

Narratives II: Thickening the Plot

Supplemental materials

The following four supplemental sections provide examples of dealing with certain aspects of New Testament narratives. There are many other aspects to consider, of course, but much of what these examples do applies to other forms of narrative as well.

Sections one and two focus on the back-to-back *parables* found in Luke 18:1-14, the parable of the unjust judge and the parable of the Pharisee and the publican.

The first of these two sections briefly considers special features of the first parable (Lk 18:1-8), noting things about it that help us in understanding the message that Luke has apparently embedded in it. Users can try their hand at listing those features before consulting the suggestions provided here.

The second section is longer and more complex. It tracks the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (Lk 18:9-14), step by step, through the exegetical procedure recommended in the textbook. Students and instructors can use this section as a model of the sermonizing process. It is a bit idealized, of course, but it should be enlightening in its overview of a concrete example. Again, trying it out for oneself first will make possible a potentially fruitful dialogue with the sample offered in the following pages.

Sections three and four deal with *intertextual* allusions and *intratextual* allusions, respectively. Allusions to earlier (or sometimes even to upcoming) material constitute a common technique in narrative literature, and even in non-narrative literature. Things can be said “between the lines” through well-chosen allusions, giving those things greater impact than they would have if they were expressed in a simple proposition.

Section three highlights the way Paul alludes to Old Testament prophetic literature as part of his self-description in Galatians 1. The fact that he casts his “alluding net” *outside of* the letter he is writing, bringing in text from another source, makes this an example of intertextuality.

Section four illustrates an example of intratextuality, noticing the way Luke has appealed in Acts 14 to an incident already rehearsed in Acts 3. The fact that the allusion is made *within* the same document makes it an intratextual, rather than an intertextual, allusion.

I. Specific “Parable” Considerations Applied to Luke 18:1-8

1. Repeated terms: ἐκδίκησις, ἐκδικέω “justice/vindication,” “grant justice” (4x)
 - What “atmosphere,” social setting, religious setting, and even theological perspective are implied by these terms?
2. Most space: devoted to the behavior and speech of the judge, four verses out of seven
 - four verses out of seven to the judge (vv. 2, 4-6)
 - one verse to the widow (v. 3)
 - two verses to God (vv. 7-8)
3. Central contrast: between the judge and God
4. Central characters: (see 3, above; is the widow a central character?)
 - Luke as author, Jesus/Son of man, audiences, *judge*, *widow*, *God*, we the readers
5. End of parable: faith (cf. v. 1), promise of God’s faithfulness
6. Direct discourse: widow’s prayer; judge’s rationalizing
7. How could it be told differently?
8. Adjacent/nearby parables: Pharisee and Publican
9. Internal interpretive guidance? verse 1, verses 6-8
 - verse 1 is Luke’s framework
 - verses 6-8 are Jesus’ (and Luke’s) framework and punch line
10. Main point: That God can be trusted; therefore keep on trusting him and do not despair in your impatience for ἐκδίκησις “vindication.”

II. Processing the Big Picture: Luke 18:9-14 The Pharisee and the Publican

The following are stages useful in an exegetical analysis of this parable:

- Orientation to Luke's Gospel as context
 - Central message
 - Structure
 - General historical-cultural background

Boundary definition

Translation and grammatical analysis

Textual criticism

Internal structure and external setting

Historical-cultural references

Word studies

Redaction criticism

Parable: main point

- Logic and content statement

Parable: original setting

Parable: Luke's use of it

- Content and context statement

Broader biblical and theological contexts

Parable: contemporary application

Sermonizing

Orientation to the Book from Which the Pericope Is Taken (Luke)

Central message (one attempt to define it): That in Jesus Christ, God has established his kingdom among humanity, thereby turning human values upside down and abolishing barriers of race, gender, status and wealth. New hope abounds. The price of membership in this new community is, for now, suffering, just as Jesus suffers in establishing it. But rich, transcendent blessing is the promised reward. This dynamic is further developed in Acts, where the Jewish-Gentile division is obliterated—painfully for some.

Structure: Luke's Gospel falls into sections that can be defined as follows (D. Bock, *DJG*, 500):

1. Introduction of John the Baptist and Jesus (1:1--2:52)
2. Preparation for Ministry: Anointed by God (3:1--4:13)
3. Galilean Ministry: the Revelation of Jesus (4:14--9:50)
4. Jerusalem Journey: Jewish Rejection and the New Way (9:51--19:44)
5. Jerusalem: The Innocent Slain and Raised (19:45--24:53)

The selected passage, Luke 18:9-14, thus falls within the so-called Travel Narrative, which is punctuated throughout with allusions to the journey “up” to Jerusalem, where Jesus is to be sacrificed. This portion of the Gospel focuses on the cost and meaning of being a disciple of Jesus: facing rejection, enduring suffering, and living out faithfully the values of the kingdom of God here and now. In other words, just as Jesus endured rejection and suffering along the journey to his “Jerusalem,” so his disciples will likewise face the same during the “waiting period,” along the journey toward their own “Jerusalem.” The interim age of the Church is the age of cross-bearing discipleship in the process of living out the kingdom's values in a rebellious world.

