

Forsaking Even One's Mother-in-Law Redaction Critical Analysis of Luke 5:1-11

Joachim Jeremias boldly stated that “Luke dislikes transpositions” and that he “was an enemy of rearrangement.”¹ Any deviations in order from the Marcan material must therefore be regarded as important markers of Luke’s particular theological stance. Seven main transpositions have been suggested for the Lucan gospel, out of which this study focuses on the third – the call of the first disciples in Luke 5:1-11.²

In Mark, the call of the four fishermen comes just fifteen verses into the Gospel, at the very beginning of Jesus’ Galilean ministry (1:16-20) shortly after the temptation in the desert (vv.12-13) and an introductory summary statement (vv.14-15). In Luke, by contrast, the beginning of Jesus’ ministry follows a different chronological order than Mark. The temptation pericope (4:1-13) and the beginning summary statement (vv.14-15) reproduce the Marcan chronology faithfully. In lieu of the call narrative, Luke departs from Mark by recording the rejection at Nazareth (vv.16-30), but immediately follows him through the exorcism of the demoniac (vv.31-37), the healing of Simon’s mother-in-law (vv.38-39), the healing of the multitude after sunset (vv.40-41), and the decision to preach elsewhere (vv.42-44). It is only here that Luke introduces Mark’s call narrative, transposing it from the beginning of this sequence to its end (5:1-11).

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¹ Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 161, 98.

² See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes, I-IX*, Anchor Bible 28 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1981), 71-72.

This displacement has been the subject of much scholarly debate. This study presents diverging solutions that have been devised to explain Luke's rearrangement and seeks to suggest an alternative proposal.

The Two Calls Solution

The simplest solution to this disparity in chronology between Mark and Luke is that of considering two different calls that Jesus extends to the fishermen. Mark 1:16-20 is a highly economical account of the two pairs of disciples' call and commission, faithfully reproduced in Matthew 4:18-22 which suggests that no recourse was made to Q material in this narrative. Rather, Luke's account is a literary reworking of the original Marcan story. Luke has replaced the original brief introduction with a composite from Mark (3:7.9; 4:1) and added verses 10a and 11 on the basis of Mark 1:16-20. In between the two ends of the narrative, Luke weaves the call of the disciples into the account of a miraculous catch of fish which bears close resemblance to the resurrection story found in John 21:1-11. It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the relationship between these two accounts. Given the eleven points of convergence and seven points of difference between the Lucan and Johannine accounts delineated by Joseph Fitzmyer and Alfred Plummer, it is difficult to determine whether a common *Vorlage* was utilised in both.³

Four approaches to the problem have been proposed: (a) Luke represents a symbiosis of John and Mark; (b) the account is purely Lucan; (c) Luke uses an independent source; and (d) Luke mostly uses an independent source but with touches of Mark. On the whole, it seems that the latter is most probable: Luke has incorporated the miracle story in a framework based on Mark. In so doing he may have replaced the original ending of the miracle story with Marcan material.⁴

Fitzmyer notes how the episode is "scarcely a mere parallel" to the Marcan call narrative in 1:16-20. Apart from the new setting provided by the transposition, he pinpoints three differences: (a) the Lucan Jesus is not a mere passer-by but

³ See Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 560-561; Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1896), 147.

⁴ See I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Paternoster, 1978), 200-201. In this regard, Michael Wolter maintains that the pre-Lukan narrative of the superabundant catch of fish might have already concluded with a saying of Jesus with which Peter was called into discipleship or to mission. See Micheal Wolter, *The Gospel according to Luke* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016) 1:223.

he teaches the crowds from Simon's boat (vv.1-3); (b) Simon casts his net for a miraculous catch of fish at Jesus' words; and (c) Jesus promises Simon a new career which results in his renunciation of everything to follow Jesus (vv.9b-11).⁵ To these, several other discrepancies may be pointed out: (a) Luke adds his characteristic phrase τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ which becomes a comprehensive designation of Jesus' preaching and Christian evangelism in Acts;⁶ (b) with characteristic accuracy Luke corrects ἡ θάλασσα to τὴν λίμνην Γεννησαρέτ (v.1); (c) Mark speaks of fishermen at their work in their boats (1:16) while Luke reports that their work was finished and their two boats empty (5:2); (d) in Luke no reference is made to Andrew; (e) the evangelist uses the term ζωγράφω (v.10) probably to remove the notion of killing the fish from the metaphor; (f) Jesus' call δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου (1:17) remains unspoken in Luke; and (g) while Mark relates that Jesus called the two pairs of brothers to be his followers, Luke has a more pro-Petrine perspective.⁷ Other differences are more cosmetic as Lucan diction is discernible throughout the narrative. Such Lucanisms include ἐγένετο + καί + finite verb (ἦν ἐστῶς) in v.1⁸ and ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν in v.10.⁹

