

Marginalized People in the Gospel of Luke

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Abstract

It can be said that Jesus's main mission on this earth was to preach about the Kingdom of God. The Gospel of Luke highlights the theme of the kingdom of God. Luke narrated the beginning of Jesus' ministry when He read from the book of Isaiah in the synagogue in Nazareth. Jesus declared that Isaiah's prophecy was being fulfilled in front of the audience in the synagogue. The prophecy talked of the Messiah's ministry to four groups of people, and each of those groups was targeted by the Messiah's ministry. They were clearly marginalized people then, and they can be related to the marginalized people in today's society.

Keywords: Gospel of Luke, Marginalized, Marginalized People

I. INTRODUCTION

The gospel of Luke has been written publicly for the Greek-speaking community, specifically for Theophilus. The purpose of the writing for the audience as its written in Luke 1:4, GW version "In this way you will know that what you've been told is true.". The author is Luke, who is referred to in Colossians 4:14 as "the beloved physician Luke" , in other English translation is "Luke the beloved physician", a Gentile who lived in Antioch. He accompanied Paul from Troas on his second missionary journey and then stayed in Philippi until Paul returned on his final missionary journey (Acts 20:6). They seem to have been close companions until Paul's death (2 Timothy 4:11), and Paul refers to him as a "fellow worker" in Philemon 1:24.

Luke gathered the information for his writing from eyewitnesses that he met during his travels with Paul, and was compelled to write regularly, so his readers would know everything he taught (Luke 1:1-4). In Luke's observation, every event shows God's intervention for the fulfillment of divine purposes. Luke's Gospel consists of a series of events, Each event arranged sequentially, the significance of each event does not complete when viewed alone. Each event should be read with reference to its narrative location., and this is one of the important factors to determine the meaning, and can not separate each event or pericope.

Luke 4:14-44 is a fabric composed of several materials, but also internally coherent. As Green explains:

References to the Spirit in 4:14, 18 are interpretive throw acts to Jesus' anointing (3:21-22) and testing in the wilderness (4:1). With these tags, narrator observes that onset Jesus' public ministry is the natural development

of 3:21-4:13. Having been empowered and sanctioned as God's Son, Jesus now performs as God's Son. On the other hand, 4:14-15 and 4:42-44 form an inclusion around 4:16-41. In this way summaries of Jesus' missionary activity (with parallel references to proclamation, synagogues, and Jesus reputation) receive concrete illustration in Jesus' public proclamation, exorcism, and healing in synagogues (4:16, 28, 33, 38) and a home(3:38)-(Green).

Jesus said to his disciple, in Luke 4:43, that he must preach the good news, He preached the good news specifically about the kingdom of God. Next clause in ESV "for I was sent for this purpose." This verse clearly explains that Jesus was sent to fulfill God's purpose. Mark and Matthew wrote the same idea with Luke concerning Jesus's purpose, but Mark and Matthew did not mention the good news of the kingdom of God.

In ISV version "i must preach ..", word "must" in greek word is δεῖ, this word used quite often in Luke's gospel, Carson(Moo) explained the word δεῖ its also used when Jesus "must" be in His Father's house (Luke 2:49); He must keep walking and die in Jerusalem (Luke 13:33); must stay at home Zacchaeus (Luke 19:5); and how He died on the cross (Luke 9:25; 17:25; 22:37; 24:7); Luke 24:44, in LEB version "And he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything that is written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." The Father has decreed to send Jesus Christ His Son, the necessity to undertake the mission, to preach the good news of the Kingdom of God.

Luke began his narrative in Luke 1:5 with the phrase "in the day of Herod, king of Judea", its contrast with Luke 1:33 that Jesus as promised Messiah who will rule forever, and his kingdom will never end.

Charles Hodge in his book Systematic Theology(Hodge), wrote three aspects of the kingdom: (1.) authority or royal power; such power is the prerogative of a king to run; (2.) For those who submit to that authority. Between each community, or a commonwealth, or territory subject to a king, constitutes his kingdom. And In the New Testament, those who acknowledge Christ as king form kingdoms His; (3.) The word is used metonymically to effect the exercise of royal authority.

