

LUKE'S PORTRAIT OF THE PAULINE MISSION

by I. Howard Marshall

Whatever else it is, the Book of Acts is a book about mission.¹ Its theme in broad terms is the way in which the small group of disciples of Jesus received the power of the Holy Spirit to be his witnesses and evangelised successively in Jerusalem, in Judaea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). People came to believe in the Lord Jesus and received salvation and formed new groups of believers. Those who responded to the message included both Jews and Gentiles, and the story of the mission is at the same time the story of how these two groups were able to form one people of God without the Gentiles having to submit to circumcision and in effect become Jews in order to become Christians. Within this story it is no exaggeration to say that the major part is played by Paul, although the book is rightly understood as 'the Acts of the Apostles', or at least as 'the Acts of [some of] the Apostles'.

It follows that Luke's picture of Paul is of a missionary, and it is this theme that will focus the content of this article.

STORY AND PATTERN

There is a tendency in recent criticism of the New Testament to examine the various writings from a literary point of view and to attempt to explain the shape and content of any given book on a literary level, i.e. in terms of what the implied author appears to be doing for his implied readers. The danger of this approach is to explain everything on this level, without bearing in mind that the authors of narratives are (or should be) constrained by what happened (or their understanding of what happened) and therefore are by no means free agents, able to mould their materials at will. Acts is a historical narrative and must be evaluated as such. It is true that tensions have been found with the evidence of the pauline epistles as regards the 'facts' of Paul's career, but a by-product of this essay will be the claim that these tensions do not affect the broad picture.²

Luke had the difficult task of covering a complex period of Christian history and like any writer he has had to impose some sort of system or pattern on the story. He has constructed a story line which leads from Jerusalem to Rome, and he has ignored other material, such as the local expansion of Christian groups in Judaea and Samaria in detail and the progress of the Christian mission in Egypt and North Africa; he knows that the Gospel reached Rome long before Paul arrived there (Acts 28:15), but he has made Paul's arrival and evangelism there the climax of his book. He runs the risk of making Paul's arrival appear to be the 'real' arrival of the gospel in Rome, but without making any suggestion that the existing church in Rome differed theologically from Paul he may be implying that the advent of the Pauline gospel at Rome was a significant matter. The evidence of Romans suggests that Paul was in fact concerned that the church there should have a clear understanding of his gospel and that at the time of the letter the church was not unanimous in its understanding of the gospel and its implications (cf. the groups in Rom 14-15).

The pattern of Acts is not simple, but it is clear that the story falls broadly into two parts, centred respectively on Peter (but including the activity of Stephen and Philip) and on Paul (along with Barnabas and then Silas). These two parts overlap, with Saul/Paul being introduced in Acts 9, and Peter continuing to be an actor until Acts 15. There is good reason to see some deliberate parallelism between the accounts of Peter and Paul, but this remains fairly general and no effort is made to force precise parallels between them. The crucial factor for our purpose is that both of them are presented as primarily missionaries. Both itinerate, the principal activity of both is talking about Jesus to audiences of Jews and Gentiles, both have the power to work miracles of healing (like Jesus) and also to inflict God's judgment on opponents of the work of the Spirit, and both suffer imprisonment on account of their witness. These parallels arise out of the historical facts, but Luke has used his narrative to highlight them. The effect of

¹J. M. Penney, *The Missionary Emphasis of Lukan Pneumatology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); I. H. Marshall and D. Peterson (ed.), *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

²Cf. D. Wenham, 'Acts and the Pauline Corpus II. The Evidence of Parallels', in B. W. Winter and A. D. Clarke (ed.), *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1993), 215-58.

Acts is thus to put Peter and Paul alongside one another as the two principal evangelists. This agrees with Paul's own perception of the situation when he thinks of himself as being commissioned to be the apostle to the Gentiles whereas Peter is the apostle to the Jews (Gal 2:6-10). It may also be noted in passing that the picture of Paul so far is fully in agreement with that gained from the epistles, where he is a traveller for the gospel, preaches a message, does 'the signs of an apostle' (2 Cor 12:12), and executes judgment (1 Cor 5:1-5), and is imprisoned.

