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zum Neuen Testament · 2. Reihe 49

David Crump

Jesus
the Intercessor



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Martin Hengel und Otfried Hofius

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Jesus the Intercessor

Prayer and Christology in Luke-Acts

by

David Michael Crump



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*This work is dedicated to my parents,
who raised me so as to know the Fear of the Lord.*

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List of Journals Consulted

ABR	Australian Biblical Review
AGB	W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i>
AJT	American Journal of Theology
ALUOS	Annual of Leeds University Oriental Society
ANRW	W. Haase (ed.), <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
AshTJ	Ashland Theological Journal
ATR	Anglican Theological Review
AUSS	Andrews University Seminary Studies
BDF	F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament</i>
Bib	Biblica
Bibl	Biblebhashyam
BibT	Bible Today
Bij	Bijdragen
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester
BK	Bibel und Kirche
BL	Bibel und Leben
BLit	Bibel und Liturgie
BR	Biblical Research
BT	The Bible Translator
BTB	Biblical Theology Bulletin
BTF	Bangalore Theological Forum
BW	Biblical World
BZ	Biblische Zeitschrift
Cath	Catholica
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
Chr	Christus
CJT	Canadian Journal of Theology
ClassRev	Classical Review
ClRev	Clergy Review
CMCSE	Collectanea Mechliniensia Commentarius Scientiarum Ecclesiasticarum
CTM	Concordia Theological Monthly
CW	Die christliche Welt
ETL	Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses
EvQ	Evangelical Quarterly
EvT	Evangelische Theologie
ExpT	Expository Times
GL	Geist und Leben

GTJ	Grace Theological Journal
HeyJ	Heythrop Journal
HibJ	Hibbert Journal
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
IBS	Irish Biblical Studies
IndTS	Indian Theological Studies
Int	Interpretation
ITQ	Irish Theological Quarterly
JAAR	Journal of the American Academy of Religion
JANESCU	Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBR	Journal of Bible and Religion
JEH	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JR	Journal of Religion
JReIS	Journal of Religious Studies
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LTP	Laval Théologique et Philosophique
LumV	Lumière et Vie
LV	Lumen Vitae
MGWJ	Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums
NJKA	Neue Jahrbücher für das Klassische Altertum
NovT	Novum Testamentum
NRT	La nouvelle revue théologique
NSN	Nuntius Sodalicii Neotestamentici
NTS	New Testament Studies
Numen	Numen: International Review for the History of Religions
OS	Oudtestamentische Studiën
Per	Perspective
PRS	Perspectives in Religious Studies
RB	Revue biblique
RechBib	Recherches bibliques
RS	Religious Studies
RevExp	Review and Expositor
RevRel	Review for Religious
RevScRel	Revue des sciences religieuses
RGG	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
RHPR	Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses
RQ	Restoration Quarterly
RR	Review of Religion
RSPT	Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques

RSR	Recherches de science religieuse
RThPh	Revue de théologie et de philosophie
SB	H. Strack and P. Billerbeck, <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i>
ScEccl	Sciences Ecclesiastiques
Scr	Scripture
SD	Studies and Documents
SE	Studia Evangelica I, II, III (= TU 73[’59], 87[’64], 88[’65], etc.)
Sem	Semeia
SJT	Scottish Journal of Theology
SO	Symbolae Osloenses
SP	Studia Patristica
SPAW	Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften
SR	Studies in Religion/Sciences religieuses
ST	Spirituality Today
SwJT	Southwestern Journal of Theology
TB	Tyndale Bulletin
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
TG	Theologie und Glaube
Th	Theology
TijT	Tijdschrift voor Theologie
TJ	Trinity Journal
TLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
TP	Theologie und Philosophie
TS	Theological Studies
TSK	Theologische Studien und Kritiken
TToday	Theology Today
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TV	Theologia Viatorum
TZ	Theologische Zeitschrift
VE	Vox Evangelica
VT	Vetus Testamentum
WTJ	Westminster Theological Journal
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZRG	Zeitschrift für Religions und Geistesgeschichte
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche
ZWT	Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Study of Prayer in Luke-Acts

