000.

18. B. Repschinski, 'Of Mice and Men and Matthew 2', in K. Pandikattu and A. Vonach (eds), *Religion, Society and Economics. Eastern and Western Perspectives in Dialogue* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2003), pp. 75-94.

to sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven. The centurion is contrasted with those in Israel who will be thrown out of this sort of eschatological banquet celebrating the victory of God.¹⁹ However, the point of Matthew's story is not just that the centurion's faith is greater than that found in Israel, but that this faith results in his joining into table fellowship with the Jewish patriarchs. The centurion thus becomes a convert to Judaism by his faith in Jesus. The story also is a precursor of the parable of the wicked tenants (Mt. 21.33-46). There the vineyard is taken from the opponents of Jesus and given to a new people. It is a story that the chief priests and Pharisees recognize to be about themselves (Mt. 21.45). In the story of the centurion it is those who by tradition should have been at the banquet who are replaced by people like the centurion.

The story of the Canaanite woman (Mt. 15.21-28) makes the theme of proselytism even more palpable. It is a story that also occurs in Mk. 7.24-30. But Matthew's changes are telling. Apart from making the woman a little more unlikeable,²⁰ Matthew also inserts a short dialogue between Jesus and the disciples. Matthew has the disciples ask Jesus to pay attention to the woman, thus establishing the story more firmly as a story about the community. That this problem was a matter of lengthy deliberations is suggested by the imperfect ἡρώτου in Mt. 15.23. Jesus' answer to the disciples shows where the problem lies: Jesus was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (15.24), yet here an annoying Gentile intrusion into this arrangement takes place, and the woman is not to be dissuaded from her intent of worshipping (προσέκυνει, 15.25) Jesus.²¹ The Matthaean solution to this conundrum betrays his sympathies quite well. As in Mark the simile of the bread for the dogs from the table of the children is used, with the woman not at all questioning the designation. However, Matthew changes her acceptance to eat, not as in Mark, the crumbs of the children, but the crumbs from the table of the masters (τῶν κυρίων, 15.27). It is the recognition of the masters that lets Jesus exclaim about the greatness of her faith. If this story is a representation of how Matthew viewed the Gentiles positively, there are several implications. First, Matthew identifies it as a longstanding problem of the community. Secondly, the Gentiles come to worship Jesus. Thirdly, they acknowledge their masters at the table, the house of Israel. Thus Matthew

19. This feast is anticipated in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. See, for example, Isa. 25.6; Mt. 22.1-14; 25.10; Rev. 19.9; Lk. 14.15-16; *b. Pesah* 119b; *Exod. Rab.* 25.10. See D. A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13* (WBC, 33A; Dallas: Word Books, 1993), p. 205.

20. So noted by Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, p. 223.

21. At this point one has to question Sim's assertion that none of the Gentiles really become disciples of Jesus. Whatever is meant by this expression, the Canaanite woman is a worshipper of Jesus. See Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, p. 223.

creates not just a story about the great faith of the Gentiles. The Canaanite woman also tells of the low place of the Gentiles in the hierarchy of the community.

With the way the Gentiles appear in the Gospel several statements of Matthew suddenly become more intelligible. The mission of Jesus was perceived by Matthew as a mission to Israel, and consequently the disciples were to go nowhere near Gentiles and Samaritans. At the same time, right from the birth of Jesus there are Gentiles intruding into the story. At the great inauguration of Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, much of which concerns the holiness of the Jewish Law, Matthew has a multitude of Jews and Gentiles in attendance, ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ Δεκαπόλεως καὶ Ἱεροσολύμων καὶ Ἰουδαίας καὶ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου (Mt. 4.25). Quite possibly Matthew gives here an, albeit idealized, image of the community in his mind. Thus the promise of hope for the Gentiles in Mt. 12.15-21 through the meek Messiah is not unprepared, but quite definitely part of what Matthew can hold out to Gentiles.²² It is no surprise, then, that the mission to the Gentiles is something Matthew views as part of the community's life while it waits for the end time (Mt. 24.14).