General historical cultural background: Luke's Gospel, like the other three, portrays Jesus' life in early first-century Galilee, Judea and surrounding territory. “Second-temple” Judaism, under Roman administration and the political power of the Herodian dynasty and the Sadducees, dominates the background. The Jerusalem temple and its cult occupy the central place in the contemporary Jewish life, even economically, and even in the Diaspora. But the Pharisees and the synagogues administer much of the day-to-day religious life of the people.

Luke's own circumstances, those for which he wrote his two-volume work, involve the tense process of consolidating the Church of Jesus Christ, as the people of God, without racial, gender, religious or economic distinctions. Specifically, the blending of Jewish and uncircumcised Gentile believers into one people of God constitutes a primary concern of Luke.

Boundary Definition

After a long series of speeches by Jesus on various subjects, interspersed with encounters with various needy people, the topics of the coming of the kingdom and the day of the Son of Man are raised at 17:20-21 and 17:22-37. The latter topic ends in the cryptic saying that where the body is, there the vultures will gather.

Then a parable is introduced at 18:1, Luke stating its intention as encouraging faithfulness. At 18:9, another parable is introduced, Luke likewise stating the purpose, but here in terms of the sort of people the parable is directed toward.

In addition to the repetition of the term παραβολή “parable” in verse 9, Luke has placed special stress on it, both by packaging it in the definite, demonstrative construction τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην “this parable,” and by positioning it “awkwardly” at the end of the sentence. This contrasts with the indefinite, default-positioned παραβολήν of verse 1. The effect, of course, is to create a clear seam at between verses 8 and 9.

At 18:15, the cast changes, as does the focus. From Jesus’ speaking parables, the action turns to the infants brought to him that he might touch them.

Thus 18:9-14 defines a well-marked pericope, containing an internally coherent parable contrasting two persons and their approach to God and each other.

Translation and Grammatical Analysis

⁹ Εἶπεν δὲ καὶ πρὸς τινὰς τοὺς πεποιθότας ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς ὅτι εἰσὶν δίκαιοι καὶ ἐξουθενούντας τοὺς λοιποὺς τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην

¹⁰ Ἄνθρωποι δύο ἀνέβησαν εἰς τὸ ἱερόν προσεύξασθαι, ὁ εἷς Φαρισαῖος καὶ ὁ ἕτερος τελώνης.

¹¹ ὁ Φαρισαῖος σταθεὶς πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ταῦτα προσηύχετο ὁ θεός, εὐχαριστῶ σοι ὅτι οὐκ εἰμι ὡσπερ οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἄρπαγες, ἄδικοι, μοιχοί, ἢ καὶ ὡς οὗτος ὁ τελώνης

¹² νηστεύω δις τοῦ σαββάτου, ἀποδεκατῶ πάντα ὅσα κτῶμαι.

¹³ ὁ δὲ τελώνης μακρόθεν ἐστὼς οὐκ ἠθελεν οὐδὲ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπάραι εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, ἀλλ' ἐτυπτεν τὸ στήθος αὐτοῦ λέγων· ὁ θεός, ἰλάσθητί μοι τῶ ἁμαρτωλῶ.

¹⁴ λέγω ὑμῖν, κατέβη οὗτος δεδικαιωμένος εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ παρ' ἐκείνων· ὅτι πᾶς ὁ υψῶν ἑαυτὸν ταπεινωθήσεται, ὁ δὲ ταπεινῶν ἑαυτὸν υψωθήσεται.

⁹ Then he said *this* parable [*or: And this is the parable he spoke*] to some who were confident concerning themselves that they were righteous and who despised the rest of society.

¹⁰ Two men went up to the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

¹¹ The Pharisee, having stood (by himself?) prayed these things (to himself?): “O God, I thank you that I am not as the rest of humanity, swindlers, dishonest, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

¹² I fast twice a week; I pay a tithe on everything I get.”

¹³ But the tax collector, standing at a distance, was not willing even to lift his eyes toward heaven, but kept beating his breast, saying, “O God, be merciful to me, *the sinner!*”

¹⁴ I tell you, the latter went down to his house having been justified rather than the former. Because all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

v. 9

τοὺς πεποιθότας ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς

πεποιθότας BDAG, p. 792A: 2nd pf. has pres. meaning = *depend on, be confident/trust in*

ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς = *concerning themselves*

Position of τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην emphatic

v. 11

σταθεὶς aor. pass. ptc., = *stand (to speak)* BDAG, p. 482D

Function of πρὸς ἑαυτὸν? Modifies σταθεὶς or ταῦτα προσηύχετο?

