

Christology and Soteriology in Luke: Inner Texture Analysis of Luke 4:16-30.

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Abstract

The article discussed the person and works of Jesus in Luke 4:16-30. The identity and manifesto of Jesus in the gospel of Luke is a key issue that many scholars have separately examined. However, there is overwhelming emphasis on the rejection of Jesus rather than Christology and soteriology which is projected in the text. Luke 4:16-30 is a multifaceted micro-narrative that amalgamated the person and the works of Jesus – Christology and soteriology. This study engaged inner texture of socio-rhetorical interpretation propounded by Vernon K. Robbins to read Luke 4:16-30 to analyze Jesus as the son of Joseph, a prophet, teacher, and a miracle worker. The objective is to bring out the rich nuances by the author to combine Christology and soteriology in the manifesto of Jesus.

Keywords: Christology, Soteriology, prophet, scripture, Nazareth, miracle, rejection.

Introduction

Luke 4:16-30 is a synoptic text that can be found in Mark 6:1-6 and Matthew 13:54-58. There are literary variations among the three. The Markan and Matthean versions share close resemblance in composition more than the Lukan version. The Markan and Matthean versions do not have the reading of the Isaiah text by Jesus. They place the text in the middle of the ministry of Jesus, but Luke placed it at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus. The placement by Luke may suggest that Luke intentionally fixed it at the current position to argue that

the ministry of Jesus was the fulfillment of prophecies in the Hebrew Bible (Marshall 1978, 178). This is emphasized by the phrase ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν (*amēn legōumi*) (truly/verily I say to you) v 24 to refer to a popular authoritative saying in the social and religious context of the ancient Mediterranean world (Marshall 1978, 188). In the Markan and Matthean versions, there was no attempt to push Jesus from the hill by the audiences in the synagogue although they took offence against Him (Mk. 6:3; Mt. 13:56). Mark and Matthew mentioned that Jesus performed some limited miracles, but Luke was quiet on it (Mk. 6:5; Mt. 13:58). In addition, Mark and Matthew mentioned the names of the siblings and the mother of Jesus while Luke did not. Although there are significant differences between the Lukan version and the Markan-Matthean versions, the statement of Jesus that a prophet is not honored in His hometown, the venue of the event - the synagogue, and the rejection of Jesus run through the three accounts.

The text of Luke 4:16-30 contains the first discourse of Jesus in a socio-religious context after His baptism by John the Baptist and His first statement to begin His ministry, according to Luke. The text is critical because it is the opening utterance by Jesus, which sought to give possible directions for His ministry. Literarily, the text seeks to demonstrate the manifesto of Jesus concerning His ministry. It gives the criteria to evaluate the works of Jesus at the end of His ministry. It is significant to note that this opening statement was made in a socio-religious setting – the synagogue. The setting is often composed of major stakeholders of society, such as religious leaders, leaders of social sects, and the availability of religious sacred books that Jesus needed to use to announce His ministry aspirations to these key social and religious stakeholders. This view is apparent in the repetition of terms and concepts, how these terms and concept progress in the narrative culminating into an argument that the choice of Jesus to use the synagogue to announce His ministry assignment was strategic because the synagogue at Nazareth is not limited to religious activities but also civil, educational,

legal, and social matters are parts of issues discussed at the synagogue. In other words, the ministry of Jesus will impact or have contributions to religious, civil, educational, legal, and social strata of the community. Simply put the combination of Christology and soteriology of Jesus for the benefit of the audience.

There are many interpretations of Luke 4:16-30 arriving at varied meanings based on the exegetical method used and the focus of the interpreter. According to Crockett, the rejection narrative of Luke 4:16-30 can be divided into two sections: the sermon of Jesus (Lk. 4:16-21); and the response of the audience and closing remarks of Jesus (Lk. 4:22-30) (1969, 177-183). He drew a two parallel chiasmic structure of Luke 4:16-21 to show that vv 18 and 19 are at the apex and key to the appropriate understanding of the rejection narrative, and that it is a straightforward composition (Crockett 1969, 79). His assertion that the literary composition of Luke 4:16-21 is straightforward could be due to the affirmative nature of the text concerning the ministry of Jesus as the fulfillment of a supposed prophesy of the combination of Isaiah 61:1-2 and 58:6. Crockett found the second half of the micro-narrative, Luke 4:22-30 very problematic or disjointed with reference to the first half. Because Jesus won the heart of many of the audience present after the reading and contextualization of the Isaiah texts as a fulfillment of His ministry but after some comments, the very audience in the synagogue who affirmed Him decided to throw Him out (Crockett 1969, 80). Jesus' comments from vv 22-24 might be the main ingredient that might led to the change of thoughts of the audience. Crockett added that a proper interpretation of vv 25-27 is critical to the understanding of the micro-narrative and the entire gospel of Luke because there are references to Elijah and Elisha accounts in the gospel (Crockett 1969, 89-90). In the nutshell, the proposition of Crockett is that the micro-narrative of the rejection narrative is disjointed; however, an interpretation of the Elijah and Elisha components in the text will lead to a coherent understanding.

Combrink's literary analysis of the passage shows that the account is narrated in a pendulum. Jesus reads and the audiences respond in the affirmative and made reference to His ancestry; Jesus explains the text and the audiences respond; Jesus reacted to the ancestry remarks by the audiences by referring to Elijah and Elisha's miracle accounts; the audiences were angry at his negative comments concerning them and therefore pushed him out of the town (Combrink 1973, 27-47). Hence, the micro-narrative is a well-structured piece that has an introduction and a conclusion: "the rejection narrative forms a coherent whole, true to the style and literary method of Luke" (Combrink 1973, 48). It implies that Combrink does not see a break in the micro-narrative as suggested by Crockett. However, Combrink's literary analysis shows a downward trend, from affirmation to rejection of Jesus by the audiences at Nazareth.