These discrepancies between Mark and Luke have prompted arguments in favour of considering two different calls that Jesus extends to the fishermen.¹⁰ Mark (1:16-20), and by extension Matthew (4:18-22), record the first call to discipleship of Peter, Andrew, James, and John who become part-time co-workers with Jesus for his Galilean trip but return to their occupation as fishermen on several occasions. Luke, by contrast, records a second call to Peter who forsakes his livelihood to become a permanent full-time associate of Jesus. James and John then follow suit. Norval Geldenhuys goes as far as to suggest that Peter's

⁵ Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 560.

⁶ See Lk 8:11.21; 11:28; Acts 4:31; 6:2.7; 8:14; 11:1; 12:24(?); 13:5.7.44.46.48; 16:32; 17:13; 18:11.

⁷ Luke has a deep respect for Simon Peter who emerges as a foundational character in the primitive church in Acts. Besides Lk 5:4-9:10b, he alone has Jesus' prayer for Peter (22:31-32) and the Risen Jesus' appearance to Peter alone (24:34). Luke also eliminates negative remarks found about Peter in Mark 8:32-33 and 14:37. See Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 562-564.

⁸ See Lk 5:12.17; 8:1.22; 9:28.51; 14:1; 17:11; 19:15; 24:4.15; Acts 5:7; 9:19.

⁹ See Lk 1:48; 12:52; 22:18.69; Acts 18:6.

¹⁰ See Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke*, 141-148; Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), 180-184; William F. Arndt, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1956), 154-157; Günter Klein, "Die Berufung des Petrus," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 58 (1967): 1-44; George E. Rice, "Luke's Thematic Use of the Call to Discipleship," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 19, n.1 (1981): 52-53.

realisation of sin in v.8 may be attributed to the fact that “after he [Peter] had previously begun to follow Jesus, he had again left Him and returned to his old profession, and that he had now come to the profound realisation of the foolish sinfulness of his former half-heartedness.”¹¹ This interpretation lends itself to much criticism. Indeed, William Liefeld calls the dichotomy “unnecessary,”¹² while Frédéric Godet exclaims: “can anyone suppose, [...], that Jesus twice addressed the same persons in these terms, “I will make you fishers of men,” and that they could have twice *left all* in order to follow Him?”¹³ William Arndt brushes off such criticism claiming that it was the most natural thing for the disciples to return to their regular trade only to permanently attach themselves to Jesus’ person at a later stage.¹⁴ More hesitant is Plummer, affirming that an identity between the Marcan and Lucan accounts “can neither be affirmed nor denied with certainty,” but he then concedes that “there is nothing improbable in two miracles of a similar kind, one granted to emphasize and illustrate the call, the other the re-call, of the chief Apostle.”¹⁵ Plummer provides seven contrasting elements in the two gospel narratives to substantiate his claim, while Darrell Bock provides four which for him “seem significant enough to suggest distinct events.”¹⁶ Yet, these claims are unconvincing. There are simply too many similarities that Luke chooses to retain from his source.

The Stylistic Solution

Another explanation for the Lucan transposition of the call narrative turns to the author’s particular literary style. One of Luke’s literary techniques is to mention a character early in the narrative only to return to that person later to provide more details. Such is the case with Barnabas, introduced summarily in Acts 4:36-37 but only treated in detail in Acts 13. Philip is likewise introduced briefly in Acts 6:5 but Luke brings him more fully onto the stage later in Acts 8:5-40. The same goes with Paul, first mentioned in Acts 7:58-8:3 but only takes

¹¹ Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, 182.

¹² Walter L. Liefeld, *Luke*, Expositor’s Bible Commentary 8 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 876.

¹³ Frédéric L. Godet, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1875), 255.

¹⁴ Arndt, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, 156.

¹⁵ Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke*, 142, 147.

