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The meal in Luke 22:19–20 and the Suffering Servant in Luke 22:37: The Lukan passion narrative as sacrifice images of reconciliation in Luke’s Gospel

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Abstract

The meal in the Gospel of Luke (22:19-20) and the Suffering Servant narrative in Luke 22:37 are very significant in understanding the importance of these texts to the early Jesus community. The interpretation of these texts was precious as they read and meditated on the significance of the death of Jesus to them. The death of Jesus to the early community meant to fulfil the Old Testament prophecies of the coming messiah who will bring about a new era of reconciliation through his death. The use of socio-historical interpretation in this article helps to examine the meal in Luke 22:19-20 and the claim of Jesus in Luke 22:37 to see whether there is a correlation to the Old Testament, especially the process of reconciliation. The two texts in question showed that the Lukan community in the Gospel of Luke believed that the death of Jesus was a means of atoning for the sin of the community event that was familiar in the Old Testament. The language in the texts showed that Jesus authenticated the Old Testament prophecies upon himself. The article concludes that Jesus’ death in the Gospel of Luke is for the forgiveness of sin and reconciliation.

Keywords

Reconciliation; Luke’s Gospel; socio-historical study; passion narrative; meal; suffering servant; Jesus’ death

1. Introduction

The passion story in Luke is significant as it plays a crucial part in the Gospel. Luke uses many events to buttress his argument as to the reason for the death of Jesus in his newly founded community. One of the key events is the place of the meal in the passion narrative in the Gospel of

Luke—the meal (Luke 22:19-20) in the passion narrative calls for special attention. The reason is that Luke seems to believe that this meal directly links to the Old Testament sacrificial corpus. The Old Testament sacrifice places sin as the cause of human problems and chaos. Hence, there was a need for sacrifice. Sacrifice became a means to heal the shattered human relationship in the Old Testament.

Luke's allusion to many passages in the Old Testament during the passion of Jesus needs special attention. The allusions to covenant in the Torah, the Prophet, and the Suffering Servant in Isaiah ignite the reason for this study. The reason for Luke to include this narrative in the passion story raises questions. Why did Luke take the time to place this scene within the passion narrative? What message did Luke want his community to know about the passion narrative? Does Luke's allusion to the Suffering Servant in 22:37 have anything to do with reconciliation?

This article will first look at the reason for the passion narrative in the Gospel of Luke and test it from the available literature to know whether Luke's passion narrative has anything to do with the theology of the cross (theologia crucis). Therefore, this article will adopt a socio-historical method to study the reason for the meal in Luke 22:19-20 and Luke 22:37. Socio-historical hermeneutics will be able to reveal the essence of such meal and the implication of the Suffering Servant allusion in the sacrificial corpus of Luke's Gospel. The socio-historical method compares different literature based on the social setting of the ancient world. Margaret Y. Macdonald (1988) gives a succinct definition of socio-historical hermeneutics that is implicit in this article.¹ Macdonald (1988:23) alleges that socio-historical hermeneutics combines sociological and historical results in a well-balanced investigation and fruitful hermeneutical reflection (Macdonald, 1988:23).

1 Socio-historical study uses insights from the historical realia of the existing literature, while social-scientific emphasises of application of different social models for the interpretation of a biblical text (Macdonald, 1988:20-23).

2. The Passion Narrative in Luke's Gospel

John Owen (1616-1683) at the beginning of his thesis in his classic work *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* mentions Luke 19:10 as one of the first two texts that have a bearing on redemption and reconciliation through the blood of Christ. Owen's (1989:1-7) testimony postulates that the death of Christ in Luke has a direct bearing on the redemption and reconciliation of humanity and that, according to him, it was the profound reason for Christ's coming to the world.

This also seems to be the testimony of the ancient church fathers who wrote before him, as is evident in *Catena Aurea* by Thomas Aquinas. In the preface to his *Catena Aurea: A commentary on the four Gospels collected out of the works of the Fathers*, Aquinas cites other church fathers who state that the Lukan narrative attests to the salvific event more than any of the Evangelists (Aquinas, 1843:1-2)

