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JESUS CHRIST AS THE LORD IN LUKE–ACTS: A CASE STUDY IN EARLY CHRISTOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION

The theological debate over the divinity of Jesus Christ reached a critical juncture in early Christianity, culminating in the controversy sparked by Arius (c. 256–336). Arius argued that the Son was a created being, distinct from and subordinate to God the Father. His teachings ignited a dispute that led to the Council of Nicaea (325), as terms like ὁμοούσιος ("of the same essence") and ὁμοιούσιος ("of similar essence") were debated. However, the term ὁμοούσιος ("of the same essence") was adopted to affirm Christ's full divinity. Though this term does not appear in the New Testament (NT), the NT employs other expressions that strongly indicate Christ's divine status. The biblical world does not conceptualize abstract terms like οὐσία ("nature" expressed in terms of property Luke 15:12–13) in the same way as later theological formulations. Instead, it expresses divine identity through relational and functional categories, using terms such as "image or likeness" (Col 1:15), or the „radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Heb 1:3). Within the NT narrative, divine authority and status are often conveyed through the concepts of lordship and kingship.



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Among these, one of the most significant is the title *Kyrios* ("Lord"), which is applied to Jesus in ways that parallel its usage for Yahweh in the Old Testament. This narrative presentation of Jesus as *Kyrios* implicitly affirms his divine nature. While the Nicene formula ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρί ("of the same essence as the Father") marks a decisive moment in Christian doctrinal development, the NT remains fundamentally narrative in its theological approach. Even in texts that exhibit a high Christology – notably, John 1:1–18 or John 17, which speak of Jesus as the incarnate Logos and his unity with the Father – this Christology is articulated through story rather than formal dogma. Likewise, Pauline literature articulates high Christological claims within a narrative and hymnic structure. Scholars such as Hooker-Stacey (2001, 298–302) and Loke (2017, 24–47) emphasize this in their exegesis of key passages such as 1 Cor 8:6 and Phil 2:6–11:

1 Cor 8:6:	εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα […] εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς δι᾽ οὗ τὰ πάντα
	there is only one God, the Father from whom all things come […] there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things come
Phil 2:6:	ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων
	being in the form of God
Phil 2:11:	κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός
	Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Gospels also reveal Jesus' self-awareness of his unique relationship with the Father. This is most evident in his prayers (e.g., Matt 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42; John 12:27), in which Jesus addresses God with an intimacy and immediacy unparalleled in Jewish tradition (Loke 2017, 6–9).

1.1. QUESTIONS ON JEWISH MONOTHEISM

Contemporary scholarship on early Christology frequently intersects with the broader discussion on Second Temple Jewish monotheism. One contested issue concerns the chronology and implications of the transition from the Hebrew divine name (יהוה אדני as in Ps 16:2 [LXX 15:2]) to its Greek equivalent *Kyrios* ("Lord"). Kavin Rowe (2006, 44) and Stanley Porter and Bryan Dyer (2023, 3) highlight the complexity of this linguistic and theological development. Moreover, the nature of monotheism in Second Temple Judaism remains a complex issue. Nathan MacDonald in his book on Deuteronomy (2003) explores Deuteronomy's presentation of monotheism as a covenantal reality – God's oneness being primarily understood in relation to Israel (Deut 6:4). Richard Bauckham (2008, 62–71) challenges the assumption that Jewish monotheism was merely

numerical. Rather than reducing God's uniqueness to singularity, Bauckham emphasizes YHWH's sovereign rule over all creation. In his analysis of Deut 32:37–39, Bauckham (2008, 70) concludes: "Though called gods, the other gods do not really deserve the term, because they are not effective divinities, acting with power in the world. YHWH alone is the God with supreme power." Jewish wisdom literature (e.g., Ps 96:4–5; Prov 8) also personifies divine attributes such as Spirit, Word, and Wisdom. However, these literary personifications never infringe upon the uniqueness of the Creator God. Paul echoes this in Rom 1:20–25, maintaining a strict Creator–creature distinction. Yet certain NT texts, such as 1 Cor 8:6, suggest that Jesus is placed on the divine side of this divide, indicating an early high Christology (Loke 2017, 70).

1.2. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The historical evolution of early Christology has received sustained scholarly attention. Among its foremost interpreters, Larry Hurtado has offered an extensive account of the emergence of what he calls "Christ-devotion" within early Christian communities (1988; 2003; 2005; 2006; 2010; 2017). Hurtado advances beyond merely lexical studies of the term *Kyrios* by examining how early Christian worship practices reflected and shaped beliefs about Jesus' divinity. He builds upon Wilhelm Bousset's classic work *Kyrios Christos* (1913; Eng. trans. 1970), which argued that Christological titles and devotion to Jesus originated primarily in Gentile Christian circles outside of Palestine, influenced by Hellenistic religious norms. According to Bousset, Pauline Christology was shaped by these Gentile developments, diverging from an earlier Jewish Christian understanding in which Jesus was viewed as a merely human messianic figure. As summarized by Loke (2017, 4):

> Bousset argued that the application of the title kyrios ('Lord') to Jesus originated from Gentile churches outside Palestine, and their faith in turn shaped the beliefs of the apostle Paul, through whom the reverence to Jesus spread widely. This deviated from the faith of the primitive Palestinian Jewish community, whose monotheistic heritage precluded such a high Christology and who regarded Jesus as a merely human messianic figure.

Hurtado (2017, 35–36), while agreeing that Christological development unfolded over time, insists that early Christian worship already entailed an unprecedented devotion to Jesus as part of divine identity. He emphasizes the need to correlate literary and non-literary sources and to situate "Christ-devotion" within a historical trajectory. Recent scholars, including Porter and Dyer (2023), revisit this development, reaffirming the foundational role of the Septuagint and Jewish traditions, rather than Hellenistic cults, in shaping the early Christian understanding of *Kyrios*. In contrast to Adolf Deissmann's theory of an Egyptian cultic

origin (1922), Porter and Dyer (2023, 3–7) argue that the NT concept of *Kyrios* is best understood within the matrix of Jewish scriptural tradition. Meanwhile, proponents of the "Later Evolutionary Theory," such as Maurice Casey and James D.G. Dunn, argue that the full recognition of Jesus' divinity emerged only by the time of the Gospel of John (ca. 90–100). On the other side, scholars like Richard Bauckham insist that high Christology characterized the Christian faith from its inception (Loke 2017, 4–5). Particularly significant for this article is Hurtado's claim that early Christians drew heavily on biblical texts, most notably Ps 110, to articulate Jesus' divine status (Hurtado 2005, 23–26).