THE DIVINE AND HUMAN ASPECTS

Luke's thrice-repeated account of Paul's calling indicates two sides to it. On the one hand, his calling to be a missionary comes directly from God through a revelation of Jesus Christ to him (cf. Gal 1:15-17). The initial picture of Paul is accordingly of an individual agent, responsible to God/Christ.³

On the other hand, Paul is invited by Barnabas to share in the task of teaching in the church at Antioch (Acts 11:25f.), and the calling to undertake the first 'mission' recorded in Acts is addressed not to Barnabas and Paul themselves as free individuals but rather to the church at Antioch which is commanded to send them out on God's work (Acts 13:1-3). In practice, a missionary could not work without some relationship to other Christians, and we know that different, existing congregations gave practical support to missionaries. Although Paul himself could insist that he received his gospel not from human beings but from Jesus Christ (Gal 1:12), he nevertheless can refer in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 to the main points in his message as something which he had 'received' as a piece of Christian tradition. The Lord communicates with his missionaries both directly and through the agency of the congregations. There need be no tension between Paul's insistence that he in effect received the gospel directly from Christ and his acceptance of what he was taught by other Christians; it is the priority of the divine calling to preach to the Gentiles which is crucial for him.

There is perhaps a parallel to this combination of the divine and the human in the way in which the mission progresses. On the one hand, the mission is conducted under divine guidance. God gives directions and encouragement to the missionaries by various agents and agencies * Christ, an angel, the Holy Spirit, and other human beings; he uses a variety of means * heavenly visions, dreams, and prophecies. Paul stands out by reason of the number of ways and times in which this happens. Direct divine instructions and guidance are mediated through such events as: the conversion vision; the activity of Ananias; the summons by Barnabas; the guidance at the Antioch prayer meeting; another vision in the temple; the dream of the man of Macedonia; the prophecies by Agabus and others; the vision in Corinth; and the vision on the ship. They are conveyed by a variety of divine agents: the Lord (Acts 18:9f.; 22:17-21; 23:11); the Spirit (Acts 13:2, 4; 16:6, 7; 20:22); an angel (27:23).⁴

On the other hand, over against these frequent direct indications of God's will we also have the many cases where the missionaries respond to circumstances and, as we say, use their intelligence. Thus the actual itinerary of the first tour is not ascribed to divine guidance. The instigation of the second tour lies with a desire by Paul to follow up the groups established on the first tour. Although there is a case (see below) that Luke sometimes relates an initial incident in such a way that it can be assumed that subsequent, similar incidents follow the same pattern without the need to describe this in detail (e.g. the synagogue sermon in Acts 13 is typical for later preaching in synagogues), there is no reason to believe that, where direct divine guidance is not mentioned, it must be assumed to have taken place. It appears to happen rather in exceptional circumstances such as new ventures or in face of strong temptations to discouragement. Luke mentions it in order to emphasise that the mission takes place with divine encouragement and guidance, but the stress on Paul's obedience to heavenly visions does not imply that these are an exclusive form of guidance and the story itself shows the missionaries using their own minds to decide what to do in specific circumstances.

THE PATTERN OF CAMPAIGNS

³Most recently: J. D. G. Dunn, 'Paul's Conversion * A Light to Twentieth Century Disputes', in J. Ådna, S. J. Hafemann and O. Hofius, *Evangelium Schriftauslegung Kirche. Festschrift für Peter Stuhlmacher zum 65. Geburtstag* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1997), 77-93.

⁴No clear rationale as to why a particular agent is responsible for any given example of guidance is forthcoming.

Luke presents the story of Paul as a missionary in the form of successive tours. There are three of these, punctuated by periods back on home ground (the ground stretches from Jerusalem to Antioch), and in the second and third there is a pattern of going over some of the same territory but also engaging in further evangelism. There is a temptation to over-simplify the narrative by speaking of a pattern of ever-increasing circles, but this is to be resisted. The first tour embraces Cyprus and Galatia. The second takes in Galatia (a follow-up visit) but then moves further west across Asia into Macedonia and Achaia with a brief, anticipatory visit to Ephesus. The third tour takes Paul again through Galatia to Ephesus which becomes the main focus of this trip, but it is followed by a follow-up trip to Macedonia and Achaia. (The description of the third tour does not in fact include any fresh territory that was not already visited on the second tour, although some of the routes followed are different, and Ephesus had in effect been visited previously only 'in passing'.)

From this summary of the narrative it is easy to see why Bible maps regularly depict Paul's three 'missionary journeys'. Nevertheless, an important point should be noted that has the effect of seriously altering the traditional schematic presentation. Although Luke's narrative does indicate that there are three identifiable trips in which Paul moves from place to place, the 'journey' motif needs considerable qualification. It is frequently misinterpreted to indicate that Paul did a kind of whistle-stop tour, stopping in each place only long enough to establish a small group of believers and then dashing on to the next place.⁵ The chronological information provided by Luke should have been sufficient to nip this misapprehension in the bud, in that lengthy periods are spent in Corinth (over 18 months) and Ephesus (over two years), and in other cases hasty departures were due to circumstances outwith the missionaries' control. After the first journey, which may have had something of an exploratory character, Paul and his companions normally made extended stays.