As mentioned above (in the preceding paragraph), the salvific reason for the death of Jesus in Luke was not challenged until the early nineteenth century after the publication of Hans Conzelmann in 1960 (Herrick, 1997:2-3). Since then, there has been much debate as to whether Luke's passion story has any salvific intent at all. As a result of this debate, the Lukan Passion Narrative has witnessed a burgeoning body of literature. Despite the amount of literature emerging from the study of the Lukan Passion Narrative, only a few scholars attest to the atoning sacrifice of the Lukan Jesus. For several scholars (e.g. Dibelius, Perry, Conzelmann, Barrett, Bock, Scaer), the death of Jesus in Luke's Gospel has no salvific effect (Daly, 2009:54). They argue that the death of Jesus in Luke is similar to that of Socrates (Scaer, 2005:78) and that it was of no salvific significance to the Lukan community (Neyrey, 2007:157). For Neyrey (2007:191), there is no *theologia crucis* in Luke. His death does not speak the language of expiation but rather that of the faithfulness of God to Jesus (Karris, 1985:79-115).

The exegesis concerning the death of Jesus in Luke as non-salvific began with the emergence of the work of Martin Dibelius in 1919, followed by the revised edition of Alfred Morris Perry's thesis by the Chicago School of Theology in 1920. However, there is no evidence that Perry had contact with the work of Dibelius and vice versa. They seem to have worked independently

of each other. Dibelius's work *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* "Form Criticism of the Gospels", which was published in 1919 and translated into English as *From Tradition to Gospel*, is an important work that provides a critical starting point for the examination of the function of the death of Jesus in Luke. Perry's thesis published in 1920, agrees with the notion proposed by Dibelius, namely, that the Lukan Jesus' death seems to have little or no salvific benefit to the Lukan community. Perry (1920:74) asserts that Luke, for example, does not mention any sacramental or salvific implication of the death of Jesus in the Passion Narrative.

Since the publication of these two works, the emergent literature seems to follow the line of Dibelius and Perry's arguments. On the one hand, Dibelius asserts that the death of the Lukan Jesus is that of a martyr and is without any salvific benefit to his community. According to him, the Lukan community had understood the death of Jesus in this manner since they were aware of similar martyrdoms during the Maccabean persecution (Dibelius, 1971:201). This assertion places the death of the Lukan Jesus on a par with the Greco-Roman concept of a heroic death (Scaer, 2005:11-78). On the other hand, Perry (1920:74) declares, "The death and resurrection of Jesus are the central interest and *raison d'être* of the J Source, but the significance attached to his death is not large." The same argument is evident in the work of C.K. Barrett (1961:47-48) that the interpretation of the death of Jesus in Luke lacks any reference to Jesus as saviour. Instead, the Father is given prominence over Christ and the Holy Spirit. Barrett (1961:47) argues that God the Father is the author of creation and salvation and nothing of the pre-existence of Christ, and there is the barest of hints (Acts 20:28) of an atoning death regarding the death of Jesus in Luke. Jesus sends the Spirit because it has been granted to him by the Father.

Dibelius and Perry's theories of the absence of the salvific benefit of the death of the Lukan Jesus have attracted many disciples recently and become the standard view of the passion event in Luke. Conzelmann's hybridisation of Dibelius and Perry theories in the 60s established him as one of the modern proponents of the absence of salvific effect in Luke. Donald Senior (1989:145-148) and Peter Rice (2013:365) understand the death of the Lukan Jesus as a heroic death in which he died as a victim of

injustice in the hands of his people, the Jews.² Scholars such as Overbeck (1875:1), Harnack 1909:88-287), Conzelmann (1960:132-140), Haenchen (1971:180), Tyson (1986:100-104), Sanders (1987:48-50) and Rice (2013:363-368) also believe that the Lukan Jesus' suffering and death were due to his people, the Jews. Senior argues that Stephen emulated this heroic death in Acts 7. Darrell L. Bock (1994:355) and F.S. Spencer (2008:63-64) followed a similar interpretation that the Lukan Jesus is a Suffering Servant but lacks any notion of a salvific event attached to his cross. The same idea – that the death of Jesus is no different from that of Socrates' praiseworthy death – is upheld by Peter J. Scaer (2005:134) and Susanna Asikainen (2018:164-166).

Contrary to the views of modern scholars, the salvific effect of the death of the Lukan Jesus has always been the belief of the church fathers and earlier commentators in the Lukan narrative. Neither did they see the cross as lacking any soteriological effectiveness. For instance, Augustine believes that “St. Luke seems to dwell more than the other Evangelists upon the Priestly lineage of the person of our Lord...” Ambrose followed the same argument and accentuated that the Lukan Passion Narrative is about a priestly victim, Christ himself, who has taken the sin of humanity (Aquinas, 1843:1). Cyril, the Patriarch of Alexander, in his exposition to Luke's Gospel, believes that the Lukan Jesus was made sick because of our sins so that we might be delivered from the sickness of our soul (Just, 2003:360).