1.3. THE NARRATIVE APPROACH

This study undertakes a narrative-intertextual approach to Luke–Acts, with particular attention to the theological implications of the title *Kyrios* as applied to Jesus. Drawing on the methodological insights of Porter and Dyer (2023, 8–11), who emphasize the interpretive significance of literary structure and intertextual resonance and building on the foundational work of Rowe (2006) and Thompson (2008), this study explores how the title *Kyrios* functions within the broader narrative arc of Luke–Acts. The aim is to demonstrate that the Lukan corpus presents Jesus as the divine Lord, whose identity is progressively revealed through word, deed, and divine vindication. The analysis proceeds in two interrelated steps: (1) an exploration of the narrative use of the title *Kyrios* in the narrative plot of Luke–Acts, particularly in its opening chapters; and (2) investigation of how Old Testament citations are employed to affirm Jesus' divine identity. Luke's narrative strategy is neither incidental nor merely rhetorical – it is profoundly theological. Through deliberate intertextual engagement with the Jewish Scriptures, Luke attributes divine prerogatives to Jesus within his historical context, anticipating the Christological affirmations that would later be formally articulated at Nicaea.

2. JESUS' LORDSHIP IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

2.1. LUKE'S INFANCY GOSPEL: LK 1–2

Luke's infancy narrative functions as a theological and literary bridge between the Old and New Testaments. The intertwined accounts of the announcements and births of John and Jesus underscore this connection. Within these opening chapters, the title *Kyrios* ("Lord") plays a crucial role, at times referring clearly to God, at other times to Jesus, and in some instances, intentionally retaining a level of ambiguity. Luke's use of the title "Lord" in the infancy narrative reveals several nuanced applications:

(1) As a divine title rooted in the Old Testament tradition, often used in expressions such as κύριος ὁ θεός (e.g., Luke 1:32. 68), or in a gradually explicative manner where *Kyrios* becomes a near-synonymous substitute for God (e.g., in 1:6, Zechariah and Elizabeth are described as "righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord" – ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ [...] τοῦ κυρίου).
(2) As a genitive of possession, where *Kyrios* denotes God's ownership or authority (e.g., "the temple of the Lord" – ναὸν τοῦ κυρίου in 1:9).
(3) As a reference to divine intervention, pointing to God's active role in salvation history (e.g., Elizabeth's affirmation in 1:45: "there will be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord" – παρὰ κυρίου; or Zechariah's prophecy in 1:76: "you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways" – ἐνώπιον κυρίου [...] ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ).

In some passages, however, the referent of "Lord" remains deliberately ambiguous, reflecting a theological strategy that gradually associates Jesus with the divine identity. This ambiguity is not accidental but is part of Luke's broader narrative technique (Rowe 2006, 34–49). Through such layered usage, Luke begins to shape a Christological vision in which Jesus shares in the prerogatives and identity of *Kyrios*.

(A) FIRST SCENE: THE ANNOUNCEMENTS OF BIRTH

John. In the announcement of John's birth, the title "Lord" follows a chiastic pattern (A–B–A'), where the outer elements could hint at Jesus, while the central one clearly refers to God. This suggests that John will stand in the presence of the (Lord) Jesus, preparing a people for him.

Jesus. Similarly, in the announcement of Jesus' birth, a comparable pattern emerges. Jesus' presence as (Lord) is inaugurated, and Mary acknowledges her role as the servant of (Lord) Jesus. The central element, however, remains a clear re-

A Outward reference	Luke 1:15	ἔσται γὰρ μέγας ἐνώπιον [τοῦ] κυρίου, /…/	For he will be great in the sight of the Lord /…/
B Reference to God	1:16	καὶ πολλοὺς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ἐπιστρέψει ἐπὶ κύριον τὸν θεὸν αὐτῶν.	And many of the sons of Israel he will bring back to the Lord their God.
A' Outward reference	1:17	καὶ αὐτὸς προελεύσεται ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ δυνάμει Ἠλίου, ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα καὶ ἀπειθεῖς ἐν φρονήσει δικαίων, ἑτοιμάσαι κυρίῳ λαὸν κατεσκευασμένον.	And he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

ference to God, whereas the everlasting messianic kingship is attested (Luke 1:33). While this might seem a mere realization of the Lord's promise to David and onto his progeny that "God will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (2 Sam 7:12–13); however, it will be narratively confirmed with Jesus' universal kingship (Acts 2:33. 36). Yet, as Luke Timothy Johnson (1991, 39) observes, "from the start the reader is prepared to see in Jesus something far more than a Davidic king."

A Outward reference	Luke 1:28	ὁ κύριος μετὰ σοῦ	The Lord is with you.
B Reference to God	1:32	δώσει αὐτῷ κύριος ὁ θεὸς τὸν θρόνον Δαυὶδ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ	The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David.
A' Outward reference	1:38	ἰδοὺ ἡ δούλη κυρίου	Behold, I am the Lord's servant.

Moreover, an additional point must be noted concerning the role of the Holy Spirit – the Power of the Most High – who overshadows and sanctifies (Luke 1:35). The significance of the Holy Spirit in Luke's work cannot be overstated. This is evident not only in the frequency of references (11 occurrences in Luke and 33 in Acts) but more importantly in the theological function the Spirit fulfills. The Holy Spirit, proceeding instinctively from God the Creator, represents the divine power at work to bring about the fulfillment of God's salvific plan (see Luke 4:18; Acts 1:8). This power is manifest through the Spirit's action in key narrative figures: John (Luke 1:15), Elizabeth (1:41), Zechariah (1:67), Mary (1:35), Jesus (3:22), and the early community of believers (Acts 2:4), including those chosen for service (Acts 6:5). Thus Kavin Rowe (2006, 47) affirms:

> the Holy Spirit is not distinct from God, but – one must say it carefully – distinct within God. In contrast to Gabriel, for example, or the heavenly host in Luke 2:13–14, there is no hint in Luke that the Holy Spirit is other than God, one of God's creatures or a semi-divine being. To the contrary, the Holy Spirit is God, but in the character of his animating activity.

Therefore, as Jesus is empowered by the Holy Spirit, it is within this theological framework that the title *Kyrios* ("Lord") begins to be applied to him. Yet this application does not imply a direct identification or conflation with God the Creator, whom Jesus, from his youth, addresses intimately as his Father (Luke 2:49).

(B) SECOND SCENE: THE BIRTH NARRATIVES

John. Elizabeth's initial greeting to Mary during her visit establishes a significant connection between Jesus and the title "Lord." She addresses Mary as "the mother of my Lord" (Luke 1:43: ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ κυρίου μου), explicitly attri-

buting the title *Kyrios* to Jesus and thereby affirming his exalted, possibly divine, status even before his birth (Johnson 1991, 41; Green 1997, 96). The following reference to "the Lord" (1:45: παρὰ κυρίου) can be understood as referring to God, yet in the unfolding context of the narrative, it also resonates with the earlier reference to Jesus, suggesting a nuanced and fluid application of the title. Mary's response, traditionally known as the Magnificat, begins with a doxological affirmation: "My soul magnifies the Lord" (Luke 1:46: Μεγαλύνει ἡ ψυχή μου τὸν κύριον). This expression recalls the language of King David, particularly in 2 Sam 7:26, where David magnifies the name of the Lord for blessing his house. Such intertextual resonance strengthens the theological weight of Mary's proclamation and embeds her response within the tradition of covenantal gratitude and divine exaltation. Moreover, as Johnson (1991, 44) notes, the titles "Lord," "Savior," and "Holy"– used for God – are already applied to Jesus: he is called "holy" (Luke 1:35), "Lord" (1:43), and will soon be identified as "Savior" (2:11). The repeated use of the title *Kyrios* by both Elizabeth and Mary (Luke 1:38. 43. 45. 46) accentuates its theological significance in the infancy narrative. While the distinction between Jesus and God remains intact, the recurring application of *Kyrios* to both figures suggests an intentional narrative strategy pointing toward Jesus' divine identity – already emerging within the womb. As Kavin Rowe (2006, 45) insightfully concludes: "The dramatic moment of 1:43 in the narrative bespeaks a kind of unity of identity between YHWH and the human Jesus within Mary's womb by means of the resonance of κύριος."

