CHAPTER FOUR
STUDY OF THE TEXT
GERASENE DEMONIAC - LK 8:26-39

PART ONE: THE WORLD OF LUKE

4.0. INTRODUCTION

After having studied the Biblical background of the subaltern peoples we shall now move to the crux of the thesis, namely, the study of the text (the pericope on “Gerasene Demonic”, in Luke 8:26-39). Henceforth, the panoramic view of the subaltern peoples of the Old Testament that we have studied up to now in the thesis, will in fact, make our work easier. In this chapter we shall concentrate on the study of the text from Lukan perspective, with a view to interpret it from the point of view of the subaltern peoples, which is the objective of our research. In order to understand the text that Luke presented, we should know the ‘world’ (community) in which he composed it and to the community he addressed it.

4.1. THE WORLD OF LUKE

“What is the ‘world’ of Luke”? Is there one such? The assumption in asking such questions is that all the evangelists (normally, in the case of any writer) had their Sitz im Leben or perceived notions. So also Luke. Luke had maintained his own ‘particularities’ while writing the Gospel of Jesus Christ compared to the other evangelists.

1. By the word ‘world’ we mean the community in which Luke shared his Christian faith and to which he first addressed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus Lukan world should be understood as Lukan community. Hence ‘world’ does not mean universe (geographical) as we normally understand.

2. The ‘particularities’ refer to the concerns and needs of the community that are sought after.
Since very little direct information is available on Luke, and about his world (community) in the Gospels or in the New Testament books, it is difficult to describe clearly what his world was. As we know, Luke was not the first eye witness of Jesus or Jesus' Public ministry (Lk. 1:1-4). What his community believed also shaped his understanding of the Gospel. It was this community, as far as the Gospel was concerned, that became the world of Luke. Luke depended, for his sources, on the writings of the Evangelist Mark and other traditions of the first Christian community. Though the sources were divergent, Luke had his own understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was this understanding that formed his world view. It was to this world of Luke that he invites the readers, as Sharon H. Ringe says:

Luke, "draws the reader in to the particular view of human life and of the world."

It is important to grasp what this particular world view of Luke was about. However, here, we must admit, that the understanding of this world view of Luke depends also on the world from which the reader, one who is reading now (the subaltern peoples), comes or with what purpose he/she intends to read it. In our attempt to discover the world of Luke from the perspective of subaltern peoples, we shall once again look at it from a sociological point of view. This, a different approach, from the traditional

3. They are: Lk 1:1-5; Acts 1:1-4; Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11.


6. The fact that there are various interpretations and presentations of the same Gospel of Jesus Christ (in the first place by four evangelists) over the centuries, inspires the present reader to interpret the text to his/her community where he/she is. This reality also explains why there have been different interpretations of the message of the gospel that suited the "interest" (interests varied from needs and situations) of the various cultures and times, differently, at different times and in different contexts and for different needs.
one, introduced by Liberation theologians, and Social scientists, will be an appropriate one.

Luke's world consisted primarily of the Gentile Christians drawn from the poor city dwellers of the Roman world. According to another Lukan writer, Lukan world consisted of a mixture of different people:

"The primary audience for which Luke was designed was a group of late first century Churches of diverse social composition. By diverse social composition I mean that these Churches included people of different ethnic and religious background, social status and wealth. There were Jews and Gentile women and men and relatively wealthy people, common people and a few members of...elite class."

Among the vast mixture in the Lukan community, the majority belonged to subaltern groups. There were outsiders, who had no share in the rich religious heritage of Judaism. However it was these outsiders, subaltern peoples, who were the special recipients of the kingdom that Jesus established. This community of men/women was under the rule of God that was established by the Messiah, Jesus Christ. It is in this

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7. The pericope on "Gerasene Demoniac" was interpreted or commented upon as 'Jesus healing a Demoniac' or 'Jesus exercising his power over the demons' but not as an interpretation from social perspective. The titles that each author gave is already an indication of the orientation that he\she had taken. We will make what are these some of the titles in the next section.

8. Some of these Liberation Theologians include: Gustavo Gutierrez, Jan Luis Segundo, Jan Sobrino, Leonard Boff.

9. Some of these scholars include: Gerard Teissen, Kee Howard Clark, Elliot John, Bengt Holmberg, Tidball Derek, Shailer Matthew, Stambaugh J., David Blach, Jerome H. Neyrey, and others.


12. These outsiders include Romans and other foreigners.

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context of plurality and diversity that we understand the theme of Table-Fellowship,\(^\text{13}\) found in Luke-Acts. Luke's world was an intra-Christian community. In such a world both Christianity and the Roman empire,\(^\text{14}\) interacted well in a number of distinct and related levels,\(^\text{15}\) both at historical,\(^\text{16}\) and judicial levels (Lk. 7:1-10; 23:47; Acts 10:1-11; 18; 13:6-12).

One of the distinct features of the Lukan world was poverty and riches. The Gospel of Luke has twenty-one references to riches and rich men and has eight references to poverty and the poor.\(^\text{17}\) Luke mentions more about the Samaritans, the Publicans, the women and the outcasts implying that they were part of his world. It was perhaps, due to this reason that Luke's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles,\(^\text{18}\) have more relevance than any other books of the New Testament to the under-developed countries, in their social, political and economic situations today.

The Lukan world was greatly influenced by Judaism. Luke wrote his Gospel of Jesus and the Acts of the Apostles both to the non Jewish-Christians and to the Jewish-Christians. Luke often plunges his readers into the atmosphere of Judaism and the Old

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\(^\text{13}\) It was one of the concrete means that Jesus followed in order to remove divisions in the human community. We will study more about it in the following sections.

\(^\text{14}\) Romans were the rulers of Palestine in the times of early first centuries before Christ.


\(^\text{16}\) A coincidence of Imperial history and the beginning of the Gospel. (see Lk. 1:3; 3:1-2).

\(^\text{17}\) Duncan Macpherson, op. cit., pp. 5-10.

Testament. However, he was influenced also very much by the non-Jewish world like that of the Greek.\textsuperscript{19}

As far as the geographic composition of his writings are concerned, they consist of both urban and rural places. A good number of the cities mentioned in New Testament are found in Lukan writings.\textsuperscript{20} Since Luke mentions many cities, we are tempted to ask the question if there were many Lukan communities or one community, spread all over the cities! We must note here that there is some confusion in determining what is city and what is not. What the other evangelists call 'village', Luke calls it a city.\textsuperscript{21} There were certain distinctions made between city and village (Lev. 25:13-17, 25-31) regarding the property buying and selling. The Rabbis of the New Testament called village a village where there was no synagogue.\textsuperscript{22}

Lukan description of urban and rural settings contained different socializations. Accordingly different life styles and value systems prevailed in the world of Luke. While urban areas tolerated disparities and differences, village atmosphere maintained religious purity and political clarity. The parable on 'The Great Supper' in Lk. 14:15-24, explains Lukan understanding of urban culture. The Table-Fellowship, it projected, nurtured broad reciprocity among various groups, irrespective of caste and creed.\textsuperscript{23} Meal gatherings in cities were centres of socialization and of conflicts (5:29-32; 7:36-50; 14:1-24; 19:5-10).\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{19}. Herman Hendrickx, op. cit., p. 73.


\textsuperscript{22}. Jerome H. Neyrey, op. cit., p. 127.

\textsuperscript{23}. Caste is an Indian concept. It was explained already in the second chapter. Creed refers to religious beliefs.

However, we must state, that even if the above arguments show an encouraging picture of the community, one factor that stood as the yard stick to distinguish one from the other in most of the meal gatherings, must have been economic status.

The Lukan world contained also the rural references. Out of twenty eight occurrences of the "country" in the New Testament, seventeen of them are found in Luke-Acts. Obviously rural social world was more advantageous for guarding the religious purity and the covenant relations with God and among people. The political atmosphere was well charged with the feeling of hatred against Romans both in urban and rural areas. Most of the land in Palestine belonged to Romans. The villages of Lukan world had gone through the constant experience of violence and the effects of political turmoil of urban climate. In the domain of economic inter-actions both the rural and the urban peoples shared strong relations.

On the village periphery there were the sick, the outcast and the poor. There were differences within the village inhabitants (16:19-31). Most often there existed relationships but they were between unequal partners. This was manifested by the number of cases of the terminology used in the Gospel. For example: "lender" (danistes) and "debtor" (chreopheites), "lord" (kyrios) and "creditor" (7:41; cf. 6:34; 16:5), "father (i.e. "landowner) and "day labourer" (misthios, 15:17), master and servant. The important form of exchange in the villages was money and the market was the place of meeting.

The Lukan world gives an idea of Sitz im Leben of his community and consequent response of Jesus to the problem of his community. Luke wrote the Gospel of Jesus, that is fulfilled among us, as Barbara E. Reid Says:

"Luke's stated purpose is to “compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us”.


The communities' concerns and struggles are revealed in the themes that recur in the Gospel: prayer, Jesus' boundary-breaking practices, table-companionship, poor, women, the fulfillment of God's promises, etc". 27

The fulfillment includes whole humanity with integral needs of all human beings. Thus we find that Luke tried to incorporate as many aspects of human needs as possible. The Lukan world was characterized, as pointed out above, by the disparities between the rich and the poor. 28 The riches and possessions were a threat to the tranquility of life (6:20-23). The Christian community to which Luke wrote suffered from want of things and was persecuted for its faith (Acts 14:22). On the other hand, the Lukan community excelled in living Christ-values. Their hospitality to the travelling brothers (Lk. 10:1-16) was exemplary.

4.2. CONCLUSION

When we understand the Sitz im Leben of the Lukan world, we can perceive how and why Luke paid so much attention to present Jesus as the Saviour of the subaltern peoples. Luke himself personally would not have had the experiences of the sufferings of his community but was fully aware of the struggles of the subaltern peoples. With this assurance we could say that Luke's Gospel is the Gospel of the subaltern peoples. The subaltern peoples of the Old Testament that we studied are found in Luke's writing. Luke empowers, encourages and challenges, with the message of Jesus, all the subaltern peoples who grapple with concrete problems of their lives.


PART TWO: SURVEY OF RECENT STUDIES OF THE TEXT

4.2.0. INTRODUCTION

Studying the Gospels from a sociological point of view is a recent approach. The study of the Gospel of Luke from the point of view of the sociological hermeneutics is also a recent study and still recent is the study of the individual texts, for example, "Gerasene Demoniac" in Lk 8:26-39. Therefore it would not be proper to look for the material for the survey on the study of the text from the particular perspective of our study. It would also not be proper on our part to expect every one to interpret the texts as we would like to do. However the survey of the studies done on the pericope would help us to see what has been the research so far on the pericope and to what extent these studies are different from the one that we propose in this thesis.

4.2.1. SURVEY OF RECENT STUDIES OF THE TEXT

Are we justified, while studying Lukan text, to survey the studies done on Markan text? Though it is the Markan text that is studied more than the other parallel pericopes, from the point of view of the basic composition of the text, both Mark and Luke keep more or less same account of the pericope. When we look for the studies done on the pericope, on the one hand, we find ourselves at a loss, as there are only a few serious studies, on "Gerasene Demoniac" in Luke 8: 26-39, and much less from a subaltern peoples' perspective, but on the other hand, we are stimulated to think that we could contribute our humble discoveries towards the relevance of the text in the context of the thesis. The pericope on "Gerasene Demoniac" has been commented upon in many of the commentaries as part of the Gospel(s) but it has not been taken as a subject of research.

1. It is a synoptic parallel text: Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-20; Lk 8:26-39.
In recent years, however, there have been several monographs and articles written on this pericope and here again we note that it was more the Markan than Lukan or Matthean text that was considered.

4.2.1.1. HEALING OF DEMONIAC - DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO MK 5:1-20

The October issue of “Ecumenical Review” of 1971 has carried four articles with the title: “The Healing of a Demoniac”, and subtitled: “Different Approaches to Mark 5:1-20”. It was an attempt to study the Markan pericope on “Gerasene Demoniac” from different angles. But these articles do not have a sociological approach and were restricted largely to exegetical analysis.

4.2.1.1.1. Rudolph PESCH - “A Historical Analysis”

Pesch, while calling this pericope (Mk 5:1-20) the most "stupendous" passage in the New Testament, also sees it as the most scandalous one. According to him, it seems to present to the naive, a glorious demonstration of Jesus' power over Satan's legions but to the septic, it comes across as the power of Jesus duping the devil. The demoniac's illness was “manic-depressive insanity”. This observation goes close to the experience of the suffering subaltern peoples, though we do not see the demoniac only from

2. There are only a few doctoral studies done on our pericope.
Besides these dissertations we also find some articles on the pericope.


5. Ibid.
psychological point of view. Pesch sees contrasting reactions in the drama displayed in the cure of the demoniac. Panic breaks out among the swine after Jesus orders demons to enter into the herd of swine (Mk. 5:13; Mt. 8:32; Lk. 8:33). The herdsmen get panic (8:34) and all the people of the surrounding country of Gerasene were seized with great fear (8:37a) but later on they return to entreat Jesus to depart (8:37b).

In the analysis of the historicity of the pericope, Pesch asks legitimate questions regarding the text, its authenticity and original sources. According to him it would be laborious work to determine the credentials of the text. He employs various exegetical tools to study the text and brings out the typical features of exorcism that determine the theme of the passage:

“We can clearly discern the pattern of the Jewish-Hellenistic exorcism narrative in the Markan passage but it does not constitute the exclusive scaffolding of the passage. In the meaning and development of the story, the already mentioned features from the traditional healing miracle story and the Exorcism ritual also play an important part.”

He also studies the syntactic and semantic meanings of various terms. However, his analysis is restricted mostly to the literary analysis of the pericope.

6. The credentials of the text is determined on the authenticity of the text which depends on a number of systematic procedures helped by certain exegetical methods. They are: 1) Literary Criticism - Is the evangelist's versions of the story the oldest form of text or an edited version? If latter, what was the original text like, from which the evangelist worked? From which source-complex did it reach the evangelist? 2) Form and Theme Criticism - what type of text was the evangelist's original text? To what literary patterns did it confirm? To what extent was it distinctive in pattern? What were its component themes and where did these themes originate? 3) History of the Tradition and Redaction - How did it originate? What is its history? What were the main reasons for its creation, and for its preservation and transmission? Through what stages did the traditions pass? Was it edited? More than once? What meaning did those who handed it on and those who edited assign to it? etc. (Pesch, p. 350). 4) Interpretation - what were the compelling strings for interpretation of the need of the hour?.

In his "Essay in Literary Analysis" of the pericope Starobinski makes an attempt to study the pericope from literary point of view. He admits in the beginning of his analysis that a pure literary "interpretation" of a Gospel passage is rather a hazardous experiment. The literary analysis employed to study the pericope should not keep the reader outside the whole process of interpretation. In the literary analysis, the first question that needs to be raised is "Who is the author of the passage", and "Who is the addressed one". The author of "Mk 5:1-20" is Mark himself. But besides noting this, we should understand that the question implies more than that. That is: "Who is the author now"? Or "who is (narrating) presenting it now"? and "to whom it is addressed to"? "What is the role of the passage"? These questions prompt us to answer them as being relevant to our situation here and now. These questions stimulate the present subaltern community in the quest for answers. The contribution of the article consists

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9. In the domain of 'interpretation' Jean Starobinski clarifies the limitation of the interpreter. Literary interpretation is the latest in the long sequence of exegetical attempts. One has to distinguish who the interpreter is. If the interpreter happens to be neither a Christian nor even a theologian of another religious persuasion, his interpretation could be inadequate by virtue of its being that of an outsider. Even the 'insider' often may not grasp the complete situation. (Jean Starobinski, op. cit., p.377.)


11. Ibid.

12. When asking the question who is addressed or to whom it is addressed to, according to Jean Starobinski, we should find out if the text itself provides any indication (of its own role)?

13. By saying 'now' we mean to the times of here and now. To the times of the reader who is studying the text at present.

14. The actual reader of the text or the interpreter of the text.

15. In our case it is addressed to the community of subaltern peoples.

16. The choice of the text presupposes the intention of the study. Hence the interpretation should gear to the aspiration of the reader.
in helping us to discover the spatial structure of the passage and finally its salient characteristics.

4.2.1.1.3. CYRILLE ARGENTI - “A Meditation on Mark 5: 1-20"

C. Argenti,\(^{17}\) attempts a spiritual and theological development of the pericope on “Gerasene Demoniac”. The acts of Jesus have significance. Jesus crossing the Sea or Lake of Galilee before curing the demoniac is seen as preparing the ground for the miracle. Before exorcising the evil spirit that possessed the Demoniac, Jesus first calms the waves, suggesting that Jesus has power over nature and evil spirits (Healing of the Demoniac). The characteristics of the demon in the pericope is worth noting. They depict the Sitz im Leben of the demoniac. This perception of the author helps him to interpret the possession of the demoniac as spiritual slavery and the eventual liberation of the demoniac by Jesus. The dialogue between the demoniac and Jesus too is worth noting. The appeal of the demon not to torment him "before the time" (Mt. 8:29) has Christological significance, namely, even the demons recognize him as Saviour. Thus C. Argenti’s article suggests valuable insights.

4.2.1.1.4. MANOEL DE MELLO - “The Gerasene Demoniac - The Power of Jesus confronts the Power of Satan”

Manoel De Mello reflects on the pericope from the point of view of the confrontation between Christ and Satan.\(^{18}\) Satan is the enemy of Christ. Taking the demon which possessed the man, as given in the pericope, he goes into the study of existence of Satan and its negative role in the salvation history. Satan (evil) and Christ (good) are in constant confrontation. Symbolically this confrontation is seen as being


continued even after Christ's death as the fight between the power of the Holy Spirit and the power of Satan (evil). The message from the study of the pericope is: that the Church, anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit, has to fight the forces and the powers of evil. The article emphasizes, rightly, the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian life.

4.2.1.2. J. F. CRAGHAN, “The Gerasene Demoniac”

John F. Craghan also takes Markan pericope for the study of the text.19 He makes a skillful and learned demonstration of the exegetical methods in the study of the pericope. He studies Markan text with a comment on the parallel pericopes of Matthew and Luke. He distinguishes three literary stratum in Markan pericope: A) What actually happened during the public ministry, b) The contribution of the Community and c) The contribution of the author, Mark, himself.

Craghan sees a historical nucleus in exorcism in pagan territory. Jesus offers salvation to pagans. The demoniac is made an apostle to pagans. He suggests that the pericope of the Gerasene Demoniac provokes a variety of interpretations.20 However he does admit that the historical reliability of the account is a more serious problem.21 Craghan, while comparing the texts of both Mark and Luke points out that the non-uniformity in style, vocabulary and narrative movement in the Lukan pericope point to the Lukan reshaping of the original text and event. The community (Lukan) contributed to the shaping of the text by its explanation and actualization. Finally, he offers an


interesting interpretation and theological framework, by unearthing the movement of
the pericope towards the salvation of the Gentiles and its universal application.

4.2.1.3. A. J. MASS - “Jesus Cures the Demoniac in the Land Of Gerasene”

A. J. Mass in his article on the pericope surveys the actions, names, characters
and dialogues of the episode. His explanations also have a semantic meaning as he
interprets the words and terms in the context with suggestive meaning. His explanation
is also based on the data available from the historical information.

4.2.1.4. GEOFFREY ROBINSON: - "The Pagan Demoniac - Mk 5: 1-20"

Geoffrey Robinson in his study on the passage from Gospel of Mark makes a
good case for the theme on Christian Mission to Pagans. The encounter between Jesus
and the demoniac in pagan land was seen as an encounter between Good and Evil. Jesus
responded generously to the petitions of the pagan people and invited them into his
kingdom. The pagan people too on their part responded generously to Jesus' call. Once
the pagan was cured and blessed, he became a missionary. The Demoniac, making all the
efforts to approach Jesus in spite of heavy odds that prevent or possess him is an
encouraging sign according to Geoffrey Robinson. The ultimate surrender of the demoniac
to Jesus who has come to bring salvation to the Gentile people, too, was seen as the
surrendering of the evil powers before Jesus. Thus the author has, a substantial
contribution to make.


4.2.1.5. CAROL SCHERSTEN LAHUD -“Reader Response to Ritual Elements: Mark 5: 1-20"

Carol S. Lahud studies the pericope with the help of Rhetorical and Reader response criticism. Supported by biblical interpretation and models for ritual (exorcism narratives) studies on the pericope, the author believes that one could find a potential reader-response in the pericope. Lahud's handling of exegetical methods in order to make the text relevant is inspiring. The author situates the passage within the first five chapters of Mark's Gospel in order to find its context. Thus it becomes easy to see reader-response to the events in the ministry of Jesus according to Mark. This approach pre-supposes the capability of the reader to respond to the demands of the text. When the reader is capable of "reading" the text, the same text challenges the expectations (according to his needs) of the reader. In the context of the Gospel, the analysis of the text discloses itself gradually. According to Lahud, the reader response to narrative elements consists of:

Assessing "how the text of Mark 5:1-20 guides reader response. This analysis examines,
1) the context for the narrative within Mk 1-5,
2) the gradual release of information to the implied audience, and 3) challenges to audience expectations, and places special emphasis on 4) the potential impact of ritual elements."27

The above suggested norms, as Lahud says, could be applied to all of the Gospel narratives, for example, to larger issues, such as: the role of the disciples or Christology.


