

RE-WALKING THE “WAY OF THE LORD”: LUKE’S USE OF MARK AND HIS REACTION TO MATTHEW

Mark Goodacre

1. *Luke’s Use of Mark and Matthew*

Luke’s arrangement of double tradition sayings material remains the foundational premise for positing the existence of Q. It is alleged that Luke could not, should not, would not have rearranged the sayings as they appear in Matthew. Matthew’s arrangement of the sayings material is comprehensible, admirable and aesthetically pleasing while Luke’s is baffling, unwieldy and artistically inferior. No matter how much advocates of the Farrer theory illustrate the literary strength of Luke’s arrangement, no matter how much they point to the weakness in Q theorists’ overblown rhetoric, no matter how much they draw attention to the parallels between Luke’s use of Marcan and Matthean sayings material, the old chestnut repeatedly comes out. Luke could not, should not, would not have rearranged the sayings as they appear in Matthew.

While it is tempting to blame two-source theorists for intransigence or lack of imagination, a more humble and helpful response would be to ask what it is about Luke’s arrangement of the double tradition that they find so baffling. What is it that they find so implausible about the way that Luke orders the non-Markan material that he shares with Matthew? The question arises in large part because of the difference between a theory that invokes a hypothetical document and a theory that does not. The theory that invokes a hypothetical document is always able to defer difficult questions by appealing to the unseen document, which by its nature can never be tested for comparison. Any potential that the hypothetical document might have challenged or contradicted the assertions of its advocates is defeated by virtue of its unseen nature. In this way, the theory in which a hypothetical source plays a key role always allows its advocates a certain advantage.

In one sense, the two-source theory is all about a judgement call on the question of the order of the double tradition material. It is a fact that there are major differences in the ordering and placement of this material. The question centres on whether it is more plausible that Matthew has done the lion's share of the re-arranging or whether it is more plausible that Luke has done so. Q theorists have made their judgement call – Matthew is the one who did the re-arranging. Luke, on the whole, conservatively retained the Q order. It is a judgement call that allows the Q theorist to defer the question of Luke's order, to project it onto the misty, non-observable Q source, where it can either be ignored (the majority) or explained on the basis of the generic constraints of writing a Sayings Gospel (the hardline Q theorists).

Nevertheless, regardless of the rhetorical advantage that two-source theorists can exploit through the use of an unseen document, it is still important to ask the question that is at the heart of their invocation of Q to explain Luke's order. And the question, to repeat, is this: What is it about Luke's arrangement of the double tradition that is so implausible?

It has to be said that advocates of the Farrer theory have sometimes played into the hands of their opponents by proposing implausible solutions to the supposed problem of Luke's order, solutions that reinforce the perception that there is a real, insurmountable difficulty here. Although there is more to be said for Michael Goulder's lectionary theory than is generally realized,¹ the theory is at its weakest in relation to Goulder's suggested series of sequential parallels between Deuteronomy and Luke's Central Section,² and it is a theory that loses plausibility in the light of its difference from other theories of Deuteronomistic influence like that of C. F. Evans,³ and for the fact that Goulder later "shelved" the theory to put greater stress on an alleged scrolling forwards and then backwards through Matthew.⁴

1. See my *Goulder and the Gospels: An Examination of a New Paradigm*, JSNTSup 133 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 294–362, for a critical appraisal of Goulder's lectionary theory. I argue that he is on strongest ground in relation to the festal calendar, especially as it relates to the origins of the Passion Narrative.

2. Michael Goulder, *The Evangelists' Calendar* (London: SPCK, 1978). See too John Drury, *Tradition and Design in Luke's Gospel* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1976), 138–64.

3. C. F. Evans, "The Central Section of St Luke's Gospel," in *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot*, ed. D. E. Nineham (Oxford: Blackwell, 1955), 37–53.

4. Michael Goulder, *Luke: A New Paradigm*, JSNTSup 20 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989), 129–30. See the critique in Robert Derrenbacker, *Ancient Compositional Practices and the Synoptic Problem*, BETL 186 (Leuven: Leuven

Proposals like these can give the impression that Luke's re-ordering of Matthew's double tradition is indeed a mystery. Once the implausible explanation is rejected, we are back to the problematic judgement call about Luke's order – that no one in their right mind would have rearranged Matthew's double tradition, and that deferring the problem to the alleged order in an unseen Q is the best solution.⁵ Recent responses to the supposed difficulty have tended to focus more on finding the thread through Luke's arrangement of the double tradition, illustrating how Luke naturally develops his own thematic links between passages, with compelling narrative development of the kind that makes good sense on the assumption that Luke is attempting to craft a plausible *bios* of Jesus.⁶ I have attempted to challenge the value judgement that is foundational to the preference for Matthew's order over Luke's, arguing that this judgement is not shared by those outside of the guild like film-makers, or those inside the guild like narrative-critics, all of whom have proved capable of understanding Luke's supposedly baffling procedure.⁷

Nevertheless, in spite of these works, scholars still repeat the old chestnut, often without engaging the arguments themselves. The point is regarded as a staple, and arguments against it as impossible: Luke could not, should not, would not have rearranged Matthew's non-Marcan material. Under these circumstances, it is worth taking a step back and asking if there is something fundamental that we have failed to notice, or something key that we have not communicated. I would like to argue that there is an issue that requires renewed exploration, and which has the potential to make an important contribution to the discussion. The argument originates in a key insight that Farrer theorists have often made about Luke's attitude to Mark's Gospel, but develops it by drawing attention to an essential theological point that we have completely missed.