Introduction

It is difficult to find a book on prayer which does not at some point lament “the crisis of piety” in the modern church,¹ a crisis often associated with the lack of attention given this subject by biblical scholarship. While such a crisis may well exist, it cannot be attributed to any absence of literature on prayer. The popular bookshelves are filled to overflowing with books on prayer, and the inquisitive buyer never lacks for new titles promising to reveal previously hidden insights into the why, how and wherefore of practical piety. Neither have modern biblical scholars been totally remiss in giving attention to this area. Many important works on prayer have been written this century (to deal with only the last of those nineteen which have followed the writing of the final NT documents), providing valuable insights into any and every aspect of prayer, both historical and theological.² The first conclusion to be derived from these observations is rather obvious: if the modern church is peculiarly impious it simply demonstrates that access to literature about prayer does not ensure the practice of prayer. In any event, it is more likely that, except in extraordinary circumstances, what these writers call a crisis in piety is actually the church’s normal condition!

However, there is also an important question arising from these observations which is more immediately relevant to the present study: why should anyone feel the need to undertake yet another investigation of prayer in the NT? In response (or defense), it must be said that studying prayer in Luke-Acts is quite a different matter from writing on the theology of prayer in general. In the first place, for as many warnings as one can find about the dangers of modern impiety, there are at least as many observers who have pointed out that Luke has more to say about the place of prayer in the ministry of Jesus and the early church than any other NT

¹ For example see G. P. Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers: The Significance of the Intercessory Prayer Passages in the Letters of St. Paul*, (Cambridge, 1974), p. ix; and W. Bingham Hunter, *The Prayers of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, (Aberdeen, 1979), pp. 1–14, with extensive additional notation.

² See the bibliography. H. Schmidt, *Wie betet der heutige Mensch? Dokumente und Analysen*, (Freiburg, 1972), pp. 225–284 lists 1221 works written on prayer between 1960 and 1970 alone. J. Carmignac, *Resarches sur le Notre Père*, (Paris, 1969), provides an 84 page (pp. 469–553) bibliography of works dealing with the Lord’s Prayer.

author. This observation has become a commonplace in biblical studies.³ Yet it is only within the last twenty-five years that any detailed attention has been given to understanding the significance of this theme within Luke's own writings. To elucidate this important point will require a brief look at the history of the study of prayer in Luke-Acts.

1.1 A History of the Study of Prayer in Luke-Acts

The study of both Jesus' prayer-life and the gospel of Luke had occupied an important position in the 19th century Liberal "quest" for the historical Jesus. According to A. Deissmann, coming to understand "the inner life of Jesus is the chief task of research in early Christianity."⁴ And since Jesus' practice of prayer was the main avenue by which one could come to an understanding of his "unique self-consciousness," prayer was a prime topic for those interested in unravelling Jesus' self-understanding.⁵ Furthermore, Luke's gospel in particular had occupied a special place in the Liberal reconstruction of the historical Jesus since it was seen to be "in some measure a rationalised and humanitarian rendering of the Gospel."⁶ Therefore Luke's Jesus seemed most amenable to undergirding the doctrine of the universal Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. However, these two interests in prayer and Luke did not coincide so as to produce a study of prayer *in* Luke specifically. It was not yet time for such literary analysis.

Albert Schweitzer's attack upon the Liberal quest did not eliminate the interest in Jesus' prayer-life; it merely served to redirect scholarly attention on the subject. The main focus was no longer psychological, although this did not wholly disappear,⁷ but historical and descriptive; the question now became, how could

³ For example see A. Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke*, (Edinburgh, 1981), p. xlv; J. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, vol. I, (New York, 1981), pp. 244–247; J. Schmid, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas*, (Regensburg, 1960), pp. 251–253; H. J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts*, (London, 1927), p. 269.

⁴ A. Deissmann, *The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul*, (London, 1923), pp. 43f. Also see his seminal elaboration of this approach in "Der Beter Jesus," *CW*. 13 (1899) 701–707; J. S. Banks, "Professor Deissmann on Jesus at Prayer," *ExpT*. 11 (1899) 270–273 provides an English synopsis of this article. J. D. G. Dunn commends Deissmann as the exemplar for the method which he pursues in his own investigation of Jesus' experience of the Spirit; see *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament*, (London, 1975), pp. 11–26, especially p. 15.

