

TANGAZA COLLEGE
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

**TO WHOM AM I A NEIGHBOUR IN THE MIDST OF
TRIBAL PREJUDICES**

**An Exegesis of Luke 10:25-37, and its Application to Religious
Communities in Africa**

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DECLARATION

I, Paul Black Chembe declare that this Long Essay is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflections. It has never been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this Long Essay to my mother who has always challenged me by her constant sacrifice for others. Her sensitivity to the needs of others has always been a reminder for my Christian calling. She remains for me a great mother and a model for my daily life.

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May the Almighty God reward all those who have helped me directly and indirectly, those I have mentioned and those I have not.

1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

I have been reflecting on the aspect of neighbourliness in religious communities since 1995. I was in the novitiate by then and I lost my father. I felt so lonely, though in a community, and it seemed nobody cared for me. I felt that I bore the pain of loss all alone. And one day a certain man was briefing us on the effects of the genocide in Rwanda and he kept referring to those who cared for their enemies as “Good Samaritans”. The man concluded by saying: “blood is thicker than the water of baptism.” From that time I have been observing some aspects of community life, and how the parable of the Good Samaritan challenges us everyday. I am happy that finally I can write something on this topic.

In this essay, I follow the biblical methodology of writing. This essay has three chapters, and each chapter has an introduction and a conclusion. In the first chapter, I have set limits on the text, and how it has been exposed over the centuries from the manuscripts. Again in order to get the message of the text, and how it can be applied in our contemporary world, context we are going to see the remote and immediate contexts. There are also structures within the text that are important for better understanding of the message.

In the second chapter, I am treating the text exegetically. Although I am not doing a detailed word by word exegesis, I have tried to identify a few words which look to be key words to unveil the message for our purpose. This episode of the Good Samaritan, by having a context, must also have a historical setting especially the community or communities to whom the author was writing. It is after considering these that we can find a theological message of that time and ours today.

In the final chapter we venture into application of the message into today’s life especially in religious communities in some parts of Africa. I must admit that this research has not been easy especially on how to quantify the attitudes of people.

But all the same I believe that there is some truth in what has been observed. As Jesus was challenging the religious authorities of his time, he is doing the same today. There are historical events, cultural circumstances and many other things that prevent us from imitating the compassionate love of God. To be a religious is not an end in itself, but a means to something higher. Therefore to attain it, African religious are challenged to be for each other as children of one family.

CHAPTER I

Exegesis in Luke 10:25-37.

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the introductory questions in order to give the reader the intent of the work and the style and modality of the paper. The layout of this chapter starts by demarcating the limits of the text in question, the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Then what follows is the textual criticism which has its own importance as far as some elements are concerned. There is also the context of the passage under question, both the immediate and remote context, to be able to understand the influences and situations that led to this text, and how the text can be understood today from the original context. And finally we have the form and structure of the text which are vital for better understanding of the whole meaning of it. Some key actors and actions are very important in the text and special attention must be paid to them. A knowledge of both the genre of the text and its structure are important if we are to interpret it.

1.2 Delimitation

1.2.1 *Terminus a quo*

The fact that the parable of the Good Samaritan is a story within a story, has been treated differently by different commentators.¹ At first sight it looks as if the episode of the lawyer asking a question to Jesus is distinct from that of the narration of the parable of the Good Samaritan. But the point is that the parable comes as a

¹ A.J. MCNICOL – D.L. DUNGAN – D.P. PEABODY, ed., *Beyond the Q Impasse- Luke's Use of Matthew. A Demonstration by the Research Team of the International Institute for Gospel Studies*, (Pennsylvania 1996) 314.

result of a question from the lawyer to Jesus. According to Luke, Jesus uses the parable of the Good Samaritan to give an answer to the question of the lawyer.²

Some commentators base their argument on the fact that the first part of the episode, i.e. the encounter of the lawyer and Jesus is parallel to the other synoptic gospels (Matt 22:34-40; and Mark 12:28-34) as they present the double love commandment,³ while the parable itself is not found anywhere apart from the gospel of Luke. These commentators argue that this encounter and the parable are not the same story; and it is believed that the presence of the lawyer's question in Mark and Matthew, on top of the evidence of heavy Lukan editing, is a sign that the parable and the question of eternal life were separate in the oral tradition. But from the thematic point of view, the structure of the whole shows that it is a single block leading to the same point, as far as Luke is concerned. Therefore this is a story within a story. We can also identify a change of scene or episode by a change of characters in the story. In this case there is a lawyer coming in which automatically changes the scene; the actors are no longer Jesus and his disciples, but Jesus and the lawyer. For these reasons we have determined that our text begins with verse 25.⁴

1.2.2 Terminus ad quem.

The pericope of the Good Samaritan ends with verse 37 because of the following factors: here Jesus and the lawyer conclude their encounter as Jesus sends the lawyer with an imperative to 'go and do'⁵ likewise. This is the final answer that Jesus gives to the lawyer's first question of what he must do to inherit eternal life.

² L.T. JOHNSON, *Sacra Pagina III: The Gospel of Luke*. (Collegeville 1991) 175.

³ R.C. TANNEHILL, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries: Luke*, (Nashville 1996) 181.

⁴ J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke X-XXIV*. (Garden City 1986) 882.

⁵ Jesus wants to emphasize a different aspect of the law. For the Jewish priests or lawyers, knowing the law and reciting everyday was enough; but according to Jesus the law must get deeper in order to influence action, making it an active law. Cf. J. KODELL, *The Collegeville Bible Commentary: The Gospel of Luke*, (Collegeville 1989) 957.

After this command of Jesus, there is a change of characters which is the beginning of another episode, different from the one of the Good Samaritan. The lawyer disappears and two women come who are sisters, Martha and Mary (Lk 10:38-42). Therefore what follows after verse 37 no longer belongs to the story of Jesus and the lawyer. This verse 37 is the end of this parable as such. Verse 38 begins a different episode with different characters.⁶

1.3 Textual Criticism

There is only one textual problem present in this pericope. For the sake of this study we want to discuss this textual problem which is relevant to our understanding of the text.

ν 31 κατὰ συγκυρίαν δὲ ἱερεὺς τις κατέβαινε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐκείνῃ καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἀντιπαρήλθεν·

ν 32 ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ Λευίτης [γενόμενος] κατὰ τὸν τόπον ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ἀντιπαρήλθεν.

This is the question of omission, called haplography. This kind of omission occurs in a wide variety of manuscripts. In Luke 10:32 the whole verse is missing in other manuscripts especially in codex \aleph because the sentence ends with the same verb (ἀντιπαρήλθεν) as the previous sentence of verse 31. So from verse 31 it goes straight to verse 33 (the clause καὶ ἰδὼν ἀντιπαρήλθεν at the end of 10:32 appears very much like καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἀντιπαρήλθεν at the end of 10:31)⁷

“The participle *γενόμενος* read by P⁴⁵ A C D E G H K M S U V W Γ Δ Θ Λ and most minuscules, is absent from P⁷⁵ \aleph^c [owing to homoeoteleuton \aleph^* omits the entire verse] B L X Ξ 0190f 28 33 700 *al.* The participle *ἐλθὼν*, read by P⁷⁵ \aleph^c B C E G H K M S U V W Γ Δ Θ Λ Ξ and many minuscules, is absent from P⁴⁵ D Π 63 68 114 243

⁶ J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke. X-XXIV*, 883.

⁷ B. M. METZGER, *The Text of the New Testament, Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, (New York 1992) 31.

253 265 270 482 489 726 990 1200 1219 1375 *al.* It is difficult to decide whether the longer text, being redundant, was shortened by copyists, some of whom deleted γενομενος and others ἐλθων, or whether the longer text is the result of conflation. In view of the collocation γενομενοι κατα in Ac 27.7, a minority of the Committee preferred the reading γενομενος κατα as a Lukan expression; at the same time, in view of the divided attestation for and against ἐλθων, they preferred to enclose that word within square brackets. The majority of the Committee, however, impressed by what was taken as superior manuscript support, preferred to retain ἐλθων in the text without brackets; and, being reluctant to identify γενεσθαι κατα as a special Lukan collocation, thought it necessary, in view of the weight of the witnesses that omit γενομενος to enclose this word within square brackets.⁸

It is worthwhile to note that the omission of verse 32 was a mistake of the copyists, because without it the story would have been incomplete. With verse 32 the story falls perfectly well under the storytelling device of the triad.⁹ But for the repetitions of some expressions, though they may sound Lukan, it is enough to give the necessary expressions other than to fall into redundancy.

1.4 Context of the Text

1.4.1 Immediate Context

The parable of the Good Samaritan features within the larger section of the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-19:27). But the immediate context is the jubilation of the disciples as they return from their mission. They are happy because of the positive outcome of the mission where the demons submitted to the name of Jesus. But Jesus points out the most important reason for rejoicing which is the fact that their names are written in the book of citizens of heaven meaning that they have attained salvation.¹⁰ Then Jesus responds with praise for God's revelation shared not

⁸ B. M. METZGER, *A Textual Commentary, The Gospel According to Luke, Part 1, Chapters 1-12*, (London 1975) 127-128.

⁹ J. A. FITZMYER, *Luke X-XXIV*, 883.

¹⁰ J. A. FITZMYER, *Luke X-XXIV*, 863-864. Here Jesus' words allude to the Old Testament idea of the heavenly book of the living or of life, the registry of those who belong to God's upright people. The image is drawn from the ancient records of cities or kingdoms, which listed the citizens who belonged

with the wise and intelligent but with infants. Jesus has just finished blessing his disciples for seeing and hearing the great marvels of the Lord which are revealed to the merest of children (Cf. Luke 10:22-24). Then when all that are together have received Jesus' eschatological blessing, Luke's narrative turns to those outside the inner group and describes their reactions. A lawyer stands up and wants to know how he too can inherit eternal life, how he too can have his name written in heaven like Jesus' disciples. This person being a lawyer, is by definition one of the "wise and educated." The lawyer and Jesus engage in a question and answer session after the manner of lawyers and those they interrogate.¹¹

1.4.2 Remote Context

The Gospel of St. Luke has been divided into different sections depending on themes. The parable of the Good Samaritan falls in the fourth section which happens to be the longest section of the whole gospel known as the Journey to Jerusalem.¹² On the way Jesus interacts with three groups or categories of people: the ordinary, the eager disciples and the scrupulous hostile adversaries.¹³

At the beginning of this travel narrative Jesus sets his face towards Jerusalem and he sends his disciples as an advance party who are quickly rejected by the Samaritans (Luke 9:51-56). This section of the travel narrative is mostly Lukan because very little resembles any of the synoptic gospels. In this section we see a special theology of Luke that influences the details. The plan of God that Jesus must suffer, die and rise in the Jerusalem environment forges a chain which links every

to them. For the Old Testament background, see Exod 32:32f; Pss 69:28; 56:9; The idea itself is rooted in Ancient Sumerian and Akkadian literature.