As Luke has presented the matter, we already see indications that some kind of plan was being worked out. In this context a further point becomes significant. The evangelism was conducted for the most part in major centres of population, and was certainly not carried out in the manner of Jesus who itinerated around villages in a very limited area of country. There were a number of major cities in the Roman Empire: Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Ephesus and Corinth, together with other, smaller towns which were the major centres of population in their regions. Is it sheer coincidence that Paul visited four of these five major cities?⁶ He also stopped in other major towns that were on the main Roman lines of communication in Asia and Macedonia * Philippi and Thessalonica, Athens, Pisidian Antioch.

This would suggest that Paul saw the strategic importance of establishing churches in the major provincial centres. Luke comments that during Paul's time in Ephesus 'everybody' in Asia heard the word of God (Acts 19:10; cf. 19:20). This comment could presumably be applied to the other cities which he visited. If so, we have a strategy for reaching as wide an area as possible in a short time. These points raise the question whether there was a deliberate strategy on the part of Paul or whether Luke has detected (or imposed) a pattern.

Was something like this, then, Paul's vision, or was it imposed on the material by Luke? At this point the evidence of Romans 15:14-33 is crucial. Here Paul comments that he has fully preached the gospel round from Jerusalem to Illyricum and is now setting his sights on Spain (via Rome). He has no more work to do in this area. This indicates that Paul was looking back on the completion of a specific task.

⁵Cf. the ironic parody: "Von Ephesus ab, in Cäsarea an, hinauf und die Brüder gegrü*t, hinab nach Antiochia, dann durch Galatien und Phrygien zurück." Abgemacht im Fluge und berichtet im Telegrammstil, kein Amerikaner könnte es be*er' (J. Wellhausen, *Noten zur Apostelgeschichte*, as cited by W. Thiessen, *Christen in Ephesus. Die historische und theologische Situation in vorpaulinischer und paulinischer Zeit und zur Zeit der Apostelgeschichte und der Pastoralbriefe* [Tübingen: Francke, 1995], 28).

⁶Other missionaries presumably found their way to Alexandria, and/or the constant movement of Jews to and from that city brought the gospel in the same way as Roman Jews fairly certainly took the gospel back home from Jerusalem.

The task may of course have been begun without at first realising its full extent and character, but at some point there dawned on Paul what he had done or was in course of doing. But what was it?⁷

There is a case (based to some extent on a specific interpretation of 2 Thess 2:6-8) that Paul saw himself as entrusted with at least part of the major task of proclaiming the gospel to all nations as the necessary condition for the parousia of the Lord Jesus. His aim therefore was to hasten that coming by getting round the world as quickly as possible. It was sufficient for this purpose that he preached the gospel 'representatively' in each area of the world rather than that he literally reached every person. By the second/third century we find Christian writers stating that the twelve apostles had in fact reached every nation with the gospel, although how they reconciled this belief with the facts is not clear.⁸

However, it has to be said that there is nothing of this consciousness in Romans 15. On the contrary, Paul's mood in the *Hauptbriefe* is one of desire to bring the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles as widely as possible, and to go to places not reached by other Christian missionaries. Evangelism for its own sake, or rather for the sake of the peoples to whom he is conscious of being a debtor (Rom 1:14f.), appears rather to be the task. Therefore, it is preferable to take Romans 15 in the sense of a strategic endeavour to found churches as centres of continuing Christian work.⁹ Moreover, it is clear that Paul recognised the activity of other missionaries (the mission to the Jews by James, Peter and John [Gal 2:9] and the missions of other, unknown workers in other areas [2 Cor 10:16]).

If so, the reflections of Paul and the picture in Acts cohere remarkably well. We can accordingly conclude that the strategy which can be deduced from Acts and which Luke had evidently detected was in fact Paul's own strategy and it has been correctly assessed by Luke.

EVANGELISM AND FOLLOW-UP

From our summary of the three missionary campaigns we have already noted the clear pattern of initial missionary activity followed by further contacts to strengthen and encourage the infant groups of believers. This pattern is not peculiar to Paul, but is something to be expected. The initial visit to Samaria by Philip is followed up immediately by Peter and John; they go purely on a basis of goodwill, and it is only when they arrive that they learn of problems that need to be tackled. The trip by Peter and John includes further evangelism in Samaria. The Ethiopian eunuch is an exception to all the rules.¹⁰ Peter travels to visit existing 'saints' in Lydda and Joppa. Nothing is said about a return visit to Caesarea after the conversion of Cornelius. The Jerusalem church sends Barnabas to follow-up the work in Antioch.