Donald Guthrie in his book Theology of the New Testament 2, explains the meaning of the word βασιλεια (kingdom) not only means a territory of a king's reign, but the actions or activities of government. Definition in Hebrew, for example in Psalm 145:11, 13, "They will proclaim the glory of your kingdom, and will speak of your might,... your kingdom is a kingdom of all ages, and your reign endures through all generations. God is faithful in all his words and loving-kindness in all he does." This term chiefly describes that which pertains to royalty or the natural outflow of power from the royal station.

Luke 11:2, in KJV "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth."

Traditional text represented by the text type of "the Alexandrian" or "the Egyptian", which is found in the "critical text" published in the twenty-first edition of Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament and United Bible Society fourth edition. Young's Literal Translation "Our Father who art in the heavens; hallowed be thy name: Thy reign come; Thy will come to pass, as in heaven also on earth;" that explains that the kingdom of God will come and be accomplished as it is in heaven and so on earth.

Political Setting

In Luke 1:4, it is written "in the days of Herod the king of Judea, ...", Luke begins his narrative after writing the opening greeting, by mention the king, which in

this case is Herod, king of Judea, who rule over the land of Judea that time...it contrasts (parallelism antithetical) with what is written in Luke 1:33, "and he will be king over the house of Jacob forever and ever, and his kingdom will have no end." The word "he" refers to Jesus, it explains in verse 31, the baby to be conceived by Mary who received grace from God, and Jesus was given "the throne of David" who will be king to lead the house of Jacob (1:32) until forever. and His kingdom will have no end (1:32). The phrase forever and ever, indicates that His Government and Kingdom are eternal and divine, these criteria can only be fulfilled by a king who has eternal nature, which means only by God-self. It contrasts with King Herod who was a human, who ruled over a certain territory, and he did not rule forever.

1.1 Religious setting

Luke wrote about John the Baptist in the narrative section of the birth of the Lord Jesus, the background of his birth (Luke 1:5-25; 1:57-80) tells of God's actions and John the Baptist was the one who will prepare for Jesus's ministry. Luke 3:2 "While Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John, son of Zechariah, in the wilderness." The beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist which began with the coming of the word of God to him, with the background of Annas and Caiaphas being high priests. Gill explains:

Luke 3:2 : "Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests,.... Some difficulty here arises, how these two could be both high priests; when according to the law of God, and the usages of the Jewish nation, there was to be, and was but one high priest at a time: many things are observed by writers, to solve this difficulty: some go this way; that though according to the divine institution, and the practice of former times, there was but one high priest at a time; yet now, through the corruption of the present age, there were two high priests; or at least, which officiated alternately in the same year: but of such a corruption, no instance can be given, even in those corrupt times; and as Maimonides says (a), there can be but "one high priest" העולם , "in all the world"; and besides, is Contrary to their canons, which were then in being, and still remain; one (b) of which runs thus, ממנין "they do not appoint two high priests at once". Others suppose, that these two annually performed the office of high priests by turns; that Caiaphas was high priest one year, and Annas another: it is true indeed, that through the corruption of those times, this office became venous, hence it is said in the Talmud (c),"

The point is there was a corrupt practice in the priesthood at that time, in which the priests as the leader of God's people should be role models to teach and to be examples for the people. In the midst of the moral decay that occurred even in the priestly office, God called John into God's plan. Luke 3:3, the sermon of John the Baptist "So John came throughout the Jordan and shouted: "Repent and be baptized, and God will forgive your sins." Concerning repentance and forgiveness of sins, which in the next verse John gives a very strong rebuke, and teaches that repentance is accompanied by the fruit of repentance at the last verse, Luke 3:18-19, about Herod the Tetrarch who was rebuked for taking the wife of Philip's brother who caused John the Baptist to be imprisoned. A form of parallelism between the high priest Annas and Caiaphas with Herod the Tetrarch, they are the imagery of the corrupt ruler, and evil conduct.

1.2 Social Setting

Israel was in the captivity of the empire Rome for many years. Most people of

Israel, hope for the coming of the Messiah which they have heard from the prophecy of the prophets in Tanakh. Unfortunately, the messiah which they hoped not like their expectation. They hope the messiah who will set them free from the tyrant of Rome, in their mind, must be a king who will conquer Rome with military force, who will establish his kingdom on earth physically.