¹¹ F.B. CRADDOCK, *Luke: Interpretation. A Biblical Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, (Louisville 1990) 31.

¹² J. A. FITZMYER, *Luke. I-IX*, 823.

¹³ L.T. JOHNSON, *SacP. III: The Gospel of Luke*, 174.

work and every act of the Saviour to the Holy City Jerusalem.¹⁴ This parable of the Good Samaritan is the first parable within a journey context as it is mentioned in Luke 13:22, 17:11. For its details to make sense, it must be read from Luke 9:51-56. This journey of Jesus to Jerusalem is a march towards exaltation as a fulfillment of God's plan. The same experience of Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem will be the experience of the church moving towards the New Jerusalem. Luke purposely arranges this journey narrative to teach the disciples the cost of discipleship. According to commentators of Luke, this travel narrative is not a diary of Jesus' journey to the place of his passion and resurrection, but an important framework that Luke has given to his collection of "Q" "L" and other materials.¹⁵ In most scenes of this section, Jesus plays the role of teacher. He is accompanied by his disciples who, by being privileged witnesses of what he says and does, are able to learn his ways. The disciples are being prepared for many things not only for the dramatic events that will take place in Jerusalem, but also for what the future mission holds for them.

Like heralds, Jesus sends his disciples ahead of himself to the villages where he was to pass (Luke 9:52). In particular he sends them to a Samaritan village but they reject them (Luke 9:53). The hostility of the Samaritans is not the personal hatred Jesus will meet in Jerusalem, but rather an indication of the national or racial prejudices between the Samaritans and Jews. Surprisingly, Jesus rebukes James and John for suggesting calling fire to consume the whole village as a vengeance for their rejection.¹⁶ Luke is trying to present the Gospel in contrast with the law. He puts the Gospel as the primary task even over the sacred duty of burying parents (Luke 9:59-60) which according to the law was a priority (1Kgs 19:19-21). Jesus sends the seventy-two disciples to prepare the way for him, and dependence on the Lord is very

¹⁴ C. STUHLMEYER, *New Testament Reading Guide: The Gospel of St. Luke*, (Collegeville 1964) 86.

¹⁵ C. OWCZAREK, *Sons of the Most High*, (Nairobi 2002) 208.

¹⁶ E. LAVERDIERE, *Luke: New Testament Message. V*, (Delaware 1980)141.

important for the disciples.¹⁷ Jesus makes a drastic comparison between obstinate cities of Galilee where he centered much of his ministry and Sodom, Tyre and Sidon which are gentile cities. There is victory over Satan, being won in Jesus' name (Luke 10:17).

There is the happy return of the seventy missionaries (Luke 10:17) which provokes a prayer in Jesus to the Father, praising him for letting these "little ones" understand what is really going on in the world about the decisive battle between the good and evil. The humble disciple is able to see and hear what prophets and kings looked forward to, truth which, because of its simplicity, is often hidden from the worldly great and worldly wise. The revelation of the meaning of existence is under God's full control; it cannot be bought nor can it be deduced by human cleverness.¹⁸ This is where the lawyer comes in to find out what he, as an expert of the law can do that will grant him eternal life.

1.5 Form and Structure of the Text

1.5.1 Form

The story of the Good Samaritan is a parable as far as many scholars are concerned.¹⁹ The word parable itself is derived from the Greek word παραβολή that appear frequently in the Gospels which means to cast alongside, implying a comparison or juxtaposition. In the case of Jesus' parables, it involves an everyday phenomenon or situation being likened to the Kingdom of God. It can also mean 'a metaphor or a simile drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise

¹⁷ J. KODELL, *Collegeville Biblical Commentary: The Gospel of Luke*, (Collegeville 1989) 59.

¹⁸ J. KODELL, *CBC: The Gospel of Luke*, 60.

¹⁹ L.T. JOHNSON, *SacP. III. The Gospel of Luke*, 175.

application to tease it into active participation or thought.’²⁰ Again there are those parables which are also seen as exemplary stories. This type of parable exhibits the characteristics of the parable with one major difference; it does not refer by analogy to another reality. Instead, it offers a pattern of correct behaviour to emulate, or wrong behaviour to avoid. This is the category under which the story of the Good Samaritan falls.²¹

1.5.2 Structure

For the structure of the parable of the Good Samaritan, there is quite a number that can be presented. This is one of them:

“Here Luke has changed the logical sequence of parable with the rule of three. For the purpose of his teaching something to the lawyer, he breaks the rule by presenting a priest, a Levite, and instead of having a lay Israelite, he brings in a Samaritan. He has also changed the structure of the question of the lawyer of viewing a neighbour as an object of mercy to a neighbour who is subject of mercy.”²²

a) Dialogical

The structure of the dialogue between Jesus and the lawyer can be identified as eight speeches which are divided into two precise rounds of debate. In each round there are two questions and two answers. The formal structure of each scene is identical. In round one, the dialogue uses the inversion principle. The first and last speeches in this round are subject of *Do* and *Live*, the inner two are the topic of the law.²³ The dialogue and its inversions can be presented in this way:

-Round One

1. The Lawyer asks the first question “teacher, what shall I *do* to inherit *eternal life*?”

²⁰ J.L. BAILEY, *Literary Forms in the New Testament*, 106.

²¹ J.L. BAILEY, *Literary Forms in the New Testament*, 108.

²² R.C. TANNEHILL, *ANTC, Luke*, 183.

²³ K.E. BAILEY, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 32.

2. Jesus asks the second question in the dialogue: He said to him, “What is written in the law? How do you read?”
3. The lawyer answers Jesus’ question: “you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbour as yourself.”
4. Jesus answers the first question of the Lawyer “you have answered right; *do* this and you shall *live*.”

-Round Two

5. The lawyer asks the third question: “who is my neighbour?”
6. Answering the lawyer, Jesus ends by asking the fourth question, “Which of these three became a neighbour?”
7. The lawyer’s answer to the above question is “The one who *did* mercy to him.”
8. Finally, answering the question “who is my neighbour?” Jesus gives the concluding challenge *Go* and continue *Doing* likewise.²⁴

Apart from the two structures already presented, there is another one. This is more straightforward, with its two parts presented in the parable.

	Part 1.	Part 2
Identification of the Lawyer’s motive	Verse 25	Verse 29
The lawyer’s question	Verse 25	Verse 29
Jesus’ answer and counter question	Verse 26	Verse 30-36
The lawyer’s (appropriate) reply	Verse 27	Verse 37a
Jesus’ final word in the Imperative	Verse 28	Verse 37b.

²⁴ K.E. BAILEY, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 34.

b) Narrative

The narrative part of the parable is where Jesus is answering the question of the lawyer. This time the answer needs to be exhaustive so that the lawyer should understand and dare not ask any more questions. Jesus presents the answer by narrating the story of a victim of robbers.

The structure of the narrative has a kind of parallelism as far as the actions are concerned.

Verse 30

Verse 34

<i>fall among robbers</i>	<i>Seen and approached</i> by a Samaritan who had compassion
<i>stripped</i> by robbers	<i>Bound his wounds</i> by Samaritan
being <i>beaten</i> by robbers	<i>Taken care of</i> by the Samaritan
<i>left</i> by robbers half dead	<i>Brought him to an inn</i> and paid for treatment.

These two columns represent two kinds of action opposing to each other. The actions of the robbers in verse 30 creates a need for a neighbour. The second column has actions as well but different from those of verse 30. These actions in verse 34 are neighbourly, aimed at bringing life. The robbers leave him to die without taking any responsibility for his life while the Samaritan takes responsibility to make sure he gets well. Therefore to be a neighbour is to express love through actions that bring life.²⁵

1.6 Conclusion

Having located the parable of the Good Samaritan in its proper place in the entire Gospel of Luke, we have also seen the context in which it is presented. The

²⁵ Etemal life can only be achieved when we make others alive. Cf. B.B. SCOTT, *Hear then The Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus*, (Mineapolis 1989) 193.

technical aspect of the text has also been viewed to see the variants that have been there with the text from the manuscript evidence.

This parable, being the first parable in this section of the Gospel of Luke, 'the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem', has a special role in the remaining part of the Gospel and the future life of the followers of Christ for their mission. There is a challenge that Jesus puts forward to anyone who categorizes his neighbour. It challenges a limited conception of neighbour, based on things like bloodlines, law, tradition or culture. As a parable that can be categorized as an exemplary story, it is a call to do away with legalistic behaviour and instead to be truthful and selfless in showing love to those in need. The structure of the text brings to light the different actors and the crucial actions.

CHAPTER II

Exegetical Analysis of Luke's Message

2.1 Introduction

In this second chapter of our investigation on the parable of the Good Samaritan, our attention will be focused on the exegetical analysis. And then after that we will see the historical setting of the gospel to be able to understand its goal. In this setting we first of all see for whom and for what purpose was the writer writing this whole gospel and what impact does this story have as a small part to the entire gospel. The second thing is to clarify, who this Samaritan is, and why should he be called good. From there we will try to pay attention on the meaning of the actions of the different characters of this story with special interest in some key concepts such as neighbour, love, compassion and mercy.

Finally, with the detailed analysis of the parable we will be able to draw the theological message of this parable in our context today.