Similar to the proposition by Combrink, Just Jr. argued that the text is a coherent passage in an ABA¹B¹ chiasmus order.

Introduction 4:16a: Jesus arrived at Nazareth where He was born

A 4:16b-21 Jesus read the scripture and announce its fulfillment

B 4:22 the people in the synagogue responded in wonder

A¹ 4:23-27 Jesus speaks concerning His rejection by His own people

B¹ 4:28-29 the people in the synagogue responded in anger

Conclusion 4:30: Jesus passed through the people and run away (Just 1996, 91)

By this chiasmus, it suggests that the interpretation of the rejection account of Jesus at Nazareth must be determined by subthemes. Although the literary structures given by Crockett, Combrink, and Just are important inputs for the interpretation of the micro-narrative, however, this work, considers the repetition of terms and concepts, progression, style of narration, plot, and argumentation to determine the emphasis and the building blocks of the text as hermeneutical clues for the interpretation of the text to complement their works as others like Vernon Robbins suggests and further implications for Christology and soteriology. This will lead to the discovery of Luke's rhetorical/narrative composition of the text to persuade his audiences to accept Jesus and the sociological and institutional inputs that influenced the composition of the text to show how Luke portrayed Jesus in socio-religious setting as the Christ and the Saviour.¹

In this study, Christology refers to the study of the identity of Jesus as the son of God, the son of Joseph, and a prophet. Soteriology refers to the study of the miraculous works of Jesus to save the vulnerable in their predicaments. The study contributes to Lukan Christology that gives attention to the salvation of all, particularly, the socially disadvantage and vulnerable (Powell 2009, 147-158; see Lk. 2:11; 4:21; 19:10; 23:43).

Repetitive texture analysis of Luke 4:16-30

There are repetitions of terms in Luke 4:16-30. These terms and phrases seek to point to the emphasis of the narrator or what the narrator wish to re-occur very often in the memory of the audiences. The literary building blocks of the micro-narrative are Jesus who is portrayed in personal pronouns:

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αὐτῷ (He), which clearly show that the text was narrated by a third person – author. Συναγωγή (*sunagogē*), βιβλίον (*biblion*), πύξας (*ptuzas*), προφητῆς (*prophētēs*), and καὶ πάντες (*kai pantes*) occurred more than once in the micro-narrative. All these terms and phrases are discussed to evaluate how the implied author engaged them to contribute to the composition of the text to portray Jesus in the socio-religious settings of Nazareth.

Συναγωγή

The term συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) (synagogue, place of assembly) occur three times in the micro-narrative (Lk 4:16, 20, and 28). The first time the term is used it is in the accusative case to indicate that it is the main object of the action of Jesus; a socio-religious center that hosted and provided the opportunity for Jesus to make His views known to the audiences (Lk 4:16). The συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) has the potential to attract Jesus, religious leaders, and citizens to converge at one location (Lk 4:16). The other uses of συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) in Luke 4:20 and 28 are in the dative case and give proof for the centripetal nature of the συναγωγή (*sunagogē*). The accusative and dative cases use of συναγωγή clearly depicts the nature and purpose of the term in the ancient Palestinian world. The compound συναγωγή can be split into the preposition σὺν – which can be used with a dative or genitive case, connotating “the totality of persons who are together, or who come together, or who accompany one another, or who work together, sharing a common task or a common destiny, aiding and supporting one another” (Grundmann 1971, 766-797), in a sociative dative manner. While ἄγω commonly denotes to lead or bring together, means that the general meaning of συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) is a pace that brings people together.

However, there are two uses of συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) in relation to society and Judaism which we need to discuss in order to find the use of συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) in Luke 4:16-30. In the

ancient Greek secular usage, it is a place of meeting citizens for the discussion of issues concerning the city and the citizenry. After each meeting, emperors and heroes were revered. It also serves as a venue for festivities by leaders of the city (Schrage 1971, 798-852). In Judaism in the Diaspora, it was used as a meeting place for biblical Israelites for the study of the Torah, education, and prayer (Schrage 1971, 806). This is a narrower usage as against the broader usage by many citizens in the *polis* (city). In view of the giving of the scroll to Jesus and the discourse concerning Elijah and Elisha, it is most likely that the use of συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) in the narrative refers to ancient biblical Israelite usage, which is limited to adherents of Judaism. However, since the συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) does not limit attendance by other persons, it will not be strange that other individuals who do not adhere to Judaism may be present. The implied author stated that it was the custom (εἰωθός) of Jesus to be present at the synagogue (Lk 4:16). This statement may be due to the earlier report of Jesus' use of the συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) to teach to the amazement of the audiences (Lk. 4:14-15).

The question that arises is that if Jesus uses the συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) once, does that constitute a εἰωθός (custom)? Hence, εἰωθός should be understood as He (Jesus) will be accustomed to. In other words, Jesus will in the future be accustomed to visiting synagogues regularly each Sabbath. This is premised on the assumption that the presentation by Luke is orderly or sequential (Lk 1:1-4). It is also likely that since the narrative was recorded after decades of the ministry of Jesus, it is an insertion by the implied author because he had the privilege of the overview of the ministry of Jesus. Nevertheless, εἰωθός (*eiōthos*) could be a reference to His custom of attending synagogue service since His childhood (Marshall 1978, 181) because He was nurtured in Nazareth.