26. For Lahud, the context of the story of "Gerasene Demonic" is found in the whole frame work of the Gospel of Mark. It is situated in the preaching of Jesus about the Kingdom of God (1:14-15).

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From the thematic point of view Lahud's article throws light on the development of the passage from ritual elements especially in the treatment of the concepts of cleanness and uncleanness. The new interpretation given to ritual elements illuminates the reader to find the theological significance. The final response of the demon possessed man influences the response of the audience. The demoniac healed person is commissioned with a special mission, namely, to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. Similarly the reader, too, is commissioned with the same mission. Thus the reader response becomes evident from the impact that the story (episode) has on the behaviour of the reader. From this point of view Lahud's article sows the seeds (implied meaning), seen from Jewish religious and society background, to the religio-social reading of the pericope.


Duncan M. Derrett in his article focuses attention on the theme of uncleanness. He situates the pericope in a Jewish-Christian milieu. The focus of attention for him was the behaviour of the swine. The swine, as abode of demons, is an aspect, according to him, that is outside human experience. Thus the behaviour of the swine could be minimized with the notion that it is part of a miracle-story. The wonder experience of the people of Gerasene, due to the extraordinary things that took place, is explained from the argument that it is the general outcome of such stories. Therefore, the author of the article does not discuss all the aspect connected to the swine, their behaviour and their consequences.


Derrett's study also has a strong Old Testament overtones. The demoniac's experience was seen as identical with the Exodus experience of Israelites. The final delivery of the demoniac from his bondages was symbolically identified with the liberation of Israelites' experience of slavery in Egypt. The redemption of Israel is connected with the eschatological and messianic hope. The unclean are made clean and become partakers of the kingdom that Jesus established. These partakers also include the Gentiles. The Gentile mission of Jesus became a reality during his lifetime itself. The demoniac, after having been delivered, became the disciple who shouldered the responsibility of the proclamation of the Good News. But this Good News that he shared was from his own personal experience of being liberated by Jesus.

4.2.1.7. FRANZ ANNEN - Heil fuer die Heiden: Zur bedeutung und Geschichte der Tradition vom besessene Gerasener (Mk 5:1-20 parr)

In his doctoral dissertation,\textsuperscript{30} Annen concentrates on the theme of pagans and the salvation to the pagans. The author first goes into the historical tradition of the episode. He starts by asking some important questions: Did the event take place historically? If it was not historic, how (why) did three evangelists include this pericope in their writings? However, it would be too much to ask if he found the proper answers to the above questions. Tradition, too, does not throw much light on such questions. Then the attention of the author goes to the significance of the pericope. Here the author develops the significance of the exorcism in the pericope. The pericope, according to the author, contains three important elements: Salvation of the pagans - pagan becomes disciple; Christology - the acts of power; and Theology - manifestation of the Kingdom of God.

4.2.1.8. S. J. ANTHONYSAMY - “Jesus in the Gentile Territory: Mk 5: 1-20.”

S. J. Anthonysamy in his doctoral thesis allots one entire chapter to the study of the pericope on “Gerasene Demoniac” of Mark from the point of view of the ministry of Jesus to the Gentiles in the Gentile territory.\textsuperscript{31} The Gerasene Demoniac is the representative of the pagan situation of the times of Jesus. The pericope has double features: Gentile territory and Gentile Demoniac. Both of them focus on the Gentile characteristics of Gentile Mission. By studying the pericope on Gerasene Demoniac from the perspective of the Gentile Mission, the author highlights the importance that the evangelists give to the Mission of Jesus to the Gentiles which stands as an inspiration and motivation to the Christian apostles and missionaries. The elaborate exegetical and thematic study of the pericope that SJ Anthonysamy presents stands as a method of interpreting the scripture passages from a different perspective.

4.2.1.9. A. GABRIEL, - “The Gerasene Demoniac (Mk 5:1-20)

- A Socio-Political Reading”

A. Gabriel makes an inspiring and bold attempt to interpret the pericope from socio-political context.\textsuperscript{32} The author of the article makes an hermeneutical interpretation of the pericope in the context of the sufferings in the society. The mission of Jesus was to fight against the forces of evil, which opposed the realization of the Kingdom by Jesus. The exorcism performed by Jesus' is significant, because, by dethroning the demon he demonstrates his power over the evil forces. In this sense Jesus' exorcism has a liberative aspect and gives impetus to liberation movement. Liberation is to be worked out as part


\textsuperscript{32} A. Gabriel, “The Gerasene Demoniac (Mk 5:1-20): A Socio-Political Reading”, is a paper read in Society of Biblical Studies biennial meeting held in Pillar, Goa, 1996.
of wholeness of human liberation. The author suggests that the liberation that Jesus granted is cosmic. Jesus destroys the evil forces both at supernatural level and at earthly level.

The message that the author communicates at the end is that it is the responsibility of every individual to fight the residual elements of the evil forces that linger around us, human society. The defeated evil forces try to remain but if they remain the effect will be disastrous. These evil powers collide with the oppressive forces to safeguard the existing structures for their own benefit. This has a social and political impact. The forces that exploit and oppress the people try to operate in order to do more injustices. But a real fight in the mode of Jesus Christ would bring total liberation. Since the article is more in the form of short notes and reflections, it does not carry heavy exegetical overtones. But, does throw some inspiration for sociological interpretation of the pericope.

4.2.1.10. CONCLUSION

Study of various materials on the same pericope is very insightful in their own way. It is obvious from the various studies, on the same pericope, by different authors, from different backgrounds, that a text can be studied from different aspects. All interpretations have their significance.

The basic question that one should ask while studying the text is "if he/she is faithful to the message of Jesus' presented in the Gospels"? Once that is assured, the reader has to ask the next question "if the study that he/she is doing has any relevance to the community that he/she belongs"? We will take off to the study of the text from here.
PART THREE: STUDY OF THE TEXT:
GERASENE DEMONIAC - LUKE 8:26-39.

4.3.0. INTRODUCTION

The Sitz im Leben of the subaltern peoples of Andhra Pradesh that we have studied in chapter two guided us to search for a suitable response. In the pursuit of this objective we have decided to take the pericope on “Gerasene Demoniac” from the Gospel according to Luke (8:26-39). The purpose in choosing the text from Luke has been stated. The Gospel according to Luke contains various themes. It is the social theme,¹ in the Gospel that inspires us most. Even the choice of the particular text, namely, “Gerasene Demoniac”, has a purpose. It is true that there are other texts² which represent the plight of the subaltern peoples. But in our judgement³ it is the Sitz im Leben of the demoniac (8:27-28) that goes closer to the Sitz im Leben of subaltern peoples.

Our approach in the study of the text, as mentioned in the beginning of the thesis, is a sociological approach, with the bias of social hermeneutics.⁴ A text could be read and investigated from different aspects. Much depends on the pre-suppositions and pre-understanding of the reader.⁵ Our interest in studying the text is not only exegetical but

¹ We shall elaborate what this social theme (environment) is in the course of the study of the text in this part.

² As noted earlier, the Gospel of Jesus according to Luke has many texts that represent the sufferings of the subaltern peoples. However we should note that not all texts carry all the dimensions of the Sitz im Leben of the subaltern Peoples. Each case of experiences of subaltern groups is different. Among various texts, the episode on “Gerasene Demoniac” goes closer to the reality of the subaltern peoples’ experience, though even this may not represent the entire Sitz im Leben.

³ We shall show the justification of this judgement during the study and interpretation of the text. In fact many of the reasons for this judgement have been already explained in the previous chapters.

⁴ We have already explained what we mean by these terms like: social approach and social hermeneutics in the chapter on “Methodology”.

⁵ Pre-understanding of the reader should not be taken as “subjective”, referring to negative sense.

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also biblical theology with the help of exegetical tools. Reading the text can be of two types. The reader reads the text from his/her own Sitz im Leben or from that of those whom he/she represents. This understanding needs to be kept in mind while we go through the study of the text. As pointed out in the chapter on methodology, we will employ "Historical Critical Method" to discover the meaning of the text with an interest to interpret it from the point of view of the subaltern peoples.

4.3.1. DELIMITATIONS

In the study of the pericope, the act of 'delimiting' the pericope comes first. The Gospel according to Luke is a well organized unit. If there is a beginning (1:5-4:15) to the life of Jesus as an incarnated person, there is an end with death (22:47-23:56) and resurrection (24:1-52) as the saviour of humankind. In between the birth and the death there is the public life. Even the public life (ministry) of Jesus is a well organized unit with a purpose-oriented introduction (4:16-21), action-filled ministry (4:22-9:17), summary (9:18-20) and further narration of actions (9:21-22:46). Our pericope falls into the first part of the main body of the Gospel, namely, from the commencement of Jesus' ministry to the confession of the disciples and in particular of Peter about Jesus (9:18-20). As Jesus goes about meeting the people, encountering various sections of society, he reveals himself, as to 'who he is' and 'what he is aiming at'. One such event is found in our pericope (8:26-39). Jesus encounters demons. Even the demons acknowledge Jesus as Son


7. The delimitation of a text could be done in different ways. Namely, isolating it from the rest of the pericopes, thematically, from its internal unity, compositional particularities, geographical location, etc.

8. Delimiting the pericope from the rest of the pericopes in the Gospel both from close and distant contexts would help us to distinguish its uniqueness and to study it as a separate entity in order to help us draw its suggested meaning and implied relevance.

of God, the Most High (8:28). Interestingly, the first part of Jesus’ journey among the people ends with one such confession (by Peter):

Once when Jesus was praying...he asked his Disciples, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” They answered....” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “The Christ (Messiah) of God" (9:18-20).

Having situated the pericope in the larger perspective of the first major part of the Gospel we should now find its uniqueness which would help us to isolate it from the rest.

Our pericope is one among the five mighty deeds,\(^\text{10}\) that Jesus performed before the confession of Peter, which is the summary of the first part of the ministry of Jesus (4:22-9:20). In all of the five mighty deeds (8:25, 28,48, 54 and 9:10-17)\(^\text{11}\) Jesus was admired and recognized as the Son of God, the Liberator. This revelation continues in further events of Jesus’ journey towards Jerusalem in the next larger part in the Gospel.

The pericope of “Gerasene Demoniac” could also be shown as an independent unit from its uniqueness from the place (geographically) of occurring. The pericope preceding it shows that the place, context, time and persons involved are different from our pericope. The previous episode (8:22-25) took place at a different place, namely, across the lake (8:22). Our pericope takes place in the country of the Gerasene (8:26), opposite Galilee. Thus we see that v. 26 marks the beginning of a new event. The closing verse (v. 39) points to the end of the event. "The cured person went away from there proclaiming throughout the whole city" (v. 39). Even the first verse of the following

\(^{10}\) They are: 8:22-25 - calming of the sea; 26-39 - Gerasene Demoniac episode; 40-56 - restoring the dead girl and healing of the woman and 9:10-17 - feeding the five thousand.

\(^{11}\) 8:25 - "Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him"; 8:28 - "When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted - "Son of the Most High" 8: 48 - He said to her, "daughter, your faith has made you well, go in peace"; 9:17 - "They took up what was left over, twelve baskets of broken pieces".
The internal unity of the pericope too supports us in saying that our pericope is one single and independent unit. While the encounter in the previous chapter was between Jesus and the disciples, here it is mainly between Jesus and the demons. The place, the audience and the persons involved in the successive pericopes are different. While there is a discourse in the previous pericope and a healing in the following event, there is exorcism in our pericope.

The specific theme in our text too is to be noted. Evil has no place in the presence of Jesus. The defeated demons proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus cures every ailment (4:40-41). He has come in search of the marginalized and the alienated groups of subaltern people. Thus, even thematically, we could show that it is an independent unit. The determining of the limits of the pericope would go a long way in our further study of the pericope. It would help us to study it as an independent unit and discover its meaning.

4.3.2. CONTEXT OF THE PERICOPE

The act of distinguish the context in which the text was composed and the elements that prompted the composition, would help us to understand the meaning of the text. The context could be divided into two parts: the larger context and the immediate context. The larger context situates the pericope in the entire Lukan Gospel and the immediate context helps us to discover its specific importance.
4.3.2.1. THE LARGER CONTEXT

The "Gerasene Demoniac" pericope falls within the larger section of the Gospel. In the larger section, it falls in the first half of the main section. While the first part (4:22-9:17) speaks of the life of the disciples, the second part (9:27-19:27) deals with the formation of the disciples. The first part also deals with the exercising of the authority in establishing human society through various cures, healings and driving out evil powers by Jesus. The foundation for these kinds of activities was already laid in the manifesto of Jesus that Luke presents in 4:16-18. This manifesto, in fact, becomes a measuring rod for the whole Lukian account of Jesus' prophetic mission of salvation to the subaltern peoples. In this context Jesus becomes the "Hope of the hopeless", particularly with the episodes like "Gerasene Demoniac", the "cure of Jairus' daughter" (8:40-48), etc.

While the first part of the Ministry of Jesus takes place purely in the Galilean territory (4:22-9:17), the rest of the journeys take place on the way to Jerusalem and in Jerusalem (19:28-21:38). The Galilean ministry was marked with the encounters of Jesus with different types of people: disciples, followers (5:1-11), Pharisees (5:21,30), lepers (5:12-16), sick (6:6-11; 7:1-10), women (7:36-50), and demons (8:26-39). In all these instances Jesus is presented as the one who goes in search of the subaltern peoples who need him. He meets them and responds to their needs. This encounter-response method

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12. This larger section is called "Journey or Travel Narrative", which is also called "Christian Deuteronomy" (cf. Deut.1:22-25; Lk. 9:51ff.). See Edward Schweizer, op. cit., pp. 165-166.


14. This manifesto precisely speaks about the liberation that Jesus came to deliver. It consists in proclaiming Good News to the subaltern peoples.


16. These journeys are mentioned only in the nineteenth chapter in Luke, 19:27f. They contain the discourses of Jesus on various themes. They include parables, sayings, etc.

is in conformity with the manifesto (4:18-21) that is entrusted to him. In the healing of
the “Gerasene Demoniac”, Jesus drives away the demon out of the person and makes him
a normal person again. Thus we see that the pericope falls well into the larger section
with broader context.

4.3.2.2. THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

If the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Luke has a clear context and purpose,
each individual pericope too contains a particular context. The mission of Jesus liberating
the "captives" and the oppressed (4:18-19) is manifested and realized in every individual
encounter. This is evident in our pericope too. The section in which our pericope falls is
one of the evidences of the actualization of salvation of the subaltern peoples. Jesus is
in the wave\textsuperscript{18} of encountering harmful elements to human life. Fresh from his victory over
the tempest (8:22-25), he is confronted by a sterner fury, the rage of hostile spirits (Cf.
8:28).\textsuperscript{19} He is the real Messiah of the possessed and the marginalised. In fact Jesus
becomes, through his salvific acts, as shown in the above section,\textsuperscript{20} and as Michael
Wilcock calls with a symbolic title: “The Lord of the New Israel”.\textsuperscript{21}

In the “Gerasene Demoniac” episode, as Fitzmyer points out, "The evil threatening
being (demon) in the form of natural cataclysms now has a counterpart in the evil

\textsuperscript{18}. By the word ‘wave’ we mean the sequence of the events in which Jesus
deals with the evil forces. In 8:22-25 he calms the storm; in 8:26-39 drives the
evil spirit; in 8:40f. conquers death.

(1893), p. 126.

\textsuperscript{20}. The Messianic activities in the section are: a) 8:22-25 - calming the
storm, b) 26-29 - exorcising the demons from a possessed man, c) 40-56 - healing
a woman of her hemorrhage and raising the child from death.

\textsuperscript{21}. The New Israel are those who are liberated and unified with God by the
InterVarsity Press, Leicester, 1979, p. 98.
afflicting the psychic being of mortal man". This evil being had try to tarnish human society by trying to destroy the possessed man. It is in this context that we see Jesus using his power to heal an unfortunate demented human being, an outcast, subaltern of the society, and restoring him to the soundness of mind and wholeness of life.

Another element that helps to mark the immediate context of the pericope is location. The previous miracle was concerned with the “Lordship” of Jesus (8:25) in relation to the disciples and their faith. But the healing of the demoniac shows a conflict between Jesus, the “Son of the Most High God” and the evil power. The locale of this conflict is heathen, a Gentile territory, sign of abomination and uncleanness. The uncleanness is typified by the swine in the pericope. But as the pericope shows the ‘heathen’ (Gentile territory) is made ‘heaven’ by both the presence and action of Jesus. Hence the location too provides a valuable context to the pericope.

Luke presents the salvific action of Jesus as the concern for the outcasts and the persecuted through this demoniac episode and says, that the mission of Jesus is to save all those who are tormented by the evil and destructive powers and those who have become slaves to them. It is in this immediate context that we understand the relevance of our pericope of the “Gerasene Demoniac”, in Luke, that is relevant, to the subaltern peoples of Andhra Pradesh.


4.3.3. STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

Most of the Scripture scholars agree that Luke derived the story of the healing of the Gerasene Demoniac from Mark (5:1-20) and made certain changes to it.\textsuperscript{24} The differences between the Lukan and the Markan texts are specially Lukan redactions.\textsuperscript{25} The comparative study of the parallel texts in the Synoptic Gospels (Mt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-20; and Lk. 8:26-39) will reveal the differences and particularities among the accounts of the evangelists.\textsuperscript{26}

4.3.3.1. STRUCTURE OF THE PERICOPE AND ITS UNITY

Structure of the pericope points to the internal divisions and their unity. Designing a structure facilitates to study the dynamics of the pericope. Study of the structure helps us to unearth its inherent features and their implied meaning. We shall study the structure of the pericope on Gerasene Demoniac through the following diagram:

\begin{itemize}
  \item [\textsuperscript{25}] J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 733.
  \item [\textsuperscript{26}] Parallel study in fact would help to distinguish the particular elements of the individual pericopes. We will not do a detailed parallel study of the Gerasene pericope. We will do the parallel analysis from thematic point of view that help us in the pursuit of the objective of our research.
\end{itemize}
STRUCTURE OF THE PERICOPE AND ITS UNITY

Beginning: kai katepleusan ... v. 26
(and they sailed down ...)

Description of the Problem

B1
vv. 27B-29

Jesus'

B2
vv. 34-37

Encounter 3

C
vv. 30-33

Solution to the Problem

A2w vv. 38-39

Ending: kai apetthen ... v. 39
(and he went away)

a. 1 = 2 = 3 = Structural unity

4.3.3.2. COMMENTS

The above diagram shows that there is internal unity in the structure.

1. **Part One**: Consisting of A1 and A2 gives clear beginning and ending to the event.
   1.a. **A1 - vv. 26 - 27a**

   In A1, there is the arrival of Jesus and his disciples from a different place (8:22-25) to this new place (8:26). On his arrival Jesus encounters a man possessed with the demon. v. 27a introduces the demon. This gives the starting point and suggests about the movement of the episode.
   1.b. **A2 - vv. 38 - 39**

   The point A2, suggests that the event has come to an end. The healed man is sent home with a mission. After having completed the exorcism and healing the demoniac, Jesus leaves the place and returns (v.40).

2. **Part Two**: Consisting of B and C, constitute the body of the pericope.
   2.a. **B1 - vv. 27b - 29**

   Number one of the part two (B1) presents the problem that Jesus grapples with. There is the person affected due to the possession of the demon and its description. This part represents well the *Sitz im Leben* of the subaltern peoples. The conditions of the possessed man too present him as a subaltern person.
   2.b. **B2 - vv. 34 - 37**

   In B2 of part B we see the response of Jesus to the man who approached him for healing. Jesus exercises his power over the evil spirit with his presence and words, which stand as a solution to the problem. There are three types of witnesses to it: The herdsmen (v.34), the people of the city (Gerasene, v.35) and all the peoples of the surrounding country (v.37).
   3.c. **vv. 30 - 33**

   Part C of the pericope forms the most important part. It consists of the encounter between Jesus and the demoniac: The request of the demon and Jesus acceding to it and consequences.
From the above diagram we see that our pericope forms as one unit with clear internal unity. Once this is established we are in a position to analyse the pericope with a view to interpret it.

4.3.3.3. THE SALIENT FEATURES OF THE STRUCTURE

The study of the individual units would throw light on the composition of the pericope:

1. vv. 26 - 27a - opening - setting of the place (Gentile territory) and the character (healing of the demon possessed man) of the event.

2. vv. 27b - 29 - The state of the man possessed with the demon.