Martin Luther in his eleventh passion sermon, “Christ prayer on the cross – The malefactor on the right,” which focuses on Luke 23:32-43, acknowledges that Luke's story of passion is unabridged, self-explanatory and complete compared to those of the other Gospel writers. In his own words, after reading the text of Luke 23:32-43, Luther (1871:176) says of the Lukan Passion Narrative: “The holy Evangelist Luke here mentions two very consolatory things. Therefore, although the other Evangelists Matthew, Mark and John have omitted them in their record of Christ's sufferings, we shall treat them here, so that this record may be before us its completeness.” John Calvin and other reformers gave the same interpretation that sees the

2 The term Jews is used here for the non-Lukan Jesus community in Luke. They were the teachers of the Law and were always against Jesus and his teachings (5:17-33; 6:2, 7; 7:30-36; 11:39-43; 16:14).

Lukan Jesus' passion within the framework of the *theologia crucis* (theology of the cross). The *theologia crucis* has been actively developed in the Lukan Passion Narrative as a means through which humanity can access the divine presence. Calvin (1979:3.302) notes that the crucifixion of Christ between two robbers “was the finishing stroke of the lowest disgrace”, but that he did this,

So that he might free us from condemnation, this of expiation was necessary, that he might place himself in our room. Here we perceive how dreadful is the weight of the wrath of God against sin, for appeasing which it became necessary that Christ, who is eternal justice, should be ranked with robbers. We see, also, the inestimable love of Christ towards us, who, so that he might admit us to the society of the holy angels, permitted himself to be classed as one of the wicked.

John Lightfoot (1979:3, 215) alleges that the passion of the Lukan Jesus signifies his expiation. The same approach can be seen in the work of Leon Morris (1965:63-106), who argues for the central place of the cross in Luke's gospel. Fitzmyer (1985:1514) notes that the death of Jesus is a symbolic event in Luke which gives humanity access to the presence of God. To Fitzmyer (1985:1515-1517), the Lukan Jesus' death is a sacrifice, and it is no less soteriological in its description than that of Mark or Matthew. Luke Timothy Johnson (1991:375-380) agrees with the salvific nature of the death of Jesus in Luke's Gospel, but he primarily portrays Jesus as a prophet who died for the sin of his people. It seems as if Johnson's categorisation of the death of the Lukan Jesus as a prophet implies that his heroic death should be understood primarily as that of a Jewish prophet. This understanding, however, lacks any allusion or echo in the Old Testament text that could shed light on his death, since it has no example of a prophet who died for the sin of his people.

One recent work that seems to hold onto the salvific economy of the death of Jesus in Luke is Peter Doble's: *The Paradox of Salvation: Luke's Theology of the Cross*. Doble (1996), however, depicts the death of the Lukan Jesus as a righteous death. Doble (1996:93-225) takes Luke's use of *δίκαιος* “righteous” as the starting point for his thesis. He theorises that Luke's use of *δίκαιος* is an allusion to or echo of the Wisdom literature. Doble's work

is commendable for its insight in many areas: in the first place, it can take the use of the word *δίκαιος* as a means through which the meaning of the salvific event of the Lukan Jesus is understood. Secondly, its attempts to review the literature on the use of *δίκαιος* are of great interest, as it provides diverse meanings for the Lukan use of the word and its connotation in the Lukan Passion Narrative. The study also reveals that the use of *δίκαιος* by Luke vindicates a *theologia crucis* as the crux of the narrative, and a subset of the *theologia salutis* in the Lukan Passion Narrative (Doble, 1996:239). However, while the work of Doble is commended, it inadvertently posits that the place of the cross in the death of the Lukan Jesus marks Jesus' death as similar to that of a righteous prophet (Doble, 1996:37, 231) and likens his blood to that of an innocent prophet. One wonders the essence of the blood of an innocent prophet in Doble's exegesis since the blood of an innocent prophet in the Old Testament was not used to effect the forgiveness of sin and reconciliation. It was a curse on the people who shed such blood, as in Deut 19:10, 13. Furthermore, the significance of the cross in terms of a salvific event in Luke is questionable in Doble's work, as he (1996:237) writes:

While the Lukan cross is no ransom and effects no forgiveness — which Luke understands as God's direct gift to the penitent — this cross is the proving of the *δίκαιος* and a model of how those who follow him might expect to die.... For Luke, Jesus is the first of a company gathered to walk in his Way: if the 'final event' is the resurrection of the saints or the *δίκαιος*, then Jesus' resurrection and exaltation is their guarantee of what is to come. God raised Jesus because his dying proved him *δίκαιος*.