University Press, 2005), 79–80, 200, but note the helpful comments in John Poirier, "The Roll, the Codex, the Wax Tablet and the Synoptic Problem," *JSNT* 35 (2012): 3–30 (10–14).

5. See, for example, Albert Denaux, *Studies in the Gospel of Luke: Structure, Language and Theology*, Tilburg Theological Studies (Berlin: Lit, 2010), 63, "The central section...constitutes a major problem for those who defend Luke's dependence on Mt." Denaux is disparaging about Farrer, Goulder and Drury.

6. See, for example, Mark Matson, "Luke's Rewriting of The Sermon on the Mount," in *Questioning Q*, ed. Mark Goodacre and Nicholas Perrin (London: SPCK, 2004), 43–70.

7. See my *The Case Against Q: Studies in Marcan Priority and the Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002), 81–132. See now also Francis Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 156–216.

The key and often-repeated insight is that we can only understand how Luke reacted to Matthew if we first understand the degree of his admiration for Mark. The essential theological point that we have missed is that Luke's admiration for Mark is especially evident in his adoption and development of Mark's fundamental redactional motif, the "way of the Lord." The thesis of this paper is that Luke shares Mark's enthusiasm for "the way of the Lord," and that his passionate development of this theme makes the adoption of Matthew's re-structuring of Mark, with its lengthy tableaux and its extended Galilean ministry, quite impossible.

For adherents of the Farrer theory, the priority of Mark is absolutely fundamental to understanding how Luke approached his sources.⁸ Luke's admiration for Mark's Gospel is not in any way incidental to his project. The clues are obvious. Jesus' Galilean ministry is narrated in Luke 3.1–9.50 with a clear and striking fidelity to Mark's ordering of the parallel material, a fidelity that suggests from the outset that his relationship to Matthew is different. And in the wording of individual passages, Luke often prefers Mark's expansive and dramatic story-telling to Matthew's terse, abbreviated versions of Mark's materials, so clearly illustrated in Luke's preference for Mark over Matthew in the miracle montages narrated in Matt 8–9. Luke's admiration for Mark is clear, and it is not an accident that he appears to have built his own Gospel on the Marcan foundation.

The failure to appreciate Luke's admiration for Mark, however, is not simply a question of the evangelist's fidelity to Mark's story-telling techniques and his ordering of the material in the Galilean mission. It is not just a matter of structures and parallels but also of theological motivation. At the heart of Mark's Gospel is the motif of the "Way of the Lord." That this is a major redactional motif in Mark has been established beyond reasonable doubt in Joel Marcus's seminal book.⁹ From the opening of the

8. See Goodacre, *Case Against Q*, 10–14, 19–45, 86–90 and literature cited there; Francis Watson, "Q as Hypothesis: A Study in Methodology," *NTS* 55 (2009): 397–415 (412–13); see also Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 124–31, 148–55, 159–60; John Poirier, "The Composition of Luke in Source-Critical Perspective," in *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem: Oxford Conference, April 2008: Essays in Honour of Christopher M. Tuckett*, ed. Paul Foster, Andrew Gregory, John S. Kloppenborg and Jozef Verheyden, *BETL* 239 (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 209–26 (218–20).

9. Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992). It is echoed in Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), which understands the Gospel as developing an Isaianic new exodus, "This dual perspective of salvation and judgement – both within the context of the Isaianic New Exodus – seems to provide the fundamental literary and theological structure of Mark's gospel" (4).

Gospel (Mark 1.2–3), with its composite quotation of Exodus, Malachi and Isaiah, it is clear that Mark's Gospel emphasizes Jesus' mission as progress on the Way of the Lord, and this is progress towards the Passion. The way in the wilderness is the way prophesied in Deutero-Isaiah, but the triumphal procession is paradoxically inverted as the way of the cross. As soon as Jesus turns towards Jerusalem, "the way" features repeatedly in Mark's narration and Jesus' speech,¹⁰ including at key structural moments in the narrative, most famously at the outset of the third and final Passion prediction.¹¹

10.32 Ἦσαν δὲ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἀναβαίνοντες εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, καὶ ἦν προάγων αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ ἐθαμβοῦντο, οἱ δὲ ἀκολουθοῦντες ἐφοβοῦντο. καὶ παραλαβὼν πάλιν τοὺς δώδεκα ἤρξατο αὐτοῖς λέγειν τὰ μέλλοντα αὐτῷ συμβαίνειν 33 ὅτι ἰδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα...