⁵ Cf. Deissmann, *Religion*, pp. 43–68. "The central question for the history of religion, and for religion in general, is, 'What communion had Jesus with God?' It is to a large extent the same with the question, 'How did Jesus pray?'" (p. 69).

⁶ C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*, (London, 1972, 2nd ed.), p. 65 (originally published in 1936).

⁷ However, it did become more common for such interests not simply to be minimised, but thoroughly expunged; see R. Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*, (New York, 1958), pp. 8f (originally published in 1934); G. Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*, (London, 1960), p. 13 (originally published in 1956).

Jesus' prayer-life be explained in terms of his historical surroundings?⁸ For each of these approaches – that of 19th century psychologising and 20th century historicising – the prayer materials of Luke had provided the largest proportion of grist for the mill. Everyone recognised that his gospel offered more examples of Jesus at prayer than any of the other gospels; and, of course, the book of Acts provided the only NT narrative account of the church's early prayer habits. Thus his prayer materials were indispensable for anyone wanting to study Jesus and prayer, whatever their particular agenda might be. But the result, in each case, was the same: while Luke was readily acknowledged to say more about Jesus and prayer than anyone else, Luke's own purpose in having so much to say was never investigated on its own terms. It took yet another development in NT studies before this could happen.

Of course, this new development was the advent of redaction criticism, and the crucial document for Lukan studies was the work of H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte Der Zeit* (1953). Conzelmann's work opened the door for the proper investigation of Luke's prayer materials in their own right.⁹ However, with Conzelmann now acting as chief-guide in this new Lukan wilderness, the first to follow him along his paths of redaction quite predictably imbibed not only of his new methodology but also some of his idiosyncratic understanding of Luke's theology. This was no less true of the earliest studies in Lukan prayer than it was of other post-Conzelmann investigations into the theology of Luke-Acts, as will be seen.

1.1.1 *Wilhelm Ott: Prayer and Eschatology*

The first study of the Lukan prayer theme was published in 1965 by Wilhelm Ott and was entitled *Gebet und Heil: Die Bedeutung der Gebetsparänese in der lukanischen Theologie*. Ott's work focuses primarily upon Luke's didactic material, particularly the parables found in Lk. 11:5–8, 9–13; 18:1–8, to which he devotes lengthy tradition-critical and redactional attention. His primary conclusion is that the centre of Luke's teaching on prayer is neither a concern for true piety, nor the goodness of God in hearing the believer's requests, as is the case in Matthew (p. 137f), but the exhortation *to be persistent in prayer*. The motivation for this restructuring of the tradition is Luke's concern over the parousia delay.¹⁰ Whereas the prayer teaching in both Mark and Matthew was guided by their near expectation of the parousia, Luke has surrendered this hope. The pressing issue for him is not an imminent return of the Lord, but the survival of the church in an indeterminably long period of temptation in this world. The solution to this problem is

⁸ A good example of this approach would be J. Jeremias' article "Das Gebetsleben Jesu," *ZNW*. 25 ('26) 123–140.

⁹ Originally published by J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen; first English translation by Faber and Faber and Harper & Row in 1961, entitled *The Theology of St. Luke*.

¹⁰ According to E. Bezzel it was originally a Würzburger dissertation entitled *Die Mahnung zu unablässigen Beten bei Lukas*; see his review in *ZRG*. 18 ('66) 377f. This title succinctly expresses Ott's conclusions regarding Luke's teaching on prayer.

persistent prayer; it is the chief means of persevering in Christian discipleship. In fact, Ott is so emphatic on this point that prayer actually becomes a means of salvation; at least it becomes *the* means of ensuring that one will eventually be able to stand before the coming Son of Man (pp. 64f, and pp. 73–75 on Lk. 21:34–36). This is most clearly illustrated in his comparison of Luke with Paul. According to Ott, Paul also emphasises the importance of persistent prayer. But he prays to express his gratitude to God for salvation, whereas in Luke one prays to receive salvation (pp. 139–143).