There is another problem in the work of Doble, as so-called *allusions* and *echoes* do not have any direct support from the *Priesterschrift*, which is believed to contain the basic procedures for the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. Against Dibelius, Perry, Conzelmann, Neyrey, Karris and Doble, John Kimbell (2014) in his monumental work, *The Atonement in Lukan Theology*, therefore argues succinctly that the death of the Lukan Jesus is salvific in nature. According to him, the Lukan Jesus carried out atonement by cutting a new covenant for acquittal of the sin of his community. Kimbell (2014:55), however, believes that Luke does not mention the death of Jesus as a means of reconciliation. This view of

Kimbell of atonement without reconciliation casts doubt on the reason for atonement in ancient Israel. In trying to understand the salvific effect of the death of the Lukan Jesus, there is thus a need to see it through the eyes of Luke. There is also a need to re-examine the function of Passion Narrative in Luke alongside allusions and echoes from the Old Testament and especially the *Priesterschrift*, from a socio-historical perspective.

3. A socio-historical reading of the function of the meal in Luke 22:19-20

The opening narrative of the Lukan Passion is a meal scene. Meals play a crucial role in several Lukan texts (e.g. 5:29; 7:36-49; 11:37; 24:30). Nolland (1993:1041-1052) has observed the roles that setting/structure play in the Lukan narrative. Luke utilises a specific formula every time a new scene or element is presented in his discourse. The structure/setting of this meal is within the Passover meal. Scholars of Luke such as Jeremias (1966), Marshall (1978), Fitzmyer (1985), Soards (1987), Green (1997), Heil (1999) and Megbelayin (2001), however, have diverse opinions on the meaning and significance of meals in the Lukan Passion Narrative, especially of the meal in 22:19-20. Some Lukan scholars such as Jeremias (1966:85), Fitzmyer (1985:1390) and John Paul Heil (1999:177-180) have identified two meals within the text of Luke 22:14-20. According to them, the first meal is to be regarded as a Passover meal, while the second (the last) one can be seen as the actual meal that Jesus used as a symbol for his death (Jeremias, 1966:85, 255). The type of meal Luke has in mind is crucial as it explains what will happen to the Lukan Jesus as well as what will be the purpose of his death regarding human salvation (Green, 1997:757-760).

Several interpretations have been provided by scholars based on their understanding of the particular meal in question. In line with their interpretations, different names have also been attributed to the meal scene in 22:19-20. It has been called “The Lord’s Supper” (Marshall, 1978:804; Scaer, 2008:126-127; Camp, 2009:82), “The Last Supper” (Jeremias, 1966:219; Fitzmyer, 1985:1390; LaVerdiere, 1996:81; Heil, 1999:180; Megbelayin, 2001:138), and “A Meal of Remembrance” (Etukumana, 2012:9-11). In the Greco-Roman society, meals played many functions among others social cohesion and bonding, the same can be seen in other ancient literature

as in the case of Deut 12:21 (Etukumana, 2024:8-9). Josephus (*Jwr* 6:423) alludes that the Passover meal in Israel was a means of social cohesion as it was capable of bringing people together “ἄθροίζοντα”. In the ancient Greco-Roman, meals involved δειπνον “eating” and συμπόσιον “drinking” (Finney, 2012:168; Etukumana, 2024:7), and such meals took place in a sacred place (Homer *Il.* 7.321; *Ody.* 3. 439-463, 14.418-436, 20.280, 293). No one was expected to carry away the food from the holy place (Smith, 1992:653). Such food was believed to have the efficacy to heal the participants. From the words of Plato, the participants were “made whole again” because the people “ate and drank” with the gods (Plato *Law*, 2. 653d). The sacredness of the ancient Greco-Roman meal scene is reflected here in Luke’s meals scene through the use of different nuances and invocations before the meal (Etukumana, 2012:83-84).