Matthew draws all these narrative threads and elements together in the final commission of the risen Jesus (Mt. 28.16-20). The first thing to note is the presentation of Jesus. He is again on a mountaintop, as he was when he began his teaching (Mt. 5.1). His disciples worship him, and Jesus describes his authority in continuation with the earthly ministry of Jesus (Mt. 9.6; 11.27) and couched in the language of Dan. 7.13-14. Already in Dan. 7.14 this kind of authority is power also over the Gentiles.²³ The universal dominion of the risen Christ now extends to the disciples in their mission to make disciples of all nations, to baptize them and to teach them to keep (τηρεῖν) all that Jesus commanded (ἐνετειλάμην) his disciples. This, of course, cannot be the beginning of the Law-free Gentile mission, as some might think. Jesus never did teach that in the Gospel of Matthew, but instead commanding obedience to the Law, its necessary fulfilment to the last iota, and its interpretation in the light of the prophets (Mt. 5.17-20) who enjoined mercy more than sacrifices (see the use of Hos. 6.6 in Mt. 9.13 and 12.7).

One striking aspect in Matthew's treatment of the Gentiles is that they appear as outsiders in the narrative. They are held up as negative

22. Byrne, 'Messiah', p. 69, sees this as a most important passage in defining the relationship of the Gospel to the Gentiles. While this is certainly true, the passage does not allow us to conclude that the mission to the Gentiles is a Law-free mission.

23. For the background of this passage in Daniel see J. Schaberg, *The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Triadic Phrase in Matthew 28:19b* (SBLDS, 31; Chico: Scholars Press, 1982), pp. 111-221.

examples, they appear as individual characters in particular pericopae but then disappear again like the magi who return to the East or the centurion and the Canaanite woman who just fade. Even in the final commission Jesus commands his Jewish disciples to extend the mission to Israel (cf. Mt. 10.5) now also to the Gentiles, as if this was a completely new direction of the mission, as in fact it is within the scope of the narrative. The redaction of the story of the Canaanite woman shows how much the discussion of a Gentile mission must have been a live issue in the community, and may even have been distasteful to some of its members.

The community understood the mission to the Gentiles as a command of the risen Lord, and Matthew found ways of preparing for this command within his narrative of the earthly Jesus. The Matthaean mission to the Gentiles was, however, clearly confined to a mission that asked of the new believers in Christ to become Jewish as well, keeping to the commandments of the Law and recognizing that their participation in the community was restricted to being something of a second-class Christian Jew. In this sense, Matthew's community was not really a mixed community. It is likely that a community dominated by Jews but accepting proselytes experienced a lot of the conflicts described in Matthew 18, and the nature of those conflicts might have been akin to those described by Luke in Acts 6.

3. *The Gentile Mission in Luke*

The Gospel of Luke, together with its companion volume Acts,²⁴ has by a large consensus been described as originating with and addressed to a Gentile audience.²⁵ It is, therefore, most surprising that the Gentiles do not feature prominently in the Gospel at all. Their great entrance into salvation history, so to speak, happens only in the Acts of the Apostles. There are no Gentiles appearing at the manger of Jesus, and the Syrophenician woman from Mk 7.24-30 does not show up in Luke's Gospel. Even the

24. The majority of scholars view Luke and Acts as a two-part narrative by one author. However, there are sometimes arguments for the independence of the Gospel of Luke from Acts, even to the point of suggesting that they are by different authors. For a moderate argument of independence, see J. Nolland, *Luke 1:1-9:20* (WBC, 35A; Dallas: Word Books, 1989), pp. xxxiii–xxxiv.

25. However, Nolland, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, p. xxxii, argues for a setting among proselytes, while J. Jervell is convinced of a Jewish Christian origin. See J. Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (KEK, 3; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), pp. 49–52. C. Stenschke notices that, despite the consensus of placing Luke-Acts within the Gentile world, there is little scholarly attention focused on the topic as a theological issue, perhaps because it has been taken for granted. See C. Stenschke, *Luke's Portrait of Gentiles Prior to Their Coming to Faith* (WUNT, 2.108; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), p. 3.