There are several important results of this Lukan focal point. First of all, Luke presents Jesus as the paradigm of Christian perseverance through prayer. Luke is not interested, like Matthew, in the “How” of prayer (pp. 92–94), but simply in the “That” of prayer, especially as this can be illustrated through the life of Jesus (particularly Lk. 11:1–13 and 22:39–46). Consequently, Luke’s special interest in Jesus’ prayer-life does not stem from any biographical or even a christological concern; rather it is only the “Vorbildcharacter” of Jesus’ prayers which interest Luke (p. 97). Jesus is the prime example of how to survive temptation by means of prayer. This also explains why Ott’s brief treatment of prayer in Acts (pp. 124–136) focuses primarily on how the early church followed Jesus’ example.

Secondly, because the church’s chief danger lies in the possibility of being distracted by worldly cares, Luke eliminates any suggestion that one should pray for material things (pp. 111 f, 139). In Lk. 11:11–13 Luke reinterprets the tradition to show that the only good gift is the Holy Spirit, all other requests are for harmful things. Thus, in Luke’s view, the delay in the parousia means that God intends prayer to be made only for spiritual requests, and the true answer to such prayer is always the Holy Spirit.

Obviously, Ott begins his study by accepting Conzelmann’s convictions concerning Lukan eschatology, i.e. Luke’s guiding concern is the parousia delay, which causes him to recast salvation-history into a three-fold scheme which sees Jesus’ ministry as a Satan-free period (p. 85) and the era of the church as the time of temptation (pp. 65f, 119, 138f). However, this means that the fortunes of Conzelmann’s eschatology are also those of Ott’s main thesis. There is no need to rehearse here the many legitimate critiques which have been launched against Conzelmann’s views over the years;¹¹ suffice it to say that they are sufficient to call for a major reevaluation of the significance which Ott attaches to the paranetic prayer materials in Luke-Acts. Even granted that Ott has shed important light upon Luke’s emphatic exhortation “to pray” – and this is an important, beneficial part

¹¹ See W. C. Robinson, *The Way of the Lord: A Study of History and Eschatology in the Gospel of Luke*, Ph.D. dissertation, (University of Basel, 1962); *Der Weg des Herrn: Studien zur Geschichte und Eschatology im Lukasevangelium, ein Gespräch mit Hans Conzelmann*, (Hamburg, 1964); H. H. Oliver, “The Lucan Birth Stories and the Purpose of Luke-Acts,” *NTS*. 10 (‘63–4) 202–226; F. O. Francis, “Eschatology and History in Luke-Acts,” *JAAR*. 37 (‘69) 49–63; S. G. Wilson, “Lukan Eschatology,” *NTS*. 16 (‘70) 330–347; I. H. Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian*, (Grand Rapids, 1970), pp. 144–147; P. Minear, “Luke’s Use of the Birth Stories” in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, (Philadelphia, 1980); R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, (Edinburgh, 1982), pp. 100–157.

of his study – it is far from clear that in following Conzelmann he has provided the proper explanation for that emphasis. While looking at Luke’s paraneitic materials will not be a major part of the task undertaken by the present study, it will have a role to play in what follows.

Also, one must question Ott’s restriction of Jesus’ role to that of a simple paradigm. Jesus certainly is presented as the great model of prayer in Luke. But does this necessarily exhaust the significance of Luke’s portrayal? How can Ott exclude *a priori* any christological import from Luke’s descriptions of Jesus at prayer when he makes no effort (at least none is revealed) to discover what possible christological interests might be found in Luke’s prayer materials if one were to look for them?

It is also difficult to see how Jesus can be an example to the church of how to survive demonic temptation through prayer if the largest part of his ministry was itself a temptation-free era. This leaves only the prayers offered on the Mount of Olives and Golgotha as having any relevance to what Ott describes as the sole significance of Jesus’ prayer-life in Luke. What, then, is to be made of all those prayer notices found between Lk. 4:13 and 22:3? Ott seems not to have thought through the compatibility of his thesis and his presuppositions. Clearly one (Jesus prays only as paradigm) or the other (Jesus’ life is free of Satanic temptation) or even both of them must go.