Whatever might be the meaning attached to the meal in 22:19-20, the fact is that according to Luke’s narration of the meal, Jesus is the fulfilment of the promise of the Old Testament, as is argued by Godwin Etukumana (2012:10-11):

In the Old Testament YHWH told Moses to make sure the people keep the Passover meal for remembrance, but in Luke, it is not Moses who communicated to the people, but God in Jesus who informed the new community to keep this meal in remembrance of Jesus. This command implies the superiority of Jesus’ meal over the Passover meal, a demonstration of the Lucan rhetoric of remembrance, which can be seen as a “Lucan literary stamp” (LaVerdiere, 1996:82) on the salvific and liberation power of Jesus upon the new community.

This understanding of the meal as a meal of remembrance is in line with the interpretation of Calvin (1979:3.292-393), who describes the meal in the Lukan Passion Narrative as a meal of remembrance that reminds believers that they have been reconciled to God (*Deo primum reconciliati*).

3.1 The Passover meal and Jesus’ identity

The Lukan understanding of the meal can be determined by reading Luke 22:19-20, which states:

καὶ λαβὼν ἄρτον εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς λέγων·
τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς

τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν. καὶ τὸ ποτήριον ὡσαύτως μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι,
λέγων· τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ αἵματί μου τὸ ὑπὲρ
ὑμῶν ἐκχυνόμενον.

And he took the bread having given thanks broke it and said to them:
this is my body that is given for you. “Do this in remembrance of me.”
And in the same manner, he took the cup after supper saying “This is
the cup of the New Covenant in my blood that is shed for you.”³

The meaning of the statement by Jesus in the context of the Lukan Passion Narrative is to understand the mission of the Lukan Jesus. The Lukan peculiarity is evident in his choice of words in the meal scene and its ritualistic importance. Luke categorically identifies the second meal with the use of the phrase μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι (after eating supper), whereas Matthew and Mark interweave the different elements to make them one event (Chilton, 1997:71). Luke separates the two meals, to inform his community of the identity of Jesus in the second meal. In the ancient world, the nature of meals determined the people to be invited. Old Testament, Josephus and Philo (*Leg* 3:94) identified the Passover meals with the Jewish remembrance as Luke in 22:19-20. The identification of Jesus with the elements of bread and wine invokes the knowledge of sin, which calls for atonement (Luke 22:19-20). The statement of Jesus identifies sin as the cause of human friction with God and with one another, while the eating of the bread is the prologue to the salvific event of Jesus’ death. The symbolic representation of the bread, in essence, “is, however, the authentic making present of its salvific effect” (Wolter, 2017:460).

The ἄρτον (bread) shared by the disciple is believed to anticipate the body of Jesus that will be crucified on the cross for the sin of his people and which thus metaphorically signifies his agony and suffering (Renn, 2005:141). Bread and body in the text form a parallelism (Nolland, 1993:1052-1053) that represents the Passover lamb that was slain in Egypt (Jeremias, 1966:198-199), which in turn has important implications for understanding the soteriological aspects of his life and death (Fitzmyer,

3 This article prefers using the longer text to that of the shorter one. The argument in favour of the longer text has been made by many Lukan scholars (see Cooper 1962:39; Jeremias 1966:148-149; Petzer, 1984:251; Carpinelli 1999:75; Billings, 2006:526; Etukumana, 2012:11-15).

1985:1401). Scholars such as Jeremias (1966) and Marshall (1978) have also wrestled with the interpretation of ἄρτον in the context of the Lukan Passion Narrative of this meal.

From the Lukan perspective, Jesus uses Old Testament sacrificial imagery to refer to himself as the bread, which is a metaphor for the lamb that was slain for the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, as evident in Exod 12:14; 13:9 and Deut 16:3 (Bock, 1996:1726). The implication here is that the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is a direct representation of the Old Testament lamb, which is symbolised by the use of bread in the Lukan Remembrance meal text (Etukumana, 2012:41-48). The bread thus symbolises the body of Jesus that will be crucified on the cross for the sin of his community. Nolland (1993:1054) relates the function of the statement τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον to the references in ancient Greco-Roman society in the works of Thucydides (*Hist.* 2.43.2) and Libanus (*Declam.* 24.3), which reveal that “to give one’s body” delineates dying in battle for the sake of one’s community of people. This picture from the ancient writers shows that the body of Jesus was given for the sake of his community as a means of redemption. Stated differently, it was *an exchange* for the life of his people. Porter (1994) believes that exchange was a means through which people in the ancient world could process reconciliation. The same position is reiterated in his recent work (2006:131-152).