32. They were on the way, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, 33 saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem..."¹²

In Mark, the Way of the Lord is the way of the Passion. The Way is prophesied by Isaiah, proclaimed by John and walked by Jesus. It is without doubt a major redactional emphasis in Mark, and it has rightly been a key stress in recent scholarship on the Gospel. Yet when it comes to Luke, where the same motif is just as important, it has received nothing like the same degree of emphasis in the scholarship. It will therefore be worthwhile pausing to sketch out the importance of the "Way of the Lord" as a key theological motif in Luke and Acts.

10. Figures for ὁδός are 22/16/20/4+20. To the extent that some redaction critics prefer counting to exegesis, the proportionally similar figures for ὁδός might give the impression that there is nothing distinctive about its use in any of the Synoptics or Acts. On the danger of this kind of redaction criticism, see further below (p. 40).

11. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 32, notes that of the usages of ὁδός in Mark's Gospel after 1.2–3, "the most significant are the seven references (8:27; 9:33–34; 10:17, 32, 46, 52 – half of the Markan total) clustered in the Gospel's central section, 8:22–10:52, which describes Jesus' journey up to Jerusalem." Kevin W. Larsen, "The Structure of Mark's Gospel: Current Proposals," *CBR* 3 (2004): 143–64 (149–50 and literature cited there), acknowledges the importance of this motif in Mark 8.27–10.52 but suggests that its importance in the Gospel as a whole may have been overstated. However, 8.27–10.52 has pivotal importance in Mark, as the section in which Jesus sets his face towards Jerusalem. "The way" is announced at the outset (1.2–3) and is now confirmed in the narrative's development. Once Jesus has reached Jerusalem, the term is, of course, less frequent.

12. On Luke's parallel (Luke 18.31), see below (n. 34).

2. *The Way of the Lord in Luke and Acts*

Even those with a cursory knowledge of Luke and Acts will be familiar with the fact that Luke likes to characterize the early Christian movement as “the Way” (ὁ ὁδός) on repeated occasions in Acts (Acts 9.2; 19.9, 23; 22.4; 24.14, 22),¹³ and that he uses a variety of descriptors for the godly path, not only “the way of the Lord” (Acts 18.25) but also “the way of God” (Acts 18.26, cf. Matt 22.16 // Mark 12.14 // Luke 20.21) and “the way of salvation” (Acts 16.17). For Luke, it is more than a metaphor, and he repeatedly narrates events taking place with symbolic grandeur on the road. Thus where Paul himself only talks about his call taking place in connection with Damascus (Gal 1.15–17), Luke locates it specifically and repeatedly “on the way,” on the road to Damascus (Acts 9.17, Ἰησοῦς ὁ ὀφθείς σοι ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἣ ἤρχου; Acts 9.27, καὶ διηγέσατο αὐτοῖς πῶς ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ εἶδεν τὸν κύριον; Acts 26.13, κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν). It is a sign of Luke’s success as a story-teller that even Pauline scholars who work with a letters-first chronology cannot help referring to the compelling “Damascus Road” motif that is derived from Luke.¹⁴

This kind of symbolic use of “the way” or “the road” provides the setting for several iconic Lucan passages. The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10.25–37) takes place on the road (10.31) and illustrates the kind of mercy that should be a part of the believer’s way. The Emmaus Story (Luke 24.13–35) provides the climax of the Lucan approach to the gospel and resurrection, with Jesus’ life and Passion as a fulfilment of Scripture, experienced in the process of an epiphany that culminates with the eucharist, and once again the revelation to Cleophas and his unnamed companion happens on “the road.” It is on the road that Jesus opens up the Scriptures to them (24.32, ὡς ἐλάλει ἡμῖν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ὡς διήνοιγεν ἡμῖν τὰς γραφάς...) and the whole story is narrated as a story about what happened “on the road,” with the recognition coming through the breaking of bread (24.35, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐξηγοῦντο τὰ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ καὶ ὡς ἐγνώσθη αὐτοῖς ἐν τῇ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου).

13. It is, of course, possible that Luke here uses a term that was widely used by early Christians. Compare, for example, the “two ways” material in the *Didache* (*Did.* 1.1–2; 4.14; 5.1; 6.1; 11.8) and other early Christian works. But whatever the historicity of this as an early Christian descriptor, it is the one that Luke chooses to describe the movement, when there were other terms available.

14. E.g. Douglas Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 151, 152 and 429.

The symbolic importance of events like these happening along the way is clear from Luke's presentation in both the Gospel and Acts,¹⁵ and it is something that characterizes not only isolated passages but also the entire narrative. It is introduced from the beginning with Zechariah's prophecy of John the Baptist's mission:

1.76–77 καὶ σὺ δέ, παιδίον, προφήτης Ὑψίστου κληθήσῃ,
προπορεύσῃ γὰρ ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἐτοιμάσαι ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ,
τοῦ δοῦναι γνώσιν σωτηρίας τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ
ἐν ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.¹⁶

Moreover, Luke naturally seizes on the Marcan quotation of Isa 40, extending it to draw out its significance for the Gospel and Acts:

Mark 1.2–3	Luke 3.4–6
2 Καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ· Ἴδοὺ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου· 3 φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ· Ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ.	ὡς γέγραπται ἐν βίβλῳ λόγων Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου· [Transferred to Luke 7.27, following Matt 11.10] Φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ· Ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ. 5 πᾶσα φάραγξ πληρωθήσεται καὶ πᾶν ὄρος καὶ βουνὸς ταπεινωθήσεται, καὶ ἔσται τὰ σκολιά ἐῖς εὐθείαν καὶ αἱ τραχεῖαι εἰς ὁδοὺς λείας· 6 καὶ ὄψεται πᾶσα σὰρξ τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ.