2.2 Detailed Analysis

ν25 Καὶ ἰδοὺ νομικός τις ἀνέστη ἐκπειράζων αὐτὸν λέγων· διδάσκαλε, τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω;

*And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what must I do so that I may inherit eternal life?"*²⁶

The opening καὶ ἰδοὺ literally translated as "and behold," is characteristically septuagintal and Lukan and in this context, is just a simple introduction.²⁷ Luke uses

²⁶ For the English translations, I have used the *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version*, (New York 1973)

νομικος which is a noun for “lawyer,”²⁸ which has rabbi as its nearest equivalent in modern Judaism. Luke is the only evangelist who uses this word νομικος. Apart from the interpretation of the law, the lawyers acted as judges in the courts and trained young men in discipleship.²⁹

ΑΝΕΣΤΗ “stood up” is found in several texts in the New Testament (Cf. Luke 4:16; Acts 1:15, 5:34, 11:28, Mark 14:60, Matt 12:41). In the context of this verse, the action of the lawyer reflects a social courtesy and a greeting of respect to a group which was seated. In the Middle-East the student had always stood to address his teacher out of courtesy. However, the lawyer in this parable stands not to address Jesus, he also stands to give him the title of teacher διδασκαλε.³⁰ By that he meant that Jesus is at least an equal to him as far as law is concerned.³¹

The lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test. Matt 22:35 has πειραζων “testing” or ‘tempting” which Luke has strengthened with an εκ prefix making εκπειραζων. This phrase reveals a hostile attitude of the lawyer towards Jesus as he tests him on the subject of inheriting eternal life.³² In the Old Testament, especially in Deuteronomy the idea of inheriting was primarily applied to Israel’s privilege of inheriting the promised land.³³ This inheritance is understood as the gift of Yahweh. With the phrase τι ποιησας it implies that by a performance of something, eternal life can be secured. The lawyer is asking for a heroic act that must be done or great

²⁷ F. C. EVANS, *Saint Luke: New Testament Commentaries*, (London 1993) 424., J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke, X-XXIV*, 879.

²⁸ Lawyer in the Jewish tradition is a person well educated according to the law and its interpretations.

²⁹ E.J. TINSLEY, *Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible: The Gospel According to Luke*, (New York 1965) 119.

³⁰ This title διδασκαλε has already been given to Jesus by Simon in Luke 7:40 as he acknowledged Jesus as one of the teachers of Israel. Cf. G. KITTEL, *Theological Dictionary of New Testament. II*, (Grand Rapids 1976) 153.

³¹ K.E. BAILEY, *Poet and Peasant: Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary Cultural Approach to parables in Luke*, (Grand Rapids 1983) 35.

³² J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke X-XXIV*, 880.

³³ “And because he loved your ancestors, he chose their descendants after them. He brought you out of Egypt, with his own presence by his great power, driving out before you nations greater and mightier than yourselves, to bring you in, giving you their land for a possession, as it is still today” (Deut 4:37-38).

sacrifice to be made. This kind of mentality is the one of the gaoler in Philippi (Acts 16:30).³⁴ Israel did not conquer the land by its own achievements. The notion of ζωνη αιωνιον κληρονομησω first of all the verb is frequently used in LXX of the occupation of Canaan by the Israelites (Deut 4:22,26; 6:1); it is transferred to the perfect possession of the kingdom of the messiah. Eternal or everlasting life is an eschatological concept, which appears in Dan 12:2 “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” This concept of eternal life was there in Jewish texts (Ps 24:13, 36:9, 11, 22,29; Isa 60:21) before the 2nd Century BC.³⁵ In the New Testament, the notion of eternal life appears as supernatural life received by a believer as a gift from God. (John 3:36, 1John 5:11).

ν 26 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν· ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τί γέγραπται; πῶς ἀναγινώσκεις;

He said to him, "what is written in the law? How do you read?"

Jesus refers the lawyer to the law, in other words to the Pentateuch or the Torah of Moses.³⁶ On the question of “how do you read?” the ἀναγιγνωσκεις “to read” means here not the act of reading as such, but the understanding or the perceiving to the sense of the text that has been read.³⁷ For ἀναγιγνωσκεις³⁸ that was the natural answer given to Jesus and he adds the second law from Leviticus (Lev

³⁴ A. PLUMMER, *The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of Old and New Testaments: The Gospel According to St. Luke*, (Edinburgh 1989) 284.

³⁵ J. NOLLAND, *Word Biblical Commentary XXXVB Luke 9:21-18:34*, (Dallas 1993) 583.

³⁶ J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke X-XXIV*, 880.

³⁷ J. NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 583.

³⁸ The first of the two laws was written on phylacteries, and the Jew recited it morning and evening from Deut 6:5, 11, 13. The lawyer must have known this by heart.

19:18) and is remarkable, and it may be that he was desirous of leading up to the question: “and who is my neighbour.”³⁹

ν27 ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης [τῆς] καρδίας σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ἰσχύϊ σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ διανοίᾳ σου, καὶ τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν.

And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.”

Ἀγαπήσεις is translated in English as “you shall love.” In the Old Testament the verb to love is אָהַב. There are three categories of the religious use of root אָהַב. First of all, it is used of Yahweh’s love for his people. This use is frequently found in the circle of theology in which the Deuteronomist, Hosea and Jeremiah stood and especially where the concept of divine election was present.

The second category of the Old Testament use of אָהַב is in the context of human love for Yahweh or for things related to Him.⁴⁰ Thus there are several motivations which stimulate a human being to love God such as in Deut 6:4-5 where the motivation for loving Yahweh is the fact that he alone is God and hence to him is such exclusive loving devotion due. The Israelites’ love for Yahweh is also motivated by all that Yahweh has done for them in terms of election, redemption, and providential care for Israel as a nation (Deut 10:12-13; 11:1; Ps 31:23-24). Therefore human love for God is far from being expressed simply in pure legalism or external observance of the cult; on the contrary, it engages the whole person. Here as in Mk 12:30 we have four powers with which God is to be loved. They cover man’s

³⁹ A. PLUMMER, *ICC., The Gospel of St. Luke*, 285.

⁴⁰ W.A. VANGEMEREN, *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Exegesis and Theology. I.*, (Cumbria 1997) 283.

physical, intellectual, and moral activity; with all his powers, it must come from one's whole heart as illustrated in Deut 4:29; 6:5.⁴¹

The third category of the use of אהב in the Old Testament is the one of love for fellow human beings as commended by God. The insistence on treating a fellow Israelite in a positive, affectionate and just manner occurs only in the Pentateuch especially in Lev 19:18 which is often quoted in the New Testament (Cf. Matt 5:43; 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31, Luke 10:27; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8). The Greeks had four terms for expressing the major senses of love. First *στοργη* "storge" which refers either to the tender love that parents naturally feel towards their children or children towards their siblings and parents or to the bond that unites husband and wife. It also takes in sympathy for friend and compatriots not found in the New Testament. Secondly, *ερωσ* "eros" which is not found in the New Testament, expresses above all unreasonable passion and desire. It is a passionate love which desires the other for itself. Thirdly *φιλεω* "phileo" friendship or amity refers to affection, attachment, sympathy always marked by a kindly attitude and good will.⁴² Finally the noun *αγαπη* "agape" this is the most rational kind of love, in as much as it involves recognition and judgment of value. Unlike other loves which can remain hidden in the heart. It is essential to charity to manifest itself and provide proofs. It is a disinterested and generous love, full of thoughtfulness and concern.⁴³ It is in this sense that God is *αγαπη* and loves the world (John 3:16). The uses of *αγαπη* and *αγαπω* in the New Testament can be summarized in three groups.⁴⁴ First they are used to describe the attitude of God toward his son Jesus Christ (John 17:26); the human race in general (John 3:16; Rom 5:8) and particularly to those who believe in

⁴¹ W.A. VANGEMEREN, *New International Dictionary, of O.T. Theology and Exegesis I*, 286.

⁴² Cf. C. SPICQ, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament I*, (Peabody 1994) 9-10.

⁴³ C.SPICQ, *TLNT. I*, 11-12.

⁴⁴ W.E. VINE, *An Expository Dictionary of N.T.*,(Chicago 1940) 20-21.

Jesus (John 14:21). Secondly they are used in the sense of conveying the will of God to his children concerning their attitude one toward another (John 13:34) and toward all the people (Thes 3:12, 1Cor 16:14, 2 Peter 1:7). Finally, they are used to express the essential nature of God (1John 4:8).

Luke inverts the order of the last two elements from Mark by putting strength before mind. The common thing between Luke and Matthew is that both do not quote Deut 6:4. The original addition of mind to the list is perhaps to be associated to the fact that *διανοια*, *mind*, is a variant reading for *καρδια* *heart*, in Deut 6:5. The heart denotes a reply to God from the inmost personal center of one's being.⁴⁵ The heart for ancient Hebrew was the center of the intellect where the law was kept (Ps 119:11). Thus the phrase "with all your mind" can be seen as an expansive translation in the Greek gospel of the meaning of the original Hebrew text.⁴⁶ "Your soul" relates to the vitality and consciousness of a person, "your strength" introduces the element of energetic physical action, "your mind" implies the thinking and planning processes.⁴⁷ The challenge is to a complete engagement with God with the total capacity of all of one's faculties.⁴⁸

In its Old Testament context the term "neighbour" in Lev 19:18 was generally limited to fellow Israelites, including full proselytes. But there was disagreement about the exceptions since Pharisees were inclined to exclude non-Pharisees and the Essenes required that a man should hate all the sons of darkness. The rabbinical saying ruled that heretics, informers and renegades should be pushed into the ditch and not pulled out.⁴⁹ In Lev 19:34 neighbour is extended to cover the resident alien.

⁴⁵ J. NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 583-584.

⁴⁶ K.E. BAILEY, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 38.

⁴⁷ J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke. X-XXIV*, 880.

⁴⁸ J. NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 584.

⁴⁹ J. JEREMIAS, *The Parables of Jesus*, (New York 1963) 202-203.

There has been a considerable debate about whether the “as yourself” reflects a requirement first to love oneself in order to be able to love others, or whether it proposes the replacing of self-love, and the expression does not mean as much as you love yourself. The logic of the text does assume that behaving towards others as though oneself, on the receiving end will produce compassionate and kindly behaviour.⁵⁰

ν28 εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ· ὀρθῶς ἀπεκρίθης· τοῦτο ποίει καὶ ζήσῃ.