The image of battle in the ancient Greco-Roman world provides an interpretative framework through which the ancient world sees the death of a soldier in a battle as salvific since such a death resulted from the defence of the territorial integrity of their land. Jesus offering his body to his disciples is similarly attested in the ancient Greco-Roman literature where one offered oneself life in exchange for his community (Breytenbach, 2009:344; Wolter, 2017:461; Etukumana, 2024:12). Thucydides (*Hist.* 2.43.2) attests that during the time of wars, people gave up their bodies. Philo (*Spec.* 1:154) uses προαποθνήσκειν (to die) in exchange for others. Poetically, Euripides in one of his plays narrates how Alcestis, a wife gave herself in place of her husband (Lloyd, 1985:120-125). It was more honourable and heroic to die on a battlefield than in any other manner in the ancient world (Porter, 2006:152-153).

The Lukan narrative of this meal could also be an allusion to the Servant motif, in that the bread could be intended to refer to the wounded body of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53.⁴ In Isaiah 53:5, the Suffering Servant was wounded (ἐτραυματίσθη) for our lawlessness (τὰς ἀνομίας ἡμῶν) and bruised for our iniquities (τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν). In the *Didache* (9-10, 14), written about 96 CE, Jesus is depicted as the “servant of the Lord” who was sacrificed for the benefit of his community (Wolmarans, 2005:320). Allan Garrow (2004:224-234) see the author of Luke as depending on the *Didache* for his composition, resulting in it influencing Luke’s theology. The view that Luke depends on the *Didache* is not supported by all scholars. Luke’s use of δίδωμι is peculiar, indicating no possibility of sharing bread without first dividing it into smaller portions. This assumed division of the body of Jesus would then correlate with the wounded Suffering Servant in the Isaiah text. The disciples were instructed to eat the meal in his remembrance, which connotes remembering that his body was broken as a means of atonement for their sin. The concept of Isaiah’s Suffering Servant is well articulated by Breytenbach (2009:349-350), who argues that the LXX translation of the Suffering Servant text of Isaiah has its backdrop in the Greek concept of “dying for” and “deliverance” unto the hostile force. It was an event that, when viewed within the messianic mission formula of the ancient Jewish tradition, has political and cultic connotations. The violent death that the Lukan Jesus suffered could thus also have both political and cultic connotations. The remembrance also implies the presence of the Lord in their midst when sharing the bread, as is related in Luke 24:30-31 (Decock, 2002:43).

The cup (τὸ ποτήριον) symbolically represents the blood that is about to be shed for the disciples. In the Greco-Roman world drinking from one cup was a sign of reconciliation, as demonstrated in Homer (*Il.* 1.584-600). Jesus’ sharing of a cup thus signals his intention to inaugurate a new era of reconciliation for all who will drink from it in the future in remembrance of him. The content of the cup is theologically signified by the blood of Jesus. J.L.P. Wolmarans (2005:310) adduces that in Greco-Roman culture a similar belief is envisaged when the worshippers believed that “Drinking

4 Fitzmyer (1985:1401), however, believes that the use of ἄρτον has no connection with the Servant motif of Isaiah 53.

wine for the followers of Dionysus meant drinking the god himself.” This belief among the ancient worshippers of Dionysus led them to change their behaviour since they believed the gods were now within them. In both the Greco-Roman and the Jewish worlds, blood was in many cases used for expiation. The Lukan narrative identifies τὸ ποτήριον with blood, which is to be a new covenant (Fitzmyer, 1985:1402). Fitzmyer alleges that the blood of Jesus is an allusion to θυσίαν σωτηρίου “sacrifice of salvation” in Exod 24:5 (LXX), where Moses used blood as a means of sealing a covenant with the house of Israel.