¹⁶ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 1,1-9,50*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 450.

a leading role in the Lucan narrative from chapter 9. Robert Karris explains the deferral of the call account to this peculiarly Lucan stylistic choice. Luke transposes the narrative in such a way as to introduce Simon in 4:38-39 only to treat him in greater detail in 5:1-11.¹⁷ Joel Green makes a similar observation.¹⁸ This interpretation is, in my opinion, plausible even though it may not be strong enough to justify the motive for displacement given Luke's aversion to it.

The Logical Plausibility Solution

Psycho-Rhetorical Context for the Disciples' Call

An analogous proposition seeks to explain Luke's transposition as the author's attempt to describe discipleship as a result of prior acquaintance of Jesus and the experience of a revelation of divine power. In Mark, the call of the four fishermen occurs at the very beginning of the story when Jesus has hardly initiated his public ministry. He sees the two pairs of brothers who are no more than complete strangers to both Jesus and the reader and upon hearing his call, they inexplicably follow him oblivious of his teaching and miraculous power. The narrative appears awkward and far-fetched.

Luke's transposition may be considered a correction of the Marcan narrative's seeming implausibility. In his account, the call and commission of the disciples occur after the healing of Simon's mother-in-law (4:38-39) so that he provides a context and motivation with which to better understand the fishermen's commitment of faith. For this reason, many scholars have claimed that Luke's transposition corrects Mark's awkwardness and renders the narrative "psychologically plausible."¹⁹ A slightly different stance is that of Mikeal Parsons who posits "rhetorical plausibility" rather than a psychological reason for the

¹⁷ Robert J. Karris, "The Gospel according to Luke," *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, eds. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Roland E. Murphy (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1997), 675-721.

¹⁸ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1997), 225.

¹⁹ Godet, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke*, 258; Karris, "The Gospel according to Luke," 691; Bock, *Luke 1,1-9,50*, 450; Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 71, 549, 560; Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 363; Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 199; Leopold Sabourin, *The Gospel according to St Luke: Introduction and Commentary* (Bandra: St Paul, 1984), 147; Luke T. Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina 3 (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 90; R. Alan Culpepper, *The Gospel of Luke*, New Interpreter's Bible 9 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 114; Mikeal C. Parsons, *Luke*, Paideia (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 87-88.

change.²⁰ Drawing up on the *progymnasmata* and the rhetorical handbooks, Parsons claims that Luke introduces changes in the story's chronology to "tell the unbelievable in a believable way."²¹

Elaborating on the psychological hypothesis, Joel Marcus has even inverted the transposition, claiming that it was Mark, not Luke, who may have been responsible for moving the story of the call forward to the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Marcus defends his point by claiming that retaining Luke's original order would not only be "chronologically and psychologically plausible, but it would alleviate the difficulty that in the present narrative Peter and Andrew seem to abandon everything to follow Jesus in 1:18, yet are back in their own house in Capernaum in 1:29."²²

There are two main faults with the psychological interpretation. Though plausible in its reasoning, I agree with Hans Conzelmann who states that "it is not demanded by the text that Jesus must already have known the disciples. Such an interpretation is the result of pragmatic reflection."²³ Indeed, no such psychological preparation is necessitated in the call of Levi some verses later. Jesus simply sees the tax-collector, and upon his call, Levi immediately gets up, leaves everything and follows him. No prior encounter with miracle seems to be needed here. Secondly, Luke redacts his Marcan source in such a way as to render the disciples witnesses to two miracles prior to their call and commission: the healing of Simon's mother-in-law in 4:38-39 and the miraculous catch of fish in 5:4-9 that derives from Luke's special source (L). Given Luke's dislike of transposition, why would he postpone the call narrative until after the miraculous healing of Simon's mother-in-law, when he could have retained the Marcan order and simply added the miraculous catch story to the Marcan call narrative as he indeed does in 5:1-11? Would not the miraculous catch story alone provide enough psychological context to the disciples' call? Why do the disciples need to witness an extra healing miracle when a nature miracle would have sufficed?

²⁰ Parsons, *Luke*, 88.

²¹ Mikeal C. Parsons, *Luke: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2007), 24-25.

²² Joel Marcus, *Mark: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary I-VIII*, Anchor Bible 27 (New Haven: Doubleday, 2008), 178.