v. 13

ἰλάσθητί μοι aor. pass. imper. = *be propitiated toward me, be merciful to me*

τῶ ἁμαρτωλῶ (function and implication of article?): Wallace, p. 223, suggests either “par excellence” (the worst sinner of all) or comparison (I’m the sinner in this room,

unlike this righteous Pharisee), and thinks it is most likely “par excellence.” I’m not convinced; the element of comparison between the two characters pervades this parable, probably even here.

v. 14

παρ’ ἐκεῖνον (use of παρά to set up comparison; Wallace, p. 297)
οὗτος and ἐκεῖνος as “the latter” and “the former”

Textual Criticism

v. 9

a. For ἐξουθενούντας read: ἐξουθενούντες (supported by B and a corrector of P⁷⁵). Effect: makes the “some” (τινες) convinced that they were righteous *even while* they were despising the others; less likely perhaps, it makes them convinced they were righteous *by means of the very act of* despising others.

b. Omit τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην (supported only by D).

v. 10

a. Omit ὁ before εἷς (insignificant, though supported by B).

b. For ὁ ἕτερος read: εἷς (insignificant and poorly attested).

v. 11

a. For πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ταῦτα (NA²⁷) read:

ταῦτα πρὸς ἑαυτόν (good support: P⁷⁵, **Σ**², B, etc.; formerly in NA)

ταῦτα (poor support, though **Σ**)

πρὸς ἑαυτόν (poor support)

καθ' ἑαυτὸν ταῦτα (poor support)

If the first alternative reading is preferred, the effect would be to connect πρὸς ἑαυτόν directly with προσήχετο, rather than leaving it ambiguous as the text does. Metzger (*Textual Commentary*, p. 143) cites the principle of the more difficult reading in favor of the text, however. The parallel to verse 13 (“where” the publican stood) argues in favor of text.

b. For ὡσπερ read: ὥς (insignificant, poor support)

v. 12

a. For ἀποδεκατῶ read: ἀποδεκατεύω (well supported, but insignificant)

v. 13

a. Insert εἷς before τὸ στήθος (negligible difference)

b. For αὐτοῦ read:

ἑαυτοῦ (insignificant)

or omit (insignificant)

v. 14

a. For παρ' ἐκείνον read:

ἢ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος (insignificant)

ἢ ἐκεῖνος (insignificant)

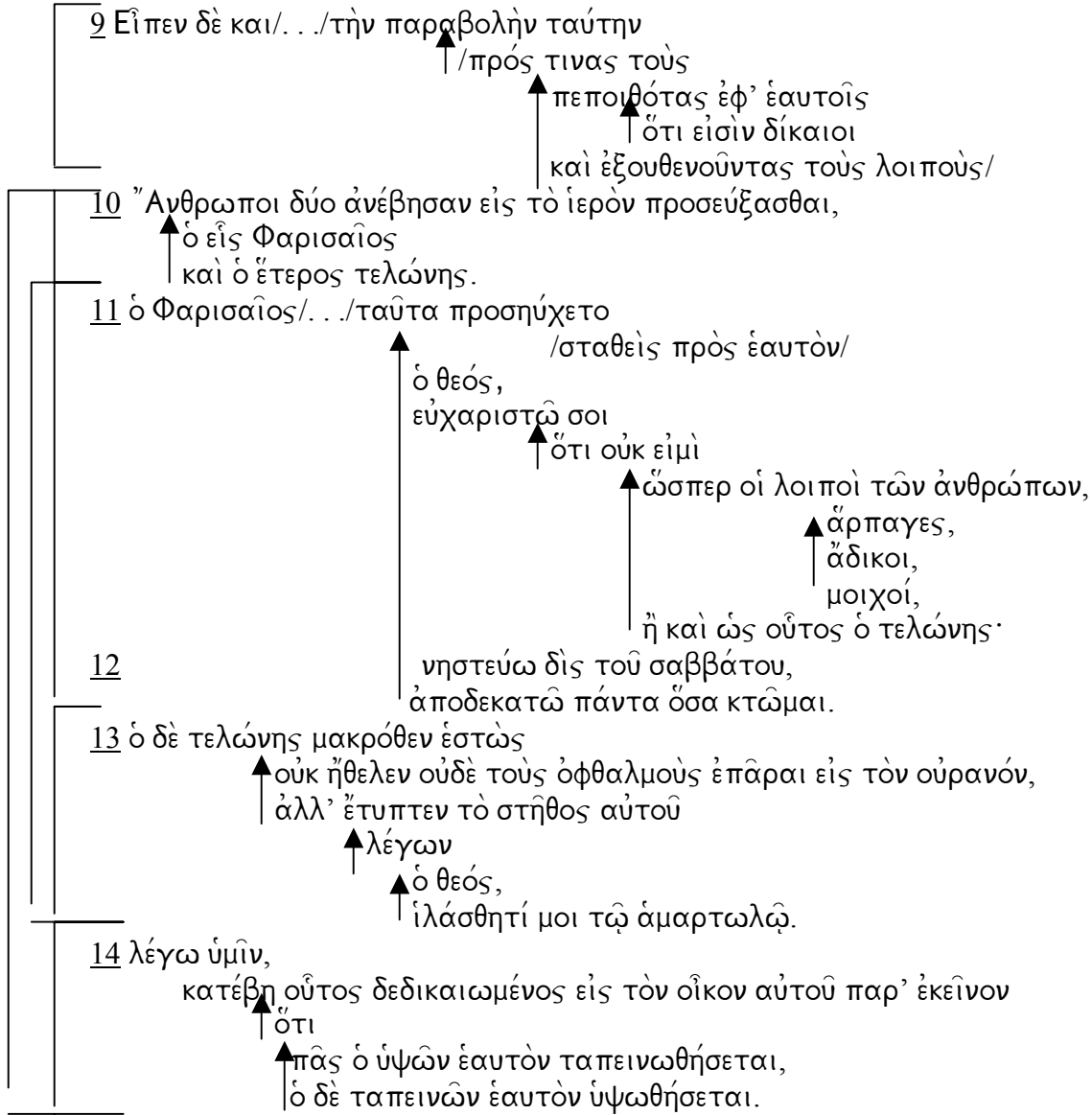
ἢ περ ἐκεῖνος (poorly supported): “than that one” cf. BDAG, p. 433B (§2εβ)