It also seems likely that Ott’s preoccupation with Conzelmann’s eschatology has caused him to misread the significance of Lk. 11:9–13. Is it self-evident that this passage describes all prayer for material things, in other words, prayer for anything other than the Spirit, as being harmful? To anticipate only slightly, it would appear that Luke’s beliefs concerning the sovereignty of God – a readily recognised and important theme in Luke-Acts – are more immediately relevant than artificial eschatological constructions.¹²

1.1.2 O. G. Harris: *Prayer and Heilsgeschichte*

In 1967 O. G. Harris produced an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation at Vanderbilt University entitled *Prayer in Luke-Acts: A Study in the Theology of Luke*. Harris distinguished himself by being the first to attempt a comprehensive analysis of the prayer theme in Luke-Acts, as compared to Ott’s more restrictive discussion of the parabolic material in the gospel. Harris’ main thesis is that “Luke conceives of prayer as an important means by which God guides the course of redemptive history. This is his controlling and distinctive idea of prayer” (p. 3). Secondly, Jesus is presented as a paradigmatic example of piety which the church is to emulate. But this is a decidedly minor point.

Harris thoroughly endorses Conzelmann’s view of redemptive-history and Luke’s “historicising” tendencies in the face of a delayed parousia (pp. 209ff, 222f,

¹² The influence of Ott’s main thesis has been widely felt; see for example A. Würzinger, “‘Es komme Dein Königreich’: zum Gebetsanliegen nach Lukas,” *BLit.* 38 (‘64–65) 94; J. Schmid, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas*, (Regensburg, 1960), Excursus on “Jesus und das Gebet,” pp. 200–202.

239f). Therefore, even though he gives no indication of being familiar with Ott's work (perhaps due to the nearly simultaneous completion of their theses), Harris also views prayer as the chief means by which the church is to "endure" until the parousia. Consequently, Harris relates Luke's prayer theme to both his eschatology and his paradigmatic portrayal of Jesus in much the same way as does Ott.

Harris' primary thesis concerning prayer and decisive turning points in salvation-history has been largely accepted by NT scholarship.¹³ There is no doubt that his was a groundbreaking work in the field of Lukan studies and he has demonstrated an important connection between the activity of prayer and the way in which God guides salvation-history. But the present study will also indicate the need for significant readjustment in the details of Harris' thesis. In the first place, it is not obvious that Luke considers every mention of prayer in Luke-Acts as marking a critical turning-point in *Heilsgeschichte*, a fundamental assumption in the course of Harris' argument. For example, what is "pivotal" about the situation in Lk. 5:16? Without the establishment of some prior, evaluative criteria it is too easy to describe virtually anything associated with prayer as comprising a turning point.

Secondly, is it quite correct to say that prayer is *the means* by which God guides salvation-history? Could there be other ways of describing this relationship? For example, in view of Luke's concern with the sovereignty of God and (as this study hopes to show) with the way in which prayer serves to attune the will of the individual to the will of God, would it not be more correct to say that Luke reveals various ways in which God is already guiding salvation-history, and prayer is a means of human perception of, and thus participation in, what God is doing? Harris posits a cause and effect relationship between prayer and the progress of salvation-history; prayer is one of the tools through which God is able to act historically. However, it may be more correct to say that prayer is one of the tools through which an individual becomes properly aligned with God's predetermined action and so is able to obediently participate within God's appointed framework.

Harris also suffers from major methodological flaws which severely limit the value of his work. In keeping with the earliest work in redaction-criticism, he tries to separate tradition from redaction in order to base his exegetical conclusions

¹³ For example, see S. Smalley, "The Spirit, Kingdom and Prayer in Luke-Acts," *NT*. 15 ('73) 60f; P. T. O'Brien, "Prayer in Luke-Acts," *TB*. 24 ('73) 112, 123-127; A. Trites, "The Prayer Motif in Luke-Acts" in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, (Danville, 1978), pp. 181, 185f; Fitzmyer, *The Gospel*, vol. I, p. 772; I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, (Grand Rapids, 1978), p. 366; L. Feldkämper, *Der betende Jesus als Heilmittler nach Lukas*, (Bonn, 1978), pp. 22f. Harris' influence upon Trites seems to have been mediated through Smalley and O'Brien.