3. vv. 30 - 33 - The encounter - dialogue between the sick (possessed) and the healer (Jesus).

4. vv. 34 - Introduction of herdsmen

5. vv. 35 - 36 - Appearance of the people on the scene

6. v. 37a - Reaction of the people

7. v. 37b - End of the event - departure of Jesus

8. vv. 38 - 39 - The final words and entrusting of the mission.

This type of dissectionary analysis manifests the skills of the evangelists in composing the pericope and at the same time throws light on the suggested meaning of the pericope. There is a logical conclusion to the episode. What becomes clear as we study the dynamics of the internal order of the pericope, is that this pericope stands as a good example of intense activity of Jesus liberating the possessed (oppressed) and has vast scope (which we will see soon) for a profound interpretation.
4.3.4. FORM CRITICISM

If we are to use the tools of Historical Criticism in the study of the pericope on "Gerasene Demoniac", it may prove to be a fiction as John F.Craghan puts it. Using any particular exegetical method does not always guarantee complete results from that particular method. It means, that when we use certain tools, for the study of the text, the choice of tools also determines, to an extent, the direction of the study.

The account of the Gerasene Demoniac in Lk. 8: 26-39 defies the normal form-critical analysis. Instead the pericope could rightly be identified as a part of an exorcism narrative form and a miracle story. There is not much scope for any real form criticism of the pericope. However, the application of form criticism to our pericope would help us to study it better, especially in the comparative study of the synoptic parallels.

Luke follows the Markan outline closely except for distributing the Markan description of the state and history of the possessed man (Mk. 5:3-5); between its original position (Lk. 8:27) and a position (v.29) after the report of the exorcising command. The episode of the swine (vv. 31-33), according to Leopold Sabourin, presents one of literary

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27. Form criticism "Seeks to specify the literary form or subform of a given biblical passage". See J. A. Fitzmyer, Scripture, The Soul of Theology, Paulist Press, New York, 1994, p. 23. In our case it will help us to find out if our passage is a miracle story, a pronouncement or an exorcism story.


29. Choice of exegetical tools too determines the pre-suppositions and the 'subjective' determination of the study.


characteristics of the ancient narratives of exorcism. While the unclean spirit in Mark requests Jesus not to send him "out of the country" (5:10), the demon in Luke requests Jesus not to send him "into the abyss" (8:31). Luke does not mention, as Mark does (5:13) the number (2000) of the swine involved. The man who meets Jesus 'comes out of tombs' in Mark (5:2) but in Luke he is from the city (8:27). When he confronts Jesus he submits himself before him (Lk. 8:28; Mk. 5:6).

Though one may say that Luke has merely improved the Markan narrative stylistically, and in spite of many similarities and differences with the other Gospels accounts, he has brought out his own typical vocabulary and motifs in editing the pericope. For example: he stresses the "saving" (healing) of the man (v.36) and the fear induced in the audience (v. 37) to highlight the impact of the pericope. Luke alone refers to the 'abyss' in connection with the exorcism (v. 31). The pericope on "Gerasene Demonic" too instructs the apostles about who is Jesus, and unfolds the 'Messianic Secret'. The present account and the following as well, provide the patterns for the coming mission of the twelve apostles (9:1-6). Unlike Mark and Luke, Matthew lacks this missionary command in his pericope on "Gerasene Demonic".


34. H. I. Marshall, op. cit., p. 335.

35. In the pericope the demons proclaim Jesus as the "Son of God, the Most High", (Lk. 8:28) who has come to end the times of possession and liberate the possessed (v. 39).

36. The concept 'Messianic secret' is found frequently in Mark. Luke too includes titles of Messiah to Jesus and unfolds their secrecy eventually.
4.3.5. EXORCISM NARRATIVE

The pericope on "Gerasene Demoniac" is labelled with different names. But most of the scholars bring it under the title: "Exorcism Narrative". The study of the dynamics of the pericope suggests that it forms part of the exorcism narrative in the Gospel according to Luke. Jesus asking the name of the possessed man (v.30) could be seen as an indication that Jesus was aware of the art of exorcism. The knowledge of the name of the demon would give the exorcist an advantage over the demon. There is always a

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37. Exorcism is one of the most ancient and universal practices in the history and practiced even during the times of Jesus. (see John J. Rousseau & Rami Arvi, Jesus and His World, Fortress press, Minneapolis, 1995, p. 98).


relationship between the teachings of Jesus and exorcism. The exorcism event goes beyond mere happenings. Jesus does both teaching and exorcism with authority.

The exorcism account in Luke, however, does not follow closely a fixed formal pattern (4:31-37). Casting out demons is considered as one of the most significant aspects in Jesus' ministry (11:17-22; Mt. 12:25-29; Mk. 3:23-27). This activity manifests his messianic power, a triumph over evil. We shall trace a few features of exorcism in our pericope. They are:

a. The exorcist arrives (vv. 26 - 27a)
b. Description of the demoniac's condition (vv. 27b -29c)
c. Demoniac's recognition of Jesus, the exorcist (v. 28)
d. Exorcism itself (vv. 30 - 32)
e. Proof of the existence of the demon (v. 33)
f. Reaction of the spectators and others (vv. 34-37)
g. Conclusion with a mission (vv. 38 -39).

The above features highlight that the “Gerasene Demoniac” is not a simple miracle story but also an exorcism event. The basic miracle story has been, in our instance, enshrouded with elements of the fantastic and grotesque. This is seen in the sequences of the episode that we have analysed.


46. J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 734.
Luke, while composing the pericope, seen from the Exorcism Narrative point of view, focuses attention on the symptoms of the demoniac (vv. 27-28).\(^{47}\) There is a genial exchange between Jesus, the exorcist and the demon. The exorcism, however, does not come to a safe completion.\(^{48}\) The demons leave the man but enter the swine. The amazement of the bystanders is noted.\(^{49}\) Thus we could say that though the pericope does not strictly follow all the features of exorcism in the strict sense, still it has all the ingredients.

4.3.5.1. EXORCISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

John Nolland in his commentary on Luke's Gospel says that the exorcism in the New Testament generally is placed somewhere between magic and medicine.\(^{50}\) Exorcism was practiced both within (Mt. 12:27; Acts 19:13) and outside Judaism. The exorcism in Jewish society was achieved by prayer and laying on of the hands. The exorcism was credited with remitting of sins (2 Kg. 5:1-25). Jesus gave authority over the power of Satan to his disciples (Lk. 9:1-2; Mt. 10:8; Mk. 3:13; 6:7-13). For Jesus the casting out demons was one of the most verifiable indications of the arrival of the Kingdom. This Kingdom opens a new era to the subaltern peoples.

Exorcism, though exclusive to the synoptics, is also found in other books of the New Testament. The book of Acts is one such: 5:16; 8: 4-8; 10:38; 16:16-18; 19:11-12. According to the New Testament understanding, demons are seen as hostile forces in the Kingdom of God. Therefore the encounters of Jesus in the exorcism narrative pericopes


\(^{48}\) It might not come to the completion seen from literal exorcism features but from the point of preaching of Gospel message for the tormented possessed man the pericope has a definite completion.

\(^{49}\) Cf. Lk. 8:34 = 4:36; 9:43 & 11:14.

\(^{50}\) J. Nolland, op. cit., p. 204.
are not merely isolated incidents of comparison of individuals oppressed by malevolent forces. They are direct confrontations between the evil power and presence of the Kingdom of God. The success of Jesus' assaults on demons indicates that the head of the evil kingdom (Satan) had already been crushed making possible the vanishment (of the oppressor) of its domain. Thus demons are cast out and the individuals are liberated.

4.3.6. SYNOPTIC THEMATIC PARALLELS OF THE PERICOPE

The form-criticism and exorcism analysis of the pericope guided our study to discover the various features. We shall further elaborate them with Synoptic thematic parallel study. For our study it is the thematic development that would throw light on the objective of the research, namely, to find the message of the text relevant to the sufferings of the subaltern peoples. We shall do it with the help of the following table and comment upon the table.

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### 4.3.6.1. TABLE OF THE SYNOP TIC PARALLELS:

(We place Markan Text first as it is the primary source)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>MARK</th>
<th>MATTHEW</th>
<th>L UKE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Opening (v.v. 26-27a)
| a. They (Jesus & Disc.) | He | They (Jesus & Disc.) |
| b. came | came | sailed |
| c. to the other side of the sea | to the other side | |
| d. to the region of the Gerasene | to the region of the Gadarenes | Opposite Galilee |
| e. | - | - |
| f. He got out of the boat | - | stepped out on land. |

2. Encounter (v. 27b & c)

| a. When he came out | as he stepped out |
| b. Suddenly a person | there met him |
| c. controlled by an unclean spirit | - |
| d. | two demoniacs |
| e. | from the city |

3. Habitat of the Possessed Man (v. 27d)

| a. he came from tombs | came out from tombs | he did not stay in a house but in the tombs |

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53. Inclusion of Matthean text, besides being one of the Synoptic texts, helps us to study the differences among the parallel texts.

54. The reference in this section refer only to Lukan text. Our point of reference is Lukan pericope.

55. The Greek word 'chorann' is translated as "country" but "region" would be proper as the word "country" means a different country\nation. In the pericope the word "country" must have been used to distinguish the places of Jewish (in religious sense) boundaries from those of Gentiles. But from the civil boundaries, from both points of view, Jewish and Gentiles, it is one Palestinian country.

56. Some Scholars translate the Greek word 'poleos' as 'city' and others as 'town'. There is difference between city and town. The former is big in many aspects compared to the later: in population, area, economic and commercial concentrations.

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4. Features of the man possessed (v. 27d, 29)

a. no one was able to bind him not even with chains -

b. he had often been bound with fetters and with chains -

c. nobody had the strength to subdue him -

d. - for a long time he had not worn clothes -

e. he would cry day and night in the tombs and in the hills. -

f. used to bruise himself on the stones -

5. Meeting Jesus (v. 28)

a. saw Jesus from a distance -

b. he ran up -

c. - they shouted he shouted out -

d. knelt before him" -

e. Shouting in a loud voice -

f. "What do you want to do with me Jesus, You, Son of the Most High God?" -

g. for God's sake -

h. do not torment me "Did you come here ahead of time to torment us?"

6. Jesus' command (v. 29)

a. because he had been saying to it: - for he was about to command -

b. - -

c. "Come out of the human being -

7. Demon and the possessed man (v. 29)

a. - for many times it had laid hold of him had kept him under guard driven him into wilderness -

8. Jesus - Demon dialogue\Jesus' Command (vv. 30-32)

a. He(Jesus) asked him - Jesus asked him.

b. "What is your name?" - What is your name?"

c. My name is "Legion" - and he said "Legion" because many devils entered him.

d. for we are many -

e. he begged him earnestly - he begged him

57. This phrase could be translated as 'worshipped him'. Mark uses the proseksunsen, worshipped. However, as William Lane argues that the word proseksunsen does not mean adoration. see William L. Lane, The Gospel of Mark, William E Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1974, p. 179.
f. not to drive them not to order them
from their territory to depart into

g. now a great herd of now not far from
swine was there them there was a
on the mountain herd of many
side, feeding feeding on the

h. and the spirit and the devil
kept entreating kept entreating
him saying, him saying,

i. "Send us to the "If you cast us
swine that we may out, send us into
enter into them the herd of swine"

j. Jesus immediately he said to them
 gave them leave and he gave them
leave.

9. Fate of the demons and the swine (v. 33)

a. The unclean spirit and they came out and the demons came
came out and entered and entered into
into the swine the swine
b. And the herd, in number about 2000 and behold and the herd
whole herd

c. rushed down rushed down rushed down
with great violence

d. into the sea the cliff the cliff
e. into the sea into the sea - into the lake
f. and were drowned and perished and were drowned
in the sea in the water

10. The fate of the swine herd (v. 34)

a. But the herdsmen but the herdsmen and when the herds-

b. fled fled

c. and reported it and reported reported it

and what had
everything

and behold the
possessed man

d. in the town and in the town and in the country
in the country

e. in the country

11. The town people - "witnesses" (vv. 35-36)

a. and people came out and behold all the and people came out
and people came out

b. to see what had happened to see what had happened
And they came

c. and they came to see Jesus to meet Jesus

d. and saw the man and found the man
who had been from whom the
afflicted by the demons demons had gone out

e. sitting sitting at his feet
f. clothed

and in his senses
and in his right mind

g. and they were afraid and they were afraid

h. and those who had and those who had
seen

i. reported to them reported to them

j. how it had happened how he had been
and about the swine saved

12. Crowd's request (v. 37)

a. - on seeing him

b. and they and they

all the people of

the Gerasene
district
c. began to ask him  
entreat him  
besought him  
d. to depart  
to depart  
to depart  
e. from their district  
from the district  
from them  
f.  
-  
they were seized  
with great fear.

13. Jesus' departure (v. 37b)

a. as Jesus was  
he got into boat  
and went back  
got into boat  
and went back  

14. The healed man - mission (vv. 38-39)

a. the man who had been  
afflicted by the demon  
whom the demons had  
gone out  
b. began to entreat him  
prayed him  
c. that he might  
remain with him  
remain with him  
d. and he did not  
allow him  
but Jesus sent him  
away  
e. but said to him  
saying  
f. Go home to your  
relatives  
house  
g. and tell that  
and tell all that  
God  
h. and how He has had  
mercy on you  
has done for you  
i. and he departed  
and he departed  
j. began to proclaim  
proclaiming  
k. in the Decapolis  
throughout the  
whole city  
l. all that Jesus  
all that Jesus  

m. and all marvelled.  

4.3.6.2. COMMENTS ON THE SYNOPTIC THEMATIC PARALLELS

The above table points to a number of similarities and differences. The contrasts among the texts is an indication of how each evangelist, while depending on one another for the sources, maintain their own particularities. The differences in the Lukan text, when compared with Mark, stand as Lukian redactions. If Luke shortened Markan text, Matthew had edited it still further. The synoptic parallels reveal a number of differences, namely, various exegetical forms (form, literary, etymology, terminology,).


Mark presents one demoniac. Matthew recounts the story of two demoniacs. Luke has transposed the details about the description of the demoniac's activity. Markan direct command of exorcism becomes, in Luke, an indirect command (8:26). Unlike Mark, Luke makes clearer distinctions between the demoniac and the demon. Luke's choice of words (e.g. Gerasene, abyss, etc.) express his sense of social and religious background as they existed during his time. Thus we could say that all the scholars accept that the pericope on "Gerasene Demoniac" is one and the same but the various presentations are the prerogative of each individual evangelist. We shall present these contrasts of the synoptic presentations as 'thematic contrasts'. But we shall present them without much interpretation and leave the interpretation to the later part.

4.3.6.2.1. CONTRASTS IN THE PRESENTATION OF THE THEME:


While Mark and Luke use the personal pronoun in plural 'they' (Jesus and his disciples), Matthew uses it in singular, 'He', as if only one (Jesus) came to the region. The verbs 'ελθοντος' (in Mark and Matthew) and 'κατελθουσαν' (in Luke) have their significance. While the former is translated as "they came to" (other side of the sea) the latter reads as "they sailed down" (into the land). While the

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60. Ibid.

61. L. Sabourin, op. cit., p. 197.


63. Ibid.


66. We call it 'thematic' because it serves more than other studies the purpose of our research, namely, to find its implication of the response that the subaltern peoples are expecting. However we should clarify that contrasts do not mean that there were different themes in the pericope but there are variations in reporting the account.
sea and the mountain mean much in the Jewish historical background (Exodus event in Old Testament and the place of Beatitudes in New Testament in Matthew) the land has importance to Luke.67

    All the three Evangelists agree that the event took place on the "opposite" of "the country\region". The emphasis on the 'opposite or other side', a Gentile territory of Galilee is significant. Only Luke specifies that it is at the country, “opposite of Galilee", (8:26) indicating that it is a Gentile (alien and impure) place. However, the evangelists differ in mentioning the name of the actual place. The name of this same place is recorded differently. Even the recording of the way Jesus entered the region is worth noting. It goes in line with the terminology that the evangelists used. While Mark says that Jesus (and his disciples) got out of the boat, Luke says that he stepped out on to the land, place of living human beings (v.27; Cf.6:17; and Mk. 5:1).

3. Possessed Man: v. 27
    While Mark and Luke say that it is a 'certain (aner, anthropos) 'man' (who was possessed with the demon), Matthew says, 'he' (with contempt) was possessed with two demons. Differences between Matthew on the one hand and Mark and Luke on the other show a significant variety in the perception and consequent compositions. Mark qualifies it by saying who ‘this man' is: “man with unclean spirit" (5:2). There is also difference among the evangelists about the reaction of the possessed man when he sees Jesus. While Mark says that the demoniac cried and ran to Jesus, Luke says that he cried and fell down before Jesus and Matthew

67. Jesus preached beatitudes, according to Luke, on land ( epi topou pedinou - a level place or plain ground). While mountain (in Matthew) represents an elevated place, inaccessible to all peoples, land represents the dwelling place of human persons.

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too says that he cried with a loud voice but does not say anything about his movement. 68

4. Condition of the Possessed Man: v.27.

Mark describes, more than the others, the Sitz im Leben of the possessed man. While Matthew ignores it altogether, Luke describes it briefly in verse v.29. It is surprising to note that how Luke has omitted the details of possession of the man, especially when he seems to be other-wise keenly interested in the deplorable social conditions (see Mk 5:3-5) of the subaltern demoniac. While Mark says that the demoniac lived among the tombs, Luke emphasizes the demoniac was not living in the house but among the tombs.

5. The Proclamation of the Demons: v.28.

All the three evangelists note the proclamation of the demons about Jesus. The proclamation is Christological and it is from the mouths of the demons. All the three record the direct speech that the demons employ, i.e., “you”. This direct pronoun is referred to Jesus. This Jesus is identified as “Son of God”. There is unanimity among the evangelists to identify Jesus as "Son of God". However, while Mark and Luke qualify the Christological title: Jesus, Son of God “The Most High”, 69 Matthew simply says as “Son of God”.


Matthew is silent on the dialogue between Jesus and the demons. There is similarity in the contents of Markan and Lukan accounts of the dialogue between Jesus and the demoniac. Jesus asks, in Mark, a direct question "What is your


name”? and the possessed man answers "my name is Legion". The pronoun ‘moi’, in singular, in Mark, is in plural in Luke ("for many demons..."); 8:30. Demon's request to Jesus in Markan and Lukan accounts, (v.31) “not to torment them” (demons, possessors of human persons), an humble plea of the suffering subaltern possessed man, becomes a question form in Matthew, “Have you come here (Gentile area) to torment us?”

7. **Swine and herd of swine**: v. 32.

All the three Synoptics mention the presence of swine (in the Gentile territory). The plea of the demons to be sent to the swine is also very significant in the pericope. They do not want to be destroyed completely. When they are allowed to have their way they hurry to the swine. All the three evangelists mention that the swine were drowned. However there is no coherence in the accounts of the drowning. While Matthew says that ‘they’ drowned (perished) “in the waters”, Mark says they were drowned “in the sea” and for Luke they drowned “in the lake”.70 The episode takes place in a Gentile area. It shows the contempt attitude of the Jews and the open mind of Jesus towards the Gentiles. We shall see what the destruction of swine (together with demon) would imply in interpretation.

8. **The healed man**: v. 35.

Both Mark and Luke give importance to the state of the healed man. The `act' of healing (releasing from demon's possession) is signalled through the command (v.29) that Jesus gave to the demon. The evangelists describe the healing by narrating how the man was after the healing. He was clothed and was in his right senses and sat at the feet of Jesus. It is in contrast to the situation before healing. Before the healing, he was without clothes and was in a disturbed state of mind (Lk 8:27,29; Mk 5:3-5).

70. In fact the episode does not take place near sea or lake. It is in the country of Genesarene (Lk. 8:26; Mk. 5:1; and Mt. 8:28).
9. **They were afraid**: v.35.

The reaction of 'the people' at the end of the miracle is "fear" according to Luke. They 'were afraid' (marvelled!) according to Mark by seeing what had happened to the possessed man. Mark ends the pericope with the reaction of the 'people' but Luke does not stop there. Luke is more of an action-oriented man. He ends the account of the pericope with 'the cured man' taking up the mission entrusted to him by Jesus. Feeling of wonder and marvel should lead to taking up the challenge and responsibility.

10. **He proclaimed all that JESUS had done to him**: v.39.

The mission of the healed man was to proclaim. He accepts the challenge and responsibility. In v.34 it was herdsmen who reported to the people of the town about the healing of the possessed man and now it is 'the healed man' who proclaims. It is also worth noting about whom he proclaims. Jesus had instructed the man to go and proclaim about what the Lord (kyrios "The Lord", Mk. 5:19 and ho theos - God, in Lk. 8:39) had done for him. The man goes and proclaims about all that Jesus had done to him. Both Mark and Luke differ in pointing out the place of the proclamation. While Mark says that the healed man proclaimed about what Jesus had done to him in the Decapolis, Luke says that he proclaimed throughout the whole town. The central message of proclamation of the liberated man is obviously Jesus and his salvific activity. He is the Son of God, the Messiah who stands in the place of God and is God Himself.