faithful centurion of Capernaum does not appear in person but sends emissaries to plead his case with Jesus (Lk. 7.3, 6). On top of this he is very carefully described as one who loves Israel and is a benefactor of the local community. There are few places where the Gentiles put in a personal appearance in the Gospel of Luke. At the beginning of the Sermon on the Plain it can be safely inferred that among the people from Tyre and Sidon (Lk. 6.17) there are some Gentiles present,²⁶ but their activity is restricted to listening to Jesus' teaching. Another appearance of Gentiles can be inferred in the story of the Gerasene demoniac (Lk. 8.26-39). Yet, as in Matthew the Gerasenes ask Jesus to leave. Like Mark, Luke notes the request of the healed man to remain with Jesus. Instead he gets a commission to tell the deed of God in his household. Luke does not yet seem to envision Gentiles among those following Jesus.²⁷ The man proceeds to tell his story in the whole city. The only other Gentiles who appear in Luke's Gospel are those connected with his arrest, passion and death. Of course this is a very negative appearance of the Gentiles in the story of Jesus. However, Luke manages to put a positive spin on it in the third passion prediction (Lk. 18.31-34). There are several remarkable Lukan redactions of Mk 10.32-34. The first is the introduction of the theme of fulfilment of scripture, in which Luke has a particular interest (cf. Lk. 24.26-27; 44). The second is the addition of the Gentiles, into whose hands Jesus has to be handed over. Finally, Luke formulates a remark that the disciples did not understand. It appears that the Gentiles have become part of the plan of salvation laid out in scripture, recognized by Jesus and explained to his disciples on the road to Emmaus.²⁸

There are several instances where the Gentiles are the recipients of great hope arising out of the ministry of Jesus. At the presentation in the

26. J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke: Introduction, Translation and Notes* (AB, 28-28A; 2 vols; New York: Doubleday, 1983), I, p. 622, sees the presence of the Gentiles here as owing to Mk 3.8. This may be so, but since the Markan context is completely different it may safely be assumed that Luke intends more than faithfulness to a source.

27. It is doubtful whether Fitzmyer, *Luke*, I, p. 735, here speaks correctly of the first 'pagan disciple' of Jesus. After all, the man is not allowed to remain with Jesus. Nolland, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, p. 414, seems to be more correct in his statement that 'the time of the Gentiles has not yet come', particularly since the mission of the man does not extend to the whole Decapolis as in Mark but only to his own village.

28. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, II, p. 1208, sees the lack of understanding on the part of the disciples as related to the partitioning of salvation history in Luke-Acts and draws the parallel to the Emmaus pericope where the disciples' eyes will finally be opened. I do not understand how Nolland can construe the passage into a polemic against 'the foreign overlords who controlled the government of Palestine at the highest level, and under whom the Jews were a subject people'; J. Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (WBC, 35B; Dallas: Word Books, 1993), p. 896. The introduction of the fulfilment of scripture is a very clear argument that at stake here is the plan of God from ancient times, not the apportioning of guilt. The additional remark about the disciples is a further indicator of this.

Temple, the aged Simeon gives praise because he has seen universal salvation in Jesus, a 'light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel' (Lk. 2.32). John, baptizing at the Jordan, speaks of the beginning of an age that includes salvation for all Gentiles (Lk. 3.6) and follows this up with a prophecy of judgement against those coming to him at the Jordan, a judgement that will not take into account that they are children of Abraham but will ask for their deeds (Lk. 3.7-9). And John makes it explicit that it is the one coming after him who already has the winnowing fork in his hand (Lk. 3.17). This sentiment of judgement against those relying on their Jewish heritage seems to be underlying the lament of the Galilean cities as well (Lk. 10.13-16). However, if the judgement is made according to the deeds of people and not according to their heritage, this holds true for the Gentiles as well (Lk. 12.30; 17.26-30). In the programmatic appearance of Jesus in the Nazareth synagogue, Luke holds up Elijah and Elisha who worked signs of salvation among Gentiles, and the allusion to the repentance of the Ninevites and the visit of the Queen of the South (Lk. 11.30-32) is remarkably similar to the examples at Nazareth. These remarks show that Luke envisions salvation held out to Gentiles, while at the same time applying a measure to both Jews and Gentiles. It is the response to Jesus which will make or break salvation for both groups.