15. See also the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8.26–40) for a similar example of salvation taking place on the symbolic road (8.26, 36, 39).

16. Still earlier, Luke prepares the way when Zechariah is in the temple, “With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1.17). Cf. C. Kevin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 70–1, “The internal movement of the narrative, then, is one of prophecy and fulfilment, or prefiguration and embodiment, intimation and realization. Luke 1.16–17 and 1.76 are brought to life here in Luke 3.4–6, as John the Baptist appears from the wilderness as a prophet, fulfilling his vocation as a herald by trumpeting forth anew the words of the prophet Isaiah.”

<p>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,</p> <p>“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way;</p> <p>3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”</p>	<p>As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,</p> <p>[transferred to Luke 7.27, following Matt 11.10]</p> <p>“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.</p> <p>5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, 6 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”</p>
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As in Luke 1.76–77, one of the elements in Isa 40 that appears to have appealed to Luke is the idea of τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ (“God’s salvation”), first to “his people” and ultimately to πᾶσα σὰρξ (“all flesh”). For Luke, the way of the Lord leads ultimately to salvation for all nations, and it is this element that Luke takes time to draw out and underline in his quotation of the text of Isa 40 that he finds here in Mark.¹⁷ Indeed, it appears to be this element of the theme that specially draws Luke’s interest. He has invested in Mark’s notion of Jesus’ mission as walking in the Way of the Lord, but has exploited its full Isaianic significance by making clear that the Way, while indeed about the Passion, is properly characterized as the road to salvation for all flesh.¹⁸

17. Luke here follows Matthew in avoiding Mark’s composite quotation of Mal 3.1 and Exod 23.20, and transferring it to Luke 7.27 (par. Matt 11.10). The move has the advantage of allowing Luke to take over the pericope about the Messengers from John the Baptist (Matt 11.2–19 // Luke 7.11–35) at the same time as creating a more even transition from Luke 3.4a, “the words of Isaiah the prophet” to 3.4b, “Prepare the way of the Lord,” in a way that facilitates the longer Isaiah quotation. In doing so, however, he inadvertently creates a nightmare for future Q theorists for whom the coincidences in Matthew’s and Luke’s redaction of Mark are so implausible. See further my “The Evangelists’ Use of the Old Testament and the Synoptic Problem,” in Foster et al., eds., *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, 281–98 (284–9) and literature cited there.

18. Cf. Wm. C. Robinson, Jr., “The Theological Context for Interpreting Luke’s Travel Narrative (9:51 ff.),” *JBL* 79 (1960): 20–31: “Thus Luke’s particular approach to Heilsgeschichte in terms of a ‘way’ leading to the gentiles can be aptly entitled in his own words, borrowed from the LXX via Mark: *The Way of the Lord* – from Nazareth to Rome” (26–7; emphasis original).

3. *Luke on Matthew on Mark*

Given Luke's obvious passion for the Isaianic motif of the "Way of the Lord," so prominent a feature of his Marcan source, it is worth now returning to the question of Luke's reaction to Matthew's redaction of Mark. Given its theological weight, its Old Testament pedigree, its structural importance in Mark's Gospel, the "Way of the Lord" motif appears to have made a major impact on Luke. But here lies one of the fundamental problems with Matthew's reworking of Mark. For an evangelist like Luke who has come to think of the Christian movement as "the Way," who conceptualizes "the road" as the symbolic location of divine encounters, for whom "the Way of the Lord" is a way that leads through the Passion to salvation for all flesh, Matthew's restructuring of Mark is not likely to have proved appealing.

It is not that the theological motif is absent from Matthew. Like Mark, Matthew begins the gospel proper with John's announcement of the Way of the Lord, quoting Isa 40 (Matt 3.3), and he transfers the Exod 23.20 / Mal 3.1 quotation to the later story about the Messengers from John (Matt 11.10),¹⁹ which reinforces John's role as the one who prepares the Way. Moreover, while Matthew does not take over all of Mark's references to the road (Matt 16.13, cf. Mark 8.27; Matt 18.1, cf. Mark 9.33–34; Matt 19.17, cf. Mark 10.17),²⁰ he retains several, including an abbreviated version of the momentous walk up to Jerusalem (Matt 20.17 // Mark 10.32), the blind men on the roadside (Matt 20.30 // Mark 10.46, but not Matt 20.34, cf. Mark 10.52) and the entry to Jerusalem (Matt 21.8 // Mark 11.8).

