LUKE AND Οἱ ΠΤΩΧΟΊ: A SOCIO-SCIENTIFIC READING OF LUKE 4:16-21 AS LIBERATION

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Licentiate in Sacred Theology (S.T.L.) Degree from the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

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May, 2023

ABSTRACT

Jesus's manifesto in Luke 4:16-21 is an allusion to Isaiah 61:1-2 and 58:6 and portrays Luke's concern for the poor. A socio-scientific reading of this manifesto shows Jesus as an eschatological prophetic Messiah who assumes both prophetic role and royal functions of a king to liberate and restore honor to the oppressed and marginalized people of his time. The research challenges political leaders of Nigeria to look into the cries of ethnic minority groups and Nigerian Christians to become proactive in seeking concrete ways to alleviate this social problem. It also calls for Nigerians to intensify socio-political activism in defense of equity, equality, and justice for minority ethnic groups in Nigeria.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank Almighty God for good health of mind and body, and for sustaining me through this academic voyage.

My gratitude goes to my thesis advisor, Prof. Andrew Davis, who exposed and increased my love for the book of the prophet Isaiah. His diligence, patience, guidance and mentoring were very important. Also, his encouragement and positive suggestions were very helpful in the course of writing my thesis. Similarly, I thank Prof. Matthew Monnig, SJ, for exposing me to biblical intertextuality that led to the topic of my thesis. Your encouragement, critical suggestions, and insights were very useful.

I thank my Bishop, Most Revd Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe, CMF, the Catholic Bishop of Makurdi diocese, Benue State Nigeria, for his fatherly love, support, encouragement, and for giving me the opportunity to carryout graduate studies.

I cannot forget the Boston College's Irish Famine Memorial (IFM) Fund, for granting me the scholarship for acquiring my License in Sacred Theology. in the same vein, my sincere gratitude goes to all the professors at STM for their love and kindness, especially their commitment to academic excellence. Thanks to the library staff of O'Neill and Theology and Ministry Libraries for always making available academic resources for my research.

I thank Sr. Dr. Geraldine C. Uzodimma, for her help, encouragement, and guidance. I cannot forget to thank in a special way, Fr. Thomas Raferty, and Fr. James Ojo, pastor and parochial vicar respectively, and the good parishioners of St. Oscar Romero Parish, Canton, MA, for giving me accommodation during my studies. May God bless you all.

INTRODUCTION

Luke-Acts is among the greatest in the New Testament concerning issues of the poor and poverty. Poverty in Luke is understood both spiritually and materially. "The poor" implies a group of people considered destitute and outcasts in society: the needy, the blind, widows, orphans, imprisoned/captives, debtors, slaves, women, and sinners.[1] In first-century Palestine, the poor (also known "down and outers"[2]) were mostly a marginalized group of people deprived of their honor in society. The NT (particularly the Synoptic Gospels) written within the second half of the first century, gives priority to the poor in Palestinian Jewish society in that age. Jesus's ministry includes the poor.[3] His programmatic announcement of his manifesto[4] in Luke 4:16-21 is one of the major discourses on the poor and the outcast where the "good news" is announced to the poor.

Although scholarship is of a consensus about Luke's use of Isaiah in Jesus's manifesto, there are different opinions regarding his interpretation of the Isaian text in 4:18-19. Two questions

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[1] Among the four evangelists, Luke pays more attention to the poor or socially marginalized than any of the other evangelists. The poor and outcasts form a major concern of the Lukan messianic ministry as it is evident in the entire gospel. Scholars have argued for different Lukan motifs or central themes. Luke is the Gospel of universal salvation (Luke 3:6); the Gospel of renunciation (5:11; 12:33; 17:25); and the Gospel of Messianic joy (6:20-22; 7:23; 23:29) (Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to St. Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, Reprint, TNTC 03 (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986), 14). For Arthur A. Just, the Gospel of Luke is meant to preach to the hearer in narrative form and to instill in the hearer Christian faith. Luke's narrative, therefore, is kerygmatic (*Luke*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 1996), 27). Karl Allen Kuhn is of the view that the motif of Luke is "to challenge Theophilus and other readers to abandon their allegiance to the life they know and to some extent still cherish" (*The Kingdom According to Luke and Acts: A Social, Literary, and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2015), 3). In this work, I use "OT" for the Old Testament, and "NT" for New Testament.

[2] In first-century Palestine, the "down and outers" were largely an oppressed group of people robbed of honor in the society. This group depended on others for daily survival (Kingsley Ikechukwu Uwaegbute, "A Socio-Scientific reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," *Neotestamentica* 53, 1 (2019), 102.

[3] The poor in Luke can be seen as being physically and/or spiritually poor. For instance, the Bible frequently uses the term 'poor' in describing a group of people (including the rich) who are humble before God and rely on him for everything, especially for protection in times of trouble (cf. Ps 40:17; 72:12-14; 86:1; Matt 5:3). See Matthew E. Carlton, *The Translator's Reference Translation of the Gospel of Luke* (USA: SIL International, 2008), 79.

[4] A manifesto is a public declaration of one's intention, views, or motives. A manifesto expresses one's mission statement, and outlines the itinerary for such a mission (Frederick C. Mish, "Manifesto," *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, 449). Luke's narration of Jesus's sermon at Nazareth (4:16-21) is called Jesus's manifesto which defines his overall ministry and mission (Pablo T. Gadenz, *The Gospel of Luke*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2018), 98-99).

are important for investigation: firstly, what is the interpretation of Luke's use of the Isaian text? Secondly, why does Luke insert some changes in the Isaian quotation? Some commentators, like Leon Morris, see the text from a spiritual perspective similar to Matthew's beatitude where the kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor in spirit (5:3).[5] Others like Amy-Jill Levine and Ben Witherington III, view this narrative as Jesus's fulfillment of the prophecies as the Messiah, and Luke's means of proving Jesus's concern for the poor and destitute of first-century Palestine, especially as it concerns Roman imperial domination. Levine and Witherington III explain that Jesus's manifesto is not about the benefits of the kingdom which Jesus would not share with the people at Nazareth, nor on issues of divine justice, that comprise of punishment of sin.[6] Rather, Jesus's sermon is an insight into the kingdom of heaven, where the blind will see, the captives will be released.[7] Joseph Fitzmyer sees the event at Nazareth with Luke's quotation of Isa 61:1-2 and 58:6 as putting into action Jesus's concern for "the poor," a theme that comes up again in the beatitudes (6:20-26) and later in 7:21-22. This Lukan motif is further expanded in the exclusively Lukan narratives that contrast the poor and the rich and deal with material possessions.[8] Bryan R. Dyer sees Luke's quotation as the lens through which Luke presents Jesus's emphasis on the poor and the marginalized. Luke 4:18-19 is, therefore, very significant in that Jesus quotes Isaiah to

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[5] Morris, *The Gospel According to St. Luke: An Introduction and Commentary,* 14.

[6] Amy-Jill Levine and Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Luke*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 116. Levine and Witherington III add, "Similarly in error are those commentaries that claim Jesus incensed the people in the synagogue by proclaiming mercy to the impure or dishonored or excluded. The issue in this verse is not Jewish exclusivity versus Christian mercy; Isaiah and Jesus are both speaking about human misery and divine mercy" (p. 116).

[7] Levine and Witherington III, *The Gospel of Luke*, 116.

[8] Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According Luke 1-9*, AB 28 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1981), 248-9. The teaching on the material possessions is contained in the first woes (Lk 6:24); the parable of the rich fool (12:16-21); the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-26); the good Samaritan (though meant for another purpose, but exemplifies the correct use of material possession to support those in need, 10:35-37); the teaching of inviting the poor to dinner and not the rich (14:13). The situation of Zacchaeus was a unique one, where he offered to give away half of what he had to the poor (19:8). The parable of the rich owner is told analogously where the rich man commends the dishonest manager for the prudent use of his commission (16:8) (p. 249).

initiate and teach his public ministry as "good news for the poor." Jesus's concern for the poor (a description that includes those marginalized groups), although has a spiritual dimension, meeting the physical needs of people, is also his genuine concern in Luke's Gospel. In his second account (Acts), Luke emphasizes almsgiving as a counter-cultural response to the poor and needy.[9]

The second question, that is, why Luke inserts some changes in his quotation of Isaiah, is contested by scholars. For instance, François Bovon considers Luke's citation as *haphtara* (a selection from the prophets), linking the different texts of Isaiah since they share the same words, a practice where such texts (Isa 58:4; 57:15-58; 58:5; 61:1-11) were used during the *Yom Kippur* at the start of the Jubilee Year.[10] On another note, Joseph M. Lear sees Luke's citation of Isaiah as a deliberate attempt to include a catchword "ἄφεσις" (release) while emphasizing "δεκτός" (acceptable day) at the end of the quotation.[11] Since Luke is emphasizing release to the poor and outcast of first-century Palestine, I propose that Luke's citation of Isaiah is best read with a socio-scientific lens. This research, therefore, employs the socio-scientific criticism methodology of

[9] Bryan R. Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," MNTS (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2015), 106-7. Dyer sees almsgiving in Luke-Acts should be seen as genuine solidarity with the poor and weakening of cultural norms that promote injustice and marginalized (p. 118). Consequently, the poor and socially disregarded have formed the central part of the Lukan narrative as the literary genre and purpose of the eschatological role reversal aligns with the liberation/deliverance of the poor and restoration of their dignity and status in society. This is why Mckinney suggests that the issue of the poor and the rich have formed major themes in Lukan narrative (Stephen J. McKinney, "The Roots of the Preferential Option for the Poor in Catholic Schools in Luke's Gospel," *International Studies in Catholic Education* 10, no. 2 (2018): 220, https://doi.org/10.1080/19422539.2018.1492264.pdf). Similarly, Maria A. Bation refers to Luke as the Gospel of the poor (Bation, "Luke's Good News to the Poor: Ambiguities and Challenges," LJLST 28, 1 (2014): 59).

[10] Bovon François, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27*, ed. Helmut Koester, trans. Donald D. Deer (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 153.

[11] Joseph M. Lear, *The Hybrid Isaiah Quotation in Luke 4:18-19,* AJEC 107 (Brill:2018), 163, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004383371_008.pdf.

Catherine Murphy[12] and the sociological conflict theory of Timothy Lehmann, and T. R. Young[13] in reading the situation of poverty and marginalization, coupled with the oppressive Roman imperial domination and other elite groups in first-century Palestine in Luke's time. Such a reading shows some similarity between the social context of Jesus's time and present-day Nigeria, particularly the problem of ethnic minorities, a major cause of poverty and marginalization.

In Luke 4:16-21, Jesus assumes the position of the eschatological prophet, similar to that of the Third Isaiah, who has been sent to proclaim "good news to the poor." In addition to the prophetic attributes, Jesus assumes a royal function that is only discharged by the king (Messiah) in a jubilee year. This twofold demonstration in Jesus's programmatic announcement informs my reading of Jesus in Luke 4:16-21 as an eschatological prophetic Messiah, who, aware of the domination of sin, Satan, and imperial Roman rule, announces good news to the poor who were captives under those dominions. Their release from captivity parallels the practice of the Jubilee year, where debts were forgiven. As an eschatological prophetic Messiah, through the empowerment of the Spirit of God, Jesus opens the eyes of faith of those who believe in him as the fulfillment of OT prophecies. Jesus is best read as an agent of liberation, firstly to the new

[12] Catherine Murphy explains that Social-scientific criticism is an exegetical method that tries to study the original social and cultural setting of a text through clues in the text's content and rhetoric and through the analysis of other ancient evidence. The searcher assumes that the world in which these texts were written is totally dissimilar from our contemporary world; consequently, a modern critic cannot make a valid claim of the meaning of such texts without a considerate knowledge of the social conventions and traditions of the author's age. This method stresses little on the individual author, as it would be in narrative criticism, and pays more attention to the social context of the author since meaning is viewed as a socially-constructed phenomenon*(Biblical Criticism, New Testament Religious Studies Seminar* (Santa Clara University: Fall 1999).https://webpages.scu.edu/ftp/cmurphy/courses/all/bible/exegesis/social-scientific.htm).

[13] Timothy Lehmann and T. R. Young, "From Conflict-to-Conflict Methodology: An Emerging Paradigm for Sociology," *SI* 44, 1 (2007), 28. DOI:10.1111/j.1475-682X.1974.tb00719.x.pdf. Lehmann and Young explain that Conflict methodology is necessary to constrain the corporate-dominated society with conflict conditions of social organization. Conflict methodology includes those tactics and techniques by which information is acquired from and initiated into structures under conditions of hostile contrast. By appropriate usage of conflict methodology strategies, the model of reciprocity between the sociologist and his subject of research and between the individual citizen and his society can be reestablished and a more equal and just social order built (pp. 27-28).

Israel's poor children under the domination of sin, Satan, and the imperial governments. Secondly, his "liberational" concern[14] for the "poor" or "down and outers" which restores honor to the marginalized people of his society becomes a model for Christian discipleship. This reading of Luke 4:16-21, therefore, has hermeneutical implications for the problem of ethnic minorities in Nigeria and ideological interpretation[15] of the "kingdom of God for the poor."

In order to make this argument, chapter one is on hermeneutical consideration of οἱ πτωχοί and Jesus as an eschatological prophet in Luke 4:16-21. Chapter two focuses on the exegetical analysis of Luke 4:16-21, showing how the poor are Jesus's concern in his mission and ministry. Chapter three analyzes Luke's understanding of οἱ πτωχοί ("down and outers") and how he interplays with Isaiah in his option for the poor and marginalized. Chapter four is a consideration of Luke and the poor in the Nigerian context, addressing both the ideological interpretation of the good news to the poor and the ethnicity of minorities as the causes of poverty in Nigeria. A socio-scientific interpretation of Luke 4:16-21 is employed as a liberational model for Nigeria, with religious, socio-political, and economic benefits.

[14] Uwaegbute, "A Socio-Scientific reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 102.

[15] Nkechi G. Onah and Robinson S. Agbo, "Church proliferation and immorality in Nigeria: Interrogating the paradox," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 77, 1 (2021): 4. With the increase in Pentecostalism in Nigeria, many pastors have become preachers of the gospel of prosperity, where the pastor prey on the poor Christians by explaining to them the need to give to God what they have and believe that the kingdom of God is for the poor. Onah and Agbo add "Some of these pastors have adopted ostentatious lifestyles and carry themselves as celebrities, superheroes and business executives (Ojo 2018:92). Kuka, in Achunike (2004:44), called them 'harbingers of a "cross-less" religion'. Some of these ministers lay emphasis on prophecies, visions, healing, and miracles and preach a prosperity gospel. The ministers convince their followers of the importance of family deliverance to avert ancestral curses, barrenness, sickness, premature death, poverty, and other problems. They capitalize on the poor economic situation in the country and the suffering of the masses. These pastors or ministers de-emphasize the fact that we cannot entirely eliminate sickness and poverty from the world (Mk 14:7). Sickness, suffering, and death are parts of being human" (p. 4).

CHAPTER 1: HERMENEUTICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF Οἱ ΠΤΩΧΟΊ

This chapter considers the hermeneutical understanding of οἱ πτωχοί and how it functioned in antiquity, the book of Isaiah, Judaism, and the New Testament, and Luke-Acts in particular. It also explains the meaning of the eschatological Messiah and the hermeneutics of ἄφεσις (liberation) as it relates to the mission of the Messiah.

1.1 Meaning of Πτωχός in the Greek World, the Bible and Judaism

The poor is viewed differently. We shall consider the poor in Greek, the Bible and Judaism.

1.1.1 Πτωχός in the Greek World

In antiquity, discussions on the poor and poverty were not given pride of place. This informs why the poor and poverty are considered objects of historical, philosophical, anthropological, and sociological study, even though it is obvious that the available literature, which was authored by the elites, scarcely mentions the poor. Consequently, rather than focus on the poor and poverty in antiquity, the scholarship pays more attention to the study of the privileged social classes.[16] Estelle Galbois and Sylvie Rougier-Blanc explain that from the eighth century BCE to the first century CE, the poor in Greece was not viewed as a homogeneous social category as we have it today. Different words were used to describe the poor.[17] In the Greek "taxonomy of poverty," there is an economic vocabulary that stresses the absence of goods or in a state of

[16] Estelle Galbois and Sylvie Rougier-Blanc, "Elites Feared Falling into Poverty and Tried to Keep the Evil Away with Laughing Figures," *Magazine de Sciences Humaines et Sociales* 01, 10 Mondes Sociaux (2020). https://brewminate.com/poverty-in-ancient-greece.

[17] Frederick Hauck, "Πτωχός in the Greek World," *TDNT* 6:886. A survey shows that various words are used for the poor and poverty in Ancient literary sources: "to bow down;" "to be destitute;" and "begging" (6:886). Geoffrey W. Bromiley gives a summary of Frederick Hauck's view on poverty: "Some beggars are people who will not work and prey on others. But there are also beggars who have lost their property and wander about in great unhappiness. In general, beggars are despised, but small gifts are given to them, and Homer can even say at times that they come from God. The Greeks have no system of poor relief. They protect the rights of orphans and distribute grain to citizens, but the indigent is dependent on the expected generosity of others. Poverty is nowhere commended" ("Ptochos in the Greek World," *TDNT Abridged in One Volume*, 969).

deprivation caused by poverty such as ἄπορος, that is, "destitute" or "a person lacking the means of earning an income." Some of the terms emphasize incapacity and limits that are caused by poverty and form a "social" terminology that describes poverty as a form of servitude. For instance, ἀδύνατος, which means "without capacity," or "disabled" is often associated with poverty among Attic orators. It is within this same register that the understanding of the vocabulary associated with the demands of work and the family of πενία including πένης that is "poor worker who does manual labor and owes no land" is found.[18] Πενία is also considered the personification of poverty and needs, hence, "deficiency," or "poverty."[19] The third group of poverty terms is linked with supplication, seeking, begging, as well as the dependence that comes from them, that is the behavior or act of being poor. In this category is found the family of words around πτωχός of one who crouches and cowers," hence "beggarly, poor").[20] Ernst Bammel rightly suggests that "πτωχός" is one of the oldest terms used to describe abject poverty, and the beggar is considered a "social parasite."[21] Hence, πτωχός has attracted a lot of attention from scholars. Beed and Beed attest to this by stating that scholars such as Walter E. Pilgrim, Wolfgang Stegemann, Leslie Hoppe, Ben Witherington III, and Bruce W. Longenecker have greatly discussed πτωχός in various ways.[22] From its etymology, πτωχός is related to πτώσσειν (Homer, Odyssey 18, 363), meaning

[18] J. David Pleins, "Poor, Poverty in the Old Testament," *ABD* 5:403.

[19] Estelle Galbois and Sylvie Rougier-Blanc, "Elites Feared Falling into Poverty and Tried to Keep the Evil Away with Laughing Figures."

[20] Hauck, "Πτωχός in the Greek Work," 6:886.

[21] Estelle Galbois and Sylvie Rougier-Blanc, "Elites Feared Falling into Poverty and Tried to Keep the Evil Away with Laughing Figures."

[22] Clive Beed and Cara Beed, "Recent Christian Interpretation of Material Poverty and Inequality in the Developed World," JMM, 16, 2 (2013): 361. See also, Walter E. Pilgrim, *Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke and Acts* (Denison, U.S.A: Augsburg Fortress Pub., 1981); Wolfgang Stegemann, *The Gospel and the Poor*, trans. Dietlinde Elliott (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); Leslie J. Hoppe, *There Shall Be No Poor Among You: Poverty in the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004); Ben Witherington III, *Jesus and Money: A Guide to Time of Financial Crisis* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2010); and Bruce W. Longenecker, *Remembering the Poor: Paul, Poverty, and the Greco-Roman World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Pun., CO., 2010).

"to bow down timidly." As an adjective, πτωχός means "destitute," or "mendicant." Πτωχεύω as an intransitive verb, implies "to be destitute," or "to lead the life of a beggar' (Homer, Odyssey, 15, 309). As a transitive verb, it means "to beg from someone." Πτωχεία, implies "begging", "destitution," or "the life of a beggar."[23] Ernst Bammel suggests it is worth distinguishing πτωχός from πένης. While πένης means "one who has to earn his living because he lacks property," πτωχός implies "the complete destitution which forces the poor to seek the help of others by begging."[24] Consequently, it is the fate of the πτωχός to have nothing. The fate of the πένης on the other hand is to live frugally.[25]

Considering the poor and poverty from the aristocratic standpoint, Homer in Odyssey 18, 1ff., is quoted by Bammel to have described the "permanent beggar" as the one who refuses to work but preys on the well-to-do, and does not let others settle into his sphere. Homer describes a second category of the beggar as "the uprooted beggar," who though was once a worthy person in a fine house, for various reasons, has lost all native rights and due to so much unhappiness, goes about begging (Homer, Odyssey, 21, 327). For Homer, the guilt and destiny of the two categories of poverty are assessed differently as "the uprooted beggar" is considered with sympathy. Overall, however, the beggar is despised (Homer, Odyssey, 173-77).[26] The beggar is naturally given a small gift (Homer Odyssey, 17, 420), but to give alms is not considered a virtue even from a religious view. Although Homer is sometimes referring to strangers and beggars as coming from God, the view that the "very poor" are under special divine protection is quite strange to the Greek world. For instance, Zeus is called ξένιος and ἱκετήσιος but never πτώχιος.[27] The fact that rendering help

[23] Hauck, "Πτωχός in the Greek World," 6:886.
[24] Hauck, "Πτωχός in the Greek World," 6:886.
[25] Hauck, "Πτωχός in the Greek World," 6:886.
[26] Hauck, "Πτωχός in the Greek World," 6:887.
[27] Hauck, "Πτωχός in the Greek World," 6:887.

to the poor was encouraged, there were no religious attachments to make the helpers have a sense of religious responsibility as it were to a deity. This is while the Greek God is not described with the adjectives like πτώχιος that connotes poverty or begging.

The Greek world had no state relief system for poor. Organized relief was only found in societies. Beneficence was not considered as giving of alms but rendering of service to that which is beneficial to the society. The care for orphans was to protect their inheritance and not to relieve their poverty. The distribution of grains and other goods was given to all citizens and not only the poor. Hence, ἐλευθεριότης (freedom/liberty) and φιλανθρωπία (charity) are highly recognized as virtues, however, the poor of the city is not their object. Nevertheless, it is expected that the citizens will help the indignant, especially those who were considered poor due to misfortune. Also, moral and religious glorification of the poor was absent; on the contrary, in the event of a social conflict, the poor were not eligible to invoke the aid of the gods.[28]

Literary and iconographic scholarship reveals that external symbols associated with poverty in antiquity are similar to those of today. For instance, thinness is associated with malnutrition; old age with premature aging as a result of hard labor; and clothing with simple rags. Though poverty in antiquity is also seen from various perspectives, the primary understanding of political exclusion was prevalent, since it was assumed that the poor go about their need to survive and had no time to exercise their "profession" as citizens. In fact, the Greeks viewed the poor in a critical way and excluded them from the active life of society since they were of low morality and degraded by insecurity and impiety. In search of their source of living, the poor in antiquity looted altars and stole offerings meant for the gods; they told lies and did various things just to survive. This explains why they were marginalized and rejected for communal living in society. In the

[28] Hauck, "Πτωχός in the Greek World," 6:887.

cities, they occupied open spaces such as public porches, and thresholds of homes. However, there is no extant evidence either from literary or epigraphic sources indicating the legislative provisions to drive the poor out of the open space. Also, the poorest maintained a semblance of sociability, by frequently going to public baths or through their systematic presence close to the temple. This implies that the poor were in a way integrated into society.[29]

The Greek artistic world presents a derogatory image of the poor. For instance, the Greek iconographs have a Roman marble copy of the third or second century BCE (original, *Glyptothek, Munich photo,* Chr. Koppermann) that shows the image of a "drunken old poor woman" who is a beggar, indicating the poor in a negative manner. Also, there are some Hellenistic terracotta images showing some dressed workers and fishermen, among whom are some naked characters and beggars with ridiculous faces representing liberation. These iconographs indicate why the elites feared falling into poverty, which they considered evil, and tried, by all means, to keep the evil away from their existence. Greek history also has it that there was a common practice where people choose to "become poor" either by posture, clothing, or modest offering to the gods. Such a practice shows value in giving up, simplicity, and a return to the original values of keeping oneself apart from the city or society. Socrates, who walked barefoot, and the Cynics who advocated detachment from all goods and pleasure, are ideological representations of poverty in antiquity.[30]

The poor in the Greek world, therefore, are a group who are economically disadvantaged and socially excluded from the active life of society. Since the condition of the poor was shameful, many aristocrats feared becoming poor in order not to be found in such a situation.

[29] Estelle Galbois and Sylvie Rougier-Blanc, "Elites Feared Falling into Poverty and Tried to Keep the Evil Away with Laughing Figures."
[30] Estelle Galbois and Sylvie Rougier-Blanc, "Elites Feared Falling into Poverty and Tried to Keep the Evil Away with Laughing Figures."

1.1.2 The Poor in Isaiah 61:1

In general, the OT considers wealth, health, and vitality as blessings, both on the socio-economic and theological levels. There was not yet a discrepancy between material and spiritual poverty. The words used in the Hebrew Bible in relation to the "poor" include, דל, מסכן מחסר/מחסור and עני/ענו.[31] These Hebrew words are vital in the Hebrew Bible and express the relationship between the Israelites and God, especially in stressing concern for the poor. All these terms are important for understanding the poor in the OT, especially in prophetic writing. Three of the words, דַּל, עָנִי/ענו and אֶבְיוֹן (*ebiôn, ani/anav,* and *dal*) are often translated by the term "poor." These three adjectives are synonyms and are often used in pairs, especially in the Psalms, for the reason of parallelism. Among the three adjectives, ענו is the word used in Isa 61:1-2.

Poverty and Exile in Third Isaiah

Isaiah 61:1 is a post-exilic context. It provides one of the earliest insights into the understanding of a theological exile that goes beyond the territorial boundaries of the Babylonian captivity. Thus, later appropriation of the text by the authors of Third Isaiah, its redaction, and inclusion into the canonical form of Third Isaiah and the book of Isaiah as a whole, shows the growth of this understanding of the ongoing exile that would flourish in later Second Temple literature.[32] Isaiah 61 therefore, as noted by Gregory "plays an important and pivotal role in the development of theological motifs and hermeneutical methods during the postexilic period."[33]

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[31] Pleins lists the terms for the classification of the poor as אביון: the Beggarly Poor; דל: the Poor Peasant Farmer; and the Lazy Poor; מסכן: poverty Is better; רוש: political and economic inferiority; עני: the Injustice of oppression; a Political Movement of the Pious Poor ("Poor, Poverty in the Old Testament," 5:403). The LXX (and the NT) used πτωχός, πένης, πενιχρός, and ἐνδεής.

[32] Bradley C. Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," *JBL* 126, no. 3 (2007):475.

[33] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 475.

Considering the condition of the postexilic people, those who are suffering from socio-economic oppression, the author of Isa 61:1 describes them as עֲנָוִים. The term ענו translates "the poor, weak, afflicted" and עֲנָוִים in this context are those who are financially or economically destitute and unable to lift themselves out of their poverty.[34] Considering the context of the eighth-century prophets, this condition is the effect of unjust social structures that made the rich and powerful take undue advantage of the poor (cf. Isa 3:14; 10:2; Amos 2:7; 4:1; 5:11; 8:4-6). Also, the לִנְשְׁבְּרֵ֥י לֵ֖ב ("brokenhearted") are understood in relation to the poor who have nothing. The socio-economic understanding of the situation of Isa 61:1 becomes clearer with the mention of the second group of the infinitives: "to proclaim liberty to the captives" and "release to the prisoners." Thus, "the liberation that is proclaimed is for those who have been sold into indentured service because of debts. Because there was no Jewish monarchy in post-exilic Palestine, those who controlled the temple system would have enjoyed an enormous amount of socioeconomic power. It is this imbalance of power and exploitation that underlies the declaration in Isa 61:1-3."[35] However, there is also a religious background to these descriptions of the recipients. This is because as עֲנָוִים had acquired a broader and particular religious sense while also retaining the basic sense of economic poverty, ostracism, and exploitation.[36] This religious understanding of the poor, as Bradley Gregory notes, is found in many of the Psalms (cf. 22:27; 69:33; 72:2, 4, 12; 109:16, 22). For example, God is described as being close to the brokenhearted in 4:18; 51:19, and the binding of the brokenhearted is God's activity when he restores Jerusalem and gathers the exiles (147:3). This

[34] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 482.

[35] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 482.

[36] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40:55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 19B; New York: Doubleday, 2003), 224. See also Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 482.

same religious understanding of the poor reflects later in the last chapter of Third Isaiah (66:2).[37] Therefore, the use of עֲנָוִים Isa 61:1-2 implies both economic and religious poverty.

It is also important to note that ענו is used only in 61:1 and is not elsewhere in Second or Third Isaiah. However, its related plural adjective עֲנִיִּין (עָנִי) is used in 41:17 and 49:13 which in both contexts, although especially 49:13, the term refers to Israel in exile. I shall come back to discuss this in the next section on exile in Second Isaiah. Thus, it is to the עֲנָוִים ("poor persons") that the good news is proclaimed. Secondly, the sense of עֲנָוִים used in 61:1 can also imply "humble" or "afflicted." This makes 61:1 similar to the Psalm, where the "ones with broken hearts" is mostly used parallel to the "poor" as already noted. Similar to 57:15, 61:1 "poignantly describes the dispirited Jewish community around the ruins of Jerusalem before Ezra returned."[38] It is obvious that the author of Isaiah deliberately used both "humble" and "poor" in discussing the poor in 56-66, especially in considering the situation of the returning exiles. This is similar to the עֲנָוִים used in the Psalms as a reference to the faithful who wait on YHWH in spite of their personal distress (Pss 10:17; 22:27; 25:9; 34:3; 37:11; 69:33; cf. Isa 57:15).[39]

The recipients of the message of Isa 61:1-2 are again described as the "brokenhearted" (לב נשברי). This term has no precedent in the tradition of Isaiah and is only small in the rest of the Hebrew Bible. The phrase or a variant of the term is often used in the Psalms, and the nearest parallels are 34:18 and 51:19 (also 147:3). Although Gregory notes that Jerome saw a connection

[37] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 482. Gregory adds that scholars are progressively drawing attention to the fact that even if there are certain socio-political circumstances underlying these descriptions, these settings are depicted in language drawn from earlier traditions, and a better way to understand this context is by employing the earlier texts and concepts that are appropriated by the author of Isa 61:1 -3 in his portrayal of the recipients of the ministry of the prophetic "Servant-Herald" (p. 483).

[38] John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66*, in WBC 25, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Waco, Texas: Word Book Publishers, 1987), 302.

[39] Joseph Anthony Giambrone, *Sacramental Charity, Creditor Christology, and the Economy of Salvation in Luke's Gospel*, WUZNT, 2, 439 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 11.

between Isa 61:1 and Ps 51, he explains that there is no evidence of any intertextuality between Isa 61 and the parallel Psalms. Also, the fact that the Psalms are very difficult to date would make any speculation on reference in either direction very weak.[40]

Nevertheless, the most recognized reference to past traditions is in Isa 61:1c-2a, which has the Jubilee language in Lev 25 that speaks of granting liberty to captives, release to prisoners, and the coming of the year of the Lord's favor. Despite there is no explicit mention of the Jubilee nor the *Yom Kippur* (the Day of Atonement) or anything connecting to the Jubilee year, there is a correlation made because of the similarity in the phrasing between Lev 25:10 and Isa 61:1, in the word דרור ("liberty"). The connection with liberty דרור is rare in the Hebrew Bible and is found only in Lev 25:10; Jer 34:8; Ezek 46:17; and Isa 61:1. Since the notion of the Jubilee is behind Ezek 46:17, stressing the Israelites' return to their landed property shows that the notion had existed during the exile. Gregory notes that the reality that some scholars are of the opinion that the jubilee release does have some sort of relationship with the release in Jer 34:8 strengthens the position that דרור has a particular use in the Hebrew Bible that focuses on the notion of the jubilee. Therefore, unless strong opinions suggest otherwise, דרור in Isa 61 should be understood as a reference to the Jubilee.[41] This notion of the Jubilee is greatly considered in the debt-slavery of Second Isaiah.

Therefore, although there was no longer a Jewish monarchy in post-exilic Palestine, temple officials enjoyed a great amount of socioeconomic power at the expense of the poor. It is this imbalance of power and resulting exploitation that underlies the declaration in Isa 61:1-2. The

[40] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 483.
[41] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 484.

speaker of Isaiah 61 therefore, is one who assumes both the royal and prophetic roles, an eschatological mission that is later realized in the NT.

Poverty and Exile in Second Isaiah

Second Isaiah is important in the treatment of poverty in Isaiah, especially as it concerns the exile who are not only oppressed but are poor. The message of Second Isaiah is that God is coming to redeem his people from their poverty and oppression (40:9) and to comfort them as it is indicated in the very beginning in 40:1: "Comfort my people comfort them." In the vision in Isa 41:17-19, the description of the praise and honor to God is often mentioned in close connection to God's provision for the poor and needy. It is for הָעֲנִיִּים וְהָאֶבְיוֹנִים ("the poor and the needy"), that God promises to answer and never to forsake them (41:17). The עֲנִיִּים here signifies the legitimacy of Israel's needs. And God proves that he answers them since he does not abandon the עֲנִיִּים.[42] This situation is similar to that in 61:1 after the exile.

As mentioned earlier, in the contexts of 41:17 and 43:19 both (but especially 49:13), עָנִי is used to refer to Israel in exile. In 49:13, עֲנִיָּיו stands in relation to the people of Israel, who are the recipients of Second Isaiah's message of comfort: "For YHWH has comforted his people and had compassion on his afflicted ones" (כִּי נִחַם יְהוָה עַמּוֹ וַעֲנִיָּיו יְרַחֵם). An equivalent of the term is used in 48:10: "furnace of affliction," which is another clear allusion to the exile. Instead of considering Second Isaiah's allusions to the primary background of this term, it is possible to interpret עָנִי in relation to 58:7, the only other occurrence of the term in Third Isaiah. Consequently, if Isa 60-62 form the core of Third Isaiah, however, then from the perspective of composition, "58:7 must be understood in light of 61:1 and not the other way around."[43] Also, the anointed prophet of Isa 61:1-

[42] Watts, *Isaiah 34-66*, 107.

[43] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 483.