Others had observed a connection between prayer and important events in Luke-Acts before Harris; see A. Hastings, *Prophet and Witness in Jerusalem: A Study of the Teaching of St. Luke*, (London, 1958), pp. 89-91; Jeremias, "Gebetsleben," p. 131; J. Margreth, *Gebetsleben Jesu Christi, des Sohnes Gottes*, (Münster, 1902), pp. 42f, 199. But it was left to Harris to nuance the position by defining "important events" as turning points in salvation-history.

only upon those prayer notices which derive from Luke's own hand (pp. 3f, 23 n. 1). Consequently, significant portions of Luke-Acts are excluded from consideration because they are "traditional" and thus irrelevant (Lk. 20:46f; 22:31-34; Acts 6:1-6; 16:25; 20:36; 21:5; 27:35; 28:8, 15; see p. 196). In addition, other material is omitted (Acts 9:40; 14:23) because even though it is redactional it makes little or no contribution to the proposed thesis as this "develops" from the material remaining (pp. 172, 192f). Aside from the obvious prejudice which Harris' thesis has exercised over the assembly and exegesis of Luke's materials, it should be plain that Luke's inclusion of traditional material is itself an editorial decision which merits every bit as much attention as do his alterations.¹⁴

This methodological fault calls for a renovation of the main thesis itself since one of its prime supports is the apparent "absence" of any Lukan prayer notices after Acts 13:1-3 (p. 198), where the mission to the Gentiles - according to Harris, the last major turning point in salvation-history - is inaugurated (pp. 242f). Harris indicates his own dissatisfaction with his method when he concedes that the prayer notices in the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10:2-4, 9, 30f; 11:5) are traditional, yet deals with them nonetheless because they are amenable to his argument!

Finally, Harris like Ott sees no need to explore any christological import in Jesus' prayer-life. Jesus is simply the church's paradigm. However, the criticisms of Ott on this point apply to Harris as well. Is this simple conclusion really as self-evident as these scholars seem to believe?

1.1.3 Louis Monloubou: Prayer and Jesus' Model

La Prière selon Saint Luc: Recherche d'une structure by L. Monloubou appeared in 1976. This is a wide ranging study which investigates the various prayer practices of 1st century society, both Jewish and Gentile (pp. 25-34), as well as the general interest in prayer found in Luke-Acts. The largest sections of this work are taken up with a study of the different sorts of prayer language used by Luke (pp. 101-170), giving significant attention to how this vocabulary reveals Luke's general outlook on prayer, and a detailed analysis of Mary's Magnificat (pp. 219-237). Jesus' own practice of (pp. 57-72) and teaching on (pp. 73-92) prayer receive less attention, although Jesus serves as the key to unravelling the rest of Luke's material. This is so because the whole of Luke's treatment of Jesus is intended to present him to the church as their only model of true discipleship: the One who perseveres through prayer.

According to Monloubou, Luke presents Jesus-as-Paradigm in two ways, through the two types of prayer texts found in the gospel. First, there are seven texts which simply mention that Jesus prayed, without conveying any content (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 9:28f; 11:1; 22:41) (p. 57). He then points to the number

¹⁴ For an excellent critique of this assumption which so often accompanies redaction-criticism, together with a detailed defence of the claim that traditional material may be as reflective of an author's theology as his own redaction see I. H. Marshall, "Tradition and Theology in Luke (Luke 8:5-15)," *TB*. 20 ('69) 56-75.

seven saying it is unlikely that it be “merely fortuitous” (p. 58). Monloubou does not elaborate upon this suggestive remark, but he seems to imply that Luke is playing at numerology, using the number of perfection to draw the reader’s attention to Jesus as the perfect pray-er.