The birth narrative of John the Baptist follows a pattern reminiscent of Old Testament storytelling, emphasizing divine intervention. The neighbors and relatives recognize that "the Lord has shown his great mercy" to Elizabeth (Luke 1:58: ἐμεγάλυνεν κύριος τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ μετ᾽ αὐτῆς), and the narrator further highlights God's presence in John's life by stating that "the hand of the Lord was with him" (1:66: χεὶρ κυρίου ἦν μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ). In these instances, the title "Lord" is used in its traditional sense, referring to God's direct action in history. A similar pattern emerges in Zechariah's prayer. He first invokes God as "Lord" (1:68: κύριος ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ), yet later in the same passage, the title appears to anticipate Jesus. John is described as the one who will go before "the Lord" to prepare his way (1:76: ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἑτοιμάσαι ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ). John's preparatory role will be enacted as the voice in the desert, as in Isaiah's prophecy: "Prepare the way for the Lord" (3:4: ἑτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου), as in Isa 40:3; however, with a crucial change in its continuation.

While Isa 40:3 reads "make straight the paths of our God," Luke changes the reading into "make straight his paths" in Luke 3:4, thus, by using the personal pronoun αὐτός instead of noun θεός, he intentionally relates it with the precedent κύριος and thus with Jesus. (Rowe 2006, 71–72). This shift within the episode of John's birth suggests a gradual application of the divine title to Jesus, even within

Isa 40:3	φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἑτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν	Luke 3:4	φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ· ἑτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ·
	The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God.		The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.

a setting deeply rooted in Old Testament themes. Thus, whenever the narrative explicitly points to Jesus, the title "Lord" is subtly extended to him, underscoring his unique identity and divine role. Thus, John's character – not only in words but also through continuous reiterations (Luke 1:16–17, 76; 3:4–6) within narrative development – points to Jesus that embodies the divine quality of the "Lord" without conflation of undermining the God of Israel.

Jesus. The announcement of Jesus' birth follows a distinct pattern that further emphasizes his special status. The title "Lord" first appears in reference to the angel of the Lord and the glory of the Lord that surrounds the shepherds (2:9: ἄγγελος κυρίου καὶ δόξα κυρίου), reinforcing divine presence and authority. This theme is echoed after the episode when the shepherds proclaim that "the Lord has made known" this event to them (2:15: ὁ κύριος ἐγνώρισεν ἡμῖν). However, the central statement shifts the focus explicitly to Jesus, who is identified with a triad of messianic titles: "the Savior, the Messiah, the Lord" (2:11: σωτὴρ ὅς ἐστιν χριστὸς κύριος). This clustering designations highlight Jesus' unique role as the long-awaited Messiah who will save his people (Isa 9:1–7) but also as the one who challenges worldly rulers (as Emperor Augustus mentioned in Luke 2:1) as a bringer of peace (see Johnson 1991, 50; Green 1997, 132; Porter and Dyer 2023, 163–64). Moreover, he is set apart as the one who embodies the messianic kingship (χριστός) in sharing divine abode as κύριος, as Rowe (2006, 55) concludes that:

> the doubleness in the referent of the word κύριος; should not be understood in terms of a confusion or mixing together of two different persons/characters (as Vermischung implies), but rather in terms what we might call a Verbindung, the binding together of χριστός and θεός in their identity via the word κύριος.

The literary structure of this passage further reinforces this point. It underscores the centrality of Jesus within the divine revelation, presenting him not only as the Messiah but also as the one who bears the title "Lord" in a way that hints at his divine identity.

Furthermore, the angel's threefold proclamation about the newborn child carries deep theological weight. It is introduced as "good news of great joy for

B Reference to God	Luke 2:9	ἄγγελος κυρίου ἐπέστη αὐτοῖς καὶ δόξα κυρίου περιέλαμψεν αὐτούς	The angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them
A Reference to Jesus	2:11	σωτὴρ ὅς ἐστιν χριστὸς κύριος	Savior, which is Christ the Lord
B' Reference to God	2:15	καὶ ἴδωμεν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο τὸ γεγονὸς ὃ ὁ κύριος ἐγνώρισεν ἡμῖν	and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord has made known unto us

all people" (Luke 2:10), framing the birth of Jesus as a royal and universal event. This theme is expanded in the hymn of the heavenly host, which employs merism – a rhetorical device that expresses totality by mentioning two extremes. The angelic praise "Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace on earth" (2:14), encompassing both heaven and earth, subtly alludes to Jesus' divine nature – his kingship is not merely earthly but extends to the cosmic realm, signifying his unique position as the one who unites heaven and earth in God's salvific plan.

In the account of Jesus' presentation, and offering in the temple, there are further indications of Jesus' special status. Mary and Joseph follow the Law (see Lev 12:1–8) and thus present Jesus in front of the Lord God (Luke 2:22). While at this point the title "Lord" refers directly to God, the following verse indicates how the parents follow the prescriptions written in the Law of the Lord (Exod 13:2; Lk 2:22–23), the child will be called holy to the Lord. The concluding description reaffirms the enactment of the Law by the parents (Lev 5:11; Luke 2:24). Moreover, the entire narrative sequence will conclude with this same assumption that "they did everything required by the Law of the Lord" (2:32). The arrangement of the referrals of the title "Lord" is set in a chiastic manner (B–A–B'), in which the Law of the Lord in verses 22 and 24 embraces the close relationship between Jesus and the Lord (2:23).