²³ Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St Luke* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), 41.

Jesus' Soteriological Activity as Preamble to the Disciples' Ministry

Unlike the previous solution which credits the logical plausibility of the narrative, another solution, favoured by Alan Culpepper,²⁴ John Nolland,²⁵ and François Bovon,²⁶ seeks to explain Luke's delayed call account within the whole section. Luke introduces the pericope only after Jesus' identity and the nature of his ministry have been clearly developed. Luke Johnson explains: "Luke wishes to provide a profile of the prophet Jesus' ministry before drawing any attention to the recruitment of the next generation of prophets. By delaying Peter's call, Luke enables the reader to pause over Jesus' personal prophetic ministry of liberation."²⁷ Though tenable, this interpretation may be questionable. Nolland defends this understanding by highlighting how "in this section the people who personally respond to Jesus develop an importance for which there was no room in the strongly Christological focus of 4:14-44."²⁸ Yet, this characterisation of the disciples simply does not fit the wider ambit of the Gospel. Green notes that in this section, disciples are "conspicuously absent" or "appear as little more than cardboard figures, undeveloped as characters."²⁹ He adds that in Luke, the disciples have little role to play owing to three main reasons: (1) the disciples will only take centre stage in missionary activity in Luke's second volume, Acts; (2) their primary role until then is to learn; and (3) here they only serve as models of appropriate response to Jesus and his message. Given these observations, it seems unlikely that Luke would have postponed the call narrative to reinforce the disciples' role in ministry as patterned on their master's own.

The Thematic Solution

Another position seeks to explain Luke's decision to postpone the call of the disciples, against the Marcan *Vorlage*, in terms of the evangelist's key themes in his gospel. Conzelmann, for instance, aligns the motive for the Lucan transposition of the call narrative with the theme of rejection/acceptance. He claims that the story of the call is the positive completion of the Nazareth story in vv.16-20.

²⁴ See Culpepper, *The Gospel of Luke*, 114.

²⁵ See John L. Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, Word Biblical Commentary 35A (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 219.

²⁶ See François Bovon, *Luke: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1,1-9,50*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 166.

²⁷ Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 85-86.

²⁸ Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, 219.

²⁹ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 228.

Both create a literary contrast. Conzelmann maintains that “the critical attitude in his [Jesus’] home town serves as a foil to the presentation of what is the only genuine relationship to Jesus: that which is the result of a call.”³⁰

Frederick Danker similarly detects a thematic parallelism in Luke’s chapter five and suggests that the transposition in Luke can be understood in terms of “a thematically integrated series of recipients of mercy.”³¹ Simon’s receipt of absolution through an invitation to share in Jesus’ mission in 5:1-11, mirrors the paralytic’s experience in vv.17-26. Likewise, the cleansing of the leper in vv.12-16 is paralleled by the call of Levi in vv.27-29, given that both are typical of religious and social outcasts. Danker thus proposes the pattern a b a’ b’ (Simon, leper, paralytic, Levi) and maintains that this series “reaches its climax in the thematically integrating saying of v. 32 (‘I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance).”³²

Adhering to the thematic interpretation and drawing heavily from Danker, George Rice contends that “the narrative is placed by Luke where it is because of its programmatic significance and because ‘it contains many of the main themes of Luke-Acts *in nuce*.”³³ Rice posits that the transposed Lucan call narrative ought to be understood in terms of the programmatic passage from Isaiah 61:1.2 and 58:6 which Luke reproduces in 4:18-19. For Rice, Luke sees the final verse “to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,” as an announcement of release from Satan’s power (4:31-44), the power of sin (5:1-32), and cultic traditions (5:33-6:11). Within this structure, Rice claims that the relocation in Luke’s chronology produces a unit of four pericopes that deal with the issue of release from sin: Peter’s admission of his sinfulness (5:1-11), the cleansed leper (vv.12-16), the healing of the paralytic (vv.17-26), and the call of Levi (vv.27-32). This interpretation which understands the transposition in the light of the main motif of release (ἄφεσις 4:18) which characterises Jesus’ inaugural proclamation, is echoed in the work of Sławomir Szkredka. He notes how the displacement of the call narrative in Luke serves to emphasise how “Simon is set free *from* the fearful confines of his self-confessed sinfulness and *for* the participation in the ministry of Jesus.”³⁴

³⁰ Conzelmann, *The Theology of St Luke*, 42.