2 is arguably understood as the Servant of Second Isaiah, who, according to William Beuken (as noted by Gregory), appropriates the role of the Servant for himself and his community. Also, the endowment with the spirit of the Lord is reminiscent of the pouring of God's Spirit upon his Servant in the first of the servant Songs (42:1).[44] A similar notion is found in 48:16, however, the text seems to be fragmented. Later, God promises to pour out his spirit upon the offerings of the Servant in 44:2-3. Considering Beuken's position that the speaker in Isa 61:1 draws on these Second Isaiah's threads, then the prophet's ministry would have gone beyond merely the restoration of socio-economic conditions of post-exilic Palestine. Instead, the ministry would need to be viewed as expressing an eschatological aspect that is realized among the members of his community: the promise to be released from exile.[45]

Furthermore, the speaker in Isaiah 61 uses the verb בשר, and thus appropriates the role of the herald of good tidings already found in Second Isaiah (cf. 40:9; 41:27; 52:7). Second Isaiah has it that Zion or Jerusalem is both the first herald (40:9) and at the same time the receiver of the message (41:27; 52:7), where the herald is differently known as either a prophet (possibly Second Isaiah and/or the Servant) or a military commander.[46] In 49:13, the וְעֲנִיָּיו ("suffering ones/afflicted ones") in the eschatological hymn[47] are described similarly to the "ones with broken hearts" in 61:1. They see God's work of redemption and are called to applaud God on behalf of the people

[44] William A. M. Beuken, "Servant and Herald of Good Tidings: Isaiah 61 as an Interpretation of Isaiah 40-55," in *Le Livre D'Isaïe*, 415-16. See also Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 480-81.

[45] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 481.

[46] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 481.

[47] Watts, *Isaiah 34-66*, 187.

and the city.[48] Consequently, there seem to be some similarities between the suffering servant of Second Isaiah and the prophet of Third Isaiah who announces good news to the עֲנָוִים.[49]

Therefore, the exile in Second Isaiah is re-echoed in two dimensions in the speaker of Isa 61. Firstly, by appropriating the language of the herald/second Isaiah, the ministry of the Servant in Second Isaiah to the Babylonian exiles has been echoed by the speaker of Isa 61 in his ministry to his post-exilic community in Palestine. Secondly, the description of the nature of this ministry of the speaker of Isa 61 echoes the ministry of the Servant of Second Isaiah.

1.1.3 The Poor in Judaism

The poor have been given a lot of attention in Judaism. In fact, "the poor" and "poverty" are prominent in the writings of the rabbis, the historians Josephus and Philo, the Pseudepigrapha writings, the Qumran documents, and the judgment of the rabbis. All of these make use of "the poor" and "poverty" in their varied perspectives.[50]

The Rabbis, Josephus, and Philo

Following the destruction of the Second Temple, Rabbinic attitudes towards the poor and poverty were evident. According to Ernst Bammel, the rabbis have knowledge of all the terms used for "the poor." However, they make only little use of them.[51] Bammel notes that the term אביון faded totally in Rabbinic Judaism. Also, the term אֶבְיוֹנָה is only used in a liturgical context. In the same vein, the term דל is very rare and its usage displays a tendency to abstraction, though without religious quotation. For lack of an adequate term for "beggar" for which Hebrew has no specific term, Rabbinic Judaism makes use of the word מסכן ("dependent" or "the socially

[48] Watts, *Isaiah 34-66*, 188.
[49] Gregory, "The Postexilic Exile in Third Isaiah: Isaiah 61-13 in Light of Second Temple Hermeneutics," 481.
[50] Ernst Bammel, "Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:894-902.
[51] Bammel, "Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:894.

inferior"). The usual term, however, is עָנִי, although its meaning is more restricted since it implies "a poor person," that is "the socially poor." Thus, the terms ענו and עני have totally lost any religious quotation in Rabbinic Judaism and were used nearly exclusively for "meek" or "humble."[52] Also, in translations, the terms πτωχός and πένης are used interchangeably, with a difference only in today's Greek, where πτωχός is avoided; for instance, πτωχός is not used in the Epistle of Aristeas. In Latin, πτωχός is mostly ascribed to the special notion of *mendicus,* with sometimes *pauper and egens* implying the same thing.[53]

Rabbinic writings from after the destruction of the Second Temple indicate that the rabbis promoted community responsibility for helping the poor. The writings show compassion and concern for the poor and call on the Jews to support them through charity. The rabbis went as far as amending the religious laws in order to help the poor to have a good life. Such a favorable disposition towards the poor seems to be the opposite of the way the rabbis treated the poor before the destruction of the Second Temple as contained in the NT.[54] B. Z. Rosenfeld and H. Perbnutter argue that "Examination of actions attributed to sages from before the destruction shows that the rabbis related positively primarily toward the poor who were "sons of good citizens." The other poor were "others" and were left to charity and tithes. After the destruction of the Second Temple, all poor are "ours," sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.[55] In Josephus's writings, the term πτωχός is contained only in the *Bellum* 5, 570; πτωχεία in the *Antiquities of the Jews* 11, 8; 12, 224. However, he uses πένης more frequently in describing a man as a member of the "stratum." In

[52] Bammel, "Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:894.

[53] Bromiley "Ptochos in the Greek World," *TDNT Abridged in One Volume*, 970.

[54] B. Z. Rosenfeld and H. Perlmutter, "The Attitude to Poverty and the Poor in Early Rabbinic Sources (70-250 CE)," *JSJ* (2016): 411.

[55] Rosenfeld and Perlmutter, "The Attitude to Poverty and the Poor in Early Rabbinic Sources (70-250 CE)," 411.

Antiquities of the Jews 4, 269; 10:155; *Bellum* 2, 585, πτωχός seems to be absent in the strata. Josephus uses πενία to imply economic status in *Antiquities of the Jews* 17, 307. Due to Philo's abstract vocabulary, the fact of poverty and πτωχός is absent. The term πτωχός occurs only in *Eusebius's Philo* 139.

In summary, with the destruction of the Second Temple, rabbinic attitude towards the poor and poverty was evident. According to Ernst Bammel, the rabbis have knowledge of all the terms used for the poor. However, they make only little use of them. Bammel notes that the term faded completely in Rabbinic Judaism. Also, the term is only used in a liturgical context.

Pseudepigrapha

Shreds of evidence concerning the πτωχός in the Pseudepigrapha literature is not uniform. A part of the apocalyptic writings eludes not only πτωχός but also any reference to the social condition either in the present or future age excluding the marginal reference in some cases for instance, as found in Pseudo Philo. Other writings are full of objections, however, πτωχός is not used and there is no suggestion of any antithesis to it.[56] Bromiley adds that "another group demands pity for the poor, commends generosity, gives examples of it, and considers its rewards. Other works hold out the hope that poverty will vanish in the new eon. Before the end, the poor will conflict with the rich and will then be set above them. Poverty is threatened for those who follow the harlot Babylon."[57] Still, another is said to have complained violently against the wealthy, interfusing the notions of poverty and piety. For example, in the Psalms of Solomon (5:2. 11; 10:6), God indicates his concern for the poor. The consideration and application of the term πτωχός in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha took various forms of affliction, such as material poverty, but

[56] Bammel, "Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:895.

[57] Bromiley "Ptochos in the Greek World," *TDNT Abridged in One Volume*, 970.

in particular, it means an inner quality.[58] Lastly, a martyr theology at this time integrated poverty into the divine dealings in history. However, the passive disposition prevents the growth of active movements on behalf of the poor.[59]

Qumran

Since scholarship is of a common consensus that the period of the existence of the Qumran community dates from 150 BCE to CE 68, the Qumran writings are valuable for understanding the poor in the NT. In the Qumran documents, the word 'poor' primarily takes a religious sense as it is contained in the other Jewish writings.[60] Bammel argues that the author of the Hodayot ('The Thanksgiving Psalms/Hymns'), also known as the "Teacher of Righteousness," for instance, refers to himself as 'the poor' whose soul has been delivered by God (1QH 5:13f., 16, 18). However, the expressions 'all the well-loved poor' in 1QH 5:21 and 'among the poor in spirit' in 1QM 14:7 show that there was a category of people described as 'the poor.'[61] In 1QM 11:9, the redemption of the poor is mentioned: "By the hand of thy poor whom thou has redeemed." Also, "As he himself (i.e., 'the wicked Priest') plotted the destruction of the poor, so will God condemn him to destruction" ($1Q_pHab$ 12:5–6; cf. v. 10)."[62] Although these passages give the impression of the "poor" as all the members of the Qumran community who assumed that they alone represented the life of the coming age,[63] the socio-economic dimension of the term is not absent in Qumran. "The

[58] Bromiley "Ptochos in the Greek World," *TDNT Abridged in One Volume*, 970.

[59] Bammel, "Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:896.

[60] Jey J. Kanagaraj, "The Poor in the Gospels and the Good News Proclaimed to Them," *Themelios* 23, 1 (1997): 43.

[61] Bammel, "Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:896. Cf. Kanagaraj, "The Poor in the Gospels and the Good News Proclaimed to Them," 43.

[62] Kanagaraj, "The Poor in the Gospels and the Good News Proclaimed to Them," 43.

[63] Bromiley, "Ptochos in the Greek World," *TDNT Abridged in One Volume*, 971. To this, Bammel adds, "Individuals and groups are called poor in the Qumran literature. God uses them to defeat his enemies. "Community of the poor" becomes a common term for the movement but the use does not enable us to draw any conclusions as to its composition" ("Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:971).

members of the community should renounce their private property before they attain full membership in the community (1QS 5:2; 6:19, 22). But such a non-possession of property is not without ethical implications; for those who thus make themselves poor should practice truth and humility, justice and uprightness, and charity and modesty in all their ways (1QS 5:3–4)."[64] This implies an invitation to renounce worldly riches before focusing on the study of the Law to become mature in morality. 1QH 5:19 puts the poor in parallel lines with the fatherless: "For thou hast not abandoned the fatherless or despised the poor."[65]

Because the poor were important in the Qumran, there was a need for voluntary philanthropy toward them. Bammel explains that this consideration of the poor was most important. Hence, sayings such as "Like the poor tithe this…" were firmly rooted in the established customs. The distributions to the poor at the feast of *Purim*[66] and the gifts to be offered on the night of the Passover were important. Alms-giving became a habit in the Qumran community.[67] At the end of the Jewish War, there existed an official system of poor relief similar to the type that had existed only in the diaspora. In its developed form, synagogues had officials who were charged with this responsibility. Through taxation and voluntary gifts, the income was divided into two: part for the weekly care of the poor and another for those who passed through daily.[68]

Although it is very clear that the Qumran system cared for the poor, there is no extant evidence of the desire or effort to extinguish the social demarcations in the Qumran community.

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[64] Kanagaraj, "The Poor in the Gospels and the Good News Proclaimed to Them," 43.

[65] Kanagaraj, "The Poor in the Gospels and the Good News Proclaimed to Them," 43.

[66] *Purim* is a Jewish holiday that commemorates the saving of the Jewish people from extinction at the hands of an official of the Achaemenid Empire.

[67] Bammel, "Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:900-901. It was also the practice to give to charity one part of the second tithe which was to be sent in Jerusalem, so that swarms of beggars were attached to the holy city.

[68] Bammel, "Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:901.

Palestinian Judaism

Poverty is part of the Roman world and is greatly discussed by modern scholars. A common notion of poverty in scholarship is the lack of basic human needs: food, clothing, and shelter. It later included a lack of education, employment, and political discrimination. There were many attempts to help the poor in Roman Palestine through philanthropy and the distribution of grains to the citizens. However, there was no planned effort of any kind on the part of the leading officials to eradicate poverty and alleviate the poor conditions of those at the social margins.[69] Recent scholarship argues that the economic setting of the Jews in Palestine was complex and varied.[70]

The period after the Maccabean unrest under Gabinius was a time of great social tensions. However, more settled conditions came with the reign of Herod. The Pharisees' interest in the masses and the relations failed. This gave rise to some new extremists who got the support of the masses. Bammel explains that distress caused by the two wars brought into existence an *ethos* of poverty, however, there was an increase in wealth which resulted in social cleavages in which the masses were scorned and the poor neglected, even though some secretaries continued to glorify them.[71] From the legal view, the poor pay minimum taxes and are also allowed to be supported as contained in the poor tax based on Deut 14:29 (which is regarded as a dead letter, but which the

[69] Rosenfeld and Perlmutter, "The Attitude to Poverty and the Poor in Early Rabbinic Sources (70-250 CE)," 412.

[70] Rosenfeld and Perlmutter, trace the dissuasions on poverty and the poor in Roman Palestine: "Poverty and Charity in Roman Palestine were researched extensively by G. Hamel. His conclusion was that most Jews in the first century CE were poor as was the situation in the Roman world in general. However, in a later publication, he modifies his view and describes the economic situation of the Jews in Palestine as more complex and varied. Indeed, recent research on Roman society describes a more complex one in which there was a significant percentage of society that enjoyed sufficient assets to be considered not poor, but on the other hand, were not rich. In previous research, the authors continued Hamel's inquiry by distinguishing between various economic levels in Palestinian Jewry, showing that there were some strata that were above the poverty line and others below that line. It also showed that the sources related to various levels of poverty in the society according to the amount of money and commodities the poor man had" (The Attitude to Poverty and the Poor in Early Rabbinic Sources (70-250 CE)," 412).

[71] Bammel, "Πτωχός in Later Judaism," *TDNT*, 6:899. Cf. Bromiley, "Ptochos in the Greek World," *TDNT Abridged in One Volume*, 969.

Pharisees observe as a duty and became more important at this time). The poor also enjoy voluntary philanthropy, a major source of help for the poor, even though it was mostly abused by beggars. An accepted principle was that "as sin offerings bring atonement for Israel, so does philanthropy for the Gentiles."[72] This is what they uphold following the fact that after the destruction of the Temple, the Gentiles played a great role in Israel in rebuilding their city. Consequently, some of them, for instance, the Essenes, made it a duty to give not only food and clothes but also money to the poor. Similar to the Qumran community which I have already mentioned, at the end of the Jewish War, an official system of poor relief came into existence, and the synagogues made levies and offerings that made available daily and weekly support for the poor and built hospices for them. Nevertheless, the social difference continued to thrive.[73]

Even though Palestinian Judaism went as far by including lack of education, employment, and political discrimination, and made extra efforts through philanthropy, the distribution of grains to the citizens, and synagogue levies to support the poor, there was no practical effort by the officials to eradicate poverty and alleviate the poor conditions of those at the social margins. This makes the economic setting of the Jews in Palestine more complex for our understanding.

1.1.4 The Poor in the New Testament

Although there has been much work on numerous individual texts including NT authors such as James and Luke, and innumerable general studies after the classical word study approach, there is not yet a solid, succinct overview of NT understanding on the poor/poverty. Thomas D. Hanks suggests that "the utter inadequacy of word-study approaches may be seen in the common

[72] Bromiley, "Ptochos in the Greek World," *TDNT Abridged in One Volume*, 969.

[73] It is worth mentioning the views of the rabbis on poverty. The rabbis held a negative view of poverty. The rabbis after the exile had a negative view of poverty, despising the humble offerings of the poor and refusing to see poverty as an excuse for not studying the law. Although disaster could affect anyone, poverty rates as a curse or a punishment. Nevertheless, there is still information to the effect that the poor are principally objects of the divine mercy (Bromiley, "Ptochos in the Greek World," *TDNT Abridged in One Volume*, 969).

omission of such theologically fundamental texts as Matt 25:31-46, where poverty is concretely described ("I was hungry ... thirsty ... naked") but without a general word for poor/poverty."[74] It is of great concern that widespread theological findings from highly selective word studies have resulted in ambiguity.[75] The NT (as well as the LXX) employed πτωχός, πένης, πενιχρός, and ἐνδεής for עני and ענו.[76] According to the classic word-study approaches from *TDNT* 6:88-915, and *NIDNTT* 2, 820-28, there is a focus, especially on πτωχός ("poor, oppressed," literally, "beggar"), by far the most common term for the utterly destitute in the NT (34 times) and 49 time in the LXX.[77] W. Frederick Danker, considers πτωχός in four dimensions. Firstly, pertaining to economical poverty, πτωχός originated from "begging," that is, a person who is not only dependent on others for support but also simply poor (e.g χήρα πτωχή Mark 12:42; Lk 21:3). Secondly, concerning "being thrust on divine resources" which is beyond the unfavorable economic situations, the πτωχός is considered as disillusioned and oppressed, in need of God's help, anticipating to receive it soon. It is to those within this category that the gospel is preached (Isa 61:1; Ps 68:33; Matt 11:5; Luke 4:18; 7:22). The third is about "lacking in spiritual worth," and here, humans, ὁ μέν πτωχός is contrasted to God. This is the sense found in Matt 5:3 (οἱ πτωχοὶ

[74] Thomas D. Hanks, "Poor, Poverty in the New Testament," *ABD* 5:414.

[75] Hanks contends that "while much of homiletical value can be found in existing works, the common tendency to systematize (with forced ideological harmonization) makes clear the need for the further interdisciplinary and integrative study. Continual disagreement about the socioeconomic background, date, and authorship of many NT documents makes any effort at a comprehensive overview tentative, but growing sensitivity to NT diversity, ideological pitfalls, and new anthropological perspectives is making possible considerable advances on previous studies in an area that undoubtedly will involve much debate for years to come. In the Gospels, in addition to texts that refer explicitly to the poor, debate continues regarding the socioeconomic level of Jesus, his disciples, the author of each gospel, and the ecclesiastical situation addressed. Anthropological and feminist studies often broaden definitions and concerns to include groups socially weak, marginated, and despised: women, the sick and handicapped, tax collectors, sexual minorities, etc." ("Poor, Poverty in the New Testament," 5:14-15).

[76] Athough πτωχός, πένης, πενιχρός, and ἐνδεής are prevent in the New Testament, there are additional eight terms used in the New Testament, making it difficult sometimes to understand what actually constitutes the "poor." These include: ταπεινός, πραυς, ἀσθενής, κακός, ἐπακούω, ἀδικία, Χανανῖος, and ἀσθενής.

[77] Hanks, "Poor, Poverty in the New Testament," 5:415.

τῷ πνεύματι). In a similar way, the messier of the church at Laodicea is termed πτωχός (Rev 3:17). The last concerns "being extremely inferior in quality," that is "miserable shabby." It is those within this carry that Paul speaks of the στοιχεῖα (… the weak and beggarly elemental/principles spirits) in Gal 4:9. In 1 Cor 15:10, he speaks of the grace of God that did not turn out to be shabby.[78] Danker's position, therefore, considers the πτωχός from both economic and spiritual dimensions. This is close to the sense of the word that is used in the NT, especially in Luke 4:18-19.

Joseph H. Thayer takes a similar position to Danker's on πτωχός. He suggests that πτωχός is derived from πτώσσω meaning "to be thoroughly frightened" or "to hide oneself in fear," and may originally come from, or be related to, πτυσσσω, ("to fold together" or "to roll up").[79] Thus, three related words - πτωχός, 'poor', πτωχεύο, 'become poor', and πτωχεία, 'poverty,' have been used 40 times in the NT, suggesting the number 40 as a significant number that may point to a spiritual context. As part of the number 40, which is 10 multiplied by 4, the number 10 is the number of "completeness" and 4 is the number of the "earth" (that is, north, south, east, and west). This suggests that the issue of poverty is a human and global one, implying that humanity is poor.[80]

The second word used for the poor in the NT is πένης. Jerome H. Neyrey notes that πένης refers to "a person who engages in manual labor," and so is contrasted with πλούσιος, "a member of the landed class" who does not work. From this understanding, "at stake is the social status or honor rating of such a worker."[81] The πένητες were, therefore, all the people who needed to work in shops or in the fields and lacked the attributes of the rich who were free to give their time to

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[78] W. Frederick Danker, "Πτωχός," *BDAG*, 896.

[79] Joseph H. Thayer, "Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Coded with Strong's Concordance Numbers," (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995), 4434.

[80] Thayer, "Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Coded with Strong's Concordance Numbers," 4434-5.

[81] Jerome H. Neyrey, "Who Is Poor in the New Testament," *Scripture from Scratch*, (2002). https://www3.nd.edu › ~jneyrey1 › Attitude.

politics, education, and war. In this sense, πένης is differentiated from πτωχός, which refers to someone who is reduced to begging, that is, a person who is destitute of all resources, especially farm, and family. Hence, πένης is often used for אביון in the OT,[82] which in most instances does not fit the context of or situation of usage (e.g., Ex 23:6, 11; Deut 15:4, 7, 9).

The last two words, that is, πενιχρός and ἐνδεής, of the four used for the poor in the NT, are used only a few times in the Bible. Πενιχρός is often used synonymously with πένης. It is used a few times in the OT (cf. Ex 22:25; Prov 29:7), and only once in the NT (Luke 21:2). The term ἐνδεής on the other hand, also appears only a few times in the Bible and means a fundamental deprivation and destitution, that is, one who is in need of resources and depends on others for survival.[83]

Among the four terms (πτωχός, πένης, πενιχρός, and ἐνδεής) used for the "poor" in the NT, πτωχός, which to a large extent, refers to people of low economic means, is the most frequently used.[84] It is πτωχός that Luke uses in 4:18. Even though some scholars emphasize the spiritual aspect of the πτωχός,[85] the economic understanding of the term is very present in the NT, especially as shown in Jesus's manifesto (Luke 4:18-19) and ministry. This understanding of πτωχός shapes the remaining understanding of the poor in Luke-Acts. We shall discuss the πτωχός in Luke-Acts in chapter three.

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[82] Neyrey, "Who Is Poor in the New Testament." Neyrey explains that "At the top of the social stratification of ancient society were monarchs and/or aristocratic families (1-2%). Moving down the ladder, we find a retainer class: tax-gatherers, police, scribes, priests, etc. (5-7%). The bulk of the population (i.e., 75%) consists of merchants, very few of whom were well off; artisans, almost all of whom lacked worldly goods; and farmers and fishermen, some of whom owned more and some less land. Finally, below these are the untouchables (i.e., 15%) who are beggars, cripples, prostitutes, criminals, who live in the hedges outside the cities." Hanks adds that, in ancient Greece, the most common term was πένης, which describes one who has little and must live frugally (this is used only in 2 Cor. 8:9 in the NT) "Poor, Poverty in the New Testament," 5:415.

[83] Hanks, "Poor, Poverty in the New Testament," 5:415.

[84] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According Luke 1-9*, 248.

[85] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 108.

1.2 The Eschatological Prophetic Messiah (Isaiah 61: 1-2; 58:6 and Luke 4:18-19)

Luke places the precise citation and interpretation of Scripture (Isa 61:1-2; 58:6) almost exclusively in Jesus's proclamation in Luke 4:18-19 (and later in the disciples' Acts 2:17-21 [cf. Jowl 2:28-32]; 4:25-26; 13:33-35). The fact that Luke puts this citation and explication of Scripture at the beginning of Jesus's ministry at Nazareth speaks of the importance of the fulfillment of prophecy for Luke's literary and religious project.[86] Luke designates Jesus as a prophet, after affirming that Jesus is filled with the spirit,[87] and Luke's use of the title "prophet" for Jesus, however, is strategically noteworthy. Jesus announces that he is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy concerning this spirit-filled anointed one (4:21).[88] Similarly, Luke T. Johnson rightly notes that in Jesus's inaugural sermon, Luke uses the figures of Elijah and Elisha to describe Jesus's prophetic antecedents for his mission to the outcast: "Although there were many widows in Israel, Elijah went to the assistance of the widow of Zarephath, and although there were many lepers in Israel, the prophet Elisha healed the foreign soldier Naaman rather than them (l Kgs 4:25-27, see 2 Kgs 17:8-16; 2 Kgs 5:1-14)."[89] These marvelous acts of Jesus made the crowd proclaim

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[86] Luke Timothy Johnson, *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church: The Challenge of Luke-Acts to Contemporary Christians* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2011), 25.

[87] Johnson, *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church: The Challenge of Luke-Acts to Contemporary Christians*, 29. Luke has Jesus speak of the prophets of old (1:70; 3:4; 4:17, 27; 9:8, 19; 10:24; 13:28, 34; 16:16, 29, 31; 18:31; 24:25, 27, 44), and compare his disciples to them (6:23; 10:24; 11:47, 49, 50); he also explicitly designates John the Baptist as a prophet (1:76; 7:26-28). Luke of the ancient prophets in Acts (2:16; 3:18, 21, 24; 7:42, 48; 8:28, 30, 34; 10:43; 13:15, 20, 27, 40; 15:15; 24:14; 26:22, 27; 28:23, 25)- including David (2:30), and he talks of believers as the children of the prophet (11:27; 13:1; 15:32; 21:10) (p. 29).

[88] Jesus refers to himself the proverb that prophet is not accepted in his native place (Luke 4:24). Later in 7:1-50, Luke presents the crowd as response to the raising of the son of the widow at Nain, stating that "A great prophet has arisen, in our midst, and God has visited his people" (7:16). Furthermore, Luke aligns twice the question about Jesus's messianic identity with speculation that "one of the ancient prophets has arisen" (9:8; 9:19). This relation to the ancient prophets Is strengthened when Jesus declares, in a context that points towards his future suffering, "it is impossible that a prophet should die outside of Jerusalem" (13:33). Lastly, after his resurrection and encounter with his disciples while on the way to Emmaus, Jesus's disciples identify him as "man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (24:19), (Johnson, *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church: The Challenge of Luke-Acts to Contemporary Christians*, 29-30).

[89] Johnson, *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church: The Challenge of Luke-Acts to Contemporary Christians*, 29.

him as the great prophet and God's visitation to his people (Luke 7:16).[90] F. Scott Spencer describes it as "God the liberating Savior in the teachings and miracles of Jesus."[91] Jesus is the final/eschatological anointed prophet, who is finally ready to embark on his public saving mission. This is why Jesus says that "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (4:21) which inaugurates a New Jubilee Year.[92]

Luke, therefore, portrays a close link between Jesus and Israel's kings (מלך המשיח). This is because, in post-exilic Palestine, the Davidic royal kingship is gone. Consequently, the anointed prophet takes up both the prophetic role and royal function of a king since he is anointed with God's spirit and proclaims a year of Jubilee that was only proclaimed by a king. It is this insight from Third Isaiah that Luke picks up as a fulfillment in Jesus's manifesto. Jesus, therefore, becomes the eschatological prophetic Messiah, who announces an eschatological Jubilee. This informs why Mark L. Strauss (in alluding to N. T. Wright) notes that Israel's exile according to Luke was not over before Jesus; therefore, Luke's story of Jesus's redemption is the climax of Israel's story.[93] In support of Luke's appropriation of Third Isaiah, Christopher R. Matthew's review of John Roth, "The Blind, the lame, and the Poor: Character Types in Luke-Acts," explains that Luke's audience knew the LXX and its view of the lame, the captive, the blind, the poor, etc., and that these terms in the LXX serve as the standard recipients of God's favor. Jesus' acts of bringing salvation to this group are, therefore, a display of his LXX-based messianic credentials.[94] In addition to the characterization of Jesus as "God's unique eschatological agent of salvation,"

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[90] Johnson, *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church: The Challenge of Luke-Acts to Contemporary Christians*, 29-30.

[91] F. Scott Spencer, *Luke* in THNTC (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2019), 104.

[92] Spencer, *Luke*, 104. Jesus begins this mission in his hometown Nazareth and remains anchored in all "all the surrounding country" of Galilee (4:14), until shifting his attention southward toward Jerusalem (9:51) (p. 104).

[93] Mark L. Strauss, "The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts: The Promise and Its Fulfillment in Lukan Christology," JSNT 110 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 6.

[94] Christopher R. Matthews, "The Blind, the Lame, and the Poor: Character Types in Luke-Acts," *JBL*, 1999: 758.

the divine care shown to this group of people reveals the object of Jesus' mission as opposed to the negative notion and rejection of sinners, by the LXX.[95] In the same vein, Fitzmyer argues that Luke interprets the Messiah as the one who brings universal salvation for all. Luke's presentation of Jesus's activities was meant for the beginning of a new era in human existence. Consequently, the theological undertone of Luke's interpretation of the Messiah shows a distinctive form of universalism.[96]

Jesus, therefore, proclaims the fact of "God's eschatological salvation," the event of his decisive intervention in human history, proposing to Israel a new mode of salvation, at the very beginning of his public ministry, and he spells out his mission of preaching the good news to the poor and to announce the year of the Lord's favor which is liberational (4:18).[97]

1.3 Liberation/Release (דְּרוֹר/ἄφεσις) (Isaiah 61:1)

The term ἄφεσις, (ἀφέσεως, ἡ, singular- ἀφίημι) translates the Hebrew דְּרוֹר ("a flowing," "free run," or "liberty"). It is seen from two perspectives. Firstly, a "release," from bondage or imprisonment (Luke 4:18-19; Isa 61:1f; Polybius 1, 79, 12).[98] It is an act of freeing and liberating from something that confines, that is release from captivity (1 Esdr 4, 62; Isa 58:661:1; Luke 4:18).[99] Secondly, ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν is seen from the view of "forgiveness" or "pardon" of sins (suitably, "the letting them go," as if they had not been committed; "remission of their penalty" (Matt 26:28; Mark 1:4; Luke 1:77; Luke 3:3; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; Acts 5:31); τῶν παραπτωμάτων ("forgiveness of trespasses" Eph 1:7); and just ἄφεσις ("forgiveness" Mk 3:29;

[95] Matthews, "the Blind, The Lame, and the Poor: Character Types in Luke-Acts," 757-759.
[96] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According Luke 1-9*, 145.
[97] Peter Mallen, *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke-Acts*, LNTS 367 (London, New York: T & T Clark, 2008), 64.
[98] "Strong's Greek: 859. "ἄφεσις," *biblelexicons.com*, accessed December, 30, 2022. https://www.studylight.org/lexicons/eng/greek/859.html.
[99] Danker, "Πτωχός," *BDAG*, 155.

Heb 9:22; 10:18).[100] This aspect emphasizes pardon, cancellation, or freedom from guilt, obligation, and punishment.[101] In Isaiah 61, ἄφεσις carries imagery of the priestly proclamation of a year of jubilee or release from debt as contained in Lev 25:8-17. The release from debt (celebrated every fiftieth year) was a means to forgive the debt and to return land and property to its ancestral owners. In the context of Isa 61:1, which is closer to 40:1-11; chapters 51-52 and 60, ἄφεσις (דְּרוֹר) applies to the return of Zion to its exiled people.[102]

1.4 Chapter Summary

The poor are a group of low social status in societies where shame and honor were important. In antiquity, Greek literature paid little attention to themes of poverty and poverty. They viewed the poor critically and excluded them from the active life of society since they were of low morality and impiousness. In the OT, although wealth, health, and vitality were seen as blessings, there was not yet a discrepancy between material and spiritual poverty. While there are many words that translate the poor ענו and עני are mostly used in the prophets and are related.

In Postexilic Palestinian Third Isaiah (61:1), where monarchical royalty ceased to exist, the prophet assumes both royal and prophetic duties, while appropriating the language of the Servant of Second Isaiah, and announces good tidings. It is to the עֲנָוִים ("poor persons," "humble" or "afflicted") that the good news is proclaimed. The עֲנָוִים are the dispirited Jewish community around the ruins of Jerusalem before Ezra returned. In the Babylonian exilic Second Isaiah (41:17), the עֲנָוִים are "the poor and needy" whom God does not abandon. The וַעֲנִיָּו ("his afflicted") in 49:13 are the suffering or afflicted ones in the eschatological hymn similar to the broken hearted of 61:1.

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[100] "Strong's Greek: 859. "ἄφεσις," *biblelexicons.com*, accessed December 30, 2022. https://www.studylight.org/lexicons/eng/greek/859.html.

[101] Danker, "Πτωχός," *BDAG*, 155.

[102] Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah*, The New Oxford Annotated Bible, New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha, Fully Revised Fourth Edition, College Edition: An Ecumenical Study Bible (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1049.

Judaism had positive concern for the poor. Here, ענו and עני totally lost every religious quotation in Rabbinic Judaism and became applicable exclusively for "meek" or "humble." Josephus prefers πένης to πτωχός and uses πτωχός only once. Philo does not use any connotation of poverty or πτωχός. Though evidence about πτωχός in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are dissimilar, passive mood objects to the growth of active movements on behalf of the poor. Yet, the poor are important in the Qumran and there was a need for willful philanthropy toward them.

Although there has been no clear understanding of the poor and poverty in the NT, πτωχός is often used for the poor, and implies economical, spiritual, or social poverty. The NT uses both πτωχός, which implies "poor" and πένης, which refers to a person who engages in manual labor, with πένης often used for אביון. In Luke, πτωχός refers to a group of low status: materially, economically, and socially. It is to this group that the eschatological prophetic Messiah in Luke 4:16-21 proclaims the good news of liberation. This is because Israel's exile according to Luke was not over until the coming of Jesus; hence, Luke's story of Jesus's redemption is the climax of Israel's story. The exegetical analysis of this proclamation will be explained in chapter two.

CHAPTER TWO: EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF LUKE 4:16-21

This chapter does an exegetical analysis of Jesus's programmatic announcement in Luke 4:16-21. It considers the socio-political and economic contexts in which Luke wrote his Gospel, the source question concerning Jesus's use of Isa 61:1-2; 58:6 and the LXX, Luke's dependence on Mark, and the variations between Luke and Mark. All of this prepares the grounds for examining the programmatic proclamation nature of Jesus's manifesto, at the beginning of his public ministry at Nazareth (Lk 4:18-19). Jesus's manifesto, therefore, sets forth his ministry and mission which he later accomplishes. The chapter concludes with a summary.

2.1 The Socio-Political Context of Luke

The Gospel of Luke, written between 75-95 CE, likely during the reign of Emperor Domitian,[103] is understood in its earliest shape from the papyri fragments dating back to the third century. It is necessary to understand the period that directly preceded the first-century CE in order to see the bearing of the social context of first-century Palestine. This will help us in understanding the political time and space of first-century Roman Palestine and the social context within which Luke was written which will give a better insight into the manifesto of Jesus in Lk 4:18-19.[104]

Politically, the period from 167-63 BC is important in Jewish history. The Seleucid ruler, Antiochus Epiphanes' defilement of the Temple caused an uproar that resulted in the Maccabean

[103] John T Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary,* NTL (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 4. Carroll suggests that the dating of Luke between 75–95 CE is probable though not secure. However, he concludes that since Mark was written about 70 CE, then a date after 70 CE would be a possible date for Luke's composition. Beyond the source hypothesis, the narrative shows multiple allusions to the destruction of the second temple (13:34-35; 19:43-44; 21:20-24), and that textual marker, too, would place the book's writing after 70. The nearest possible date for the composition of Luke must make possible for dissemination before citation by Justin and use by Marcion as his main Gospel narrative in the mid-second century. Consequently, Carrol concludes that Luke is dated sometimes between 75–125 CE, and any more precise dating is a matter of one's assumptions (p. 4).