Βιβλίον

The term βιβλίον (book, scroll) (*biblion*) appear three times. Twice in v 17, and once in v 20, which the implied author said Jesus referred to the βιβλίον (*biblion*) as γραφή (*graphē*) (v 21) (scripture, sacred writing) to probably distinguished it from other writings. It means that the βιβλίον (*biblion*) that was handed to Jesus to read from was an accepted religious document to give guidance and conduct in worship or religious matters. The first usage in v 17 is in the nominative case which means that it is one of the subjects of the micro-narrative, perhaps the main subject around which other subjects revolves. This is so because there was no issue for critical discussion until the βιβλίον (*biblion*) was read by Jesus followed by His interpretation. The other two uses of βιβλίον (*biblion*) in vv 17 and 20 were in the accusative case to show that it has become the object of the micro-narrative for interpretation by Jesus to the displeasure of the audiences. Βιβλίον (*biblion*) is often used interchangeably with βιβλος (*biblion*) to refer to anything that had been written down and widely accepted by the community that uses it, which may concern marriage, agriculture, apocalyptic, dietary laws etc (Verbrugge 2000, 94). Since the συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) in this context is used purposely for biblical Israelite worship and teaching services as established above, the βιβλος that was given to Jesus to read is that which was written by the prophet Isaiah.

Πτύξας

Πτύξας (*ptuzas*) occurred twice in the micro-narrative in a reversed order. It appeared in v 17 as ἀναπτύξας (to unroll, open) and πτύξας (*ptuzas*) in v 20 (roll, close) to indicate a beginning point and an end point of an activity. The use of ἀναπτύξας and πτύξας (*ptuzas*) refute the argument that the βιβλίον (*biblion*) was opened by chance or divine influence to where the prophecy of Isaiah was (Marshall 1978, 182). Neither was it opened to Jesus by the attendant or any human

being present. Simply put a connotation that Jesus intentionally opened the βιβλίον (*biblion*) to the particular place He read from.

Προφητῆς

The πύξας (*ptuzas*) that was given to Jesus to read from is that of the prophet Isaiah. The noun προφητῆς (*prophētēs*) (prophet) occurred three times in the micro-narrative. It first appeared in v 17, and then vv 24 and 27 respectively. The use in v 17 is in the genitive case to indicate that the βιβλίον (*biblion*) that was given to Jesus is Isaiah, a literary prophet of Israel. The miracle of the healing of King Hezekiah in the book of Isaiah has been argued to be an insertion to show that the prophet had performed a miracle (Hill 1979, 12-16). However, judging from the material of the prophet it can be argued that Isaiah is a literary prophet. Προφητῆς (*prophētēs*) in v 24 was used in the nominative case to draw attention to Jesus. The implied author depicted Jesus as prophesying to how His native people would relate to Him and drew examples from the ministry of biblical Israelites prophets – Elijah and Elisha, miracle working prophets. The references to these prophets suggest that Jesus is a miracle working prophet, which people of His own society will not uphold as other people in non-native societies.

The third use of προφητῆς (*prophētēs*) was in the genitive case of time to point to the period of the ministry of the prophet Elisha. It shows the favor to Gentile persons to receive the grace of God through healing; an indication that when the natives of Jesus reject Him the Gentile nations will be favored. Hence, the calls for Gentile and biblical Israelite relationship to both receive the blessings of the Messiah in the gospel of Luke (Crockett 1969, 177-183). The reference to the accounts of Elijah and Elisha concerning the miracle on nature (food for the widow) and the healing of the leper was to caution the people of Nazareth to appropriate the blessings of God. In a nutshell, the micro-narrative used προφητῆς (*prophētēs*) to

refer to both literary and miracle working prophets in the social and religious context of biblical Israelites and their relationship to their native people and other nations in their social contexts.

Καὶ πάντες

The phrase *καὶ πάντες* (*kai pantes*) (and all, and every) plays a critical literary role in the understanding and interpreting the response of the audiences in the συναγωγή (*synagogē*). The phrase occurred two (2) times in the micro-narrative. It first appeared in v 22 to express the affirmation of the people towards the reading of the scripture from the scroll of Isaiah. The people were amazed because they knew Him as the son of Joseph. It raises questions on the double paternity of Jesus as the son of God and the son of Joseph. Luke presented Jesus as the son of God and the son of Joseph. Although it may appear to the contemporary person as confusing, for the ancient Mediterranean person it is a normal issue to present the deity/spirit/God and the woman as parents of a person if the divine aspect of the person is emphasized while the physical father is presented with the woman when the native physical relational issues were being promoted (Lincoln 2013, 639-658). *Καὶ πάντες* (*kai pantes*) attempts to end the first segment of the discourse concerning the Christology and Soteriology of Jesus in synagogue in Nazareth.

The second use of *καὶ πάντες* (*kai pantes*) is towards the close of the second segment of the entire micro-narrative (v 28). It occurred after Jesus had made reference to Elijah and Elisha that went against His native people in the synagogue. In this concluding usage, it expresses the anger or disapproval of the people concerning Jesus. This anger or rage did not limit the people to send Jesus out of only the synagogue but out of the town – Nazareth in the attempt to push Him from the hill to die. It is not clear whether the same people who admired Jesus were the same individuals who were later fill with rage against Him. Or it is a portion of the audience who were later

filled with rage against Him. However, deducing from the rejection action, which was not limited to the synagogue but Nazareth, it is possible that the καὶ πάντες who were raged were more than those who admired Him earlier.