However, while Matthew retains some of this material, and clearly echoes Mark's Isaianic conceptualization of Jesus' mission as "the way of the Lord,"²¹ his restructuring of Mark's Gospel diminishes the impact of the theme. Where in Mark, the motif of "the Way" dominates the central section of his Gospel, from Mark 8.27 to Mark 11.2, as Jesus turns his face to his impending Passion in Jerusalem, Matthew's Gospel does not have a clearly demarcated central section in which there is a transition from Galilee to Jerusalem. Indeed, Matthew's decision to include so much of

19. See above, n. 17.

20. Luke also does not include these Marcan references, on which see further below.

21. But notice also the possibility that Matthew structures the Mission discourse along "new exodus" lines – see Dale Allison, "Reading Matthew Through the Church Fathers," in *Studies in Matthew: Interpretations Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 117–31 (120–2).

his new, non-Marcan material in the context of the Galilean ministry gives his Gospel a quite different shape. The reader has to wait until Matt 19 for Jesus to leave Galilee and head to Judea in the most unceremonious way imaginable (Matt 19.1, “When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan”). If the Gospels are Passion narratives with extended introductions,²² in Matthew the introduction is greatly extended, so much so that it represents almost two thirds of the Gospel.

As every introductory student knows, the key structuring motif in Matthew is the five discourses (5–7, 10, 13, 18 and 24–25). Since Matthew places the first four of these in the Galilean ministry, and only the last one in Jerusalem, the option for creating a pivotal central section is negated – it simply would not work in Matthew’s five-discourse restructuring of Mark. The point is perhaps best illustrated in synopsis:

Matthew	Mark	
1–2		Birth Narrative
3–4	1	John the Baptist, Temptation, Call
5–7		Sermon on the Mount
8–9	2–3, 4–5	Miracles
10	3, 6	Mission Discourse
11–12	2–3	Messengers from John etc.; Sabbath Healings; Beelzebub, etc.
13	4	Harvest Parables
14–17	6–9	Miracles, Food, Confession, Transfiguration
18	9	Church Discourse

19.1: Jesus heads to Jerusalem

19–23	10–12	Divorce, Rich Man, Vineyard, Triumphal Entry, Temple Teaching
24–25	13	Apocalyptic Discourse
26–28	14–16	Passion & Resurrection

Although Matt 14–28 tracks Mark 6–16 pretty directly, with passages appearing in the same broad narrative order, the presence of three large discourses before this, evenly spaced in Matt 1–13, changes the way that

22. Martin Kähler, *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic Biblical Christ*, trans. Carl E. Braaten (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 80 n. 11. Although frequently misquoted as applying solely to Mark, Kähler’s remark was actually about all four canonical Gospels. On the Passion in Matthew, see Allison, “Foreshadowing the Passion,” in *Studies in Matthew*, 217–36.

the Gospel reads. No longer do the events that begin in Mark 8.27–30 (Peter's confession) signal a pivotal central section about the way of the Lord. The turn to Jerusalem is less momentous, the road less clearly marked.

For Luke, this restructuring of the Marcan narrative is unlikely to have proved appealing. However much Luke admires a lot of Matthew's new sayings material, he is unlikely to have admired the locations Matthew provides for it, in an extended Galilean ministry, in which Jesus frequently pauses to talk for extended discourses. The lack of movement, in comparison to Mark, is manifest, so much so that it is surprising that two-source theorists repeatedly chastise a Farrerian Luke for failing to imitate it. After all, as Goulder and others have emphasized, Luke appears impatient enough with lengthy discourse material even from his Marcan source, as his drastic abbreviation and redaction of the Marcan parable chapter makes clear.²³

The point, though, is not simply Luke's aesthetic preference for a narrative that bristles with energy and movement.²⁴ It is a question also of his theological motivation for rejecting Matthew's structure, a rejection that proceeds from his embracing of Mark. My suggestion is that Luke adopts the Isaianic "Way of the Lord" theology from his first source, Mark, but develops it by providing a structure that allows him to incorporate lots of the new Matthean material. Mark's Christological insight provides Luke with the perfect literary conceit, a means of retaining a central section that depicts Jesus on the road to Jerusalem, at the same time as incorporating material from Matthew as well as his own tradition.

Even where Luke does take inspiration from Matthew's re-structuring, as in the idea of adding a Birth Narrative (Matt 1–2; Luke 1–2), Luke finds a way of grafting in an announcement of "the Way of the Lord." We know from Acts that Luke thinks of John the Baptist as the beginning of the gospel (Acts 1.22, "beginning from the baptism of John"; cf. Acts 13.24–25), and now he begins the Gospel with John's father, and makes sure that the one who prophesies is now himself prophesied. The way of the Lord is announced by Zechariah with full Septuagintal majesty (Luke 1.76–77).