At that time, the leaders of Israel (the priests, scribe, Pharisees, Sadducees) broke the covenant with God. They ignore the law of God, including how to treat the poor. The poor are under oppression and difficult situations in their life. On the other hand, the Roman empire imposed high taxes on the Israelites and was exacerbated by the actions of tax collectors who deliberately increased the amount of tax for personal gain. These conditions shape the social community in the era of Jesus's ministry on earth.

II. METHODOLOGY

The basic method used to specifically examine the four groups is a lexical and grammatical analysis of the biblical text, especially in Luke 4:18-19. And also through an approach through the historical context, religious context, social and political context that occurred at that time. The context is used to understand the conditions that occurred at that time. Then conclusions are drawn about who is displayed by the group. And from that context becomes the basis for drawing relevance in the modern context.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main themes in the gospel of Luke are : The faithfulness of God, God made the covenant with Israel, and He is faithful with his covenant. God also fulfills the prophecy which has been conveyed by the prophets, and in the gospel of Luke, he describes that it is all fulfilled in Christ through his writings. God is the King of all nations, Jesus is Messiah King, He rules over his people and establishes his kingdom spiritually; God is the Savior, not only for the Jews, but Gentiles too. Luke records in his writing, that Jesus is concerned to all people, not only to the Jews, but also the Gentiles. God cares for the poor and needy people.

Luke 4:18-19 in Revised Version "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovering of sight to the blind, To set at liberty them that are bruised, To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.* It's quoted from [Isaiah 61:1-2](#) "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; He has sent me to preach good news to the poor, and to care for the brokenhearted, to proclaim release to the captives and release from prison for those in captivity, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all people mourning."

This verse is what Jesus said in synagogue, at Nazareth, on Sabbath day. He stood up to read, he received the book of the prophet Isaiah, he found the place where it was written, then he read. After Jesus read those verses, he declared : (TPT) "These Scriptures came true today in front of you.". In the next verse, at verse 22 (TPT) everyone in the synagogue was impressed by how well Jesus spoke, in awe of the beautiful words of grace that came from his lips. *But they were surprised at his presumption to speak as a prophet*, so they said among themselves, "*Who does he think he is? This is Joseph's son, who grew up here in Nazareth.*" Shortly, they rejected Jesus, they forced Jesus out of the city which was built on a hill with a cliff. They intended to throw him off it. In the next verses, verse 31-37, Jesus went to

Capernaum, began to teach the people, and also He casted out the demons. 38-41, Jesus healed many people.

Verse 43, Jesus said (LEB) "It is necessary *for me* to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because I was sent for this *purpose*." In RV: preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God.

Jesus was sent by The Father, to preach good news/tiding of the kingdom of God, the good news about the kingdom of God. Luke records what Jesus directly said that preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God was the purpose of His sending, which is not recorded in detail as in the same passage in the other synoptic gospels. Compare the quote in Luke 4:18-19, with Isaiah 61:1-2 in LXX, as follows:

" And the day of vengeance of our God - This is language adapted to the deliverance from Babylon. The rescue of his people would be attended with vengeance on their enemies. This was not quoted by Jesus see [Luk 4:19](#)). The text which the Saviour took then as the foundation of his discourse [Luk 4:21](#), seems to have ended with the clause before this, It is not to be inferred, however, that he did not consider the subsequent expressions as referring to himself, but it was not necessary to his purpose to quote them. Regarded as applicable to the Redeemer and his preaching, this doubtless refers to the fact that his coming would be attended with vengeance on his foes. It is a great truth, manifest everywhere, that God 's coming forth at any time to deliver his people is attended with vengeance on his enemies. So it was in the destruction of Idumea - regarded as the general representative of all the foes of God (see the notes at Isa. 34; [Isa 35:1-10](#)); so it was in the deliverance from Egypt - involving the destruction of Pharaoh and his host; so in the destruction of Babylon and the deliverance of the captives there. So in like manner it was in the destruction of Jerusalem; and so it will be at the end of the world Matt. 25:31-46; [2Th 1:7-10](#) ."

There is one phrase that Jesus does not mention in his quote, the phrase "the day of vengeance of our God". In Luke 4:18-19, the quote ends with the phrase "the year of the Lord's grace has come", Jesus came as the Messiah, who would save His people through his work of redemption. the context of Isaiah's prophecy regarding the Messiah is the Messiah as King; Messiah as a Servant: The Messiah as the Suffering Servant, who has come to preach the good news to the poor, the captives, the blind, the downtrodden, basically for everyone.