And he said to him, “You have answered right; do this, and you will live.”

Several observations can be made from Jesus’ answer: “do this and you will live.” Jesus’ answer to the lawyer calls him to answer his own question. Jesus does not tell the lawyer what to do rather the lawyer tells himself. The lawyer has asked a special question about eternal life. But Jesus extended the dimension of the discussion to all life. The Greek text has here a future ζήσῃ “you shall live.” This future is life after death – do this and you will live in the next life.

Finally ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΟΙΕΙ which is a present imperative “continually do this,” not just once and for all.⁵¹ The lawyer requested a specific and limited action in order to inherit eternal life but the answer given to him is a command for an open ended life style that requires unlimited and qualified love for God and people.⁵²

ν29 ὁ δὲ θέλων δικαιῶσαι ἑαυτὸν εἶπεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν· καὶ τίς ἐστίν μου πλησίον;

But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?”

⁵⁰ J. NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18.34*, 584.

⁵¹ A. PLUMMER, *ICC.: The Gospel According to St. Luke*, 285.

⁵² K.E. BAILEY, *Through peasant Eyes*, 39.

δικαιῶσαι ἑαυτὸν, “to justify himself,” recurs at 16:15 and 18:9,14. The lawyer’s self-justification is not a case of excusing himself for asking Jesus, although he knows what Jesus thinks.⁵³ He wishes to appear virtuous, despite omitting to perform this duty in the past. The lawyer sees the answer to his question is simple and has been displaced from the position of challenger to that of one being challenged. It is finally unclear whether the self-justification is thought to involve the justifying of his earlier question or whether we should see it as a preparation for making a claim to having fulfilled what the law asks of him.⁵⁴

The story in the next six verses (30-35) will extend the neighbours’ love beyond that given in Lev 19:16. The identity of neighbour is different from the traditional understanding. He is not identified by the role but what he does. He merits the identity of neighbour by the act of love to an extreme need.

ν30 Ὑπολαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· ἄνθρωπός τις κατέβαινεν ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ εἰς Ἱεριχὼ καὶ λησταῖς περιέπεσον, οἳ καὶ ἐκδύσαντες αὐτὸν καὶ πληγὰς ἐπιθέντες ἀπῆλθον ἀφέντες ἡμιθανῆ.

Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half-dead.”

ὑπολαβων “took him up” to reply to him. Here only in New Testament has ὑπολαμβάνω this meaning which is quite classical and often in Job 2:4, 5:1, 6:1, 9:1, 11:1; 12:1, which is in contrast with Luke 7:43 as I suppose, “I presume.”⁵⁵ ἀνθρωπος τις κατεβαινεν. The road is downhill; but besides this we commonly

⁵³ J. JEREMIAS, *The Parable of Jesus*, 202.

⁵⁴ K.E.BAILEY, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 39.

⁵⁵ A. PLUMMER, ICC. *The Gospel According to St. Luke*, 285.

talk about “going down” from the capital. The narrative implies that the man is a Jew and Jericho is about twenty miles from Jerusalem. The road still, as in Jesus’ time, has a bad name. It is probable that Jesus was on this road at the time when he delivered the parable; for Bethany is on it and the next event takes place there (Lk 10:38-42).⁵⁶ λησταις περιεπεσεν. change from imperfect to aorist “fell among the robbers” this means that they were all around him. Οἱ και ἐκδυσαντες αὐτον και πληγασ επιθεντες. “who both stripping him laying blows on him.” Robbers naturally plunder their victims but do not always strip them like the case of Jesus on the cross (Matt 27:28). It was because he tried to keep his clothes and also to disable him that they added blows to robbery. For the phrase πληγασ ἐπιθεντες can be compared to the beatings and stripping of clothes of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:22-23).⁵⁷ The identity of the victim is not given. However the other three figures are well identified. We know their nationalities and their religious background. The victim is just ανθρωπος τις. The story was narrated by a Jew to a Jewish audience and in Jewish territory; therefore the victim might have been a Jew. Jesus leaves the man unidentified. This anonymity will persist till the moral of the story in verse 36 and verse 37a.⁵⁸

What was stolen from the man apart from his clothing attracts no comment; it does not contribute to the man’s immediately pressing need. We only know that the man is naked, beaten up, abandoned and left half-dead.⁵⁹ “Half dead” has two meanings: it could mean that the man could be taken for dead, that he was unconscious and looked like a corpse. The other possibility, is that the man was badly injured, that his life was in danger, and therefore he needed help in order to

⁵⁶ A. PLUMMER, *ICC. The Gospel According to St. Luke*, 285.

⁵⁷ A. PLUMMER, *ICC. The Gospel According to St. Luke*, 285-287.

⁵⁸ B. B. SCOTT, *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus*, 192.

⁵⁹ J. NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 593.

survive. The second argument is here preferable for two reasons. First of all half dead refers to the person on the point of death and secondly, the fact that the Samaritan acts with compassion shows that the man must have appeared alive, but in severe condition.⁶⁰

v31 κατὰ συγκυρίαν δὲ ἱερεὺς τις κατέβαινε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐκείνῃ καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἀντιπαρήλθεν·

“Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.”

The word κατὰ συγκυρίαν may not mean exactly ‘by chance’, but better ‘by way of coincidence’. Since the road was lonely, the coming of the priest was a coincidence to the victim’s need for help. ἱερεὺς τις κατέβαινε. This implies that he also was on his way from Jerusalem and that he was going home after discharging his turn of service and that Jericho was a priestly city. ἀντιπαρήλθεν “went by opposite to him.” this word is rare in the New Testament, in the book of Wisdom it has a contrary meaning (Wis 16:10).⁶¹ By coincidence a certain priest was coming, who was probably riding, because by that period priesthood constituted the prestigious and elite class in Jewish society.⁶² The appearance of the priest was a source of hope that the injured man would be saved. But this prime representative of the religion hardens his heart and passes by on the other side. The priest would have considered himself justified in law.⁶³

⁶⁰ A.J. HULTGREN . *The Parables of Jesus: A commentary*, (Michigan 2000) 96.

⁶¹ ἀντιπαρήλθεν in the book of Wisdom means: “came by, opposite to them” with the aim of helping them. Cf. J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke*, X-XXIV, 887.

⁶² K.E. BAILEY, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 43.

⁶³ The law forbids priests touching the corpse of one of his people unless one of the closest relations. Cf. Lev 21:1-3; Num 5:2; 19:2; Ezek 44:25-27. This was probably to keep distance from a probably dead man. But then in case of a corpse without any one to bury, a priest would bury. In this case of a

The wounded man could not speak and he did not have any distinctive dress on him, this made him to be unidentifiable. Having seen the wounded man, there is not only the possibility that the man is a non-Jew, but the priest would have thought that the man might be dead and if so, contact with him would defile him. And once defiled, the priest cannot collect, distribute and eat the tithes; therefore his family and servants will suffer the consequences with him.⁶⁴ Besides the above arguments the priest would have also remembered that once defiled, he could not officiate at any service and could not wear his phylacteries. Moreover, the fact that the priest was coming from Jerusalem presupposes that he has just fulfilled his two weeks period of service in the temple and was on his way home to Jericho. He would feel humiliated if he contracts ritual of impurity, which will oblige him to return to the temple and stand at the eastern gate.⁶⁵ The story's focus is on the priest's failure to help rather than on the reason that he failed to help.

ν32 ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ Λευίτης [γενόμενος] κατὰ τὸν τόπον ἔλθων καὶ ἰδὼν ἀντιπαρήλθεν.

“So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.”

The insertion of *γενόμενος* before *κατὰ τὸν τόπον* (A) makes *ἔλθων* belong to *ἰδων* meaning “came and saw” and thus the Levite is made to be more heartless than the priest, whom he seems to have been coming behind. The priest saw and passed

wounded man who was thought of being dead, the priest has no excuse to say he was avoiding defilement because the law gave exception.

⁶⁴ K.E. BAILEY, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 44.

⁶⁵ During the daily sacrifice which took place twice in the temple, a gong was struck at the time of the incense. At the sound of this gong the chief priest of the delegation of Israel (note that this delegation was made of priests, Levites and Jewish lay men) made the unclean stand at the Eastern gate in front of the altar. These people were mainly unclean priests, who were obliged to stand there to shame them for their remission in contracting uncleanness for the ritual of purification, which was time consuming and costly. It required finding, buying and reducing a red heifer to ashes, and the ritual took a full week. Cf. K.E. BAILEY, *Through Peasant Eyes*, 45.

on; but the Levite came up to him quite close, saw and passed on. But B L X Ξ omit γενομενος, while D and other manuscripts omit ἐλθων; and it is not likely that both are correct. More and more editors today omit γενομενος because they think it is not original.⁶⁶ Levites were secondary figures in Jewish religious life, from whom one may expect a little bit less. The reaction of the priest and the Levite towards the half dead man is similar in the sense that they all come, they all see and all pass by. No explanation is given about their comportment, what is important are their actions, for it is on these that the Lukan Jesus concentrates in the narrative.⁶⁷ Although the regulations on defilement from contact with a dead body were also to be found in the Samaritan Pentateuch, they did not stop the Samaritan of the story from showing kindness to the wounded man.⁶⁸

ν33 Σαμαρίτης δέ τις ὁδεύων ἦλθεν κατ' αὐτὸν καὶ ἰδὼν ἐσπλαγχνίσθη.

But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion.

The arrival of a Samaritan is an unexpected development in the story. His arrival does not at once say much. A Jewish audience would not expect much from him because Samaritans were considered as apostates by Jews.⁶⁹ The expression ἐσπλαγχνίσθη “he had compassion” is the pivot upon which the story turns.⁷⁰ Compassion is a feeling with and for others, it is a fundamental and distinctive quality of the biblical conception of God, and leads to an action. It was out of God’s compassion that he delivered Israel out of bondage and called her to be his own

⁶⁶ B.M. METZGER, *A Textual Commentary, in Greek New Testament*, 1972³, 152-153.