μᾶλλον παρ' ἐκείνον τὸν Φαρισαῖον (insignificant)

Only problem (a) in verse 11 is worth paying attention to. Its significance is that considering it helps us to see that it is indeed possible to construe πρὸς ἑαυτόν with the verb προσήχετο rather than with the participle σταθείς. In that case, the Pharisee is ironically portrayed as praying *to himself!*

Internal Structural Analysis

(See next page for an English analysis [NRSV])



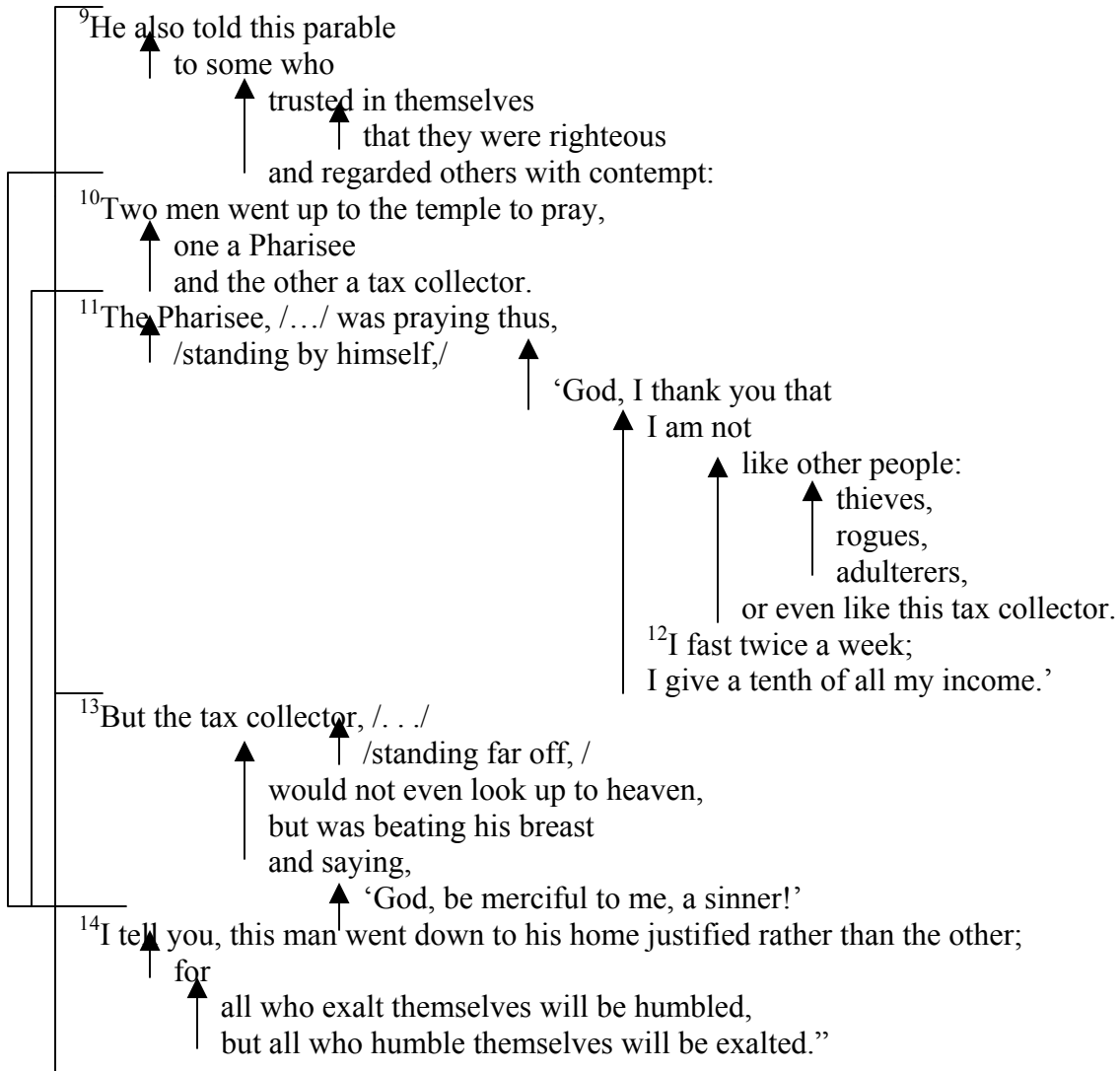
The pericope falls into five interrelated segments:

(1) Luke's *introduction*, including the specification of the target audience of Jesus' parable (v. 9)

{ (2) The *set-up* for the action of the parable (two men going to the temple, v. 10)
 { (3) The action of the first man, the Pharisee (vv. 11-12)
 { (4) The action of the second man, the tax collector (v. 13)

(5) Jesus' (=Luke's) *conclusion* and punch line, embodying the message to the target audience (v. 14)

Structural Analysis of Luke 18:9-14 (NRSV)



Historical-Cultural References

Pharisee. In Jesus' own day, the Pharisees were highly respected and honored by the people. Sadducees, on the other hand, were the wealthy religious elite, whose cooperation with the Roman occupation authorities made them very comfortable in society. But the Pharisees were the ordinary, respectable people, the leaders of the synagogues, and the examples of devotion to the God of Israel. The majority of them were upright, honorable people, like Nicodemus and possibly Joseph of Arimathea (though he may have been a Sadducee), who truly sought to be what they understood God to require. They were zealous for the Torah and for the honor of the Jewish nation. They were often in direct conflict with the worldly Sadducees. They were the religious heroes of the common people.

Tax collector. Publicans, or tax collectors, were Jews who had obtained employment with the Roman government of Judea to collect the hated Roman taxes from their own countrymen. Many of them, like Zacchaeus, enriched themselves by collecting far more than what was due and pocketing the excess. Their countrymen hated them for both reasons. No one would favor a publican over a Pharisee. Tax collectors were regarded as dishonest cheats, and often were portrayed as brothel owners (T. Schmidt, *DJG*, 805). They were the sleazy 42nd Street low-life of the time, like modern hustlers, "protection"-mongers, loan sharks and porn kings. This gives additional point to the Pharisee's list: swindlers, dishonest people and adulterers (v. 11).

Fasting. Pharisees developed fasting twice a week in addition to the usual major traditional fasts on the Day of Atonement, etc.

Praying in the temple. Jesus refers to the temple as a house of prayer (Lk 19:45-46).

The chief thing to see here is the contrast between the social roles of the Pharisee and the tax collector, and from that to listen to the parable with the ears of the original audience.

Word Studies

ἁμαρτωλῶ (ἁμαρτωλός) “sinner” (v. 13)

In Luke alone the word occurs eighteen times, more often than in all three other Gospels combined. It refers to the usual “moral” quality, where the focus is on “not observing the details of the law”:

Luke 5:8 Peter claims to be a sinful man

Luke 15:7, 10 Heaven rejoices over sinners who repent

But it also can carry a focus on a class of people, involving prejudicial treatment:

Luke 5:30 Pharisees offended because Jesus associates with publicans and “sinners”

Luke 5:32 Jesus has come to call “sinners,” *not the righteous*, to repentance

This suggests that in Luke 18:13, the tax collector identifies himself as not a member of the worthy class to which the Pharisee belongs, doubtless assuming there is good reason for that.

δεδικαιωμένος (δικαίω) “justify,” “vindicate,” “do justice to,” “treat as just” (v. 14)

Occurs five times in Luke (twice in Acts):

- *Luke 7:29* And all the people who heard this, including the tax collectors, **acknowledged the justice** of God, because they had been baptized with John’s baptism.
- *Luke 7:35* Nevertheless, wisdom **is vindicated** by all her children.
- *Luke 10:29* But wanting **to justify** himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”
- *Luke 16:15* So he said to them, “You are those who **justify** yourselves in the sight of others; but God knows your hearts; for what is prized by human beings is an abomination in the sight of God.”
- *Luke 18:14* I tell you, this man went down to his home **justified** rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.
- *Acts 13:38-39* by this Jesus everyone who believes is **set free** from all those sins from which you could not **be freed** by the law of Moses.

In 18:14, the word probably means that God treats the tax collector as *just*, not as a *sinner*. He is numbered among those whom God will acquit on that great Day of the Lord. There is a connection in this context also with being “exalted” (ὑψωθήσεται) by God. Perhaps it should be translated something like “counted as” righteous, vindicated.