[104] This is because an examination of the correlations between the socio-political inferences contained in the narrative world of and the socio-historical situation of the narrative are very important in understanding the meaning of the text.

revolt, which succeeded in recapturing the Temple and restringing its sacrificial worship in 164 BCE.[105] Shortly after this, in 160 BCE, the Seleucids gave independence to Israel, an experience that lasted until the intervention of the Romans in the civil strife that emerged in 63 BCE. This period of the Maccabean rule had some challenges when the Maccabean increased quest for political power and territorial expansion conflicted with the religious aims of their early supporters. This brought about the Pharisaic and Essene movements as a protest to the political and secular direction of the upper classes, causing a sharp conflict between them including the wanton crucifixion of eight hundred leading Pharisees by the Maccabean tyrant, Alexander Jannaeus. This led some Jews who were desperate for peace amid civil strife, to seek the help of Pompey, who sent the Roman logions under him.[106] Sadly, the Romans sacked the city, defiled the sacred precincts of the Temple, and never surrendered their control of Palestine again.

Also, the Romans ruled from 37-4 BC through their loyal agent, Herod the Great, an Idumean, who, by forcible circumcision, was a Jew.[107] Ched Myers explains that after the death of Herod the Great in 4 BCE, a new era began that altered the socio-political air of Palestine.[108] The split of his domain into three tetrarchies,[109] and later transfer to direct Roman rule with the removal of Archelaus in 6 CE was followed by major outbreaks of socio-political turbulence by Jewish

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[105] Walter E. Pilgrim, *Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1981), 39.

[106] Pilgrim, Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus, Twentieth Anniversary Edition* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2008), 42.

[107] Pilgrim, *Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts*, 40. Pilgrim adds that "The reign of Herod the Great, though hated by most Jews and especially by the pious, brought about stable conditions in Palestine. Herod kept the peace, brought a measure of economic prosperity, constructed whole cities, among them the beautiful seaport, Caesarea, and built several magnificent edifices which even his despisers had to grudgingly admire, most famous, of course, the splendid restoration of the Temple and its court area." However, poverty and other socio-political tensions were not far-fetched, and the luxury of the Herodian court as well as its pagan life-style, and the omnipresent threat of Rome's logions, kept resistance simmering (p. 40).

[108] Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus, Twentieth Anniversary Edition* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2008), 42.

[109] The division included tetrarchies, ethnarchs and prosecutors.

nationalists, especially the Zealots, which thrived up to the Jewish revolt in 66 CE.[110] This era ended with the defeat of the rebels (revolt by the Zealots) and the destruction of the Second Temple by the Roman general Titus in 70 CE.[111] In summary, the socio-political situation of the period shortly before, and within the first century is characterized by five major currents: "the waning fortunes of the native kingship; direct and indirect Roman administration of the colony; the power of the high priesthood and clerical aristocracy, including the Sadducean party; the shifting political alignments of the Jewish renewal groups, especially the Pharisees and Essenes; and the various strands of popular resistance and dissent among the masses."[112]

In addition, Josephus in *Antiquities*, XVIII, 2.3 indicates that Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great, who ruled the region of Galilee (4 BCE–39 CE), built the beautiful city of Tiberius, on the west of the Sea of Galilee, and filled the city with many outsiders, including many beggars.[113] There is also evidence, suggested by Pilgrim, of constant tension between the upper and the lower classes. Right from the reign of Herod the Great, there were constant complaints made against the luxury and splendor of the royal courts, in contrast to the increasing economic decline of the masses. There were also many tensions between the high-priestly families and other

[110] The Roman census of 6 CE, according to Pilgrim, led to the first recorded organized Zealot resistance (like the Maccabean revolt), headed by Judas the Galilean, a man from Galilee (Jesus's province). Although this movement could not go far, it remained alive. The resistance was not only due to inbred hatred for the Roman oppressors and their agents, like Pilate, but also due to unsettled conditions in the land. Many of the Jews who were part of this movement were unemployed, drifters, and badly poor. Pilgrim adds that, even though Josephus (*War*, IV, 3.9, 10), the contemporary of Jewish historian who despised the Zealots, hides this fact by referring to them as "brigands and murderers," it is obvious that there were irregularities between the social classes. In fact, the constant irregular warfare left the land shattered, and created the extremes of poverty that kept the Zealot uprising (*Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts*, 40).

[111] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus, Twentieth Anniversary Edition*, 42.

[112] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus, Twentieth Anniversary Edition*, 54.

[113] Pilgrim, *Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts*, 41. Pilgrim explains that there were many in the land. There were also two great famines that struck the land, the first in 23 BCE and the second in 46–48 CE (cf. Acts 11:27). Although they were caused by severe drought, their seriousness was multiplied by the general condition of want that existed and which no provision was made (p. 41).

aristocratic families of the Sanhedrin and the poor priests and common people. This forms part of the reason for Jesus's cleansing of the Temple, which was not without social appeal to the poor. The historian Josephus reveals the incident that took place in Jerusalem at the outbreak of the Jewish War in 66 CE. He notes that in order to gain the support of the masses and conquer the opposition of the aristocrats, the Zealots first raided the city and burnt the ledgers containing the records of debts (Josephus, *War* II, 17.6). The social significance of this act, possibly projected as a Jubilee year proclamation was a great move against the gap created between the rich and wealthy and the poor. This was the social and political condition in which Jesus lived and died as recorded by the evangelist Luke. As a Galilean, Jesus must have been aware of the Zealots' efforts for freedom and alms, the grinding poverty of the many, and their exploitation by the few. The time was ripe for social upheaval and revolution.[114] Therefore, the words and actions of Jesus must be understood and read within this socio-political background.

Some of the issues in Jesus's time could seem to be present in Luke's time of writing his Gospel. This is why although Luke writes within a Hellenistic context, the socioeconomic and political issues seem like those of Roman Palestine. Concerning the community of Luke's Gospel,[115] it is likely that the location of the author and the audience of Luke's Gospel is other than Palestine. This hypothesis as argued by Halvor Moxnes, "is based purely on specific information in the text. Luke's descriptions of houses appear to be informed by a different landscape and culture from that of a Palestinian village. And Jesus's sayings, in Luke 12:11-12,

[114] Pilgrim, *Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts*, 41.

[115] Tobias Marevesa proposes the ambivalence of the location of the community of Luke. This is because the community of Luke is troubled with different descriptions and counterarguments that range from destinations such as Antioch, Corinth, and Ephesus. Consequently, scholars such as Philip Esler (*Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivation of Lucan Theology*, SNTS 57 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 26) and Moxnes ("The Social Context of Luke's Community," *Interpretation* 48, 4 (2016): 380) do not agree on a particular and specific location which instituted the community of Luke ("Rethinking Luke's Community: The Ambivalence of Location and Identification from a Social Identity Complexity Lens," *STJ* 7, 1 (2021), 3).

about future persecution, reflect a setting in the Hellenistic diaspora. The terminology used is that of a synagogue and of authorities of a Hellenistic city, not that of the Roman rulers, vassal kings, and the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem."[116] Hence, it is possible that Luke's location is an urban setting in the eastern part of the Mediterranean.[117] However, Moxnes notes that there is no consensus yet about the city, stating how Philip F. Esler has made a strong argument that Luke had a specific city in mind. For Esler, the city is Ephesus, although Antioch has been greatly considered as well.[118] Although other scholars do not pay attention to the question of specific locations or historical events concerning typical situations or general climate,[119] Esler argues that there are "particular relationships" between Luke's theology, and his social, political, and religious worldview. These relationships require readers "of a certain type, all of them being characterized by a quite circumscribed set of tensions within their membership and with the world outside."[120] These "tensions" seem to be so general in character that they can be noticed in the number of Hellenistic cities in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. Consequently, instead of a specific setting, it is more plausible to look for "typical" aspects of urban life in the Greco-Roman city. Similarly, the effort to locate Luke's audience is established, not on individual elements in Luke's story, but on social structures and relations described by Luke himself.[121] And these are found in Luke-Acts.

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[116] Halvor Moxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," *Interpretation* 48, 4 (2016): 380.

[117] Moxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," 380. However, Moxnes explains that there is no consensus yet about the city, stating how Philip Esler (*Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, p. 26) has made a strong argument that Luke had a specific city in mind. For Esler, the city is Ephesus, although Antioch has been greatly considered as well. Other scholars do not pay attention to the question of specific locations or historical events concerning typical situations or general climate.

[118] Philip F. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivation of Lucan Theology*, SNTS 57 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 26-27.

[119] Moxnes, argues that the difficulties in drawing specific historical conclusions from literary text led him to side with the "typical situation" or "typical situations" approach ("The Social Context of Luke's Community," 381).

[120] Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivation of Lucan Theology*, 26.

[121] Moxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," 381.

Considering the structure of power and social relationships that constituted life in Luke's world (similar to that of Roman Palestine), it is likely a Hellenistic city, where the quest for honor and dislike for shame which was an integral aspect of the Greek culture, known right from Homer's time onward,[122] one would argue that the social settings must have greatly influenced Luke's Gospel. Firstly, this was associated with warrior ideals, in a "softer" form it was central to the Hellenistic notion of the city as a community of citizens. This resulted in a struggle for honor among the elites in Hellenistic society. "The costs involved were those of benefactions to the city in the form of public buildings, feasts, and plays, for example. These benefactions were rewarded by a public office or other expressions of status, like status, seats of honor, and city banquets."[123] Secondly, social relationships were guided by a structure of patronage. Thus, one's status was considered not based on universal, human rights, but on one's place in a personal hierarchy. The poor or less important people depended upon an elite patron for help, work, loans, and similar needs, and in return, the poor paid their loyalty and public support to the elites.[124] Thirdly, social contact was ruled by the need of balanced reciprocity. Economic contact in preindustrial societies expresses three forms of reciprocity: "generalized reciprocity (giving without specific demand for a return); balanced reciprocity (giving with an expectation of quick re-compensation); and negative reciprocity (taking something, sometimes with force, without giving anything back)."[125]

More so, women in the Greco-Roman society were on the fringe of the community. Luke-Acts' portrayal of women is full of ambiguities that mirror tensions within the communities.

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[122] Moxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," 382.

[123] Moxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," 382. A.W.H. Adkins outlines the development of the concept of "honor" in the Greco-Roman world (*Merit and Responsibility* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960)). Concerning the treatment of "honor" and its relevance to the Gospel of Luke, cf. Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, "Honor and Shame in Luke-Acts: Pivotal Values in the Mediterranean World" in *Social World of Luke-Acts*, pages 25-65.

[124] Moxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," 382.

[125] Moxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," 382.

Women were normally associated with meals, food, and hospitality (Luke 4:38-39; 7:36-50; 10:38-42). However, women are rarely mentioned as guests at meals with Jesus, instead, they are mentioned as "serving" Jesus and his apostle (4:38-39; 8:1-3).[126] Also, women could have a strong stand in the household, but less position in public affairs. That was the same situation with elite women. Women who were of low social status could easily make a carrier of their own, for instance, through crafts or as merchants or vendors. Paul Trebilco argues that women held prominent positions in the social and political sphere only in the western parts of Asia Minor, where women also served as leaders in the synagogues.[127] Nevertheless, since women assume Jesus's model of "a serving patron," they are not entrusted with witnessing, healing, or proclaiming in the Gospel of Luke. Rather, as "ideal disciples," they remained within their domestic tasks and belonged to the fringe of society. Luke's story may not be so much a description as a recommendation: It signifies male ideals for women's behavior.[128] One could arrive at a position that the social identities of the members of Luke's community were varied and complex.[129] This is the backdrop to Luke's Gospel, especially as it pertains to Jesus's manifesto in 4:16-21.

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[126] In some instances, this "serving" meant "to provide," as in the instance of several prominent women who "served Jesus with their property" (8:1-3). These women were acting as patrons to Jesus. In Acts 16:14-15, Lydia, "a seller of purple goods," who though, not an elite woman, was economically independent, and served not only as a hostee to Paul, but also acts as a patron, though inferior to the apostle, who brings the good news to her (Moxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," 385). See also T. Karlsen Seim, *The Double Message: Patterns of Gender in Luke-Acts* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994).

[127] Paul Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor*, SNTS 69 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 115-18. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511520464. Moxnes suggests that if we situate Luke's communities within this era, it would provide a highly interesting background for the independent women in Luke's narrative. However, there seems to exist a tension between the role of these women and Luke's characterization of them. Dissimilar to male disciples, women did not claim honor or privilege, but exemplified Jesus's own model of the "patron who serves" (22:27) ("The Social Context of Luke's Community," 385-6).

[128] Maxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," 386.

[129] Marevesa, "Rethinking Luke's Community: The Ambivalence of Location and Identification from a Social Identity Complexity Lens," (2021), 20.

The socio-political context of the Gospel of Luke, which dates after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, therefore, was marked by a wide margin between the poor, and the rich, and Hellenistic imperial domination like that of Roman imperial domination of Palestine. It is a society where the search for honor and dislike for shame was prevalent. In such a society, women (and children) were regarded as the margins of society. Although the social constituents of the Lucan community seem to be varied, it is obvious that Luke wrote about a community where power and dominance were present and a wide gap between the rich and the poor was inescapable.

2.2 Literary Context and Text of Luke 4:16-21

Among the Gospel writers, Luke is the most deliberate/skillful, concerning the events of Jesus in a way that links them easily to the story of Israel. Luke's account is, thus, a continuation of biblical history.[130] This is why Richard B. Hays aptly observes that the overall design of Luke-Acts highlights God's purpose in fulfilling the promise of saving Israel and his people.[131]

Luke 4:16-21 is within the larger context of the "actions that demonstrate who Jesus is and the salvation he brings" (4:14-9:50).[132] Following the introductory report of Jesus's ministry, this major section explores the action of Jesus (with thirteen miracles) in Galilee. The frequent question "Who is this?" (5:21; 7:19-20, 49; 8:25; 9:9, 18-20; cf. 4:22, 36), indicates Luke's focus on Jesus's identity.[133] The smaller context is that of "Jesus's power to bring salvation" (4:14-6:49). This pericope is characterized by references to the power and authority of Jesus's word (cf. 4:32, 36, 41; 5:11-12, 24, 28; 6:5, 46). The first part of the unit focuses on the ministry at Capernaum and

[130] Richard B. Hays, "Liberation of Israel in Luke-acts: Intertextual Narration as countercultural Practice," in *Reading the Bible Intertextually*, Edited by Richard B. Hays, Stefan Alkier, and Leroy A. Huizenga, (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2009), 103.

[131] Hays, "Liberation of Israel in Luke-acts: Intertextual Narration as countercultural Practice," 103.

[132] Alan J. Thompson, *Luke*, EGGNT (Nashville, Tennessee: B & H Academic, 2016), 73.

[133] Thompson, *Luke*, 72.

is composed of references to Jesus's teaching and preaching in synagogues (4:14-15, 44). While some scholars begin another section at 6:12 or 6:17, the sermon (6:17-49) that concludes with the importance of an obedient response to Jesus's word is a suitable conclusion to 4:14-6:49.[134]

The immediate context of 4:16-21 is Jesus's proclamation at the synagogue and his subsequent rejection by his own people (4:14-30).[135] The text of 4:16-21 reads:

> 16 Καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς Ναζαρά, οὗ ἦν τεθραμμένος, καὶ εἰσῆλθεν κατὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων εἰς τὴν συναγωγήν, καὶ ἀνέστη ἀναγνῶναι. 17 καὶ ἐπεδόθη αὐτῷ βιβλίον τοῦ προφήτου Ἡσαΐου καὶ ἀναπτύξας τὸ βιβλίον εὗρεν τὸν τόπον οὗ ἦν γεγραμμένον· 18 Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ᾽ ἐμέ, οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς, ἀπέσταλκέν με κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν, ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει, 19 κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν. 20 καὶ πτύξας τὸ βιβλίον ἀποδοὺς τῷ ὑπηρέτῃ ἐκάθισεν· καὶ πάντων οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ ἦσαν ἀτενίζοντες αὐτῷ. 21ἤρξατο δὲ λέγειν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὅτι Σήμερον πεπλήρωται ἡ γραφὴ αὕτη ἐν τοῖς ὠσὶν ὑμῶν.[136]

Luke 4:16-21 summarizes in a short story Jesus's "mission statement" or "manifesto."[137] This informs Darrell L. Bock's note that the story in Luke 4 is probably a summary of Jesus's instruction and not a direct quote.[138] Luke places this story at the beginning of Jesus's ministry. Michael Mullins rightly argues that "Luke places the scene at the beginning of the narrative of the ministry. Placing it here gives Jesus the opportunity to make his programmatic statement about his ministry, which serves as the point from which he sets out on his great missionary itinerary, the final phase of which brings him to Jerusalem."[139] Luke's story structures the words and actions of Jesus within

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[134] Thompson, *Luke*, 72.

[135] Thompson, *Luke*, 72.

[136] Michael W. Holmes, *The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition* (Lexham Press; Society of Biblical Literature, 2011–2013), Luke 4:16–21.

[137] According to the evangelist Luke, immediately after Jesus's temptation in the desert, he returned to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit" (4:14), where news about him spread in the countryside. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. The first part of the event at Nazareth described in Luke 4:16–30 contains Luke's report on Jesus's sermon in his home city of Nazareth (4:16-21).

[138] Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, BECNT (Grand rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 405.

[139] Michael Mullins, *The Gospel of Luke* (Dublin, Ireland: The Columba Press, 2010), 58.

the rich and enduring story of God's redemptive purposes in creation, giving salvation significant connotations at both the individual and communal levels. It is obvious that Luke places human redemption or salvation, even when understood in personal terms, within larger social conventions and institutions[140] as the basis of Jesus's proclamation. Joel B. Green rightly notes that the programmatic nature of Jesus's sermon at Nazareth is pivotal for our understanding of the mission of Jesus in the Gospel. In these words, the shape and structure of Jesus's ministry are given form.[141] Green adds that Luke's places of Jesus's sermon at the beginning of Jesus's ministry at Galilee for two reasons. The first has to do with Luke's narrative structure. Luke places this story at the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry, setting the tone for the entire ministry and mission of Jesus. Secondly, the story is the only instance in Luke's Gospel where we ever hear the content of Jesus's synagogue sermons, however, there are other occasions where Luke indicates that Jesus taught, without stating exactly what he said. In summary, the programmatic proclamation of Jesus suggests its significance in Luke's general narrative: "It is a specific illustration of the summary statement in Luke 4:14–15; it is the first account of Jesus's public ministry in Luke's gospel; it is the only place where Luke describes the substance of Jesus's synagogue teaching and is therefore representative for all of Jesus's synagogue teaching; it is linked with both previous and subsequent emphases on the Spirit and the Sonship of Jesus; finally, it is mentioned elsewhere in Luke-Acts (Luke 7:21–22; Acts 10:38)."[142]

Consequently, it is reasonable to interpret Jesus's sermon in Luke 4:1-21 as being characteristic of what he said in the synagogue at other times and places during his mission and ministry. For Luke, the salvation brought about by Jesus's life, ministry, death, and resurrection

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[140] Joel B. Green, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke,* NTT (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 135.
[141] Green, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke,* 76-77.
[142] Green, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke,* 207.

(the eschatological Messiah) fulfilled Israel's eschatological expectations, with the prophetic language concerning the welcoming of those marginalized and liberation for those in captivity.[143] In this work, therefore, we have divided Luke 4:16-21 into two parts: Jesus's movement to Nazareth (4:16) and his public ministry of restoration and fulfillment (4:17-21).

2.3 The Source and Form Questions

It is pertinent to ask where Luke got his material. For this work, we shall consider Luke's dependence on Isaiah 61:1-2a; 58:6, and Mark 6:1-6 as his source in constructing his story.

2.3.1 Isaiah 61:1-2, 58:6, and the LXX

It is a scholarly consensus that Jesus quoted Isa 61:1-2a; 58:6 in Luke 4:18-19.[144] However, the nature of this programmatic speech by Jesus is greatly debated. It is very likely that Luke used the LXX (Isa 61:1-2a)[145] in quoting from Isaiah. Hence, it is crucial to compare the two texts.

Lk 4:18-19	**Isa 61:1-2a (LXX)**
πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' ἐμὲ οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς, ἀπέσταλκέν με κηρύξαι **αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν ἀποστεῖλαι τεθlυραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει** κηρύξαι **ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν**	**πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' ἐμέ οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς ἀπέσταλκέν με** ἰάσασθαι τοὺς συντετριμμένους τῇ καρδίᾳ κηρύξαι **αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν ἀπόστελλε τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει** καλέσαι **ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν**.[146] **58:6** οὐχὶ τοιαύτην νηστείαν ἐγὼ ἐξελεξάμην, λέγει Κύριος, ἀλλὰ λῦε πάντα σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας, διάλυε στραγγαλιὰς βιαίων συναλλαγμάτων, ἀπόστελλε **τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει,** καὶ πᾶσαν συνγραφὴν ἄδικον διάσπα.[147]

Table 1.1 Comparison between Luke 4:18-19 and LXX (Isa 61:1-2a)

[143] Green, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke,* 76.

[144] Other texts in Luke-Acts associated with Isaiah 61 include Lk 6:20-26; 7:18-35; and Acts 10:34-43.

[145] R. T. France, *Luke*, TEACH THE TEXT (Grand Rapids, Michigan: 2013), 69.

[146] Henry Barclay Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek: According to the Septuagint* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1909), Isa 61:1–3.

[147] Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek: According to the Septuagint*, Isa 58:6.

From table 1.1, it is likely that Luke makes use of Isaiah in Jesus's manifesto. This is why Joseph M. Lear notes that Jesus turned to the "place" in Isaiah where he read in the singular (τὸν τόπον, v. 17), that is, Isa 61:1–2.[148] But, a closer look at table 1.1 shows that Luke has introduced a phrase from Isaiah (58:6). Kimball suggests that Luke used an exegetical technique known as *gezerah shawa*, which links two texts grounded on a catchword, and in this case "ἄφεσις" (Isa 61:1; 58:6).[149] In the quotation, one discovers discrepancies between the Greek text of Isaiah and Luke's quotation.[150] Luke fails to quote the full text of Isa 61:2, disrupting the poetical structure of the text. The entire verse contains: "καλέσαι ἐνιαυτὸν Κυρίου δεκτὸν καὶ ἡμέραν ἀνταποδόσεως, παρακαλέσαι πάντας τοὺς πενθοῦντας" ("to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance, to comfort all those who mourn"). Luke omits "and the day of vengeance, to comfort all those who mourn." Rather, he introduced another phrase from Isa 58:6 "ἀπόστελλε τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει" ("to send those who are oppressed into liberty").[151] Bock suggests that

[148] Joseph M Lear, *The Hybrid Isaiah Quotation in Luke 4:18-19,* AJEC 107 (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke, Brill NV, 2019), 159. It is argued by many scholars that Jesus is quoting from Isaiah 61:1-2a and 58:6. However, it is not clearly stated why Jesus used this text. It is not also clear whether this text was a lectionary reading on this Sabbath that Jesus visited the synagogue. Although Fitzmyer (*The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 531) tries to justify Luke's narrative that the Temple authorities (the *chazzan*) handed Jesus the scroll, implying that Jesus was particularly selected from among the congregants to read on that Sabbath, M. F. Pattella (*The Gospel According to Luke* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005), 30) doubts the availability of a synagogue lectionary for first-century Judaism. Rather he suggests that Jesus was already expressing his authority by bypassing such a lectionary (if it existed at all) while reading from Isaiah which may not have been chosen to be read on that Sabbath.

[149] Charles A. Kimball, *Jesus' Exposition of the Old Testament in Luke's gospel,* JSOT Suppl. 94 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 108-10.

[150] My translation and use of Isaiah here is from the Greek version (LXX) of the OT since it is most likely that Luke is quoting from the LXX. According to Lera, "The text and critical apparatus of the Gottingen LXX demonstrates no significant differences with Rahlfs' LXX (only 534 changes the infinitive καλέσαι to κηρύξαι, which is likely a result of the influence of Luke's text, as the critical apparatus of the Gottingen text suggests), see *Isaias* (VTG 14; Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967). It is because of the method by which Luke includes Isa 58:6 in Isa 61:1–2 that it is most likely that he was using a Greek version. One of the reasons it appears he included Isa 58:6 is that it, like Isa 61:1, uses the noun ἄφεσις. The noun ἄφεσις that connects the two passages, however, is two different terms in Hebrew (דְּרוֹר in Isa 61:1 and חֻפָּשִׁי in Isa 58:6). Since the noun ἄφεσις appears to be key in connecting Isa 58:6 and Isa 61:1, and since this connection is possible only in the Greek, it appears that Luke was primarily using a Greek version of Isaiah" (*The Hybrid Isaiah Quotation in Luke 4:18-19,* 159).

[151] Bovon, *Luke 1: Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, 153.

the line from Isaiah 58:6 may be a "targum-like rendering" of the lacuna in Isaiah 61 but does not consider it in detail.[152]

Luke substitutes the last verb "καλέω" in Isa 61:2 with "κηρύσσω." Lastly, Luke leaves out the phrase "to heal those broken in heart" in Isa 61:1.[153] Green notes that Luke's emphasis on "release" for captives, and the reference to the "year of the Lord's favor" informs the inference that Jesus is referring to the year of Jubilee contained in Leviticus 25:8-17. The year of Jubilee was explained as a "year of release" that functioned as a sign that God was "sovereign over the land and that the reign of God entailed release from bondage." This makes Green summarize Luke's purpose in this narrative, expressing Jesus's opening address at Nazareth as an announcement of the final Jubilee, the new era of salvation, that ushered in the kingdom of God.[154] Similarly, W. Mark Tew explains that Jesus's speech signaled the nature of his messianic duty. Luke's narrative strengthens this theme: "What kind of Messiah would Jesus become? His self-proclaimed identity now included the following: good news to the poor, sight to the blind, release to the captives, and healing to the broken. The absence of the article in each of these cases indicates no individual was being described. Each is intended to be descriptive of groups of people."[155] Furthermore, Luke's aim of including the hopeless and distressed in Jesus's manifesto stresses the fact that it is to "these nameless, faceless, down and outcasts" that the Messiah has come to proclaim the good news.[156] Also, the LXX that Luke quotes parallels the actual ministry of Jesus,

[152] Bock, *Luke: 1-9:50*, 404-5.
[153] Lear, *The Hybrid Isaiah Quotation in Luke 4:18-19*, 160.
[154] Green, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke,* 78.
[155] W. Mark Tew, *Luke: Gospel to the Nameless and Faceless* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2012), 57-58.
[156] Tew, *Luke: Gospel to the Nameless and faceless*, 58.

in that it makes explicit reference to restoring sight to the blind. This corresponds to the Hebrew phrase that translates as "release to the prisoners."[157]

Luke, therefore, made those changes intentionally in order to give his quotation of Isaiah a structure by forming verbal parallelisms between the final four phrases in the quotation. In doing so, it seems he endeavored to retain the sense of the original Isa 61:1–2a as he perceived it. Also, it is possible to suggest that Jesus reinterpreted the text of Isaiah in Luke 4:18-19 in order to highlight that, though his kingdom does have far-reaching significance for all aspects of life, it couldn't be characterized as the vengefully-oriented political movement anticipated by some.[158]

2.3.2 Dependence on Mark

It is a scholarly consensus that both Matthew and Luke made use of Mark as a source. If this is plausible, then, it is obvious that Luke 4:14-30 is constructed using the Marcan source (6:1-6). The fundamental question forming a contentious issue in the criticism of Lk 4:14-30 as noted by Christopher J. Schreck is whether the story is basically dependent upon Mark 6:1-6a.[159] Luke transposes the synagogue sermon closer to the beginning of Jesus's public ministry in Galilee by placing it in the chapter immediately next to the presentation of John the Baptist (Luke 3:1ff). While Luke places this narrative (4:14-30) immediately after the introduction of John the Baptist (3:1ff), Mark puts it in chapter six of his Gospel. However, the important issue to be addressed is,

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[157] France, *Luke*, 69.

[158] Lear, *The Hybrid Isaiah Quotation in Luke 4:18-19*, 160.

[159] Christopher J. Schreck, "The Nazareth Pericope: Luke 4:16-30," in *The Gospel of Luke*, ed. F. Neirynck, Deuxieme edition, (Leuven, 1989: Leuven University Press), 403. Russell Pregeant explains that the "two document hypothesis theory," a comparison of materials common to all the Synoptic Gospels, leads to the conclusion that Mark appeared first, then the authors of Matthew and Luke used Mark independently in creating their own works. Although this leaves unexplained, the large body of material common to Matthew and Luke but not present in Mark. Hence, proponents of the "two document hypothesis theory" posit a second written source, besides Mark, which both Matthew and Luke used. The designation for this hypothetical document is "Q," after the German word *Quelle,* meaning "source." Other scholars have expanded this solution to a four-source theory, stating two more documents to account for material that is peculiar to Matthew (M) and Luke (L) (*Engaging the New Testament: An Interdisciplinary Introduction* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 101).

first and foremost, the received context of the Nazareth story in the Synoptic tradition and then its immediate context in Luke (redaction).[160] The beginning of the narrative in Luke 4:14-15, which indicates his fame makes it different from the earlier narrative of the temptation (Luke 4:1-13).

Responding to Luke's dependence on Mark, Fitzmyer explains that the aphorism in Luke 4:24 "No prophet is accepted in his own country," is paralleled in Mark 6:4 "No prophet is without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house." This shows that a certain relationship exists between Luke and Mark. This suggests that Luke must have done some redaction on Mark's account of the story.[161] Fitzmyer adds, rather, that "because Luke's narrative is a conflation, there is, on the one hand, the fulfillment-story ending on the note of Jesus's success; on the other, there is the rejection story."[162] Francọis Bovon, takes a different position from Fitzmyer. He notes that the original version developed in two different directions over a long period of time. Mark's version emphasizes the "unbelief" of the Nazarenes; while Luke's version emphasizes the "prophetic speech" of Jesus.[163] It is probable, however, that Luke expanded or made some changes to the original text. This is because "from a form-critical perspective, Luke's pericope is an artful reworking of an already expanded apothegm. Over time, through reflection on the Scriptures and history, the abortive encounter between Jesus and his hometown developed into an account laden with Christology and ecclesiology. But in contrast to the theology of the New Testament letters, the pericope remained a narrative."[164] Therefore, that the narrative of Jesus's sermon at Nazareth was already familiar to the early Christians in oral tradition while it was then recorded by the authors of the Synoptic Gospels.

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[160] Schreck, "The Nazareth Pericope: Luke 4:16-30," 400-401.
[161] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 528.
[162] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 528.
[163] Bovon, *Luke 1: Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, 150.
[164] Bovon, *Luke 1: Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, 150.

There are more similarities between Mark's and Luke's narratives of Jesus's visit to Nazareth. In each story, there is a visit to a synagogue located in Jesus's hometown. Secondly, there is a general reaction, both positive and negative, to Jesus's teaching. Thirdly, there is a recognition of Jesus's parentage. There is also the insertion of the proverb "a prophet without honor or welcome in his own town" in both stories. And lastly, Jesus did not perform any sign in Nazareth, except to touch a few who were sick.[165] Although there is a little similarity in the wording of Mark' and Luke's forms of the narrative of this visit, the main content of the two stories remains the same. Luke's form of the story seems longer than Mark's version, which raises the question about the source and function of Mark's version.[166] Luke's reasons for his redaction are both literary and thematic. He converts Jesus's visit to his hometown, Nazareth from a crisis into Jesus's manifesto. This manifesto shows how Jesus as a Spirit-driven prophet, fulfills the order set forth in OT prophecies (cf. 3:22; 4:1, 14),[167] a pattern he had in the previous chapter before Jesus's manifesto in Lk 4. Luke's citation of Isaiah, therefore, alters his source (Mark 6:1-6; cf. Matt 13:53-58).[168]

Secondly, vv. 14 and 15 could be seen as editorial work by Luke.[169] Fitzmyer calls vv. 14-15 as a 'summary' of the kind that Luke utilizes in Acts.[170] Similarly, Bovon notes that vv 14-15 (which points both forward and backward) is a transition, and the formal similarity to 4:1 indicates their introductory nature.[171] Also, it is argued whether an earlier narrative of Jesus's beginning can

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[165] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 526.

[166] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 526.

[167] Carey, "Moving Things Ahead: A Lukan Redactional Technique and Its Implications for Gospel Origins," 309.

[168] Luke Timothy Johnson and Daniel Harrington, *The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina Series 3 (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 79.

[169] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 521-2.

[170] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 522.

[171] Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, 149.

be observed from behind the vv. 14-15. Consequently, vv. 14-15 (and Matt 4:12) would possibly be reworking a variant of this tradition, and Mark 1:14-39 (and maybe with 6:1-6) would convey another variant.[172] Bovon suggests that "the tradition (Q or pro-Luke?) would have contained two main blocks of Material: (1) The Baptist, baptism, and Jesus's temptation; (2) the first preaching, first disciples, and first miracles."[173] This further stresses the presence of a sort of redaction technique in the Nazareth story, which Luke carried out in order to suit his own presentation of Jesus's visit to his hometown. Coming from this understanding, Heinz Schürmann concludes that 4:16-30 is a pre-Lukan since Luke had access to a variant in Mark 6:1-6. He adds that this pre-Lukan variant had already undergone serious editorial processes when Luke came upon it and extended it with vv. 17-21 (23a) and vv. 25-27 to accommodate his Christology and universalism.[174] In a similar way, Robert C. Tannehill, notes that vv. 16-21, "the non-Markan tradition" is limited to Nazareth and the contextual place of the narrative between Jesus's temptation and his appearance in Capernaum. The remaining of the vv. 22-30 is redactional. Verse 22 is very Lukan. In vv. 23-24, there is a non-Markan tradition, especially in v. 23. Verses 25-27 are considered by Tannehill as originally part of an additional independent source. Lastly, the rejection of Jesus in vv. 28-30 is traditional, and the evangelization of the Gentiles is redactional.[175] Greg Carey is therefore right to have noted that Luke used aggressive redactional techniques

[172] Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, 149.

[173] Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, 149-50. J. Delobel's analysis according to Bovon proves vv. 14-15 to be Lukan, in such a way that it is difficult to hypothesize any other than Mark (J. Delobe, "La redaction de Lc. IV, 14-16a et le 'Bericht vom Anfang'" in Neirynck, *Evangile*, 203-23").

[174] Heinz Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte der Nazareth-Perikope Lk 4,16-30," in *Descamps and de Halleux, Mélanges Bibliques*, ed. Albert Descamps and Andre de Halleux (Festschrift B. Rigaux. Gembloux: Duculot, 1970), 205.

[175] Robert C. Tannehill, "The Mission of Jesus According to Luke IV 16:30," in ed. E. Grasser, *Jesus in Nazareth*, BZNW 40 (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1975), 7-11.

including transposing episodes from their Markan sequences and greatly modifying them.[176] However, Luke's redactional techniques do not suggest a literary dependence on some other source. Instead, Carey suggests that careful attention be paid to Luke's redaction, noting that caution be exercised before turning Luke's 'orderly account' into a historical narrative of early Christian memory.[177]

It is, therefore, reasonable to state that Luke used the essential elements from Mark 1:1-6 but weakened their impact. Nevertheless, the overall form of Luke 4:16-30 is redactional work on Mark 6:1-6. One could conclude that it is the Christian recollection, or maybe, oral tradition that directs Luke's thought for his redaction of Mark 6:1-6 in Luke 4:16-30 since there are no sure evidence for Luke depending completely on Mark.