The first missionary campaign by Barnabas and Paul necessarily included return visits to the towns evangelised on the outward journey (and later by Barnabas to Cyprus), and then the first parts of the second campaign and the third campaign took Paul over some of the same ground. (The first campaign probably retraced its steps because of the opposition that the believers in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch were facing.). The towns visited in the second campaign, Philippi, Berea, Thessalonica and Corinth are implicitly revisited at the end of the third campaign (Acts 19:21; 20:2f.), and then the final part of that campaign sees a follow-up of the work in the west of Asia. It emerges that in virtually every case Paul revisits the congregations which he founds, sometimes more than once. Acts says nothing about the letters

⁷I have explored elsewhere the question whether Paul saw his task as simply preaching the gospel representatively in the main areas of the Eastern Mediterranean world, or as planting congregations which would in turn evangelise the areas surrounding them (see my essay 'Who were the evangelists?', in J. A*dna and H. Kvalbein [ed.], *The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles* [forthcoming]).

⁸Hermas, *Sim.* 9.17; *Apol.* *Aristides* 2; Justin, *Apol.* 1.31. See O. Skarsaune, 'Mission to the Jews * a Closed Chapter? Some Patristic Reflections on the Great Commission' (forthcoming, as in note 7)

⁹This was how Eusebius understood the intention of the next generation of evangelists (*H.E.* 3.37.2f.).

¹⁰He is like Melchizedek in that he arrives as it were from nowhere on the scene, experiences conversion and then rides off into the deep south and is never heard of again. What is his function in the developing story in Acts?

which he sent to them,¹¹ but it does record that he sent his colleagues to visit some of them (Acts 19:22). The picture of a warm, loving relationship emerges.

It needs no argument that again this picture agrees with that in the letters where there is a continuing relationship between the missionaries and the new congregations, characterised by love and concern for their spiritual growth and their stability despite attacks of whatever kind.

PAUL AND HIS COMPANIONS

The Pauline mission in Acts is carried out by missionaries working in groups. This contrasts with the activity of Peter and Philip who (at least according to the narrative) each travelled on their own, although we do read also of Peter and John's joint activities, especially their follow-up visit to Samaria. The first missionary campaign is carried out by Barnabas and Paul with John (Mark) as their initial helper; but it is Paul who quickly becomes the main actor (Acts 14:9, 13, 16) and the order of naming the principals changes at Acts 14:23. When Paul suggested a return visit to Barnabas, the latter was unhappy with the decision by Paul not to take John Mark with them, and so they separated. Each of them then went off with a partner, Barnabas with John, and Paul with Silas. Silas was a Jerusalem Christian who would help to demonstrate the unanimity between Jerusalem and Antioch in the matter of the 'apostolic decree'.¹² It was not long before a junior member was added to the Pauline group, Timothy. The fact that Paul was able to leave Silas and Timothy in Berea while he alone went on to Athens does not significantly alter the picture. In fact, he was accompanied by Macedonian believers that far. His fellow-missionaries returned to join him by the time that he had reached Corinth (although 1 Thessalonians may suggest a more complicated set of comings and goings).

At this point Silas disappears from the story, although Timothy remains in it (Acts 19:22; 20:3); there is no need to read anything sinister into this.¹³ One suggestion is that Silas replaced Mark rather than Barnabas, i.e. as junior helper rather than equal partner.¹⁴ But this is unlikely in view of the description of Silas as a leading member of the Jerusalem church.¹⁵

In any case from this point onwards the narrative refers to Paul by himself without a colleague of equal standing; he is accompanied on occasion by Priscilla and Aquila, and by Acts 19:22 he has a number of helpers; on his return to Jerusalem he has something of an entourage (Acts 20:4) including Luke who apparently joins the party at Philippi. The significant factor for our study is that the third missionary campaign is apparently the work of Paul with helpers rather than with a colleague. And this is confirmed by the omission of any co-authors in Romans and 2 Corinthians. This omission stands out in view of the contrast with other letters from this period. Both 1 and 2 Thessalonians are co-authored, as is 1 Corinthians (but with a Corinthian Christian, Timothy being away at the time). Galatians is anomalous in that it has neither co-author nor greetings from fellow-believers; the omissions may be due to the intensely personal nature of the letter and perhaps quite simply to the fact that Paul was genuinely on his own when he wrote it.

The problem of Paul's companions may have significance for his relationships with the churches in Antioch and Jerusalem. The change in companionship from Barnabas to Silas may suggest that

¹¹The common view that Luke did not know the Pauline epistles has been challenged by L. Aejmelaesus, *Die Rezeption der Paulusbriefe in der Miletrede* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeseura, 1987).