The key point, though, is that Luke – like Mark – underscores the theological weight of Jesus' journey on "the Way of the Lord" by giving it structural importance in his Gospel. If anything, Luke's emphasis on

23. See Goulder, *Luke*, 40–1; Goodacre, *Case Against Q*, 91–6; Poirier, "Composition," 219.

24. Cf. Robinson, "Theological Context," 27: "the purpose of his arrangement was theological rather than just aesthetic."

the theme is even stronger than Mark’s. It is signalled clearly in Luke’s reworking of the Transfiguration story, shortly before Jesus and the disciples set out on their journey:

Mark 9.4	Luke 9.30–31
καὶ ὤφθη αὐτοῖς Ἡλίας σὺν Μωϋσεῖ, καὶ ἦσαν συλλαλοῦντες τῷ Ἰησοῦ.	καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες δύο συνελάλουν αὐτῷ, οἵτινες ἦσαν Μωϋσῆς καὶ Ἡλίας, 31 οἱ ὀφθέντες ἐν δόξῃ ἔλεγον τὴν ἐξοδὸν αὐτοῦ ἣν ἤμελλεν πληροῦν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ.
And Elijah with Moses appeared to them, and they were talking with Jesus.	And behold, two men were talking with him, who were Moses and Elijah, 31 who having appeared in glory were speaking about his exodus which he was about to fulfill in Jerusalem.

Moses and Elijah’s discussion with Jesus is no longer a mystery. For Luke, the subject matter is specifically about Jesus’ *exodus* which he is about to fulfil in Jerusalem. The exalted scriptural language about glory,²⁵ in a context about fulfilment of the law (Moses) and the prophets (Elijah) in Jerusalem,²⁶ suggests that Luke’s use of the term *exodus* is not simply a case of Luke varying his synonyms.²⁷ It is a mark of Luke’s literary panache that he does not simply rely on prophecy and proof text but instead dramatizes discussion about fulfilment in a conversation with Moses and Elijah. This is how Luke conceptualizes the gospel, the way of the Lord culminating in Jerusalem where Jesus fulfils what the law and the prophets foretold.

25. Luke’s addition of δόξα (“glory”) vocabulary here may itself be influenced by the Deutero-Isaianic prophecies about God’s glory, especially Isa 42.8, 12; cf. Luke’s redaction of Mark’s Bartimaeus story (Mark 10.46–52 // Luke 18.35–43), where the man who has been healed of blindness (cf. Isa 42.7, 16, 18) follows Jesus and glorifies God (καὶ ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ δοξάζων τὸν θεόν).

26. The “fulfilment” theme bookends Luke’s Gospel, from 1.1, διήγησιν περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων (“a narrative about the events that have been fulfilled among us”) to 24.44, δεῖ πληρωθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωϋσέως καὶ προφήταις καὶ ψαλμοῖς περὶ ἐμοῦ (“it is necessary that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms should be fulfilled”). Notice how the themes of fulfilment of the law and the prophets, Jerusalem and Jesus’ glory are clustered together also in the Emmaus story (24.25–27, 32–33).

27. For the “exodus” theme in Luke, see J. Mánek, “The New Exodus in the Books of Luke,” *NovT* 2 (1955): 8–23.

Shortly after the journey has been prefigured in the Transfiguration, it is formally announced in Luke's elegant Septuagintal narration that is normally held to begin his Central Section:

9.51 Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ συμπληροῦσθαι τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ἀναλήμψεως αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὸς τὸ πρόσωπον ἐστήρισεν τοῦ πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ.

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him.²⁸

Although expressed in Luke's distinctive prose, the statement is in one sense Luke's substitute for Mark's rather portentous statement in 10.32, "They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid,"²⁹ but while Luke's Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem, he does not march out in front, but sends messengers ahead, in an echo of the messenger who goes ahead of Jesus (Luke 7.27), and foreshadowing Jesus' sending out of the two disciples for his entry into Jerusalem (Luke 19.28–34) as well as Peter and John in the preparation for the Last Supper (Luke 22.7–13).

Moreover, Luke's redaction of the material he now takes over from Matt 8.18–20 is well-suited to this new Lucan context at the beginning of the central section and – as so often – it puts the lie to the notion that his relocation of double tradition is inappropriate:

Matt 8.18–20	Luke 9.57–58
<p>18 Ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς πολλοὺς ὄχλους περὶ αὐτὸν ἐκέλευσεν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὸ πέραν.</p> <p>19 καὶ προσελθὼν εἰς γραμματεὺς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Διδάσκαλε, ἀκολουθήσω σοι ὅπου ἔαν ἀπέρχῃ. 20 καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Αἱ ἀλώπεκες φωλεοὺς ἔχουσιν καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατασκηνώσεις, ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν κλίνει.</p>	<p>57 Καὶ πορευομένων αὐτῶν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ εἶπέν τις πρὸς αὐτόν· Ἀκολουθήσω σοι ὅπου ἔαν ἀπέρχῃ. 58 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Αἱ ἀλώπεκες φωλεοὺς ἔχουσιν καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατασκηνώσεις, ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν κλίνει.</p>

28. On Luke 9.51, see especially Craig A. Evans, "'He Set His Face': On the Meaning of Luke 9:51," in *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke-Acts*, ed. C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 93–105.

29. Albert Denaux speaks of "a large consensus that Luke 9.51 is a redactional verse, built upon Mk 10.1, 32" (*Studies*, 15).

18 Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side.	
19 A scribe then approached and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." 20 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."	57 <u>As they were going along the road</u> , someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." 58 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

It is another fine example of Luke situating key exchanges with the symbolical weight provided by a location ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, "on the road," the phrase he takes over from Mark but now develops in his own narrative.³⁰ These would-be disciples have to make their decision on the road while Jesus' face is set towards Jerusalem. They know whom they are following, and the direction in which he is walking.