Secondly, Monloubou notes those texts where the content of Jesus’ prayer is recorded (10:21 f; 22:41–44; 24:34, 46). Through studying Luke’s redaction of Mark, especially of the scene in Gethsemane, he believes that Luke’s alterations may consistently be explained by the same motivation: to present Jesus as the model of Christian discipleship (pp. 59–61). In fact, Luke’s only real interest in Jesus’ prayer-life is how it may instruct the church. “La prière de Jesus, telle que la présente saint Luc, est donc une catéchèse sur la prière que pratiquent les chrétiens” (p. 61). This also explains why the whole of Monloubou’s discussion of prayer in Acts concentrates upon the parallels between Jesus’ prayer habits and those of the early church.

Consequently, Monloubou’s treatment of Luke’s paranetic material, especially Lk. 11:5–8 and 18:1–8, is not unlike Ott’s. There is a slight difference in that Monloubou makes the element of persistence an implication of the primary point which has to do with God’s goodness in hearing prayer (pp. 77, 79). But, with Ott, this didactic emphasis upon ceaseless prayer serves to supplement Jesus’ model of faithful prayer. However, it should also be noticed that Monloubou appears to have reached this formulation independently, without a single-minded dependence upon Conzelmann’s eschatology.

Monloubou has probably most thoroughly explored the exact manner in which Luke-Acts presents Jesus as the church’s model pray-er. And there can be no doubt that this is an important element in Luke’s overall presentation. However, it hardly needs to be said that Monloubou’s justifications for describing this as the only reason for Luke’s interest in Jesus’ prayer-life are less than convincing. His allusion to the number seven is hard to believe. Even if one were to assume that Luke could have supposed his readers to pick up on such a subtle idea, why should he have counted only those references which lack content, especially since there are only six of them anyway (22:41 is not contentless!)?

Finally, there remains the perennial question: Why is it automatically assumed that Luke had no christological interests in his prayer motif? Is it really defensible to claim that Luke had nothing but a paradigmatic view of Jesus in mind?

1.1.4 Ludger Feldkämper: *Prayer and Christology*

A major treatment of prayer in Luke-Acts appeared in 1978 from Ludger Feldkämper, originally submitted as a doctoral dissertation at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, and entitled *Der betende Jesus als Heilmittler nach Lukas*. The title immediately reveals the primary interest of the work. For as Feldkämper says, the distribution of the Lukan prayer texts throughout the ministry of Jesus, the fact that it is so often Jesus who is at prayer, as well as the content of the prayers

themselves, all indicate that Luke's interest is not simply in prayer in general but in Jesus' prayers in particular (pp. 17f). At last, someone had stepped forward to investigate the christological significance of Luke's prayer materials beyond their simple paradigmatic function. In doing this Feldkämper asks two questions (pp. 18f). First, what significance does prayer have for Jesus' person; "was bedeutet die Betonung des Betens für die Darstellung des Gesamtmysteriums Jesu?" (p. 18). Secondly, what is the importance of prayer for Jesus' relationship to God and the church?

Jesus' prayers reveal his unique relationship as the Son. This is discovered in the dialogical nature of prayer which is seen in Luke's overall organisation of prayer texts. In the first half of the gospel Jesus is addressed by God as "Son" while in prayer (3:22; 9:35). In the second half Jesus responds by praying to God as "Father" (10:21f; 11:2; 22:42; 23:34, 46) (pp. 333f). This also reveals the general theological truth that true prayer is always a human response to the personal initiative of God (p. 334).

Secondly, Jesus' prayers always occur in one of two contexts: either that of Jesus' powerful words and deeds, or the discussion of his future suffering (p. 335). These various contextual associations make prayer the meeting ground for Lukan christology and soteriology, for at just these points Jesus is revealed as the Son sent by the Father to bring the Kingdom of God and to suffer in Jerusalem. From this use of the prayer theme Luke demonstrates that it is the entire life of Christ, not only his sufferings, that are important for our salvation (p. 336).