¹²Cf. B. N. Kaye, 'Acts' Portrait of Silas', *Nov.T* 21 (1979), 13-26, especially 16-18.

¹³It is not clear how far Kaye, 'Silas', wishes to go when he notes the coincidence that the change in the Corinthian mission from work based on the synagogue to a mission specifically to Gentiles and the disappearance of Silas.

¹⁴R. E. Nixon, 'Silas', in *NBD*, 1101.

¹⁵Since Silas is named in the salutations of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and since he was known to the Corinthians, it can be taken as certain that he was not with Paul when he wrote 1 and 2 Corinthians, otherwise he would have figured in the salutations or greetings.

on the second campaign Paul felt that he was the emissary of both the Antioch and the Jerusalem churches.¹⁶ So far as the former is concerned, the missionaries were again commended to the Lord by Antioch.¹⁷ However, it is not clear whether the church in Jerusalem had anything to do with the initiation of Paul's second campaign, although the implied outcome of the Jerusalem 'council' is that the church in Jerusalem gave its blessing to the on-going work of enabling the Gentiles to turn to God (cf. Acts 15:19). In any case, at the end of the campaign Paul goes up and visits 'the church' (Acts 18:22); this must be the church in Jerusalem, since Acts 18:18 implies a visit to Jerusalem to terminate his vow. Nevertheless, he spends 'some time' in Antioch, which seems to imply a longer period there than in Jerusalem.

Towards the end of the third campaign, Paul sets his face to visit Jerusalem (Acts 19:21), and his hurry means that there was no question of visiting Antioch on the way.¹⁸ There is thus some sort of relationship with Jerusalem, but the language of commendation and 'spending some time' is not used of Jerusalem. Does it look as though Paul sought some kind of recognition and backing from Jerusalem, but did not get it, despite the very warm reception in Acts 15:4? The indications appear to be that Paul, ever a dominating character, worked increasingly on his own initiative and not as the agent of a church, although he strove to maintain good relationships with the churches in Antioch and Jerusalem and to have their backing and support for his work.

We encounter here, as often in Acts, the tantalising nature of Luke's narrative which leaves itself open to different interpretations and doesn't answer some of the questions that we would like to raise.¹⁹

It must be noted that there does not appear to be any reflection of these problems of the relationship with the churches in Paul's letters. Only in Galatians 2 do we get the leaders in Jerusalem giving their cordial backing to the work of Paul and Barnabas among the Gentiles. This must have been at a time before Paul and Barnabas separated. For the rest, Paul presents himself as an agent responsible only to God (1 Cor 4:1-5). Nevertheless, there is some kind of relationship with the church in Jerusalem signified by his 'collection for the poor'. This point is not mentioned in Acts, except casually in Acts 24:17, and there is certainly an unresolved tension here, although it may be that the gift was ill-received (cf. Paul's apprehensions in Rom 15:31) and that Luke has therefore drawn as little attention as possible to it.

OUTREACH TO JEWS AND GENTILES

The missionary task is witness to all people (Acts 22:15) but Paul is to be sent 'far away' to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21; similarly 26:17), although his mission is also to take place 'before the people of Israel' (Acts 9:15). The task is fulfilled by preaching in Damascus, Jerusalem and Judaea and then to the Gentiles also (26:20).

A pattern emerges in Acts according to which, when he comes to a new town, Paul initially visits the Jewish synagogue or makes contact with a Jewish group. This is true of Salamis and of Pisidian Antioch; the story of Paul's visit here (Acts 13:13-52) is told at length so as to serve as an implicit pattern for subsequent towns. Consequently, when Paul follows the same pattern in Iconium, it can be qualified by the phrase 'as usual' (Acts 14:1). The pattern is expressly repeated at Philippi, at Thessalonica, where we have the comment 'as his custom was' (Acts 17:2); Berea; Athens; Corinth; and Ephesus. The only places where the pattern is not said to be followed are Lystra, where the evangelism affects the non-Jewish

¹⁶R. Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte (Apg 13-28)* (Zürich: Benziger/Neukirchen:Neukirchener, 1986), 94.

¹⁷This is the natural reading of Acts 15:40; it leaves readers to assume that Silas had returned to Antioch after his departure in Acts 15:33. It is less likely (but not wholly impossible) that Luke intends us to assume that Paul went to Jerusalem to pick up Silas; no commentator seems to make the suggestion.