The group of people listed in both Luke 4:18-19, and Isaiah 61:1-2 LXX used the same word. These word are:

Πτοκωω: an adjective which literally means squatting, curled up like a beggar. One who is poor and helpless, One who is in poverty, total powerlessness, total destitution. Also means a beggar (Luke 14:13, Luke 14:21; Luke 16:20, Luke 16:22;). It is mentioned in a figurative sense as in Revelation 3:17. Poor people mean people who are in dire need, those who are destitute and for their necessities of life expect alms from others (Luke 18:22; Luke 19:8). Including the understanding of people who are suffering, depressed. Figuratively speaking in Matthew 6:20, "poor in spirit" means those who recognize spiritual powerlessness.

συντριβω: means to break, to rub. Break, strike something, smash together, or break into pieces. Beginning with the definite article , which refers to a person who is in a state of broken heartedness , in the English translation, the King James Version, it is translated as " *brokenhearted* ". Isaiah 42:3, describes the "broken reed" as people who experience such a mental affliction that they are unable to stand up straight, are discouraged, have no hope.

αιχμαλωτοι: derived from the root word means taken, conquered. Taken by the sword, which also means a prisoner. It only appears in the New Testament in Luke 4:18 which refers to those who have been taken captive not only physically but also spiritually, which is also the case in the Septuagint translation of Isaiah 61:1.

τυφλω: The root word has meanings such as covering with smoke, unable to see clearly, literal meaning is blind as in Luke 7:21-22. Figuratively relates to a foolish mind, slow to understand for example in Luke 4:18, examples in the Septuagint as written in Isaiah 42:16, Isaiah 42:18-19, Isaiah 43:8.

These groups are representative of the target of The Messiah's Ministry. The characteristics of Luke's Gospel include Jesus' concern for all people, especially the exiles, the poor, women, and those known as "sinners", who could also be called the marginalized in modern terms. Jesus preached the good news of God's Kingdom that has been represented, not only for the group of people not only in a physical sense, but more important mean to a group of people which in a spiritual sense is also included in these categories, which mean is to all fallen mankind, basically they have fallen into the sin, so they being unable to help themselves and need help from others, the group of people who have no power, no resources, no connection with other society.

3.1 Marginal People

Merriam Webster Dictionary defined marginal which applied to people: excluded from or existing outside the mainstream of society, a group, or a school of thought *marginal* voters. The definition of marginal in modern context are: (1). related to borders (edges); not very profitable: ; (2). on the edge: ; (3) when it applied to the group of people. So it can be said that marginal people are people who are marginalized or marginalized from social life in a society. Marginalized words usually aimed at a society that is identical to a slum group of people, not orderly, and even uneducated. Also included are people with disabilities who are considered as an unproductive group. In the perspective of Luke's Gospel, there are some examples that can be identified as marginalized: the characteristics of Luke's Gospel include Jesus' concern for all people, especially the exiles, the poor, women, and those known as "sinners", who could also be called the marginalized.

Modern term of marginal people (adjective) described group of people as marginal, which means that they are not involved in the main events or developments in society because they are poor or have no power. The examples of marginalized people in the gospel of Luke:

(a) Woman: The social background, especially Jewish culture, at the time when Jesus lived serving on earth, the position of women occupies the second number position in order of the society after men. As the Jewish rabbis taught, they had the concept that because women were created after men, women are placed in a position after men. And also because of the woman who first ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil that causes death to enter the world (Sira). In the subsequent development women are limited in the social order, although allowed to assist in her husband's business activities, but the role of women is not so significant. Generally women are not allowed directly to study Torah, usually they receive teachings from their husbands who have received teachings of the rabbis. And the rabbis also generally do not allow women to be made students. It is noted in rabbinic literature that women are often associated with science magic, stupidity, dishonesty, and low morale. Even in worship meetings, men and women were separated, because the

rabbis feared that the curves of women would result in impure thoughts towards men.

In the Gospel of Luke, in the narrative of the birth of Jesus, three women are mentioned who have their respective roles, namely Mary, Elisabeth, and Hannah. and Mary had a very good response, which different from Zechariah who received messages from God through angel (Luke 1:5-24). When he received the news, he did not believe it so he became mute until John was born. Elisabeth is pregnant at old age, who will give birth to an important figure who would prepare the way for the coming of the Messianic King. Hannah, a prophetess who was an old woman, was eighty years old when he met the baby Lord Jesus who was eight days old. She gave thanks and proclaimed deliverance which the Lord Jesus would do (Luke 1:36-38).