Luke's central section, while sometimes criticized for its apparent lack of movement, is in fact a rather sophisticated narrative in which form matches function. Jesus is on the road, making his way to Jerusalem, while his teaching takes place in interactions with disciples and would-be disciples about the Christian way, and his parables depict characters themselves on the road, making good decisions and bad (see further above). The journeying motif is a literary conceit that allows Luke to draw in the best of the Matthean material, while integrating it into a structure that is inspired by Mark. Thus the first major teaching section in Luke's central section is drawn from Matt 10, the Mission Speech, in which Luke's Jesus addresses the Seventy (Luke 10.1) in material derived from Matthew. The discourse is all about the correct behaviour "on the road" (Luke 10.4, κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν) and it leads into the first parable of the Central Section, the Good Samaritan (Luke 10.25–37), which also takes place on the road, illustrating Luke's typical integration of exhortation with related parable.³¹

30. On the importance of the phrase in Mark, see Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 32: "...it would be no exaggeration to say that the phrase 'on the way,' which appears at its beginning, middle, and end (8:27; 9:33–34; 10:32, 52), could well stand as its title. Of the seven references to the ὁδός here, the majority, if not all, are redactional, and they structure the whole carefully constructed journey account, which is probably also a Markan creation." The phrase is frequent in Luke too – see 9.57, 10.31, 12.58, 19.36, 24.32 and 24.35. Among these, 9.57 is redactional, 10.31 is in L material (Good Samaritan), 12.58 is paralleled with Matthew (Matt 5.25), 19.36 is a minor agreement with Matt 21.8 (Triumphal Entry) and 24.32 and 35 are L material (Road to Emmaus).

31. See similarly the teaching on prayer in Luke 11.1–13 and on riches in 12.13–34, in my *Case Against Q*, 110–16.

Continued reminders about journeying punctuate Luke's central section (especially 10.38; 11.53; 13.22, 33; and 17.11), as Luke gives the impression of constant movement.³² It is sometimes felt that the occasional notices about Jesus stopping for meals (10.40; 11.37; 14.1) somehow slows down the action but this is how Luke sees Mission – Jesus and the disciples stop to eat what is placed in front of them (Luke 10.7). Moreover, the constant mention of the accompanying crowds provides the means by which Luke can continually present Jesus' teaching, with repeated gear changes, as the journey continues (11.14, 27, 29; 12.1, 13, 54; 14.25).

It is a mark of Luke's literary achievement that the segue back into Mark's narrative is so subtle that it is practically impossible to work out where it is.³³ The debates about the true extent of Luke's central section are symptomatic of the skill with which Luke has grafted his new material, quarried from Matthew and intertwined with L, onto the Marcan model.³⁴

32. Cf. Schuyler Brown, *Apostasy and Perseverance in the Theology of St. Luke*, *Analecta Biblica* 36 (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1969), 132–45: "The conception of Jesus' activity as fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies of the Way of the Lord has been consistently developed by Luke. He calls the beginning of Jesus' ministry an *εἰσόδος* (Acts 13.24) and its termination in Jerusalem as an *ἐξόδος* (Lk 9.31). The whole of Jesus' teaching ministry is fitted into a framework of spatial movement: 'He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place,' i.e. Jerusalem (Lk 23.5; cf. Acts 10.37). The Way motif achieves its climax in the Lucan travel narrative, with its repeated references to Jesus' movement in the direction of Jerusalem" (133).

33. K. L. Schmidt, *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (Berlin: Trowitsch, 1919), 246–7, already noted that the travel narrative extends at least to Luke 19.27. Robinson, "Theological Context," 21, suggests that limiting the travel narrative to the predominantly non-Markan section 9.51–18.14 imposes an artificial, narrowly source-critical perspective on Luke's project: "Yet Luke may not have owned a copy of Huck-Lietzmann's *Synopsis*, which ends the travel account not at the end of the trip, but at the end of Luke's insertion (18.14), i.e., at the point where the trip continues with Markan material... the travel account extends to Luke 19.27 and so includes Markan material." Robinson further notes (21 n. 7) that the narrative may continue beyond 19.27; cf. Denaux, *Studies*, 27.

34. Cf. Denaux, *Studies*, 27: "Luke's journey motif has indeed been inspired by Mark 10.1–52. Luke shows knowledge of the Markan travel notices 10.1, 17a, 32a, (33), 46a; 11.1a. Although the verses Mk 10.1, 17, 32a do not have a direct parallel in Luke, Mk 10.1, 17 may have influenced Lk 17.11–12a, and Mk 10.32 has an echo in Lk 19.28. Mark 10.33... finds its direct parallel in Lk 18.31, and the mention of Jesus' passage through Jericho in Mk 10.46 is taken over in Lk 18.35 and 19.1. The motif [they drew near to Jerusalem] in Mk 11.1 does not figure in the corresponding verse Lk 19.29, but Luke anticipates it in the inclusion framing the parable of the pounds: Lk 19.11...and Lk 19.28. All this clearly shows Luke's dependence on Mark." I

Luke's central section does not replace Mark's but leads into it with several chapters of new material. Luke's inspiration comes from Mark, but it is an inspiration that enables him fully to embrace the congenial material he takes over from Matthew. By re-walking the Way of the Lord, he is able to give priority to Mark while drawing from Matthew.