Socio-rhetorical literary analysis of the micro-narrative suggests that these terms and phrases are the skeletal framework on which the text was built. It is the intention of the implied author that the audiences or implied readers focus their attention on these ideas and connotations that these terms and phrases drew to the text. In other words, the literary contributions of these terms and phrase cannot be ignored in socio-rhetorical interpretation of the Christology and Soteriology account of Jesus in Nazareth. The terms and phrases repeated are a critical device engaged by the implied author to lead the reader to the themes in the text (Croy 2011, 58). In other words, what had been seen earlier has re-occurred in the same manner or slightly varied manner in context to keep the attention of the readers or audiences to the root of the terms at the time it was first used to the current context or mode of its usage. It may be positive or negative.

Progression Texture Analysis of Luke 4:16-30

There is a progression in the Christology and soteriology manifesto account, and in the repeated terms and phrase. The term συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) occurred in a progressively quantitative manner in relation to the audience and their activities. Its first usage in v 16 was in relation to the custom of one person – Jesus to attend synagogue services. It improved positively to refer to the admiration of the gracious word of Jesus by all in the synagogue. The last and final usage of the word in the micro-narrative was related to the action of many people, to force Jesus not only out of the synagogue but also out of Nazareth. It is a syllogistic and quantitative progression (Leroux 1995, 1-25) concerning human activities in the synagogue. The implied author engaged συναγωγή

(*sunagogē*) in a declining manner from being used to admonish to being used to reject. In other words, συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) was engaged in a spatial progression (Croy 2011, 62) to the town's hill of Nazareth; a movement from the synagogue – a limited meeting place to a larger location in town. Consequently, the implied author intended to keep the attention of the readers or audiences on the activities that took place at the beginning, middle, and end of the micro-narrative where συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) was employed. Although the actions in the συναγωγή (*sunagogē*) relating to its usage progresses from positive to negative, it can also be argued that the actions were mixed. The actions were not straight forward, both positive and negative results could emanate from the συναγωγή (*sunagogē*), which the readers' or audiences' attention to this situation ought to be unflinching for a good understanding and interpretation of the text.

Narrative Texture Analysis of Luke 4:16-30

The implied narrator began the account with καὶ ἦλθεν (*kai ēlthen*) (when He came) to indicate the period/time that the incident took place in the synagogue and to create a connection or succession from the pre-text – Luke 4:14-15 because His activity in the synagogue which was praised was mentioned. This does not suggest a direct or immediate or sequential succession of Luke 4:16-30 to Luke 4:14-15 but indication of literary ideas and concepts that can be found in both pericopae. It is a Homeric style of composition by the implied narrator to link or draw characters in a pre-text to have a connection with the characters in a text that follows (Elbert 2004, 98-109).

Luke 4:16-30 is a μυθικὸν πρᾶγμα (*muthikos pragma*) (mythical narrative) (Robbins 1996, 368-384) because the account contains deities and heroes such as Jesus, Spirit, Lord, Elijah, and Elisha. It is a narrative elaboration for the reason that it has a beginning, middle, and an end (Robbins 1983, 43-74). In other words, it is a fully developed account by

the implied author. A complete narrative has the ingredients of place, time, and manner of presentation (Robbins 1996, 372). This will be discussed under the subheading – settings.

Events

The passage of Luke 4:16-30 is a rhetorical unit that follows order, duration, and frequency in four to six parts rhetorical composition (Phillips 2008, 226-265; Witherington III 1995, 44):

Rhetorical Unit	Corresponding
Reference in Luke 4:16-30	
<i>Exordium</i> : Introduction to the composition	Luke 4:16
<i>Narratio</i> : It explains the nature of the narrative or Discourse	Luke 4: 17-20
<i>Propositio</i> : The thesis of the narrative with supportive Arguments	Luke 4:21-27
<i>Peroratio</i> : Conclusion	Luke 4:28-30

The micro-narrative show deliberative rhetoric(Phillips 2008, 226-265; Witherington III 1995, 44) to demonstrate the teaching of Jesus concerning the reference to the Isaianic passage. It shows a narrative cohesion of deliberative rhetoric in a case and result structure:

Deliberative Rhetoric

Corresponding Reference in Luke 4:16-30

Case: Jesus read a scripture and drew implication
 Luke 4:18-21

Result: The audience responded in amazement
 Luke 4:22

Case/Result: Jesus preached a sermon

Luke 4:23-27

Contrary Result/Case: The audiences were raged

Luke 4:28

Result: The audiences drove out Jesus from Nazareth

Luke 4:29-30

This reveals the main character in the narrative.

Characterization

Jesus is a critical character that transcends the *exordium* through to the *Peroratio*. This is emphasized in the deliberative rhetoric structure where the responses of the audiences were based on the actions of Jesus. Jesus was presented as a character although known by His native citizen, has now assumed a divine status to the surprise of His people. The character of Jesus was presented as a flat character; a character that portrays a single and consistent trait in a narrative (Croy 2011, 105). A character that the implied narrator constantly referred to in the personal pronoun “He”, who tried to convince His native people that He is no longer the ordinary/normal person but had been influenced by the divine power of God to fulfill an assignment. The narrator did not indicate that Jesus was selected to preach the sermon in the synagogue service. Hence, the actions of Jesus – reading of scriptural text and the preaching of the sermon present Jesus as a lawless person, who does not follow laid down rules or protocols but does what favors Him only. The narrator’s presentation of Jesus’ response to the audiences when they said He was the son of Joseph shows that He was not only a teacher but also a miracle working person. It is Luke’s prophet Christology that combines teaching and miracles as Soteriology (Just jr. 1996, 194).