³¹ Frederick W. Danker, *Luke*, Proclamation Commentaries, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 15.

³² *Ibid.*, 15-16.

³³ Rice, ““Luke’s Thematic Use of the Call to Discipleship,” 55.

³⁴ Sławomir Szkredka, “The Call of Simon Peter in Luke 5:1-11. A Lukan Invention?,” *Biblical Annals* 8, n.2 (2018): 176. See also, Sławomir Szkredka, *Sinners and Sinfulness in Luke: A*

The thematic solutions proposed, though tenable, do not quite explain the motive for chronological displacement. With respect to Conzelmann's rejection/acceptance motif, it seems implausible that Luke would have changed the call narrative's position when retaining the Marcan chronology would have had the same effect. The transposition adds nothing to the theme. Danker's mercy theme can be disputed in terms of its delimitation. Why should this theme be limited to the first twenty-nine verses of chapter five? Why could it not be extended to the episode of the exorcism in Capernaum (4:31-37) and the healing at Simon's home (vv.38-39)? Are these not also signs of receipt of mercy? A similar claim could be applied to Rice's and Szkredka's interpretation. It seems unlikely that the call narrative should be understood in terms of the release from sin motif. The pericope does not concern itself primarily with "Peter's admission of his sinfulness" but rather of the recognition of his unworthiness before the transcendence of his divine master.

Proposal: Emphasis on Theme of Absolute Renunciation

Having critically analysed the various solutions proposed for the change in Lucan chronology, I suggest that the difference in relative order in Luke can be understood in terms of the theme of absolute renunciation in the light of the detail that Simon and his companions left everything (ἀφέντες πάντα) to follow Jesus. In Mark, as Marcus has pointed out, Simon and Andrew appear to renounce their possessions to respond to Jesus' call and commission in 1:18, yet they seem to have no qualms in returning to their home in 1:29. Luke remedies this logical contradiction. He changes the chronological sequence of the call narrative from before the cure of Simon's mother-in-law narrative, where he mentions a house belonging to Simon, to immediately succeeding it. The displacement, therefore, accentuates Simon's abandonment of everything he possessed. This is not a novel interpretation. Karl Lachmann, in his 1835 article "De ordine narrationum in evangeliiis synopticis," makes the same claim.³⁵

Study of Direct and Indirect References in the Initial Episodes of Jesus' Activity, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/434 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017): 46-65.

³⁵ See Karl Lachmann, "De ordine narrationum in evangeliiis synopticis," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 8 (1835): 581-582. Palmer provides a translation: "Luke may therefore have thought it inappropriate to mention Simon's *house* (Lk 4:38) after this, like the others, in reporting that his mother-in-law was suffering from fever there. Luke therefore preferred to put the call of Simon and his friends (5:1-11) after the healing of Simon's mother-in-law, rather than (supposing the story of the demon who knew Christ were transposed or dropped along with the words 'he rose up from the synagogue' [4:31-8]), leave a problem, though not a difficult one,

Indeed, Luke is sometimes described as “the gospel of absolute renouncement.”³⁶ He does not identify Jesus as a carpenter’s son as opposed to Mark (6:3). As an itinerant preacher, moving about from place to place without a permanent residence or supportive occupation, Jesus is said to have “nowhere to lay his head” (9:58). His disciples share the same predicament, being exhorted to preach in poverty (9:1-6; 10:1-12), break away from all possessions (14:33), and to distribute them to the needy (12:33; 18:22). This practice of the life of missionary poverty is matched by Jesus’ injunctions concerning wealth: Jesus commends the blessed poor as against the woeful wealthy (6:20.24), he affirms that no one can serve God and Mammon (16:13), and that it is difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom (18:24). Here, Zacchaeus’ retort “Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much” (19:8), becomes Luke’s preferred paradigm concerning the place of possessions among those who follow Jesus. Indeed, Green notes that “discipleship demands that one no longer be a slave to wealth or cling to possessions as though they were one’s source of security or social position, and that one give precedence to the family of God and especially to those in need.”³⁷