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71. The reaction of the people, (from the town, Gerasene) is based on what the herdsmen had reported to them. The 'people' here also could include the apostles and the people who had come with him across the sea (cf. Mk 4:36).

72. The plural form of the pronoun "they" refer to, according to Luke, 'to the people of Gerasene'. (vv. 35-37).

73. By adding 'Decapolis', Mark, a kerygmatic Evangelist, extends the mission of evangelization to beyond one's boundaries. By saying 'town', Luke means to say that mission starts from one's own place. Both have significance.
As pointed out earlier the similarities and contrasts among the parallel texts do not juxtapose each other but complement one another. The contrasts reveal the variations in perceptions and not on the substance of the contents and message of the event. Redactionally these contrasts would point to a special theological nuance of Luke. We will see it in the interpretation of the text.

4.3.7. STUDY OF THE WORDS

In the understanding of the thesis, noting various terms and names of the places that are used is necessary. This would help to discover the specific slant that Luke would have intended to give.

4.3.7.1. Gerasenon - Gerasenes\textsuperscript{74} - v. 26.

"Gerasenon" being the name of the place it may not have any particular nuance. However, let us study something about it. In each of the synoptic accounts there are different names regarding the proper noun, the name of the place of the episode.\textsuperscript{75} Mark and Luke mention it as Gerasene, but Luke further adds to it that it was situated to the "opposite of Galilee" (v.26). Matthew calls it as "Gadarenes"\textsuperscript{76} (8:28) according to some Gerasenon is more appropriate.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{74} The Greek text is taken from The Greek New Testament, ed. Kurt Aland et al., United Bible Studies, Stuttgart, Germany, 1966.

\textsuperscript{75} There are number of studies on the identification of the name of the place. But there is no unanimity. See R. G. Calph, "A Study of the place-names Gergesa and Bethabara", in JBL, 27 (1908), 128-133. And F. C. Burkitt, "Gergesa - a Reply", in CBO, 9 (1947), pp. 101-105.

\textsuperscript{76} William Hendrickson, (op. cit., p. 445.) believes that it was a region of tombs, some of them probably empty chambers hewn into the cliffs arising from the eastern shore of the lake.

\textsuperscript{77} J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 737.
a. Gerase

'Gerase' is modern Jerash city. It was a prosperous Hellenistic city located in Transjordan, midway between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee. It is about thirty three miles south-east of the Lake Gennesaret. Like other cities of Decapolis, Gerase had a considerable area of attached territory. It is not specified if its territory reached to the Sea of Galilee. It is also known as a city of Arabia which has neither sea nor lake near it.

b. Gadara

It is modern Umm Geis, another city of Decapolis. It is about six miles south east to the Lake Gennesaret. Hippos the historian, speaks of it as "villages' bordering on Tiberias (Jn.6:24) and the territory of scytholpolis. This would imply that there was some proximity of Gadara to the lake. The Gospels speak of it as a town of Judea, famous for a hot spring but having no steep slope, lake or Sea. However, F.L. Godet notes that near the lake of Tiberias the remains of city Gerasa are found. During the Hellenistic period it was one of the major cultural centres and it became the capital city of the district of Gileas.

78. Ibid, PP. 736-737.
Also see Carl H. Kraeling, Gerase, City of The Decapolis, American Schools of Oriental Research, New Haven, 1938.


83. I. H. Marshall, op. cit., p. 337. Also see J. A. Fitzmyer, p. 737.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid, p. 736.

86. Ibid.


c. Gergesa

Fitzmyer quotes Origen saying that he identified Gergesa as an "old city in the neighbourhood of the lake now called Tiberias." According to local tradition, the name "Gergesa" which is formed from Greek word Gergesaios means "the dwelling of expellers". Gergesa is said to be modern 'Kersa' (or 'Kursi') according to some other translations) on the eastern side of the lake. It also perhaps could be the name of the district. There is a mention of 'Gerasites' in the Old Testament too (Deut. 7:11; Josh. 24:11.).

These differences about the locality of the episode might seem confusing. Among the three names, 'Gerasene' is an assimilation to Matthew (8:28) and for Luke 'Gerasene' is an attempt at the correction of the other evangelists.

4.3.7.2. Galilee

By saying that the event of "Healing of Gerasene Demoniac" took place on the "opposite of Galilee", Luke places the emphasis on the locality. Galilee is the name for the northern region of Palestine, which literally means either the 'circle' or 'desert'. Galilee and Galileans are associated particularly with Jesus of Nazareth and his

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89. J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 736.

90. C. F. Evans, (op. cit., P.384) calls it as "dwelling of the casters out" a prophetic reference to the conduct towards the Saviour of the citizens of those places who "besought him to depart from the casters".

91. J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 736.


93. This name is more commonly referred to, as a consensus name.

movement. Galilee is Jesus’ home land (Lk. 1:26; 2:4,39). The initial phase of the public ministry of Jesus is located in Galilee (4:14). Jesus had much impact both on the so called “higher classes” and “lower classes” of the Galilean Society. Hence mentioning that the event took place “opposite Galilee” gains importance. Emphasis is on the “Gentileness” of the locality of the present event. The Gentile people too are made members of the Messianic Kingdom.

4.3.7.3. **Mnemasis - Tomb.**

Mentioning of "tomb" in Luke's Gospel, in our context, could be understood in perspective. Here it could be understood presumably as Gentile tombs, which are a source of ritual uncleanness for Jews. For the Jews, any contact with the dead would mean uncleanness (Num.19:11,14,16; Ezek. 11:15; Ps. 68:7; Is. 65:3-4). Tombs in Jewish areas used to be white washed (Mt. 23:27) in order to warn the people from contacting them even accidentally. Tombs are considered as the resort of demons, and they are laid outside the boundaries of human society. Luke, by pointing out that the possessed

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96. Pharisees and Teachers (higher classes) of Law came from Galilee to hear Jesus (5:17) and the Galilean Women (lower class due to their social status) accompanied Jesus during his ministry and trial (23:49-55).


98. Tomb is a place dug in the ground or cut out of rock for a dead body and a monument over it. Although many Babylonians, Greeks and Romans had the custom of burning the dead bodies during the funeral services but it was Jews, following the custom of Canaanites, Moabites and other Near Eastern people, followed regularly the custom of burying the dead in the ground.


man (v. 27) lived among the tombs, highlights the wretchedness of the man (due to his possession by demon). To live among the tombs (burial caves, Num. 19:11) is to live on the margins of Society. Such people are unclean and are forbidden to enter the temple or to participate in the worship or the religious meals.  

4.3.7.4. Abussos - The Abyss - v. 31

“Abyss” is a religious concept. There are various definitions of it. The Greek word ‘abyss’ can denote either the abode of the dead (Ps. 107:26; Rom. 10:7) or the final prison of satan and the demons (Rev. 20:3). It is a term used both for the deep sea and for the underworld prison in which the evil spirits were to be locked up until the end (Rev. 9:1-11). It is used often in the Septuagint to translate the word ‘tehom’, which is designated in the Old Testament cosmology as the “watery deep” or cosmic sea under the earth, the symbol of chaos or disorder. In Catholic tradition it is understood as ‘hell’ or ‘Sheol’. Abyss used in reference the demonic subaltern experience refers to darkness and a sign of no hope. Jesus turns this experience of despair into hope and new life as is the case of the oppressed man after the healing.


104. According to Michael Willock, (op. cit., p. 120) “it is a place of the dead in the underworld, to which tombs lead and from which evil was said to originate. R.C.H. Lenski (op. cit., p.473) “it is burning pit of hell prepared for evil angels (Mt 25.41)”. And Sadier M. F. (The Gospel according to St. Luke, George Bell and Sons, London, 1898, p. 216.) calls it “bottomless pit in a negative sense”.


106. C. F. Evans, op. cit., p. 387.


Luke brings in the presence of "swine" into the episode. Though these animals are used in a negative sense, it is symbolic. Another word used for 'swine' is pig. In the understanding of the Palestinian Jews, the swines are worthless animals, because they are 'unclean', (i.e., not to be eaten Lev. 11:7; Deut. 14:8). Swine is an abomination according to the Old Testament (Exod. 14:27; Is. 65:24f.) The word 'swine' is also used in a sense of contempt. Jews are known to apostrophize their enemies as swine. According to them, the swine are unclean, because, they have cloven holf and completely divided, and they do not chew the cud (Lk. 15:15). These two features automatically qualify the swine as "unclean". The pork eaters and worshippers of demons are considered unfaithful to God (Is. 65: 3-4).

The episode of "Gerasene Demoniac" takes place in a Gentile country. In such Gentile territory raising of swine is seen as an economic enterprise (Lk. 15:15). It is in this context that we understand the use of swine in this episode. But if we ask the question if the swines represent evil spirits, the answer is negative. Horward I. Marshall calls this whole episode involving the swine (vv. 31-33), by and large, as a folkloric and legendary character. J. M. Creed terms it as "strange story". It might be folkloric or imaginary, but it is symbolic from the point of view of our study, namely, that purity and impurity are the creations of man. Jesus has the power to make the 'impure' as pure but at the same time, while cleansing the impurity of subaltern peoples Jesus exposes the so called 'purity' of the pure people.

110. Michael Wilcock, op. cit., p. 120.
111. It is said that the demon entered the animals but it is not said that the animals were evil or demons.
113. J. M. Creed, op. cit., p. 120.
In presenting the pericope of "Gerasene Demoniac" and the similar ones, Luke has something specific to communicate. Luke with his knowledge of the Greek and Jewish cultures and religions, seems to show aversion to certain unwanted elements[114] and would like to do away with them. Luke presents Jesus as one who would like to see human beings flourish with full life and not be oppressed by any harmful forces. Though the event takes place on Gentile territory it has special importance to Jewish society.[115]

The Jewish people claim to be the holy people of God and profess to be under the guidance of their only God. But there are a number of elements that seem to rule the life in Jewish Society other than the principle of love and equality. Demons and evil spirits which are identified with discrimination and alienation, are some such elements. They are very much influenced by these unwanted elements. It is here we see Jesus trying to destroy the unhelpful and harmful elements. The early Christianity must have seen the curing of demoniac as a source of inspiration to fight against the evil forces (see Acts 8:9-24; 13:6-12, 19:11-20). The demons play a considerable role in the pericope. Hence it is not unjustifiable to spend a few moments to know something about the the demons, the unwanted presence.

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[114] Evil spirit (demon) is certainly one such unwanted element to any human society. Symbolically, any oppressor is an unwanted element.

[115] Luke's community consists also the people from Jewish society. It is addressed to them too as it is to the Gentiles. Besides this, the incidents of exorcism or demon possessions were not uncommon among Jews. Hence it is worth situating it the milieu of Jewish Society.
4.3.8.1. THE UNWANTED PRESENCE

The confrontation in the pericope of "The Gerasene Demoniac" is between Jesus, the Saviour and the evil spirit, the foreign element (demon). The possessed man reacts vigorously which speaks of the brutalized state of the man. Luke also notes that the demon, which possessed the man, is not a single but a 'Legion'. Thus we could note that the foreign presence is in the multiple form of oppression and it is widespread.

The name 'Legion' in the pericope could suggest the harshness of the Roman occupation. The presence of foreign political power was always treated as of threatening numinous power, a pollution of the land. Roman rule, a demonic power, could be thus interpreted as a threat to the people of Palestine. The name 'Legion' reflects the military might of the Roman forces occupying Palestine and perhaps the cruelty of their governance. More than one commentators hold to this kind of interpretation. One such is William Barclay. He reasons that:

"The man said his name as 'legion' may be because he has seen a Roman legion on the march, and his poor afflicted mind felt that there was not one demon but a whole regiment inside. It may well be that the word haunted him because he had seen atrocities carried out by a Roman legion when he was a child. It is possible that it was the sight of such atrocities which left a scar upon his mind ultimately seen him mad."
4.3.8.1.1. DEMONS AND EVIL SPIRITS

Spirit, an abstract being, is the one that animates life. This spirit is known as soul, intelligence, etc. It is of two kinds: one that animates life towards good and the other towards bad. One that creates bad is called 'Evil spirit'. Evil spirit, demon\devil is the personification of the principle of evil. As evil is opposed to good, it is also opposed to God and to Jesus Christ. In scriptural language evil spirit is personified with demons. Demon is called as devil or satan. The idea or notion of demon does not seem to exist in the early part of Jewish religion. As James M. Efird argues, the idea of evil beings (demons), who were allied with the forces of darkness and wickedness in Jewish religion, came into focus, probably, under the influence of Persian thought, during the inter-testamental period of Judaism.

From the standpoint of religious psychology, Demonism represents an externalization of human experience. Feelings and sensations, moods and impulses, even physical conditions, within human persons are portrayed as outer forces. The terror is not something that issues out of a man's inner self but something by which the inner self is seized or gripped with (Exod. 15:14; Jer. 21:6; Ps. 48:7; Is. 33:14). In Rabbinic Judaism demon is seen as one who does harm to life. Sickness is attributed to demons. They believe that these demons have freedom to operate in this world and will

121. Demon - the English translation of a Greek term 'diamonos', originally referred to any one of numerous, vaguely defined "spirit beings", either good or bad. In King James version of the Bible, the term is regularly translated as "devil". Demon appears in RSV as the translation of a different Greek term meaning "accuser" or "slanderer" (diabolo). The word Demon is used as a virtual synonym for "Satan".
cease at the final judgement, when they will be thrown into the everlasting fire prepared for the devils and his angels (Mt. 25:41; 2 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 20:10). Jewish eschatology represented at Qumran expected that demons would be deprived of the power at the end. In the Old Testament, the demons are considered the foes of God. Those who favour demons are also foes of God:

The foes are also those who live in tombs, those who burn incense on the tiles to demons and those who eat pork (Is. 65: 3-5).

There is no one particular term which refers to the word "demon" in the Bible. 'Demon' refers to, either 'evil spirit' or neutral 'anonymous gods or spirits'. Most of the Old Testament interpreters identify two general classes of demons: a) *sedium* (demons) b) *Seirim* (hairy demons, satyrs, see Lev. 17:7; Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37; Is. 13:2).

Demons find sufficient place in the New Testament society too. As C.F. Evans notes there is always a relation between the powers that torment human beings and Jesus exercising his power over them to liberate the tormented persons:

"The close connection in Hebrew thought between hostile powers in nature and the tormenting spirits, and the use of storm figure for disorder and madness in mankind (Ps. 65:5f.; 46:2-6; Is.17:2f.), make the justification of this (Gerasene Demonic) and the preceding pericope signified. While the storm at sea is represented as a demon, whose exorcism brings calm, the description of the demoniac here is designated to depict a temptuous and storm ridden creature, whose exorcism involves the return of demons to the deep."  

125. L. Sabourin, op. cit., p. 198.
126. In the Old Testament there is belief that evil spiritual beings can torment people (1 Sam. 16:14-23). Protection from them was sought (Ps. 91).
The demons come to oppose Jesus. They protest and raise their voice in the presence of Jesus. The figure of Demon in the New Testament is comprehensible only when it is seen as the counterpart or counter principle of Christ. Demons acknowledge themselves as 'legion'. Mark notes, that they were in great number: "for we are many" (5:9).

Demons recognize Jesus' power (Lk. 8:30; Mk. 1:24,26; 5:9). The revelation that there are many demons (v. 30) who are involved becomes the basis for the role of large number of swine in the following verses (32-33) of the pericope. Jesus makes the demons confess that they are many (legion). Jesus' asking for the name of the demons cannot be understood as if he sees them as his enemies and also not as a sign of power struggle between him and the demons. Jesus has authority on everything (5:17-26).

Jesus sees how the demoniac, "this man....", in v. 28 is so severely disturbed by the demons. The demon had tied down this man with chains. The demon, the oppressor, had conditioned the man to be in cruel state of life. This man was looking to come out of his miserable situation. Jesus hears his cries and comes to his rescue. Jesus condemns

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130. In fact, according to Luke the conflict between Jesus and the Demons begin already early in Jesus' ministry and occur every now and then. (Cf. Lk. 4:31-37; 8:28; 9:37-43; Acts 11:14-22, 24-26; 16:16-18.)


132. 'Legion in Aramaic could mean either the body of men composing a legion or the officer commanding it. In Greek 'Legion' means a body of frontline soldiers in Roman army, 'commander of legion or the legion itself. The Latin word, 'legio' translated as "laon" means the same as 'legion' in Greek. A 'Legion' was a unit of the Roman army containing normally five to six thousand members.

133. Cf. Lk. 4: 1-10.

134. In earlier instance, (Lk. 8:2 - 'some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities') Jesus pays attention to the possessed people.
the demon, the oppressor, and liberates the oppressed, the demonized and the persecuted. Jesus comes in search\textsuperscript{135} of the unwanted people in their own society.

The possessed and the marginalised are regarded as unclean and dirty. They are socially alienated, culturally marginalized, religiously discriminated, politically under scored and humanly humiliated. These people have no place in the normal society and thus are forced to live among the tombs where the 'evil spirits' reside. Such is the case of the marginalized subaltern peoples. The situation in society for these people is below human dignity. Jesus, through his cures, drives out the 'demon' that oppress the man and reinstates the possessed to his normalcy.

4.3.9. INTERPRETATION

The above study has helped us to discover the inner meanings of the pericope. The study also helped us to grasp the implications of the meaning. The story of “Gerasene Demoniac” should be interpreted so that it can continue to speak a word of assurance and hope to the subaltern peoples,\textsuperscript{136} for whom everyday is a battle with depression, fear, anxiety or compulsive behaviour.\textsuperscript{137} When the norms of interpretation are guided by the context of the problem it would yield intended results. The exercise of interpretation rotates around the circle of "Author-Text-Reader".\textsuperscript{138}

\textsuperscript{135} Jesus' coming out of Galilee and entering Gentile territory could be taken as a sign of his coming in search of the unwanted persons.

\textsuperscript{136} When interpreting a text from and for a particular context certain amount of subjectivity is unavoidable.

\textsuperscript{137} Alan Culpepper, op. cit., p. 188.

\textsuperscript{138} In fact we have already made clear what this circle is about in different contexts. Author, the evangelist, has handed over the text about the universal message of Jesus Christ, written in the context of his times. Today's reader reads this text in order to make Jesus' message, presented in the text, relevant to his community here and now.
As already noted in the beginning of the dissertation, the social reading of the Gospel message is a recent venture and even more so the subaltern reading of the message of Jesus. The *Sitz im Leben* of the Palestinian subaltern peoples of Jesus' time is not the same as the *Sitz im Leben* of the subaltern peoples of Andhra Pradesh. However, as we have seen above, the social and other problems of both the societies, basically, are not much different.

The story of Gerasene demoniac presents itself as Jesus using power to heal an unfortunate demented human being, an out-cast of the society. He liberates him to the fullness of mind and dignity of person both spiritually and physically. In this sense Jesus reaches out to the helpless subaltern peoples.

a. v. 22b. "*Kai eipen pros autois' dielthomen eis po peran tes.."\(^{139}\)

- Let us go across to the other side of lake"

In the first verse of the previous pericope (8: 22-25) Luke makes clear the intention of Jesus.\(^{140}\) Jesus and his disciples travel,\(^{141}\) "to other side of the lake" because Jesus has an appointment\(^{142}\) to meet the demoniac. This is already an indication that Jesus goes in search of the subaltern peoples (4: 18-19).\(^{143}\)


\(^{140}\) Luke says that Jesus and his disciples "sailed down" *katepleusan* to the country of Gerasene. This marks the difference from previous pericope in v. 22 (*egeneto* - he came to pass..).

\(^{141}\) Literal meaning of the word *katepleusan* is translated as "sailed down" but could be said as "travelled". Jesus' travelling from the "high seas" or from the "high waters" has significance. If the Jews considered themselves to be "high" and "those on the other side" of Galilee (Jewish territory), a gentile territory as "low", Jesus leaves these 'high classes' aside for time being and goes in search of the "low" class people.

\(^{142}\) Saviour of the suffering peoples goes in search of them.

\(^{143}\) These subaltern peoples, as we have pointed out earlier according to Luke, primarily, are the socially or religiously despised or oppressed people. see Francis Pereira, "Jesus and the Good News of the Kingdom to the Poor" in *The
1. v. 26. "kai katepleusan...gerasenon - and they sailed down."

Jesus and his disciples come to Gerasene country. The episode takes place expressively in the Decapolis (Mk 5:20), predominantly a Gentile area. Since Luke emphasizes that the episode took place in a Gentile territory, we could see in it an anticipation of the future ministry of the Church to the Gentiles. Thus Luke's intention is made clear. The salvation that Jesus brings is to whole humanity (to the Jews and to the Gentiles).