The shift from the prescription of the Law to Jesus' personal designation in the central part of the description is significant. While Exod 13:2 uses the imperative "sanctify" (ἁγίασόν) as a divine command (13:1: the Lord) for every male first-born, Luke 2:23 presents a passive future form "will be called holy" (2:23: ἅγιον τῷ κυρίῳ κληθήσεται), suggesting both Jesus' personalization and his identity as well as a future fulfillment within the narrative. Moreover, this unites three temporal referrals of the narrative. First, it evokes the angel's announcement of Jesus being born through the power of the Holy Spirit and thus "holy and called the son of God" (1:35: τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον κληθήσεται υἱὸς θεου). Second, it finds confirmation through the words of Simeon, as he has been foretold by the Holy Spirit, he sees in Jesus "the anointed of the Lord" (2:26: τὸν

B Reference to God	Lev 12:2	[Lev 12:1: ἐλάλησεν κύριος] ἀκάθαρτος ἔσται ἑπτὰ ἡμέρας	Luke 2:22	αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ αὐτῶν κατὰ τὸν νόμον Μωσέως [Lk 2:23: γέγραπται ἐν νόμῳ κυρίου]
		[Lev 12:1: The Lord said] she will be unclean for seven days		when the days of their purifi- cation according to the law of Moses [Lk 2:23: written in the Law of the Lord]
A Reference to Jesus	Exod 13:2	[Exo 13:1: εἶπεν δὲ κύριος] ἁγίασόν μοι πᾶν πρωτότοκον πρωτογενὲς διανοῖγον μήτραν ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς Ισραηλ	Luke 2:23	πᾶν ἄρσεν διανοῖγον μήτραν ἅγιον τῷ κυρίῳ κληθήσεται
		[Exo 13:1: The Lord said] Sanctify to me every first-born first produced, opening every womb among the children of Israel		every male that opens the womb will be called holy to the Lord
B' Reference to God	Lev 5:11	[Lev 4:1: ἐλάλησεν κύριος] ἡ χεὶρ ζεῦγος τρυγόνων ἢ δύο νεοσσοὺς περιστερῶν	Luke 2:24	τὸ εἰρημένον ἐν τῷ νόμῳ κυρίου, ζεῦγος τρυγόνων ἢ δύο νοσσοὺς περιστερῶν
		[Lev 4:1: The Lord said] a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons		what was said in the Law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."

χριστὸν κυρίου), while God is entitled as "Sovereign Lord" (2:29: δεσπότης). Third, it foreshadows Jesus' role as the "Holy One of God" (4:34: ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ "the Holy One of God"), ultimately fulfilled in his sacrifice and resurrection (see Acts 3:13). By following the Law, Jesus is thus presented in the very realm of the Lord, already hinting at his unique status as the Holy One. This pattern of subtle yet deliberate references to Jesus as "Lord" demonstrates a theological progression in Luke's narrative, wherein Jesus is gradually revealed as the one who fully embodies divine authority and presence.

2.2. JESUS' IDENTITY: LK 3–5

Jesus' unique position is established immediately after his presentation and return to Nazareth, where he grows, becomes stronger being filled with wisdom as God's grace is upon him (Luke 2:40). The beginning of Jesus' public ministry is prepared by John, who speaks of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire (3:16).

Jesus' identity as the "beloved Son of God," empowered by the Holy Spirit, is revealed at his baptism (3:22: ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός). Jesus "filled with the Holy Spirit" is "led by the Spirit into the desert" (4:1), and after being tested by the devil concerning his sonship he returns to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit" (4:14). In his programmatic speech in the synagogue of Nazareth, Jesus speaks of realization of Isaiah's words (4:21). Thus, Jesus presents himself as being empowered by the divine Spirit and thus inaugurating the liberating God's presence (Isa 61:1; Luke 4:18; Duby 2022, 207). Jesus' identity as the anointed with the Spirit is confirmed by the power to defeat the daemons and inaugurate the kingdom of God (Luke 11:20). His authority of the Lord and Christ is revealed as he bestows the Holy Spirit on his community (Acts 2:33. 36).

In connection with Jesus' baptism, the genealogy of Jesus is presented (Luke 3:23–38), culminating in the important statement that Adam is the son of God (3:38: Ἀδὰμ τοῦ θεοῦ). This positions Jesus within a lineage that traces back to a divine origin. This connection is significant for two key reasons. First, it places Jesus within the broader context of humanity, giving his message universal significance. Second, portraying Jesus as the Son of Man (or Son of Adam) bridges the human and the divine, a concept rooted in apocalyptic literature (Dan 7:13: בר אנש / υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου). This linkage suggests that Jesus, as the Son of Adam, embodies both human and divine elements, as Joel Marcus (2003a, 38–61; 2003b, 370–86) discusses that the anarthrous form e.g. in Ezek 22:30: בן אדם / υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου or in Dan 7:13: בר אנש / υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου denotes a child of human parents; however, for a biblical audience it evokes the Eden story since אדם refers not only to a "human being" but denotes the name of the first human being, Adam. Marcus points to the fact that in the LXX the arthrous form ὁ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου does not appear in LXX or in Theodotion or in non-Christian writing before the NT. However, this term denoting "the man's son" or "the son the man's" finds its referral to the first man, the man *par excellence*, Adam (Gen 1:27: האדם / ὁ ἄνθρωπος). Marcus concludes that this would indicate "a person who was descendent from that first man but was also, in a way, on a par with or even greater than." (Marcus 2003a, 45) He confirms his claim by pointing to 1 En. 62:7, where the Son of Man is understood as the offspring of Adam. Moreover, the Adamic interpretation of the Son of Man encompasses that "the dominion and divine glory of the prelapsarian Adam will be restored to him at the eschaton." (Marcus 2003a, 48) Marcus interprets Mark 10:45, as how the Son of Adam had the right and authority to be served by all creatures in the universe. But by becoming the servant of humanity, he has reversed Adam's sin, the death which he passed on to his offspring (Marcus 2003b, 377).

The theological significance of this connection is further illuminated by the concept of Jesus as the "Last Adam" (see Acts 17:26; Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:21ff.) a theme explored in biblical scholarship, including the works of Robin

Scroggs (*The Last Adam*, 1966). While the Adamic myth, as Scroggs (1966, ix) argues, "is composite and exists as a whole in no single tradition" he sees how the idea of *Urmensch* is related to the Messiah, as the Last Adam. Thus, Jesus functions as the ultimate mediator, reconciling humanity and divinity through his earthly suffering and his exalted eschatological authority (Rossé 1992, 140). Thus, the Son of Man has the authority to forgive sins (Luke 5:24), is the Lord of the Sabbath (6:5), mingles with all people (7:34), and is a sign calling for acceptance and conversion (11:30; 12:8. 10. 40; 17:22. 24. 26. 30; 18:8; 19:10; 21:27. 36). He experiences rejection and proclaims his suffering (9:22. 26. 44. 58; 18:31; 22:22. 48; 24:7), and, ultimately, is seated at the throne of God's power (Luke 22:69; Acts 7:56). Jesus identifies his role in Isaianic terms as "the anointed by the Spirit of the Lord" (Isa 61:1; Luke 4:18). Moreover, Jesus' reading of Isaiah introduces an important redactional inference from Isa 58 (Isa 58:6: ἀπόστελλε; Luke 4:18: [ἀποστεῖλαι] τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει) underlining the liberating power of God, pronouncing God's favor as a sign of his kingship (Isa 61:2; Lev 25:10). Jesus, anointed by the Holy Spirit, enacts this liberating power of God through his teaching and work (Luke 7:22–23).