⁶⁷ C. OWCZAREK, *Sons of the Most High*, 203.

⁶⁸ J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke X-XXIV*, 884.

⁶⁹ A.J. HULTGREN, *The Parables of Jesus: A commentary*. 98.

⁷⁰ Compassion is the divine emotion attributed to Jesus in Luke 7:13. And when the Lord saw her (the widow who had lost her only Son), he had compassion on her and said to her “Do not weep.” and to the father of the prodigal son in Luke 15:20. Moved with compassion the father runs, embraces and kisses his son.

nation (Exod 3:7-9). Since compassion was the characteristic of Israel's God, the prophets declared that compassion and kindness were essential requirements of members of the community (Mic 6:8). In the New Testament, God of Israel, the Father of Jesus is revealed as a God full of compassion. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of mercies and God of all comfort," (2Cor 1:3). God's compassion is clearly shown by the fact that he sent his only son to redeem the whole of humankind.⁷¹ ἦλθεν κατ' αὐτον. "came down upon him." The fear of being himself overtaken by robbers does not influence him. Directly he saw him, he was moved with compassion like the case of the widow who has lost her only son (Luke 7:13). The compassion of the Samaritan reflects divine compassion.

ν34 καὶ προσελθὼν κατέδησεν τὰ τραύματα αὐτοῦ ἐπιχέων ἔλαιον καὶ οἶνον, ἐπιβιβάσας δὲ αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ ἴδιον κτήνος ἤγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς πανδοχεῖον καὶ ἐπεμελήθη αὐτοῦ

*And went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine, then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.*⁷²

These medical details would be interesting to Luke since he is a physician.⁷³ And for τραυμα ἐστὶν καταδησαι (Ecclus.27:21) the act of binding a wound to enhance

⁷¹ G. W. BROMILEY-HARRISON, E. F. - HARRISON, R. K. - LASOR, W. S. - SMITH, E. W., ed., *The International Standard Biblical Encyclopedia, IV*, (Michigan 1988) 755.

⁷² Though the agreement is not close, it is possible that the description of the Samaritan's action has been influenced by 2Chro 28:15. 'And the men who have been mentioned by the name rose and took the captives, and with the spoil they clothed all that were naked among them, they clothed them, gave them sandals, provided them with food and drink and anointed them; and carrying all the feeble among them on asses, they brought them to their kinsfolk at Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.'

⁷³ R. J. KARRIS, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary: The Gospel According to Luke*, (London 1992) 675.

healing, and for ἐπιχέω (Gen 28:18; Lev 5:11) pouring on of oil on a wound to soften it and as an act of worship or sacrifice to God.⁷⁴

The rest of his actions are the expression of his compassion, towards the wounded man. He uses what he has to offer as first aid to the victim, “he bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine.”⁷⁵

In Jeremiah 30:17 the imagery of binding up of wounds is the saving act of God to his people. Moreover in Hosea 6:1-10 there are many sentences echoing the Samaritan’s action towards the wounded man. Yahweh is the one who will bind up the wounds of his people. He will revive, raise and come to them.

It is a Samaritan who gives a profound expression of the steadfast love for which the prophets were calling. He is the one who pours out the true offering acceptable to God.⁷⁶ The fact that the Samaritan set the wounded man on his own κτηνος which literally means a domestic animal capable of carrying loads.⁷⁷ is most likely to indicate that he had other animals, perhaps with merchandise. His willingness to go to the inn and remain there overnight administering to the needs of the wounded man is a further act of self giving love.

⁷⁴ Oil and wine were recognized household remedies, and the two were sometimes mixed and used as a salve for wounds. The oil and the wine which the Samaritan used to render the first aid to the wounded man, were also sacrificial elements in the temple worship. Oil and wine are found as sacrificial elements in several texts in the Old Testament. Lev 23:13, Deut 12:17; 14:23, 18 4; Neh 10:38.

Likewise the verb “pour” is also from the language of worship. Exod 4:3, 30:9; Lev 2:1-6, Num 5:15; Ps 42:4. The pouring of oil and wine were libations in connection with the sacrifices. Some prophets like Hos in 6:6 and Mic in 6:7-8 call Israel to go beyond ritual, they insisted on steadfast love or a self giving love. Priest and Levite were the religious professionals who knew the precise rituals of the prescribed liturgy. They poured out oil and wine on the high altar before God but, they failed to make a living sacrifice on the wounded man. Cf. A. PLUMMER, *ICC. The Gospel According to St. Luke*, 288.

⁷⁵ In the Old Testament olive oil was used to soften wounds (Isa 1:6), on the other had it is used in the New Testament to anoint the sick (Mk 6:13; Jas 5:14). In 2Sam 16:2 wine is used for someone who faints but in the context of this parable it is used as a medical application. Cf. J. FITZMYER, *Luke, X-XXIV*, 888.

⁷⁶ K.E. BAILEY. *Through Peasant Eyes*, 50.

⁷⁷ F.W. DANKER, *A Greek – English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago 2000) 572.

ν35 καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν αὐριον ἐκβαλὼν ἔδωκεν δύο δηνάρια τῷ πανδοχεῖ καὶ εἶπεν·
ἐπιμελήθητι αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὅ τι ἂν προσδαπανήσης ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ ἐπανέρχεσθαί με
ἀποδώσω σοι.

*And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the inn keeper, saying,
"Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I came
back."*

Having brought the wounded man to the inn, the Samaritan cares for him and the following day he gives two denarii⁷⁸ to the innkeeper in order for him to continue caring for the wounded man. A comparison of the robbers' actions to the one of the Samaritan clearly shows the behaviour of two opposites. The robbers stripped and beat the victim leaving him dying, but when the Samaritan comes, he takes him to an inn and leaves him being taken care of. The final action of the robbers to the victim was abandoning of him, while the Samaritan will leave the wounded man in the inn under the care of the inn keeper and will promise to return.⁷⁹

Ἐκβαλων ἔδωκεν δυο δηναρια. The verb ἔδωκεν here does not imply any violence; "having put out," "drawn out," from his girdle; not "flung out;" as in comparison to Luke 6:42, Matt 12:35, 13:52). προσδαπανησης means "spend in addition" to the two denarii. Having been robbed, the injured man would not have had with him the money to pay his own way. Ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ ἐπανερχεσθαι με. The εγω is emphatic. "I", and not the wounded man, "am responsible for payment."⁸⁰ The charge of recovery from serious injury is an uncertain business, so the Samaritan pledged himself to meet any shortfall in the advance payment made for the injured man's care.

⁷⁸ Two denarii would have provided for very basic board perhaps enough to provide for him through his recovery. Cf. R.A. CULPPER, *The New Interpreter's Bible: The Gospel According to Luke, IX*, (Nashville 1995) 230.

⁷⁹ K.E. BAILEY. *Through Peasant Eyes*, 53.

⁸⁰ A. PLUMMER, ICC. *The Gospel According to St. Luke*, 288.

Αποδώσω is used here with a connotation of debt; meaning to “pay back what is owed, reimburse,”⁸¹ and it is found else where in Luke 7:42; 12:59 and 19:8,15.

ν36 τίς τούτων τῶν τριῶν πλησίον δοκεῖ σοι γεγονέναι τοῦ ἐμπεσόντος εἰς τοὺς ληστὰς;

"Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?"

The moral aspect of the parable is in this verse 36. Jesus not only forces the lawyer to answer his own question, but shows that it has been asked from the wrong point of view. For the question “who is my neighbour?” is changed to “To whom am I neighbour?” All the three: priest, Levite and Samaritan were by proximity neighbours to the wounded man and his claim was greater on the priest and Levite, but only the alien recognized any claim. The γενομεναι is very significant and implies this recognition, “became neighbour,” “proved neighbour.”⁸²

The lawyer is invited by the story to look at the neighbour question from the point of view of the potential recipient of neighbour-love in a situation of extremity, for whom the answer to the question can be a matter of life and death. The question in verse 36 underlines this thrust of the parable. The strategy of the parable and the wording of the question, assume a reciprocity in the term neighbour.⁸³ If a neighbour is one to whom I will be ready to extend my help, a neighbour is also one who is ready to extend help to me. One who is my neighbour must be present with me, but he is no neighbour if he is there only for himself and not for me as well. The perfect infinitive form γεγouεναι, “to have become,” is probably justified meaning that the Samaritan became a neighbour in his compassionate actions. No restrictive sense for

⁸¹ J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke X-XXIV*, 888.

⁸² A. PLUMMER, *ICC. The Gospel According to St. Luke*, 289.

⁸³ J.JEREMIAS, *The Parables of Jesus*, 205.

“neighbour” is finally adequate to the realities of the human situation when viewed from the situation of a person in desperate need.⁸⁴ For Jesus the fact of being a neighbour does not depend on the identity of the person but on acts of compassion. The lawyer finally understands that being a neighbour is something one must earn rather than something given.⁸⁵ In brief, for Jesus what matters is the compassionate or merciful act towards neighbour and not one’s identity.

ν37 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔλεος μετ’ αὐτοῦ. εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· πορεύου καὶ σὺ ποιεῖ ὁμοίως.

He said, “The one who showed mercy on him.” And Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔλεος μετ’ αὐτοῦ. The lawyer goes back to his own question τι ποιήσας; he avoids using the hateful name Samaritan. “he, that showed the act of mercy upon him,” or literally “the one doing mercy with him.”

πορεύου καὶ σὺ ποιεῖ ὁμοίως. “go; thou also do likewise.” This is also the present imperative that could mean “Thou also habitually do likewise.” It is no single act, but life long conduct that is required.⁸⁶ The lawyer is asked by Jesus to ‘go’ and ‘do’ like the Samaritan. This new understanding of neighbour-love made the lawyer not to answer “the Samaritan” and so point to the role. But he answered “the one who did mercy” and Jesus confirms this understanding of the lawyer and tells him to go and do likewise. Jesus also does not mention the “Samaritan” by name. He does not refer to an identity or a role, but to the *doing*. Therefore Jesus makes it clear that

⁸⁴ J. NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 596.

⁸⁵ C. OWZAREK, *Sons of the Most High*, 205.