¹⁸It is unusual that in Acts 20:3 Paul's destination is given as 'Syria'. Does this imply that his ultimate destination was Antioch? However, according to Pesch, *Apostelgeschichte*, 185, from Corinth Jerusalem would be regarded as being in Syria.

¹⁹See especially N. Taylor, *Paul, Antioch and Jerusalem. A Study in Relationships and Authority in Earliest Christianity* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992).

population, Derbe, and Perga. It is not clear whether the pattern established at Salamis was followed on the journey through Cyprus to Paphos.

The evidence shows that Luke laid particular stress on this feature. Different conclusions have been drawn from the narrative. W. Schmithals could conclude: 'It is almost impossible to imagine Paul beginning his preaching in the synagogues'.²⁰ Schmithals bases his view on a strict interpretation of the division of missions in Galatians 2 according to which Paul relinquished any mission to the Jews; he may have longed for their salvation (Rom 9-11) but his share in bringing it about was his mission to the Gentiles, designed to make the Jews jealous. His churches were Gentile in composition. But Luke gives a different picture because, for whatever reason, he is presenting Christianity as the true Judaism. Paul did make contact with God-fearers, and his first churches consisted largely of them

Schmithals' case has the merit of giving a neat solution to the problems raised by Galatians 2. Nevertheless, it cannot be right. It has always to be remembered that there are limits to what a narrator can get away with if there are people around who remember what happened, and so striking a misrepresentation is thus not credible. The view that there were no, or next to no Jewish Christians in Paul's churches is also incorrect; it cannot explain the conflicts that went on within the congregations and not simply between the congregations and outside visitors. If Paul wished to reach the God-fearers, the place to begin was the synagogue.

A very different proposal is offered by J. Jervell which is that Paul's missionary work according to Luke was directed to proselytes and God-fearers and scarcely touched Gentiles who were not in contact with Judaism.²¹ Where Schmithals is concerned with what actually happened, Jervell is attempting to interpret correctly what Luke is saying, regardless of whether it is historically accurate. But Jervell's interpretation is also questionable, in that it does not do justice to the scenes in Lystra and Athens, which are not to be seen as isolated exceptions to a general rule.

Robert Tannehill also considers the material from the point of view of what it tells us about Luke's understanding. He notes that Paul's procedure follows the lines laid down in Luke 9:5; 10:11 where the instructions apply to each individual city that is visited. Paul's preaching begins in the synagogue (or, in Rome, with Jewish visitors) to whom the promises of the Messiah are made. Even at the end of Acts Paul is still endeavouring to reach Jews with the gospel. Thus Acts reflects the tension between (1) the need to continue to proclaim the promises to the Jewish people and (2) the rejection of the promises which takes place time and again.²²

Paul's own letters emphasise that salvation was 'first for Jews and also for the Gentiles' (Rom 1:16). This is not the same thing as saying that in any given town the mission should begin with the Jews (if there are any) but is probably meant to indicate the historical order in which Jesus came as a Jew and only later was he proclaimed as a saviour to the Gentiles also. So is Luke's presentation simply a symbolical expression of this truth or perhaps even a misunderstanding of it? This also is highly unlikely. For Schmithals Paul does not preach to Jews at all, but simply longs that they will be saved through envy of the Gentiles; but 1 Corinthians 9:20 clearly excludes this interpretation, and the composition of his churches indicates that Jews had been reached with the gospel. As has often been observed, the synagogue would have been a good strategic place for beginning a mission; however, Luke's narrative implies that it was a

²⁰*Paul and James* (London: SCM Press, 1965), 60.

²¹*The Theology of the Acts of the Apostles* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 39; 'The Church of Jews and Godfearers', in J. B. Tyson (ed.), *Luke-Acts and the Jewish People. Eight Critical Perspectives* (Minneapolis, 1988), 11-20. Jervell has to postulate that when Luke uses the term 'Greeks', it always refers to God-fearers. He claims that the message is rejected by 'pure' Gentiles, and then has to say that a few exceptions do not alter the picture.