Moreover, in the episode of the miraculous catch of fish in Luke 5:1–8, when Peter falls at Jesus' feet and addresses him as "Lord," asking him to depart because he is "a sinful man" (5:8: ἀνὴρ ἁμαρτωλός εἰμι, κύριε), it may appear

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Isa 61:1</td><td>πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ᾽ ἐμέ
οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με
εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς
ἀπέσταλκέν με
ἰάσασθαι τοὺς συντετριμμένους τῇ καρδίᾳ
κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν
καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν</td><td rowspan="5">Luke 4:18</td><td>πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ᾽ ἐμέ
οὗ εἵνεκεν ἔχρισέν με
εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς,
ἀπέσταλκέν με
εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς,
ἀπέσταλκέν με,
κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν
καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν,</td></tr>
<tr><td>The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor
he has sent me,
to heal the broken in heart,
to proclaim freedom to the captives,
and recovery of sight to the blind</td><td>The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
because he anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me

to proclaim freedom to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Isa 58:6</td><td>ἀπόστελλε τεθραυσμένους
ἐν ἀφέσει</td><td>ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους
ἐν ἀφέσει</td></tr>
<tr><td>set the oppressed free.</td><td>to set those oppressed free,</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Isa 61:2</td><td>καλέσαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν</td><td rowspan="2">Luke 4:19</td><td>κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν.</td></tr>
<tr><td>to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.</td><td>to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.</td></tr>
</table>

that Peter is acknowledging Jesus' honorific authority. However, the disproportion between Peter's acknowledgment of his sinfulness and Jesus as Lord evokes the biblical theme of a sinner before the Lord, from whom death is the natural consequence (Isa 1:28; Ps 36:20 [LXX]). Therefore, Peter's words and actions indicate that he is confronted with the divine presence (Green 1997, 233). This is underscored by the awe of the others (Luke 5:9) and Jesus' response, urging him not to fear but to embrace a new role in gathering people (5:10). The narrative evokes the prophetic encounter with the divine and initial call as experienced by Isaiah in his temple vision (Isa 6:5–10). Peter, despite initial distrust, expresses a faith in Jesus' lordship (Rowe 2006, 82–89).

A similar pattern – falling on face – reemerges in the following episode. The leper addresses Jesus as "Lord," in complete trust, yet leaving it up to Jesus to decide "if you are willing, you can make me clean" (Luke 5:12: κύριε, ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαί με καθαρίσαι). Healings that Jesus realizes are a sign of divine power that Jesus is endowed with (5:17: δύναμις κυρίου ἦν εἰς τὸ ἰᾶσθαι αὐτόν; 6:19: δύναμις παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἐξήρχετο; Rossé 1992, 181–82). Although he is not explicitly acclaimed as divine Lord – remaining, as in Mark 5:18–20, somewhat enigmatic – the power at work within him affirms the initial overshadowing by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). The divine power is put to the question regarding forgiving of sins in this does not pertain only to God (5:21: τίς δύναται ἁμαρτίας ἀφεῖναι εἰ μὴ μόνος ὁ θεός;). Jesus is not seen only as an agent of God who proclaims God's forgiveness (see 2 Sam 12), but it is perceived as a rival of the uniqueness of God. However, Jesus, as a Son of Man, has the Lord's power and authority to forgive (Luke 5:24); namely, he embodies "the only God of Israel in the power of the Lord and lives out this unity in the power to forgive sins" (Rowe 2006, 105).

2.3. JESUS' RELATIONSHIP TO THE FATHER: LK 10

Luke's gospel narrative does not portray immediate high Christology. Thus, the title "Son of God" is never directly applied by Jesus to himself. Rather, it is used by his opponents, such as the demoniac forces (Luke 4:3. 9. 41; 8:28), or indirectly by Jesus to announce his resurrection (20:36) or affirm his divine status (22:70). However, at various occasions Jesus is depicted during his prayer either to set himself apart from the crowds (5:16; 9:18), to enter in a special relationship with God, the Father (3:21–22; 9:28–37; 22:41–45) or before making important decision of his mission (6:12–16) and entrusting this bond with the Father to his disciples (11:1–4). However, the narrative not only shows that Jesus prays, but also reveals the depth of his relationship with the Father. This bond is highlighted at the beginning of the journey narrative in Luke 10:21, where Jesus, rejoicing in the Holy Spirit, reaffirms his unique communion with the Father and addresses him as "Lord of heaven and earth," thereby proclaiming his lordship over all

creation (Green 1997, 422). Whereas the distinction of lordship of God, the Father is related to creation and salvation (10:27); Jesus' lordship is related to his mission of setting free (10:17) and proclaiming the word of liberation (10:39–41); (Rowe 2006, 138–39). In brief, the close reading of some passages of Luke's gospel shows how the divine title "Lord" is applied to Jesus; however, Jesus is not a rival but embodies the divine prerogatives in unity with God, whom he perceives as his Father. The constant use of the term "Lord" aligns Jesus with divine authority, reinforcing his role as the fulfillment of Israel's messianic hopes.

3. JESUS' NAME AND HIS LORDSHIP IN ACTS

3.1. THE PORTRAYAL OF JESUS IN ACTS 1

The transition between Luke's Gospel and Acts is marked by the mention of Jesus, as Luke explains that in his first book, he "wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven" (Acts 1:1–2). However, the significance of Jesus' name, confirmed by divine messengers (1:10), is further developed throughout Acts 1. Jesus is presented in direct relation to the Father – both in the fulfillment of his promise (1:4) and his sovereign authority (Acts 1:7) – which underscores the unique relationship between Jesus and God (see Luke 2:49; 10:21–22; 11:2). While the title "Lord" in Acts 1:6 may initially refer to a general designation of authority, Peter later clarifies that "Lord Jesus" signifies the divine status of the Risen One (1:21–22). This is reinforced by Jesus' ability to know the hearts of people, a quality elsewhere attributed to divine knowledge (15:8), yet, here, it is directly associated with Jesus, as he is the one to whom the community addresses its prayer (1:24). Another element that conveys a divine nuance to Jesus is the concept of witnessing. In Isaiah, bearing witness is linked to the uniqueness of God (Isa 43:10. 12), yet in Acts, the apostles are now commissioned – empowered by the Spirit – to serve as witnesses of Jesus (Acts 1:8) and his resurrection (1:22; 2:32; 3:15; Marguerat 2011b, 171–85). This shift underscores Jesus' central role in God's salvific plan, affirming his divine status and authority in the unfolding narrative of Acts. Moreover, Peter interprets Judas's death by melding together Ps 69:25 [LXX 68:26: ἔπαυλις] and Ps 109:8 [108:8 LXX: ἐπισκοπή] thus to describe Judas as an enemy of the suffering king. As Jipp (2020, 111) observes, Judas is the first among several figures to receive divine retribution for their violence against the Messiah and his people.