⁸⁶ A. PLUMMER, ICC. *The Gospel According to St. Luke*, 289.

being a neighbour does not depend on the identity of a person but on his/her acts of mercy.⁸⁷

2.3 Historical Setting

A general view of Luke as an evangelist is important to be able to establish the historical setting of this parable of the good Samaritan. Luke is writing within a pluralistic Syrian Antioch community with a majority of Gentiles and a few Jews. Basing on the fact that Luke used Mark, and Mark wrote his gospel a little before the Jewish War of 66-70 A.D, then Luke must have written his after the war as he presupposes that Jerusalem has been destroyed (Luke 21:5-38). But again Luke in his gospel does not reflect anything of the bitter persecutions of the Christians from the latter part of the Domitian's rule around 81-96 AD and there is nothing mentioned about the severe controversy that existed between church and synagogue after the Pharisaic reconstruction of Judaism at Jamnia in 85-90 AD. These observations puts Lucan Gospel within the period between 70 and 85 AD.⁸⁸

Luke's Gospel is a gospel to the gentile Christians responding to their question on whether God would fulfill the promises he made to them if he failed to fulfill those he made to his specially elected people. These questions are coming after experiencing the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple. Luke gives an assurance to the gentile Christians that God will be faithful to the promises made to them. He points out to them that through Christ, God has been faithful to the promise made to Israel and in unexpected way to the Gentiles, women, poor, unclean, outcasts and toll collectors together and the Samaritans have been included. The only condition is that they must be repentant.

⁸⁷ C. OWCZARECK, *Sons of the Most High*, 205.

⁸⁸ R. J. KARRIS, *NJBC: The Gospel According to Luke*, 675.

Luke portrays Jesus as a custodian of Jewish traditions, as he mentions about the law.⁸⁹ The gospel begins in Jerusalem and in the Temple and then from there it goes to all the nations breaking the boundaries of tradition and religious practices. This thrust is what brings a number of controversies between the Jewish Christians and the gentile Christians. Luke in his gospel emphasizes the ministry of Jesus which is mainly an inclusive one, seeking out that which was lost and the sinners and restoring them to union with God. In this endeavor, the Lukan Jesus points out some figures from the Samaritan community who were traditional enemies, to prove that even those outside the Jewish community will be restored to the creator as long as they respond to him in love.⁹⁰

2.3.1 The Historical Background of the Animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans

The pride of the Jews made them dislike anyone who was not Jew, taking them as outsiders and not inheriting the kingdom of God. The Samaritans suffered this kind of fate. The Jews could not recognize the Samaritans as part of the chosen nation of Israel.

2.3.2 The Origin of Samaritans.

The origin of the Samaritans is complex. First of all it is more than just being natives of the city of Samaria. Their origin can be traced from two different sources. From a Samaritan perspective, it dates back to 722 B.C. when the Northern Kingdom of Samaria was conquered by the Assyrians who brought immigrants from foreign lands to live in Samaria. The Samaritans themselves believed that they were true descendants of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Levi, and so they represented

⁸⁹ "It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for one little stroke to drop out of the Law." Cf. Lk 16:17.

⁹⁰ According to Jesus, his mission was for all people.

faithful worship of Yahweh from the time the Israelites, conquered Canaan. They considered themselves remnants of the Northern kingdom and accepted the designation of Samaritan.⁹¹

However from the Jewish sources, especially 2Kgs 17, the Samaritans were descendants of colonist people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharviam whom the Assyrians brought into the region of Samaria from other territories that they had conquered.⁹²

According to Ezra 4:1-5, the separation between Samaritans and Jews was made clear shortly after the Persians allowed the Jews to return from the Babylonian captivity in 538 BC. There were two main tribes that returned from exile. The larger tribe of Judah and the smaller one of Benjamin which was eventually absorbed into Judah. As a result, a Jew was a member of the tribe of Judah. The first task of the returned exiles was to rebuild the Temple.⁹³ The Samaritans and the people of the land offered help in rebuilding the Temple and the wall of the city but they were rejected by those who returned from exile because they were anxious to preserve their own religious independence uncontaminated from what they regarded as unclean and imperfect; and this sparked the hostility.⁹⁴ This animosity is clearly seen in the writings of Ben Sirach and the gospel of John.⁹⁵

Besides the biblical sources which pictured the conflict between Jews and Samaritans, there are some extrabiblical sources such as the *Antiquities of the Jews* of

⁹¹ The Samaritans translated their name as keeper of the faith in contrast to the schismatic Jews who did not keep the faith and led by Eli move the sanctuary from Shechem at the foot of Mt. Gerizim to Shiloh in the 11th Century. Cf. ISBE. IV, 303.

⁹² The Assyrians practiced politics of relocation of people in order to lessen likelihood insurrections. So it is believed that the Samaritans were brought there from a gentile nation.

⁹³ The heads of the families of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites—everyone whose spirit God had stirred—got ready to go up and rebuild the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:5).

⁹⁴ J.L.,MCBRIDE, *Parables of Jesus*, (Leeds 1999) 154.

⁹⁵ "There are two nations that my soul detests, the third is not a nation at all; the inhabitants of mount Seir, the Philistines and the stupid people living at Shechem." Cf. Sir 50:25-26. These inhabitants of Shechem are the Samaritans. In John 4:9 a Samaritan woman recognized that Jesus was a Jew and asked him; "How is it that you ask me for a drink, since Jews do not use the same cups and bowls that the Samaritans use?"

Josephus which underlines the foreign origin of the Samaritans by calling them ‘Cutheans’ even though the Samaritans preferred to be called ‘Hebrews.’⁹⁶ When the offer to help the Jews in building the Temple and city of Jerusalem was turned down, open hostilities and violence occasionally erupted between the two groups.⁹⁷ During the time of Jesus between 6 and 9 AD, at midnight during the Passover, “some of the Samaritans came secretly into Jerusalem and threw about dead men’s bodies in the cloisters; on which account the Jews afterward excluded them out of the Temple, which they were not used to at such festivals.”⁹⁸

Although Jesus may have charged the twelve not to enter any Samaritan town (Matt 10:5), Luke includes Samaritans among the disadvantaged whom Jesus particularly saves. Nor will Jesus call down fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans who refuse to receive him because he is headed to Jerusalem (Luke 9:52-56). Jesus does not join Jews in condemning Samaritans, but instead, he picks some of them and makes them models of faith and love (Luke 10:29-37; 17:11-19).

2.4 The Theological Message of the Passage

By means of this parable Jesus brings his hearers away from the legalistic or culturally conditioned mindset to a life of authentic love. One should not seek to define who the neighbour is, but simply be a neighbour to the one in need. The example of the Samaritan, who does good to a person in need without any apparent regard for religion or tribe, shows how genuine love does not count religious, tribal, national or cultural differences.⁹⁹ The basis of Christian theology and ethics is the

⁹⁶ W. WHISTON, *Josephus: Jewish Antiquities, Book 11, Chapter 2, par. 1 nos. 19-25*, (Grand Rapids 1999) 360-361.

⁹⁷ As a result of these hostilities, in 128 BC. John Hyrcanus burned the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim and twenty years later he destroyed the city of Samaria. Cf. C. OWZAREK., *Sons of the Most High*, 201.

⁹⁸ W. WHISTON, *Josephus: Jewish Antiquities, Book 18, Chapter 2, par 2, no.30, 588*.

⁹⁹ J. H. ARLAND. *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*, (Michigan 2000) 100.

love of God and love of one's neighbour.¹⁰⁰ It is the aim of Jesus that by the use of the law, the boundaries will be broken and people can love without distinction.¹⁰¹ There is the question of attitude here. Neighbour is not a matter of blood bonds or nationality or religious communion; it is determined by the attitude the person has towards others. The priest and the Levite were well versed in the demands of God's law. Like a lawyer priests would interpret the law for others, but here they failed missing the purpose.¹⁰² The Samaritan by practicing love showed that he understood the law.¹⁰³

Jesus by not following the ordinary conventions of story telling wants to challenge the long standing enmity and bring in the aspect of neighbourliness which is identified by doing.¹⁰⁴ For Jesus, neighbours are defined actively not passively. According to Jesus loving God and neighbour is a source of life as he says in verse 28: "Do this and you will live." The second round ends up with a similar command: Go and do likewise (Verse 37).¹⁰⁵ For Jesus mercy is not the conduct of a calculating heart and eternal life the reward for doing prescribed duties. Eternal life is that quality of life characterized by mercy for those in need, regardless of their race, religion or region and without any thought or motivation of reward. Mercy only sees need and with compassion responds to the need. Knowing the law is not enough but

¹⁰⁰ This love of God, is rooted in the Shema (Deut 6: 4-5) which places all of human faculties to the divine submission in love. The love of neighbour as oneself has been said several times by Paul in his letters. In his letter to the Romans he says: "be under obligation to no one – the only obligation you have is to love one another..." (Rom 13:8-10) In the letter to the Galatians he says: "For the whole law is summed up in one commandment: 'love your neighbour as yourself.'" (Gal 5:14). James calls the love commandment as the "loyal law"(Jas 5:8).

¹⁰¹ J. H. ARLAND, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*, 101.

¹⁰² B.S. CHILDS, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context*, (Philadelphia 1986) 150-153.

¹⁰³ J. KODELL, *The Collegeville Biblical Commentary: The Gospel of Luke*, (Collegeville 1989) 955.

¹⁰⁴ The conventional story telling had the triad aspect. Like the story of the Good Samaritan was suppose to have a priest, a Levite and the third person for the story if it was to really make sense that the high religious officials failed, a lay Israelite was supposed to be the hero not an outsider a Samaritan. Cf. R. A. CULPEPPER, *The New Interpreters Bible IX: The Gospel of Luke*, (Nashville 1995) 227.

¹⁰⁵ In verse 28 Jesus commands and promises a reward of life, while in the second command in verse 37 there is no reward promised. It is obvious that those who belong to the kingdom of God, express love, towards God and others without aiming at any reward. Like the Samaritan could not expect any reward or payment for what he did for the beaten man. Cf. R. A. CULPEPPER, *NIB*, 227-229.

putting it into practice is what matters for those who have accepted God's sovereignty of loving him with heart, strength, might, and mind (Deut 4:5-6). There is no dichotomy between the commands to love God and to love one's neighbour. When one loves God he lives out love for others as well (1John 4:7-21). This love is three dimensional, God, others, and self.