Jesus was portrayed as someone who knows scripture, particularly the miracles of Elijah and Elisha and their

position in ancient biblical Israelite's religion and social life. He used the Elijah and Elisha stories rhetorically to point to His native people that selective miracles are possible through divine direction by God and having faith in the miracle working person like Himself. However, during the period of Elijah the Land was under a curse. It is not the case of God's divine selection to show favor or lack of faith in Elijah (1 Kgs. 17:1-7). The healing of Naaman possibly emphasizes the idea of foreigners taking advantage of the anointing upon biblical Israelites Prophets (2 Kgs. 5:1-19), yet the text did not show any rejection of Elisha by his native people. The import of the argument of Elijah and Elisha could be understood on the grounds that Elijah was rejected by a biblical Israelite King – Ahab a fellow comrade in religion but was accepted by a Sidonian widow – a foreigner (1 Kgs. 17:8-25). The healing of Naaman – a Syrian army commander was to demonstrate that there is a prophet in Israel (2 Kgs. 5:8) (Pao and Schnabel 2007, 251-414).

The narrative suggests that Jesus knew ahead of the scripture reading that His native people would not accept Him. However, the narrator did not indicate to the readers how and when Jesus got to know this. It is probably that the audiences knew how and when Jesus got to know; therefore, there was no need to mention it in the text. Plausibly, it could have been mentioned by the narrator so that the recipient – Theophilus who is a non-native of Nazareth could not conjecture about the issue but to have specific information. It is a gap that the implied narrator has left for Non-natives of Nazareth should fill or find answers for. In addition, Jesus' implications that the scripture He read has been fulfilled in the hearing of the people left questions in the minds of the readers of the passage. How and when the Spirit came upon Jesus? Is it in the bodily form like a dove when He was baptized by John in the River Jordan? (Lk. 3:21-22); or after the temptation, when He was filled with the Spirit and returned to Galilee (Lk. 4:14-15); or during the reading/presentation in the synagogue (Lk. 4:18-19)? The implied reader is free to adopt any of these

assertions as answers to when did the Spirit come upon Jesus. However, juxtaposing Luke 4:16-30 on Luke 3:21-22, one can draw the concept of divine sonship and biological sonship. Consequently, the implied narrator might be referring to the baptism account of Jesus and the oracular message that followed.

Again the escape of Jesus will not be very clear to readers who were not witnesses on the scene. Jesus was held by some people to the town's hill yet He escaped without obvious notice (vv 29-30). Just argued that it was a miraculous escape (Just jr. 1996, 196) because the set time for His death is not due (Marshall 1978, 190). The Markan and the Matthew versions did not mention the attempt to push Him from the hill and the escape.

The second character in the micro-narrative is the audiences in the synagogue. This group of audiences has a round character, which keeps changing due to human emotions; they have weaknesses and strengths (Chisholm2002, 30). The variations in the character of the audiences depend on the statements of Jesus and judging Jesus based on their knowledge of scripture in their sub-conscience. In view of the use of the synagogue as the venue for the event, the narrator clearly argues that the audiences are mostly biblical Israelites. This is attested by the scroll of Isaiah given to Jesus to read from and the amazement of the audiences after the reading (Lk. 4:22). The audiences in the synagogue seem to have known Jesus quite well such that they could refer to Him as the son of Joseph (Lk. 4:23). It is likely that some of them might be close family relatives in the extended family system of ancient Mediterranean society. It is also an indication that, the event was not the first time Jesus entered that synagogue. He might have been known in the synagogue since His younger days. To consolidate this view, the Markan and Matthean versions of the account mentioned the siblings of Jesus and added that Jesus was a Carpenter (Mk. 6:3; Mt.13:55-56). Marshall (1978, 186) postulated that, the

audiences also knew the miracles Jesus had performed at Capernaum and were demanding that Jesus performed miracles to consolidate His claim as a prophet. This claim suggests that Jesus had performed miracles or started effective public ministry prior to the Christology and Soteriology account, this proposition is difficult to substantiate in the gospel of Luke. Nevertheless, the opus of Mark and Matthew stated that Jesus went to His hometown with His disciples (Mk. 6:1-6; Mt. 13:54-58), which shows that Jesus had started ministry and performed some miracles in Capernaum.

The audiences were not static. They could revise their thought at any time depending on the circumstances. They expressed affirmative amazement at the reading of scripture by Jesus, but quickly revised their thoughts after the sermon of Jesus. The rejection and attempted murder of Jesus by the audiences fulfilled the earlier claim by Jesus that He will not be accepted by His people. For them Jesus cannot appropriate the claims of vv 18-19. By this the narrator presents to the readers that the natives of Jesus were ignorant of the nativity accounts of the experience of Mary with the angel Gabriel (Lk. 1:26-38); the birth of Jesus (Lk. 2:1-7); the witness of the angels after the birth of Jesus (Lk. 2:20); and the naming of Jesus at the temple (Lk. 2:21-38). These stories must have been in circulation for more than thirty years prior to the event of the Christology and Soteriology in Nazareth. Plausibly, in an oral stage (Brown 2007, 13-16), which one would assume that the natives of Jesus should be aware of.

The action by the audiences to push Jesus from the hill implies that they can kill based on religious ideologies. In other words, human life is subject to religious values. The audiences are religiously intolerant. The Markan and the Matthew versions did not report the adverse action of the audiences, but that Jesus was surprised at their unbelief (Mk. 6:6; Mt. 13:58). In addition, the audiences were amazed at the wisdom, power, and knowledge of Jesus (Mk. 6:2; Mt. 13:54).

It is difficult to determine what exactly made the audiences to be raged against Jesus because the two prophets that were mentioned by Jesus in relation to miracles were not rejected by their native people. Is it that the audiences attempt to push Jesus was due to misapplication of scripture in their view?