2.3.3 Variation between Mark, Matthew, and Luke

Besides Luke 4:18-19, there are other NT texts that allude to Isa 61:1-3 (Matt 5:3–4; 11:5; Luke 6:20–21; 7:22; Acts 4:27; 10:38; Rev 5:10). Though all these references are connected to Jesus's mission or ministry, none precisely references ἄφεσις, "release." According to Luke, Jesus's return from the wilderness after his temptation marks the beginning of his public ministry, which for the first half, will be carried out in his home province of Galilee until he faces Jerusalem in 9:51.[178] There is a difference between Jesus's proclamation in Luke from that in Mark and Matthew. While Mark 6:1–6 and Matt 13:53–58 mention Jesus's sermon in Nazareth and consequent rejection, only Luke provides the content of the sermon and the clear allusion to Isaiah 61:1-2a; 58:6. Mark and Matthew record a single visit to Nazareth, which they put later in their

[176] Greg Carey, "Moving Things Ahead: A Lukan Redactional Technique and Its Implications for Gospel Origins," *Biblical Interpretation* 21, 3 (2013): 302-3.
[177] Carey, "Moving Things Ahead: A Lukan Redactional Technique and Its Implications for Gospel Origins," 303.
[178] France, *Luke*, 68.

stories. Luke deviates from both Mark and Matthew. Luke not only tells a more detailed story, focusing typically on Jesus's mission of deliverance but also has placed the story at the beginning of Jesus's public ministry, to serve as a frontispiece for his entire ministry. This explains why the themes of "good news for the poor," "deliverance," and "universal scope of Jesus's mission" set the tone for all that is to follow. Within the same context, the hostility of his own people serves as a warning of the opposition that his ministry will provoke from conservative Jewish interests.[179]

2.4 Jesus's Manifesto (Luke 4:16-21)

It is a common position among scholars that the narrative in Luke 4:14–30 is the programmatic presentation of Jesus' ministry. Within this narrative, Jesus begins his public ministry in Galilee and visits his hometown. While in the synagogue, Jesus declares his manifesto, which states that he fulfills the vision in Isa 61:1-2 of the Lord's anointed. In this declaration, Jesus is to be a minister of deliverance and of good news for the poor. In the second part of the narrative, the people's initial favorable impression changes to hostility when Jesus insists that his mission is wider than their local concerns. The episode concludes with Jesus surviving a murder attempt.[180] Nevertheless, our concern here lies within 4:16-21, that is, Jesus's visit to the synagogue at Nazareth, his manifesto, and his explanation of the fulfillment of the Isaianic prophecy.

2.4.1 Jesus Goes to Nazareth (v. 16)

Jesus came (ἦλθεν from ἔρχομαι) to Ναζαρά (Nazareth). Nazareth is a small village in the hilly countryside of Galilee. The genitive relative pronoun οὗ functions as an adverb after a noun that indicates the location.[181] Also, the Τεθραμμένος (from τρέφω– "to grow") with ἦν, "had been brought up" are related to Ναζαρά in defining the place he grew up. Τρέφω ("nourish") is often

[179] France, *Luke*, 68.
[180] France, *Luke*, 69.
[181] BDAG, 732d-733a.

associated with food (cf. 23:29). In this context, τρέφω is used in reference to the nurturing of childhood. Bovon suggests that Luke is familiar with the Greek tripartite chronology of birth, the five years at home (this explains ἦν τεθραμμένος, "he had been brought up"), and the time of education at school (cf. Acts 22:3).[182] In other instances, in Luke-Acts, the textual variant, ἀνατρέφω is often used technically to refer to education as in the case of Moses in Acts 7:20-21 and Paul in 22:3. On several occasions, Luke has repeatedly mentioned Nazareth as the hometown of Jesus (Luke 1:26; 2:4, 39, 51; cf. 10:38).[183] This introduction is reminiscent of 2:39-40 (when they returned to Ναζαρά at the end of the presentation), and 50-51 (when they had found Jesus in the temple after three days, they returned to Ναζαρά), and prepares for 4:23 (Jesus's response to the people's question: "Is this not Joseph's son?"). In Matt 4:13-16, Jesus deliberately relocated to Capernaum, a more prominent lakeside center at the beginning of his public ministry, and that move is presupposed in Luke 4:23. Consequently, the sermon at Nazareth is not the first recorded public appearance of Jesus since he already had a reputation as a healer in Capernaum. This informs why he is invited to the synagogue to preach in his home synagogue when he returns.[184]

The going of Jesus to the synagogue is described by Luke as "his custom." Εἰσῆλθεν κατὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς αὐτῷ is a marker of a norm or standard, "according to custom."[185] The dative αὐτῷ is a reference or possession, that is, "as was his custom." Luke presents Jesus as a pious Jew with a good upbringing since he regularly attended the synagogue.[186] Τῶν σαββάτων (the plural and singular of σάββατον are used interchangeably)[187] is the first of the six σάββατον passages in Luke

[182] Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, 152.
[183] Johnson and Harrington, *The Gospel of Luke*, 78.
[184] France, *Luke*, 68-9.
[185] BDAG, 512d-295d.
[186] Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, 152.
[187] BDAG, 909d.

(4:16-30, 31-37; 6:1-5, 6-11; 13:10-17; 14:1-6). The verb ἀνέστη (from ἀνίστημι, "arise") show the action, and ἀναγνῶναι (from ἀναγινώσκω, "read") expresses purpose. Luke shows Jesus as a pious Jew (4:15, 31), just like his parents (2:42). Jesus's activity in the synagogue appears again in 4:33, 44; 6:6; 13:10. Later in Acts, the synagogue is an essential place for early Christian preaching (13:5, 14; 14:1; 17:10; 18:4, 26; 19:8).[188]

The synagogue was used for the study of the Torah and the prophets. However, there is no clear evidence as to whether there was a set system of prophetic reading following the lectionary. Fitzmyer argues that a typical Sabbath service of first-century Judaism included singing a Psalm, reciting the *Shema,* and reading from the Torah and a section from the prophets known as *Haphtarah*. This *Haphtarah* is normally followed by a sermon-like explanation of the prophetic book being read.[189] The person who was chosen to read the *Haphtarah* made the choice of the passage and at the end of the reading, gave the sermon. Therefore, it is probable that Jesus made the choice of Isa 1:1-2.[190] If Isaiah 61 was the set reading, it was indeed an appropriate one for the occasion. But if Jesus made the choice of the reading, then he must have selected deliberately, a well-known passage to convey his message.[191] It is obvious therefore, that ἀνέστη, ἐπεδόθη, ἀναπτύξας of Luke 4:16-17 and πτύξας, ἀποδοὺς, ἐκάθισεν of 4:20 frame the quotation from Isaiah.[192] Also, the passage read by Jesus (Isa 61, 58:6) is not normally described as the "Servant passage" of Isaiah. However, the passage picks up and develops the theme of the first such passage,

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[188] Johnson and Harrington, *The Gospel of Luke*, 78. The origins of this institution is, however, not certain. Nevertheless, by the early part of the first-century, the synagogue had existed throughout Palestine and the Diaspora as a focus for the Jewish life, serving as meeting halls, prayer places, and schools for the study of the Torah (Acts 15:21). Luke 4:16-30 is very important for providing evidence about the early synagogal liturgical practice (p. 78).

[189] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 531.

[190] Kingsley I. Uwaegbute, "A Social-Scientific Reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," *Neotestamentica* 53, no. 1 (2019): 111.

[191] France, *Luke*, 69.

[192] Thompson, *Luke*, 73.

Isaiah 42:1-4 (already echoed in God's declaration in 3:22). In this passage, the prophet speaks in the first person, even though, the passage was probably already widely considered as a proposal for the mission of the expected messiah, the same sense used in the Qumran.[193] Luke therefore, places in Jesus's manifesto, a reading of the prophet Isaiah at the Synagogue in Nazareth, first, to indicate Jesus's awareness of the promised Messiah, and secondly, for Jesus to appropriate the qualities described by Isaiah as the prophet-Messiah as would be expressed in his mission and ministry.

2.4.2 Public Ministry of Restoration and Fulfillment (vv. 17-21)

When Jesus stood up in the synagogue on that Sabbath day (4:16), Luke records that he read from the prophet Isaiah (61:1-2; 85:6). In the text (4:17), Jesus reads from the βιβλίον. The noun βιβλίον, "scroll" (from βιβλίον, "papyrus") is the subject of the passive ἐπεδόθη. Also, the accusative βιβλίον is the object of the temporal participate ἀναπτύξας (from ἀναπτύσσω, "unroll"). Εὗρεν (from, εὑρίσκω, "to fine") indicates the passage Jesus found from Isaiah. Allen J. Thompson rightly notes that perhaps Jesus chose this reading.[194] Contrary to the claim by some commentators that the text from Isa 61 was chosen for Jesus to read, the Greek verb used rather supports the contrary. The aorist passive εὗρεν, (3rd person singular) as used is translated as 'He found.' Εὗρεν indicates that Jesus himself chose to read Isa 61:1-2 when the scroll was handed to him by the ὑπηρέτῃ (attendant).[195] The perfect participle γεγραμμένον (from γράφω "write") with the pluperfect peripheral construction ἦν, shows the text is situated.[196] Luke had Jesus intentionally read from this text in order to announce his manifesto.

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[193] France, *Luke*, 69.

[194] Thompson, *Luke*, 73. Also Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke 1-9*, 532.

[195] Patrick Yankyera et al., "A Historical-Critical and Morpho-Syntactic Interpretation of Luke 4:18-19," *ERATS* 6, 6 (2020):326.

[196] Thompson, *Luke*, 73.

2.4.2.1 Proclamation of Good News (4:18-19)

The account of Jesus's proclamation is variably described. Bultmann and Bovon refer to this section of Luke as an *apophthegm* or "proclamation story."[197] Fitzmyer is not certain about Bultmann's position, stating that 4:18-19 is a conflated form and seems unclear whether the best category is "a pronouncement story" or "a story about Jesus."[198] Bock explains that Fitzmyer speaks of a combination of the fulfillment story and the rejection story, which is a nice description, provided it does not suggest two distinct accounts were merged.[199] Berger Klaus holds a view divergent from Bultmann (and Bovon) and Fitzmyer. He explains that the narrative is an expression containing sub-forms. He states five of these sub-forms: "I words" of commission (4:18-21), a proclamation account, an account that explains one's identity, a scriptural call account (Isa 61:1-2), and an example account, drawing on Elijah-Elisha (4:25-27).[200] However, I see Jesus's proclamation as programmatic, stating his manifesto in a *chiastic* pattern. This *chiasmus* outline of 4:16-20 is as follows:

a. the synagogue (v. 16b)
b. standing (v. 16c)
c. receiving the Scripture (v. 17a)
d. opening the Scripture (17b)
e. preaching the good news (18c)
f. proclaiming release to the captive (18d)
g. giving sight to the blind (18e)
f. setting free the oppressed (18f)
e. proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord (19a)
d. closing the Scripture (20a)
c. returning the Scripture (20b)
b. sitting (20c)
a. the synagogue (20d)[201]

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[197] Rudolf Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. Marsh John (Oxford: Oxford Press, 1963), 31-32. Also, Bovon, *Luke 1: Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, 208.

[198] *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 527-28.

[199] Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 398.

[200] Klaus Berger, "The Royal Messiah Tradition of the New Testament," *NTS*, 20:1-44.

[201] Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 399.

This chiastic structure gives an insight into the programmatic nature of Jesus's proclamation, thus giving value to Luke's literary style.

Beyond the chiastic structure of the story, Luke presents Jesus as fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, especially as the quotation is introduced by οὗ ἦν γεγραμμένον ("where it is written") in 4:17. Christopher James Luthy rightly alludes to this fact that Luke has presented Jesus as fulfilling the role of the Isaianic speaker on several occasions: "(Luke 4:18-21; 7:21-22; Acts 10:37-38).[202] Also, Jesus not only proclaims these things but makes them happen as contained in Luke 7:18-23.[203] Hence, Jesus's "good news to the poor" in his manifesto in (Luke 4:18-19), shows that those on the outskirts of society- "down and outers"- are a major concern in his ministry. This is why the rest of his quotation from Isaiah is an extension of his concern for the captives, the blind, the ill, and the oppressed. This Isaian quotation is very significant in Luke-Acts. In his argument about the importance of Isa 61:1-2 in Luke-Acts, Dyer alluded to Bruce Longenecker who explains that Isaiah's discourse on divine triumph and Jesus in the Gospel of Luke puts Jesus's teaching and action squarely within this narrative. This is because Jesus associates his ministry with those of Elijah and Elisha (4:24-28) particularly in their ministries to widows and lepers.[204]

More so, there are two other features of Jesus's application of those passages from Isaiah (61:1-2; 58:6) to his ministry. One of them is that the quotation concludes with an emphasis on the "year of the Lord's favor" (the year of Jubilee). This is because Isaiah (61) had converted the Levitical codes on the Jubilee to a divine assurance of liberation. Jesus, therefore, appropriates the

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[202] Christopher James Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond" (PhD diss., University of Divinity, 2019), 159.

[203] Carlton, *The Translator's Reference Translation of the Gospel of Luke*, 80.

[204] Bryan R. Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," in *The Bible and Social justice: Old Testament and New Testament Foundations for the Church's Urgent* call, MNTS, Edited by Cynthia Long Westfall and Bryan R. Dyer (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publication, 2016), 110. See also C. M. Hays, *Luke's Wealth Ethics*, 111 and Tannehill, *narrative Unity*, 1:71.

themes of Jubilee in order to emphasize liberation as an important feature of God's kingdom which he proclaims and puts into action in his ministry. The second feature is Jesus's allusion to the prophets Elijah and Elisha (Luke 4:25-27), which takes his ministry to the poor beyond the boundary of Israel to the Gentiles. Thus, "while the point of these examples seems to be that Israel has a history of rejecting God's messengers, it also points to the pattern of that messenger doing ministry outside of Israel."[205] In Lk 4, Jesus explains that there were widows in Israel but Elijah was sent to a Gentile widow at Zarephath in Sidon while the heaven was shut and there was famine. Similarly, even though there were many lepers in Israel, Elisha was not sent to heal them but Naaman, the Syrian. These references at least suggest the universal scope of Jesus's mission which extends the liberating power of the kingdom beyond the borders of Israel. It is this extension of the universal scope of Jesus's mission to the Gentiles that is taken up by the early church and presented in deep detail in Luke's second volume, the Acts of the Apostles.[206]

In summary, Luke is concerned with πτωχός in the programmatic statement of Jesus at Nazareth. In this statement, Luke portrays a universal scope of Jesus's mission that extends the liberating function of the kingdom beyond the borders of Israel, thus making all peoples participants or sharers in the kingdom of God. We shall consider 4:18-19 in segments in discussing the content of this proclamation.

2.4.2.1.1 Πνεῦμα Κυρίου ἐπ᾽ ἐμέ οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με

In Luke-Acts, Jesus has been referred to as being anointed[207] by God on three occasions (Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27; 10:38), and the activity of the Spirit in his life is seen throughout Luke's

[205] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 111.

[206] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 111.

[207] Carlton, *The Translator's Reference Translation of the Gospel of Luke*, 79. In the OT, priests and kings were anointed on the head with oil as a sign that God had chosen them to serve him (Ex 28:14; 1 Sam 15:1' 16:13). Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit at his baptism to show the same thing (Luke 3:21-22; Acts 10:38).

work (Luke 1:15, 35; 3:22; 4:1 [twice], 14, 18; 10:21; Acts 1:2; 10:38). Jesus in Luke-Acts fulfills the role of the Isaianic speaker (Luke 4:18-21; 7:21-22; Acts 10:38).[208] Importantly, Luke often presents the Holy Spirit as being responsible for the proclamation of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ("the kingdom of God"). Likely, the Spirit resting on Jesus in Luke-Acts (Isa 61:1-2) is what enables and testifies to his ministry, which is centered on the proclamation of βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.[209]

It is noteworthy that Jesus's words in Luke 4:18, and the words from Isa 61:1 have the same beginnings: "The Spirit of the Lord (πνενμα κυριου) is upon me; he has anointed (εχρισεν, i.e "anointed") me." Considering this, Kavin Rowe observes that the link between χριστός and ἔχρισέν in Luke 4:18 shows that Jesus's self-identification with the text is a messianic claim.[210] This is why Luke mentions the Hebrew words here: *Ruach Adonai* (רוח אדני) for Spirit of the Lord and *Messiah* (משך) (4:18; cf. Isa 61:1) for anointed one. Although there is a presupposition by some commentators that Jesus is the Isaianic speaker, there is no strong consensus as to how Luke's tradition may have regarded this figure. To this, Charles A. Kimball, suggests six proposals for the speaker's identity: "The eschatological prophet, the Messiah, a priestly Messiah, a combination of the eschatological prophet and the Messiah, a combination of the eschatological prophet and the Isaianic Servant, and a combination of the eschatological prophet, the Messiah and the Servant."[211] Although other views have also been proposed, Kimball's six views seem plausible.[212] However, the proposal on "a combination of the eschatological prophet and the

[208] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 159.
[209] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 159.
[210] Christopher Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Bakers Academic, 2006), 79.
[211] Kimball, *Jesus' Exposition of the Old Testament in Luke's gospel,* 111-13.
[212] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 159-60.

Messiah" appeals to me more than the other five since Jesus's manifesto reveals more prominently, his prophetic and Messianic attributes as could be seen in his mission and ministry.

Furthermore, even though there is still scholarly discrepancy over which figure (or figures) is in Isa 61, it looks probable that Luke perceived Jesus in prophetic terms, especially in the close textual relationship between two of the key allusions to Isa 61 and Jesus's identity as a prophet. The quotation from Isaiah in Luke 4:18-19 is immediately followed by a reference to prophets to whom Jesus is compared (Luke 4:24-27), and the reference to Isa 61 in Lk 7:21-22, immediately preceded by Jesus, is identified as "a great prophet" (Lk 7:16). This seems consistent with Luke's broader demonstration of Jesus as a prophet (cf. Luke 13:33; 24:19).[213] Moreover, Luke may have been influenced by the Targum of Isaiah, which emphasizes the speaker in Isaiah as being a prophet. It is also possible that Luke considers the speaker in Isaiah as the Messiah, given the possibility that Luke likely had access to the scroll 4Q521 which links Isa 61 with an eschatological Messiah. Also, "the juxtaposition of Isa 58:6 with Isa 61:1-2 in Luke 4:18-19 supports the position that Jesus was to be viewed as a messianic liberation figure who would bring justice to the nation."[214] Luke probably used the anointed prophet in Isa 61:1 in relation to the Messiah, especially considering the linguistic link between χρίω ("to anoint") and χριστός ("anointed one").

It is possible, therefore, that Luke sees the Servant figure in mind in the speaker (despite the fact that Isaiah 61 is not a Servant song) considering associations with other parts of Isaiah (Isa 42:1-4; 49:1-11). However, there is little proof about the position that Jesus was purposely portrayed as the Servant by Luke. Rather, it is possible that Luke considered the figure of Isa 61 as both prophetic and messianic, which is coherent with his depiction of Jesus in Luke-Acts. This

[213] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 160.
[214] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 160.

is evident in Jesus's concern for the poor for whom he announces the good news of an eschatological Jubilee.

2.4.2.1.2 Εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς ἀπέσταλκέν με

Beyond the description of Jesus as the Isaianic speaker, Luke-Acts also uses the Isaianic language in describing Jesus's ministry, the first function being the εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς ἀπέσταλκέν με. In Luke-Acts, εὐαγγελίζω is used in different ways such as John's ministry (Luke 1:19; 3:18), the birth of Jesus (2:10), the word (Acts 8:4; 15:35), Jesus fulfilling the OT prophecies (8:35; 13:32), repentance (14:15) and as an overall reference to salvation in Jesus (5:24; 10:36; 11:20; 17:18). Secondly, Luke-Acts uses εὐαγγελίζω frequently in relation to the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (Luke 4:43; 7:22-28; 8:1; 9:2-6; 16:19). This usage of εὐαγγελίζω in connections to the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ implies that Jesus's main mission was to announce[215] the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.[216] In this context, the proclamation of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is to the πτωχοῖς. In Luke-Acts, πτωχός is consistently used as a reference to the economically poor. Although there are other instances where the context does not bring out clearly the understanding of the economically poor such as Luke 4:18 and 6:20, the consistent understanding of πτωχός throughout the rest of Luke-Acts presupposes that πτωχός is best understood for Luke in terms of economic poverty. Luthy rightly argues that the two unclear uses of πτωχός are both part of the passages referring to Isa 61:1. However, Luke 7:22 which is also a reference to Isa 61:1, makes it obvious that πτωχός is used to imply those who are economically poor.[217] There is also the possibility that Luke understands πτωχός from a spiritual dimension as comprising all those who are spiritually poor. Therefore, the

[215] The Greek text is ambiguous here. Most commentators think "to announce/proclaim the good news/message to (the) poor" goes with "he anointed me." But some commentators think that it goes with "he has sent me," as it does in Isa 61:1, which is what Jesus reads in Luke 4:18 (cf. 4:43) (Carlton, *The Translator's Reference Translation of the Gospel of Luke*, 79).

[216] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 161.

[217] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 162.

understanding of “the captives,” “the blind,” and “the oppressed" can be understood partly metaphorically, considering that Jesus did not physically liberate people by military force, except in the incident of the Gerasene demoniac (Luke 8:26-39) which is interpretable post-colonially, with the pigs representing the Roman military, and the demoniac representing the conquered, colonized people. Thus, Jesus’s cure of the demoniac implies his bringing peace to those who are politically oppressed.[218] Nevertheless, even if one subscribes to this reading of the passage, there remains a sure dissimilarity between physical freedom from military oppression and spiritual release. It is important to note that Luke uses πτωχός seven times as part of a list of adjectives that explain the broader meaning of the poor (4:18; 6:20; 7:22; 14:13, 21; 16:20, 22).[219]

Additionally, as discussed earlier, the understanding of the poor in Isa 61:1 includes both religious and economic deficiency. Therefore, πτωχοῖς in Luke 4:18 is used in the dative (dative of advantage) as an indirect object of εὐαγγελίσασθαι.[220] Although εὐαγγελίσασθαι qualified ἔχρισέν, where the first punctuation comes after πτωχοῖς, is likely that Luke is using the LXX (and the MT). Consequently, εὐαγγελίσασθαι and the subsequent infinitives (ἰάσασθαι, κηρῦξαι, ἀποστεῖλαι) are qualifiers of ἀπέσταλκέν.[221] These infinitives deal with preaching: a proclamation of the good news to the poor, the preaching of release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, and preaching of the acceptable year of the Lord. The other infinitive, ἀποστεῖλαι refers to setting free those who are oppressed. Either all the four infinitives are dependent on ἀπέσταλκέν,

[218] Elizabeth Arnold and James McConnell, “Hijacked Humanity: A postcolonial reading of Luke 8:26-39” *RevExp* 112 (2015): 595-6. See also Luthy, “Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond,” 161-2.
[219] Luthy, “Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond,” 162.
[220] Martin M. Culy, Mikeal Carl Parsons, and Joshua J. Stigall, *Luke: A Handbook on the Greek Text* ed. Martin M. Culy, BHGNT: Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2010), 133.
[221] Parsons, and Stigall, *Luke: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, 133.

or εὐαγγελίσασθαι is dependent on ἔχρισέν and the other three are dependent on ἀπέσταλκέν.[222] Fitzmyer translates Luke 4:18-19 with the four infinitives depending on ἀπέσταλκέν.[223] However, there is a dispute among scholars concerning the punctuation here. Most editors place a stop after πτωχοῖς, making the εὐαγγελίσασθαι dependent on ἔχρισέν. For some, the stop comes after με, making εὐαγγελίσασθαι to be dependent on ἀπέσταλκέν, which is what is found in MT and the LXX. This fits into Luke's interpretation in 4:43: "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose."[224] The proclamation of the good news becomes a messianic attribute of Jesus in Luke. Therefore, when one thinks that Luke describes the good news as a proclamation of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, it becomes clear that Luke did not see Jesus as isolating the message from those who are economically rich. But it is obvious that Luke principally regarded the πτωχός as those who are authentically poor.

While Luke pays attention to the "blessedness of the poor" and the difficulties arising from material wealth (cf. 12:13-21; 16:19-31), there is no place where Luke explicitly explains that Jesus verbally proclaimed the good news to the poor. Nevertheless, "Luke not only presented this as one of Jesus' ministry emphases, but he also believed that Jesus accomplished it (see Luke 7:22). It seems likely that Luke considered much of Jesus' audience to be the poor, even though he did not clearly designate them as such."[225] This idea is consistent with Luke's broader picture of the receivers of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. Luke, therefore, presents the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ as being universally open to all, but at the same time practically biased toward the disadvantaged and

[222] Arthur A. Just, *Luke 1:1-9:50*: *Concordia Commentary* (St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 1996), 190.
[223] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 52, 532. See also Just, *Luke 1:1-9:50*: *Concordia Commentary*, 190.
[224] Just, *Luke 1:1-9:50*: *Concordia Commentary*, 190.
[225] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 163.

marginalized.[226] This broader sense of Luke's presentation of βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ informs his citation of the Isaianic passage in Jesus's announcement of βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

Therefore, the ἀπέσταλκέν (ἀποστέλλω, "sending") of the speaker in Isaiah to εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς also shows Luke association of Isa 61:1 with the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. Following the Isaianic speaker who is mentioned twice as being sent in Luke's citation of Isaiah, the only explicit instance where Jesus is portrayed as having been sent is in 4:43, a passage emphasizing that Jesus is been sent to preach the good news of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ to other towns. Equally, Luke twice reports Jesus sending out his disciples to proclaim the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (9:2 and 10:1-16). Whereas there are many instances where ἀποστέλλω functions in a context other than the proclamation of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, it is, however, obvious that the ones who proclaim the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ have been sent, and this notion finds its bearing in Isa 61:1.

2.4.2.1.3 Ἰάσασθαι τοὺς Συντετριμμένους τῇ Καρδίᾳ

In Luke-Acts, there is no clear mention of the "the healing of the broken-hearted." However, the theme is not absent. Luke's citation of Isaiah in Luke 4:18-19 skips "the healing of the broken-hearted" and inserts Isa 58:6 instead. Although Luke uses ἰάομαι in fifteen instances, mostly in connection with physical healing, it is never used in connection with the healing of the broken-hearted. Nevertheless, physical and spiritual healing may often overlap as in some instances there is a combination of the two. For example, in Luke 5:17-26, the healing of the paralytic is accompanied with the forgiveness of sins (Luke 5:17; cf. 6:18, 19; 7:7; 8:47; 9:2, 11, 42; 14:4;17:15; 22:51; Acts 9:34; 10:38; 28:8, 37).[227] However, in 9:39-42, Jesus ἰάομαι ("heals") a possessed man is designated as being συντρίβω ("crushed") by the demon. Connecting this

[226] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 163.
[227] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 163.

passage with Isa 61:1 suggests that the "brokenhearted" comprise those who were under the power of the devil.[228] Although such a connection is not clear, it appears possible, especially when one considers Acts 10:38, a clear reference to Isa 61, which describes Jesus ἰώμενος ("healing") those under the power of the devil. Also, κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν which Luke inserted instead of "the healing of the broken-hearted" refers, at least in part, to the liberating of people from spiritual oppression. Hence, it is challenging to be sure that Luke sees Jesus as fulfilling this prophecy from Isaiah through his healing works (5:17-26; 7:1-10, 18-23).[229]

2.4.2.1.4 καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν

In Luke-Acts, "blindness" and the desire for the restoration of sight is used both literally and metaphorically. There are many instances where Luke refers to the physically blind (7:21, 14:13, 21; 18:35 43). In 18:35 (cf. Acts 9:9-19; in 22:6-13; 26:13-18), Luke emphasizes physical restoration of sight. Although the recovery of Paul's sight did not indicate physical restoration, Paul mentions the opening of eyes metaphorically, as it concerns Gentiles moving away from the power of Satan toward God (Acts 26:19-21). In 13:4-12, a blind magician, Elymas is likely healed (13:11), even though there is no record of his healing.[230] Blindness is also used metaphorically in Lk 6:39 in connection to one's encountering of salvation (1:79; 3:6; Acts 26:17-18) and to indicate one's awareness or unawareness of God's plan of salvation being realized through Jesus (Lk 24:31; Acts 28:27). This metaphorical understanding of blindness seems to be emphasized. The recovery of sight is often seen as a metaphor for welcoming or receiving revelation and experiencing

[228] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 164.
[229] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 165.
[230] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 167.

salvation and inclusion in God's family.[231] Because Luke equates salvation with βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, we can say that regaining metaphoric sight corresponds to entering the reign of God.

There are two instances where Luke records blindness in connection with Isa 61: Luke 4:18 and 7:21-22. Nevertheless, only 4:18 employs ἀνάβλεψις in explaining the restoration of sight gained by those who are blind. While 7:21-22 refers to those who are physically blind, 4:18 is likely a reference to both those who are physically and spiritually blind since other references of the citation of Isaiah 61 have metaphorical significance. Furthermore, considering the programmatic nature of Lk 4:18-19, it is unlikely that Luke would have seen Jesus's ministry as a physical healer or restorer of sight as being a pivotal point of his ministry since there is only a specific incident indicating the healing of physical blindness by Jesus (18:35-43). It is also possible that the 4Q521, which may represent a tradition likely known to Luke, also uses metaphorically, "the recovery of sight" from Isa 61:1.[232]

Hence, the references to Isaiah concerning the restoration of sight for the blind and the broader Lucan context point to Jesus's ministry as restoring both physical and spiritual blindness, with spiritual blindness being equated with entering the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

2.4.2.1.5 Κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν

In 4:16-21 Luke only records one comment from Jesus after he gave the scroll back to the synagogue attendant. Rowe notes that Jesus announced to the audience that the prophecy in Isa 61:1-2 was fulfilled in their hearing.[233] It is very important to underscore the Jubilee language in Jesus's announcement, and that in order to arrive at the NT's emphasis on the Jubilee in Jesus's

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[231] Green, *Theology of the Gospel of Luke*, 79. See also Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 167-8.

[232] Hans Kvalbein, "The Wonders of the End Time Metaphoric Language in 4Q521 and the Interpretation of Matthew 11:5," *JSP* 18 (1998): 96-97. See also Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 168.

[233] Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke*, 79.

sermon, we must answer the questions regarding how Jesus's sermon fulfills the requirements of the Jubilee year. In the OT, while mention of the Jubilee is also found in Lev 26 and 27, most of the relevant information about it is contained in Lev 25. Leviticus 25, which is part of the "Holiness Code,"[234] begins with an account of the Sabbath years. Bruno R. Christopher argues that "the basic principle of Sabbath years is found in verses 3–4: every seventh year, the people of Israel were to refrain from cultivating the land as a "Sabbath to YHWH" (v. 2)."[235] The celebration of the "year" of Jubilee officially begins in the seventh month of the year. So, it is possible that the year began in the seventh month of either the 49th or 50th year and prolonged until the seventh month of the 50th or 51st year.[236]

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[234] Although majority of scholars such as J. Joosten (*People and Lan in the Holiness Code: An Exegetical Study of the Ideational framework of the Law in Leviticus 17-27*, VT Sup 67 (Leiden: Brill, 1996)), are of the opinion that Lev 17-26 was an independent work later inserted into the book of Leviticus, our focus on the Jubilee here is devoid f such theory.

[235] Christopher R. Bruno, "Jesus is Our Jubilee … But How?" The OT Bacкground and the Lukan Fulfillment of the Ethics of Jubilee," *JETS* 53, 1 (2010): 85. The refrain from the cultivation of all production every seventh year reminds the inhabitants of the authority of the ultimate owner of the land. After this explanation, the rest of the chapter is a general principle for the practice of the Jubilee year, followed by a series of precise guidelines. Each fiftieth year, on the Day of Atonement (*Yom kippur*), Israel was to sound the trumpet and announce a year of Jubilee. The Jubilee command (25:10) instructs Israel to consecrate the fiftieth year in order to "proclaim liberty throughout the land. The nominal form of "liberty" (דְּרוֹר) is found six times in the OT: Lev 25; Isa 61:1; Jer 34:8, 15, 17; and Ezek 46:17. Also, there is a combination of דְּרוֹר and קרא ("proclaiming liberty") which appears in Isa 61:1 and Jer 34:8 (p. 86).

[236] Allen P. Ross, *Holiness to the Land: A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), 459-460. See Bruno, "Jesus is Our Jubilee … But How?" The OT Bacкground and the Lukan Fulfillment of the Ethics of Jubilee," 85. On this issue, Christopher Bruno follows Allen P. Ross's summary of the three major options for the chronology of the Jubilee: "(1) the Jubilee took place at the end of the seventh Sabbath year so that the land was not worked for two consecutive years; (2) the Jubilee and the seventh Sabbath year was simultaneous, and "fifty" is a general way of speaking about the 49th year; (3) the Jubilee began in the first month in the civic calendar but the seventh in the cultic, so that whether one considered it the 49th or 50th year depended on which calendar was being used" (p. 85). Sidney B. Hoenig suggests a fourth option which is that the Jubilee was a shortened year, similar to our modern leap year ("Sabbatical Years and the Year of Jubilee," JQR 59 (1969): 27). More so, דְּרוֹר is further described in two specific ways in 25:10-11. Firstly, it was demanded that property and persons be returned to their proper owners and places. Secondly, the land was to be left to rest. Bruno adds that "The command for the land to rest is given first. As noted above, the first part of Lev 25 is devoted to the details of the Sabbath rest. Since the Jubilee year occurred every seventh Sabbath year, the land was to be given its customary septennial rest. The principle is expanded in vv. 18-22. Here, YHWH gives his assurance that if they are faithful to keep his command to give the land its rest, the Israelites will not lack food. Rather, YHWH will bless the crop of the sixth year so that it will produce a crop sufficient for three years (vv. 21–22). Thus, the crop of that year will provide for the year itself, the next year when the land is resting, and a third year, the first year of the new cycle, while the people are waiting for the crops to come in again" p. 86). These situations were closely related to YHWH's commands for Israel's covenant

There is a huge scholarly debate concerning the actual celebration of the Jubilee. It is not clear whether the practices of the Jubilee were carried out in a real sense. This is because there is no extant evidence in Jewish history that the Jubilee was observed.[237] If the Jubilee was, however, observed, Jesus's announcement of the favorable year of the Lord was intended to bring about freedom and liberty for all those who suffered different kinds of oppression. Jesus's mission was, therefore, meant to be a reversal of the fortunes of those who were oppressed by the elites of Palestine.[238] John Carroll explains that if Jesus here proclaims a Jubilee year of "release" he is referring to the era of salvation in which social, economic, and cultic understandings of communal life will all be radically reorganized. Thus, where the story of Jesus's manifesto shows him forgiving sin, calling for debt cancellation, and releasing the sick from demonic oppression, readers of Luke say that Isaiah's prophecy of an era of divine favor has been fulfilled.[239] Hence, Luke's putting of the Jubilee language into Jesus's mouth could be likened to the sense of the kingdom of God, which functions as an ideal in the world, but its ultimate realization is in the eschatological vision. The Jubilee announced here is an aspiration of eschatological freedom.