It remains curious, however, that on the one hand Luke clearly envisions a universal salvation including Jews and Gentiles, and at the same time removes the Gentiles so far from the narrative of the Gospel. It has been suggested that this is due to Luke's view of salvation history which depicts a thoroughly Jewish ministry of Jesus in his lifetime, while the mission in Acts takes off towards the Gentiles.²⁹ There is some truth to this view. The mission to the Gentiles takes off in Acts at the express command of the risen Lord, much like in Matthew. This mission is first revealed to Ananias (Acts 9.15), then entrusted to Peter in a vision that he does not understand. Only at the sight of Cornelius and his household possessed of the Holy Spirit does Peter understand the vision as well as the plans God has for the salvation of the Gentiles (Acts 10). Finally, it is Paul who takes up this mission systematically. Even though Paul is depicted as teaching in the synagogues around the cities he travels to, Luke also shows how his message is repeatedly rejected at the synagogue and in consequence he turns to the Gentiles. Furthermore, Paul's self-understanding as it is reported in Acts is that of a missionary sent to the Gentiles by the will of God himself (Acts 9.15; 15.7).

29. This theory goes back to the influential study of H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit. Studien zur Theologie des Lukas* (BHT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 4th edn, 1962). Conzelmann's work was revised and updated by M. Dibelius, E. Haenchen and P. Vielhauer.

However, Luke does not leave the great separation between the Gospel and Acts unbridged. His way of bringing together the ministry of Jesus to the Jews and the ministry of Peter and Paul to the Gentiles is the introduction of another ἔθνος (Acts 8.9) that is different from the Jews (ἄλλογενής, Lk. 17.18), the Samaritans.³⁰ Neither Mark nor Matthew gives the Samaritans as much space as does Luke. Mark does not mention them at all, and Matthew specifically excludes them from the mission of the disciples (Mt. 10.5-6). Furthermore, Luke obviously did not deem it necessary to explain any of the differences between Samaritans and Jews.³¹ The first report of the Samaritans is contained at the beginning of the big Lukan interpolation (Lk. 9.51-56), often regarded as a theological turning point within the Gospel. A Samaritan village refuses to offer hospitality to Jesus 'because his face was set toward Jerusalem' (Lk. 9.53).³² Jesus' disciples are aggravated at this and suggest calling down fire from heaven to burn the place to the ground. However, Jesus rebukes his disciples. The story is remarkable in that it portrays the Samaritans as not receiving Jesus, who in turn protects the Samaritans from the wrath of the disciples. In a sense it may be said that just as for Jesus the time of his assumption had not yet come (Lk. 9.51), neither had the time for the Samaritans come. It is possible to view the mission of the 72 disciples in Lk. 10.1-12 as being directed to the Samaritans as well.³³ There is no change of place between Lk. 9.56 and 10.1.³⁴ There is nothing to suggest that the mission of the

30. J. Jervell argues that the Samaritans are complete Jews, but fails to account for their unique status in Luke and Acts. See J. Jervell, 'The Lost Sheep of the House of Israel: The Understanding of the Samaritans in Luke-Acts', in J. Jervell, *Luke and the Divided People of God: A New Look at Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1979), pp. 113-32. Stenschke, *Gentiles*, p. 111, places the Samaritans among the Gentiles, but he needs to explain at least why he does so despite a different terminology that does not merely seem to originate with geographical variations. The debate is summarized by M. Böhm, who herself views the Samaritans as a Jewish sect. Her arguments are very persuasive. See M. Böhm, *Samariern und die Samaritaner. Eine Studie zum religionshistorischen und traditions-geschichtlichen Hintergrund der lukanischen Samariertexte und zu deren topographischer Verhaftung* (WUNT, 2.111; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), pp. 8-30.

31. This is very different from Jn 4.9 which supplies editorial comments about the Samaritans' uniqueness. Otherwise the parallels with John 4 are significant, and are detailed by D. Ravens, *Luke and the Restoration of Israel* (JSNTSup, 119; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 72-4.

32. This is a striking difference to the rejection at Nazareth in 4.16-30. See J. T. Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), p. 144.

33. Nolland draws some parallels, but he is not clear on whether he actually views the mission of Lk. 10.1-12 as directed to the Samaritans. See Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, p. 533.

34. The whole central section, or big interpolation, mentions only two indications of where Jesus is, and both of these mention Samaria: Lk. 9.52 and 17.11. The obvious conclusion to draw from this is that Samaria was the 'area of Jesus' ministry' in the central section, paralleling the earlier ministry in Galilee. See Ravens, *Luke*, p. 78.