Deducing from the burgeoning discussion concerning the narrative texture, the implied narrator intends those readers would accept Jesus as a human who has now assumed a divine status which cannot be scientifically comprehended. And that faith in Him will yield miracles for the audiences. Although Luke did not report that Jesus performed miracles in Nazareth because He presented the account as the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, the Markan and Matthean versions reported that Jesus performed few miracles due to the unbelief of the people (Mk. 6:5; Mt. 13:58). The Carpenter is now a prophet of God, mighty in words and deeds and must be accepted by His town folks in order to receive miracles. In that regard, it is both deliberative and epideictic rhetoric. The character of the audiences is not the ideal that the narrator intended for the readers to emulate. However, the narrator did not give enough background information for a non-native of Nazareth to clearly understand vividly what took place in the synagogue.

Settings

Place

The place of the incident is Nazareth, a place that was said to be the native town of Jesus. This needs to be interrogated since He has a divine ancestry. Nazareth is derived from the Hebrew root *nātzár* which means watch hill (Merrill 1898, 5-16). It was where Jesus lived with His parents Mary and Joseph and grew in stature and wisdom. It is a town in a valley, which is the present day town of EnNasira in Syria (Parker 1869, 189-198). The topography of Nazareth is such that it was surrounded by hills (Parker 1869, 189). “The streets

of Nazareth are narrow and crooked and steep, and encumbered with heaps of unmentionable filth. Its houses are mean and squalid and too modern and commonplace in construction to offer so much as a redeeming touch of the picturesque” (Parker 1869, 191). The description shows that the town cannot be compared to ancient cities such as Jerusalem, Galilee, and Capernaum etc. These cities are better developed than Nazareth but Jesus grew in this town with the messianic consciousness and moral lifestyle that did not derail Him from His primary task as the messiah (Bosworth 1901, 424-433). Bosworth refer to Nazareth as a village that lacks many social, economic, and educational facilities (Bosworth 1901, 426). Although Nazareth was not a highly developed town in terms of infrastructure and social amenities, it was enough to help Jesus cultivate religious lifestyle and devotion to duty (Bosworth 1901, 424). The implied author did not show the exact location of the synagogue where the incident took place. But since Nazareth is not a city with a large population, it is likely that the synagogue is the only one in the town. The synagogue might be located in close proximity to the town’s hill.

However, Jesus was not entirely influenced by His environment. He was not influenced neither did He agree with the opinion of the people of Nazareth concerning the religious benefit that natives may derive from a religious intermediary (Bosworth 1901, 425). This was apparent in His discourse about Elijah and Elisha (Lk. 25-27). Jesus’ reference to these influential prophets of biblical Israelites – Isaiah, Elijah, and Elisha point to a good religious education system with good teachers in Nazareth.

Time

The incident took place during a Sabbath worship service in the synagogue at a point where there should be a reading from the prophets. There was a fixed liturgy at the synagogue worship service. Upon entry, each individual was to offer a

private prayer to thank God for safe arrival at the synagogue. This was followed by the confirmation and affirmation of biblical Israelite faith in Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21. Thereafter, prayer and praise and then comes the apex of the service – the reading of scripture from the Pentateuch and the Prophets. This is followed by prayer and the sermon if there is someone competent enough to preach (Marshall 1978, 181-182). All the readers of scripture and the passages were selected prior to the beginning of the service; therefore there are no surprises concerning persons who would read during the service (Schrage 1971, 798-841). However, it is not clear whether this fixed liturgy was relaxed during the period of Jesus for readers of the prophets to select their own passages as seemed the case for Jesus (Marshall 1978, 182). In view of the rage that the audiences in the synagogue were filled with after the preaching of Jesus it is not likely that the service continued to the end where the Qaddish prayer is offered (Marshall 1978, 181).

Although it is quite difficult to ascertain the exact date of the event, it is believed that Jesus preached in the synagogue at the end of the month of Tishri to the beginning of cheshvan. This is based on a three-year lectionary of the synagogue where Isaiah 61 was read in the third week and other passages in Isaiah were read in the fourth week, and in the second week of cheshvan (Hill 1971, 161-180). Luke is familiar with this lectionary based on the LXX version of the Hebrew Bible available to him (Hill 1971, 173-175). The implied author earlier portrayed that Jesus had knowledge of the Isaianic literature (Lk. 3:4-6). Even though some have doubted the use of scripture (Hebrew Bible, MT) by Jesus that it was an interpolation by the Early church (Funk and Hoover 1993), the evidence show that Jesus was not only a prophet and a miracle working person but also an interpreter of scripture (Moyise 2009, 249-270).

Manner

The implied author of Luke 4:16-30 presented Jesus to have used a mode that is quite different from what pertains in a typical synagogue worship service by biblical Israelites. Usually, the reading from scripture is not commented upon by the reader but could be commented upon by the preacher (Marshall 1978, 182). Consequent to the reading by Jesus, He made inference that what He read has been fulfilled in their hearing (v 21). It was not stated that Jesus was selected to read from the prophets and also to preach the sermon for the day. But Jesus did both. Although preaching of the sermon for the service was not the preserve of priests or any known religious leader, any individual in the congregation could be selected to preach or offer himself to preach during the service (Burton 1896, 143-148), Jesus combined both duties. The manner that Jesus used could be interpreted as innovative, it could be an issue that caused rage in the audiences in the synagogue. Jesus' manner would disorganize the service such that the person slated for the sermon will be disappointed.