2.5 Conclusion

Having done the exegetical analysis of the parable of the Good Samaritan many important elements for ethical living have been discovered. This parable is a special tool that has been used by Luke in his attempt to assure the gentile Christians that God is for all people and aims at uniting them to himself by giving them eternal life. This "the Journey to Jerusalem,"(Luke 9:51-19:27) has the Good Samaritan as the first parable known to be teaching by way of example.

This parable challenges any attempt of categorizing a neighbour. In other words it challenges any limited conception of neighbour based on race, bloodlines, cultural background, traditions and religion. In order to drive the point home Jesus presents a Samaritan, a great enemy to the Jews, as a hero among them in showing love. Jesus emphasizes the active neighbourliness, where there is no boundary drawn, nor identity given, but each one becoming a neighbour to those in need. This parable is a call to do away with laws which limit spontaneity in responding to those in need by showing mercy freely.

CHAPTER III

Application of the Parable to the Religious Communities in Africa.

3.1 Introduction

Usually reading the scriptures and living according to them is not easy. There are many factors that incapacitate us in our striving to practice the gospel. This third chapter is to take the task of finding what could be the stumbling blocks on our way towards a full participation in the life of God. I feel that it is easy to fall into the trap of generalization when we talk of Africa. I do not want to give an impression that I am giving facts about Africa as a whole. My knowledge is quite limited to only sub-Saharan Africa with some attention to a few countries where have visited.

Some of the areas that I have decided to talk about, in connection to poor relationships in religious communities are the following; negative historical events, limited cultural upbringing, and personal weaknesses like pride, prejudices and fear. Despite the fact that Africans are attached to their families, tribes and nations, there is hope that they can live an effective life in multiethnic communities. The primary thing to achieve this is proper formation from the beginning. Cultural identities are supposed to be abandoned in a process of conversion and new personal identities are acquired where love of neighbour is done.

3.2 Situation of Religious Communities in Some Countries in Sub-Saharan

Africa

A remarkable number of congregations in this part of Africa, whether international or local, have a common factor which is a great challenge. The majority of members happen to be from one ethnic group. The result of this affects the minority negatively. There are often stereotypes between one ethnic group against

another. These affect leadership as superiors are elected on tribal grounds. This situation could either be historical, cultural, natural or deliberately created.

3.2.1 Historical Background for this Situation in Africa Religious Communities.

Most of the missionaries came to the sub-Saharan region around the nineteenth century, alongside colonization. The colonists were coming together with the missionaries. Colonists and missionaries worked hand in hand since they often came from the same country like the case of Portugal.¹⁰⁶ This situation in itself was not bad but the way their different missions were executed brought a negative effect on the response to the local vocations until today. In some countries slave trade was still being practiced, and some of these colonists and missionaries were the masters and perpetrators of this trade. Some Portuguese clergy depended on slave trade for financial support.¹⁰⁷ To be sure of a constant supply of slaves, tribal wars were encouraged, so that prisoners of war could be sold as slaves. This brought hatred and enmity between different ethnic groups.

Another situation is when the colonists came to divide people into classes or tribes. In Rwanda people were inappropriately grouped into tribes despite being linguistically and culturally homogeneous.¹⁰⁸ The divisions were initiated by the colonists for their own selfish political gains. The Rwandese shared the same Bantu language, lived side by side with each other and even intermarried. The Tutsis were made superior over the Hutus. This view conditioned the missionaries who came to Rwanda and also the Rwandan people themselves. The Tutsis had their cultural ego inflated while the Hutus ended up with an aggressive inferiority complex. The outcome of the colonists favouring one group at a cost of another, was a creation of a

¹⁰⁶ A.F. WALLS, *The Cross Cultural Process in Christian History*, (New York 2002) 90-92.

¹⁰⁷ A. HASTINGS, *The Church in Africa*, (Oxford 1994) 126.

¹⁰⁸ G.PRUNIER, *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide 1959-1994*, (Kampala 1995) 5.

dangerous social bomb.¹⁰⁹ The creation of some structures influenced the way of thinking and acting in all spheres of life. In schools for example, a Hutu was not supposed to be more intelligent than a Tutsi and the Hutus were downtrodden.¹¹⁰ Missionaries recruited following the tribal lines, creating imbalance in religious communities.¹¹¹

3.2.2 The Cultural Background Contributing to the Imbalance

Africa has many tribes and cultures. Due to the socialization process it has been difficult for some ethnic groups to mix with others. For example those ethnic groups who perform rites of passage as a way into adulthood do not recognize those who are not initiated as adults. The different cultural practices make it difficult to intermarry. These differences pose a great challenge in religious communities where different tribes are represented. There are some people in religious communities who see their confreres as children because they are not initiated. The question is: Is it possible to live harmoniously as indigenous Africans in a multiethnic community with all sorts of prejudices and stereotypes?

Apart from the animosity between ethnic groups in this part of Africa not all tribes responded positively to the evangelization by missionaries. It is an observation by R.E.S. Tanner that with the same kind of exposure, different tribes have responded to Christianity differently. He mentions the Sukuma tribe,¹¹² which has been exposed to Christianity for more than one hundred years, but only 12% are Christians, while with the same exposure in other tribes, more than 60% of the population are Christians. Basing on these results it shows that there are serious reasons. The first

¹⁰⁹ G. PRUNIER, *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide 1959-1994*, 9.

¹¹⁰ G. PRUNIER, *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide 1959-1994*, 13.

¹¹¹ G. PRUNIER, *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide 1959- 1994*, 10.

¹¹² Sukuma is one of the biggest tribes in Tanzania, found in the Malya region.

of the reasons could be the social system. For the Sukuma, there is no village set up only family groups of households. The second reason could be their traditional religious system which seems efficient and adaptive. It may be providing a better service in terms of availability and cheapness than what can be provided by the Christian churches.¹¹³

3.2.3 The Natural Aspect Resulting in Majority of Religious from One Tribe

The experiences which I have had are from the Franciscan Province of St. Francis in Africa and Madagascar and other Franciscan entities. This province covers countries like Malawi, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, Madagascar and Mauritius. Upon their arrival, the expatriate brothers settled in these countries and opened formation houses like postulancy and novitiate. Obviously the first people to join them were from the surrounding areas of mission centres. The exposure was limited because they were formed with a view of the local needs and within their own countries. After some years, the formation has been centralized, having a common place for postulancy and novitiate. This development is a challenge in many aspects. After inquiring from people, there are details which I have experienced within my own multiethnic and multinational province. The majority of the friars in the different countries of the province are from particular tribes in their respective countries. Some of our communities are multinational and multiethnic. But this does not always work smoothly, as there are at times feelings of alienation and animosity. This is because of some attitudes or stereotypes that have been formed over a number of generations by one ethnic group against another. When it comes to taking candidates one tribe is preferred against another. It could also be possible that

¹¹³ R.E.S., TANNER, *African Christian Studies Should there be a change in the focus of Christian concern? A Possibility of a New Direction in Eastern Africa, Vol. 12. No.3* (Nairobi 1996) 48.

candidates get discouraged when they see a vocation promoter from a particular tribe other than their own. With this situation over a period of time inevitably one tribe outnumbered the others.

There is another example of the Franciscan Mill Hill Sisters as they were founding the Little Sisters of St. Francis. In their case they never started by recruiting candidates but it happened the other way round that the young girls who were attracted to their life, expressed their desire to join them. Since they were working among the Baganda people, the first girls who expressed interest were the Baganda.¹¹⁴ Their experience of a multinational dimension for the mission made them to recruit from other tribes in Uganda and even Kenya. Formation houses were put in different places to introduce an open attitude for intertribal communities.

Here is yet another example of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. When they came to Africa they settled in Ghana among the Dagati people. Their life attracted young girls from the same tribe. But they could not accept them for their congregation. At that time it was directed by Rome to send local candidates to local congregations. These FMM sisters started forming a new congregation called Oblate. Being a local congregation this Oblate branch had a different charism and had the apostolate of teaching catechism among their own people. When the time came for the new congregation to be independent from the founding FMMs, the local Oblate sisters refused. This young congregation was not formed with a view to live in an international congregation of the FMM and its charism. There was a need for more formation to suit an international congregation and to be open to work not only among the Dagati where their initial formation took place but even beyond without prejudices.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ M. JOHN, *The Service in the Heart of Africa*, (Limuru 1992) 97.

¹¹⁵ M. O'REILLY, *The Challenge of Being a Religious in Africa*, (Eldoret 1996) 84-85.

3.3 Compassionate Love, a Challenge to Religious Communities in Africa

Historical events, cultural elements and natural circumstances surrounding our lives in Africa, have contributed to a kind of growth but at the same time deep wounds. The civil wars in Africa are as a result of prejudices between one tribe and another. This is why it is said that the majority of the world's refugees are Africans, who are victims of civil wars.¹¹⁶ These historical wounds, cultural barriers, stereotypes and prejudices are carried along as we enter into our respective religious communities. The call to religious life is a call to the change of identity and self denial (Luke 9:23-24). It is only with one's redemption from bad historical events and the wounds of sin from our parent Adam that there will be freedom to love others selflessly. Having a big number of members of one tribe in a congregation or religious community is not so much the issue, but the root cause of this phenomenon must be assessed. What is crucial is how we treat each other, and how the majority or the minority are perceived. The kind of identities each person has affects the way of thinking and acting and can affect relationships positively or negatively.