Although there are other likely references to the Jubilee and its announcement of liberty in the NT (Luke 4:18), the strongest allusion is found in Luke 4:18. The word αἰχμαλώτοις (from αιχμαλωτος "captive," or "the speared") translates "those who are speared." This word is only used once in the NT. In the OT it is used quite often in conjunction with those who were forced into the

life in the land, hence, the Jubilee reinstates the kinship and land tenure systems that formed part of Israel's covenant with YHWH. The last part of (Lev 25:35-55) outlines the principles for servitude about the Jubilee, that is, "the release of indentured servants." In situations where an Israelite was to necessarily come under another's authority as a tenant, this person is to be treated with kindness and released in the Jubilee year. Yet, if slaves are bought from the neighboring nations, they are kept as property, and, seemingly, not released in the Jubilee (25:44-46). Also, if an Israelite farmer is indentured outside of his clan, a kinsman has the first right of redemption, and if this is not possible, then the farmer is to be released in the year of Jubilee (p. 86-7).

[237] Uwaegbute, "A Social-Scientific Reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 114.

[238] Uwaegbute, "A Social-Scientific Reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 114.

[239] Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary,* 112.

Babylonian exile, hence the sense of "the speared." The participle τεθραυσμενους (from θραυω, "oppressed") literally means "the shattered," and is only used once in the NT.

Also, ἄφεσις (from ἀφίημι) has a literary link with the Jubilee in the Septuagint. This has influenced some scholars such as Sharon H. Ringe to say that texts such as 4:18 (where ἄφεσις is used twice as part of a quotation from Isa 61:1-2) are a strong allusion to the Jubilee year.[240] In the same way, Christopher J.H. Wright rightly notes that the presence of ἄφεσις in Jesus's quotation of Isaiah has a Jubilee quotation in three dimensions: typologically, paradigmatically, and eschatologically.[241] The typological approach permits us to understand the Jubilee in light of the Christ event. Jesus's fulfillment of the Jubilee in Luke 4:18-19, the "freedom" of the Jubilee becomes not only spiritual forgiveness but also economic freedom. The paradigmatic approach of the Jubilee focuses on the principles of economic and social equality as the enduring principles of the Jubilee since "the jubilee speaks volumes to the massive issue of international debt." The eschatological approach revolves around the expectations of Isa 61 and God's promise of restoration to Israel (and by extension, to the whole world). While this promise started to be fulfilled in Jesus as the eschatological prophet Messiah, the full realization of these promises is yet to arrive.[242] Therefore, even though there are other allusions to the Jubilee year and its announcement of liberty in the NT, the clearest allusion to the Jubilee comes from Jesus's manifesto (Lk:4:18-19).[243]

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[240] Sharon H. Ringe, *Jesus, Liberation, and the Biblical Jubilee: Images for Ethics and Christology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 2015-17.

[241] Christopher J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for People of God,* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 206.

[242] Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for People of God,* 206-208.

[243] Christopher R. Bruno, "Jesus is Our Jubilee … But How?" The OT Background and the Lukan Fulfillment of the Ethics of Jubilee," *JETS* 53, 1 (2010): 84. Bruno adds, "Although Mark 6:1–6 and Matt 13:53–58 refer to Jesus' sermon in Nazareth and subsequent rejection, only Luke records the content of the sermon and the allusion to Isaiah 61" (p. 84).

In fact, the Jubilee is thus central to Jesus's proclamation. This is why when Jesus asks us to forgive our debtors, he "tells us purely and simply to erase the debts of those who owe us money; that is to say, practice the jubilee."[244] Furthermore, ἄφεσις in Luke can be seen in the sense of forgiveness of sins as in 1:77; 3:3; 24:47.[245] Alluding to George M. Soares-Prabhu ("Good News to the Poor: The Social Implications of Message of Jesus," *Bible Bhashyam* 4 (1978) p. 204), Jey J. Kanagaraj argues similarly as did Wright, that Luke omits "to heal those who are broken in heart," instead, in Isa 61:1, and introduces a phrase from Isa 58:6 "to send the broken ones away in the release." This could be interpreted in a spiritual sense but the connotation of freeing the oppressed has a social thrust.[246] The combination of these verses from different chapters in Isaiah is for the theological purpose of emphasizing the release of creation from its bondage to sin. This release comes through the forgiveness of sins that Jesus himself brings.[247] Also, the associated verb ἀφίημι, occurs 31 times in the Gospel of Luke. Its meanings include: "depart/leave" (4:39), "leave behind/abandon" (5:11), "allow/permit" (6:42) and "take with/to oneself" (17:34-35). Thus, the meaning centers on the forgiveness of sins.[248] Similarly, the "recovering of sight to the blind,' can be understood through the lens of Acts 26:18, where Luke gives a metaphoric interpretation of "opening eyes as turning from darkness to light, that is from the power of Satan to God, which is further explained as receiving forgiveness of sins and the rightful share of the Gentiles among the holy people of God."[249] In general, Luke makes use of the verb "to forgive" along with its noun

[244] John H. Yoder, *Politics of Jesus*: *Vicit Agnus Noster, Second Edition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 62.

[245] As I have already mention, ἄφεσις is used twice in Jesus's proclamation in Lk 4:18.

[246] Jey J. Kanagaraj, "The Poor in the Gospels and the Good News Proclaimed to Them," *Themelios*, 23, no. 1 (1997), 49.

[247] Kanagaraj, "The Poor in the Gospels and the Good News Proclaimed to Them," 50.

[248] Just, *Luke 1:1-9:50*: *Concordia Commentary*, 190-1.

[249] Kanagaraj, "The Poor in the Gospels and the Good News Proclaimed to Them," 51.

form to present a central motif. By doing so, he pays attention to how Jesus, as an agent of liberation, fulfills the mission of releasing creation from its bondage to sin.

Jesus's role as the agent of the liberation of Israel is highlighted dramatically in his manifesto at Nazareth (4:14-30). Luke stated "Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit," Jesus returns to Nazareth after his temptation in the wilderness and reads from Isaiah while in the synagogue. Jesus's expression "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" after the reading awakens in the reader, Luke's interpretive clue that Jesus himself is the Spirit-anointed prophet, whose mission is the liberation of Israel.[250] Jesus's citation of Isa 61 connects his ministry to the Isaianic hope of a restored Israel that returned from exile, and the disjointed citation of 58:6 "metaphorically evokes the prophetic imperative for Israel's authentic worship through practices of justice contained in 58:6-9a."[251] Richard B. Hays rightly says that by invoking the text from Isaiah on letting the oppressed go free, Luke's narrative taps into a rich and complex intertextual history. Hence, the text resonates greatly with the story of God's concern to rescue Israel from slavery in Egypt, as found, especially in the reference to the vindicator going before and the glory of the lord serving as a rear guard (Isa 58:8; cf. Ex 13:21-22; 14:19-20; Isa 52:12). Therefore, when Luke introduces the phrase "to let the oppressed go free" into Jesus's mouth at the synagogue, he metaphorically connects Jesus's liberation mission, now, not only with Isaiah's end of exile but also with the earlier prototype of the exodus.[252] Jesus's manifesto is, hence, a statement of liberating Israel from the slavery of sin and Roman imperial domination.

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[250] Hays, "Liberation of Israel in Luke-acts: Intertextual Narration as countercultural Practice," ed., Richard B. Hays, Stefan Alkier, and Leory A. Huizenga. *Reading the Bible Intertextually* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2009), 107.

[251] Hays, "Liberation of Israel in Luke-acts: Intertextual Narration as countercultural Practice," 107-8.

[252] Hays, "Liberation of Israel in Luke-acts: Intertextual Narration as countercultural Practice," 108.

2.4.2.1.6 Κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν

This is the last part of the quotation which Luke takes from Isaiah and addresses the present period as the time of God's favor when the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is announced and its physical reality is felt. As earlier mentioned, Luke substitutes the verb "καλέω" in Isa 61:2 with "κηρύσσω" in Luke 4:19. He then, includes, however, figuratively, Isaiah's explanation of the present time as ἐνιαυτὸν ("a year") denoting an indefinite period of salvation, which is different from his other uses in Acts 11:26 and 18:11, both of which speak of the literal year.[253] Considering the Jubilee codes in Lev 25, it is possible to read ἐνιαυτὸν as a parallel to ἐνιαυτὸν ἀφέσεως ("the year of release") in Lev 25:10. Although, Luke has no evidence to indicate that this is his reading of the ἐνιαυτὸν, it seems ἐνιαυτὸν is an illustration of the original intention of Third Isaiah's author in describing a Jubilee.

In Luke's quotation of Isa 61:1 in Jesus's manifesto, ἐνιαυτόν is accompanied by δεκτόν ("acceptable"). In the NT, δεκτόν is found only five times. Three of the times are in Luke-Acts, and all instances are concerned about Isa 61: Luke 4:19; 4:24; Acts 10:35. In all three instances, δεκτόν is used to describe all the people, including Gentiles, that are now acceptable for entering the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. The whole idea of 'acceptance/non-acceptance becomes pivotal to Luke's notion of admittance to the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. The 'acceptable year of the Lord' becomes the basis of God's 'hospitality' to humans, proclaimed and enacted in Jesus's mission.[254] Although the δεκτόν can be interpreted differently, Robert B. Sloan tries to connect δεκτόν and the Jubilee, by forcing a complex literary connection by stating that the verbal form of the Hebrew noun (רָצוֹן) which δεκτός often translates, sometimes has undertones of payment of debts. Sloan's position,

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[253] Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 169.

[254] Brenda Byrne, *The Hospitality of God: A Reading of Luke's Gospel,* Revised Edition (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2015) 50-1. See also Luthy, "Rethinking the Acceptable Year: The Jubilee and the *Basileia* in Luke 4 and Beyond," 169-70.

however, is very questionable, especially since neither the noun (רָצוֹן) nor the verb (רָצָה) shows up in the Jubilee codes of Lev 25.[255]

Luke's story of Jesus's citation of Isaiah, therefore, underscores the continuity between Jesus's concern for the poor (a preferred Lukan theme) and the message of the Law and the prophets.[256] Therefore, ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν ("acceptable year of the Lord") is better understood as signifying that all people are now accepted into the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

2.5 Summary of Chapter

Considering the socio-political contexts of Roman Palestine and the Hellenistic world of Luke we have discussed, it is obvious, therefore, that Jesus assumes the eschatological prophetic and Messianic figure of Isa 61:1-2, who is anointed by the Spirit, and moved by the oppression and harsh living conditions of the people in his time, appropriates Isa 61:1-2a; 58:6 as his manifesto in Luke 4:16-21.[257] It is the argument of this study that, just like Jesus responded openly to many socio-economic and political problems of his time, Luke uses similar problems in addressing the subject of Jesus's manifesto, which he prevents as divinely predetermined. It is possible, therefore, that Jesus's choice of Isaiah was not only motivated by the circumstances surrounding him but was also divinely inspired.[258] The manifesto of Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah and emphasizes his entire mission and ministry. As the eschatological prophetic Messiah,

[255] Robert B. Sloan, *The Favorable Year of the Lord: A Study of Jubilee Theology in the Gospel of Luke* (Autin: Schola Press, 1977), 34-36. Also, the ending reference in Lk 4:19 to "the year of the Lord's favor" re-echoes the Jubilee year instructed in Leviticus 25:8-55 ("a year of release" cf. Lev 25:10 LXX, ἐνιαυτὸς ἀφέσεως), a time when all debts were canceled and every slave was set free (Hays, "Liberation of Israel in Luke-acts: Intertextual Narration as countercultural Practice," 108).

[256] Hays, "Liberation of Israel in Luke-acts: Intertextual Narration as countercultural Practice," 108.

[257] Henry A. Virkler, *Hermeneutics Principles and Procession of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006), 73-4.

[258] Yankyera et al., "A Historical-Critical and Morpho-Syntactic Interpretation of Luke 4:18-19," 326.

Jesus announces the “acceptable year of the Lord " which grants liberty to all under all forms of captivity and welcomes all humanity into the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER THREE: Οἱ ΠΤΩΧΟΊ ("DOWN AND OUTERS") AND LUKE

In chapter two, we did an exegetical analysis of Luke 4:16-21, where we saw how Jesus's programmatic announcement of his manifesto pays attention to the poor, oppressed, and marginalized. We established in chapter two that the poor in Luke were a disadvantaged group in the time of Jesus as reported by Luke. The "poor" (πτωχός), are a foreshadowing of the Lukan stress on the social group[259] known as "down and outers" (the poor, blind, sick, imprisoned, enslaved, etc., see 6:20; 7:22; 14:13, 21; 16:20, 22; 18:22; 19:8; 21:3). Luke's "good news to the poor," therefore, clearly summarizes his concern for the marginalized and oppressed ("down and outers"),[260] who depended on the elites and even had to reciprocate any goodness done to them either directly or by clientage. This places the poor at the mercy of their helpers. We also established that Luke quoted Isaiah (61:1-2; 58:6) in Jesus's manifesto. Coming from a literary point of view, Jesus's manifesto announces good news to the poor, those at the margins of society (the "down and outers"), and the conclusion technically proclaims an eschatological year of Jubilee. Consequently, the Midrashic technique of ancient rabbinic interpretation of scripture may have been in use in the combination of 61:1-2 and 58:6 around the term ἄφεσις ("release").[261] This poses the question of who are the "poor" (πτωχός) in Luke-Acts. We had earlier argued that even though the spiritual dimension of poverty is emphasized in Luke-Acts, economic or material poverty is not excluded.

In alignment with the above, I find Bock's contribution very interesting here. Bock considers the poor as a "soteriological generalization," that is, "the poor" are those who often responded to Jesus (cf. 1 Cor 1:26-29), and in an invitation context, it implies those who are open

[259] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According Luke 1-9*, 532.
[260] T. R. France, *Luke*, TEACH THE TEXT (Grand Rapids, Michigan: 2013), 70.
[261] France, *Luke*, TEACH THE TEXT, 70-71.

to God.[262] Similarly, in reference to Luke 4:18, I. Howard Marshall sees the poor as people who are dearly in need of divine help and who wait upon God to listen to his words.[263] However, Bryan R. Dyer acknowledges that to some extent, the poor refers to those of low economic means.[264] However, the πτωχός in Luke are better understood as having both spiritual and economic connotation. For instance, as the manifesto of Jesus unravels in Luke's Gospel, Jesus on various occasions attends to both physical and spiritual needs of the people as contained in the healing of the paralytic in Luke 5:17-26 where Jesus also forgives his sins. The encounter of Zacchaeus with Jesus makes him to give half of his possessions to the poor (19:8). This gives us an insight into Luke's portrayal of the poor in Jesus's manifesto, as having both spiritual and economic dimensions as expressed in the programmatic presentation of Jesus's manifesto.

In chapter three, we shall consider how this programmatic presentation of Jesus's manifesto shapes the overall understanding of the πτωχός (also described here as the "down and outers") in Luke-Acts. We shall also establish in this chapter, how Luke 4:18-19 and Isa 61 shape the progressive understanding of the πτωχός in the rest of Luke-Acts. Although not all the instances where πτωχός is used in Luke-Acts allude to Luke 4 and Isa 61, it is presumable to say that such instances are construed within the overall established understanding of the πτωχός as expressed in Jesus's manifesto which alludes to Isa 61. As a follow-up to the above, this chapter will show how the early church responded to the needs of the poor in their community, especially their self-renunciation as believers in the Acts of the Apostles. It is worthy to note here, that even though this chapter does not consider every instance where Luke-Acts discusses the πτωχός, or its

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[262] Bock, *Luke*, *1:1-9:50*, 408.

[263] I Howard Marshall, *the Gospel of Luke*, ed. I. Howard Marshall and Donald A. Hagner, NIGTC (Michigan, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1978), 183-4.

[264] Bryan R. Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," in *The Bible and Social justice: Old Testament and New Testament Foundations for the Church's Urgent* call, MNTS, Edited by Cynthia Long Westfall and Bryan R. Dyer (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publication, 2016), 108.

equivalent, the instances or examples discussed here provide, to a very large extent, an overall understanding of how Luke-Acts portrays the poor as set forth in Lk 4. Since the OT allusion in Luke 4:18-19 is from Isaiah, we will first consider the interplay of Isaiah in Luke.

3.1 Interplay of the Prophet Isaiah in Luke

The prophet Isaiah is referenced either directly or indirectly several times in Luke-Acts. Besides Joel (Acts 2:16), Isaiah is the only writing prophet of the OT whose name is mentioned as a writer (Luke 3:4; 4:17; Acts 8:28, 30) and a speaker (Acts 28:25) of Scripture. Further, Luke's interest in Isaiah is made obvious in Appendix III in Nestle-Alands's *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 26th edition, 1979, which lists 119 allusions or citations to Isaiah in Luke-Acts.[265]

Luke-Acts cites or alludes to Isaiah at very important places. For instance, two unique passages Luke 2:32: "Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis*" (Isa 42:6; 49:6; 51:4), and 4:18-19: "Jesus's manifesto" (61:1-2; 58:6) maximally utilize Isaiah to make programmatic presentations about Jesus and his mission. The first clear quotation in Luke 3:4-6 (the only clear OT quotation found in the four gospels) is from Isa 40:3-5. Luke extends this quotation beyond the other three writers of the gospels (Mark 1:2-3; Matt 3:3; John 1:23). The influence of Isaiah on Luke and his allusions to him cannot be neglected in Luke's treatment of his commissioned narratives that connect Luke and Acts (Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:4-8). More so, Luke quotes Isaiah at the key turning points in Acts, both in narratives (Isa 53:7-8 in Acts 8:32-33) and in speech (Isa 49:6 in Acts 13:47).[266]

Concerning the issue of the poor, Luke makes many allusions to the prophet Isaiah. His quotation of the Isaian passage marks the beginning of Jesus's ministry to interpret his baptismal anointing by the Spirit in vocational terms: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me" (Luke 4:18-19; Isa

[265] Thomas S. Moore, "Luke's Use of Isaiah for the Gentile Mission and Jewish Rejection Theme in the Third Gospel," (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1995), 3.
[266] Moore, "Luke's Use of Isaiah for the Gentile Mission and Jewish Rejection Theme in the Third Gospel," 3-4.

61:1-2). Similarly, Luke places the job description of Jesus within the context of Jesus's response to John's disciples when they were sent to him by John to ask Jesus whether he was the one who was coming or they were to expect someone else (Luke 7:18-34).[267] Jesus's response to John's disciples is a continuation of his mission as expressed in the programmatic announcement of his manifesto: "The blind again see; the lame are walking; lepers are being made clean; the deaf are hearing; the dead are being raised up; the poor have good news proclaimed to them" (7:22). Beyond being a continuation of Luke 4, 7:22 is an allusion to Isa 61 and other parts of Isaiah. Apart from the cleansing of lepers (2 Kgs 5), all the other features of Jesus's answer to John's disciples allude to Isaiah: the blind see again (Isa 42:18; 61:1; cf. 29:18; 35:5); the lame are walking (35:6); the deaf are hearing (29:18; 35:5); the dead are raising up (26:19; also 1 Kgs 17); the poor have good news proclaimed to them (Isa 61:1; cf. 29:19). Very importantly, Luke concludes his narrative with a lengthy citation from Isa 6:9-10 (Acts 13:47).[268]

In summary, Isaiah plays a pivotal role in shaping Luke-Acts from the beginning to the end. This explains why Luke alludes to or quotes from Isaiah, especially in major sections of his narrative. In our next section, we shall consider the influence of Isaiah on Luke's portrayal of the poor and how the programmatic manifesto of Jesus shapes the entire progressive understanding of the poor in Luke-Acts.

3.2 Overall use of οἱ Πτωχοί in Luke-Acts

While we try to see how Jesus's programmatic manifesto (Luke 4:18-19) and Isa 61 shape the Lukan portrayal of the poor in Luke-Acts, we shall also consider other contexts within which πτωχός is used. It is, therefore, necessary, firstly, to examine those who are regarded as the πτωχός

[267] Joel B. Green, "Good News to the Poor: A Lukan Leitmotif," 211.
[268] Carrol, *Luke: A Commentary,* 170.

in Luke. Secondly, how does Luke make use of πτωχός within its linguistic co-text? This implies that the understanding of πτωχός in a particular context will be dependent upon its semantic context, that is, the words around it.[269] This will, however, constrain how πτωχός is being used and understood in such a context as shown in the table below.

Luke 4:18	6:20	7:22	14:13, 21	16:20, 22	Acts 2:45	4:34, 35
poor captive blind oppressed	poor hungry mournful persecuted	blind lame leper deaf dead poor	poor maimed lame blind	poor ulcerated hungry	needy	needy

Table 3.1 Places where πτωχός appears in Luke and similar words for the poor in Acts[270]

The word πτωχός is absent in the Acts of the Apostles. However, similar words such as χρεία and ἐνδεής ("needy" or "in need" 4:34-35) are used for describing the poor, especially economic poverty. Starting with the linguistic co-text, in table 3.1, we notice some referents of the term "poor" in Luke-Acts. Firstly, besides Luke 7:22 where πτωχός is placed at the end of the list, which could be for emphasis, "poor" is found at the beginning of each list (since the needy are also "poor"). Consequently, the "poor" interprets and is amplified by the others.[271] Secondly, the other terms in one way or the other, are descriptions of abuse, oppression, physical pain, or ailment. Most importantly, all these terms have referents to people who were economically or physically of low status and with no or little honor. Bruce Malina is right to have said that the inclusion of the "poor" in this list relates the term to a group of those marginalized and demarcated by low

[269] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 108-9.
[270] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 109.
[271] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 109.

social status.[272] The poor, according to Luke-Acts, is, therefore, generically the neglected population of humanity.[273]

Furthermore, the other three uses of πτωχός in Luke are in reference to people who are in need and of low economic status. Two of the uses are found within the context of selling one's possessions and giving the money to the poor (Luke 18:22 and 19:8). The third use is in 21:31, within the context describing the poor widow's offering at the Temple as of more value than the hug contributions of the rich. This is a manifestation of the Lukan eschatological role reversal taking place as set forth in Jesus's manifesto earlier explained in chapter two. This same pericope contains πτωχή ("of one who crouches and cowers, hence beggarly, poor". This term also designates "destitute, spiritually poor, either in a good sense [humble devout persons] or bad.") which is within the same semantic domain as πτωχός and appear only here in the whole of the NT.[274] Also, the same widow is described in 21:2 as πενιχρὰν (πενιχρός), which is "poor" or "needy" which is synonymous with πτωχός. In the same domain as pointed out by Louw and Nadi is the term ἐνδεής ("poor" or "needy") found only in Acts 4:34 in the NT which Luke uses in describing the poor and the needy (common living where there was not a needy person among them) within the early church in Jerusalem.[275]

References to the "poor" in Luke-Acts, therefore, imply people with economic and/or physical/material needs. The usual association of "the poor" with other terms of low status and marginalization significantly connects them as a group to those on the outside of the social order,

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[272] Bruce Malina, "Wealth and Poverty in the New Testament and Its World," *Int* 41 (1987)357-8.

[273] Fitzmyer, *The Gospel of Luke* 1:250.

[274] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 110. See J. P Louw and E. A Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on semantic Domains*, Vol 2, 2nd ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 564, domain 57.49.

[275] Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on semantic Domains*, domain 57.51. See also Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 110.

the "down and outers." In this context, the "poor" is an inclusive word for all peoples of low economic or social status and are on the society's fringe. That is, the "poor" designates those unnoticed and often left out of the community. This links us to the prophetic writings where the "poor" are almost understood in a literal sense and greatly relate to the marginalized.[276]

In order to get a better understanding of how Jesus's programmatic manifesto in Luke 4 and Isaiah (especially chapter 61) shapes the progressive understanding of the πτωχός in Luke-Acts, we shall consider the individual texts in table 3.1.

3.2.1 Luke 6:20-26

Luke's beatitudes[277] are indicative of the actualization of Jesus's manifesto (Luke 4:18-19) and Luke's allusion to Isa 61 (about the poor), and Isa 40 (about comforting those who mourn). These beatitudes further confirm Luke's special concern for the poor.[278] From its etymological perspective, the Greek for beatitude, "μακάριος," is sometimes translated as "happy," "glad," "prosperous," "fortunate," or "enviable." However, it means much more than happiness. It is difficult to perfectly underscore the Greek "μακάριος." Hence, weak humanistic renditions miss much of the richness of what "divine happiness" meant to Jesus and his disciples. For this work, we will use "happy" as a preference over "blessed" because "happy" seems better appreciated than

[276] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 110.

[277] In one Egyptian writing, the word μακάριος "designates a state of being that pertains to the gods and can be awarded to humans post mortem," describing a deceased person "who has been approved to enter the paradise of Osiris, even to become an Osiris himself" (John W. Welch, "Makarios" (Makarios, you will be [a] god. (https://www.byunewtestamentcommentary.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Makarios-final-endnotes.pdf, 15). In the Greek text, μακάριος describes the state of one who has gained knowledge of the divine mysteries (2 Hauck, "μακάριος, μακαρίζω, μακαρισμός," TDNT, 364), and one Greek funerary inscription reads (Welch, "Makarios"). In the NT, μακάριος appears about 50 times in 11 widely distributed books in the NT. The word has a very strong pedigree. It was important to the early Christians who had contact with Jesus (Welch, "Makarios," 1).

[278] Fitzmyer emphasizes that this sermon is the first part of the "Little Interpolation," the series of episodes that runs through 6:20-8:3, which Luke has inserted into the Mark's source that he has been using. In this series, Luke introduces materials from "Q" and "L" with some editorial changes (*The Gospel According to Luke 1:1-9*, 627).

"blessed." Most of the time, μακάριος refers to a future and heavenly state. It introduces each of the beatitudes both in Matt 5 and Luke 6.[279]

Furthermore, μακάριος hints that Jesus is not primarily talking about life in the present world, but about life in the kingdom of the heavens. More so, the beatitudes (the short classic statements which are called "*macarisms*,") are usually introduced with the plural adjective μακάριοι ("blessed") and conclude with a verb in the future tense, e.g., χορτασθήσεσθε ("shall be filled"), γελάσετε (shall laugh). This guarantee of eschatological happiness gives great comfort and solace to those who suffer challenges and tragedies in this life.[280] This again, is a confirmation of the eschatological reversal expressed in Jesus's manifesto at the beginning of his public ministry.

In line with Luke's concern for the poor or needy, which again re-echoes Luke 4 and Isa 61, Bock proposes that the theme of Luke 6:20-26 is God's call for assurance to the needy, as shown in the reversal of situations which reflects God's promise of an eschatological kingdom.[281] This implies that rewards for the rich in the present life and those unaligned with the demands of the kingdom of God are limited to this present life, especially when God's kingdom arrives. Bock notes that the ethics of the Beatitudes is personal and hardly finds its roots in the OT, especially as it pertains to responsiveness to God's Call. Bock suggests that we should be careful not to generalize the beatitudes and absolutize them. He rather recommends that the beatitudes be seen as a whole show of Jesus's concern for the spiritual condition of one's heart and how his disciples can do the will of God. This implies that for those who come to God in dear need, God promises the hope of reversal.[282] Consequently, the promise of the Beatitudes is not restricted to only those

[279] Welch, "Makarios," 2.
[280] Welch, "Makarios," 3.
[281] Bock, *Luke*, 1:558. Bock adds that, in fact, so certain is this promise that the kingdom can also be promised as already possessed by those aligned with God.
[282] Bock, *Luke*, 1:559.

who experience lack on earth but involves all those who approach God with a good and humble disposition; such ones would access blessings as explained in the Beatitudes. However, it is, possible, and even coincidentally, that the audience drawn to Jesus in Lk 6:20-26 was predominantly poor, hence, the beatitudes are expressed in terms that relate to them.[283] The beatitudes, as a reminiscence of Jesus's manifesto, therefore, give us hope of God's transformation and happiness to those who will come to receive it.

Similarly, commentators (e.g., Craig A. Evans, *Luke*; David P. Stassen and Glen Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*; etc.) have recognized the influence of Isa 61:1-2 on both the beatitudes in Matthew and Luke. For such commentators, the beatitudes call for the implementation of those prophecies expressed in Isa 61:1-2 which Jesus quoted at the beginning of his public ministry at Nazareth.[284] However, Luke's beatitudes are different from those in Matt 5:3-12. Firstly, Luke's beatitudes are considerably shorter than Matthew's. While Luke has four beatitudes with corresponding four woes, Matthew has nine beatitudes without the woes. Secondly, Luke omits Matthew's mention of "those who mourn," (οἱ πενθοῦντες) "will be comforted" (παρακληθήσονται). The verbs πενθέω and παρακαλέω are both found in Isa 61:2 (LXX).[285] This further confirms the influence of Isa 61:1-2 on Luke's beatitudes, especially in two ways. Firstly, Luke's use of ¨those who weep¨ (κλαίοντες) and "will laugh" (γελάσετε), which are neatly tied semantically to their Matthew/Isaiah counterparts can be seen as variations on the terms. Secondly,

[283] Bock, *Luke*, 1:559.

[284] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 113.

[285] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 113.

Luke includes in his woes the terms "mourn" (πενθέω) (6:24) and "comfort" (παράκλησις) (6:25) which are used in Isa 61:2.[286]

Also, while Matthew qualifies the poor by saying "happy are the poor in spirit," Luke does emphasize the spiritual dimension of poverty but simply says "happy are the poor." In this, we see the "poor" among other words used for the low status and the oppressed including the hungry, hated, and persecuted. Unlike Matthew, Luke is referring to those who suffer from real poverty and hunger, and not to those who are "poor in spirit" (Matt 5:3) nor those who "hunger and thirst for righteousness" (5:6). Luke's form of the beatitude reflects his overall concern with poverty and wealth.[287] The language of exclusion that accompanies the terms of Luke's beatitudes is very important. This is obvious in the fourth beatitude (6:22-23), which mentions the excluded (ἀφορίζω) and cast out (ἐκβάλλω) and often pass the sense of one being excluded taken, or driven out. Such exclusion as a result of association with Jesus is clear from the end of 6:22 as well as 6:20. Thus, the promise of 6:23 points to a restoration of community "in heaven" in fellowship with the prophets.[288]

Luke has four woes to the rich, well-fed, and highly esteemed (6:24-26) corresponding to the beatitudes in the earlier verses. The rich parallel the poor in 6:20; the well-fed in 6:25a parallel the hungry in 6:21a; those laughing in 6:25b parallel those weeping in 6:21b; those highly esteemed in 6:26 parallel those hated and excluded in 6:22. As already mentioned, "the poor" here implies not only those of low economic status but also those marginalized in various ways. In a like manner, "the rich" describes not only those of high economic class but is, as Green suggests,

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[286] Hans Dieter Betz, *Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 576. See also Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 113.

[287] Luke George Evans, *Luke*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 108.

[288] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 113.

"related fundamentally to issues of power and privilege, social location as an insider and arrogant self-security apart from God."[289] Dyer avails that these notions that certain people are "inside" and others are "outside" are the societal norms that Jesus desires to overturn in his proclamation of God's kingdom.[290] This is similar to Mary's Magnificat, where she sings "[God] has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the pride in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty" (1:51-53).

As earlier established, the language used by Luke in the Beatitudes mirrors that of Isa 61:2 (LXX). Earlier in Isa 3:10-11, blessings and curses appear side by side. These beatitudes can therefore also be seen as a continuation of the harsh words in the prophetic literature to those who bring about injustice or who fail to respond rightly to injustice. Consequently, the rich and the well-fed are like the rich and the fat mentioned in Jer 5:27-28. Although Jesus does not accuse these groups of directly bringing about a great injustice, the parallels connecting the woes to Jesus's beatitudes indict them for failing to respond properly to injustice. Rather, Jesus warns the rich that the comfort they enjoy in this age even at the expense of the needy, will be reversed in the new age to come or the eschatological age.[291]

In summary, the beatitudes and the woes in Luke 6:20-26 show Jesus's concern for the poor and marginalized of the world and entails the eschatological reversal of positions in the kingdom of God. It is both a call to discipleship and a warning to those who fall short of the demands of discipleship as it relates to entering the kingdom of God. But most importantly, the

[289] Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 267. See also Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 113-4, and Pilgrim, *Good News to the Poor*, 103-4.
[290] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 114.
[291] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 114.

beatitudes in Luke are a confirmation and realization of Jesus's manifesto and allusion to Isa 61, where Jesus shows concern for the needy, poor, sorrowful, and marginalized of the society. This explains also, the Lukan eschatological role reversal, that runs throughout the Gospel of Luke.

3.2.2 Luke 7:18-23

Luke tells the narrative here in which John Baptist sends his disciples to ask Jesus whether he was the one who was coming or if they should expect someone else. As earlier mentioned, this incident is a clear indication of the progressive realization of Jesus's manifesto in Luke 4 and the importance of Isa 61 in Luke's portrayal of the "down and outers"/poor. This is because the context builds on Luke 4 and alludes to the promises made in Isa 61, thus becoming a realization of those Isaian prophecies and actualizing Jesus's mission. Although Matthew also records this story, only Luke mentions Jesus's act of healing and exorcism within the hour of John's disciples' question. It is interesting that, even though Luke is yet to record Jesus's healing activity at this time,[292] he links this saying of Jesus to his actions regarding those who were poor or in need.[293]

Further, following Luke's allusion to Luke 4 and Isa 61, some commentators see this scene as concerning the physically poor and sick. For instance, pilgrim explains: "It is plain, that the sick and the poor are not vague metaphors or spiritualized concepts. Rather, they represent persons in definite situations of need, who find their needs met by the power and presence of the one who is to come."[294] However, other commentators see this passage as indicating both physical and spiritual dimensions. For instance, Carrol argues that "sight and hearing have both physical and spiritual meanings in the narrative, and perhaps genuine hearing of Jesus's word (e.g., 5:15; 6:18,

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[292] Carrol, *Luke: A Commentary*, 1760.

[293] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 111. Carrol says that Jesus's action in this scene is speaking for him. Hence, Jesus tells John's disciples, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard" (*Luke: A Commentary*, 1760).

[294] Pilgrim, *Good News to the Poor*, 72. See also Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 111-112.