(b) Poor: the poor is a condition of lacking natural resources of the economy, and also interpreted as spiritually poor. In the Old Testament, widow and orphans are included in the category of people who cannot afford it, which Moses made regulations in The Pentateuch regarding the poor in Israel (Deuteronomy 15:4-6), commanded not to oppress foreigners, widows, and orphans (Exodus 22:21-24, 23:9, Deuteronomy 24:14-17), for those who lend money to the poor, it is forbidden take interest (Exodus 22:25), the poor were allowed to eat from the field or garden of the owner whose land was not tilled (Exodus 23:11, Leviticus 25:5-7), and it is permitted to pluck from the corners of the field and what is left of harvested (Leviticus 19:9-10, 23:22, Deuteronomy 24:19-22). However, in practice, the commands are neglected, and the poor are in oppression. This condition continued until the time of the New Testament, where the Roman empire imposed high taxes on the Israelites and was exacerbated by the actions of tax collectors who deliberately increased the amount of tax for personal gain.

(c) Difabel: Luke 14:13, "But when you are having a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind." Luke wrote the words of Jesus concerning several kinds of people who are poor, handicapped, lame, and blind. The people who are handicapped, lame, and blind are categorized as poor people who do not have the ability to meet their daily needs and need help from others. These people that are also mentioned in Luke 14:21 are the disabled people in the New Testament period. Most of them became beggars who begged for alms from others, and occupied a low social strata in society at that time, because they were considered as unproductive groups of the society.

(d) Samaritan: The Samaritans are the inhabitants of Northern Israel. In 722 BC, Northern Israel was conquered by the Assyrians, and the population of Northern Israel experienced exile to another place. The inhabitants of other nations entered the Northern Israel area. This was done by the Assyrians to prevent rebellion, then ensued intermarriage between the Israelites and the residents of other nations stationed there. After the Jews from the Kingdom of Judah returned from exile, they wanted to restore Judaism's identity which was followed by various religious regulations. They strongly emphasized the purity of Jewish blood, so that the Samaritans were viewed negatively. The relations between the Samaritans and the Jews were worsened when 128 BC, John Hyrcanus, who was the leader of the Jews at that time, destroyed the Samaritans temple on Mount Gerizim to expand Judea. The Samaritans in New Testament times were considered a group that the society despised. They were socially excluded by the Jews.

(e) Leper: In the Old Testament, “leprosy” (*tsr’t*): to scourge, described “like snow” (Exodus 4:6; Numbers 12:10; 2 Kings 5:27). In the English translation of white skin, the “snow-like” imagery refers to snow falling in the form of flakes. It is a disease that causes the outer layer of the skin to die and peel, especially if scratched. As in Leviticus 13:45–14:57, which describes it as a state of temporary uncleanness that can spread to the clothes and homes of lepers. The leper must be quarantined outside the camp, to avoid contamination with other people. In the New Testament Jesus healed the leper by touching him (Luke 5:12), and commanding the man to appear to the priests in the temple as a testimony to them, according to the instructions in Leviticus 13–14. A man with leprosy considered unclean, he suffers from some kind of physical disability, and exiled.

IV. CONCLUSION

The groups of people that Jesus mentioned from Isaiah are basically all people. They need the good news of the Kingdom of God. Everyone deserves to get the same opportunity to hear the good news, regardless of the cultural, social, ethnic, and racial background. The gospel is for everyone. In Luke’s perspective, the marginalized also get the same opportunity with others to hear the gospel. Those people, to some degree in the modern context, are referred to as marginalized people, and the implication is that they are the targets of the Kingdom of God’s message. The church as the true believer must follow Christ’s example, as Jesus did. They should give attention to and serve the marginalized to glorify God. The implementation for these things depend on context and situation. This is not a simple issue and cannot be done alone, but involves the whole body of Christ to work together to accomplish this mission.

Abbreviations

ESV , English Standard Version
GW , GodsWord
KJV , King James Version
ISV , International Standard Version
LEB , Lexham English Bible
LXX , Septuginta
TR , Textus Receptus

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