Similarly, Chilton understands Jesus’ words as an allusion to Moses’ statement in Exod 24:8 (LXX) (ἰδοὺ τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης ἧς διέθετο κύριος πρὸς ὑμᾶς περὶ πάντων τῶν λόγων τούτων “See the blood of the covenant which YHWH has cut with you regarding all these words”). Chilton further believes that the essence of Jesus’ reference to διαθήκη is that he is renewing it in himself. However, he denies any connection between Jesus’ assertion and the allusion in Jer 31:31 (38:31 LXX), where the phrase καινὴ διαθήκη occurs for the first time in the whole Old Testament. Rather, Chilton applies the allusion to Zech 9:11, in which YHWH says that he will set free the prisoners because of ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης «the blood of the covenant» (Chilton, 1997:72). Fitzmyer and Chilton’s denial of an allusion to Jeremiah’s concept of καινὴ διαθήκη does not recognise the importance of circumcision and its association with blood as a means of formulating a covenant that signals reconciliation. Socio-historically, it is important to take note of the incident that occurred between Moses, his wife, and YHWH in Exod 4:25-26 (LXX), where a calamity was averted through the use of τὸ αἷμα τῆς περιτομῆς (the blood of circumcision) as a means of shielding Moses against the death that God had intended to bring upon him or his son (Cohen, 2003:30-32). Lawrence Hoffman (1996:26-100) has argued in the light of this episode that circumcision itself is a covenant whose power rests on blood. It incorporates the undeniable belief that it was αἷμα τῆς περιτομῆς that saved. This belief, according to Hoffman (1996:190), was prevalent in the Old Testament sacrificial system and early Christianity. This implication of circumcision in the Old Testament resulted in it being regarded as one of the most important duties that every Jewish male had to undergo, as is evident in the commandment in Exod 12:48, which states that no person without circumcision shall eat of the

Paschal sacrifice (Cohen, 2003:35). Here two covenants are related to each other: “the covenant of circumcision” and that of “the Paschal sacrifice.” Both of these rituals invoke the importance of blood, especially in the act of deliverance.

Jesus’ reference to ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη rests on the reconfiguration of the Old Testament concept of the covenant that he had full knowledge of as a Jew. Contra Marshall (1978:806-807) that Jeremiah’s idea of καινὴ διαθήκη does not involve blood and that the possible allusion here is to Exod 24:8. Jesus’ statement here is based on the prophecy of Jer 31:31 (38:31 LXX). Before Jeremiah announces the upcoming new covenant relationship, he uses the phrase ἡμέραι ἔρχονται, meaning «the days come» (KJV), «days are coming» (NASB), «The day is coming» (NLT), «the days are coming» (RSV). It refers to the future and thus awaits its fulfilment. The use of καινὴ is very significant, as it defines the nature of the covenant to be instituted shortly. Based on this covenant the profane people will become the people of God through the *will* of God (Jer 38:34 LXX). According to Petrus J. Gräbe (2006:79), the text of Exodus 24:8 and the bloodless covenant in Jeremiah promised to “supplement and condition each other in the Lord’s Supper logia.” He adds that “Jeremiah 31:31 provides the salvation history framework, while Exodus 24:8 illustrates the death of Jesus.” The language of Jesus in the Lukan meal ritual depicts an appropriation of this Old Testament prophecy to himself as the one who is capable of inaugurating and fulfilling ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη that symbolically represents the content of the cup (Gräbe, 2006:79-80). The definite article ἡ is absent in Jeremiah’s opening statement, which indicates anticipation. But Jesus’ appropriation of the prophecy comes with the definite article ἡ (the) to show the existing knowledge of this statement to his audience. Based on the re-authentication and re-appropriation of the Old Testament blood ritual covenant in the Lukan passion story, the Lukan Jesus has fulfilled the requirements of purity that are found in the blood of circumcision and the blood of the covenant and has brought deliverance and reconciliation to his community. He carried out by fulfilling the cutting of ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη with his blood on the cross, an indication of the inauguration of the age of reconciliation between humanity and God.