2. v. 27a. Exelthonti de auto.. - and as he stepped out.."

Jesus' going to Gerasene region appears to be going in search (8: 22b.) of the possessed man. Since Jesus expresses his desire to go to the other side of the lake (to Gentile area) he travels along with his disciples. Jesus' perception of the longing of the human (suffering ones) beings is to be noted here though it is not explicitly said. Luke mentions that Jesus 'stepped out', signifying, he comes out of his usual territory (Galilee, Jewish area) and takes initiative to go into another region (Gentile).

3. vv. 27b. and 28a. "aner tis...prosepesen auto - a certain man...fell down before him."

A "certain man..." came and prostrated before Jesus. Luke explicitly mentions that he is a man ('aner tis' - a certain man). But a little later on in v. 30 "this one man" is


144. J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 737.


146. J. A. Fitzmyer (op. cit., p. 737), though admits that it is not easy to translate the Greek text, but the phrase "he stepped out" could be translated as "going out in to the land".
described as possessed by legion. In the first instance, it is the possessed man who is the subject but in the later verses, it is the demon (possessor, 'legion') who talks. There is reciprocal meeting of the demon-possessed man and Jesus. Apparently there seems to be a positive attitude between the two. Jesus allows the man to come to him. It is the characteristic of the Liberator. Anyone else might distance him\herself from the outcast(e) but Jesus, the Liberator and Unifier welcomes him.

The heartening thing to notice here is that the possessed man too goes towards the Saviour. No one can bear suffering indefinitely. He falls 'prostrate'\(^1\) (the verb 'prosepesen' means "falling down") before Jesus. But this verb 'prosepesen'\(^2\) could be interpreted variously: 'falling prostrate', 'encountering' or 'meeting'.\(^3\) The encounter could be either by accident or by design. In the case of the possessed man, it is certainly by design.\(^4\) It could be justified from the fact that Jesus decides to go to 'other side of the lake' a Gentile territory and hence, we could say that it was designed.

4. v. 27b & c. "tes poleos, echon diamonia, ouk enedusato himation, kai en oikia ouk emenen all en tois mnemasin - out of the city who had demons..not wearing..not living in a house but in the tombs."

v. 27. furnishes all the necessary details of the Sitz im Leben of the subaltern demoniac. To sum up the whole sentence in one phrase, the demoniac does not belong to


\(^2\) The meaning of the word "prosepesen" could go beyond its written meaning. It could be a normal reverence or beyond that. The possessed man throws himself fully before Jesus in despair. In fact, Scripture speaks of persons who have demons (daimonion echei) but never the reverse, persons are not demons and they do not possess demons. (See G. A. Chadwick, "The Demoniac of Gerasa" in The Expositor, IV\8., (1893), p. 126.

\(^3\) J. Reeling and J. L. Swellenberg, op. cit., p. 344.

\(^4\) Ibid.

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normal human society. However, Luke designates him as a `man', which means, he was a human being,\textsuperscript{151} from (\textit{ek} out of) the `city',\textsuperscript{152} and now does not seem to be. The other features of the possessed man are: nakedness,\textsuperscript{153} and homelessness (he was not living in a house and has no identity but living among the tombs,\textsuperscript{154} not a place for human beings). The first two attributes are in a negative tone but the last one is in positive, which in fact is more negative, namely living among the tombs. He is the most malignant one. To live among the tombs is not normal to human beings. All these features testify that he was possessed. Luke also mentions that this state of affairs of the demoniac is not temporary but was since a long time.\textsuperscript{155}

The above information about the possessed man confirms his wretchedness. Whole city bears witness to it. It is an historical fact, in the sense that none could deny the suffering of the subaltern demoniac. He is demonized. There can be no worse humiliation to a person than to be labelled as no-man. In the same v. 27b, Luke mentions

\textsuperscript{151}. Ibid.
\textsuperscript{152}. Luke, by noting that the possessed man was from the city, probably would like to say that this man lived a better life before, with a respectable life, with good clothes, among his fellow citizens but the situation now is different. Which means something had gone wrong. Now he is possessed and oppressed by demon. He is in the custody of the oppressor. (Cf. Stahlin, "\textit{chera}" in TDNT, Vol. 9. p. 450)
\textsuperscript{153}. Nakedness symbolizes shamelessness. (See Bruce Larson, "Luke" in \textit{The Communicator's Commentary} Word Books Publishers, Texas, 1983. p. 153. From an intellectual argument, the possessed man must have been naked because it is a common tendency among the mad persons. (See Peter J. Hass, \textit{Recovering the Role of Women}, Scholars Press, Atlanta, 1992, p. 221.)
\textsuperscript{154}. Luke’s mention of the possessed man living in the tombs must have not be an unimaginable sight to his community members. As F. W. Farrar notes “the naked, homicidal maniacs who live in caves and tombs are still to be seen in Palestine.” in \textit{The Gospel According to St. Luke}, (in Greek with Maps, Notes and Introduction), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1912, p. 221.
\textsuperscript{155}. Long duration of the state of the demoniac could be seen as an acute mania cynanthropy or lykanthropy. (See J. F. Craghan, "The Gerasene Demoniac" in CBQ, 30., (1968), p. 523.) However to brush aside the possession of the man as schizopornie would be too simplistic. When we talk of the disease we should also take note of its root causes.

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explicitly that the demoniac was without a garment for a considerable time.\textsuperscript{156} It is another significant feature of the suffering subaltern peoples. Their garments have been stolen away by the oppressors. Garment need not refer only to external garments in the sense of clothes. Putting on garments is a sign of civilization. Besides his usual garments, he was made to put on one more garment, namely, that of misery. He longed to shed the garments that alienated him from rest of his community.\textsuperscript{157}

5. v. 28. "\textit{idon de ton Iesoun...anakraxas prosepesen auto - having seen Jesus... and cried out.}"

The activity of the demoniac, the sick man, is very revealing. He sees Jesus and runs up to him, trembles, cries aloud and falls prostrate.\textsuperscript{158} All these expressions signify his longingness to get rid of his sorry state of life. But none of these hurdles prevent him from going to Jesus. He dares to express his distress and entrusts his fate to Jesus. Jesus' presence was a threat to his unnaturalness as it is to the oppressors. However, as Luke points out there is hope in despair. The hope of the possessed man is evident in his efforts to come to Jesus.

6. v. 28b. "\textit{ti emoi kai soi - deomai sou me me basanises - what to me and to you...do not torment me.}"

So far, the demoniac was ‘acting’ and now the demon in the demoniac begins to speak. Here we must distinguish the demon from the demoniac. While talking to Jesus it is the demon who is engaged but when the suffering is narrated, it referred to the

\textsuperscript{156} If we notice well Luke mentions the ‘garment’ in singular. Perhaps it might refer to one robe that Jewish people normally wear. This one garment covers the whole body (Cf. Jn. 19: 23-24).

\textsuperscript{157} They are the garments of shame, humiliation, deprivation of human dignity, etc.

\textsuperscript{158} All violence however fierce it may be falls before Jesus, “Son of God”. Hence these actions signify, in implied meaning, “Christological revelation”. (see James Foote, op. cit., p. 486.)
Demon's first sentence is "What have you to do with me?" (see 2 Sam. 16:10; 19:12). From the context we know to whom it is addressed. The word "Sot" (you) refers to Jesus. The question of the demoniac (me basanises - do not torment me) sounds like a self-pity. It could be interpreted differently. The demoniac must have thought that Jesus was a threat to him and hence asks him not to have anything to do with him. It also could mean a state of lost hope: 'I am a lost one, no good could come out of me therefore leave me alone'. But it also could be said in a positive way. Please let me know what good I could draw from the contact with you. Jesus' presence makes him aware of his deplorable conditions. His Sitz im Leben was terrifying. Thus the cry of the demoniac is a cry of utter hopelessness and at the same time a cry of hope. Jesus does not torment the demon but the demon torments itself.

7. v. 28c. "Iesou huie tou theou tou hupsistou - Jesus Son of God, the Most High."

Demon addresses Jesus in the most elevated Christological terms. "Jesus, Son of the Most High" (Lk. 1:32, 35, 76). In these words, and at this point, the messianic

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159. These words of demon from his own point of view are significant. The Demon (not the possessed man), oppressor, does not want Jesus to torment him. Demon sees Jesus (in fact whom he addressed as "Son of God, Most High" in v.28.) as a judge to him. (See M. F. Sadier. op. cit., p. 215.)

160. The word 'torment' is a strong word. It means severe bodily or mental pain and suffering.


162. Though explicit mention of it is not found in the text, Jesus' healing is certainly a sign of hope.


164. In fact, in Luke, there are number of the categories of people who address Jesus with Christological titles. They include:
   a. Demons - Lk. 4:35, 41 and 8:28
   b. People - 7:16
   c. Disciples - 9:20; Mk. 8:28
   d. Jesus himself - 5:24; Mk. 2:10
   e. By God the Father - 9:35; Mk. 9:7
secret is unfolded. And it is the demon-possessed man and not a normal man who proclaims. It is surprising that a Gentile could address Jesus thus. This title was a common Gentile title for God, and hence we could say that it is justifiable. The demoniac was a Gentile (from Gentile territory) and not a Jew. The Gentiles identified Jesus as Son of God "the Most High" in a supernatural identity.

In other Lukan passages there are other Christological titles that the demons address Jesus with (4:34- “The Holy One of God” and in 4: 41- Jesus “You are the Son of God”). They have realized that Jesus could deliver salvation and has power to grant supernatural graces that a human person is in need of. By calling Jesus with such a messianic title, the demons are convicted by the knowledge that their destruction and doom has arrived.

8. v. 29a. "pareggeilen gar to pneumati to akatharto -
He commanded the demon to come out of him."

He (Jesus) commanded the demon to come out of the man. The verb ‘pareggeilen’ in imperfect tense, suggests a continuous command, meaning that Jesus' power over demons is complete and absolute for ever. It is a response to the demoniac's cry. Here it is worth noting that the designation of the demon is changed from 'demon' to 'unclean

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165 J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 738.
166 J. Nolland, op. cit., p. 408.
168 This was favourite Gentile’s title. It was used by Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20,22); Balaam (Num. 24:16); the king of Babylon (Is. 14:14) and frequently in the proclamation of Babylonian Kings (Dan. 3:26; 4:24,32; 5:18,21; 7:18,22,25,27) and also by heathen girl at Philippi (acts 16:17).
170 In the Gospel according to Luke, it is only the place where the word "Demon" (diamon) occurs and ‘diamones’ only in the parallel places (Cf. Mt. 8:31; Mk 5:12). On the other instances in the Gospel ‘diamonion’ occurs 45 times and ‘pneuma’ 27 times. (See F. W. Farrar, op. cit., p. 222.)
spirit' (Mk 5:8). Demon is qualified as a spirit but this spirit is qualified as 'unclean'.

Jesus' command manifests his power and authority. He is a new creative force. His power is a liberative act. It motivates his mission (4:18-19). Demon being called unclean spirit too is not accidental, it represents evil, suffering. It is unclean in the sense of impure. This 'impurity' (that prompts oppression) needs to be cleansed.

9. v. 29b. "sunarpazo...kai edesmeueto...diarresson ta desma

    elauente hupo tou daimoniou eis tas eremous -

    it had seized...bound...broke the chains...driven to the wilderness by the demon."

When a demon 'possesses' a human being there are consequences. The features of possession are: demon takes control of the person, keeps the person under its guard, binds the person with chains and fetters, and the person breaks the bonds and runs into the wilderness. The Sitz im Leben of the demoniac could be read into the traumatic experiences of the Palestinians associated with the Roman occupation of Palestine. All the features of the painful experiences of the demoniac are very symbolic. They express a sense of insecurity and fear. The demon having possessed the man takes all precautions to prevent the person from going away from his possession. The only place the possessed could go was to the wilderness (tombs and mountains) and not to the human society.

These features of demons-possession manifest the oppression that is laid on the subaltern peoples. The oppressor makes all the effort to see that the oppressed subaltern

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171. The verb 'sunerpekei' is to be translated as "to seize". The Demon seized the man with force. The demoniac was bound and driven. (See R. C. H. Lenski, op. cit., p. 470).

172. 'Wilderness' was regarded as a peculiar haunt of demons both in the Old Testament (Tb. 8:3) and the New Testament (Mt. 12:43).

peoples do not go out of his control. If oppression itself is inhuman, perpetuating oppression through various means is worse.

10. v. 30. "Legion - hoti, eiselthen daimonia polla eis auton - legion, for many demons had entered him."

When Jesus asked the demon for his name, the demon calls himself a "legion". By asking the possessed man his 'name', Jesus, in fact, invites him to regain his "self-hood". Luke gives an explanation why the demon calls himself "legion". For, he is not one but a group, 'many demons have entered him'. While Mark and Luke record the word "legion", Matthew omits it. The word 'legion' is found in different languages (see in the above section). 'Legion' is an indefinite term. It is a way of saying that a whole regiment of demons have entered him. The man is not tormented by one but by many demons. The second part of the sentences is an explanation to the first. When Jesus asks the man "What is your name" he replies "legion". Legion is identified with the alien spirit(s) which hold the man in his power.

When Luke mentions that the legion is in plural, it is significant. The oppressors of the subaltern peoples are many. Jesus had to deal with a multitude of demons. The multiplicity of the possession prepares the place for the mentioning of the herd of swine

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174. The 'name' is one of the most individual of each human person's possession. To have a name is to be a person.


179. Some of the New Testament scholars identify the 'Legion' with the Roman legions, soldiers who inflicted traumatic experiences upon the local people. (See L. Morris, op. cit., p. 156.)
in the following verses (v.31, 32, 33, 35,). It is also worth noting that it is not the possessed man, the human being, but the demons in him who he is legion. The multiplicity of demons also indicates the seriousness of the illness (alienation). The response of the demoniac that his name is 'legion' also suggests the confusion within the demoniac due to the possession by multiple demons. The possessed man has lost his individuality in demonic hallucinations.

11. v. 31a. "kai parekaloun auton - and they besought him.."

This sentence once again confirms the plurality of the demons (legion). Henceforth Jesus deals with demons as a group. They, in turn also act as a group. Thus we read the sentence as "they besought him". It is also interesting to note that the demons beseech Jesus. They submit themselves before Jesus. They realise that their end has come.

12. v. 31b. "hina me epitaxe autois eis ten abusson apelthein - they entreated him not to send them to abyss."

In the previous verse we learnt that the demon allowed the possessed to go into the wilderness and not to human society. In a similar sense the demons plead with Jesus not to send them to human society, but to the abyss. It is not a request but a plea, an insistence. The abyss is the actual place of the demons. It is symbolic that the demons plead to be sent to the abyss. It is the abode of evil. The oppressors, when confronted with their end, look for alternative but do not show willingness to give up their


182. Mark notes that the possessed man lived day and night on the mountains and among tombs (5:5).

oppressive ways and means. This does not indicate complete change (matanoia-repentance) of heart.

13. v. 32. "en de ekei agele...boskomene...there was swine herd"

The build up to the episode of healing the demoniac and restoring him to his normal ‘self-hood’ is continued. The disease of the demoniac (being possessed, hence impure) renders him unclean. He is associated with the unclean spirits, and now, with further unclean animals, namely swine. According to Jewish belief the swine are unclean animals. They associate themselves with the demons.\textsuperscript{184} They are not to be eaten (Lev. 11:7; Deut. 14:8).\textsuperscript{185} But they are sacred animals in some Gentile cults.\textsuperscript{186} The presence of the herd of swine also suggests that the location of the episode is a Gentile territory.\textsuperscript{187} This goes along with the notion that unclean spirits belong to Gentile territory.

When the demons entered into the swine, they were drowned. But, symbolically, along with the swine even the demons must have been drowned. If we take the “drowning” as a sign of destruction then the demons, as C.F. Evans suggests,\textsuperscript{188} have gone to their destined place of punishment, the abyss, v.31.

What happens to the swine as a consequence of demons entering them when Jesus grants permission, and the reaction of the herdsmen is understandable. Jesus giving permission to the demons to enter into the swine might appear to be confusing at the first instance. It has to be understood in the context. It is not that Jesus gives the demons freedom to go anywhere they like or possess some other creatures but to an

\textsuperscript{185}. J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 739.
\textsuperscript{186}. L. Sabourin, op. cit., p. 198.
\textsuperscript{187}. W. J. Harrington, op. cit., p. 131.
\textsuperscript{188}. C. F. Evans, op. cit., p. 387.
unimportant place where they have no chance to do harm. Jesus does not give permission to the demons to continue to do evil. Swine are considered to be of no value and what happens to them later on is unimportant. This type of interpretation lead to big debate among the scholars. Did Jesus allow the destruction of the swine? But by asking the questions from mere economic, moral point of view, (though valid and need to be answered) we should not miss the point, as Michael Wilcock, cautions us, that the focus should be on the man who is “healed” (saved).

14. v. 35. "kai heuron kathemenon ton anthropon...para tous podas tou Iesou - and they found the man seated...at the feet of Jesus."

The role of the Swine and demons is practically over, though there are no such divisions in the pericope. Now the attention is turned to Jesus - the liberator, the healed man and the crowd. The word ‘exelthon’ (and they went out) refers to the people (crowd). These are the people who are informed by those (the herdsmen) who witnessed

189. This question raises three points of discussion. Namely: economic, moral and spiritual.

Concerning the question of economic destruction, if that had happened it is really difficult to argue why did Jesus do that. From Jewish point of view swine were unclean and hence not valuable so it would be alright such animals be destroyed. If swine too are created by God why should they be unclean? (cf. Acts 10:1-16). For a rationalist there is something illogical in this whole affair! Though Gentiles would not have reared swine for their own sake, they were a great source of income to the people of that region. Therefore if Jesus had allowed such economic loss to the swineherd it is questionable and unexplainable.

From moral point of view we could not think that Jesus would have allowed it. In this regard let us examine the arguments that A. Plummer (op. cit.., P. 228) offers: 1. “Like earthquake, shipwrecks, pestilence, and the like, the destruction of the swine is part of the mystery of evil, and insoluble”. 2. Jesus would have allowed such thing in order to convince the demoniacs and their neighbours of the completeness of the cure. These arguments may have their value.

From spiritual point of view A. Plummer argues that a “brute and private property may be sacrificed when the sanity and lives of persons is concerned“. Should we understand it from the point of ransom to be paid (Suffering Servant) for the salvation of the human souls? And should we restrict the whole question of the problem of the 'possessed man' only to the realm of soul and the physical suffering?

190. Michel Willock, op. cit., p. 120.

191. These people are the citizens of the city of Gerasenes. These people enjoyed the company of the 'demonic' (of our episode) when he was with them and was one like them. But when he became a 'possessed man he became a public nuisance. None of these people showed any interest or desire to help him when he was in misery. They not only did not show interest but even cast out of the
the healing. These people, hearing about the miracle, came and found the man sitting at
the feet of Jesus, healer of the demon possessed or to say differently, the destroyer of
demons. The editing of the pericope of Luke can be noticed well here. He delicately places
the roles and brings out the sensitivity to the whole drama. There is action-reaction
process. The healed man comes to sit at the feet of Jesus, the Healer-Master. The healed
man perhaps wanted to become a disciple, a theme dear to Luke (see 5: 11,27-32, 6:13,17,
10:1; 14:25-33; Acts 6:1-2,7; 9:10,26; 11:26; 14:21-22; 15:10; 16:1). But he is sent back to
go and proclaim what God has done to him.

15. v.35b. "himatismenon kai sophronounta -
clothed and sound minded."

The signs of the man being healed are noted. The contents of v. 35- 'new
conditions' become a response to the contents of v. 27-'misery'. The healed man joins the
normal human society, sits as one among the people around Jesus. Since Luke says that
he came back and sat among the members present with Jesus, would suggest that the
community too had accepted the man.\textsuperscript{192} Community too would have repented for
alienating its own member. The sign that he is normal is pointed out by the fact that he
is clothed and is in his senses. He is totally cured. He joins the human community with
self-dignity and restored humanity. Wearing clothes is a sign of a civilized person,
belonging to a living human society.\textsuperscript{193} Being in one's senses would reveal the physical
and psychological health of the person. It is the sign of being liberated. The
transformation in the situation of the healed man is acknowledged even by the people of
city. And now they come out to see the healed man. Public respects as long as one
is pleasing and when one goes its way.

\textsuperscript{192} This has an implication for the Christian community. It is the
responsibility of everyone (as in Lk. 15:11-32) to welcome "the unfortunate one"
back to the community, from the "far country" (tombs) of his mental and physical
exile. He is no more a threat.

\textsuperscript{193} Michael Wilcock, op. cit., p. 120.
the town. They knew the man before (while he was in the possession of the demon) and see him now, a healed man.