Discourse

The implied author of Luke 4:16-30 narrated the account from a biblical Israelites *point of view*. Firstly, the mention of synagogue and the reading of the scroll of Isaiah show that the implied author made reference to a biblical Israelite religious and civic meeting center. But this needs to be explained because there are synagogues that were not biblical Israelite worship center. The use of the synagogue is not limited to biblical Israelites because it can be found outside Palestine; in other words, it can be found in the diaspora, and also used by ancient Greeks for civic meetings (Rosenfeld and Menirav 1999, 259-276). What made it a biblical Israelite worship center is the reading of Isaiah, the preaching of Jesus concerning Elijah and Elisha. These were not mentioned by Mark and Matthew (Mk. 6:1-6; Mt. 13:53-58), that notwithstanding, their allusions to miracles by Jesus

emphasized that the synagogue is the religious type by biblical Israelites.

The author used “prophet” to refer to religious intermediaries of biblical Israelites. Prophets in ancient Greek religious milieu were also referred to as *mantis* (soothsayers) while the prophets of the biblical Israelite were not soothsayers but messengers of YHWH (Hill 1971, 9-10). Therefore the reader will not be confused as to the exact prophet that the implied author was referring to, an introduction of a different form of prophetism to non-biblical Israelites.

The implied author mentioned biblical Israelite’s dominated towns/cities such as Israel, Capernaum, and Nazareth (v 23). Conversely, he also mentioned Sidon, and Syrian non-biblical Israelite’s towns that benefited from the blessings of YHWH through His prophets (v 26). Considerably, it can be seen as making provision for the blessings of God for non-biblical Israelites. Consequently, it has been argued that Luke 4:16-30 did not limit access to God’s blessings to only biblical Israelites but made way for the reception of other nations (Nolland 1979, 219-229). So then the micro-narrative mainly used biblical Israelite *point of view* to narrate the account, but there are non-biblical Israelites cities that were mentioned. It implies that the account resonates more with biblical Israelites religio-cultural settings; however, it did not neglect other nations. The discourse in Luke 4:16-30 is to make a psychological change of thought concerning Jesus in order to benefit from His miraculous prowess.

Open-Middle-Ending (Plot)

Luke 4:16-30 has an opening – v 16, middle – vv 17-29 and closing – v 30. It demonstrates that the narrative is a fully developed type. It shows that the text is not the mere listing of events or words but a coherent text that flows from beginning to the end (van Eck 2001, 593-611). Hence, it is a literary unit:

Beginning: Jesus came to Nazareth and during Sabbath worship service; He was given the scroll of Isaiah to read;

Middle: Jesus read and preached a sermon;

Ending: Jesus escaped from being pushed from the hill.

The implied author embarked upon a plot of disclosure, an epistemic plot to show that Jesus has assumed a new status as the messiah or prophet who also teach and perform miracles. Jesus might have left Nazareth as an ordinary Carpenter to be baptized by John in the River Jordan and was thereafter tempted in the wilderness for forty day and forty nights. These events might have transformed Him to a divine status. Consequently, He returned to Nazareth as a Messiah-prophet who can teach, perform miracles, and interpret scripture. His native people could not understand this plot of discovery which is epistemic in nature. The challenge of the people to understand the plot is when and how Jesus acquired this status? This is more vivid in the Markan and Matthean versions were Jesus had already performed some miracles in Capernaum and went to Nazareth in the entourage of His disciples (Mk. 6:1-6; Mt. 13:54-58).

The kernels of the narrative of Luke 4:16-30 are: (i) Jesus went to the synagogue service in Nazareth vv 16-16; (ii) He read scripture from Isaiah vv 18-19; (iii) He preached a sermon vv 23-27; and (iv) He escaped out of Nazareth v 30. The satellites that fill in the kernels to form a complete plot are: (i) being given the scroll of Isaiah v 17; (ii) the amazement of the audiences v 22; (iii) the audiences were raged and attempted to push Jesus from the hill vv 28-29. The kernels are the skeletal frame around which the satellites were formed or applied flesh to have a coherent literary plot (Matera 1987, 233-253).

Argumentative Texture Analysis of Luke 4:16-30

The implied author presented the argument for the acceptance of Jesus in an inductive (paradigmatic) reasoning by attempting to show that the status that Jesus had assumed was as a result of prophecy that had been fulfilled. It attempted to engage the *logos* of the audiences in a rhetological manner. But this appeal was not successful because the audiences thought that it may fit anyone including Jesus but not exclusive to Jesus as syllogistic reasoning may show. The implied author attempted to present a deductive argument for Jesus when he said that Jesus claimed that “today this scripture had been fulfilled” v 21. But the audiences disagree. In other words, the deductive reasoning by engaging the *logos* of the audiences was not successful. The deductive reasoning by the engagement of the *logos* of the audiences was further emphasized by reference to the accounts of Elijah and Elisha for Jesus to be accepted as one of them but it was not accepted. The inductive (paradigmatic) argument is presented in the following manner:

Major premise 1 – Jesus read the Isaianic text;

Major premise 2 – the scripture read is fulfilled in Jesus;

Conclusion – Jesus is a prophet.

The evidence in major premise 1 is that prophets teach, perform miracles, and interpret scripture. The evidence in major premise 2 is that the audiences were amazed, when Jesus interpreted scripture (sermon). The evidence that was lacking in this premise is that Jesus did not perform any miracle as reported by the Markan and Matthean versions. However, majority of the evidences in major premises 1 and 2 show that about 80% of the evidence show that it is an inductive (paradigmatic) reasoning to appeal to the *pathos* of

the audiences in a rhetology. Therefore the argument that Jesus is a prophet is a matter of probability.

Usually, inductive argument engages the *pathos* of the audiences in a rhetographic manner while deductive argumentation employs *logos* in a rhetology (Robbins 1996, 368-369; Stamps 2000, 953-959). But in this case, inductive (enthymeme) employs *logos* reasoning by referring to the accounts of Elijah and Elisha which is already in the minds of the audiences. This is a highbred argumentation to convince readers by all means possible without necessarily maintaining systems of argumentations.