3.2. PETER'S SPEECH IN ACTS 2:14–36

The bestowal of the Holy Spirit at the Pentecost is an eschatological event in terms of gathering of people including both Jews from all around the world (Acts 2:5) as well as other peoples named by Luke in the list of nations (2:9–11). Apart from subversively evoking the episode of Babel (Gen 11:1–9) or the episode of Sinai (Exod 19:16–20) the scenery of the unity evokes Isaianic messianic promises of unifying both kingdoms of Judah and Israel as well as other nations (Isa 11:10–13; 66:18–21) under messianic Lord (Thompson 2008, 58). While the event causes ambiguous response and the crowd's mockery (Acts 2:12–13), Peter, first, explains the event as the fulfillment of God's promises; and second, he invites the audience to reconsider their perception and embrace the message of salvation through baptism (2:41). Peter refutes the crowd's skepticism by grounding his argument in prophetic Scripture. He references:

> Joel 3:1–5 [LXX] in Acts 2:17–21, which speaks of the Spirit's outpouring as an eschatological event.
> Psalm 15:8–11 [LXX] in Acts 2:25–28 (later reiterated in Acts 13:34–37) and
> Psalm 109:1 [LXX] in Acts 2:34, both emphasize Jesus' resurrection and enthronement.

The bestowal of the Holy Spirit marks the eschatological fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. Peter deliberately amplifies its eschatological significance by shifting Joel's "after these things" (μετὰ ταῦτα, Joel 3:1) to "in the last days" (ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις, Acts 2:17–18), aligning the event with Isaiah's vision of the eschaton (Isa 2:2–4; McQueen 1995, 45–55). This connection underscores the universality of God's judgment and instruction, extending beyond Israel to all nations (Pao 2000, 156–59). The eschatological and universal scope of the event is further emphasized as the Spirit is poured out "upon all flesh" (Joel 3:1; Acts 2:17), extending to "all who are far off" (Acts 2:39; see Isa 46:12). What strikes the most is the fact that Peter relates the saying directly to God (Acts 2:17: λέγει ὁ θεός) and thus, he emends Joel's referral to the Lord God from the previous verse (Joel 2:27: ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεός). Additionally, Peter reinterprets Joel 3:4 ("the day of the Lord") in Acts 2:20, identifying God as the subject of eschatological judgment. However, in Acts 2:21: "Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," the reference shifts toward Jesus. This transition culminates in Acts 2:36: "God has made Him both Lord (κύριο[ς]) and Christ (χριστό[ς])." Here, Jesus is enthroned as the "Lord," a title that in Joel originally referred to God YHWH (Joel 3:5). The word sequence in Acts 2:36 is particularly significant, as the personal pronoun αὐτός, referring to crucified Jesus, is given a central position as the endowed recipient of both the messianic glory and divine lordship. Moreover, the repeated reference to God (Acts 2:22. 23. 24. 30. 32. 36) – later explicitly identified as "the Father" (2:33) – frames and binds the title "the Lord"

(2:25. 34. 36) to show that it finds its true historical and theological fulfillment in Jesus alone. Whether the appellative "the Lord, our God" (κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν) in Acts 2:39 refers to God or Jesus, remains ambiguous. However, as Charles Barrett (2004, 149) points out, Jesus has been exalted (Acts 2:33: ὑψωθείς; 5:31: τοῦτον ὁ θεὸς ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα ὕψωσεν τῇ δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ), in fulfillment of prophetic expectation (e.g., Ps 67:19 [LXX]: ἀνέβης εἰς ὕψος) and as affirmed in early Christian belief (Eph 4:8: ἀναβὰς εἰς ὕψος). By fulfilling Israel's eschatological hopes – particularly the outpouring of the Spirit and the realization of universal salvation – Jesus demonstrates that he has been entrusted with a divine role and title (Bock 1986, 147–49).

Peter strengthens his argument by citing David's prophetic words (Acts 2:25–28; Ps 15:8–11), clarifying that they do not refer to David himself but rather to his promised descendant, the Christ (Acts 2:25, 30; see Luke 20:41–44; 2 Sam 7:12–13; Ps 131:11 [LXX]). The apostles bear witness to the fact that David is dead and buried (Acts 2:29), whereas Jesus, through his resurrection, fulfills David's prophetic words (Acts 2:31; Ps 15:10). The use of Ps 15 is focused on the resurrection of Jesus. David as the "prophet" (Acts 2:30: προφήτης) "foresees" the Lord (Ps 15:8: προωρώμην τὸν κύριον); however, as the reuse of the verb "foresee" in Acts 2:31 indicates, Peter interprets the "Lord" from Ps 15:8 as Christ Jesus, as the holy one, whom God will not leave in a decay (Ps 15:10). Thus, Peter shows how David's prophetic words are enacted in Jesus' resurrection (Rowe 2006, 44–45). Moreover, as John Kilgallen (2001, 49) affirms, there is an innate bond between Yahweh and Jesus, who bases his confidence on "his awareness that the Lord has always been with him." Consequently, the sending of the Holy Spirit is the direct result of Jesus' exaltation (Acts 2:33; see Acts 7:55; Luke 22:69: τῇ δεξιᾷ οὖν τοῦ θεοῦ ὑψωθείς). While the sequence in Ps 109:1: "The Lord says to my Lord" – may find corresponding historical figure as king, as some scholars try to demonstrate (Loke 2017, 53.69) – its interpretation is redirected by Jesus himself in Luke 20:41–44, where he connects the messianic "Lord" with Yahweh (Keener 2012, 959–62). However, the contextual use in Acts 2:34 points to Jesus' heavenly kingship and lordship over the entire world demonstrated by bestowing the divine gift of the Spirit upon his followers (Johnson 1992, 61). In the broader narrative context, Jesus' lordship depicted in Acts 2:33–26 meets and confirms the expectations about the reestablishment of the kingdom of God raised in Acts 1:1–11, as the outpouring of the Spirit and universal plan of the mission becomes a sign of recognition of its inauguration in Acts 1:8, thus, he becomes the Spirit-baptizer (Luke 3:16), as "he takes on a divine role in light of the OT, where only God can pour out God's Spirit (Isa 44:3; Ezek 39:29; Joel 2:28–29)," as Craig Kenner (2012, 957) justly observes. Moreover, the restoration of the kingdom by the power from on high evoke Isaiah's promises concerning both the Spirit (Isa 32:15) as well as the testimony

(43:10–12) directed to the ends of the world (49:6;Thompson 2008, 65–70). Therefore, the lordship of Jesus is further revealed in the narrative. First, by the apostle's witness to Jesus' salvific name (Acts 4:12) and by power enabling them to heal (4:33). Second, by the vindication of his witnesses and defeating his enemies (5:38–42). Third, by the constant growth of the community (6:1) and by bringing joy and peace both to Samaria (8:5–8) as well as to the Gentiles, since through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, God realized the good news of peace to the entire world (10:34–36; Jipp 2020, 110). Moreover, Ben Witherington (1998, 147–53) demonstrates how Luke gradually shifts the use of the term "Lord" from a primarily theological meaning to a more explicitly Christological one within the narrative. At the same time, he retains a variety of Christological titles derived from his sources, which serve to highlight Jesus' central role in the unfolding story.