4. The Isaianic Suffering-Servant and reconciliation in Luke 22:37

Luke 22:37 is *Sondergut*, meaning that the text is peculiar to Luke (Taylor, 1972:67). In Luke, it relates to Jesus' interaction with his disciples after the meal had been completed. The interaction begins in verse 31 with Peter being alerted to the danger awaiting him because of the impending death that will befall his master. In the course of facing death, Jesus believes that his suffering is the fulfilment of the writing of the Old Testament, emphatically asserting that λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι τοῦτο τὸ γεγραμμένον δεῖ τελεσθῆναι ἐν ἐμοί "for I say to you that what is written in this scripture is being fulfilled in me". This quotation by the Lukan Jesus is a direct reference to the authenticity of the Old Testament scripture as *ipsissima verba Dei*, the very word of God. The Lukan Jesus is known for citing and appropriating the content of the Old Testament to himself (4:18-19; 6:3-4; 7:22-23, 27; 22:19-20). Jesus' claim that the Old Testament text refers to him is seen in how he often cites it when applying it to himself. By doing this, the Lukan Jesus presents himself as the fulfilment of the Old Testament (24:27, 44, 46). But the quotation of Isaiah 53:12 is the only time in Luke that Jesus quotes the Old Testament directly as being fulfilled in him (Nolland, 1993:1076-1077). The Lukan use of δεῖ "must" signals an irreversibly determined event that has to come to fulfilment. The Lukan use of δεῖ attributes to the statements of the Lukan Jesus as something that he must carry out (cf. 9:22; 13:33; 17:25; 22:37; 24:7; 24:44). As Plummer (1922:140) notes, it shows that "His work and His sufferings are ordered by Divine degree." This divine ordering, following the work of Plummer, is for him to fulfil the ancient prophetic text καὶ μετὰ ἀνόμων ἐλγίσθη (He was counted among the lawless people). The phrase has been interpreted differently by scholars. The first interpretation is that the disciples of Jesus are lawless due to them having a μάχαира ("sword") in their midst (Schweitzer, 1984:341-342). Scholars such as Lenski (1961:1069) and Nolland (1993:1077), however, see it as referring to his death between the two thieves. Others believe that the use of ἀνόμοι refers to the entirety of humanity for whose redemption his blood is shed (Bovon, 2012:184; contra Schweitzer, Lenski and Nolland).

What is important is that the death of Jesus was, according to Luke, predicted in the Old Testament. In several places in Luke, such as 9:22; 13:33; 17:25; 22:37; 24:7 and 24:44, Jesus reaffirms his commitment to fulfilling

this Old Testament prophecy. His association with the downtrodden and the outcasts of his society shows that he came for all afflicted with many problems. This view agrees with Hendriksen (1978:977) and Fitzmyer (1985:1430), who allege that the Lukan Jesus cast himself as the fulfilment of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. The Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 was a figure expected to come with the sole aim of redeeming Israel from sin to reconcile them to God and one another.

The Lukan Jesus does not see himself as *one who reckons with his disciples* during his passion or as someone who will die between two thieves, but as someone divinely designed to bear the iniquity of humanity to reconcile them with God and each other. This event is believed by the Lukan Jesus to have an expected time frame, and that is why the use of τέλος becomes necessary in his statement. It is on the cross that the Lukan Jesus reached the climax of this statement, as it was only meant for sinners to die such a death (Hengstenberg, 2007:610-612). The reference to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53:12 is a verbal echo through which Jesus claims to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah. This claim of Jesus provides a window through which we can understand the script of Luke regarding the place of Jesus in his community. It entails both the recontextualisation and reconfiguration of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah. According to Vernon K. Robbins (1996:41-50), recitation is a process of transmitting speech or narratives from either the oral or written tradition in the exact or different words in which the person received the tradition, Recontextualisation is a process of citing a biblical text without any indication of the existence of such a word or statement in any written text elsewhere, while reconfiguration of a text is retelling a situation in a text in a way that makes the later event new about the old event. By interpretation, Jesus here applies all the known rules of ancient rhetoric to appropriate the fulfilment of the text in his suffering and death. Positioning his narrative within the Old Testament text and its prophecy, Luke indicates that Jesus is the one whose blood is intended to redeem his community from the power of sin, thereby reconciling them with God. By implication here Jesus is both the lamb and the messianic Suffering Servant who will reconcile his people with God and establish God's kingdom on earth.

5. Conclusion

This article focused on the passion story with special attention to the meal scene and the Suffering Servant in the Gospel of Luke. It reviewed the relevance of literature to the passion narrative in Luke's Gospel. It was discovered that many scholars do not see any atoning sacrifice in the death of the Lukan Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. However, Kimbell in his work believes that the death of the Lukan Jesus was meant for atonement similar to that of the Old Testament sacrificial system. Using socio-historical hermeneutics helped in raveling literature, it was detected that Luke's passion narrative tallies with the Old Testament where atonement was meant for forgiveness and reconciliation.

Jesus' allusion to the cup of the new covenant in the Lukan passion meal scene is a direct application of ancient rhetoric that informed his audience of the significance of the meal to the Lukan community. The Lukan Jesus therefore appropriates the meaning of the meal to himself. He sees himself as the one who fulfilled the new era of a new covenant with his blood. The article has shown that blood was consequential in the Old Testament as a means of taking away sin.

The argument in this article has been that the remembrance meal in Luke 22:19-20 and the Suffering Servant in Luke 22:37 in the passion narrative contain imagery of reconciliation when using socio-historical hermeneutics.

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