Thirdly, Feldkämper discovers extensive parallels between Jesus' prayers and those of the early church (pp. 306–333, 337). This is true not only of the frequency of prayer but also of their context: namely, that of wonder-working deeds and suffering. But the parallels are not perfect; Jesus is not simply a paradigm for Christian piety. Jesus' prayers are also unique, for: a) the prayers of the community are indebted to the prior prayers of Jesus (Lk. 6:12; 22:32); b) the community is only able to praise God through the Spirit given by the exalted Lord (Acts 2:4,11; 10:46; 19:6); and, c) the community prays to and worships Jesus (Acts 7:59f; Lk. 24:52). Consequently, the prayers of the church are mediated through the "true Pray-er" Jesus (p. 337f). Christian prayer is possible only insofar as Jesus has revealed the Father, and then mediated our salvation by the strength of his own prayer-life.

Feldkämper has broken important new ground in his study of Lukan prayer. He is a keen observer of the text, and even though he tends to run rather far afield in order to make his points, the present study has benefitted a great deal from his exegetical insights; certainly no one before him had discussed Lukan prayer and christology as he has. However, "breaking new ground" also describes the limitations of his study. There is a great deal which can yet be said in this area. The first major flaw in his work once again results from the influence of Conzelmann: he has ignored the Lukan birth narratives; in particular, he has overlooked Jesus' confession of God as his Father in Lk. 2:49. This omission seriously undercuts his dialogical thesis on prayer, which is crucial to so much of what follows in his

work, concerning not only the nature of prayer itself but also the organisation of prayer texts in Luke's gospel.

But the most serious problem in Feldkämper's work is the absence of any definite relationship drawn between the fact of Jesus prayers and the theological themes which are regularly found in association with those prayers. Feldkämper waits until the last two pages of his book to make a few suggestive remarks about Jesus' prayers "mediating" certain benefits to the disciples, but at no point has he worked out exactly *how* or *where* that process has occurred. This omission becomes most noticeable as he discusses those characteristics of the gospel prayer texts which indicate various (and variable) parallel relationships (pp. 285–305). Here Feldkämper produces many interesting observations (not all of which are entirely convincing), but he is unable to offer any sort of explanation as to why these themes, i.e. the power of Jesus' ministry and his suffering, are repeatedly associated with prayer. What is the exact nature of this relationship? The material cries out for some sort of inference to be drawn, but Feldkämper is silent. He does say that "Luke has developed the motif of Jesus' prayers into an extensive 'interlocking' network" (p. 304), but this observation also points to the limitations of Feldkämper's analysis. For, in the absence of any causal/relational explanation, Luke's prayer texts simply become sign-posts pointing toward other important salvific themes; they serve as "pegs" which anchor the interrelated themes of suffering, etc., but there is no inherent reason why these points of contact need to be prayers. Some other theme might be just as suitable, for there is no causal explanation which might give prayer *per se* a generative, or even a *necessary* role in these connections. Feldkämper has begun to explain the literary significance of Jesus' prayers in Luke, but he has not offered any account of Luke's convictions regarding the actual significance of prayer in the life of Jesus. Consequently, Feldkämper has made a start in demonstrating that Luke's prayer theme has an important place in the development of his christology, but the precise nature of this connection has yet to be uncovered.

1.1.5 More Unpublished Dissertations: Wrestling with Ott and Harris

Several other Ph.D. dissertations¹⁵ have been written on Lukan prayer, all of which make the work of Ott and Harris their point of departure. C. M. Fuhrman (1981) submitted *A Redactional Study of Prayer in the Gospel of Luke*, omitting any examination of the book of Acts. He unquestioningly endorses Conzelmann's eschatological programme and accepts Ott's view of prayer and the parousia delay. Although he correctly criticises Harris' heavy-handed pursuit of prayer and *Heilsgeschichte*, his own alternative suggestion that this theme was already present in Mark (1:35; 6:46; 15:34) and Q (Lk. 10:2, 21 f) hardly carries conviction. Lk. 18:1 is made the organising principle of all Luke has to say about prayer, and the

¹⁵ Fuhrman's work was submitted to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky; Mobley's to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; and Plymale's to Northwest University, Evanston, Illinois.

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