4. *Concluding Thoughts*

If this sympathetic reading of Luke's approach to Mark and Matthew explains something of Luke's theological motivation for reworking his sources, it is worth asking why no one appears to have noticed this before. It may be that redaction critics tend to focus on what is distinctive of the Gospel in question, and this theme, the Way of the Lord, is already taken by Mark. How can it be really important to Luke too?³⁵ A related point here is that the topic was well-explored decades ago, just as redaction criticism was emerging onto the scene. The key study, by W. C. Robinson,³⁶ appeared in 1960 and while it has made some impact on the scholarship, it is nothing like as well known as the equivalent studies on the Way of the Lord in Mark.

Further, in so far as recent scholarship has explored the theme of the way of the Lord in Luke, it has largely been in synchronic terms, in literary and narrative-critical studies that do not engage with source and

would add what Denaux does not consider, that by taking his inspiration from Mark, Luke creates a structure that enables him to draw in the new material from Matthew (as well as L).

35. Cf. my comments on the difficulties with redaction criticism of Matthew in "The Rock on Rocky Ground: Matthew, Mark and Peter as Skandalon," in *What Is It That the Scripture Says? Essays in Biblical Interpretation, Translation, and Reception in Honour of Henry Wansbrough OSB*, ed. Philip McCosker, LNTS 316 (London: Continuum, 2006), 61–73, especially 61–2.

36. Robinson, "Theological Context." See also John Navone, "The Way of the Lord," *Scripture* 20 (1968): 24–30: "Luke views history as a course of events following a schedule of times set by God and moving along a 'way' leading to the Gentiles. It can be described by the Septuagint expression which Luke found in the beginning of Mark and underscored in his own work: the way of the Lord" (30). There is one recent monograph related to the topic, Octavian Baban, *On the Road Encounters in Luke–Acts: Hellenistic Mimesis and Luke's Theology of the Way*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006). Baban's helpful study has the rare advantage of considering Luke's use of both Mark and Matthew (93–113) though without noticing that the "Way" motif provides the impetus for Luke's restructuring of Mark and Matthew.

redaction-criticism.³⁷ The study of the Synoptic Problem is often thought of as the poor relation of New Testament scholarship, a difficult episode to get through in an introductory course rather than a rich and rewarding enterprise in which scholars can explore the ways in which the evangelists developed their theology in interaction with their sources.³⁸ But here a careful consideration of Luke's theology actually provides the stimulus to rethink one of the tired old clichés of source-critical study.

Having reflected on the motif of "the Way of the Lord" in Luke, and how it might be relevant to Luke's reading of Mark and Matthew, it is worth returning to our starting point. Is it indeed the case that Luke could not, should not, would not have rearranged Matthew's restructuring of Mark? The idea that Luke could not have achieved a strong reworking of Matthew's order has always been strange given the fact that there are large-scale differences between Matthew's and Luke's ordering of the double tradition material. At least one of the two has been rearranging this material. If, with most two-source theorists, one broadly aligns Luke's order with Q's order, we give Matthew a great deal of work to do, so that the supposed unfeasibility of the large scale rearrangement, the alleged logistical difficulty, is simply transferred from Luke to Matthew. But if Luke could have rearranged Matthew, should he have done so? Streeter's value judgement has often been challenged by advocates of the Farrer theory, many of whom find things to admire in the new Lucan structure, and in this they are joined by many Lucan commentators who find multiple layers and links and literary craft in Luke's central section.

All these points and more have been made repeatedly. What, then, of the notion that Luke simply would not have done this? This is where a proper appreciation of Luke's first source, Mark, comes in. To an author who admires Mark's theology, who sees how he has structured his Gospel with a central section focusing on the Way of the Lord, who further sees its Isaianic potential to speak about the salvation of all flesh, it would have been undesirable to have adopted Matthew's structure wholesale. One might say of Luke that given his theology, given his focus on the salvation of all flesh, in a Gospel beginning with John's announcement of the Way of the Lord, that he could not, should not, would not have

37. See, for example, Joel Green, "Conversion in Luke–Acts: God's Prevenience, Human Embodiment," in *The Unrelenting God: Essays on God's Action in Scripture in Honor of Beverly Roberts Gaventa*, ed. David J. Downs and Matthew L. Skinner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 15–41 (23–31).

38. Curiously, Austin Farrer himself stressed the importance of Exodus in Mark (*A Study in St Mark* [Westminster: Dacre, 1951]) without seeing its parallel importance as a theological motif in Luke.

taken over Matthew's restructuring of Mark. At its best, the Synoptic Problem is much more than a study of the mechanics of Gospel interrelations. It should interact creatively with the full range of elements in New Testament scholarship, and especially those areas that it has traditionally left to one side, like paying attention to the core Christological themes in each of the Gospels, as well as the theological motivations of the authors who composed them.