Sensory-Aesthetic Analysis of Luke 4:16-30

Luke 4:16-30 contains sensory-aesthetic elements to enrich the argument of the implied author. There are zones of emotions-fused thoughts. In the Isaianic passage purportedly read by Jesus, one of the miracle assignment stated, which the author claimed is the task of Jesus was to restore the sight ἀνάβλεψιν (*anablepsiv*) of the blind v 18d. Although it is a miraculous act, doubtless, it is also the restoration of the rhetography of the people in order to have *pathos* reasoning. By implication, Jesus was supposed to restore the *pathos* reasoning of His people which did not materialize because He was rejected by His people according to Luke. However, the Markan and Matthean versions say Jesus performed few miracles; consequently, He might have fulfilled His task of restoring the *pathos*rhetography of His people to know and acknowledge His current status as a messiah-prophet who teaches, performs miracles, and interprets scripture.

There is self-expressive speech in Luke 4:16-30. Jesus made reference to the audiences “ear” that the Isaianic scripture has been fulfilled in their hearing. The hearing was to appeal to the *logos* of the people to accept the fulfillment of the prophecy in Jesus because the people might be familiar with the text, because many of them were biblical Israelites. This is

emphasized by references to the accounts of Elijah and Elisha in the hearing of the people. Instead of using the ear to hear and praise Jesus as plotted by the implied author, the audiences used it to listen and reject Jesus.

During the reading of the Isaianic scripture by Jesus, the audiences used rhetographic human organs to express emotions-fused thought. The “eyes” οἰὸφθαλμοὶ (*hoi ofthalmoi*) of the audiences were fixed on Jesus v 20c, observing how He read the passage with His mouth στόματος (*stomatos*) v 22c. It clearly shows the senses of the audiences that were active during the reading by Jesus. Obviously, since the audiences do not have a copy of the Isaianic scroll to follow the reading by Jesus, the alternative is to watch His mouth in order to follow the reading. This sparked the emotions of amazement to show that Jesus might read well. But His reading well, rhetographically in *pathos* reasoning did not convince the audience to accept Him. After all it is difficult for the audiences to check whether what He read was exactly what was written or whether He was interpolating along the reading. The sensory-aesthetics of sight, eyes, ear, and mouth were aimed at making the ancient text speak actively to the readers – Theophilus and contemporary users of the Lukan text (Krysinski 1989, 693-706). It is a micro-narrative that engages the human senses to see, hear, and taste. To “see” who Jesus is; to “hear” what the Isaianic scripture said about Him; and to “taste”/ “experience” the miracles of Jesus. These are objects or sensory-aesthetic values of Luke 4:16-30. Readers/receptors were expected to engage as clues for the proper understanding of the text.

Implications for Luke’s Christ and Salvation

- Salvation is a key message in the gospel of Luke (2:11; 4:21; 19:10; 23:43). It is not limited to forgiveness of sins, and life after death but also solution to existential needs such as health, and knowledge for effective lifestyle (4:38-41; 5:12-16; 7:1-17; 8:26-56). This

salvation is found in the Christ who is a prophet, miracle worker, and an interpreter of scripture. However, salvation can be appropriated through a pathos conviction by the audience/seekers concerning the identity of Jesus to avoid selective salvation to individual as was the case of Naaman and the widow at Zarephath.

- The study has implication for the third quest for the historical Jesus. The third quest for the historical Jesus emphasized the charisma of Jesus to save others as a key proponent for the historical Jesus research (Meier 2003, 459-487). The author of Luke identified Jesus as a prophet, and a teacher like Elijah, Elisha and Moses. It gives voice to the third quest for the historical Jesus research in the gospel of Luke which other scholars doubted (Bird 2006, 195-219).
- The study implies a causal relationship between the Christ and salvation. An assertion that is prevalent in the Ghanaian traditional religious context where charismatic figures were expected to perform miracles and teach as salvation for persons in need or ill. A contextual soteriological formulation that responds to existential needs of worshipers.

Conclusion

Inner texture analysis of Luke 4:16-30 identified συναγωγή (*sunagogē*), βιβλίον (*biblion*), πύξας (*ptuzas*), προφητῆς (*prophētēs*), and καὶ πάντες (*kai pantes*) as the main building blocks of the micro-narrative. Issues in the text rise and fall on these terms and phrase. They occurred in a progressive manner to the Christology and Soteriology of Jesus at Nazareth, although He was rejected. The text is a complete narrative that has a beginning, middle, and ending. The argument of the implied author was inductively made to persuade the natives of Jesus to accept Him as a prophet who teach, perform miracles, and interpret scripture. However, since the result of inductive/ enthymeme (paradigmatic)

reasoning is based on probabilities, the audiences were not convince to accept the argument. It could not have been deductively argued because the implied author did not mention the source of the power of Jesus that has transformed Him.

Abductive argumentation in which the result is based on best possible phenomenon would have made impact and the expected result achieved. But it would present Jesus as a literary prophet who does not perform miracles. However, the implied author wanted to stress the miracle component of Jesus so that He would be considered among Elijah and Elisha miracle catenae. Hence, the issue in contention is between miracle working prophet and literary prophet. The implied author blamed the lack of miracles in Nazareth on the faith of the people. Although the implied author coined the narrative from a biblical Israelites *point of view* by making references to the synagogue and biblical Israelites cities of Israel, Capernaum, and Nazareth, he also made provision for other nations by allusion to Sidon and Syria. Luke 4:16-30 is not biased but welcomes all people from every nation. Hence, the Christology and soteriology that Luke 4:16-30 projects is to all nations.

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