72 is not a mission to the Samaritan towns, and there is a remarkable parallelism between the disciples sent to the Samaritan village and the 72 sent to the villages Jesus is going to visit later on. In both cases the phrase ἀπέστειλεν...πρὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ is used (Lk. 9.52; 10.1). Lastly, the injunction to the disciples to eat what is offered them points to a situation in which Jewish purity rules might not be kept. The mission in Luke 10 is modelled on Lk. 9.1-6, where the Twelve go into the villages of Galilee. In both missions the possibility of rejection is entertained. Consequently, the rejection of Jesus in the Samaritan village is not a blanket judgement over Samaritans, but a precursor of what the disciples will have to deal with themselves. It should not be interpreted as a proleptic statement about the death of Jesus like the rejection at Nazareth, since the Samaritans are not involved in the passion.

Much more positive is the image of the Samaritans presented in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10.25-37) and the healing of the ten lepers (Lk. 17.11-19). In both stories the Samaritans who do right are used as a foil to show up how the Jewish characters in the story fail to respond appropriately to the challenges of their respective situations. The Good Samaritan teaches the questioning lawyer that mercy is the fulfilment of the requirement to inherit eternal life and at the same time the fulfilment of the Law. He is described in contrast to the priest and the Levite with their connections to the Temple and the cult.³⁵ It is quite significant that a Samaritan, contrasted to the Jewish leaders at the Temple, becomes the key argument in a discussion about the Jewish Law. Similarly, the leprous Samaritan,³⁶ in breaking off his journey to the Temple to show himself to the priests and instead returning to Jesus to give thanks, is the one who really gives God honour. This man is characterized not only as a Samaritan, but also as ἄλλογενής, a foreigner, who distinguishes himself not by going to the Temple to fulfil the rituals required by the Law but by turning to Jesus. Both the Good Samaritan and the leper are acting in a way that is contrary to the Law, and yet judged by Luke to be doing the right thing.

The Samaritans suddenly appear in a rather positive light. While they are a people that Jesus turns to and sends his disciples to, they are also a people who are very different from the Judaism that is present elsewhere in the Gospel. The leper is not described as baulking at being sent to the

35. It is often suggested that the priest and Levite act out of fear for their purity. See the discussion in Fitzmyer, *Luke*, II, p. 887, and F. Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (EKKNT, 3; 3 vols; Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1989, 1996, 2001), II, p. 90.

36. It is quite possible, as suggested by M. S. Enslin, that this story is a development of the healing of Naaman the Syrian by Elisha as narrated in Lk. 4.27. If so, Jesus here is presented as much more powerful than Elisha. M. S. Enslin, 'Luke and the Samaritans', *HTR* 36 (1943), pp. 274-97 (295-6).

Temple priests, but seeing his healing he also knows that the place to give glory to God is at the feet of Jesus. Clearly Jesus expected such behaviour from the other nine as well.

In Acts 8 the Samaritans appear again as the recipients of the first mission outside of Jerusalem. In Acts 8.1 there is still a parallelism between Judaea and Samaria.³⁷ However, Judaea soon disappears from sight, and in Acts 8.4 a fully-fledged mission to the Samaritans is underway with the subsequent founding of a community founded in baptism by Philip and in the Holy Spirit by the apostles Peter and John. This Samaritan mission of Philip and the apostles is the context in which finally the first Gentile³⁸ is baptized at the instigation of an angel of the Lord (Acts 8.26). The story of the eunuch is not the beginning of the Gentile mission in Acts. This is inaugurated in Acts 10.1. However, it draws very efficiently the line from the Samaritan to the Gentile mission. The Gentile mission is not just a mission of the early church, even if at the instigation and with the blessing of the risen Lord. It has its roots in a Samaritan mission which was already part of Jesus' ministry before his death and resurrection. The Samaritans form one of the links between the Jesus of the Gospel and the missionary church of Acts.³⁹ If in the Gospel there is a progression from Jesus' mission to the Jews in Galilee to the Samaritans in the big interpolation, Acts takes the progression a step further from the Samaritans to the Gentiles.

37. Böhm, *Samaritanen*, p. 304, thinks that this indicates that Luke is not interested in a mission to Gentiles but in a restoration of Israel's tribes, announced in 1.6-8. However, she probably underestimates the context of the Jerusalem persecution.