Redaction Criticism

Because this parable (like the one just preceding it) is found only in Luke's Gospel, it cannot be compared with alternative versions. However, the Matthean "secondary parallels" to it echo the saying about exalting and humbling (Lk 18:14b; cf. Mt. 18:4; 23:12).

One of them, matching Luke 18:14 almost word for word, comes from Matthew's pericope pronouncing woes on the scribes and *Pharisees* (Mt 23:1-36). The other comes from the disciples' questions about who will be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, to which Jesus replies that only those who become like a *little child* will enter it (Mt 18:1-4).

Thus there are obvious connections with Luke 18, both in the criticism of pharisaical attitudes and in the appeal to a child as the model of humility (cf. Lk 18:15-17). Luke himself repeats the saying almost verbatim at 14:11, where the topic is where to sit at a banquet.

The upshot of this observation is that the principle of humbling the exultant and exalting the humble is applicable in a variety of ways. Age, moral uprightness, reputation, honor, occupation, none of these things in and of itself assists or prevents a person's finding acceptance with God.

The Main Point of the Parable: Logic and Content

Those who exalt themselves by assuming they are in the right, and who despise and humiliate other people, are called to humble themselves in order to be exalted by God. Like the preceding parable about the unjust judge, this one is a parable of contrast.

The Use of the Parable in Its Original Setting

Likely Jesus sought to jar the consciousness of his audiences by leading them into a trap. They would doubtless sympathize with the words of the Pharisee and his attitude toward the publican. To hear Jesus then exalt the publican at the expense of the Pharisee would have been a shock. The purpose would probably have been to restructure the values of the listeners to coincide more with the values of the kingdom of God.

Luke's Use of the Parable

[Note: The synopsis is valuable not only for comparing Gospels but also for viewing placement within a single Gospel.]

Luke tells us explicitly how he understands the point of the parable (Lk 18: 9, 14). He places it within the Travel Narrative, juxtaposing it to the parable of the unjust judge (18:1-8) and ahead of the blessing of the children (18:15-17), the story of the rich young man (18:18-23), the benefits of discipleship (18:24-30), the third prediction of his passion

(18:31-34), the healing of blind man at Jericho (18:35-43) and the story of the tax collector Zacchaeus (19:1-10).

Linking the two parables in 18:1-14 suggests they are two sides to one coin: (a) God needs no persuasion to be gracious (vv. 1-8), and (b) by human presumption, one cuts oneself off from that grace of God (vv. 9-14).

Broader Biblical and Theological Contexts

One aspect of this subject can be explored through an electronic search of the Greek New Testament and the LXX for places where the verbs ὑψόω and ταπεινόω (“exalt” and “humble”) are used in tandem, as in Luke 18:14. This combination of verbs is key here since it epitomizes the one main point of the parable.

Relevant Old Testament (LXX) occurrences include:

Psalm 75:7 But it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another.

Proverbs 18:12 Before destruction one’s heart is haughty, but humility goes before honor.

Isaiah 2:11, 17 The haughty eyes of people shall be brought low, and the pride of everyone shall be humbled; and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.

Ezekiel 21:26 Thus says the Lord GOD: Remove the turban, take off the crown; things shall not remain as they are. Exalt that which is low, abase that which is high.

Relevant New Testament occurrences of this verb-pair, outside the gospels, are found at James 4:10 and 1 Peter 5:6. (It also occurs at 2 Cor 11:17, but with a different concern.)

James 4:10 “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.” James writes this in the context of calling his readers away from petty squabbles and fighting within the congregation.

1 Peter 5:6 “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time.” This instruction comes in connection with proper relationships within a congregation.

Both James (4:6) and 1 Peter (5:5) appeal in their respective contexts to Proverbs 3:34 “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

The same theme occurs in various other places without this verb-pair, most relevantly perhaps in the Magnificat of Mary (Lk 1:52-53 “He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty”).

This is thus no *new* theme in Jesus’ ministry, and it is picked up by the rest of the New Testament. Obviously, it is a teaching that needs repeating over and over again in ever-new settings. Those who think they understand what God values are likely to be the very ones who do not!

Contemporary Application

It will not be difficult to visualize a contemporary setting in which this teaching can be applied. Church leadership, church membership, attitudes toward unbelievers or fringe people, attitudes in high school student bodies, professional organizations, neighborhoods, football teams, governments, playgrounds. Anywhere, in fact, where people relate to one another, and especially where they do so under the guise of religion, this parable speaks.

It is not being applied rightly, however, if it does not make us at least a little angry with the person applying it!

Sermonization

Preachers must *not* use a sermon based on this text as a club with which to take out their frustrations on their congregations. This is in fact true of all sermons. Sermons provide a way for the people of God to “encounter” God in a fresh way, and God is a God of redemption. Of course, it is necessary that we understand our *need* for redemption before we can effectively submit to it, and that will often mean we require a word of death, of condemnation. The purpose of that word, however, is to drive us in repentance to the word of redemption.