²²'Rejection by Jews and turning to Gentiles: The pattern of Paul's mission in Acts', in Tyson, *Luke-Acts*, 83-101. Both of Tannehill's points are disputed by M. J. Cook, 'The mission to the Jews in Acts: Unraveling Luke's "Myth of the 'Myriads'", *ibid.*, 102-123.

matter of principle with Paul to give the Jews in the synagogue the first opportunity to respond to the gospel and only then to go to the Gentiles.²³

SUPPORT FOR MISSIONARIES

How did Paul and his companions maintain themselves during their missionary work? In 1 Corinthians 9 Paul is emphatic that missionaries have a right to the provision of food and drink and a right to be accompanied by their wives. The implications are that these rights are due to them from the congregations, that is from existing congregations on whose behalf they work, but apparently including those which have arisen through their church-planting, and it is founded on an appeal to the words of Jesus and of Scripture. In Galatians 6 he establishes that those who are taught should share material things with their teachers. The right to food and drink may be taken to include the provision of lodging also. There will also have been incidental costs: travel by ship entailed the payment of a fare (Jonah 1:3) and other forms of transport required the same. Some missionaries apparently did live in this way. Paul claims that he and Barnabas worked for their living (so also in 1 Thess 2) and made it a point of honour to do so, even if this led to misunderstanding at Corinth. We know that Paul did receive financial support from other churches (Phil 4:14-18), and maybe this contributed to the misunderstanding. (The implication must be that they saved up part of the money to provide for their needs when travelling in new areas.) Self-support was possible only when they were settled long enough in an area to find work, but in the less formal setting of the pre-industrial ancient world it may have been easier to find work than in the present world with its massive unemployment. How easy was it for, say, a tailor to sit down in the street and do instant repairs or make simple clothes for passers-by, such as still happens in some areas of the world today? Would it not have been equally simple for a worker in leather, making shoes, or clothing?

The picture in Acts corresponds with this one. It is to be assumed that the church in Antioch gave its material backing to the missionaries whom it sent out (Acts 13:3). In Philippi the convert Lydia provided hospitality. They stayed with Jason in Thessalonica. In Corinth he stayed with Priscilla and Aquila who appear to have been already believers; here he certainly worked at a trade for part of the time (did part of the proceeds go to his hosts to cover his lengthy stay?), although when Silas and Timothy arrived he devoted himself entirely to missionary work. In Ephesus Priscilla and Aquila welcomed Apollos into their home for teaching, but surely also for hospitality. It is not Luke's purpose to tell us about the daily regimen of missionaries, but the hints he gives are quite sufficient to enable us to generalise from them and see the mixture of hospitality provided by believers and manual work to earn money by the missionaries.

THE MISSIONARY AND THE PRISONER

The publication of Brian Rapske's lengthy study of Paul as a prisoner in Acts should have put paid once and for all to the illusion that the second part of Acts is devoted simply to Paul as a travelling missionary.²⁴ While Paul is a free agent in Acts 9 * 20 nearly all of the last eight chapters of Acts are concerned with Paul under arrest, in prison, appearing before different courts, and finally journeying to Rome in hope of an appeal to Caesar. If he travels, it is now under duress.²⁵

But the imprisonment of Paul does not alter his role as a missionary but merely the way in which it is carried out. The story is utilised by Luke to allow Paul to provide an apologia for himself, in which the basis for his mission is expounded more than once. It illustrates how Paul was able to use his captivity as a means of witness to the gospel, both in court settings but also in the course of his daily life under various forms of captivity and imprisonment. Agrippa rightly recognised what Paul was trying to do (Acts 26:28) and Paul's activity in Rome both to the Jews and to all who came to his house was evangelistic.

²³C. K. Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1994), I, 611, 625, suggests that what for Paul was a theological principle was for Luke a matter of missionary tactics.

²⁴B. Rapske, *Paul in Roman Custody* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994).

²⁵Acts has little to say about the perils, risks and deprivations of travelling missionaries, in the manner of 2 Corinthians 11, but it does mention one flogging by the Romans, some imprisonments and (on the journey to Rome) one shipwreck with the attendant privations.

It is not surprising, then, that the picture of Paul as a missionary in Acts is the picture of a suffering missionary, and he is a prime example of his own comment that 'we must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God' (Acts 14:22). This is especially true of those who are in the forefront of witness for the gospel, although attacks against them would inevitably endanger the converts as well, and Luke records several incidents directed against the latter (Acts 8:1-3; 9:1f., 21; 11:19; 14:2; 17:1-9, 13). Certainly persecution is not continuous and does not in fact affect everybody, but it can occur at any time, and the story of Paul illustrates this possibility at considerable length, so that he (like Stephen, James and Peter) is presented as a paradigm of what may happen and how to respond positively to it as an opportunity for witness (Luke 21:12f.).