3.3.1 The Role of Formation Towards Compassionate Love.

The disciples of Jesus like citizens of any nation were subjects of history, traditional upbringing and cultural beliefs. They formed their identities basing on these circumstances. They viewed all those who did not have anything in common with them as outsiders. Here in Africa, we are not an exception, we have acquired identities from our traditional teachers so that we feel threatened when we encounter different identities. Denis McBride points out that, it takes time to define who one is, and to discover one's freedom and dignity.¹¹⁷ When we join a religious community,

¹¹⁶ A. F. WALLS, *The Cross Cultural Process in Christian History*. 94,

¹¹⁷ D. MCBRIDE, *The Parables of Jesus*, (Leeds 1999) 166.

we carry with us the identities given to us by our nations or tribes. It is not automatic that the moment we come into a multiethnic religious community we feel drawn to each other. The kind of upbringing from our respective tribes has created stereotypes and prejudices. To be ready for effective missionary outreach, beyond one's created borders, proper formation is needed.¹¹⁸ The formation must aim at stripping off the previous tribal, cultural, or racial identities and replace them with a personal one. It is only by discovering ourselves, and our identity, that we can appreciate others and their different identities.

Luke brings in a number of events in the section in which the parable of the good Samaritan falls, the Journey of Jesus to Jerusalem (Luke 9:52-19:27). This is an occasion for Jesus to form his disciples. Luke as an evangelist for the Gentiles, brings in experiences during the public ministry of Jesus in order to facilitate the formation process. He wants to bring to his disciples the universal dimension of their mission. In Luke 9:52-55 Jesus teaches against revenge. Jesus opposes the old law which was promoting revenge, eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth (Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21). As a climax of Jesus' formation, Luke brings the classic story of the good Samaritan. And finally in the same section, Luke brings in a Samaritan as a model of gratitude (Luke 17:16). The Lukan Jesus is forming his disciples by breaking the walls that separated the people of Israel from the gentiles. He deliberately makes a hated Samaritan into a model of faith, compassionate love and gratitude.

Religious are disciples of Jesus in today's world, therefore they must maintain the focus of their vocation the way Jesus wants it. They must be religious in deeds, not only in knowing the law. The universal brotherhood founded in Christ must be the core for any religious formation. Religious, tribal, national and cultural

¹¹⁸ R.C. TANNEHILL, *ANTC, Luke*, 167-168.

differences are not to be determinants of the object of our love. When recruiting new candidates, efforts must be made to have an inclusive community where different nationalities and tribes are represented, in order to change the attitudes and negative mentalities.

Conflicts are part of existential community life, but how they are dealt with is what can make a difference. Conflicts in community can destroy or build up depending on how they are handled. Real healing comes with forgiveness.¹¹⁹ The vice of pride destroys community spirit and makes forgiveness and compassionate love hard if not impossible. Fraternal sharing is a sign that we are a gift to each other, and it is a unique way through which we reveal God to each other.¹²⁰

It was seen by St. Francis from the beginning of his congregation, as it appears in his writings, that he regarded his confreres as gifts from God: “When God gave me some friars, there was no one to tell me what I should do; but the Most High himself made it clear to me that I must live the life of the Gospel’.¹²¹ On the level of general relationship in the community it might be easy but in times of need the fraternal support must be witnessed. St Francis stressed that:

“Whenever the friars meet one another, they should show that they are members of the same family. And they should have no hesitation in making known their needs to one another. For if a mother loves and cares for her child in the flesh, a friar should certainly love and care for his spiritual brother all the more tenderly. If a friar falls ill, the others are bound to look after him as they would like to be looked after themselves.”¹²²

It has been experienced that when one is sick in a community for example, only a tribemate or his fellow country person is left to care for him. Here the

¹¹⁹ L.SOFIELD – C. JULIANO - R. HAMMET, *Design for Wholeness: Dealing with Anger, Learning to Forgive, Building Self-Esteem*, (Bandra 1990) 62.

¹²⁰ C.L CALTAGIRONE, *Friendship as Sacrament*, (New York 1988) 56.

¹²¹ M.A. HABIG, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi, Writings and Early Biographies: The Testament*, (Illinois 1991).68. St. Francis recognized the need for the Gospel to be the guide in a kind of fraternal relationship to avoid the stereotypes that are as a result of our wounded histories.

¹²² M.A. HABIG, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi, Writings and Early Biographies: The Later Rule*, 63.

traditional identities are at work. I believe that if there can be proper transformation, in our stages of formation, the spiritual relationship will make each one compassionate to the sick and give him a tender care.

3.3.2 How to be a Real Neighbour in a Multiethnic Religious Community

First of all Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan, is challenging the Jewish religious leaders for stopping at the level of knowledge of the law. He therefore teaches his disciples that the law of love, to be effective, must end in action and without discrimination on any ground. It is evident even in our contemporary society as B.B. Scott observes that all cultures draw boundaries between themselves and others as a kind of security.¹²³ This effort of dividing people from others is what is being challenged by the parable in our own religious communities. There is a need for a kind of detachment from cultural identities to be open for new life.

To be able to view each member of a community as a gift from God is a kind of revelation. From there we can see the richness in a multiethnic religious community. But this richness is not automatic, it must be worked for by community building.¹²⁴ Sometimes a common language is very effective to build a common life.¹²⁵ Any action done by a religious must have *agape* as the motive. When I see the other members of my community, and see them as my people with a mutual loving possession, it means that they are mine and I am theirs.¹²⁶ In this way we become members of the same body, and we begin to feel for each other. The quality of listening at the heart of a community is essential for growth. Community is not primarily a way of life which is only a means to something else, but it is a people

¹²³ B.B. SCOTT, *Hear Then the Parable*, 189-190.

¹²⁴ M. O'REILLY, *The Challenge of Being a Religious in Africa Today*, (Eldoret 1996) 85.

¹²⁵ M. JOHN, *Service in the Heart of Africa*, 97.

¹²⁶ J. VANIER, *Community and Growth*, (Sydney 1979) 20.

called by God to carry others in their sufferings. For Religious, what they do and how they do what they do, is not as important as why.¹²⁷ The reason why they do what they do is what should differentiate them from other organizations. It is in times of problems, when I can be a true neighbour to the one in great need for the sake of Christ.

To be compassionate, one has to know how to accept to be carried, cared for and loved by others and enter into an interdependent relationship which will reveal our shortcomings. Fear blocks freedom and stifles growth. It is through the compassion of others that we experience and appreciate the love of God. A religious is a disciple of Jesus and is to be the embodiment of Christ who is the embodiment of the Father's universal compassion. This compassion can give us a sense of common experience of broken existence. In compassion we bear the pain of others, their failures, hurts and fears.¹²⁸

3.4 Conclusion

As Africans we have a strong attachment to family, tribe, or nationality, and have been loyal all along to our traditional teachers who have taught us to hate our enemies. This traditional teaching has created an identity which is a source of our security as a group. It is difficult therefore to get rid of the identities that we have inherited. These traditional identities promote uniformity and make us feel threatened by those who are different. It takes time to form a different identity, and define who we are by leaving aside the ancient animosities and inherited prejudices.¹²⁹ During the formation period, efforts must be made for one to achieve a personal identity, to live an authentic religious life. To be a neighbour is independent of race, creed, tribe and

¹²⁷ J. VANIER, *Community and Growth*, 27.

¹²⁸ C.L. CALTAGIRONE, *Friendship as Sacrament*, 43.

¹²⁹ D. MCBRIDE, *The Parables of Jesus*, (Leeds 1999) 166.

the ordinary sentiments of pity. Love overlaps all distinctions, and risks its very life in order to render help (1Cor 13:1ff).¹³⁰ It is by seeing community members as God's gifts and that our relationship is based on the spiritual level, that we will care for each other more tenderly.

¹³⁰ F.B. MEYER, *Bible Commentary: The Gospel According to Luke*, (Wheaton 1979) 441.

4. GENERAL CONCLUSION

Whether we like it or not, history in most case influences any group of people either negatively or positively. A great part of our way of life, the way we behave, relate and associate, depends on the identity history has engraved on us. The relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans is just one of the many examples of how it is difficult for different groups of people to live alongside each other peacefully.

As Jesus is challenging the Jewish religious authorities the priest and the Levite, in the same way the challenge is valid today. This time is not with the Jewish religious authorities, but to the Christian religious people. The Jews had their own laws to guide them on how to act within their limited horizons. As Christians in the first place there is more than just a νομικος to interpret the law, but we have Jesus the διδασκαλε who is universally oriented and he does teach by example.

Therefore despite the negative identities we have inherited, the cultural prejudices we have acquired, we can break the wall of division and live together in love. Africa being the area for this study, has a lot of potential to achieve the call for a neighbour because of the rich cultural values she has. But these values must be Christianized first.

Compassionate love in religious communities where there is multiethnicity, is a challenge but it is possible. The first thing is detachment from cultural attitudes which divide, and set boundaries. This will be achieved when formation is well integrated, that we can see each other as brothers and sisters in spirit. It is only by heeding the command of Jesus; σὺ ποιεῖ ὁμοίως “you to go and do likewise” that we become neighbours.

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APPENDIX 2: ABBREVIATIONS

AD	<i>anno Domini</i>
<i>al.</i>	<i>alii</i> —other persons
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
BC	before Christ
CBC	Collegeville Biblical Commentary
Cf.	Confer, Compare
Chro	Chronicles
Cor	Corinthians
Dan	Daniel
Deut	Deuteronomy
Ecclus	Ecclesiasticus/Ben-Sira
ed.	edited by
EDNT	Expository Dictionary of New Testament
Exod	Exodus
Ezek	Ezekiel
FMM	Franciscan Missionaries of Mary
Gal	Galatians
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Isa	Isaiah
ISBE	International Standard Biblical Encyclopedia
Jas	James
Kgs	Kings
“L”	exclusively Lukan material
LXX	<i>Septuagint</i>
Lev	Leviticus
Lk	Luke
Matt	Matthew
Mic	Micah
Neh	Nehemiah
NIB	New Interpreter’s Bible
NJBC	New Jerome Biblical Commentary
NT	New Testament
Num	Numbers
OFM	Order of Friars Minor
OT	Old Testament
Ps(s)	Psalm(s)
Q	<i>Quelle</i> ; Source
Rom	Romans
SacP	<i>Sacra Pagna</i>
SPS	Society of St. Patrick
St.	Saint
TCGNT	Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of New Testament
Thes	Thessalonians
TLNT	Theological Lexicon of the New Testament
v	Verse
WBC	Word Bible Commentary
Wis	Wisdom

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