A sermon faithful to the text of Luke 18:9-14 should trap the congregation into affirming the “Pharisee” within them, then surprise them by showing that Jesus condemns that “Pharisee” for his arrogance. Simultaneously, it should offer the hope of “exaltation” to the “sinners” who “humble” themselves, including those “Pharisees” among us who may suddenly see our values as if through God’s eyes and thus see ourselves as we really are. The proximity of this parable to the one just preceding it can be used to emphasize that God needs no persuasion or coaxing to respond to our expressed need. If we refuse to acknowledge our need he does not force his blessings on us. In time, he humbles us who will not humble ourselves.

III. Intertextual Allusions: Paul Alludes to the Old Testament

The “narrative technique” of intertextual allusion can happen, of course, even in an epistle. Compare the following three texts (English versions follow the Greek; especially relevant items in bold, italics, or with underscoring):

Jeremiah 1:5

Isaiah 49:1-6

Galatians 1:15-16

Galatians 1:15-16

“Ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεὸς] ὁ ἀφορίσας με **ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου** καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆ χάριτος αὐτοῦ ¹⁶ ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, **ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν**, εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι

Isaiah 49:1-6

ἀκούσατέ μου νῆσοι καὶ προσέχετε ἔθνη διὰ χρόνου πολλοῦ στήσεται λέγει κύριος **ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου ἐκάλεσεν** τὸ ὄνομά μου ² καὶ ἔθηκέν τὸ στόμα μου ὡσεὶ μάχαιραν ὀξεῖαν καὶ ὑπὸ τὴν σκέπην τῆς χειρὸς αὐτοῦ ἔκρυψέν με ἔθηκέν με ὡς βέλος ἐκλεκτὸν καὶ ἐν τῇ φαρέτρᾳ αὐτοῦ ἐσκέπασέν με ³ καὶ εἶπέν μοι δούλός μου εἰ σύ Ἰσραηλ καὶ ἐν σοὶ δοξασθήσομαι ⁴ καὶ ἐγὼ εἶπα κενῶς ἐκοπίασα καὶ εἰς μάταιον καὶ εἰς οὐδὲν ἔδωκα τὴν ἰσχύν μου διὰ τοῦτο ἡ κρίσις μου παρὰ κυρίῳ καὶ ὁ πόνος μου ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ μου ⁵ καὶ νῦν οὕτως λέγει κύριος **ὁ πλάσας με ἐκ κοιλίας** δούλον ἐαυτῷ τοῦ συναγαγεῖν τὸν Ἰακωβ καὶ Ἰσραηλ πρὸς αὐτόν, συναχθήσομαι καὶ δοξασθήσομαι ἐναντίον κυρίου καὶ ὁ θεὸς μου ἔσται μου ἰσχύς ⁶ καὶ εἶπέν μοι μέγα σοὶ ἔστιν τοῦ κληθῆναί σε παῖδά μου τοῦ στήσαι τὰς φυλὰς Ἰακωβ καὶ τὴν διασπορὰν τοῦ Ἰσραηλ ἐπιστρέψαι ἰδοὺ τέθεικά σε εἰς διαθήκην γένους [cf. 42:6] **εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν** τοῦ εἶναί σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἑσχάτου τῆς γῆς.

Jeremiah 1:5

πρὸ τοῦ με *πλάσαι σε ἐν κοιλίᾳ* ἐπίσταμαί σε καὶ πρὸ τοῦ σε ἐξελεθῆναι **ἐκ μήτρας** ἡγίακά σε, **προφήτην εἰς ἔθνη** *τέθεικά σε*.

Galatians 1:15

But when God, who had set me apart **before I was born** and **called me** through his grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal his Son to me, so that I might **proclaim him among the Gentiles**, I did not confer with any human being

Isaiah 49:1-6

Listen to me, you islands and pay attention, you **nations!** He shall stand for a very long time, says the Lord. He has **called me** by name **from my mother’s womb**, ² and he has made my mouth as a sharp sword, and he hid me under the shelter of his hand, and he made me like a choice arrow, and sheltered me in his quiver. And he said to me, You are my servant Israel, and in you shall I be glorified. ⁴

And I said, In vain have I labored and pointlessly and for nothing have I given my strength. For this reason my judgment is with the Lord, and my toil before my God.⁵ And now thus says the Lord, the one *who formed me* **from the womb** as a servant to himself to gather Jacob and Israel to him—I shall be gathered and I shall be glorified before the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.⁶ And he said to me, Is it a great thing for you to be called my servant, to establish the tribes of Jacob, and to return the Diaspora of Israel? Behold I have made you to be a covenant for the people [cf. 42:6], as a **light to the gentiles**, that you should be salvation to the end of the earth.

Jeremiah 1:5 (LXX)

Before *I formed you* **in the belly**, I knew you, and before you came forth **from the womb**, I sanctified you; I have appointed you a **prophet to the nations**.