3.3. JESUS AND HIS COMMUNITY: ACTS 3–5

(A) CHRISTOLOGICAL TITLES: ACTS 3:13–15

In the narrative section of Acts 3–5, the growing conflict with the temple authorities centers on the significance of Jesus' name. Peter himself first introduces the healing of the lame man by explicitly invoking the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene (3:6). After the miraculous healing, he reaffirms that it was through Jesus' name that the man was restored (3:16). This thematic emphasis on the name of Jesus frames Peter's kerygmatic proclamation, which reaches its climax in the salvific power of faith in his name (3:16; 4:12). At the heart of this proclamation, Peter designates Jesus with a foundational title "servant" (παῖς in Acts 3:13). This title is further enriched by three additional Christological designations in Acts 3:14–15 (see Cadbury 1933, 354–75; Ziesler 1979, 28–41; Marguerat 2011a, 147):

"Holy" (ἅγιος)
"Righteous One" (δίκαιος)
"Leader of Life" (ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ζωῆς)

(1) The term παῖς is ambiguous, as it can mean "child/ boy/ son" or "servant." In Peter's speech, the surrounding lexemes – ἐδόξασεν (glorified), παρεδώκατε (delivered over), δίκαιον (righteous one) – strongly identify Jesus with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 52:13 ("my servant shall be glorified"). This Servant motif also resonates with Isaiah 53, where the righteous sufferer is delivered into the hands of his oppressors yet ultimately vindicated by God.

(2) The title "holy" (ἅγιος) is deeply connected to divine identity and stands in antithesis to the demonic realm. In Isaiah, holiness is a primary attribute of the

God of Israel (Isa 6:3) and his role as the Redeemer of his people (57:15). In applying this title to Jesus, Peter emphasizes his divine nature and mission, which stand in stark contrast to the rejection he faced.

(3) The title "Righteous One" (δίκαιος) is closely related to holiness. Righteousness primarily characterizes God (Isa 45:21), yet it is also used to describe the messianic Servant (Isa 53:11) and the Davidic ruler (Jer 23:5). Within the Lukan corpus, Jesus is explicitly identified as "the Righteous One" (Luke 23:47; Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14), portraying him as the innocent sufferer whose vindication fulfills God's justice.

(4) The Christological titles converge in the term ἀρχηγός, which has a broad semantic range: "author/ forerunner-leader/ ruler." Further references reinforce the association between leadership and salvation e.g. Acts 5:31: "God exalted him as Leader and Savior" (ἀρχηγὸς καὶ σωτήρ) and Heb 2:10; 12:2: "The Leader of Salvation/Faith" (ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας/ πίστεως). This terminology encapsulates God's salvific action through his agent, Jesus. His role is based on the one of Moses, as presented through *syncrisis* between Jesus and Moses in Acts 7:35 "Ruler (ἄρχων) and Redeemer (λυτρωτής)." However, Jesus surpasses Moses by leading humanity to ultimate salvation. God, by delivering Jesus from the agony of death (Acts 2:24) and making him the firstborn from the dead (26:23), has established him as the forerunner who leads beyond sin and death to life and salvation (5:15; 10:42; 17:31). The Christological titles connect Jesus to the Isaianic Servant, who, as Keener (2013, 1099) notes, was "despised by the nations (Isa 49:7) until his exaltation (52:13–15)." Peter exhorts people to repent speaking of "times of refreshment" or "relief from on high" in Acts 3:20 (καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως: in Exod 8:11 ἀνάψυξις [רוחה] and Isa 32:15: [MT: רוח ממרום, Symmachus: αναψυξις εξ υψους; LXX (πνεῦμα ἀφ᾽ ὑψηλοῦ]) and of "restoration, reestablishment" in Acts 3:21 (χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων). This not only evokes the discussion about the kingdom in Acts 1:6–11, but it shows its realization (Jipp 2020, 113).

(B) THE INQUIRY AND PROCESS OVER THE NAME: ACTS 4:1–23

Following the miraculous healing, the temple authorities apprehend the apostles as they proclaim the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 4:1–2). However, the core issue of the inquiry is not merely their speech but rather the source of the healing power – specifically, the power of Jesus' name (4:7). Ultimately, the healing is inseparably linked to salvation, both in an individual sense (4:9–10: σέσωται […] ὑγιής) and in a universal dimension (4:12). To reinforce this theological claim, Peter invokes the "cornerstone" imagery for Christ in Acts 4:11 (ὁ λίθος, ὁ ἐξουθενηθείς), alluding to the rejected stone in Ps 118:22 [LXX 117:22] and Isa 28:16. While the Isaiah describes a precious foundation stone, laid by God as a sign of security, ensuring that those who trust in Him will never be put to

shame, in Psalm the stone is identified with the king who both embodies as well as triumphs in "the name of the Lord" (Ps 117:10–12, 26). Thus, the invocation of Jesus' name additionally underlines his lordship (Jipp 2020, 113–14). This emphasis on the name also suggests an *anti-magical apologetic*, as illustrated by the subsequent narrative development (Acts 8:9–11; 19:13–17). Moreover, it highlights God's active intervention on behalf of his people (see Witherington 1998, 175, 194–95; Sandgren 2003, 215–16; Marguerat 2003, 100–124; Aune 2006, 368–420).

(C) JESUS AND THE LORDSHIP OF THE FATHER: ACTS 4:23–31

After Peter and John return to the community, the assembly unites in a prayer that portrays the unique relationship between God, the Sovereign Lord of all creation (Acts 4:24: δέσποτα, σὺ ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν), and Jesus, as His holy servant and Messiah (4:27). While the entitlement of Jesus as the Anointed One is not new (see 2:36: Χριστός; 3:13: παῖς; 3:14: ἅγιος), it gains a profound dimension as the community interprets Ps 2:2 (Acts 4:26) in light of its present realization (4:27). The parallelism highlights how Jesus, the holy servant of God, whom He anointed, stands in juxtaposition with the Lord and His Anointed from Ps 2:2. This prayer underscores the unfolding divine plan, revealing that Jesus shares in the lordship of the Father. In this theological framework, God is perceived as both the Creator and the source of salvation (Dan 9:15: δέσποτα κύριε ὁ θεός), while Jesus is presented as His holy boy-servant (παῖς). Moreover, the community prays to the Lord God for the strength to proclaim His word, thereby bearing testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. This underscores the inseparability of Jesus' mission from that of the Father. Through His resurrection, Jesus' status as Lord is fully revealed in relation to the sovereign lordship of God the Father.