27, 47, 49) is no less worthy than the physical capacity to hear."[295] Whatever the case, Jesus summarizes both for John's messengers and Luke's audience what they have seen and heard. By doing so, Jesus rehearses various types of healing, and in doing so makes use of Isa 61 and the earlier parts of Jesus ministry as contained in Luke 4.

Another interesting point in this narrative is that John's question addresses the identity of Jesus, especially whether Jesus is the eschatological Messiah promised by the prophets whom the people have been anticipating for a long time. Jesus's response places his ministry within the context of Isaiah and the "narrative of divine triumph."[296] This buttresses the importance of the Isaian figure in Luke-Acts, and explains why, apart from the cleansing of lepers (2 Kgs 5, even this has some support in Isa 53:4 where Isaiah speaks of the "coming one carries our sickness"), each part of Jesus's response corresponds to the eschatological liberation portrayed by the divine figure in Isa 61[297] as already discussed in section 3.1 on the interplay of the prophet Isaiah in Luke.

Although Jesus's inclusion of good news being proclaimed to the poor seems out of place among the list of healings and miracles here, it is important to note that beyond the poor forming an important part of Jesus's mission, Luke's inclusion of the poor here is indicative that this scene in a continuation of that in Luke 4. In line with this Dyer says that even though it appears anticlimactic to place the proclamation to the poor as the culmination of the dramatic and miraculous, its placement really emphasizes the prominence of this group in Jesus's mission. Similarly, Longenecker explains that Jesus's reply portrays a world in which curing disease, giving

[295] Carrol, *Luke: A Commentary*, 1760.

[296] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 112.

[297] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 112.

sight to the blind, restoring hearing, and raising the dead were as exceptional as encouraging the poor.[298]

Therefore, as we earlier explained, πτωχός is usually placed first (cf. 4:18-19; 6:20-26) in such lists. In this instance (Luke 7:18-23), it is placed at the end, for the sake of emphasis as the capstone of the narrative.

3.2.3 Luke 11:37-54

Chapter 11 of Luke is like chapter 6. In fact, the programmatic proclamation of Jesus in Luke 4 is becoming very practical as Jesus not only speaks in general terms but calls groups by their designations as he carries out his work of liberation. Just as in 6:24-26, Luke includes a lengthy set of woes in 11:42-52, this time directed at the Pharisees and the lawyers. To indicate how the poor and marginalized, captured in Luke 4 (and Isa 61), and showing how Jesus is the fulfilled prophetic-Messiah who cares for such people, Luke 11:37-54 continues Jesus's prophetic tradition of calling out rulers for their empty rituals and lacking justice. Matthew (chapters 15; 23) and Mark 7 have similar narratives.[299] Although there are parallels between these accounts, Luke does not follow either Mark or Matthew nor does he organize his material in a similar way. To show Luke's concern for the "down and outers," Luke 37-54 expresses three woes on the Pharisees (vv. 42-44) and three woes on the lawyers (vv. 46-52). Jesus accuses the Pharisees and the lawyers of empty religious practices which they portray outwardly but at the same time neglect justice and the love of God (v. 42), which is a concern for the poor and the marginalized. These people, according to Jesus, load other people with heavy burdens without carrying such burdens by themselves (v. 47).

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[298] Bruce W. Longenecker, *Remembering the Poor: Paul, Poverty, and the Greco-Roman World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 120-1. See also Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 112.

[299] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 114.

Furthermore, Jesus links the Pharisees and the lawyers to those who killed the prophets, making a specific reference to Zachariah, stressing how they consent to those deeds and are totally responsible for them (vv. 47-51).[300] Luke's use of οὐαί ("woe") connects Jesus's words to the prophetic tradition (Isa 1:4; 3:11; 5:18; 28:1). Luke's reference to κρίσις (justice, in the LXX κρίσις is used for מִשְׁפָּט, e.g., Isa 56:1; 59:15; Jer 5:4) makes this connection clearer as expressed in Jesus's words stating that the Pharisees should give alms to those in need (v. 41). The allusion to κρίσις (justice) and ἀγάπη (love) in v. 42 echoes, although little, Mic 6:8: "Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God" (there are other places where "love" and "justice" appear together: Isa 16:5; 61:8; Jer 9:24; Hos 2:19; 12:6; Amos 5:15).[301] Jesus's disapproval of the Pharisees' and scribes' religious rituals and external show, while neglecting the interior state and the needy around them is thematically connected to the disapproval of empty rituals in the prophetic tradition.[302] Also, Jesus shifts attention from inner integrity to its outward display, that is, what purifies is loving, just action toward others (11:-41-42). Thus, tithing, for instance, mandated by the Law is good and right (e.g., Lev 27:30; Deut 14:22), as an expression of obedience to God, however, tithing is triumphed by the obligation to God's way of love and justice, comprising their embodiment in the generous distribution of resources with the poor.[303]

In summary, Luke 11:37-54 shows how the poor, in Jesus's manifesto in Luke 4 and Isaiah, are vital in Luke-Acts. In this context, Jesus's stand on the standard of justice set by God in the OT emphasized the prophets whose leaders failed to uphold justice and care for the poor /need.

[300] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 114.
[301] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 115.
[302] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 115.
[303] Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, 260.

Rather, their interest was in empty rituals, expressing outward religiosity while ignoring the things of God. Jesus's rebuke calls them to be attentive to the poor and practice love and justice.

3.2.4 Luke 18:18-30

In alignment with our earlier argument, concerning Luke's concern for both spiritual and material poverty in Luke 4, and his use of Isaiah, which is a buildup on Jesus's programmatic manifesto that shapes the entire Luke-Acts, 18:18-30 addresses the need to give up possessions for the kingdom of God. Overall, Luke 18 contains two parables ("the unjust judge and the widow" in 18:1-8; and "the pharisee and the tax collector" in 18:9-14). Also, there is a seeming connection between the prophetic theme of justice in Luke 18 and the encounter with Zacchaeus in 19:1-10. This further shows the importance of the prophetic writings in Luke-Acts.

Luke 18:18-30 focuses on Jesus's interaction with a ruler concerning the danger of wealth and inheriting eternal life. Both Matthew (19:16-30) and Mark (10:17-31) contained similar narratives, and Luke parallels them very closely. Nevertheless, Luke's narrative is unique in many ways. It is Luke alone who identifies the man as a ἄρχων ("ruler"), a term he uses nearly a dozen times in Luke-Acts in reference to the leadership in opposition to Jesus (e.g., Luke 8:41; 14:1; 23:13, 35; 24:20; Acts 3:17; 4:5).[304] The same term is also used in reference to a leader of demons (Luke 11:15) and leaders in a general sense (Acts 16:19; 23:5).[305]

In the LXX, ἄρχων has a general sense of one who is rules or exercises authority. It is used over five thousand times in the LXX in different ways. In the prophetic literature, it is often the ἄρχοντες ("rulers") who are responsible for injustice and oppression (Isa 1:10, 23; 3:14; 22:3;

[304] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 115-16.

[305] Mark's uses of ἄρχων is traced to a shared tradition of the religious leaders who accused Jesus of casting out demons by through Beelzebul's power, the ἄρχων of demons (3:22). Among the five times Matthew uses ἄρχων, two of the uses share the same referent (9:34; 12:24). The other two usages are in reference to the leader of the synagogue who asked Jesus to help his dying daughter (9:18, 23). The last usage is in reference to the Gentiles in Jesus's demonstration of those who seek to be great (20:25).

28:14; 40:23; Jer 1:28; 2:26; 4:9; 8:1; Ezek 7:29; 19:1; Hos 5:10; 7:3; 5:10; 7:3; 13:10). For instance, Isa 1:23 states: "Your rulers (ἄρχοντες) are rebels and companions of thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not defend the orphan, and the widow's cause does not come before them." Although Jesus's words to the ἄρχων in Lk 18:18-30 are not harsh as those of Isaiah, Luke's narrative set this encounter as a rebuke of the ἄρχων by Jesus.[306] Secondly, Luke does not make light of Jesus' remarks as does Mark (10:21). Thirdly, it is only Luke who describes the man as ἄρχων (a "ruler," v. 18), and πλούσιος (a "rich" person, v. 23). Πλούσιος is the same term used by Jesus in the woes in 6: 24-26. Lastly, while Matthew and Mark have the man leave immediately after Jesus instructs him to go and sell his possession and give to the poor, Luke has him present to hear the strong words against possessions in the subsequent verses.[307]

In support of Luke's setting of the scenario of rebuke, Jesus looks directly at the ἄρχων as he said, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God" (18:24). In line with this, Carroll suggests that "observing the pained reaction of the rich ruler, Jesus extends and radicalizes the challenges. It is not just in this human life that possession of material wealth poses a hindrance to participation in the realm of God; entrance into God's dominion is equally difficult

[306] Luke carefully constructs a unitary narrative comprising the whole of 18:18-30, which begins and ends with the images of eternal life, while as the narrative progresses, emerges diverse responses of the perils and possibilities of possession (Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, 364).

[307] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 116. Jesus's demand to sell everything and follow him has raised some disagreement among scholars. It is mostly stressed that Jesus's instruction to sell everything and follow him is not a one-size-fits-all demand for discipleship. Dyer opines that, while Jesus demands his disciples and others (Luke 5:11, 28; 14:23; 18:22, 28) to sell all they have, he also instructs some people to share their possessions and show hospitality to people (9:53; 10:5-12; 24:28-32). For if one sells everything, can the person they share with others or have a home to show hospitality to others? In fact, Zacchaeus gave half of his possessions to the poor and Jesus accepted him (19:8-9) ("Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 116). Others have seen Jesus's demand as being strictly for his immediate disciples. This is why Luise Schottroff and Wolfgang Stegemann suggest that the selling of all possessions should be limited to the disciples in Jesus's time (*Jesus and the Hope of the Poor*. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1986), 80-86). However, Kyoung-Jin Kim's position on the right use of possession is more appealing (*Stewardship and Almsgiving in Luke's Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield academic, 1998), 109). Luke, therefore, have intended the right use of possession than with the necessary selling of all possession in all circumstances.

for others who have stuff (*chremata*, v. 24)."[308] The ruler's question centers on the inheritance of eternal life (v. 18; cf. v. 30). Jesus shifts metaphorical fields, restating inheritance of enduring life as entrance into a state of which God (not the social elite) is the ruler (vv. 24-25; 29, cf. vv. 16-17). It is only when the ruler relinquishes his power and its basis in economic resources, can he enjoy the blessing of enduring life. Similarly, Jesus's disciples who have given up their household and its material life (vv. 28-30) will enjoy enduring life. The last verse (30), although returns to the image of eternal life, shed the metaphor of inheritance.[309]

The question from the audience shows concern about admittance: "Then who can be saved?" (v. 28; cf. 13:23). In this question, salvation joins eternal life, the kingdom of God, and treasure in heaven (18:22) as images in vv. 15-30 of the happy life that God has made for humanity and they desire and seek. Thus, the introduction of the salvation metaphor in v. 26 sheds light on the "how" of the admittance into the kingdom where life is ruled by God (reframing the concern with inheritance).[310] The theological import here is that one must be saved by God as indicated by the passive verb σωθῆναι ("saved," from σῴζω). Therefore, even if the audience does not intend a theological passive in this context, Jesus's response shows as much in v. 27: "What is impossible for mortals is possible for God."

Thus, possessions, or wealth in Luke, are not bad in themselves, but the right use of such possession, especially in helping the poor and showing hospitality is necessary for inheriting eternal life. Selling possessions, could simply be not being selfish but charitable. Luke 18:18-30, therefore, is a continuation of Luke's concern for the poor and his allusion to Isaiah in affirming Jesus the Prophetic-Messiah who proclaims good news for the poor.

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[308] Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, 364.
[309] Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, 364-5.
[310] Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, 365.

3.2.5 Acts 2:42-47 and 4:32-37

Luke's second volume, that is, the Acts of the Apostles, is a continuation of the Gospel of Luke. Hence, the themes that set the motion of the narrative are the same. In Acts, the disciples of Jesus and the believers continue with Jesus's care for the poor and marginalized, a concern that forms his manifesto in Luke 4. Even if the allusions to Isaiah and Luke 4 as it concerns the poor and marginalized are not very prominent in the Acts of the Apostles, it is seemingly implied that the motif is the same. Consequently, the early church in the Acts of the Apostles becomes a great example of how possessions are used for communal purposes, thus, breaking the social boundaries between the poor and the wealthy. This is why Dyer argues that there is a stronger emphasis on how the early church struggled with and lived out the teaching from Jesus on charity and hospitality in Luke's second volume, the Acts of the Apostles.[311] The prominent instances come from 2:42-47 and 4:32-37. Also, Luke shares at other places in Acts concerning the shortcomings of the early church in Jerusalem (5:1-11; 6:61-16 as well). However, Luke portrays his congregation here as a model of harmony and community. Such a model of sharing possessions and caring for those in need is of great importance for Luke as it fulfills Jesus's manifesto in Luke 4.

Acts 2:45, the first of the summaries concerning the life of the community of believers shows how the community of the first believers sold their property and possessions and put all the proceeds together, and attended to the needs of all among them.[312] This section provides an idealized conclusion to the amazing beginnings of the transformed people of God at Pentecost.[313] This communal living is made more visible in the second summary 4:32-37, where Luke demonstrates this sharing by the positive example of Joseph of Cyrus, whom the apostles name

[311] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 117.
[312] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 118.
[313] William S. Kurz, *Acts*, in PBC, ed., Jose E. A. Chiu (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2018), 1195.

Barnabas ("son of encouragement") who sells his land and provides the proceeds to the apostles to distribute to the poor/needy (4:36-37). He describes the community of believers with Greek philosophical axioms used for friendship. The believers live as "of one heart and soul," where members do not cling or claim exclusive ownership of their possessions, but put them together for the common good. Luke personifies this communal provision for the poor/needy by the example of those who sold their property and gave the proceeds to the apostles to distribute to the needy. Luke's use of, "at the apostles' feet," implies submitting them to the authority of the apostles for how the proceeds would be used communally. By this, Luke adds a positive rhetorical *exemplum* to demonstrate how such communal sharing was truly practiced.[314]

Because of the commitment of the early church toward seeing to the need of the poor, as intended by Jesus in Luke 4, and having "all things in common"– a Hellenistic way of describing friendship in the philosophical language (4:34-35)[315]– Luke explains that there was not a needy person in the community. He calls for friendship across social status and encourages the wealthy to provide help for the poor without any anticipation of goods or obedience in return. Consequently, Luke redefines the "ideal of friendship" as a means of providing for the poor in the community.[316] William S. Kurz throws more light on the sharing attribute. He explains that such a sharing is not a strict community of goods, as contained in ancient Qumran or contemporary

[314] Kurz, *Acts*, 1195.

[315]Dyer adds that scholars have argued that these utopia-like descriptions in Acts fulfill a Hellenistic understanding of friendship and sharing (cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 1:88-111; Plato, *Republic*, 420C-422B). This description does not detract from the historicity of the joy and unity of the early church to understand that Luke idealized these summaries in his narrative. Hence, Luke's description of the early church's sharing of possessions and care for the needy would have enticed the Hellenistic reader. This is because friendship (like reciprocity) in Hellenistic society serves as a tool for the wealthy and the highly placed of the society. The benefits of such a friendship are built on the reciprocity among the elite of the same status or anticipated reciprocal clientage from those of lower status ("Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 118).

[316] Dyer, "Good News to the Poor: Social Upheaval, Strong Warnings, and Sincere Giving in Luke-Acts," 118.

religious orders, whose members owe no personal property. Rather, in this case, some more wealthy members sold some of their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need.[317]

In general, Luke's description of the early church also appeals to the care for the poor in the standard of Justice set forth by God in the OT. Luke's expression in Acts 4:34, "there was not a needy person among them" is an allusion to Deut 15:14 (LXX) since both texts use the term ἐνδεής ("in need," "needy," or "poor"). This is like the prophetic tradition, which we saw earlier, where the community has the responsibility of taking care of the poor/needy as justice requires. Several times, in the prophetic literature, the ἄρχοντες ("rulers") was appraised by how they cared for the poor, orphans, widows, and those of lower status in general. It is possible that what the prophets condemned bad rulers for neglecting the poor and the needy was appropriated by the early church. This explains why in Acts 6:1-6, care for widows is seen in the establishment of the office of the diaconate. Also, in 9:36-42, the basis for raising Tabitha from the dead by Peter is premised on her charity to widows who testified for her.

In sum, even though the word πτωχός is not found in the Acts of Apostles, the book has the poor in the form of "the needy" or "those in need" as a major concern of the early church and dedicated a lot of time to the ministry of charity. The life of believers is a confirmation of the new age, which the followers of Jesus, exemplified in the early church as selling their possessions and giving money to the poor. This is seen in the communal sharing of property among the members of the early church community. This fulfills Jesus's mission as the eschatological Prophetic-Messiah (Isa 61:1-2) who proclaims good news to the poor (Luke 4:18-19).

[317] Kurz, *Acts*, 1195.

3.4 Summary of Chapter

From the foregoing argument, it is obvious that Luke has a great concern for the poor, described as the "down and outers." Secondly, the programmatic manifesto of Jesus in Luke 4:16-21 and Isa 61:1-2 (and Isaiah as a whole) shape Luke-Acts' notion of the poor. The passages about the poor after Luke 4 either explicitly or implicitly build upon Luke 4 and Isa 61. Luke's use of Isaiah links this concern to the prophetic tradition that sought justice and cares for the poor. Although Luke portrays the poor as those with economic needs, thus, associating them with those of low status, the marginalized, and on the society's fringe, his references to Isaiah in Jesus's manifesto at least suggest the universal scope of Jesus's mission which takes the liberating power of the kingdom that Jesus proclaims beyond the borders of Israel. By implication, the universal scope of Jesus's mission extends to the Gentiles as expressed by the early church in the Acts of the Apostles.

More so, Luke's solitary matching of the beatitudes with woes in Luke 6:20-26 is a literary style stressing his concern for the poor and the marginalized of the world in reference to the eschatological reversal of situations in the kingdom of God. The Beatitudes are, therefore, a call to discipleship and a caution to those who fall short of the demands of discipleship. Jesus's direction of woes towards the Pharisees and the lawyers in Luke 11:37-54 shows Luke's position on the standard of justice established by God in the OT and emphasized in the prophets, concerning justice and care for the "down and outers." Jesus's rebuke here, calls the Pharisees and lawyers to be attentive to the poor and practice love and justice.

Therefore, possessions, or wealth for Luke, are not bad in themselves. Nevertheless, the right use of such possession, particularly in serving the poor and showing hospitality is obligatory for receiving eternal life. This is why Luke's second volume considers the care of the poor as a

central part of the early church and concentrated a huge amount of time on the ministry of serving the poor. The way of life of the believers is a confirmation of the new age, exemplified by the early church “as selling their possessions and giving money to the poor.” All of this is an actualization of Jesus’s manifesto in Luke 4:18-19, which is the fulfillment of Isa 61:1-2.

CHAPTER FOUR
A SOCIO-SCIENTIFIC READING OF LUKE 4:16-21 AND THE POOR IN NIGERIA

The concern of our title, 'Luke and οἱ πτωχοί: a socio-scientific reading of Luke 4:16-21 as liberation,' is not only to do a socio-scientific study of the text but also to seek interpretations that can help in proffering solutions to certain problems in human society. As earlier explained in the introduction, this study aims at reading Luke 4:16–21 through the lens of social-scientific criticism and in dialogue with the issue of ethnic minorities in Nigeria, which is the crux of this research.

This chapter, therefore, explores what is a socio-scientific method. Secondly, it discusses the socio-political and religious contexts of Nigeria and how they influence the proclamation of the good news initiated by Jesus in Luke 4:16-21. The chapter further treats the causes of poverty in Nigeria from the dimension of ideological biblical interpretation and the issues of ethnic minorities. Lastly, the chapter considers the benefits of a socio-scientific reading of Luke 4:16-21 in Nigeria. The conclusion of the chapter sums up the findings and recommendations of the thesis.

4.1 Socio-Scientific Approach

A socio-scientific method is one of the methods of biblical interpretation. As earlier explained, our view of a socio-scientific reading here is patterned after the thought of Catherine Murphy, who explains that social-scientific criticism is an exegetical method that attempts to study the original social and cultural setting of a text through clues in the text's content and rhetoric and through the analysis of other ancient evidence. In this method, the searcher undertakes that the world in which these texts were written is totally distinct from our contemporary world. This implies that a modern critic cannot make a valid claim of the meaning of such texts without first having considerable knowledge of the social conventions and traditions of the author's

age.[318] This method devotes less attention to individual author, as it would be in narrative criticism, and pays more attention to the social context of the author since meaning is viewed as a socially-constructed phenomenon.

Furthermore, affiliating this research with the position that social-scientific theories are applicable to NT texts for a better understanding of first-century Palestine, this chapter uses sociological conflict theory in its study of Luke 4:16–21. The conjecture of Uwaegbute becomes important here, where he explains that conflict theory is a situation where "tensions and conflicts arise when resources, status, and power are unevenly distributed among groups in society and that these conflicts become the engine for social change. In this context, power can be understood as control of material resources and accumulated wealth, control of politics and institutions that make up the society and one's social status relative to others."[319] The outcome of conflict is not essentially violence, but more importantly is structural, and includes social and economic disparities among other structures. It leads to different access to job opportunities, social amenities, economic benefits, and other dividends by groups based on some social discriminating elements.[320] Since the conflict theory is situated within the ambiance of society, it is pertinent to also consider the meaning of social conflict. Rindap and Auwal defined social conflict as "a struggle over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain desirable values but also to neutralize injure and/or eliminate rivals"[321] The conflict theory explains that groups with a different economic and political power struggle over the position

[318] Murphy, *Biblical Criticism, New Testament Religious Studies Seminar*, https://webpages.scu.edu/ftp/cmurphy/courses/all/bible/exegesis/social-scientific.htm).

[319] Uwaegbute, "A Socio-Scientific reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 103.

[320] Manko Rose Rindap and Mari Idris Mohd' Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," *IJAH* vol. 3, no. 3 (2014): 92.

[321] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 92.

of control of the economy and power/authority. Concerning ethnic groups, conflict theory can be approached from two stages. Firstly, is the inter-ethnic stage. At this stage, minority ethnic groups are exploited and marginalized by the dominant majority group which control the economy and political power of the society. The second stage is intra-ethnic. Here, the dominant elites within an ethnic group subjugate, exploit, and marginalize the masses of the same ethnic group from within. This implies that conflict is inevitable under conditions of inter-ethnic competition for scarce or limited valuable resources within a society. However, this type of ethnic conflict strengthens the in-group and out-group thoughts of the members of ethnic groups who undergo such conflicts.[322]

The conflict theory is very important, especially in this chapter, because it relates the text of our study (Luke 4:16-21) to the problem of ethnic minority groups in Nigeria. Consequently, the use of conflict theory, here, benefits us in two dimensions. Firstly, the theory helps us to better comprehend the socio-political world of Luke 4:16–21 within which the text of our study is situated. Secondly, it reveals the discontent and agitations of "dominated Jews" against a system of Roman Palestine and the Hellenistic world in Luke's time that were quite stifling and destructive. More so, the application of the conflict theory to the Nigerian context is beneficial in revealing the agitations and yearnings of minority ethnic groups concerning issues of uneven allocation of social, political, and economic resources orchestrated by ethnic domination, while the minority groups persistently strive to earn a living in Nigeria.

Aligning with the above, our discussion of Jesus's manifesto (Luke 4:16-21), with a socio-scientific lens, and the social conflict theory, therefore, gives us a better depth into the socio-

[322] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 92.

political and economic situation of Nigeria and how best the product of our research can help in providing remedies to the causes of poverty in Nigeria.

4.2 Revitalizing Luke 4:16-21 with Socio-Scientific Optics

From our previous discussion of the socio-political and economic context of first-century Palestine and the Hellenistic world within which Luke wrote his Gospel in chapter two, we were able to establish the following: first-century-Palestine was a peasant society and politically dominated by the imperial Rome and their local allies; taxation, debt, and poverty were everyday realities; it was an honor and shame society; and it practiced patron-client relationship.

In alignment with the above context, the Gospel of Luke shows a class of people undergoing different forms of oppression, right from the very beginning of the ministry of Jesus, whom Jesus made the very goal of his ministry (4:16-21). This explains why Uwaegbute refers to 4:18-19 as "Jesus's manifesto to his people."[323] A brief look at this "manifesto" shows Jesus's interest in the welfare of the "down-and-out" in Galilean society: the poor, captive, the crushed or bruised, the blind, the heartbroken, etc. Uwaegbute rightly pointed out that "in a wide perspective, all those who, in Jesus's days suffered and groaned under different maladies materially or spiritually, were an integral part of this manifesto."[324] Among the group mentioned above are those who were conquered by predicaments in their lives. To worsen matters, they were subjected to Roman imperial rule which was confounded with a lot of maladies that some Jews found incompatible with their socio-political life. Consequently, as shown in the previous chapters (1-3), a socio-scientific reading of 4:16-21 shows Jesus's concern for all those in such an uncomfortable condition, making him a proclaimer of hope and salvation to those suffering all kinds of maladies.

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[323] Kingsley Ikechukwu Uwaegbute, "A Challenge of Jesus' Manifesto in Luke 4:16–21 to the Nigerian Christian," *IJTRT*, 5 (2013):141-2.

[324] Uwaegbute, "A Challenge of Jesus' Manifesto in Luke 4:16–21 to the Nigerian Christian," *IJTRT*, 5 (2013):144.

Since in first-century Palestine, the "down and outers" were mainly a marginalized group of people deprived of their honor in society, Jesus, in his manifesto, therefore, undertakes the position of the eschatological prophetic-Messiah, like that of the Third Isaiah, who has been sent to proclaim "good news to the poor." In addition, like in post-exilic Palestine, where the Davidic royal kingship is gone with the end of exile, Jesus assumes a royal function (as he affirms in 4:21) only discharged by the king in a jubilee year. Jesus, thus, announces good news to the "poor" or "down and outers." Jesus's concern for the "down and outers" in Luke 4:16-21 is a "liberational" one,[325] whereby, through the empowerment of the Spirit of God, he restores honor to the marginalized people of his society. This reading of Luke 4:16-21, therefore, has hermeneutical implications for Nigeria plagued with various social problems, especially the problem of ethnic minorities and ideological biblical interpretation of the "kingdom of God for the poor" as the causes of poverty in the country. It is in alignment with the above that we move into considering the socio-political contexts of Nigeria and how Luke 4:16-21 serves as a corrective lens.

4.3 An Overview of the Socio-Political Contexts and Ethnic-Minority Issues in Nigeria

Nigeria as a state got its independence on October 1, 1960. Though it is considered an independent nation, the aftermath of British colonialism forms a major historical trajectory of the nation, continues to shape, and influence its socio-economic and political affairs of the nation. Before the colonial conquest and rule, there was no state like Nigeria and the possibility of the existence of such a state was very faint. At this time, there was a motley of diverse groups whose histories and interactions, interwoven as they were by external influences, particularly through trade with Europe and the Arab world towards the last part of the nineteenth century.[326]

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[325] Uwaegbute, "A Socio-Scientific reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 102.

[326] Eghosa E. Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 2.

Before independence, Nigeria was a bipolar nation, comprising the northern and southern protectorates. These colonies were administered separately but with related territories. Nigeria as a state came into existence on January 1, 1914, when Sir Frederick Lugard, one of the colonial masters amalgamated the northern and southern protectorates. This is because similar to the subjugation of the Israelites under the imperial Roman Palestine in Jesus's time and the Greco-Roman context of Luke, Nigeria was under the imperial control of the British colonial masters. [327] This coming into the birth of Nigeria as a state was not without some issues, especially the structural imbalances that continue to manifest to this present day. This led to the division of Nigeria into three regions.

4.3.1 The Division of Nigeria into Regions

In 1947, Nigeria was further divided into three regions; North, West, and East, when the Richards Constitution took effect after Arthur Richard succeeded Lugard as the Governor-General of Nigeria. This new constitution organization situated the central legislature based in the capital Lagos controlled the whole country, while in each region Houses of Assembly was created with their regional capitals: Ibadan for the West; Enugu for the East; and Kaduna for the North. The Houses of Assembly served as advisory agents to the federal legislature on regional issues.[328]

In the Northern region, religion and commerce played influential roles. Islamic widespread influence as a result of long-existing economic activities, particularly trade interactions created near the trans-Saharan route and migrations united the Hausa states, the Kanem-Bornu (which was assigned to Britain during the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885)[329] Empire, and the Fulanis,

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[327] Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence*, 2.

[328] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 93.

[329] Marinus C. Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 17.

particularly to North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the greater part of the Islamic world. The Berbes and the Arabs introduced Islam into the Kanem kingdom around the eastern route, southern Sahara including the Hausa states, and all of West Africa, while the Arabs primarily spread Islam to Sudan and eastern Africa.[330] Important to mention here also is the event of the Fulani *jihad*, led by Usman dan Fodio in 1804, an Islamic strategy, orchestrated in order to pull the region of the Middle Belt under theocratic and centralized rulership controlled by the Sokoto Caliphate. This Islamic conquest, although successful in the northern region, met formidable resistance in the areas of Benue and Plateau, with the indigenous of people Tiv, Idoma, Igede, Ngas, and Berom rejecting Islamic religion and rule.[331] This invasion was favored by colonial rule since it reinforced and shaped the inter-group interaction in post-independence Nigeria. Osaghae argues that there are two repercussions of this Islamic invasion. Firstly, Islam was accepted as the major religion in Northern Nigeria supported by the colonial masters. The consequence was the less important position of the non-Moslem within the North, who have both no political and religious voice, especially considering the great number of Muslims in the North. To worsen matters, and promote their political agenda, the British indirect rule made it possible that appointees of the Caliphate and the Emirates were automatically imposed on the non-Muslims as their rulers. Secondly, the British accepted the political and social structuring of the Sokoto Caliphate as the "ideal" to be used and enforced in the other regions of what was developing as the Nigerian State.[332]

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[330] Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism*, 1. Iwuchukwu adds that the part of the Kanem-Bornu empire associated with Kanem significantly belongs to present-day Chad republic. Nevertheless, following the merger of the Kanem empire with Bornu, the whole empire is often referred to as the Bornu Empire or the Kanem-Bornu Kingdom. This kingdom extends from northern Chad to Kwararafa territory in the south, borders with Kano in the west and Wadi in the east (p. 1-2).

[331] Simeon Tsetim Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, American University Studies, Series 7, vol. 308 (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 144.

[332] Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence*, 2.

In order to succeed, the colonizers used an indirect rule in ruling Nigeria as did the imperial Roma Palestine who appointed locals within Israel who reported directly to the emperor. While the colonizers earned the loyalty and cooperation of the northern leaders, using their indirect rule practice, they promoted the course of Islam, they vehemently opposed Christian missionaries, especially those who made efforts to evangelize in the northern part of Nigeria. Christian missionaries such as Mary Slessor (who stopped the killing of twin babies in Nigeria) had already evangelized southern Nigeria since 1876. Later missionaries such as Samuel Ajai Crowther, W. Allakurah Sharper, and Edward Wilmot Blyden (a Pan-African Liberian missionary) experienced a lot of opposition from the British colonizer who took sides with the Muslims in the north. Blyden was tenacious in evangelizing the Muslims. He felt that converting the Muslims was easier than the traditionalists because he considered the Muslims as "half Christians."[333]

In fact, Iwuchukwu rightly says that, in the opinion of the colonizers, Islam, is by default the religion of the people, even though the presence of traditionalists was obvious, and even those indigenes who were considered non-Muslim will eventually become Muslim.[334] The reason behind this stratagem was political. Lugard had considered the political structure set by the Fulani political leaders in the north as an ideal for the successful operation of the indirect rule system that favored the British control of the vast land in northern Nigeria. Some of the arguments put forth by the British colonizers for maintaining the "Great Prohibition"[335] include the opinion that Christianity was considered by the Muslims as an instrument of the colonial authorities, considering its link to

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[333] Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism*, 21.

[334] Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism*, 15.

[335] This concept was coined by Jan Harm Boer in his discussion of the missionary messengers of liberation in a colonial context (*Missionary Messengers of Liberation in a Colonial Context: A Case Study of the Sudan United Mission*, (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Rodopi N.V., 1979), 205).

white missionaries; to prevent occurrences of *jihad* or revolt by Muslim populations; and to justify those in the Western world, following evolving events in the region, that Christians were the likely aggressors against Muslim and the indigenous people.[336] This will later have a significant effect on the Christian missionaries, especially in the eastern and southern parts of Nigeria. All of this was to buttress the stratagem established by the British colonizer in order to achieve their political rule.

In the Eastern region, the presence of many ethnic groups such as Igbo (which was the largest and occupied most of the area), Ijaw, Kalabari, Annang, Ibibio, and Efik, among others, was instrumental in the organization of village settlements in a non-centralized way. Iber explains that while maintaining the identity of the sub-group, the Igbos were united by Arochukwu, an Igbo clan, made up of Igbo and Ibibio origins who had an alliance and treatise with the Igbo clans. These groups exhibited some political and religious autonomy in the areas they controlled. Although these groups had autonomy, giving them some level of independence, they were still stateless, because they had no centralized government and their degree of independence and power structure were limited within the ethnic groups.[337]

The Western region was made up of Oyo and Benin kingdoms and were formidable and made available the political, social, and religious climate that would shape this part of Nigeria. In the region, the Yorubas formed the major tribal groups of the Oyo kingdom. They were made up of various sub-group and were related to a common ancestry traced to the legendary Oduduwa (who is known as the creator of the earth and ancestor of the Yoruba kings). On the other hand, the Benin kingdom was made up of different ethnic groups such as the Edo-speaking group of

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[336] Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism*, 16.

[337] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 145.

Isoko, Urhobo, and some Igbos without common ancestry, who were configured into the kingdom. Furthermore, both the Oyo and Benin kingdoms experienced many communal wars and tribal crises in the nineteenth century that increasingly led to their falling off and, subsequently, the birth of new regional powers and political structures.[338] However, the restructuring of the political loyalties in this region was orchestrated by the political figures from the Northern region in alliance with the British colonizers for the sake of economic and religious gains.[339]

The unequal development between northern and southern Nigeria similar to the socially polarized societies in Jesus's and Luke's time, together with the desire for political and economic security, especially by the Hausa-Fulani in the North, and the fear of southern domination, contributed to a very large extent, to the political instability of the country during the 1950s and 1960s, and has continued to present day Nigeria.[340]

In alignment with the above, Rotimi Suberu points out that Nigeria's most politically important ethnic diversity was the distribution of ethnic groups into a relatively centralized ethnic structure, where the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo have become the dominant ethnic groups. Thus, as the rivalries between these three groups continue to rise into political struggles at the end of the colonial era, combined with economic and electoral competition, it became obvious that Nigeria needs a decentralized system of government in order to accommodate all these groups. For Rotimi Suberu, only a decentralized system could bring about the constitutional reform in Nigerian

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[338] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 145.