THE MISSIONARY AND THE APOSTLE

The three accounts of Paul's initial encounter with Jesus vary in detail and emphasis, so much so that scholars have some grounds for arguing whether it constituted a conversion experience or a missionary calling (like the calling of the prophets). This wooden antithesis is, to be sure, a false one, since the event clearly contains both elements and is conversion and calling in one. The calling element is particularly obvious in Acts 22:10, 14f.; 26:15-18, but is not absent from Acts 9:6,15f. In Galatians 1 the persecuting zeal of Paul and his enthusiasm for Judaism are placed in striking contrast with his calling to preach about Jesus; a conversion is clearly part of the calling (cf. Phil 3:4-10), but here too the calling to missionary work is emphatic (Gal 1:15f.). Paul is converted for a purpose. There is thus something special about his conversion, since the conversion of other people is not explicitly accompanied by a calling to a new way of life, but they apparently carry on with their normal activities. There is, then, a special calling of certain people to specific tasks.

But to what is Paul called? It is well-known that Luke does not use the term 'apostle' for Paul, except in Acts 14:4, 14 where it is applied to both Paul and Barnabas in a rather casual manner. For Luke it is the reconstituted Twelve who are the apostles. It is not obvious how this fact is to be explained and evaluated.

J. Dupont has drawn an interesting comparison between Christ's commission to the Twelve (Lk. 24:44-49; Acts 1:8) and Paul's account of his own mission (Acts 26:16-23), establishing a fourfold pattern (which is repeated three times over in Paul's statement): there is a heavenly vision/divine empowering; the call is to be witnesses to Jesus and to declare the message; the message is to go to all nations; the message is based on Scripture and is intended to bring people to conversion. The task of reaching all nations is in fact carried out by Paul rather than the Twelve, who remain in Jerusalem and then disappear from view.

Dupont's analysis is convincing in showing that Luke sees Paul as engaged in the same work in the same kind of way as the Twelve and reinforces what was said above about the parallelism in activity between Peter and Paul in particular. Even if Paul is not called an apostle, nevertheless he does the same work as the apostles and in fact it is he who completes the part of their calling relating to going to the ends of the earth and preaching repentance and forgiveness of sin to all the nations. (Philip also does the same kind of work, although he is not an apostle and does not have an initiatory vision.)

It is also the case that although the term 'apostle' is not used of Paul, the verb 'to send' is used (Acts 22:21; 26:16f.). In other words, Luke knows that Paul fulfils all the requirements of an apostle, yet he uses the noun for him only twice in this casual way. There is evidence that Luke can underemphasise things that he does not want to bring too much into the light. His restriction of the term 'apostle' to the Twelve and his general denial of it to Paul falls into this category. The puzzle is why he has acted in this way, especially since he must have known that Paul's self-understanding was bound up with his apostleship.

Barrett argues that in Acts 14 Luke was using a source in which Paul and Barnabas were originally named as apostles of the church (at Antioch), but that he himself expressly restricted the term to those who had been with Jesus during his earthly life (Acts 1:21f.).²⁶ But *why* did Luke so restrict the term, especially if he was writing at a point when Paul's letters were in existence? If we treat what he writes as history, then the problem goes back to Peter's definition of membership of the apostles, by which Luke felt bound. One possible explanation, then, is that Luke was writing for a church which accepted this definition, and that he wrote in such a way to show that Paul was entitled to the title, but without taking the step of using it, except in this marginal way. He made his case not by claiming the title for Paul but by

²⁶Acts, I, 666f., 671f.

demonstrating that in every respect except having been a companion of the earthly Jesus he more than fulfilled the job-specification. This would fit in with the hypothesis that one of the purposes of Acts (certainly not its only or main purpose) was to offer some kind of commendation for Paul over against criticisms of his mission to the Gentiles.

In any case, what emerges with complete clarity is that the twelve apostles were in Luke's eyes first and foremost evangelists bearing witness to the risen Lord. But there were others who shared in this task, and there can be little doubt that the story of Paul as a missionary is told in order to give the church a pattern to follow in its continuing life. Luke teaches in Acts by the example of what missionaries did as well as by the exhortation which they gave.

It is a joy to contribute these thoughts to a volume in honour of one who is both a missionary and a teacher; may he continue to witness to the gospel by his life, teaching and writings *in multos annos*.

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MEMO

From Howard Marshall To Peter and Mark

Thank you for your letter reminding me about my contribution to Peter's Festschrift. I am happy to enclose what I hope is a suitable piece in hard copy. Once I have your all-clear and any suggestions for editing I can then send you a disk (IBM format).

The article is at the upper limit of your word-length and you may want to cut it slightly; I find it difficult to know what to do to abbreviate it (authors love their own words too much), but you may see ways if necessary. There is one reference in note 7 that I need to fill in later. I am not sure what you meant by 'author, short-title system', so I hope that what I have done is acceptable or easily convertible.

I hope that the process of editing goes smoothly, and I am delighted to be associated with this project; it was good to see Peter briefly in Orlando back in November.

Warmest good wishes,