Luke has taken over this theme from the common tradition and has heightened its prominence in order to highlight its importance for him. In the Marcan call narrative, Simon and Andrew abandon their nets to follow Jesus (1:18), while James and John are said to have left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men (v. 20). In typical Lucan fashion, the evangelist redacts this passage by adding his distinctive term *πάντα* to *ἀφέντες* at the end of the call narrative in 5:11. He does the same with two other passages: Levi leaves *all* prior to following Jesus (5:28), whilst to the injunction to the rich ruler in Mark (10:21) Luke adds: “sell *all* that you own” (18:22). Unlike Matthew, he also faithfully retains the pericope of the widow’s offering in Mark 12:41-44: “She out of her poverty has put in *all* she had to live on” (21:4). Even the peculiarly Lucan material (L) exhibits a radical abandonment of possessions as a prerequisite to discipleship: “None of you can become my disciple if you do not give up *all* your possessions” (14:33).

to the prudence of the reader.” N. Humphrey Palmer, “Lachmann’s Argument,” *New Testament Studies* 13, n.4 (1967): 375.

³⁶ Sabourin, *The Gospel according to St Luke*, 149. For a thorough exposition of the the theme see Thomas E. Phillips, *Reading Issues of Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts*, Studies in Bible Early Christianity 48 (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen, 2001); Thomas E. Phillips, “Reading Recent Readings of Issues of Wealth and Poverty in Luke and Acts,” *Currents in Biblical Research* 1, n.2 (2003): 231-269; Rachel L. Coleman, *The Lukan Lens on Wealth and Possessions*, Biblical Interpretation Series 180 (Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2019).

³⁷ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 229.

This radical relinquishment of possessions is further reinforced by the Lucan emphatic reference to objects, relations, and status that Simon, as representative of his fellow disciples, abandons prior to his call. In Luke, Simon is said to possess: a house in Capernaum which does not belong to both Simon and Andrew as in Mark (1:16), but it is wholly Simon's (τὴν οἰκίαν Σίμωνος; 4:38); a mother-in-law retained from the Marcan *Vorlage* (πενθερὰ δὲ τοῦ Σίμωνος; v.38); a boat in contrast to Mark 1:19 where no reference is made to the boat's owner/s (τῶν πλοίων, ὃ ἦν Σίμωνος; 5:3); James and John as business associates (οἱ ἦσαν κοινωνοὶ τῷ Σίμωνι; v.10) not merely as μέτοχοι (vs.7); his profession as a fisherman (ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἀνθρώπους ἔσῃ ζωγρῶν; v.10); and even his name Σίμων (mentioned six times in the call pericope) will be changed to Πέτρος subsequently in 6:14 only to reappear in 22:31 and 24:34. These details, redacted by Luke, serve to intensify the full extent with which Simon forsakes all. Indeed, Peter could exclaim: Ἴδού ἡμεῖς ἀφέντες τὰ ἴδια ἠκολουθήσαμεν σοι (18:28). Here Luke's use of τὰ ἴδια rather than retaining the Marcan πάντα (10:28) is strange. Johnson explains this choice of words as an anticipation of sharing of possessions in Acts 4:32, where the believers are said to call nothing as their own (ἴδιον).³⁸ Indeed, the disciples' break with possession at the initiation of Jesus' ministry in Luke's first book, anticipates the early Church's relinquishment of personal possessions for the good of the collective in the evangelist's second volume work in Acts (2:45; 4:32.34).

The criticism levelled towards Lachmann's analysis to variations in the order of Mark's and Luke's call narrative is that if absolute renunciation is the reason why Luke transposed this incident, it would be strange that Luke did not make a similar alteration to the pericope of Levi's call few verses later (5:27-32). As Lachmann himself notes, Levi is reported by Luke to have left everything (καταλιπὼν πάντα; v.28) but immediately stages a banquet in his own house (ἐποίησεν δοχὴν μεγάλην Λεὺς αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ; v.29). David Neville concludes: "Lachmann's suggestion does not really account for the divergent order of events at Lk 5:1-11."³⁹ Neville's objection is valid, yet I propose a rereading of the Marcan Levi narrative. Luke redacts this narrative and introduces two important details to the text.

Firstly, he changes the tense of the Marcan ingressive aorist ἠκολούθησεν to the imperfect ἠκολούθει, indicating a continuing practice.⁴⁰ Could this change indicate a process in which giving a banquet at his house was a necessary part of

³⁸ Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 278.

³⁹ David J. Neville, *Arguments from Order in Synoptic Source Criticism: A History and Critique*, New Gospel Studies 7 (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1994), 53.