What can we conclude from this? With Old Testament parallels—that is, by using scriptural language—Paul identifies himself in Galatians 1:15-16 as a “person called,” a prophet of God, like the prophets of old, and he does it without actually saying it in so many words.

Consider, further, the larger context of this passage in Galatians 1. It occurs in Paul’s account of his conversion and call. In other words, it amounts to Paul’s own stylized and contextualized version of what Luke gives us more explicitly in Acts 9, 22 and 26. In fact, Paul does this in a short bit of *narrative* embedded in his epistle.

Note especially here:

- The usefulness of Nestle-Aland’s marginal references (available also in the footers for each pericope in the Greek synopsis).
- The importance of concordances for finding sources of Old Testament allusions. Where you suspect an allusion, you can use electronic concordances to test your hunch in seconds.

IV. Intratextual Type-Scene: Comparing Acts 3 and Acts 14

Type-scenes are a form of allusion, and as such can be either inter- or intratextual. Here is an example of an intratextual allusion from the book of Acts. Notice the bolded parallels between the two passages (the Acts 3 text stands at the margin and the “corresponding” Acts 14 text is indented).

3:2 **And a man lame from birth** was being carried in.
(καὶ τις ἀνὴρ χωλὸς ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς αὐτοῦ)

14:8 In Lystra **there was a man** sitting who could not use his feet and had never walked, for he had been **crippled from birth**.
(Καὶ τις ἀνὴρ ἀδύνατος ἐν Λύστροις τοῖς ποσὶν ἐκάθητο, χωλὸς ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς αὐτοῦ ὃς οὐδέποτε περιεπάτησεν.)

3:3-4 When **he saw Peter and John about to go** into the temple, he asked them for alms.
⁴ **Peter looked intently at him**, as did John, and said, “Look at us.”
(ὃς ἰδὼν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰωάννην μέλλοντας εἰσιέναι εἰς τὸ ἱερόν, ἠρώτα ἐλεημοσύνην λαβεῖν. ⁴ ἀτενίσας δὲ Πέτρος εἰς αὐτὸν σὺν τῷ Ἰωάννῃ εἶπεν· βλέψον εἰς ἡμᾶς.)

14:9 **He listened to Paul as he was speaking**. And Paul, **looking at him intently** and seeing that he had faith to be healed
(οὗτος ἤκουσεν τοῦ Παύλου λαλοῦντος· ὃς ἀτενίσας αὐτῷ καὶ ἰδὼν ὅτι ἔχει πίστιν τοῦ σωθῆναι)

3:6 **But Peter said**, “I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, **stand up and walk**.”
(εἶπεν δὲ Πέτρος· ἀργύριον καὶ χρυσίον οὐχ ὑπάρχει μοι, ὃ δὲ ἔχω τοῦτό σοι δίδωμι· ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Ναζωραίου [ἐγειρε καὶ] περιπάτει.)

14:10 **said** in a loud voice, “**Stand upright** on your feet.”
(εἶπεν μεγάλη φωνῇ· ἀνάστηθι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας σου ὀρθός.)

3:8 **Jumping up**, he stood **and began to walk**, and he entered the temple with them, **walking and leaping** and praising God.
(καὶ ἐξαλλόμενος ἔστη καὶ περιεπάτει καὶ εἰσῆλθεν σὺν αὐτοῖς εἰς τὸ ἱερόν περιπατῶν καὶ ἀλλόμενος καὶ αἰνῶν τὸν θεόν.)

14:10-11 And the man **sprang up and began to walk**. ¹¹ When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, “**The gods** have come down to us in human form!”
(καὶ ἤλατο καὶ περιεπάτει. ¹¹ οἱ τε ὄχλοι ἰδόντες ὃ ἐποίησεν Παῦλος ἐπήραν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶν Λυκαονιστὶ λέγοντες· οἱ θεοὶ ὁμοιωθέντες ἀνθρώποις κατέβησαν πρὸς ἡμᾶς)

3:11-12 While he clung to Peter and John, **all the people ran together to them . . .** **When Peter saw it**, he addressed the people, **“You Israelites, why do you wonder at this?”**

(ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλίται, τί θαυμάζετε ἐπὶ τούτῳ)

14:14-15 **When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it**, they tore their clothes and **rushed out into the crowd**, shouting, **“Friends, why are you doing this?”** (ἄνδρες, τί ταῦτα ποιεῖτε)

What can we make of this phenomenon in Luke’s narrative? Are the correspondences between the two stories merely accidental? If not, what is Luke trying to do with them?

One fair guess is that he is deliberately paralleling the callings of Peter and Paul as equally legitimate: Peter’s to the Jewish world, Paul’s to the Gentile world.

Luke’s strategy in Acts appears in part to be the legitimizing of the Gentile mission, that is, the legitimizing of the place of Gentiles—as Gentiles—within the people of God. This intratextual type-scene provides him an effective tool for doing that.