16. v. 39a. "hupostrephe eis ton oikon sou - return to your house"

The dialogue between Jesus, the Healer, and the man, the healed one, is worth noting. The demon-healed man comes back and begs Jesus not to make him go away but allow him to be with Him (as a disciple!). However, the request of the 'healed man' need not be interpreted in a negative sense. Namely, that he still lacks self-confidence to face the community which cast him out. Jesus' answer, though puzzling, is revealing. Jesus usually invites the disciples to be with him but in this case asks the man to go back to his house. The house here, may not refer so much to the building where he lives but to the family or human community (contrary to his earlier dwelling among tombs) he belongs to.

17. v. 39b. "diegou hosa soi epoiesen ho theos.. - declare all that God has done for you."

The response that the healed man gets from Jesus to his request (to be disciple) might appear to be curious to us but not to those who are familiar with the Jewish religious mind. Sharing with others (his fellow citizens) what God had done to the possessed man gives a finale to the healing story and demonstrates his restoration to full humanity. It is very instructive. Jewish prayer consist of recalling the good things that Yahweh had done to them. Jesus asks him to do (though does not reject his request totally) the same. Proclaiming God’s mighty deeds would mean expressing one's faith in God.

194. T. Hawthorn, op. cit., p. 79.

When Jesus asks the man to go and proclaim what God had done to him, he goes and proclaims what Jesus had done to him. Here we should not be lost in the discussion, whether Jesus and God are different or the same, whether healing is attributed to God or to Jesus? Such questions do not arise. The power at work in Jesus is the power of God (see Lk. 5:17-26; Mk. 2:1-12; Mt. 9:2-8). God’s reign is manifested in the works of Jesus. Jesus’ command is both an order and a mission. One who is healed has to make all efforts to heal his fellow human beings in order to create a new human society.

4.3.10. CONCLUSION: SYNTHESIS

Luke provides great scope to interpret this pericope. As we have noticed in our study and interpretation, a number of elements are interwoven in the episode. They are: 1) The healing of the demoniac in the Gentile territory becomes a precedent to the mission of the disciples (Christians). 2) Through the flight of the swineherd the knowledge of the event is extended to the city and the region and eventually to the whole population (v. 37). 3) The demoniac is seen as completely recovered from his dire condition and restored to sanity (vv. 35-38). 4) The spontaneous reaction of the inhabitants has to be seen not so much as a rejection of Jesus but as their effort to secure Jesus’ departure (for they were seized with fear). It becomes a good example of the acceptance of the salvific activities of Jesus by whole humanity (Jews and Gentiles). 5) The exorcised man requests Jesus to allow him to be with him, perhaps as a permanent disciple, but the request is refused. Instead he is asked to return home and proclaim (v.39) what God has done to him. The message of Jesus that he is the Liberator of humankind needs to be shared and proclaimed.

For the Jews, the episode of “Healing of Gerasene Demoniac” would have appeared as liberation of their country from the foreign rule. According to John J. Rousseau the episode on “Gerasene Demoniac is:

196. Michael Wilcock, op. cit., p. 121.
“an added satire mocking the Roman legions which
the storytellers envisioned as driven back to
Mediterranean, for the enjoyment of a Zealot
audience.” ¹⁹⁷

Thus the Gerasene demoniac pericope would have implanted a seed of hope for the Jews.

The pericope has rich potential, as we have seen above, for subaltern interpretation. The demented man is pushed outside the community. He lived an inhuman life. Society had been harsh towards him. He needed a social restoration. He needed to be restored to his self worth and self dignity and be counted as a human being. The experience of liberation of the demoniac instills hope in the hearts and minds of the subaltern peoples.

In the above hermeneutical process we could note how the reader-response method became alive. The reader, subaltern person, read the text and found the response meaningful and suggestive. The salvation that Jesus gifted to a particular subaltern person in the episode on Gerasene Demoniac becomes a paradigm for the liberation of other subaltern peoples. We shall, in the next part, try to see how the other subaltern peoples in Luke found liberation in Jesus.

PART FOUR: SUBALTERN PEOPLES IN LUKE

4.4.0. INTRODUCTION

We have been focusing our attention throughout the thesis on the plight of the subaltern peoples in the Bible and its liberative message to those of Andhra Pradesh. In the light of this we have studied a particular text from Luke's Gospel that provided response to the problem we are struggling with. In this part of the chapter we shall highlight the subaltern peoples who have been liberated by the salvific acts of Jesus in Luke. We note here again that we are not going to do exegesis of any of the texts that we mention. Our intention here is to focus on Jesus' response to each of these individual cases found in the Gospel.

4.4.1. POOR

The option of Jesus in favour of the subaltern peoples that Luke presents is so convincing, that it appears as the personal stand of Luke.¹ In the very beginning of his public ministry Jesus makes clear that his mission, according to Luke, is to announce Good News to the "Poor"; to release the "Captives"; to restore the sight to the "Blind"; to set at liberty "those who are oppressed and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (4:18-19; see Is. 61: 1-2). According to Luke, the poor are the prime object of Jesus' programmatic mission.²


Luke brings all the marginalized subaltern peoples under one umbrella of 'poor'. In this sense it is right to say that the Gospel according to Luke, is the Gospel of "Poor". In other words, it is the Gospel of the subaltern peoples. The subaltern peoples could also be called as "People of God". According to Richard Cassidy, Jesus, as presented in Luke, displays, unmistakably, a specific and consistent concern for the poor. Jesus himself enumerates who these poor are. They are: the captives, the blind, the oppressed, the crippled, the lame (14:13,21), the disabled (14:12-14), the social outcasts (7:22; Lev. 21:18) and the less regarded groups: the Samaritans, the Gentiles, the Women, the Tax-collectors, the Sinners (through his association with them). All these groups, the receivers of Jesus' liberative act are socially alienated peoples. These are the peoples who need divine help most and are the ones who wait to hear the Word of God (Lk. 6:20).

The Greek term most commonly used in Luke and in the New Testament for "poor" is ptochos. The lexiographers note that the first century Greek used two words that we now translate as "poor" in English. They were: a) 'Penes' denoting a person who


4. W. F. Adeney, op. cit., p. 11.


had an employment but was of slender means and b) 'ptochos' who did begging and depended on others for support.\textsuperscript{10}

The Hebrew Bible defined the 'poor' with many names: 'the afflicted man, the degraded man, meager, mendicant, indigent (poor),\textsuperscript{11} and 'needy, lowly, without power, and abused by those who were in power'.\textsuperscript{12} There were a number of attributes to the experience of the poor: humiliation, oppression, vulnerability and helplessness. The prophets called the poor as 'remnant'.\textsuperscript{13} 'Anawim' was another name that was given to the poor. The term 'anawim' included: material want, failure in temporal matters, apparent desertion on the part of Yahweh, real religious humility, suffering and gentleness (see Is. 49:13; Ps. 33:7-19; 36:7-9).\textsuperscript{14}

The Old Testament identified poor as those whose power was insufficient and who did not have the capacity to provide for themselves the essentials of life. It was the most needy group, not only culturally, religiously, economically, socially but also humanly. It distinguished the poor as: the beggarly poor, the poor peasant, the lazy poor, etc.\textsuperscript{15} The poor were also known as the `desperate', `the destitute' and `wretched creatures' who fight for their survival. The Sitz im Leben of the poor in Palestine was a social reality.\textsuperscript{16} The Poor in Palestine were those who were: "beggars," "weak," "powerless," 'landless', 'righteous' and 'sick', 'naked', 'hungry' and `destitute'. As the poor depended only on God,

\textsuperscript{10} Dennis Hamm, \textit{Beatitudes in Context}, Michel Glazier, Wilmington, 1990, p. 44.


\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p. 238.


they came to be identified as God's righteous people in an unique sense (Pss. 9:9-10;14:4-6;37:14-15;69:33; Is.3:15; Hab.3:13-14).

The contrast between the poor and the rich in the Old Testament, also was brought out vividly. The wisdom literature is full of it, though it also abound in paradoxical texts regarding the poor and the rich.

Where there are no oxen there is no grain, but an abundant harvest comes by the strength of the ox (Prov. 14:4). "The poor plead for mercy but the rich answer harshly (18:23). "The poor man is shunned even by his neighbour, but the rich man has countless friends (14:20). "The rich rules the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender" (22:7). "The rich are advised to be kind towards the poor" (19:17).

The Old Testament prophets saw poverty as the main reason for the existence of the poor. Ordinarily, 'poverty' denotes economical want. However, poverty is an ambiguous term. In its original meaning it refers to the external, economic, and social circumstances in which the 'poor' people live. The real life situation described by this term, however, depends on the specific socio-economic-cultural-religious and human condition of society as a whole and on the social prerogatives of the person who uses the term in particular. The poverty of an impoverished noble man or a rich official, and a down and out poor agricultural farmer can not be put on the same level.

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19. Not all the social analysts or Scripture scholars would understand the term 'poor' in similar sense. Much depends on the social, etc. backgrounds they come from or they would like to or expected to address. Hence one's prerogative changes accordingly.
20. These groups were wealthy classes. But sometimes they appeared to be 'poor' because they could not meet the demands of their life standards.
The New Testament endorses the idea of the Old Testament that it is the responsibility of every one to work towards eradication of poverty. The responsibility was much more on the ruler. An ideal ruler was one who fully assumed the responsibility of delivering the poor from their misery and crushing oppressors:

May he defend the cause of the poor of the people give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor (Ps. 72:4).

The deliverance of the poor from their suffering was part of the Messianic expectation (Is. 11:4). The New Testament saw this as being fulfilled in Jesus (Lk. 1:52-53; 4:18-21; 6:20-24).

4.4.2. WOMEN

Women are one of the groups of subaltern peoples in Luke. They find prominence right from the beginning of the Gospel. In fact women appear already in the beginning of the Gospel (chaps. 1&2). There are more instances of women appearing with Jesus in his public life in Luke than in other Gospels. Jesus shows his compassion to women in the healings (Lk. 4:35f.). Women are included in the lost sheep that Jesus came to seek. Women are among the oppressed peoples that Jesus came to liberate (8:1-3).


23. It is none other than Mary, the mother of Jesus, (1:26) though not a subaltern in the strict sense.


There are a few examples in the Gospel, of women who appear as self-reliant (18:1-8), self-confident (Anna, Elizabeth and Mary), and so forth, but such women are only a few. Though Luke gives an important place to women in his writings, as Michael Wilcock says, they are not presented in good taste always. They "appear in very traditional roles, such as: servers at table, working as house keepers, suffering from illnesses, etc." As we have seen in the previous chapter women are considered as weaker section in Jewish society in the times of Jesus, as in most of the societies. As Luke presents in his Gospel, Jesus pays considerable attention to the plight of women and elevates them from the state of their marginalization. Jesus breaks the rigid Jewish customs concerning discrimination against women with boldness. We shall examine this aspect through the study of a few examples in the Gospel.

4.4.2.1. "SINFUL" WOMAN - 7: 36-50

The story of 'sinful woman' (7:36-50) speaks of Jesus' association with the sinners. It is said that the woman in the above pericope is a sinner (7:37) but does not say what were sins. The name of the woman is not mentioned. She is identified by some scholars as Mary Magdalene, a prostitute. Or as J.Jeremias points out, she

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28. It is in this situation of Palestine, of the Times of Jesus, that we would understand the revolution that Jesus brought.


must have been a woman in debt or an adulteress. What is important here is not what the reputation of the woman but what the woman stands for at this moment, in the presence of Jesus. The woman is portrayed as more grateful (cultured) than the Pharisee who claims to be the best "cultured man". Hence Jesus' response to woman at that moment becomes a fine rebuke to this "civilized man" (Pharisee). It is the elevated behaviour of the woman, a concrete expression of faith, that won her instant salvation. She is liberated from her sinful life & sad reputation.

This example of Jesus' forgiveness of sins focuses his special concern for the subaltern group, namely, Women. Jesus exercises his divine and redeeming love for sinners (7:37), and makes them normal human beings by restoring them to their self-dignity. Jesus specially came to seek the lost (19:10). The woman, the despised of Israel, in the episode, receives her salvation by her acts of love and faith in Jesus. It is a great act of courage on the part of woman to enter into a chauvinistic Pharisee's house, a rare event by Jewish traditions. And it must have been much more bizarre to the Pharisee and his guests that Jesus (considered to be a teacher & rabbi) allows her to touch him. This episode serves as a thought provoking message and motivating force for those who are despised as well as for the people of 'good' social standing.


14. In this episode we see two important elements: 1. The woman stands in the presence of men (Simon's house), already a daring thing. 2. It is the woman who is on the centre stage. She not only receives forgiveness from Jesus (v.48) but is acknowledged as 'woman of faith', (v.50; = 5:18-20). It is the best reward for any Jew.


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4.4.2.2. WOMAN WITH THE FLOW OF BLOOD - 8: 43-48

The circumstantial situation in which the woman dares to touch Jesus (a man) in public and Jesus acknowledging it also in public (vv. 44, 47, 48) is a clear indication of how Jesus encounters the subaltern woman and declares her a healthy human person (and her hemorrhage stops, v. 44.) to the whole society.\(^{38}\) Due to her disease she is an unclean person and therefore is an out-caste.\(^{39}\) Her health condition hemorrhages,\(^{40}\) makes her unclean (Lev. 15:25-31; Ezek 36:17).\(^{41}\)

Jesus heals the woman by declaring that her faith had brought her salvation. Jesus heals the woman from her internal sickness and external concerns and liberates her for her normal life.\(^ {42}\) The woman of hemorrhages had spent all the earnings of her life to get rid of her sickness. The mention of this details about the woman is significant. The woman's (who touches Jesus' garment four times in public) fervent faith in Jesus, the redeemer, should be a source of inspiration for the subaltern women in Jesus' liberative act.

4.4.2.3. CRIPPLED WOMAN - 13: 10-17.

The circumstance of the cure of the crippled woman is worth noting. It is done on a Sabbath (it is a sin to violate it) day and in the midst of the guardians of the law (the hypocrites who break the law). The mention of location is still more important. It was in the synagogue (not accessible to the subaltern peoples). All these circumstances certainly


\(^{39}\) She becomes an out-caste because she violates the purity commandment (Lev. 15: 19-31). See R. C. Tannehill, op. cit., p. 149.

\(^{40}\) D. L. Bock, op. cit., p. 793.


\(^{42}\) I. H. Marshall, op. cit., p. 342.
go against doing any good to the subaltern woman. But Jesus takes a definite option in favour of the woman to liberate her. He takes up the challenge and delivers the woman from her suffering.43

The disease of the woman is ‘infirmity’ and Jesus cures her from her ‘infirmity’ (v.12).44 The reaction of the Pharisee (an upright man) does not become of him. Of course, his complaint is not actually on the cure of the woman but on Jesus curing her on the Sabbath day. In fact, it appears that he is unhappy with both the elements. It is a normal reaction of the oppressor or the supporters of oppression. They cannot tolerate the good being done to suffering people. The woman suffered for eighteen years. But such durations are not impossible to surmount.45 The power of Jesus supersedes all human blocks. The real cure for her is granted when she is declared once again the “Daughter of Abraham” (13:16; 19:9).

4.4.3. WIDOWS

Luke’s interest in presenting Jesus as compassionate towards widows is part of his broader interest in the oppressed and despised.46 A woman without a husband is an insecure person. She is a victim of many exploitations and exactions (2 Kg. 4:1f., Job 24:3). Widows are those who needed help (Exod. 22: 22-24). Jesus raised his voice against those who confiscate the houses of widows (Lk. 20:47; Mk. 12:40). The primitive Church paid attention to the practical care of the widows. It provided food for them (Acts 6:1).


44. L. Sabourin, op. cit., p. 272.


Care of widows and orphans is one of the two elements of genuine religion (Jam. 1:27). Jesus shows his sensitivity to the widows' marginal existence and elevates their status in the society.

4.4.3.1. WIDOW OF NAIN - 7:11-17

The miracle of resuscitation of a widow's son is unique to Luke. Jesus raises the son of a widow of Nain, and manifests the kind of powers similar (as a great prophet) to those of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kgs. 17:17-24; 2 Kgs. 4:18-37) in liberating the marginalized. This activity of Jesus was a sign to the people that he was a prophet (with power and authority Lk.8:40-42, 49-56) and that through his activity, God was visiting his people. The widow was in a helpless situation, deprived of the support both of her husband and her son. Jesus shows his concern for this woman in distress.

The era of fulfillment of God's promise, that the "the dead are raised" (7:22), has arrived with Jesus' activity of salvation for the subaltern peoples. Jesus' power is at work not only on behalf of the gravely ill but even on a person who is dead and buried. Jesus hears the cries of the woman and thus says 'weep not' (7:13). This is a strong indication


50. Loss of son was a double tragedy for the widow. Having lost her husband, economic support, the loss of son is still harder to bear. She could turn only to her son after the loss of the husband. See I. H. Marshall, op. cit., p. 283. Son is mother's life long protector and social security. See Malin Bruce J. And Richard L. Rohrbaugh, Social Science Commentary on The Synoptic Gospels, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1992, pp. 329-330.

51. Here the initiative is from Jesus himself. He sees and acts. Compassion to widow brings the message that God visits His People. (Lk. 1:68, 78; 7:16). See R. C. Tannehill, op. cit., p. 128.

52. J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 655.
of how human and divine Jesus deals with the weak and those at the periphery of society. He extends his mighty gestures to bring life back into the dead body. The boy is restored to life. This act of Jesus also was a gift of freedom for the widow from her sufferings. Jesus comes across as the loving comforter, the victor over death and the reunifier of separated dear ones.

4.4.3.2. POOR WIDOW - 18: 1-8

The contrast between the sufferings of a poor widow and the hard heartedness of the 'upright' judge is evident in the above instance. The judge who is supposed to deliver justice is occupied with something else (his own self image). The only hope of the widow was her incessant prayer. The poor widows do not have judges to plead their cases. Therefore, often they depend on the mercy (not on justice) of the corrupt judges (Lk. 18:2; Is. 1:23). They are exploited due to their vulnerability (2 Kgs. 4:1; Job. 24:3). The Jewish law teaches that one must render justice to the widows (Exod. 22:22; Deut. 24:17) but the reality is different. The indication of justice in the parable is a reminder to the subaltern peoples, that perseverant efforts in seeking for liberation would be heard and be blessed by God.

54. N. Geldenhuys, op. cit., p. 223.
55. He is not only unconcerned about delivering justice but was even arrogant. He does not care about the teaching of Torah nor God (hence needs to be condemned according to Jewish Law).
The woman in the pericope is a weak (poor) widow but gains justice in the end. There is hope for the suffering people (11:5-8). Yahweh, the God of Israel, is a just God who pays special attention to the helpless widows and orphans. Jesus who is the embodiment of the Father stands as a just God and prophet. Jesus, Son of Man, has power and authority (Mk. 2: 1-10; Dan. 7:13) to liberate the subaltern peoples. He manifests and establishes new humanness and a new age (Lk. 19:10; Mt. 25:3; and Jn. 5:27) in granting liberation. This new age is not just for tomorrow but here and now (see Lk.19:9-10; 23:43; Heb. 3:15; Ps.95:7).


Luke makes a special attempt to present the healing of the sick as a particular concern of Jesus. It is a messianic activity that brings new life to the subaltern peoples. Jesus confronts sickness, the consequence of sin that causes suffering to human persons (Jn. 9:2f.). Jesus' miracles of healing reveal His love and sympathy for suffering humankind, namely the sick.

There are a number of instances in Luke's Gospel which show Jesus' concern towards the sick. Luke presents it right at the beginning of the Gospel. In 4:40-41, we see not just one but all those who are affected by sickness brought to Jesus. He laid his hands on and cured all of them. To say "any one who is sick" would mean that Jesus encountered all types of sick people, with all types of diseases. It is a generic term.

57. The Sitz im Leben of the widow is not indicated in the passage. But the fact that she is a widow already indicates her state of life. Loosing husband would have made her vulnerable and exploitable. We do not know if she was economically poor. She pleaded for justice against her 'opponent', oppressor.

58. That is the difference, according to the parable, between human judges and divine judge. God is always on the side of poor widow.

One such sickness is the healing of man with withered hand in 6:6-11. When (on the Sabbath day) and where (in Synagogue, v. 6) the healing takes place is irrelevant to Jesus, though they have importance in the understanding of Jesus' liberation. He could not be mute to the cries of the sick, subaltern man. In 9:37-43, we see Jesus healing a boy with an unclean spirit. In 14:1-6 he heals a man with dropsy. In these and other healings what is clear is that any sort of disease is curable by Jesus (4:40). He is the saviour of all (sick people) and excludes none.

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament see sickness as the power of evil. The Greek word "nosos" is translated as "sickness and disease". Sickness that accompanies suffering has always been a problem to human society. Jewish Scriptures present healing as remedy to sickness (2 Kgs. 20:7; Tb. 11:8, 11f., Is. 1:6; Jer. 8:22; Wis. 7:20). It is God who has recourse to the healing and remedies to cures. He is the master of life (Sir. 38:1-8,12f.,). The Hebrew word 'sara'at' translated as 'leper' in the LXX is explicitly used in the detailed legislation of Leviticus (chaps. 13-14) to cover a variety of human sicknesses.