⁴⁰ The retention of the aorist in some textual witnesses is not easily explainable. It is possibly a harmonisation with the Marcan or Matthean reading.

Levi's following Jesus? Could Levi's break with possessions be a gradual process unlike the disciples' more punctual and spontaneous leaving of everything? After all, forsaking everything is "a notation with obvious economic and vocational but also with deep-seated social ramifications."⁴¹

Secondly, Luke adds *καταλιπὼν πάντα* to Mark 2:14: *καὶ ἀναστὰς ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ*. Thomas Phillips believes that the *πάντα* here refers merely to his lucrative trade and not the sum of his possessions, so that, by extension, "the 'everything,' which Simon, James and John left, was, as in the case of Levi, a vocation and the things associated with that vocation."⁴² Phillips overlooks an important detail which contrasts, rather than compares, the two acts of renouncement. The choice of *καταλιπὼν* rather than *ἀφείξ* in the Levi pericope is significant given that, as Plummer notes, in the Hellenistic period, *ἀφίημι* is preferred to *λείπω* and its compounds.⁴³ Could this choice of word indicate that Levi's renunciation is of a different kind from that of the first disciples? Could the disciples' *ἀφέντες* refer to a different kind of complete separation of possessions than Levi's *καταλιπὼν*? William Pilgrim postulates in favour of such a dual-level understanding of renunciation, claiming that "the demand for a total surrender of possessions in Luke's gospel is limited to those who are full-time earthly disciples of Jesus, like the Twelve and the Seventy, while the demand for its proper use is intended for the people in general."⁴⁴ The term *καταλείπω* is used in most papyri in legal contexts, almost exclusively in wills.⁴⁵ Could this suggest that Levi's is a postponed renunciation that will come into effect upon his death, in contrast to the disciples' relinquishment which is immediate?

Within this framework, the Lucan transposition of 5:1-11 can be understood within the general theme of totality of Jesus' call in the gospel and within the immediate context within which it is found. His redaction of Mark within the pericope strengthens the received tradition of complete detachment with possessions. The insertion, in Luke 5:4-9a, of the narrative of the miraculous haul of fish (which probably shares the *Vorlage* utilised by John 21:1-11) further adds to the theme's prominence in that the one who provided the disciples with

⁴¹ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 235.

⁴² Phillips, *Reading Issues of Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts*, 105.

⁴³ Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke*, 147.

⁴⁴ Walter E. Pilgrim, *Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Wipf and Stock, 1981), 98.

⁴⁵ See, amongst others, BGU 6 1285; CPR 6 1; 72; P.Oxy. 1 105; 3 490; 492; P.Petr. (2) 1 22; 23; 24; 25. The verb *ἀφίημι* appears also in wills but its use is scanty when compared to the wide diffusion of *καταλείπω*.

such an abundance of plenty will likewise be ready to provide for them when they abandon all their own possessions at his command.⁴⁶

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to identify Luke's motive in delaying the call of the first disciples from its original order in Mark at the beginning of Jesus' Galilean ministry (1:16-20) to after the incidents occurring in Capernaum (Lk 4:31-41). Four solutions from the extant literature have been set out, each presented thoroughly and critiqued accordingly. To these, a fifth solution, first suggested by Lachmann, has been appropriated as a proposal to answer the motive for which the Lucan transposition has been made. Though ignored by most scholars, the Lucan theme of total renunciation is crucial to the gospel given the ample addition of the detail πάντα to many of the Marcan renunciation references. The disciples unconditionally leave *all* that belongs to them, including material objects, familial relationships and even status, to follow Jesus. In turn, Jesus promises to provide them with all they truly need and makes them models for the nascent Church to whom Luke writes the gospel.

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⁴⁶ In this regard, Geldenhuys writes: "From the nature of the case it follows that the multitude of fishes were first properly dealt with and disposed of. Jesus would not have let them catch the fish to be cast into the sea again or to be wasted. Undoubtedly the Lord allowed them to divide and sell the fishes and to provide for their dependants before commencing to follow Him continuously. Through the miraculous draught of fishes the Saviour thus taught them that He was able to provide for them and their dear ones. It was a valuable lesson to them that if they obeyed Him and entrusted themselves to Him. He would provide for them and their families even with regard to temporary needs." Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, 182.