38. A. Lindemann has little doubt that the man is a Gentile. He argues that despite the inauguration of the Gentile mission in 10.1, the placement of the eunuch's story is quite apt in view of this being a story of an individual, not an ethnic group. See A. Lindemann, 'Der "äthiopische Eunuch" und die Anfänge der Mission', in C. Breytenbach and J. Schröter (eds), *Die Apostelgeschichte und die hellenistische Geschichtsschreibung. Festschrift für Eckhard Plümacher* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 109-33. Jervell, *Apostelgeschichte*, pp. 270-1, maintains that, because of his pilgrimage to Jerusalem and his reading of scripture, the man is 'Jude, aber aus einer besonderen Gruppe', namely the proselytes. It is true that the man has been on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but the description of his origin in Ethiopia and the court of Queen Kandake are equally weighty. Furthermore, Jervell has to argue that the description of the man as a eunuch is an honorific title rather than a description of castration. In all, Jervell's case to describe the man as a Jew seems strained.

39. The parallel has been called into question by Ravens on the grounds that there is a direct intervention necessary for the Gentile mission; however, for the Samaritan mission this is not so. 'This is a clear indication that Luke regards Jews and Samaritans as being within one fundamental group to which even the most devout God-fearer does not belong'; Ravens, *Luke*, p. 93. Since the Samaritans are Jews, they cannot be used to foretell a Gentile mission. Yet even Ravens has to acknowledge that on a narrative level the Samaritan mission is a stepping stone towards the Gentiles. Ravens does not take into account that the Samaritans in the Gospel are portrayed as a foil to show up Jewish deficiencies.

If the Samaritans in the Gospel are the forerunners of the Gentiles in Acts, they also shape the form the Gentile mission will assume. If the Samaritans of the Gospel are serving as a foil to show up the limitations of the Law, the mission to the Gentiles deals with this contrast by becoming a Law-free mission. The baptism of Cornelius and the ensuing conflict (Acts 10.1–11.18) lets this vibrantly come alive with the issue of food purity and communion with Gentiles. The really contentious issue in the Jerusalem community is not described as Peter baptizing a Gentile. What those from the circumcision (Acts 11.2) object to is that Peter lived with uncircumcized people and shared their meals (11.3). Peter describes his vision and the ensuing events to them, which seems to satisfy the Jewish Christians for a while. But this story already intimates that soon a separation between those from the circumcision and the Gentiles will occur. Paul alludes to this in his speech to the Jews in Pisidian Antioch (13.46–48). This turn of events repeats itself in Acts 18.6 and 28.26–29 and thus becomes a pattern: Jews will reject the word, while Gentiles accept it gratefully and in great numbers. This division as a reaction to the preaching of Paul will remain a feature of his missionary activity. In Lystra there is great success in a thoroughly Gentile mission, only to be disturbed and threatened by the arrival of Jews from Pisidian Antioch (Acts 14.19). The first missionary journey of Paul basically serves to show God opened the door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14.27).

The account of the Jerusalem council clarifies that the mission of Paul in Antioch and elsewhere did not include circumcision (Acts 15.1), and it was not deemed necessary to impose this on the Gentiles. Then some from Jerusalem arrive who think that circumcision and the concomitant keeping of the Law must be enjoined upon the Gentiles, and they get into a heated dispute with Paul and Barnabas.⁴⁰ The solution found by the council and subsequently communicated to Antioch is one that omits circumcision and the keeping of the Law but includes admonitions to purity in religious, dietary and sexual terms. Most fascinating is the explanation James gives for this solution. He first mentions that the Gentile mission originated with Peter at the command of God, and then goes on to cite Scripture to find evidence for the fact that with the calling of the Gentiles God has chosen to rebuild the fallen hut of David (Acts 15.16–17). Luke's argument is that in the Law-free mission to the Gentiles a tottering Israel is being restored. This means that Jesus and his followers are a light to the Gentiles (Lk. 2.32; Acts 13.47), even if the disciples of Jesus are slow to recognize it. But God himself has intervened to inaugurate the mission to the Gentiles, and once the disciples understand it as God's will they acknowledge such a mission joyfully (Acts 11.18; 21.20).

40. Jervell, *Apostelgeschichte*, pp. 388–9, notes rightly that at issue is not Gentile salvation but the conditions for community life that are part of it.