Sickness has a long record of human history. Therefore, there may not be anything special in mentioning it. But when seen from the point of view of, God and Man relationship, it calls for an answer. The sick people, who suffer due to broken relationships with God, look for God's healing power. Often the development of the disease and not the disease itself, is the point of debate in the Bible. Sickness is associated with demon possession and punishment for committing sins that break the relationship between God and man.

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Sickness and healing are inter-connected in Jewish religious understanding. Sickness is also attributed to God's intervention or will. It is always God's choice to save or heal his people (Exod. 15:26). If sickness is a sign of condemnation and a curse, healing is a sign of grace and a blessing. God does not wish the death of a sinner but his conversion and life (Ezek. 18:23). When Jesus was confronted with the question of relating sickness to sinfulness he did not answer it directly (Jn. 9:1-3). The Messiah will heal the sick because he is the saviour of the sick (Is. 33:24). Divine cleansing of lepers is expected as one of the signs of the messianic age.

4.4.5. LEPERS - 5:12-16 & 17:11-19

In Palestinian community 'leprosy' (sara'at in Hebrew and lepra in Greek) was considered as the dreaded disease. Lepers were treated as untouchables. They were forced to wear torn clothes, cover their mouths and cry "unclean" in the presence of others. Leprosy was seen as polluting others. Leprosy was seen vis-a-vis the purity laws. Anyone who entered a leper's house had to bathe. Levitical rules against this disease were very stringent.

In the society where mere sight of lepers was disgusting, Jesus acts in favour of the lepers, the impure. He not only accepted the lepers but even dined with them (Mt. 26:6; Mk. 14:3). Jesus' attitude towards lepers is without any reservations and inhibitions (Lk. 5:12-16 - he touches and says a word to the leper (v.13) and publicly confirms the cure, v.14; 17:11-19). Jesus goes one step further. He orders the disciples to include the cure of lepers as part of their mission (Mt. 10:8). The cure of leprosy for Jesus is a

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63. P. Ellingworth, op. cit., 463.

messianic sign of salvation (Lk. 7:22: Mt.11:5). In Matthew's Gospel the healing of the leper (8:1-4) is the first miracle of Jesus, which shows what sort of importance he gives to the disease and the persons affected by the disease.\textsuperscript{66}

The healing of the leper is called `cleansing'. It is a symbolic gesture. When the leper is cleansed he is washed of the impurity and made clean and normal person.\textsuperscript{67} The dirt (oppression and humiliation) of society makes the person impure. Therefore cleansing is significant. Jesus has the power (4:14) to clean the impure (suffering and sin).\textsuperscript{68} He cleanses a poor social outcast.

The episode of cleansing of ten lepers in 17:11-19 is another example of Jesus' liberative power. The geographic references to the episode of ten lepers is still revealing. It takes place while he was journeying from Samaria to Galilee, (v.11). Samaria, a Gentile place is looked down upon by the Jews. If the Samaritan lepers need to come to Galilee they had to be made clean first. Jesus makes the Samaritan clean, meaning that he too is made child of God once again. The mention of Jesus passing from Samaria to Galilee is important in Lukan understanding. It is the Samaritan leper who is more grateful to God than the nine Jewish lepers (17:17-18) who were also cured. Jesus draws himself closer to the distanced lepers. They stand away from him being conscious of their plight of humiliations. But Jesus invites them to be with him as close as possible. Disease is circumstantial and not made by the law.


\textsuperscript{66} L. Sabourin, op. cit., p. 150.

\textsuperscript{67} I. H. Marshall, op. cit., p. 207.

\textsuperscript{68} N. Geldenhuys, op. cit., p. 186.
4.4.6. BLIND MAN - 18: 35-43

'Blind men' is another group of subaltern peoples in Luke. The location of the episode of the healing of the blind man of Jericho is significant. Jesus, according to Luke, goes in search of the marginalized and alienated. Jericho is a Gentile town but not far from Jerusalem. The sitting location of the blind man who encountered Jesus too is worth noting. He used to sit throughout the day by "the road side" to beg. It is a clear sign of alienation. The blind man, in his Sitz im Leben, due to loss of eye sight, could only beg. But his longing to come out of the helpless condition is evident. Though blind, his sense perceptions are clear. He could notice the presence of Jesus, who could give him his eye sight, around the vicinity, along the road. The blind man wanted to see again (v.41). Jesus responds generously. And tells him "see again" (v.42). Jesus is concerned with the poor and needy (18:15f.), that include the blind. Jesus, Son of David, is the Messiah (v.38) of the subaltern peoples.

4.4.7. TAX-COLLECTORS - 5:27-32, 18:9-14, 19:1-10

It is Luke more than the other evangelists who shows the dramatic reversal in Jesus' treatment of the tax-collectors. The tax-collectors on the other also respond very enthusiastically (3:12). They are gripped by the preaching of Jesus (Lk. 15:1; 19: 1-10; Mk 2:14f.) and were in need of a doctor (5:31-32). It is part of the mission of Jesus to attend to them (4:18-19). He liberates the alienated and preaches the Good News to them. The tax-collectors are regularly contrasted, favourably, with the Pharisees in the Gospel (18: 9-14).

Jesus offends the Jews by his association with the tax-collectors as it violated the purity regulations (7:34; 15:1). But Jesus does not mind it. His earnestness to reach out to the outcast and despised (18:11) subaltern peoples is deliberate. He goes out of his way and invites the tax-collector to be his close friend and follower (5:27-32). Jesus turns the
accusations of the Pharisees on themselves as warning that they should mend their
behaviour lest they not enter into the Kingdom of God (18:14). Zacchaeus, the chief tax-
collector's case is an illustration of God's mercy and power to change even the heart of
the rich. When they are transformed they too have access to salvation (18:27; 19:10).

The tax-collectors have a change of heart with the arrival of Jesus. Jesus brought
about a dramatic reversal of the situation through his merciful treatment of the tax-
collectors. If Jesus had admitted the fishermen as his disciples it would not have affected
the Jewish sentiments but inviting tax-collector to be his disciple certainly would not
have gone well with the Jews. The fishermen were not highly esteemed in the society but
were well accepted. The tax-collectors on the other hand were an accursed brood.69

The Tax-collectors, 'telonai', were considered as out-casts not because they
belonged to lower classes due to economic and social reasons but because of religious
reasons. They became unclean because of their profession which did not had legal
sanctions from Torah. Jews avoided the tax-collectors because they consorted with
ritually unclean foreigners and considered them as thieves, swindlers, liars, murderers
and betrayers of their country.70

For many Jews, paying taxes in Palestine was sacrilegious because they considered
that the land belonged to God and human beings are mere tenants. If any one is to
receive tax, according to Jews, it should be God, not Caesar. The tax-collectors in
Palestine were not civil servants but part of a vast private business enterprise with
headquarters in Rome.71 Tax-collector is the one who collects taxes on behalf of the

Rapids, 1996, p. 50.

70. J. Massingberde Forde, Bonded with The Immortal, Michael Glazier,
Wilmington, 1987, p. 270.

71. Paul W. Walaskay, And So We Came to Rome, Cambridge University Press,
Roman Government. The taxes included "toll" or "indirect taxes". In the eyes of the Jews he not only disregards the Rabbinic exposition of the Law but also overlooks the need to be faithful to his people. A Jew entering into custom service cuts himself off from decent society. He alienates himself from God. Such person can repay the damage only by the restitution prescribed by the Law (see Lev. 6:1f.). The Jews hated the tax-collectors because they were unscrupulous in dealing with the tax payers. The tax-collector is considered as a robber. Since the Jews viewed Roman occupation itself as illegal, the native collectors of taxes were also seen as collaborators of the oppressors.

People could not do much to counter the exploitation as any confrontation with them meant a revolt against the rulers. The Jewish tax-collectors, treated as subaltern groups, though guilty of committing sin, were still sons of Abraham. Jews criticized and opposed Jesus' movement because of its openness to the tax-collectors. This only manifested their hard-heartedness.

The tax-collectors were considered as sinners (5:27-32). They are placed with the Gentiles, harlots, extortioners, unjust and adulterers (18:11). They do not belong to the community of Children of God according to the Jewish Law. The tax-collectors are

73. Otto Michel, "Telones", in TDNT. Vol. 8., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1972, p. 89.
74. Cf. Mt. 5:46.
75. Otto Michel, telones, TDNT vol. 8., op. cit., p. 103.
rich (5:29). There were also chief tax-collectors (19:2) among them. Jesus showed sympathetic attitudes towards them. His sympathy and mercy converted them from their sinful hearts. As a result they too became sons of Abraham (19:1-10) and entered into the Kingdom of God.

4.4.8. SAMARITANS - 9: 51-56 & 10:25-37

Jesus’ attitude to the Samaritans is quite different from that of his contemporaries. Just like the tax-collectors, Samaritans too belong to Jewish society. But they are treated as outcast because of their negligence of the original religious practices. We have studied them already in the previous chapters. In Luke's Gospel they find a special place as the favoured people in the treatment of Jesus. Jesus travels far and wide during his journeys in his public ministry. He also travelled through the Samaritan villages. Samaria symbolized opposition to the Jews.

In Matthew Jesus forbids the disciples to enter into Samaritan towns (10:5) but Luke, on the other hand shows keen interest in Jesus' travels through Samaritan towns and with the Samaritans. Jesus' interest in dealings with such people stems from his emphasis on the universality of salvation that he makes accessible to all human beings.

The Samaritans appear to be more human in their approach towards their fellow needy human persons (10:25-37) than the Jewish people who are supposed to excel in charity and kindness. Samaritans gain praise from Jesus for their humanness in their

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82. J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 824.
84. J. A. Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 829.
actions. Thus the point that Jesus makes, according to Luke, is that it is not one's heritage (caste or class) that brings salvation but one's conduct. The Samaritans who are to be condemned due to their sins of commissions and omissions, are more liberated in the eyes of God than the self-proclaimed righteous Jews. The rejected last are acclaimed first (18: 14).

4.4.9. SINNERS - 6:32, 34; 13:2; 15:2

“Hamartolos”, a Greek term, was translated into English as “Sinner”. It is an adjective of the verb 'hamartano' meaning ‘to sin. ‘Hamartolos’ corresponds most frequently in the LXX with the Hebrew term 'rasha’, “wicked one”. It referred to those who were outside the boundary of righteousness. In common understanding of the term, ‘sinner’ meant those who lived an immoral way of life. However, the word ‘sinner’ has various meanings.

In Jewish understanding ‘hamartolos’ was one who lived in conscious and deliberate opposition to God, in dishonest or disreputable occupation. Therefore they were avoided not only by the Pharisees but also by the ordinary people. Pharisees called sinners, those who did not follow the Pharisaic interpretation of the law. In the New Testament language ‘sinner’ meant the unredeemed pagan. The term ‘sinner’ was also

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89. Ibid, p. 129.
used more or less as a synonym for "Gentile" (Ps. 9.17; Tb. 13:8; Lk. 6:33; Gal. 2:15). In Palestine at the time of Jesus, the term 'sinners' was seen also in sociological terms. It referred to the 'am ha'arez', those who practiced the despised trades. The Pharisaic Jews referred to non-pharisaic Jews as 'sinners'. The minority Pharisees considered the majority of the 'people of the land' as sinners, who included the uneducated people. Thus we could see that the scope of the category of sinner was indeed large.

Those who repent receive forgiveness. It is this attitude of Jesus in Luke that draws all the sinners to him. He represents mercy, forgiveness and liberation. The sinners who are so comfortable in his presence that one of them even becomes his close follower (Lk.5:27-32) and many of them dine with him (15:2). Dining is a sign of complete acceptance. However we should note that Jesus does not approve of the sin (oppression).

4.4.10. SHEPHERDS - 2: 8-20.

Shepherds, ordinary folk who work with animals, are economically a lower group, and are very vulnerable to all sorts of dangers. They are despised people. They depend on their live stock for their survival. They live a hard life out in the field, exposed to human marauders and various wild beasts. In the first century Palestine shepherds did not have the reputation for being over circumspect with regard to the property of others. They were often held in contempt and considered as nothing more than roaming

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91. Luise Schottroff, op. cit., p. 15.


93. N. Geldenhuys, op. cit., p. 115.


vagabonds and thieves.\textsuperscript{96} Since they were classed with the heathens their testimony was not admitted in the courts of Law.\textsuperscript{97}

But looking at the positive side, the shepherds are a privileged class (unlike the wise and the rich) who received the divine visions and miracles.\textsuperscript{98} The Shepherd's profession was seen as noble work in ancient Judaism. Jewish patriarchs, excelled in this profession (Gen. 4:2f., 31:38-41). Among the ancient Israelites the shepherd was often considered as honourable person (Ps. 23). David, the great king of Jews belonged to this class (1 Sam. 16:11; 17:14-15, 20, 28 34).

It is the shepherds, in Luke's Gospel, who are the first recipients and deliverers of divine revelation regarding the birth of the Messiah. (2:8-20).\textsuperscript{99} This goes very well with the theme of the poor in Luke's Gospel. As the poor class, they too anticipate the Messianic blessings at Jesus' birth itself. Because at birth itself Jesus identified himself with the low classes of his society.\textsuperscript{100} They are at the bottom of the society and outcast,\textsuperscript{101} but in the Kingdom of God they occupy a higher place. It is a clear indication that the poor are liberated from their poverty and misery in the liberative acts of Jesus, the liberator.

The shepherds get prominence with the birth of Jesus. They become an uplifted people. This is a revealing sign of God's preferential option for the groups of subaltern


\textsuperscript{97} F. C. Cook, op. cit., p. 321.

\textsuperscript{98} N. Geldenhuys, op. cit., p. 115.


people of society. The fulfillment of Messianic times is precisely this. God makes all efforts to go in search of the marginalized lower groups of society. From this revelation of God's preferential option for the poor, namely, the groups like the shepherds, we can understand the use of the imagery of shepherds which abound in the Bible. Yahweh, God of Israel was called the true shepherd (Gen. 49:24). This title was also given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament (Lk. 15: 3-7).

4.4.11. GENTILES - 7:1-10; 8:26-39.

One of the titles given to the Gospel of Luke, is the 'Gospel of the Gentiles'. Luke introduces the theme of Gentiles in the Gospel already in the beginning (2:32). Gentle are non-Jews (Is. 65:1-5). Gerasenians (8:26.) too are Gentiles. The Gentiles in Luke include: Romans, pagans and people of other nations. Gentiles are treated with contempt as they are supposed to be the men of the world, for, they seek the things of the world (12:30; Mt. 6:32).

Jesus, according to Luke, is the saviour of the Gentiles and extends the fruits of his salvific grace to them (7:1-10; 8:26-39). Jesus travels not only in the Jewish territories but goes beyond them. He travels in the Gentile regions of Tyre, Sidon and the Decapolis, Caesarea Philippi (Mk. 7:31;8:27-32) and Samaria (Lk. 8: 26-39; 9:53; Acts 1:8; 8:1-8). By acknowledging the faith of the Gentiles, Jesus attacks the lack of faith of the Jews and their vindictive attitude towards the Gentiles. When one suffers, no matter who he is, it is suffering and therefore needs attention.

102. Simeon predicts that Jesus will be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles". (Lk. 2:32).


105. Though there are only a few instances in the Gospel, they are significant.

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The centurion who approaches Jesus for help is a case of a Gentile who is better disposed to God's grace than the 'faithful' Jews. The greatness of the centurion is noticed further when we note that he is not asking any favours for himself but for his servant. Another point is that this Gentile has more faith than the Jews. This Gentile stands as an example for "all" those who receive liberation. More than the case of the centurion, the healing of the Gerasene Demoniac prefigures more forcefully Jesus' Gentile Mission. Because the centurion is within Jewish territory, a God-fearer and builds synagogue but Jesus really moves to Gentile territory in 8:26-39.107


This term was generally used to denote the 'poor'. The needy appeared as those in relation to whom we recognize our obligation of giving alms. There are a number of instances in the gospels where Jesus exhorted his disciples to care for the needy. He told the rich man to sell what he had and give it to the needy (Lk. 18:18-30; Mk 10:21). Jesus is conscious of the needs of the needy. Among the needy there are economic needs, psychological needs, humans needs (e.g. poor Lazarus, Lk.16:20-22).

The Pharisee and his guests accuse Jesus of allowing the sinful woman to waste the perfume while anointing the feet of Jesus (7:38). Jesus' response on that occasion is very revealing. He points out to his audience to distinguish the need of the woman, namely, forgiveness (7:48) and acceptance. If the Pharisees and like-minded people really had concern for the need Jesus tells them that the needy are with them if they open their eyes (14:5).108 The forgiveness of sins that Jesus grants, besides changing one's past life,
also awakens one's responsibility towards the needs of the other. Zacchaeus promises to give what is right (due) to the needy when Jesus forgives him (19:8).

The idea of 'needy' reminds us of our duty of almsgiving. John the Baptist appealed to his listeners to give alms (3:11). Jesus too tells the people to give to those who beg (6:34-35). The needy should take our primary concern in establishing the Kingdom of God here on earth. The subaltern conditions of the needy is a human-made situation. Reconciliation between God and human person and among human persons is required to better the conditions of needy.

4.4.13. CONCLUSION

The above list of the subaltern groups, found very much in Luke, throws light on the concrete love of God for those who are marginalized and who receive liberation. This gives inspiration to the subaltern peoples of any society to keep their faith in God and in the liberating act of Jesus. It is an evidence of realization of the Mission (4:18-19) with which Jesus is entrusted and for which he is incarnated in this world. In order to save the subaltern peoples, he himself became a subaltern (Heb. 4:15 - except in sin), through the experience of being born as poor, living homeless and dying nameless. But triumphant forever. The various groups of subaltern peoples that we studied in the thesis so far gives, a panoramic view and at the same time a concrete opportunity to become aware of such groups and Jesus' response to them. The scope of subaltern groups in Luke's Gospel that Jesus encountered is an inclusive one. Jesus does not limit himself to one particular group. However, he constantly discerned at every moment who needed (which subaltern group or person(s)) his attention and salvation most.


PART FIVE: LUKAN THEOLOGY: JESUS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

4.5.0. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, so far, we have been discovering, through the study of Lukan text on "Gerasene Demoniac" (8:26-39), what is Jesus' response to the sufferings of the subaltern peoples of his time. We have seen, how Jesus' response to a particular problem becomes a paradigm for our commitment towards the liberation of the subaltern peoples of our times of our communities. From such discovery we shall now try to develop the theology of social justice of Jesus in Luke, as perceived and presented in the backdrop of the subaltern world of the Gospel. Here we note that we do not limit ourselves to Gerasene Demoniac text but depend on the whole Gospel for this theological act.

4.5.1. LUKAN PORTRAIT OF JESUS

The pericope on "Gerasene Demoniac" presents Jesus as the Saviour of the subaltern peoples. All the four Gospel writers portray their particular understanding of Jesus when they present the picture of Jesus. The main part of their sources is from, by and large, the same tradition. Yet they have their own perspectives and options in presenting the message of Jesus. It is the same case with Luke. However, Lukan Jesus stands out both in form and content compared to other evangelists, when presented from the point of view of the subaltern peoples. Lukan Jesus is the one who works towards the

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1. Theology is part of culture and society. Hence like every other aspects of culture or society, meaning of theology too should be seen contextually. Theology and socio, economic, cultural and political elements of society need to complement each other.

2. For Matthew, Jesus is one who fulfills the hopes of Judaism so as to win the allegiance of Israel. He pictures Jesus as a teacher of righteousness who is a New Moses and who offers a New Law. (See W. D. Davies, Invitation to The New Testament, Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd., London, 1967, p. 227.)

For Mark, Jesus is tempered with the kind of suffering that tries and pictures the hearts of people.

John, on the other hand, presents Jesus as the Incarnation of Word of God (1: 1-4).
liberation of the poor (4:18-19). All that happens through Jesus, ultimately, is part of God's redemptive plan for the salvation of humanity.³

Luke's basic concern in portraying Jesus is to present him as the Saviour of the downtrodden and the marginalised as found in 8:26-39.⁴ As Michael Wilcock says, Luke presents "Jesus' message and ministry particularly to the marginalized peoples of the society (saviour of the world)."⁵ In fact the involvement of Jesus with the suffering of subaltern peoples can be understood without difficulty because the world into which Jesus lived too had similar situations. As W. Hendrickson says:

"The Jesus depicted by Luke entered a world filled with class distinctions and barriers, racial, national, social, sexual."⁶

Therefore, in the incarnation narrative of Jesus, we see Jesus coming into this world not as a condemning judge or conquering hero, but as a helpless, vulnerable baby (Lk. chaps.1-2). But it is this obscure birth of a carpenter's son that changed the course of human history.⁷ This Jesus is the Saviour of humankind. As Darrell L. Bock puts it:

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"In Jesus we see "a figure in whom are wrapped up all the promises of God. He is the second Adam a Prophet, Wisdom incarnate, a Leader-Prophet like Moses, the Son of Man, the Christ and above all Lord."  