[339] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 145. Iber quoting Osaghae (*Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence*, 3) adds "the wars and crises in the West were instigated and fuelled by the meddling of Fulani jihadists whose sphere of influence spread to Oyo and other northernmost part of the West, and EZuropean traders and colonialists who, particularly since the era of the slave trade, pursued manipulative and divisionist strategies to gain trade advantages and retain political-cum-military control in the eregion" (p. 145).

[340] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 148.

federal character that would address the challenges posed by the ethnopolitical complexity of the country.[341]

Richard's constitution was supplanted by Macpherson's in 1951. Macpherson's constitution, not only retained the regions but also emphasized their powers, thus allowing political parties to be formed: the Action Group (AG) (which became an opposition party to the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon) and later became the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) led by Nnamdi Azikiwe; the Northern People's Congress (NPC) was formed for the interest of the Northerners.[342] All these parties promoted regional participation. Thus, the NCNC, AG, and NPC became affiliated with the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa respectively. With this new system, the structure of the Nigerian government shifted from a unitary to a federal system. Thus, the politics of regionalism become very deep-rooted and institutionalized, marking for the first time, the coming together of regional public service, judiciary, and marketing boards in Nigeria.[343]

Furthermore, the coming together of the three regions or city-states will give rise to Nigerian as a semi-nation. This birth of Nigeria as a state was the creation of the British colonial power who exerted their force and political might as an empire upon the city-states in West Africa. Through the aid of the locals, whom the colonizers appointed as local chiefs, they were able to implement the indirect rule and organize a nation that would meet its needs and possibly, the needs of those who lived in the State. This is why Charles Abiodun Alao explains that after the establishment of the Islamic religion through the Fulani *jihad* and colonial rule, numerous

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[341] Rotimi Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001)
20. See also, Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 147.
[342] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 93.
[343] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 93.

administrative structures were retained by the British colonizers.[344] With the amalgamation of the northern and Southern protectorates by Lord Lugard in 1914 and the emergence of the Nigerian federation, the British colonizers ruled Nigeria as a unitary State under the watch of Macpherson's constitution of 1951 as a quasi-federal unit.[345]

Because the 1951 Constitution failed to grant the regions the freedom to maintain their identity as part of a unified state, which is similar to the condition of the Israelites in Jesus's time under the imperial Roman rule, the possibility of a political crisis became inevitable. Consequently, Oliver Lyttleton, the Colonial Secretary, convened a Constitutional Conference in London for the revision of the 1951 Constitution, from July 30 to August 22, 1953, which was originally anticipated to end in five years. This conference gave birth to a federal constitution that was accepted by the leaders of the main political parties.[346] To complete the work of the London Conference, another conference was convened in Lagos in January and February 1954 that established the Lyttelton Constitution. Rindap and Auwal citing Osadolor (*The Development of the Federal Idea and the Federal Framework, 1914-1960*, 2003) rightly explains that "the nature of competitive federalism before 1960 made it impossible to satisfy the increasing demands for local autonomy by minority groups within regions. The minorities in the Eastern Region formed the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers state movement and demanded a separate state. In the Northern Region, minority groups formed various associations to demand the creation of a Middle Belt. In the Western Region, the Midwest State Movement demanded the creation of the Midwest State."[347]

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[344] Charles Abiodun Alao, "Islamic Radicalisation and Violence in Nigeria," in ed. James Gow, Funmi Olonisakin and Ernst Dijxhoorn, *Militancy and Violence in West Africa: Religion, Politics and radicalization*, Contemporary Security Studies (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2013), 43.

[345] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 145.

[346] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 94.

[347] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 94.

This is why Iber, citing Rotimi Suberu, notes that the same colonial federal legacy that sought to create harmony among Nigeria's major ethnic groups was flawed by a system of centralization of power that promoted corruption and political division on ethnic lines. This corrupt act led to the issues of ethnic minority groups and poverty in Nigeria.

The Lyttelton Constitution officially established Nigeria as a three regional federation. The Constitution made available the basis for Nigeria's three large, but imbalanced, regional groups that regulate the internal and administrative structures of the nation, however, the central government controlled external and inter-regional issues.[348] It is therefore, possible to suggest the three connected factors that led to a substantial change to the federal form of government Nigeria implemented in 1954: "the staggering diversity and shear strength of ethnolinguistic forces in the federation; the differential regional impact of colonial administration, modernization, and mobilization; and the enormous attraction that federalist guarantees of sub-national autonomy had for the emergent, regionally based Nigerian successor elites."[349] These factors, together with the support of the British colonizers established Nigeria as one of the most ethnically diverse and divided countries. This is why within Nigeria, there were to be found about 380 languages, 20 geographical regions, and greatly divergent forms of political structures at different levels like clans, villages, city-states, chiefdoms, kingdoms, and a Caliphate.[350] This political stratification of Nigeria on ethnic affiliations nurtured the seedlings that have matured to become the perpetual tensions, crises, and divisions in the country since every ethnic group struggles to protect its

[348] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 146.

[349] Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria*, 19. See also, Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 146.

[350] Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria*, 20. See also, Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 146.

interests.[351] However, pressure from the movements from the three regions led to the establishment of the Henry Willink Commission, who was also the Colonial Secretary on September 25, 1957.[352]

The Henry Willink Commission was the first attempt ever to address the ethnic minority question in Nigeria. The commission concluded its investigation in April 1958 and proposed the balancing of power in the country so as to avoid the majority to use power exclusively for personal advantage. However, while state creation was proposed as an antidote to the issues of ethnic minorities, the Willink Commission moderated this since it thought that the interests of ethnic minorities could be best safeguarded at the Federal level.[353] This stage in the history of Nigeria introduced the country into a period called 'Nigeria's First Republic.'

4.3.1 The First Republic (1960-1966)

The First Republic begins after Nigeria's Independence on October 1, 1960,[354,] and ended in 1966. The outcomes of the 1954 Federal Constitution, and the 1960 Independence Constitution, gave rise to the first Nigerian post-independence civilian administration, with Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the Prime Minister, while Nnamdi Azikiwe became the first president in 1963 when Nigeria officially became a Republic.[355] At independence, the major constitutional characteristics that formed the government framework at the initial stages of independence concentrated much power on the federal government. The federal government controlled exclusively, defense, external affairs, currency, mines and minerals, transportation, and

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[351] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 146-7.

[352] B. O. Osadolor, *The Development of the Federal Idea, and the Federal Framework, 1914-196*0 in Amuwo et al. Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria (Nigeria: Spectrum Books Ltd, 2003), 44. See also Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 94.

[353] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 94.

[354] Iwuchukwu, *Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Postcolonial Northern Nigeria: The Challenges of Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism*, 39.

[355] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 150.

communication.[356] The challenge of the First Republic, however, was how to balance the power of the rising federal government with the growth of a regional party system. The centralization of power to the federal government hampered the granting of governing status to the regions. Sometimes, there were conflicts between regional autonomy and federal autonomy on issues of statecraft, especially in areas of revenue allocations and development loans. Other political developments were indicative of subordinating the regions in favor of the federal government.[357] Since the government favored centralization without making adequate provisions for the regions, it became a challenge for those who served as representatives of regions, especially on how to pull resources from the center to the regions. This process led to some tensions among different regions as they made efforts to seek recognition from the federal government, leading to a countercoup in 1966. Iber rightly explains that the perception of neglect, domination, and control by one region over the other has led to the emergence of military rule in Nigeria from 1966-1979.[358]

4.3.2 Military Rule and Federalism (1966-1979)

The First Republic was deposed in a bloody coup d'etat planned by the officers mostly from the Eastern region, instigated by Major Kaduna Nzeogwu on January 15, 1966. This claimed the lives of many regional leaders, leading to the emergence of Major General J.T.U. Aguiyi-Ironsi, from the Igbo tribe, became the first military head of State for six months. His Decree of Number 34 of 1966, displaced the federal system of government and supplanted it with a unitary

[356] Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria*, 26.

[357] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 150.

[358] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 150-1.

system.[359] This action was seen by the Northern region as an attempt by the Eastern region (the Igbo) to control both the political and economic goods of Nigeria.

Another effect of the unitary system was the removal of the regional public services and the establishment of one public service for Nigeria. The unitary system sought to give each area a certain uniformity of representation. Because the Southern part of Nigeria was more developed than the Northern part, the northerners became threatened both by the decree of 1966 that gave equal representation to each part, and by the imbalance which resulted from the prosecution of those who were killed in the coup d'etat of January 1966. This situation led to the countercoup of July 1966, headed by Major Murtala Mohammed and Captain T.Y. Danjuma, that claimed the lives of many top-ranking Igbo military officers including Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi. This countercoup restored northern dominance in Nigeria and brought back the federal system. The South saw this countercoup as revenge by the North. This brought in Lieutenant. Colonel Yakubu Gowon on August 1, 1966, a man from *Ngas*, a minority group from the Middle Belt as the second military head of State. Gowon restored the federal system which triggered deep thoughts of hostility in the Eastern region following the killings during and after the coup.[360]

After the assumption of office, Gowon called for a conference to discuss Nigeria's constitutional reform. At the conference, the governor of the Eastern region, Colonel Chukuemeka O. Ojukwu held strongly the view that any region that desired to withdraw from the federation should be permitted to do so. However, the other regions insisted on replacing the federal system with a Confederate system. Unfortunately, the conference had no results. Thus, another summit of military leaders was held in Aburi, Ghana, in January 1967, where efforts were made to resolve

[359] Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence*, 56.

[360] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 153.

the increasing tension between the Eastern region and the federal government. Seeing the possibility of the breakaway of the Eastern region, Gowon created 12 States to supplant the existing regions. Iber rightly points out that "this move by Gowon's action was meant to achieve two results: a response to the call by minority groups for the creation of States; and a diffusion of tension between the East and the federal government."[361] However, neither of these aims was realized. Rather, the Eastern region declared the State of Biafra, separate and independent of Nigeria.

Thus, "Although the minority-populated Mid-West region was carried out from the Yoruba West in 1963, the political aspiration of Nigeria's minorities for the security of their own regions or states was not given any real attention until the collapse of the First Republic in January 1966."[362] The consequence of this action by the East was the emergence of the Civil War between the federal government's army and the army from the Biafra State that lasted from 1967-1970.

4.3.3 Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970)

The Biafran Republic was announced by Colonel Chukwuemeka O. Ojukwu, the military governor of the Eastern region on May 27, 1967. The ruling Gowon administration responded to Ojukwu by declaring a state of emergency in the Nigerian Federation, referring to Ojukwu's action as treacherous and unconstitutional. The war began on July 6, 1967. Gowon first directed the police to take care of the situation since he considered the incident likely.[363] However, foreign interference propelled it into a Civil War. The French supported the Biafrans with arms. Secondly, Biafra received foreign support by stirring up religious sympathy. This systematic religious

[361] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 153.
[362] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 94.
[363] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 153.

propaganda came through pro-Biafran sympathy campaigns by relief organizations such as the Red Cross, Caritas, and Oxfam.[364] In alignment with this, Osaghae argues that the pro-Biafran sympathy was huge because "it was more the result of well-organized and effective propaganda machinery which was handled internally by the 'Biafra Directorate of Propaganda' headed by Uche Chukwumerije and coordinated externally by the Geneva-based Mark Press. The war was a genocidal one waged by the Northern Muslims who had declared a jihad to exterminate Igbos from the face of the earth."[365] This war ended on January 15, 1970, with Biafra being defeated.

4.3.4 Nigeria After the Civil War and Present Nigeria

With the defeat of Biafra by the Nigerian army, the unity of the country was retained. However, the issues of class and ethnic consciousness became more prominent. The struggle for political power, and social and economic security are all based on one's ethnic affiliation or location. This unhealthy economic and class distinction made the governability of Nigeria so difficult since suspicions on the grounds of language and location and the corresponding allocation of social amenities and economic values were determined by the ethnic affiliation factor. This fostered exclusiveness in political leadership and the growth of corruption and nepotism.

While citing Badru, Iber explains the crash distinction between Northern, Eastern, and Southern Nigeria, especially on economic grounds, because the Northern commercial class got the support of the British colonizers, who created and maintained administrative policies that favored them.[366] This new elite group who emerged during the First Republic and their inability to be good stewards of the Civil War gave rise to the Civil War which Badru refers to as the "elite's war" of

[364] Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence*, 65-6.
[365] Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence*, 66.
[366] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 155.

greed, fought over the private distribution of the "petro-dollars."[367] Nevertheless, with the already established federal system by Gowon before the Civil War, which divided the country into 12 States in May 1967, there was a great alteration of the formation of the federal structure and which also attended to the issue of majority-minority relations. "By giving relative satisfaction to the long-standing ethnic minority demands for new States, Gowon's 12 State structure not only overturned the structural hegemony of the North but also liberated many minority communities from the regional stranglehold of the majority groups and undermined local ethnic minority support for the secessionist bid of the Eastern region."[368] Gowon's efforts to heal the wounds of the Civil War proved abortive since some parts of the country felt betrayed and neglected.

Gowon was overthrown following the coup d'etat of July 29, 1975, by Murtala Mohammed, who had Olusegun Obasanjo as his Chief of Staff.[369] However, the administration of Gowon (1966-1975) and the Mohammed-Obasanjo government (1975-1979) increasingly displaced the long-existing practice of distributing the country's revenue on a regional basis, and replaced it with a population-based system, that allocated revenues based on population and inter-state parity. Thus, "whereas the old regions were the primary beneficiaries of commodity export revenues in the fifties and sixties, the new oil-rich States were denied the export revenues derived from their territories by the center. For instance, while in March 1969, 50% of both off-shore and on-shore mining rents and royalties were allocated to the State from where they had been derived,

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[367] Peter Badru, *Imperialism and Ethnic Politics in Nigeria* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1998), 82-3.

[368] Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria*, 499-517.

[369] The Mohammed/Obasanjo regime experienced two heads of State, Mohammed (July, 1975 to February, 1976) and Obasanjo (February, 1976 to October, 1979). These two are considered as one continuous regime since Obasanjo was Mohammed's deputy, and after the Mohammed's assassination in an unsuccessful coup in February 1976, Obasanjo became the head of State and returned the key positions of office earlier appointed by his predecessor as well as the structural formation and policies (Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 158).

by March 1979 only 20% of on-shore mining rents and royalties were allocated on a derivation basis."[370]

Also, the restructuring of the 19 States by Mohammed-Obasanjo in April 1976 highlighted the increasing subordination of ethnic minorities to the majority's interest after the Civil War. Whereas Gowon's 12 States had included at least six ethnic minority States, the new 19 States of the Mohammed-Obasanjo included 12 ethnic majority States and 7 minority States. This was because some requests by the key ethnic minority-dominated statehood for New Cross River, Port Harcourt, and Zaria or New Kaduna were disregarded in the 1976 restructuring.[371]

4.3.5 The Second Republic and Civilian Rule (1979-1983)

In 1979, the military regime came to an end with Obasanjo, with a smooth handover to Alhaji Shehu Shagari on October 1, 1979. This began the Second Republic. The civilian regime did little to give hope to ethnic minority groups. While citing Suberu, Rindap, and Auwal note how the ethnic minorities did in a sense marginally benefit from two aspects of the Second Republic:

> 1. The establishment of an American Style presidential system, which required the President to obtain appreciable electoral support in at least two-thirds of the states in the federation. 2. The introduction of the "federal character" principle, which required broad ethnic or inter-ethnic representation in the composition of key national bodies.[372]

Yet, identity politics in Nigeria was re-enacted in the elections of the Second Republic, with 3 of the 5 registered political parties linking to the leaders of the three central political parties of the First Republic: The National Party of Nigeria (NPN), New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) headed

[370] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 95.

[371] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 95.

[372] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 95. See also, Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria*, 29-56.

by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, prominent in the states in the old Eastern and the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) headed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo, prominent in the states, in the old Western regions. These parties simulated electoral victories along recognized ethnic and religious lines in the 1979 and 1983 elections, providing insight into the identity politics in the Second Republic.[373]

However, the efforts to implement federal character during Shagari's rule infiltrated different levels of the nation: Social, political, and economic. Shagari's rule became very corrupt and replaced State power-sharing with personal power-sharing. Similarly, State representation became replaced by patronage representation. The effect of this corruption, and the inability of political leaders to live up to their expectations, led to the return of military rule again.[374]

4.3.6 The Return of Military Rule (1983-1999), the Third Republic (1993), and the Fourth Republic (1999-2023)

With the return of the military regime (1983-1999), four military heads of State, and a civilian head of State ruled Nigeria during this period. General Muhamadu Buhari (a Fulani, from Katsina State, northern Nigeria) ruled from 1983-1985. He was overthrown by General Ibrahim Babangida, who ruled from 1985-1993. A revolt by the ethnic minority military officers was exhibited by a Tiv man, from the Middle-Belt, Major Gideon Orkaa on April 22, 1990. However, Major Orkaa's coup failed and he was executed by General Babangida. Between December 1991, and November 1993, the military government allowed civilian governors to rule their states. But the political defenselessness of the democratically elected State governors was obviously shown on June 12, 1993, when the military government not only annulled the elections conducted, but also shut down the many State-owned media houses that had criticized its annulment of the Third

[373] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 95-96.

[374] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 160.

Republic's election that produced Chief M.K.O. Abiola as president of Nigeria. The military regime also decentralized and proposed even local government independence, making it impossible for the States to have control over the local governments.[375]

Chief Ernest Shonekan (a Yoruba, from Lagos State), a civilian, ruled Nigeria from August 1993 - November 1993. This period marked the strangest blending of military-civilian alliance ever experienced in Nigeria's political history.[376] However, General Babangida was still the head of the military while Shonekan ruled Nigeria. Since General Babangida was not showing any sign of possible continuation of civilian rule, and the consequences of his action on June 12, 1993, Shonekan saw no hope. The military then took over power again, with the emergence of General Sani Abacha (a Hausa from Kano State), who ruled from 1993- 1998. Abacha had many challenges from external foreign bodies who called for a Sovereign National conference to evaluate the content of Nigeria's federation before independence. On the contrary, Iber explains that "Abacha's regime enforced military federalism to the letter and centralized the administration at his fingertips. He is also known to have been the most corrupt leader ever in Nigeria. His sudden death in June 1998, was unofficially declared a day of rejoicing in many parts of the nation."[377] Abacha was also making secret plans to transition into becoming the civilian president of Nigeria but through unscrupulous means.

Following Abacha's death, General Abdulsalami Abubakar took over the leadership of Nigeria and ruled from 1998-99. He revised Abacha's transition agenda in one year and handed over power to the civilian president Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (a Yoruba from Ogun State,

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[375] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 161.

[376] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 162.

[377] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 162-3.

southern Nigeria), a former military head of State (1976-1979), who won the election under the People's Democratic Party (PDP), on May 29, 1999, ushering in a new democratic dispensation of the Fourth Republic. The vice president was Atiku Abubakar, a Hausa-Fulani, Adamawa State., introducing the formula: "If the president is from the North, the vice president must come from the south, and vice versa." This identity politics established at the beginning of the Fourth Republic germinated to become the three determinant criteria for nominating presidential candidates for all political parties in Nigeria up till this day. Firstly, if the president for a particular tenure is from the North, the vice president will come from the South (and vice versa). Secondly, if the president is a Muslim, his vice president must be a Christian. Lastly, if the zoning of the presidency goes to the North, the next zoning goes to the South. These requirements have done more harm than good, since the voting at elections focuses on the political parties and not the candidates.

Firstly, they have almost reserved, exclusively, the office of the president to the North (Hausa-Fulani) and the South (Yoruba), excluding the third major ethnic group in the East, the Igbo, and over 250 other ethnic groups. This has controlled the political structure of Nigeria to date. We shall return to this situation in the section on 'Ethnic Minority and Marginalization.'

In fact, the political preparations that led to the emergence of Olusegun Obasanjo as the president, illustrates an indisputable case of identity politics in Nigeria. Rindap and Auwal rightly explain that "based on the circumstances of the state of the nation at the death of General Sani Abacha, it was the political calculation that only a president of the south-west extraction and of the same ethnic siring as Chief M.K.O. Abiola could atone for Abacha's sin of annulling the June 12 presidential election and douse the tension in the already overheated polity."[378] Even Obasanjo, due to his democratic advocacy, was imprisoned by General Sani Abacha's regime. Since 1999,

[378] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 96.

Nigeria has enjoyed an uninterrupted democratic rule. Obasanjo served for two tenures (1999-2007), becoming the first leader to become reprocessed in what Iber describes as "what now has become a crisis of leadership."[379]

With the emergence of Obasanjo, many Nigerians celebrated and hoped for a better Nigeria since Obasanjo had earlier headed Nigeria as a military head of State. His administration made many efforts in restoring both the economic and political structures of Nigeria. In his time, the judiciary was established with professionalism; the economy had budgeting practices instituted with an increase in the number of commercial banks, reducing the nation's foreign debt; the planning and structuring of Abuja, the Capital Territory, led by the minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nasiru El-Rufai; and the improvement of salary structures and minimum wage of civil servants. Although the Fourth Republic brought a lot of stability, it has not been able to solve the problems of ethnic minority groups and the gap between the few rich ethnic majority and the many poor ethnic minority similar to the social contexts in Jesus's and Luke's time continued.

It is important to note that Obasanjo's administration recorded huge numbers of challenges emanating from issues of marginalization and ethnic tension in various parts of Nigeria. The North, who greatly supported him (more than his home region, the South-West) alleged that he betrayed their support since he retired and dismissed key military officers from the area, leading to an imbalance in ministerial positions. In Kaduna, thousands were killed due to the war between Christians and Muslims, over the hosting of the "Miss World Beauty Contest," which was purely political.[380] In the South, particularly in Bayelsa, an oil-rich State, the military invaded and killed

[379] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 162-3.

[380] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 163.

many and destroyed properties when they were called to settle communal crises, without the government's sufficient explanation of such an action. The issue of the Niger Delta has been a thorny one up to this day.[381] There were many other ethnic "clashes involving the Ijaw, Itsekiri, and Urhobo communities of Delta State and the ethnic militias of the Odua People's Congress, the Bakasi Boys, the Ijaw Youth Council and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra"[382] in the East. In the Middle Best, particularly in Benue State, the crisis between the Tiv and the Jukun of Taraba State, which led to the killing of nineteen military men brought mayhem over the Tiv people following the order of the military troops by Lt. General Theophilus Yakubu Danjuma (a Jukun military officer) to invade the area, killing hundreds of the Tiv people without government's explanation.

With the many instabilities, corruption, and ethnic divisiveness surrounding Obasanjo's administration, Nigeria was nominated by Transparency International as the second most corrupt nation in the world, a position the country has held for several years. This was as the result of political offices, ministerial positions, the judiciary (with the indefinite suspension of Justice Wilson Egbo-Egbo, a high court judge with the Abuja High Court), and many other atrocities.

Obasanjo made the move of going for a third tenure but was opposed by the National Assemblies. However, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (a Fulani man), the governor of Katsina, a northern State, supported Obasanjo together with his State. Since Obasanjo could not achieve his ambition of a third tenure, he then prepared his supporter, Yar'Adua as the flag bearer of his party, the People's Democratic Party to take over from him. Obasanjo's two tenures came to an end in 2007,

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[381] Jonas Egbudu Akung, "The Portrayal of Liberation and the Niger Delta Question in Arnold Udoka's Akon, *Long Walk to a Dream and Iyene: A Dance Drama*," *IJALEL*, vol 5, no. 3 (2016):203.

[382] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 164.

with a reckless play with the citizen's franchises in the form of an election, since the election was not free and fair, and Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, was elected and sworn in as the second president of the Fourth Republic on May 29, 2007, with Goodluck Jonathan, an Ijaw man, Bayelsa State, Nigeria, form the South-South as his vice president. The election was greatly a disgrace to Nigeria's democracy.[383] However, it was better than Obasanjo's third tenure and the military coup that had been in existence.

Yar'Adua is recorded to be the best-serving president of Nigeria for the short time he served. While giving his first speech as the president, Yar'Adua acknowledged the shortcomings of the general elections that led to his emergence as the president of Nigeria and promised Nigerians to amend the electoral reform. He was the first Nigerian elected president who made a declaration of his assets, making him unique. Yar'Adua's administration had a seven-point agenda: infrastructure (electricity and transportation), Niger Delta regional development, food security, human capital investments (health, education, and training), land reforms and home ownership, national security, and wealth creation.[384] This agenda began to take shape. The economy was becoming better, and the working condition of civil servants became better. Many Nigerians celebrated Yar'Adua as the promised Nigerian Messiah. Unfortunately, Yar'Adua's administration lasted only for a while due to his ill health and finally ended with his death on May 5, 2010. His death was a period of mourning.

With Yar'Adua's death, Goodluck Jonathan was sworn in as the president of Nigeria on May 6, 2010, with Namadi Sambo, from the North (Kaduna State) as his vice president.

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[383] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 167.

[384] Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria*, 167.

Goodluck's administration set out to continue with the agenda established by Yar'Adua's administration, especially the resolve to intensify good governance, fight against corruption, and electoral reforms. The administration of Goodluck was impressive. He sustained to a very large extent the agenda of Yar'Adua. The supply and price of petroleum at the price of N65 (0.54USD at the exchange rate of N120 per 1USD) per liter (as against N263.760 today, at the exchange rate of N750-N1000 per 1USD)[385] was a welcoming development reminiscent of the 1970s and 1980s regarding gas and related products. The appointment of Prof. Attarihu Jega (from Kebbi State, northern Nigeria) as the umpire of the Independent National Election Commission (INEC) was celebrated. In fact, the amendment of the Electoral Act of the 1999 Constitution, moving the date for the general election to January 2011 as against April 2011 was applauded by Nigerians. Goodluck successfully ended Yar'Adua's tenure in 2011 and had many supporters and was hence elected as the third president of the Fourth Republic, and was sworn in on May 29, 2011. He proclaimed his administration with his "transformation agenda" which was aimed at transforming the Nigerian the economy in order to meet the needs of Nigerians and at the same time catapulting Nigeria to be among the first twenty world's economies in 2020. Goodluck's foreign policy cemented Nigeria's relationship with foreign economies, giving the country a better chance of economic growth.[386]

The *Premium Time News Paper* of May 29, 2015, as reported by Nicholas Ibeke, expressed Goodluck's failure in the 2015 elections and his achievements over five years.[387] However,

[385] GlobalPetrolprice.com., Nigeria Gasoline Prices, litre, April 24, 2023. https://www.globalpetrolprices.com/Nigeria/gasoline_prices/. Retrieved May 2, 2023.
[386] Blessing E. N. Thom-Otuya, "President Goodluck Jonathan's Transformation Agenda and Nigeria's Foreign Policy," *Social Science Reviews*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2015): 30.
[387] Nicholas Ibeke, "Nigeria 2015 Transition: Jonathan's Failure, Achievements in Five Years," in *Premium Times News Paper*, May 29, 2015. https://www.premiumtimesng.com/features-and-interviews/183866-nigeria2015-transition-jonathans-failures-achievements-in-five-years.html. The paper expressed how after sweeping to power with a vast majority of the votes during the 2011 presidential election, it didn't take long before the Goodluck Jonathan

Goodluck's promises were not completely fulfilled as he was not able to stabilize power and electricity and to settle issues of fuel (and gas), subsidy, and refineries. Unfortunately, his administration could not provide job opportunities to the teeming population of unemployed youth. More so, there were many issues of corruption and people embezzling public funds. For instance, the Aviation Minister, Stella Oduah was alleged to have squandered N255 million for purchasing personal cars without any reprimand by the Goodluck administration. Similarly, when the Central Bank Governor, Lamido Sanusi had alerted the president that over $20 billion in oil money was looted by the Nigeria National Petroleum Commission, the president was indifferent.

The most devastating incident that truncated the Goodluck's administration was the emergence of the *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Ladda'awatih wal-Jihad* (JASDJ) meaning "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teaching and Jihad," which is popularly known as *Boko Haram*.[388] *Boko Haram* is a group of the *Sunni* people calling for jihad. It is a Nigeria-based group that seeks to take over the current Nigerian Government and replace it with a regime based on Islamic law. It is also known to uphold the belief that Western education is forbidden. *Boko* is a holdover from the colonial English word for book. It is possible that *Boko Haram* has been in existence in several forms since the late 1990s.[389] Its first recognized leader was Muhammad Yusuf, from Jakusko, Yobe state, but grew up in Maiduguri where he attended the Idemi Mosque. Yususf's teaching emanated from similar teaching of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan, that

presidency began to unravel. Mr. Jonathan, who had endeared himself to the majority of ordinary Nigerians with his "I had no shoes" speech, promised a break from the old ways of doing things. His campaign slogan which was tagged "A Breath of Fresh Air" promised a break from the old and mostly retrogressive way the country had been governed in the past. Like all the country's past leaders before him, Mr. Jonathan kicked off his presidency with a string of promises.

[388] Charles Abiodun Alao. "Islamic Radicalization and Violence in Nigeria" in ed. James Gow, Funmi Olonisakin and Ernst Dijxhoorn, *Militancy and Violence in West Africa: Religion, Politics, and radicalization*, Contemporary Security Studies (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2013), 74.

[389] Counter Terrorism Guide, Terrorism Groups: *Boko Haram*. Retrieved April 12, 2023. https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/boko_haram.html.

sees Western civilization or influence on Islam as totally un-Islamic and a threat to the religion's extinction. The sect also believes that issues relating to banking, jurisprudence, co-education, taxation, etc., were totally opposed to Islam.[390] The group encountered obstructions in July 2009 when clashes with Nigerian military forces led to the deaths of hundreds of its members were killed while its leader Muhammad Yusuf was arrested. While in police custody, Yusuf was killed, and this infuriated many members of the group. After a year or so, the members regrouped and produced a more formidable religion than has ever formed an opposition to the Nigerian government since the 1981 *Maitatsine* riots (a sequence of violent uprisings initiated by Islamist militants in northern Nigeria between 1980 and 1985).[391]

In July 2010, *Boko Haram's* former second-in-command, Abubakar Shekau, posted in a video, claiming leadership of the group while threatening attacks on Western influences in Nigeria. A few weeks later, Shekau issued a second statement expressing solidarity with *Al-Qa'ida* and also threatened the United States. It is under Shekau's leadership, that the group has continued to increase in operational capabilities, with increasing use of improvised explosive devices (IED), vehicle-borne IED (VBIED), and female suicide attacks against a wide range of targets.[392] In June 2011, the new brand of *Boko Haram* set off its first VBIED, and carried out its first attack against a Western interest- a vehicle-bomb attack on UN headquarters in Abuja, killing at least 23 people and injuring more than 80 on August 26, 2011. Shekau claimed responsibility for the attack and promised future targeting of US and Nigerian Government interests.[393]

[390] Alao, Islamic Radicalization and Violence in Nigeria, 74.
[391] Alao, Islamic Radicalization and Violence in Nigeria, 75.
[392] Counter Terrorism Guide, Terrorism Groups: *Boko Haram*.
[393] Counter Terrorism Guide, Terrorism Groups: *Boko Haram*.

Furthermore, *Boko Haram's* capability enlarged in 2014, with the group carrying out near-daily attacks against Christians, security agents, the media, schools, politicians, and Muslims who they saw as their opposers. The sect continued to raise its international profile, promising allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in March 2015, and publicly using the name "ISIL-West Africa Province" and similar variants while carrying out concurrent suicide bombings in N'Djamena, Chad, in June of the same year. In April 2014, the sect kidnapped 276 schoolgirls in Borno State, an action that got international condemnation and in February 2015 triggered a large regional CT offensive against the group that evacuated it from most of its strongholds in Nigeria. However, the sect remains resilient in attacks in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, while stressing the danger it poses to Western and regional interests. Consequently, in November 2013, the US State Department classified *Boko Haram* as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.[394]

With the devastation and unrest superintended by *Boko Haram,* Goodluck could do but only a little, especially in the area of security. Many Nigerians became disappointed since life and property were threatened in many states, especially in the North. Consequently, Goodluck lost in the January 2015 general election to Muhamadu Buhari (a Fulani, from Katsina State, northern Nigeria) of the All Progressive Congress party (APC), as the majority of Nigerians voted for "change," a common description of the people's desire for Buhari. This election had many irregularities. However, Goodluck set out to see to the good of the citizens and never protested the defeat when he expressed that his political ambition is not worth the blood of any Nigerian.

Buhari became the fourth president of the Fourth Republic on May 29, 2015, with Prof. Yemi Obasanjo, a Yoruba from the South as his vice. The emergence of Buhari was celebrated,

[394] Counter Terrorism Guide, Terrorism Groups: *Boko Haram*.

following his antecedence of discipline while he served as a military head of State (1983-1985). It was a movement of hope that Nigeria will become great and insecurity will be wiped out. At the beginning of his presidency, Buhari made efforts to recover stolen funds, even those stolen by the former head of State, the late General Sani Abacha. Many of those who held public offices were invited by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for interrogation, and many stolen public funds were recovered. On security, Buhari introduced Operation Whirl Stroke among other Joint Task Forces (comprising the military and para-military) to combat insurgencies in Borno, Benue, Nasarawa, and Taraba among other States. The economy was a bit stable at the beginning of his tenure. However, Buhari never met the expectations of Nigerians.

On the contrary, Buhari seems to be the very poorly performed president ever, in Nigerian history concerning issues of ethnic divisiveness, and insecurity. Buhari failed to protect the lives of the Nigerians, as hundreds were killed in Maiduguri, Benue, and Taraba, among many others. In fact, insecurity completely rampaged every Nigeria.[395] At the end of Buhari's first tenure in 2019, many Nigerians never wished to hear the name "Buhari." Musicians like Daniel Wilson used their artistic voice in the song "Never Again for APC"[396] to express the dismay of the common people and resolve never to allow Buhari to come for a second tenure. To the utmost dismay of Nigerian, Buhari was announced the winner of the February 23, 2019 elections for a second tenure. This, however, was achieved through the manipulations of the election results by INEC umpire, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, whom Buhari had appointed the chairman of the electoral body on October 21, 2015. The January 2019 presidential election was very far from being described "an

[395] John Charles, *Punch Newspaper: Benue January Killings, We are Still in a State of Fear, Says Group*, January 1, 2019. https://punchng.com/benue-january-killings-we-are-still-in-a-state-of-fear-says-group/. Retrieved May 2, 2023.
[396] Daniel Wilson, *Never Again for APC*, January 5, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYYM3Ql-krI. Retrieved May 2, 2023.

election" in a democratic state. Many people were killed, ballot papers destroyed and figures forged to announce Buhari as the winner of the election.[397]

The second coming of Buhari was a pain in the neck of many Nigerians. His manipulated victory was condemned by many Nigerians. In fact, many saw Nigeria as a failed democracy following the rigging of the presidential election of 2019. The appointment of key offices all went to the Northern part of the country. For instance, the Chief of Army Staff Lt. Gen. Tukur Buratai was from Borno State, the Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Sadique Abubakar was from Bauchi was, the Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Abubakar Adamu, from Niger State; the Controller General of the Nigerian Correctional Service, Haliru Nababa, was formed Sokoto; the Controller General of the Nigerian Immigration Service, Muhammed Babandede was from Jigawa State; and many other major appointments were given to those from the North. In fact, the second administration of Buhari is very insensitive to ethnic minorities.[398]

Insecurity in Buhari's second tenure is a daily pain for Nigerians. With its aim to eradicate Western education and establish *Sharia law* (Islamic law), *Boko Haram* has become a worrisome issue to Nigeria as a nation. Two key issues raised by this sect are disturbing. Firstly, the confirmed link between the sect and *Al-Qa'ida*, particularly through Mali and the Maghreb region. According to Nossiter Adam, when seven members of Boko *Haram* were arrested with their names and contacts while going through Niger, they were discovered to be members of *Al-Qa'ida*. Secondly, it is alleged that the sect has some alliances with some political leaders in Nigeria. It is argued that

[397] Ndubuisi Kekwe, *Fnal Results of Nigeria's 2019 Presidential Election by States- APC (19), PDP (18)*. https://www.tekedia.com/final-results-of-nigerias-presidential-election-by-states-apc-19-pdp-18/. Retrieved May 2, 2023.