However intent Acts seems to be in describing the acceptance of the Gentile mission by the apostles and the Jerusalem church, Luke also exhibits traits of an initial parting of the ways between Jewish Christians and the new Gentile converts. Peter may be the first apostle to convert a Gentile, but he also remains the last one. Cornelius remains Peter's only Gentile convert. After the incident in Joppa Peter returns to Jerusalem, never to leave it again. While he argues for no obligations at all to be put on the Gentiles, his position does not carry the day at the Jerusalem council, and he subsequently fades from the story. The Gentile mission, however, is pursued by Paul and his various companions. Luke reports how much Paul comes under suspicion in Jerusalem for apparently propagating a mission that tries to convince Jewish Christians to abandon the Law (Acts 21.21). James and the elders in Jerusalem appear to be on Paul's side, but they cannot prevent Paul from being arrested. Whatever the historical events behind Luke's account are, he creates the impression that the Jewish Christian community in Jerusalem is left behind after Acts 15 and does not become part of the Gentile mission at all. The narrative, however, remains with the mission that makes further forays into Gentile territory, while the Jewish and non-Christian opponents to this mission are characterised as hostile and even ridiculous (Acts 17.17).

Luke's depiction of the steady growth of Christianity in Acts is a portrait of two churches. It is on the one hand a portrait of a church in Jerusalem that remains Jewish, committed to the Temple and the Law. On the other hand are the communities in Antioch and those later founded by Paul and his companions which are Gentile in character and which are no longer keeping the Law. The Jerusalem church grows out of the band of apostles that Jesus himself gathered around him. The Gentile churches grow out of a direct intervention of the Lord in the vision of Peter. But the Gentile churches can lay claim to an origin with the earthly Jesus as well. Not only is he the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning the salvation of the nations, he himself ventured to preach to a Samaritan *ἔθνος* that was no longer a part of the Judaism present in Jerusalem, and he sent his disciples to do likewise. The mission to the Samaritans is the precursor to the Law-free mission to the Gentiles. Luke's sympathies lie with the Gentile communities. This is the perspective of Acts. However, his Jesus is not just a light to the Gentiles, he is also the glory of his people Israel. Thus the Luke who shows the enormous growth of Christianity among Gentiles also shows deep respect for Jesus' people Israel and the Jerusalem church worshipping in the Temple. Luke is not bent on discrediting a Jewish Christian church. But his Gentile churches are very different from the Jewish church.⁴¹

41. In this sense, S. G. Wilson's sometimes criticized aphorism that Luke views the Law as an *'ethos* for a particular *ethnos*' is basically correct. See S. G. Wilson, *Luke and the Law* (SNTSMS, 50; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 103 (original emphasis).

4. *Conclusions*

In the writings of Matthew and Luke two very different approaches to the Gentile mission confront the reader. However, the problems both authors deal with are quite similar. Both live in communities in which they have to explain how a band of Jewish disciples called together by their Jewish teacher Jesus suddenly grew into a movement that was attractive not only to Jews but also Gentiles. Moreover, they had to deal with the practical consequences of this growth and the question of how Jewish the emerging church should remain. Their answers are very different. Matthew opted for a church that would remain faithful to its Jewish heritage both in spirit and in letter. He enjoins upon his community not only the necessity of keeping the Law but also its beauty as Jesus taught it. Luke, however, envisions a church whose faithfulness to the traditions of Judaism are no longer manifested in the careful keeping of the Law, but in the awareness that the community is the people of God fulfilling the prophecies of the glory of Israel as well as the eschatological inclusion of all nations. Luke's proof for this is the working of the Holy Spirit both in the community and in individuals.

Because these two competing visions are so close in their starting point and so different in their solutions, it has been suggested by proponents of the theory of Lukan dependence on Matthew⁴² that Luke's version is his correction of Matthew's theology.⁴³ Of course it would be intriguing to know whether Matthew's allusion to those who teach others to break the commandments of the Law as the least in the kingdom (Mt. 5.19) has one of those Lukan or maybe Pauline communities in view. It would be wonderful if we could relate the judaizers in Antioch (Acts 15.1) and those zealous for the Law in Jerusalem (Acts 21.20-21) to some leading figures in the Matthaean community. However, we cannot. We can only appreciate that for the early Christians, there was more than one way in dealing with the conflict between a rich tradition and a visionary future.

42. I remain unconvinced even by the very careful analysis in A. J. McNicol (ed.), *Luke's Use of Matthew: Beyond the Q Impasse* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1996).

43. Ravens, *Luke*, and E. Franklin, *Luke: Interpreter of Paul, Critic of Matthew* (JSNTSup, 92; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994).