Lukan portrait takes into consideration all above theological aspects. The essential portrait consists in presenting Jesus as significant to all human beings of all ages. The Lukan portrait of Jesus, according to J. A. Fitzmyer, has not only incorporated the essential Christological and soteriological teachings but has also made use of:

"deft strokes to depict a person who is at once very human, dramatic and at times romantic."  

Luke, though, sometimes seems to present Jesus as soft human person with beautiful qualities like mercy, love, charm, joy and delicacy, does not fail to show certain radicalism and critical attitudes that Jesus manifested towards the life around him. He was a man who was in touch with the ground realities around him. Jesus, as understood by Luke, perceived himself as one who had a concrete mission. As E. P. Sanders says:

"Jesus viewed himself and in particular of his own Place in God's plan for Israel and the World having full authority to speak and act on behalf of God. Sinners who followed him, but who may or may not have returned to the Mosaic Law, would have a place in God's Kingdom."  

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10. Ibid.
We see Jesus criticizing the Pharisees and the High Priests for their lack of sensitivity to the suffering of the people to whom they teach and preach. He had the courage to point out his finger at the rulers who forgot their duties towards the needy subalterns and he even condemned them for their anti-subaltern attitudes and activities. In fact many of the mercy and love miracles, parables (e.g. 7:36-50; 16:19-31, etc.) that Luke presented in the Gospel, speak of Jesus raising his voice against the rich and the ruling class. Thus we see the portrait of Jesus as a man of extraordinary calibre with preferential option for the liberation of the subaltern peoples.

4.5.2. JESUS' MISSION IN LUKE

The manifesto of Jesus in 4:18-19 serves as a programmed mission of Jesus in Luke.13 It is the main theme of Luke-Acts in a nutshell.14 Even some of the scholars like D.T. Tiede confirms this.15 Jesus takes up this mission for his own people and from his own country. But the people of his own home town (Nazareth, 4:16) rejects him and the other towns (Capernaum, 4:23) accepts him. This rejection-acceptance is already a significant sign in the realization of the mission. Jesus' mission is for all. Gentiles are also part of the salvific plan of God (2:30). Luke tries to show that the mission that Jesus wants to fulfill is the fulfillment of the prophecy, as he is 'a great' prophet (7:16), a prophet par excellence. In fact it is Luke among the four evangelists who presents Jesus as prophet whose mission is explicitly destined for the subaltern peoples (4:18-19).16 The prophecy of Isaiah finds its fulfillment in the person of Jesus, the anointed one.


(4:18; Acts 4:27; 10:38). It is fulfilled at the decisive moment of history, that is "today" (Lk. 4:21).\(^{17}\)

The mission of Jesus is summarized as that of preaching the Good News to the (poor) subaltern peoples. He is the one who inaugurates the salvation (7:21-23). The beneficiaries of the salvation are well indicated: the poor, the captives, the oppressed (4:18-19), the blind, the lame, the lepers, the deaf, the dead (7:21-23) and the meek (Is. 29:18f.). Luke also explains what this salvation actually means. It is the Good News to the Poor (4:18). The poor have Good News preached to them (7:22). The poor exult (Is. 29:18f.) in hope. The subaltern peoples have the acceptable year of the Lord announced to them (4:19). With the realization of the mission, there is a radical change in the Sitz im Leben of the subaltern peoples. Thus the manifesto of Jesus is to be understood strongly as his mission for the liberation of subaltern peoples.\(^{18}\)

4.5.3. JESUS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Jesus never seems to be silent on the massive situation of poverty, exploitation and degradation of human life.\(^{19}\) Though Luke does not present Jesus as a social reformer, as we understand it now, Jesus' response to the social situations of his time is quite relevant to our society today here and now.\(^{20}\) Jesus' community and its ranks of economic group must have grown large due to addition of masses of the socially alienated

\(^{17}\) 'Today' is the time of salvation. This 'today' is here and now. It is an important theme in Luke. Cf. 2:11; 19:9; 23:43.


\(^{19}\) Every instance of miracle that Jesus performed and the parables aimed at changing the life situation of the poor are examples of this.

and marginalized peoples. They include all the subaltern peoples of society. Jesus proclaims the Kingdom of God, that seeks the elimination of the suffering of human society. His justice starts with the proclamation of Good News (Lk. 4:18; 7:22) to the subaltern peoples and a warning to the rich (6:24-27). The objective of this proclamation is to liberate the oppressed and to dethrone the oppressor (1:52f.). Jesus' proclamation of social justice, according to Luke, could be summarized in his beatitudes:

“Blessed are you who are poor
For yours is the Kingdom of God.
Blessed are you who are hungry now
For you will be filled
Blessed are you who weep now
For you will laugh...” (6:20-21)

Jesus' beatitudes, on the plain ground (contrary to the ones on the mountain in Matthew) in the midst of the people stand as a guiding message of the Kingdom that seeks justice and equality.

The beginning of Luke's Gospel already lays the foundation for the stance of social justice. Mary, the mother of Jesus (1:46-56) recites a hymn which speaks of God's mighty deeds for the lowly. Mary is a lowly person according to the standards of her society. But God raised her high. John the Baptist calls for the repentance of the oppressors for their injustices committed against the weak. Repentance should expresses itself in

21. We can understand better the stance of the social justice of Jesus in Luke when we see it in the context of the Old Testament. As we have already seen in the previous chapter, the social justice of the Old testament is manifested in the defence of the weak vis-a-vis the rich (Is. 11:4; Ps. 72:1-4). God works for the concerns of the powerless of the community (Exod. 22.21-24; Deut. 24:14-18; Jer. 7:5-7; Ps. 82: 1-4).


23. Beatitudes present the uncompromised option of Jesus towards the subaltern peoples.


concrete ways, according to John the Baptist, through sharing one's goods with those who do not have (3:10-17; 19:1-10). These concrete signs announce the arrival of the long awaited Messiah who would establish a just society.

Jesus' miracles are another instance of the actualization of social justice in Luke's Gospel. Miracles are performed not to mesmerize the public but to deliver the persons from suffering and to liberate them to a new community. They are aimed at ameliorating the world in general. The parables too carry aspect of social justice. The miracle of "Gerasene Demoniac" stands as a testimony for social justice. The possessed man was in the grip of injustice caused by the evil power. Jesus wipes out this injustice.26

4.5.4. PROCLAMATION OF JUBILEE YEAR

We have made a reference to the manifesto of Jesus in Luke's Gospel (4:18-19) more than once. One important aspect of the manifesto is the announcement of the "Jubilee Year".27 In the manifesto there is the proclamation of the Good News and the announcement of the Jubilee year. Perhaps, the usage of different verbs in the text (to proclaim and to announce) is not accidental, though they might seem to be identical. The Good News is proclaimed but the Jubilee year is announced. Announcement is on something which is already decided. Hence the announcement is not mere metaphorical but literal. Jesus announces what has been promised in the Old Testament (see Lev. 25:10; Num. 36:4; Is. 61:1-2). Jesus also declares at the end of the announcement of the


27. The word "Jubilee" itself (Yobel, in Hebrew) does not seem to have any particular meaning. The yobel was probably the ram's horn used in the land every 50 years on the day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month, to proclaim the beginning of the year of Jubilee. Later, it was associated with the Latin word "jubilum" (from jubilare, to rejoice, to exult), but this was merely a verbal coincidence. As a matter of fact, the year of Jubilee was celebrated every 49 (50) years, that is seven Sabbath years, (7 times 7). Just as the week ends with a "day of release" called Sabbath, and "the week of years" ends with the sabbatical year (every 7 years). Each period of 49 years ends with a year of Jubilee.

manifesto that the time is ripe “now” to realize and fulfill the manifesto (Lk 4:21). The announcement is certainly in favour of the discriminated subaltern peoples. Announcement is the duty of the prophet. Jesus is that prophet.

Jesus' announcement certainly meant an announcement of confrontation with the land owners, merchants, money lenders, etc., of his home town where he declared his manifesto (4:16). But he was ready to face them because time had come to fight in favour of the weaker sections of society. In fact what Jesus did was nothing unheard of. Moses, on behalf of Yahweh, had instituted a genuine social revolution aimed at preventing the accumulation of capital in the hands of a minority (see Exod. 23 & Lev 25). This social revolution was to recur every seven and every forty-nine years. Therefore the announcement of Jubilee Year is fully in accordance with Jewish doctrine. Hence it was not aimed at confrontation but to implement what was due. The Jubilee rules were known both to the rich and to the poor. Perhaps it is the timing and the manner in which Jesus declared the Jubilee Year that would have irked his listeners which included also the rich. Because the Jubilee Year implied among other things expropriating the lands of the wealthy and liquidating the usurious system from which ruling classes lived. Jubilee Year meant a 'Year of freedom' to the poor.

Old Testament clearly speaks of what to do in the Jubilee Year. First of all, it is a 'favorable year'. The word 'favorable' is translated in Hebrew as "to pay debt". When it is referred to the man paying it to or 'to be favorable', it refers to God (land owner) who accepts the payment (see Lev. 26:30-3; Is. 49:8; 58:5; 61:2; Ps. 119:108). Jubilee Year is a 'Year of liberty' (Lk. 4:18; Is. 61:1). Liberty to the captives (Ezek. 16:17). It is a 'Year of release'. Release is taken in the same meaning of 'liberty'. Therefore, release is to free the captives and debtors.

28. Ibid, p. 27.
29. Ibid, p. 29.
30. Freedom to the poor is not meant only during Jubilee Year. But at least in this year a sincere effort could be made and freedom is ensured.
Jesus articulates these implications of the Jubilee year, as Luke presents, through certain images. They are: Beatitudes (Lk. 6:20-22; Mt. 5:3-6), and parables (Lk. 14:12-24); inviting the poor to the banquet, and responding to the poor (18:18-23). Jubilee laws seek the establishing the rule of God here on earth among human persons. Therefore, "Jubilee" means "Good News" to the subaltern peoples.

4.5.5. KINGDOM OF GOD - A NEW SOCIAL ORDER

Luke's presentation of the "Kingdom of God" is very rich with no less than twenty one sayings, starting with 1:33 and ending in 23:51. The alternative to the present oppressive society that Jesus proposes is "The Kingdom of God", a new social

31. According to the Beatitudes poor include those who mourn, reviled, hunger and thirst for righteousness.

32. This banquet for the poor include: the blind, the lame, the lepers, the deaf (Lk. 7:22; 14:13, 21).


35. The terms of the "Kingdom of God or God's Kingship" are basic concepts in the Bible. The usual Hebrew term for the "Kingdom of God" (malkut de Adonai, see The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII., p. 507) literally means 'Kingdom of Heaven' (malkhut Shamayim' see The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia Vol.6., p.386.). In the Jewish thought the Kingdom of God has two distinct yet interwoven meanings: on literal and political, the other metaphoric and metaphysical. In its literal and political sense it refers to the government of the political community of God. In its metaphysical sense it refers to divine "rule" over the totality of existence. The political concept of Kingdom of God has metaphysical presuppositions, while the metaphysical concept has political ramifications.


order, in which poverty and exploitation would cease to exist. In the words of C. C. Caragounis:

"The Kingdom of God that Jesus proclaimed begins a new social order distinguished from that of the law and the Prophets. It is the era into which everyone has the chance to force his/her way into (16:16). It is within every one (17:21)."

Jesus' mission consists of the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. This New order that the Kingdom of God brings would be based on a new experience of God and humankind. The Kingdom of God signifies the assurance of God's presence which nurtures and sustains (11:3- who gives us our daily bread) all humankind. The Kingdom of God means God's saving activity, healing humans who turn to Him from all sin, i.e. all blocks which do not allow him/her to deal authentically with God and fellow humans. The primary condition or qualification to become part of this order, according to Luke, is the experience of God, as Father (Lk. 10:20-21; Mt. 11:27). Abba, Father, is the one who loves all unconditionally. He invites all human persons to treat each other as brothers and sisters, as all are created in the image of this Abba (Gen. 1:26).

38. The New Social Order is not in the sense that it is for the first time that such a thing is found, it is already established by God in the beginning of the creation itself. Jesus, now renews this Kingdom of God that responds to all the ecological, socio, economic, psychological, human and spiritual demands of a fulfilled humanity.


40. "The Kingdom in general terms could be described as an ideal condition, a new world order, in which cosmic harmony prevails on earth, peace replaces war in politics, justice and love embrace each other in the society." See Lucien Legrand, "Good News of Jesus Christ", in Studia Missionalia, Vol. 46., (1997), pp. 211-225.


42. To call God as 'Abba' was considered as irreverent and therefore unthinkable. But Jesus modifies this notion and calls God as 'Abba' (Mk. 14:36; Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6.) meaning "Father". By this Jesus reestablishes the relationship between God and human persons. This implies that there should be similar relationship among human persons. See Joachim Jeremias, The Central Message of the New Testament, SCM Press, London, 1981, p. 21. And by the same author, The Prayers of Jesus, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967, pp. 11-57.
The experience of God's love should lead one to conversion, (internal and external) and to a radical change of heart, metanoia, of the oppressors (Mt. 4:17). It must seek the radicalization and transformation of society. Genuine fellowship would automatically seek justice. The love kindled by Jesus is an effective love which is shown not in mere words but in deeds (1 Jn. 3:18). It should be directed not merely to the spiritual needs of humankind, but to the human person in the totality of his/her needs. Thus love should take social dimensions (Lk 4:8-19). A new social order should be the archetypal inspiration to every Christian community and the goal of all Christian mission.

4.5.6. JESUS' VISION OF NEW SOCIETY

Jesus' words and actions imprinted in miracles, parables and discourses, in Luke, give an idea of his vision of the New Society. Vision refers to power of seeing ahead. It refers to a dream that looks for the future. By 'New Society', we mean the society where all people of God live in harmony with each other in freedom, fraternity and family. Why did Jesus dream of a vision of new society at all? The need for it is obvious.


44. This radicalization and transformation would be realized when, as John Riches explains: 1. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear and the dead are raised. (Mt. 11:5-6), 2. Eternal life is rewarded to those who suffer (Mk. 10:29f.), 3. The poor, hungry, and crying people reverse their life situation (Lk. 6:20-23), 4. The rich and wealthy, arrogant will be pulled down (6:24-26; Mt. 11:21-24), 5. The destruction of the evil is immanent ( Mk. 13: 14-37; Mt. 26:61), 6. And when Kingdom is seen as a reality here and now (Lk. 17:20f.). See John Riches, Jesus and The Transformation Judaism, Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 1980, p. 87.


47. "New Society" in biblical terms should be understood as "Kingdom of God".

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The present society is rotten with selfishness, hatred, exploitation and alienation. For Jesus, the Kingdom of God is the 'new age' which calls for a liberated community. In this community every tear would be wiped out and demons that possess (8:26-39) and oppress subaltern people would do not be allowed do it any longer (Rev. 21: 1-4). This community would be called be the “New Israel”.

Jesus builds new society (kingdom) because he has overcome Satan. He is the New Adam. The beginning of the new society has time, place and action. He starts his ministry of liberating the subaltern groups at a precise time. He exercises his ministry with his entry into Galilee, and also in the despised territory, territory of Gerasene. Jesus' vision of the new society manifests also his explicit option for the poor, not explicitly material poor but in a broader sense (subalterns peoples, 4:18-19- Is. 61:1-2).

The new society first is located among the poor of the rural places and then only among the rich, powerful, the cultivated population of the urbanized cities. The new society is the symbol of fulfillment of hopes of liberation. The characteristics of this new society consists in: freedom, fellowship and justice.

4.5.7. JESUS AND CULTURAL REVOLUTION

Culture is an all pervading reality that forms an integral part of the social system. It is the organic whole of ideas, beliefs, values and goals which condition the thinking

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49. Galilee is a despised land (Jn. 1:46), barbarous (Mt. 26:73), religiously backward (Jn. 7:41), gentile-ridden (Mt. 4:15) upcountry of the north (Mt. 4:5), but esteemed better than the 'holy city' (Rev. 11:2) of Jerusalem, place of conflict (Mk. 7:1), conspiracy (12:12, 14:1-2).

and acting of a community or people. The Jewish society in the times of Jesus practiced a different set of cultural values than it was expected of. It was a culture of hatred, division and discrimination. In this culture of loveless dealings, subaltern peoples are more and more alienated from society. Palestine in the times of Jesus had two cultural dominations of foreign rule and native oppressive character. Both laid a heavy burden on the lower groups of society. It is in this context that we see the new culture that Jesus advocates.

Jesus' culture is about the Kingdom of God and its reign (Lk. 11:20; Mt. 13:33; Mk. 2:22). The Kingdom manifests in love and justice (Mt. 5:11; 6:33). It seeks a new humanity that encompasses all nations and makes only God the centre of everything. This new humanity would be governed by the values of the Kingdom that are universal (Mt. 13:44-46). This new human community strives towards equality between the rich and the poor. The poor possess the new age (Lk. 6:20). In this new age the longings of the repressed poor would replace the privileges of the rich. The great become the least (Lk. 18:14; Mk. 10: 42-44). The unhelpful traditional rules would be replaced by helpful norms (Lk. 8:1-3; Mk. 1:20; 2:23-24 7:1-6). The culture of dialogue between religious ideologies and beliefs will help to foster a tolerant attitude. Living as one human community, guarding one's identity, should be the objective of this new culture. Jesus reshapes a genuine psychological and sociological thinking of his society through his instructions to his disciples that lead to change in attitudes.

4.5.8. JESUS AND THE SUBALTERN PEOPLES

Luke's Gospel amply makes plain and indisputably clear the mind and intentions of Jesus vis-a-vis the plight of subaltern peoples. As Luke presents, Jesus was not


52. Mathew Shailer, Jesus on Social Institutions, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1971, pp. 43-76.
bothered only with the spiritual salvation of Israel but he had also something more to do. He had to save the lost children of God's family. The people to whom Jesus turned his attention are referred to, in Luke, by a variety of terms: the poor, the sick. We have also explained why we call them subaltern instead of poor. By whatever name we may call them the true history of a majority is history of human suffering. Jesus' response to such people in the Gospel is the paradigm for our response to the savage and dehumanizing plight of our subaltern peoples. Jesus dares to respond to the needs of the poor (Lk. 4:16-21; 7:18-25 and 6:20-25). Jesus knows the subaltern peoples by their names (16:19-31). There is a particular treatment to the subaltern peoples, and they are favoured by preferential option.

As Jesus explained, any one who would like to commit himself\herself to the liberation of the subalterns should identify himself\herself with the suffering subaltern peoples, in order, to show them an active and effective concern. Jesus' life style speaks for his words. He not only became a subaltern with the subaltern (Heb. 4:15) but he even became an outcast with the outcast. He touched lepers and welcomed them to human fellowship, and dined with the tax-collectors. The effective concern for the suffering should be expressed in a concrete manner. It should be based on love commandment (Mt. 22:37-40).

53. In modern day terminology the poor are called 'lower classes', 'oppressed', or 'marginalized', etc. But it is only recently that the word 'subaltern' has come into usage.


55. In the parable of "Rich man and Lazarus", we notice that the rich man is not named while the poor beggar is referred to as Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31). It is very significant that the beggar is called by name. God knows the suffering man personally.

56. In the above mentioned parable the beggar is taken to paradise.

The suffering subaltern peoples would be favoured in the Kingdom of God and the rich would be invited for a change of heart. Riches are not bad but becoming slaves to riches is a great obstacle to enter the Kingdom of God (Lk 18:18-30). Riches make one godless and heartless. Therefore working for the liberation of the subaltern should imply distancing oneself from the possession of riches. Riches are means and they should not become ends. Distancing oneself from riches should mean putting an end to oppressive poverty. We should instill in the minds of the marginalized subaltern groups that God is on their side in words and deeds (see Exod. 22:21-24; Deut. 10:17-18; Is. 25:3-5.). Jesus' response is concretized, according to our context, that is stated in the second chapter.

4.5.9. CONCLUSION

Lukan theology is a subaltern theology. Luke presents Jesus as the staunch defender of the humiliated lower groups of society. He comes across as one who is committed just to this cause and fights for their welfare till the end. The social justice of Jesus that Luke presents is for the welfare of human community that imitates Kingdom of God. For Jesus the Kingdom of God is the fulfillment of the mission. The purpose of this mission is to announce Good News. The Good News consists in liberating the oppressed. It also consists in inviting the oppressors for a change of heart (metanoia) from their involvement in unjust and sinful structures. The purpose of liberation is to restore the lost image of subaltern peoples which was formed after the image of God Himself. The purpose of restoration of the lost image is to reunite it with the Image of God which is the final destiny of any child of God.