[398] Shola Oyeyipo, *This Day Newspaper: Service Chief's Appointment Sectional, SMBLF Tells Buhari*, January 25, 2019. https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2019/01/25/service-chiefs-appointment-sectional-smblf-tells-buhari/. Retrieved May 2, 2023.

members of this sect are connected to some governors and senators who fund their actions and sustainability.[399] The politicians are alleged to have been using members of this sect to achieve political propaganda and in rigging elections and posing threats to their political enemies.[400] For instance, *The Guardian Newspaper* in February 2017 reported the explanation of Mohammed Abubakar, Deputy Bureau Chief of Abuja, concerning the renewed hostilities between Borno State governor, Kashim Shettima of APC, and his predecessor, Sen. Ali Modu Sheriff of PDP, over who accepts responsibility for the never-ending *Boko Haram* insurgency in the state, which appear to be opening another vista of a prolonged political battle between the two politicians. This link to politicians seems to be the major reason why it is very difficult to combat the sect. It is disturbing that many politicians known and unknown are connected to *Boko Haram*. Unfortunately, no arrest has been made even when politicians are publicly known to have some involvement with this deadly insurgent sect. Rather, they continue to strive in their political endeavors, as Kashim Shettima became the running mate of Bola Ahmed Tinubu as the vice-presidential candidate of the APC in 2023 just concluded February 25, presidential election in Nigeria. President Goodluck had earlier raised alarm concerning the penetration of his administration by members of *Boko Haram*. Alao is right to have pointed out that there are some who hold the view that *Boko Haram* was part of the machinery used to expel Goodluck from office. This is why many see the sect as an established armed group meant to continue with the northern oligarchy to counter similar groups Such as Niger Delta militants, established by other ethnic groups in the country. This fact was later

[399] Nossiter Adam, *New York Times: A Nigeria, a Deadly Group's Rage Has Local Roots* (February 25, 2012). https://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/26/world/africa/in-northern-nigeria-boko-haram-stirs-fear-and-sympathy.html. Retrieved May 2, 2023.
[400] Alao, Islamic Radicalization and Violence in Nigeria, 76.

confirmed by the Inspector General of the Police that some senators were under surveillance for alleged links to *Boko Haram* n in November of 2011.[401] Even at this, no arrest was made.

In fact, *Boko Haram* has grown into variants of terrorism, killing and displacing thousands of Nigerians. Prominent among them is the group called "Fulani Herdsmen," a nomadic group. The Fulani herdsmen have in recent times killed thousands of innocent citizens and displaced many in Benue State, Nasarawa State, Enugu State, Kaduna State, and many other parts of Nigeria. In Benue State, for instance, the passing into law of the anti-grazing law by Governor Samuel Ortom in 2017 witnessed several massacres of innocent farmers who were killed by the Fulani terrorists. Innocent children together with their mothers have been butchered on a daily basis like animals. Many who have been displaced in Benue State sought refuge at different internally displaced peoples' camps (IPDs Camps), some for over a decade. To worsen matters, hundreds of those living at the IDPs camps have been attacked and murdered on several occasions. Unfortunately, the Nigerian security agents have done nothing to protect those attacked. President Buhari himself has never shown concern for such inhuman treatment, since he himself is a Fulani man from Sokoto. In fact, Buhari's second tenure is reminiscent of the situation of the Israelites in Egypt.

Economically, Nigeria has degenerated in a manner that has never existed since the birth of the country. With crude oil in the land, Nigeria imports petroleum (gas) since there are no refineries. The lack of fuel/gas for several months has made many unhappy. The foreign debt of Nigeria is on the increase without any economic progress, with the exchange rate of between N700-N1000 per $1 since January 2022. The redesign of the Naira notes unveiled on November 23, 2022, and released by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) on December 15, 2022, three months to the general elections in February-March, 2023 put the Nigerian citizens through a hardship that

[401] Alao, Islamic Radicalization and Violence in Nigeria, 76.

led to the death of many. Citizens were given a deadline of January 31, 2023, to deposit all old notes of N200, N500, and N1000. Many poor people in the remote part of Nigeria who have never seen or been to a commercial bank were put into serious confusion. To worsen matters, after many Nigerians had deposited their money to the banks for the hope of accessing the new currency, the CBN never released any money. People become hungry and sick even with their money in the bank. Those who were sick died because they could not access their money since many hospitals have no means of receiving money through electronic transfer. Even when the Supreme Court passed an ex parte, ordering the CBN to extend the date or let the old notes to be in use, their order was snubbed. This proved the death of the judicial system in Nigeria, and the absence of the rule of law. This was a political strategy targeted toward preventing the opposing parties from mobilizing their members for voting. It was with the persistence of three APC governors: Nasiru El-Rufai of Kaduna State, Yahaya Bello of Kogi State, and Bello Matawalle of Zamfara State, that the Supreme Court passed an order on March 3, 2023 insisting the extension of the date for the use of the old note to the end of December 2023. This came after the election when the APC had rigged the elections already.

The action has totally condemned Buhari's regime in the general elections of 2023. Three prominent candidates among others, featured in the presidential elections: Bola Ahmed Tinubu of the APC (a Yoruba from Lagos State), Atiku Abubakar of the PDP (a Fulani from Adamawa State), and Peter Obi of the Labor Party (an Igbo from Anambra State).[402] Many Nigerians were hopeful of the emergence of the young Obi of the Labor Party, who while as the governor of Anambra

[402] This explains that only the three major ethnic groups out of the over 250 ethnic groups are "qualified" in contesting for key positions like the presidency. It is unfortunate that out of the three, with the Fourth Republic, only two, from Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, with an Ijaw (Goodluck Jonathan, which was by chance due to president Yar'Adua's untimely death) have continued to rule the country. This raised a lot of questions. Why should a country be ruled on ethnic lines and not political ideologies in the twenty-first century? This is the situation in Nigeria that is responsible for the poor economic and social conditions.

State did excellently, and up to the time of election had publicly declared that if he had been found guilty of embezzling any public funds, he should be notified and he would quit his presidential ambition, a declaration never dare by the candidates of the APC and PDP. In fact, the candidate of the APC, Tinubu vehemently expressed that now it is his own turn to become the president, since he was instrumental to the emergence of Buhari as the president, even when he was not the choice of the people. The presidential election was a play. The 176,000 Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) which the INEC purchased with N105.25 billion and assured Nigerians that it would be a remedy for election malpractice, however, turned out to be a planned usurpation by the INEC chairman, Prof. Yakubu in order to achieve the goal of going against the desires of the electioneering Nigerians, and to completely disenfranchised them. Yakubu had earlier before the elections given hope to many Nigerians who thought that their votes are going to be countered.

On February 25, when the presidential and National Assemblies elections were conducted, the election umpire failed the nation. The BVAS Nigerians anticipated to be the aid to free and fair elections could uploaded the results of the presidential elections while those of the Senate and the House of Representatives were uploaded. The same BVAS machine was selective on which result to upload and which not to accept. The promised electronic uploading of the results from the polling units (PU) through the *INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV)* was an experimentation in futility as INEC did not keep to its promise. While many Nigerians and political parties were questioning the credibility of the BVAS, Yakubu went on to announce the candidate of the APC, Bola Ahmed Tinubu as the winner of the election, Atiku Abubakar of the PDP as the second up runner, and Peter Obi of the Labor Party as the third up runner. This raised a shock that many Nigerians had declined any hope in the Nigerian electoral system. The election was condemned by international observers from the United Nations and other organizations. The same situation

occurred with the gubernatorial and State House of Assemblies election on March 18, 2023, where people were killed and disenfranchised in Lagos, and their votes were not counted in many states. In summary, Buhari has successfully destroyed the efforts made by patriotic Nigerians like the late Chief Moshood K. O. Abiola (Abeokuta State, southern Nigeria), who represents Nigeria's struggle for democracy and the rights of its citizens.

The 2023 general election has raised a lot of tension and has increased the lines of divisions in Nigeria. On religious lines, the candidate of the APC has failed to operate with the purported principle of having the president as a Christian while the vice is a Muslim and vice versa. Christians in Nigeria felt that the choice of Shetima as Tinubu's APC vice presidential candidate, that is a Muslim-Muslim ticket was a slap on them. The outcome of the 2023 general election has led many aggrieved parties to go to court. Currently, the presidential election results and other gubernatorial and house of assembly results from different states are being contested in the various election tribunals to write the wrong right. This has made many Nigerians to view the winner of the presidential elections as a stolen mandate that does not represent the people's votes and hopes for the outcome from the court of appeal. Although the tribunal's judgment will determine who becomes the fifth president of the Nigerian Fourth Republic, the announcement by the INEC Chairman makes Bola Ahmed Tinubu as the fifth president-elect, who will take over from Buhari on May 29, 2023.

One of the major effects of the 2023 general election is the outright segregation on the ethnic basis as the Labor Party gubernatorial candidate from Lagos was termed an "Igbo" person, and not fit to vie in for the position of the governor. On March 18, 2023, many Igbo people were chased out of the voting centers, some beaten, some killed, and some disenfranchised. This "Igbophobia," in Lagos increased the ethnic tensions between the Yoruba and the Igbo people.

The consequence of this action is that not every Nigerian has equal and fundamental rights. It is a disturbing issue that has always accounted for poverty, marginalization, and negligence in Nigeria, since the citizens are unequally treated.

In summary, the British colonizers oppressed Nigeria during the period of colonialism. This is similar to the oppression of the poor in first-century Palestine and the Greco-Roman society of Luke. They used the local chiefs to achieve their aims of extracting the mineral and economic resources of Nigeria. Secondly, what the British colonizers thought was an effort of unifying the different ethnic groups and regions, multi-religious, multi-cultural, and multi-structural, turned out to become the most divisive factor in Nigeria. Even though one could argue that the British colonizers both acted as forces of integration and differentiation in Nigeria, the differentiation far outweighs that of unification in present-day Nigeria. Therefore, the political and economic background of Nigeria as a state was constructed on ethnopolitical complexity, creating tension between the three major ethnic groups in the country, and at the same time, subjugating the involvement of other minority ethnic groups in the economic and political sphere of the county. This makes available the negligence of minor ethnic groups who continually live at the mercy of the major groups.

4.4 Causes of Poverty in Nigeria and Luke 4:16-21

From the foregoing argument, we have established that Nigeria is plagued with many social problems similar to those of the poor in Jesus's time, affecting the lives of over 250 million citizens that make up the Nigerian populace. A good number of the citizens are Christians. The U.S. Department of States, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor in its International Report on Religious Freedom in Nigeria in 2018 reported that the estimated ratio of religious demography in Nigeria is 49.3% Christian, 48.8% Muslims, while the remaining 2% belongs to no or other

religions.[403] In 2021, the body reported that the ratio of Christians to Muslims is roughly even with the remaining 2% going to no or other religions.[404] These Christians face daily basis the challenges of poverty, religious persecution, political exclusion, denial of fundamental human rights, and basic social amenities.

A major challenge is a poverty. The National Bureau of Statistics report of November 17, 2022 states that in Nigeria "Poverty manifests not just in lack of income, but also in the lack of basic amenities such as access to healthcare, education, water and adequate sanitation, clean cooking fuels. 62.9% of people - nearly 133 million people - are multidimensionally poor, meaning that they experience deprivations in more than one dimension, or in at least 26% of weighted deprivations."[405] Similarly, the World Bank's report on April 10, 2014, reported when it ranked Nigeria third on the world poverty index with Nigeria accounting for 33% of the world's poor.[406] Closely connected to poverty is unemployment. "Between poverty and unemployment, unemployment induces poverty."[407] It is also reported by the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics on the "Nigerian Poverty Map" as on Friday, April 14, 2023, that Nigeria has an unemployment rate of 33.3%, underemployment rate of 22.8%, youth unemployment of 42.5%, and youth underemployment 21.0%.[408] In fact, over 67.1% of Nigerians are very poor. This means that more

[403] U.S. Department of States, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *Nigeria 2018 International Religious Freedom Report* (2018), 2. https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-report-on-international-religious-freedom/nigeria/. Retrieved April 13, 2023.

[404] U.S. Department of States, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *Nigeria 2018 International Religious Freedom Report* (2018), 2. https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-report-on-international-religious-freedom/nigeria/. Retrieved April 13, 2023.

[405] Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/. Retrieved April 13, 2023.

[406] Uwaegbute, "A Challenge of Jesus's manifesto in Luke 4:16-21 to the Nigerian Christian," 155.

[407] Uwaegbute, "A Challenge of Jesus's manifesto in Luke 4:16-21 to the Nigerian Christian," 155.

[408] Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/. Retrieved April 13, 2023.

than half of the Nigerian populace is poor. The World Bank in its Economic Report in May 2013 pointed out that both poverty and unemployment are huge issues in Nigeria.

Beyond the issues of poverty and unemployment, other social challenges such as human rights abuses, corruption, women's oppression, crimes and violence, child labor, poor prisoners' welfare, insecurity, hunger, lack of social amenities, the physically and mentally challenged, sickness, and diseases which include HIV/AIDS, cancer, hepatitis, and malaria, Covid 19, among others, have all formed enormous problems in Nigeria.

There are many factors responsible for the vicious circle of poverty in Nigeria- political, economic, religious, and insecurity. However, for the purpose of this research work, consideration is given to two factors (which seem to embrace many other factors), that is, ethnic minority and marginalization, and ideological interpretation of good news to the poor.

4.4.1 Ethnic Minority Groups

Ethnic minorities are normally viewed in contradiction to major groups that exist together in political systems such as groups that experience systematic discrimination and domination due to inferiority and a host of historical and sociological elements and have taken political action in furtherance of their communal interest.[409] As discussed earlier, Nigeria is made up of over 250 ethnic groups, the major three being Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo, and the remaining over 247 form ethnic minority groups. These three major ethnic groups dominate the political and economic affairs of Nigeria while excluding the many ethnic minority groups who are only allowed very little or no representation in some political and economic positions. This issue of ethnic minorities

[409] Eghosa E. Osaghae, "Managing Multiple Minority Problems in a Divided Society: The Nigerian Experience," *JMAS* 36, no 1 (1998): 3. According to Uwaegbute, the key phrase that should be highlighted in Osaghae's definition is "systematic discrimination and domination," discrimination and domination have shaped the life of ethnic minorities in Nigeria ("A Socio-Scientific reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 116).

is a major factor responsible for the abject poverty in Nigeria, where many Nigerians live below $1 per day.

Like the socio-economic situation in Jesus's time and as described by Luke, which we have explained earlier, the gap between the rich and the poor in Nigeria is not only very wide but dehumanizing. In his manifesto, Jesus shows concern for the "down and outers" in first-century Palestine. Luke's description shows that the "down and outers" include the poor, heartbroken, the captives, the blind, and the oppressed, among others. It is very important to note that, central to Jesus's "manifesto" is his liberational concern for a group of people-physically, socially, spiritually, and economically poor. While Jesus's liberational concern seems implicit, it also suggests a political liberation.[410] In fact, it is difficult to separate Jesus's interest in this group of people from the common harsh realities that depict first-century Roman Palestine where the marginalized had to cope with oppressive imperial Roman domination and other elite groups of their time.[411] This socio-political situation in Jesus's time and as presented by Luke has some similarities with that of present-day Nigeria, particularly concerning the issue of minorities.

My use of the term "minorities" in the Nigerian context implies the "minority ethnic groups." These groups are not only oppressed, marginalized, and excluded from participation in economic and political leadership, but also crave that their injustices be addressed and resolved by successive administrations or leadership of Nigeria. In fact, the marginalization of minority ethnic groups has formed a serious problem since the amalgamation of the Northern and the Southern protectorates by the British colonizer, Lugard in 1914, that is, 46 years before Nigeria's independence in 1960.[412] This problem accounts for the major cause of poverty in Nigeria. The

[410] Uwaegbute, "A Socio-Scientific reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 102.
[411] Uwaegbute, "A Socio-Scientific reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 102.
[412] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 89-90.

conflicts concerning the rights of ethnic minorities symbolize one of the paramount challenges to Nigeria as a country and its approach to nation-building and integration.[413] In addition, these conflicts about ethnic minorities "cannot be separated from the context of practical and social injustice and inequality that has characterized the lives of ethnic minorities in Nigeria."[414] Considering this, it becomes obvious that the problem of ethnic minorities impacts negatively on the life of Nigerians and requires serious and effective attention by the government in order to prevent conflicts that always result in the destruction of human life and property.

As discussed above, the birth of Nigeria as a federation under British rule and later as an independent State was built upon an ethnopolitical basis that continues to create political, economic, social, and religious rivalries between the major ethnic groups themselves and the ethnic minority groups. This informs the current situation of poverty in Nigeria, especially the uneven distribution of political and economic structures and resources among ethnic groups. For instance, in Nigeria, while other ethnic groups continue to rule many times, some have not even been given the privilege to have access to simple key positions in the country, making political leadership a strict reserve of a few ethnic groups (Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba).

Since political actors are key in determining what areas of the country are given economic and social benefits, these few majorities ethnic groups continue to allot projects only to their regions, leaving the many ethnic minority groups without social, economic, or political dividends. It was in a bid to oppose this oppression of the ethnic minority groups by the major ethnic groups that Major Gideon Orkaa (a Tiv officer from Benue State, Middle-Belt of Nigeria) attempted a coup against General Ibrahim Babangida in 1990. Also, it is in relation to this that resource control

[413] Festu Imuetinyan and O. Uyi-Ekpen, "Federalism, State Creation, and the Minority Ethnic Groups in Nigeria's National Integration Project," IJAH, vol. 5, no. 1 (2016):86–99.
[414] Uwaegbute, "A Socio-Scientific reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 103.

agitators have explained that Nigeria has not been practicing true federalism in both political and fiscal terms.[415] It is noteworthy that the Igbos, one of the three major ethnic groups that apparently dominate the Eastern regions, at present have joined the group of the marginalized since after Nnamdi Azikiwe, an Igbo man, from Eastern Nigeria who ruled Nigeria since 1963-1966, no Igbo person has been president or vice president again. Hence, Rindap and Auwal rigtly explain that "This sense of marginalization on the part of the Igbos has brought forth the ethnic militia, Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) aimed at drawing attention to the marginalization of the Igbos in Nigeria using a non-violent approach."[416] In recent times, this group is known as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Similarly, the Yoruba ethnic group at one point agitated for withdrawal from the Nigerian federation to form the Oduduwa Republic and the never-ending debate and counter debate for a shift of power to the South is a clear demonstration of feelings of alienation, exclusion, outright denial to rule, and marginalization.[417]

Similarly, following the outcome of the Nigerian civil war, the Niger-Delta minorities hoped to have complete control over the oil mined in their region. But their hopes were ruined by the shift from the allocation principle of derivation to those of equality and population of states which profited the big majority ethnic groups that have historically marginalized the minorities. To worsen matters, federal fiscal centralization under military rule was alienated, shutting off the Niger-Delta minorities from any direct access to oil, the new and major wealth of Nigeria. Since then, the oil minority groups have exerted pressure for the return to derivation as a major allocating

[415] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 98.
[416] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 98.
[417] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 98.

principle that would ensure justice, equity, and fairness.[418] Unfortunately, this has never been actualized.

The principle of derivation allocated revenue to each region from the central government in proportion to each contribution to the centrally collected revenue. Some union groups were formed, including the Ethnic Minority Rights Protection Organization (EMRPO), the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), and the Southern Minorities Movement (SMM). Rindap and Auwal argue that the pressures from these union groups led to local opposition to sustained oil exploitation. "It was in this response that the Babangida's administration in 1991 raised the statutory allocation to 3% of their annual investment in capital projects to community development programs in their area of operation. Also, resolving the Niger-Delta problem was a cardinal part of President Yar'Adua's seven-point agenda."[419] More so, there were two issues to the region that Yar'Adua felt could only be tackled together: the challenge of development as a result of decades of neglect and the escalating rate of criminality characterized by the instances of kidnappings, violence, and threats. Yar'Adua called for a summit to address these issues. As an introduction to the summit, Yar'Adua set up two committees, who after their deliberations the committees, recommended the immediate increase of the allocation accruing from oil and gas revenues to the Niger Delta to 25% within a context in which the supplementary funds are devoted greatly to the new infrastructural expansion of the area. Yar'Adua's administration was also advised to make available reliable conditions for amnesty by putting up a "Disarmament," "Demobilization," and "Rehabilitation" Commission with a negotiated signing of undertaking by

[418] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 98.
[419] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 98.

militant groups to end all forms of kidnapping, and attacks on oil wells and mining points.[420] This was the origin of amnesty for the Niger Delta militants that began to crystallize.

There have been many other noticed and unnoticed moves for sovereign national conferences by ethnic groups to make known their decisions on whether they are willing to remain part of Nigeria and part of the future of the federation are signals that the current arrangement is not satisfactory. Consequently, the ethnic minority issues remain unresolved.

4.4.2 Ideological Biblical Interpretation of the Good News to the Poor

Nigerians are a deeply religious people. Despite the obstacles experienced by the missionaries while they brought Christianity to the country, once it was planted, many of the citizens embraced the faith and have continued to profess it even in the face of oppression, marginalization, and poverty. In fact, it will be correct to state with John Imbiti who had expressed that "Africans are notoriously religious"[421] by saying that 'Nigerians are notoriously religious.'

I grew up in Tiv land, Benue State, an impoverished and ethnically marginalized part of Nigeria, both politically and economically. It is dominantly Christian but interpretations of the Bible, especially Jesus's teaching on "poverty and wealth" (e.g., Matt 5:2 19:21; Luke 6:20; 16:19-31) serve as an ideological justification for neglecting the poor and the marginalized by political leaders. Several times, when our family went to church, our pastors, using the beatitudes (Matt

[420] Rindap and Auwal, "Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State," 98.

[421] "African people are notoriously religious, and religion permeates into all the departments of life so that it is not easy or possible to isolate it." These words, written in 1969 by Kenyan philosopher and Anglican priest John Mbiti in his seminal book African Religions and Philosophy, were to inspire a crop of young people in South Africa who embarked on a journey to understand the religiosity of black people. Barney Pityana was to adapt the words and wrote in 1971 that "black people are notoriously religious". https://www.iol.co.za/sundayindependent/news/why-are-we-notoriously-religious-1756867. Retrieved April 16, 2023.

5:1-12; Luke 6:20-26), and the proclamation of Jesus at Nazareth (Luke 4:18-19), among other passages, would tell us that our suffering was only temporary since the good news of God's kingdom is for the poor and oppressed. This spiritual/kingdom-oriented biblical interpretation of "Good news to the poor and marginalized" in Nigeria, with anticipation of a heavenly homeland without corresponding practical help to the teeming population of the poor and oppressed, has greatly contributed to the reason why Nigeria continues to revolve in a vicious circle of poverty. However, the good news to the poor cannot be authentically preached without attending to the issues of poverty and social justice for the marginalized.

Also, as earlier explained, Nigerians are very religious, hence, their deplorable conditions of abject poverty do not in any way affect their religious profession. This explains why poverty and religious persecution of Christians by *Jihad* of Usman dan Fodio, Fulani Islamic terrorists and *Boko Haram* Islamic sect have not deterred the faith of Nigerian Christians. For instance, the killings of Fathers Joseph Gor and Felix Tyolaha, together with many of their parishioners at St. Ignatius Catholic Church, Ayar Ukpo-Mbalom, Makurdi diocese, Gwer East, Benue State in April 2018; the several killings and bombing of churches in Maiduguri; the stoning and setting ablaze at the of Deborah Yakubu at Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto, on Thursday, May 12, 2022,[422] alleging that she blasphemed prophet Muhammad; and many other hundreds of killings and religious persecutions, Christians in Nigeria continue to go to church and uphold their faith.

Another reason why the ideological interpretation of the biblical continues to subsist is the fact that the literacy rate of Nigeria is below average since there are no sufficient schools available for educating the poor masses. This explains the lack of biblical literacy, especially in rural areas.

[422] The Christian Post, *Muslim youth attack churches after arrest of perpetrators in murder of Christian student Deborah Yakubu on Thursday May 12, 2022*. https://www.christianpost.com/news/nigeria. Retrieved April 14, 2023.

Consequently, the uneducated peasant Nigerian believes completely what the religious leaders tell him or her. Even when the 'ideological biblical interpreters' interpret the bible wrongly, especially about poverty and justice, the helpless poor, the uneducated peasant Nigerians continue to hope for a good life in heaven while they continue to live perennially below average life. This is why authentic or inauthentic biblical interpretation would positively or negatively affect the religious, social, economic, and political life of the common Nigerian Christian. Unfortunately, in the presence of all these, about 49.3% of the Christian population (including the literate ones) estimated by the International Report on Religious Freedom in 2018 and 2021 in Nigeria have done nothing or have done extremely little to seek solutions to these problems. This is why in alluding to Atowoju (*Christianity and Social Justice in the historical context of Amos 5:15-17*) Uwaegbute rightly points out that Christians in Nigeria mostly play a passive role concerning issues of social problems in Nigeria. This, Uwaegbute says, arises from the erroneous belief that they are not of this world but subjects of the heavenly world.[423]

Therefore, this factor of ideological interpretation of the good news to the poor is greatly dependent on the negligence of Christian leaders/pastors and the failure to teach the authentic gospel message to the ignorant and poor Nigerian peasant Christians. Good news to the poor entail justice for the poor and the socially and politically marginalized.

4.5 Benefits of a Socio-Scientific Reading of Luke 4:16-21 in Nigeria

A socio-scientific reading of Luke 4:16-21 gives us an insight into the socio-political context of Jesus's time and that of Luke. This has some hermeneutical connection with the socio-political conditions of Jesus's time and Luke's, and that of Nigeria. This connection enables us to proffer solutions to the issues of ethnic minorities in Nigeria.

[423] Uwaegbute, "A Challenge of Jesus's manifesto in Luke 4:16-21 to the Nigerian Christian," 155.

First and foremost, by situating Jesus completely within the socio-political context of first-century Palestine, where oppressions of many kinds were present and perpetrated by a few elites, a social-scientific study of 4:16-21 acknowledges the afflictions, agitations, and struggles of the poor and marginalized, like those of the ethnic minorities in Nigeria. This kind of reading, therefore, appeals to the consciences of Nigerians leaders and elites to the plight of the oppression and marginalization that ethnic minorities experience in Nigeria daily.

Furthermore, in our discussion of the social-scientific study of Luke 4:16-21 as a programmatic announcement of Jesus's manifesto, we established that Jesus's message as the eschatological prophetic Messiah has liberational implications, that is to announce the good news to the poor, liberate captives, give sight to the blind and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. In summary, Luke describes Jesus's mission as 'liberation.' While Jesus's mission of liberation attends to the spiritual and physical needs, it also challenges the political condition that had previously marginalized the "down and outer" mentioned in Jesus's manifesto to attend to the needs of the oppressed and marginalized. Jesus himself does this by attending to the needs of the "down and outer" (cf. Luke 7:18-21). Consequently, a social-scientific reading of Luke 4:16-21 serves as an invitation for the political leaders and elites of Nigeria to seek better and practical means to tackle the oppression of minorities in Nigeria. Also, Jesus's manifesto challenges the Nigerian Christian to assume an active role in the fighting for justice, equity, and the welfare of the socially excluded, physically challenged, the displaced, orphans, widows, prisoners, afflicted, the sick, and all those within the category of the "down and outers." This group of people is physically, emotionally, and financially in need, and heartbroken. The Nigerian Christian is, thus, confronted to heal their broken heartedness by being charitable to them and re-integration them into normal societal life where everyone would have access to basic social and economic needs.

The Christian politicians are, therefore, challenged to become agents of liberation for the freedom of ethnic minorities in Nigeria.

More so, a socio-scientific study of Luke 4:16-21 has some economic implications. Jesus's invoking of a Jubilee year calls for a fair distribution of economic resources and structures that will promote the economic emancipation of marginalized minority ethnic groups in Nigeria. This is because when Jesus announced the Jubilee year that set free slaves, debtors, and captives and reinstated them to their previous economic status, he envisioned at the same time, an economic emancipation of this group of people. In aligning with the above, the ethnic minority groups in Nigeria experience lack of unemployment, underemployment, unavailability of basic social amenities, and economic suffocation.[424] Nigerian political elites are yet to adequately tackle the economic empowerment of minorities, accounting for the rise in protest in the East by the militancy of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), and in the South by the Niger Delta People's Salvation Force (NDPSF). A social-scientific reading of Luke 4:16-21, therefore, favors and promotes the position for the economic emancipation of ethnic minority groups in Nigeria.

Again, considering the wide gap that existed between the few elites and the majority poor, coupled with segregation against and dishonor of ostracized poor in first-century Palestine, Jesus's manifesto makes it clear that segregation and oppression of minority groups are cruel. This call was directed not only to his disciples but to humanity in general. In taking side with the "down and outers"- the poor, blind, slaves, sick, captors, debtors, and the oppressed- who represent minority groups of first-century Palestine, Jesus sets an ideal framework within the Christianity and human society, that equity and justice should be the guiding principles in the human society. Thus, Jesus condemns discrimination, and oppression of ethnic minority groups by ethnic majority

[424] Uwaegbute, "A Socio-Scientific reading of Luke 4:16-19 and the Problem of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria," 118.

groups, particularly about political and economic matters. Jesus's demonstration is an example for Nigerian political elites, who usurp political power by violent means to serve their own benefits, which embraces the extension of their ethnic group's domination over ethnic minority groups. Therefore, it is the task of all Nigerians to see to the need for equal treatment of ethnic minority groups in order to restore to them their honor and lawful position as citizens of Nigeria with every right and privilege.

Lastly, regarding people who are still under the chains of idolatry, occultism or evil practices similar to the domination of Satan and the Roman imperial rule over the Jews, Jesus' manifesto in Luke 4:16-21 challenges the Nigerian Christian, as one who has been delivered, and empowered to carry out liberational functions by the anointing with God's Spirit and baptism, to liberate these people through the preaching of the gospel to them, giving of devout hope, practical living the gospel values, and accepting them as God's children.

4.6 Chapter Summary

A socio-scientific reading of Luke 4:16-21 reveals that Jesus's manifesto shows a concern for the poor- marginalized, sick, imprisoned- who were without honor. These distressed people in Jesus's manifesto and epitomized in the Nigerian context, where ethnic minority groups are oppressed by the ethnic majority group.

The problem of ethnic polity in Nigeria is traced to the colonial era, a fact that has made some parts of Nigeria, especially the north, assume superiority over others, making such areas dominate the socio-political, and economic life of the country. Nigeria's checkered leadership history- military regimes and political rules- account for the corruption and underdevelopment that has thrown the whole country into a vicious circle of poverty, where over 150 million Nigerians

live in abject poverty. The efforts to resist such a marginalization led to the emergence of activist groups such as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and others.

There is little or no effort to tackle the issues of ethnic minority groups in Nigeria, even in the political dispensation of the Fourth Republic, since some parts of the country assume power is a strict reserve for them. Religious leaders on their part have failed to be the voice of the voiceless and rather engage in the pseudo-gospel of the "good news for the poor" which does not focus on the social issues both only serve as ideological interpretations for the oppressed. However, Jesus's manifesto challenges Christians to become active voices in political crusades. Christians in leadership, both political and religious, are challenged to seek ways of bringing justice, equity, development, and human dignity to the poor and marginalized in Nigeria.

4.7 Conclusion

From a socio-scientific reading of Luke 4:16-21, this thesis shows that Jesus's manifesto is a Lukan motif for the πτωχός (poor), that is, the blind, lame, down and outers, marginalized, etc. This thesis studied this manifesto in the context of ethnic minority groups in Nigeria. The research reveals how Jesus's manifesto is an allusion to Isaiah 61:1-2; 58:6 and portrays Luke's concern for the poor, a motif embedded in the Lukan eschatological role reversal that runs throughout the Gospel of Luke. The results of the research revealed that the poor, the "down and outers," those under bondage, the physically incapacitated, the marginalized and those who are heartbroken were major concerns of Jesus' mission. In this manifesto, Luke presents Jesus as an eschatological prophetic Messiah, who since Davidic kingship had ended, assumes both the prophetic role and royal functions of a king since he is anointed with God's spirit and proclaims a year of Jubilee to liberate and restore honor to the oppressed and marginalized people of his time. Jesus's liberation, therefore, had spiritual, socio-political, and economic dimensions. Like the situations in first-

century Palestine in Jesus's time, and the Hellenistic society in Luke's time, oppression and marginalization of the poor is a serious challenge in Nigeria today.

In the Nigerian situation, the marginalization of the poor is carried out through political and economic exclusion of the ethnic minority groups. The ideological interpretation of the good news to the poor by religious leaders adds more injuries to this situation. The cumulative effect of these actions creates an extremely wide chasm between the rich and the poor, a situation that has put over 65% of Nigerians into abject poverty. This informs why the research challenges firstly, the political leaders of Nigeria to look into the cries of ethnic minority groups in Nigeria through political, social, and economic emancipation.

Secondly, this thesis challenges Nigerian Christian to rise to the challenges and become not just proactive in seeking concrete ways of alleviating this social problem exposed here, but also become the voice of the voiceless in giving an authentic interpretation of the Gospel values in Nigerian society. Also, the Nigerian Christian is challenged to actively engage in a socio-political effort that seeks the emancipation defense of ethnic minority groups in Nigeria. It is a call for the Nigerian Christian to both intensify socio-political activism in defense of equity, equality, and justice for the minority ethnic groups in the country and an acknowledgment of the reality of the struggles of Nigerian ethnic minorities.

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