(D) JESUS AS THE LEADER AND SAVIOR: ACTS 5

At the following stage of the conflict with the temple authorities involving the apostles in Acts 5:17–42, Peter addresses the core of the dispute by naming Jesus (5:30), who has been the object of both divine and human action, ultimately for the purpose of salvation. He emphasizes God's sovereignty over history by inverting the chronological sequence of events (crucifixion towards resurrection) and structuring his argument in an embracing pattern:

God → Jesus ←Sanhedrin
ὁ θεὸς ἤγειρεν Ἰησοῦν ὃν ὑμεῖς διεχειρίσασθε

God → Jesus
ὁ θεὸς ὕψωσεν ἀρχηγὸν σωτῆρα

B God			Acts 4:24	δέσποτα σὺ ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν
				Sovereign Lord, you made the heavens and the earth
A Jesus	Ps 2:2	παρέστησαν οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ.	Acts 4:27	Ἡρῴδης τε καὶ Πόντιος Πιλᾶτος σὺν ἔθνεσιν καὶ λαοῖς Ἰσραήλ συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸν ἅγιον παῖδά σου Ἰησοῦν ὃν ἔχρισας
		Stood up the kings of the earth and the rulers, were gathered together against the Lord, and against his anointed.		Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel met together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed.
B God			Acts 4:29	κύριε, […] δὸς τοῖς δούλοις σου […] λαλεῖν τὸν λόγον σου
				Lord, […] grant your servants […] to speak your word
A Jesus			Acts 4:33	ἀπεδίδουν τὸ μαρτύριον οἱ ἀπόστολοι τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ
				The apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

(1) God's Sovereign Action: God decisively intervenes on Jesus' behalf, overturning human opposition and transforming rejection into salvation. First, He raises Jesus from the dead, and then He exalts him at His right hand as "Leader and Savior" (ἀρχηγὸς σωτήρ).

(2) The Sanhedrin's condemnation Reversed: Peter then shifts focus to the Sanhedrin, the very court that put Jesus to death by hanging Him on a tree (Acts 5:30). Ironically, the accusers become victims of their own fabricated verdict: their rejection of Jesus is rendered powerless by God's vindication of Him. As in Isaiah 53:4, what appeared to be a curse is transformed into a blessing.

(3) Jesus' exaltation and the call to conversion: Jesus' exaltation at God's right hand demonstrates both the invalidity of his condemnation and his messianic identity (Acts 5:30–31). The titles "Leader" (ἀρχηγός) and "Savior" (σωτήρ) encapsulate the purpose of salvation: Jesus is both the forerunner of life (3:15) and the Davidic king enthroned in the divine realm (2:30–36). However, Peter carefully presents this kingship without direct political connotations (5:31b). The

authorities' reaction (5:36–37) suggests that this distinction was largely unconvincing, yet Jesus radically differs from other leaders, since he truly cares for his people as their Savior (see Isa 45:15; Luke 1:47; 2:11; Acts 13:23). Ultimately, Peter's speech is not a condemnation but an invitation – a call to conversion and the remission of sins, directed at Israel itself (Acts 5:31b; see 2:38).

3.4. JESUS' LORDSHIP EXPANDS.

The name of Jesus is the one invoked ass enacting miracles (Acts 3:6. 16; 4:10. 30), the apostles are warned not to speak in his name (4:17–18; 5:40) and the community of "those who invoke Jesus' name" is being persecuted (9:14.20; Loke 2017, 79–80). Within the narrative of Acts, the numeric summaries (Acts 6:1. 7; 12:24; 19:20), which speak about the growth in the number of believers as a blessing bestowed on the community, reveal God's power through which the community spreads its teaching (4:31) even in the face of fierce opposition. Moreover, summary statements, echoing the narrative summaries, show how God's blessing spreads in the new communities (Chambers 2012, 119–21). The depiction of the restoration of the Davidic kingdom under Jesus' lordship is further portrayed in the summary statement in Acts 9:31, evoking Isaiah in depicting God's action for his people (Isa 51:16), the terminology of: peace, fear of the Lord, comfort of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the next step and passing of this unity unto the Gentiles is emphasized in Acts 10. In the context, where aspects of the law before the exaltation of the Lord Jesus prevented that unity are now transcended. All who believe in Jesus form a soteriological unity under Jesus' lordship, as he is proclaimed the judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:42: οὗτός […] κριτὴς ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν; Thompson 2008, 98–100).

Paul's mission to the Gentiles (13:3ff.) provokes the discussion in Jerusalem, where James interprets the entry into the gentile world as God's plan "to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles" (15:14). He argues his claim by referring to Amos 9:11–12 that show how the Lord "will restore" (Amos 9:11; Acts 15:16: ἀνοικοδομήσω) and provide that his name "will be called upon all the nations" so that "the remnant of men may seek" him (Amos 9:12; Acts 15:17). Thus, Jesus' lordship realizes the prophetic hopes for the universal restoration of David kingdom (Jipp 2020, 114–15). The apostolic preaching, particularly in Peter's speeches (Acts 2:36), explicitly declares Jesus as *Kyrios* and *Christos*, affirming his divine status in the context of early Christian proclamation. Jesus' resurrection serves as the ultimate confirmation of his divine sonship and his role as the eschatological Son of Man, now enthroned at the right hand of God. The book of Acts by witnessing Jesus' resurrection shows how the lordship of Jesus extends over the entire world. A close reading of the early chapters of Acts presents Jesus as the exalted Lord at God's right hand (Acts 2:33. 36), whose

name alone mediates salvation and healing (Acts 4:10–12), through whom forgiveness and peace are extended to both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 10:36. 43), and by whose grace salvation is given to all who believe (Acts 15:11).

4. CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that the Lukan corpus offers a richly textured and theologically nuanced portrait of Jesus Christ as *Kyrios*, the divine Lord. While Luke does not employ the philosophical vocabulary of later doctrinal formulations – such as the Nicene ὁμοούσιος – the narrative consistently attributes to Jesus' prerogatives, honors, and functions traditionally reserved for God. From the infancy narratives, where the title "Lord" ambiguously yet deliberately applies to both God and the unborn Jesus (e.g., Luke 1:43), to the Pentecost speech in Acts 2, where Jesus is proclaimed "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), the Lukan narrative constructs a high Christology grounded in narrative continuity rather than dogmatic abstraction.

The title *Kyrios* serves as a theological bridge between Jewish monotheism and early Christian devotion. Its application to Jesus, in contexts of worship, divine prerogative (e.g., the forgiveness of sins, the bestowal of the Spirit), and eschatological judgment, affirms his inclusion in the divine identity without collapsing the distinction between Jesus and the Father. Moreover, Luke's portrayal of Jesus as the Spirit-anointed prophet, the exalted Son of Man, and the Davidic Messiah enthroned at God's right-hand reveals a dynamic integration of Old Testament typologies and prophetic hope fulfilled in the risen Lord. The narrative of Acts extends and universalizes this Christological vision, situating Jesus' lordship at the heart of salvation history. His name becomes the locus of divine power and healing, and his resurrection inaugurates the eschatological age. The apostolic proclamation, grounded in Scripture and empowered by the Spirit, testifies to the reality that Jesus now reigns as Lord over both Jews and Gentiles alike. Thus, Luke–Acts bears early and compelling witness to the divine lordship of Jesus – a foundational claim that shaped the Church's worship, mission, and theological confession from the very beginning.

JEZUS CHRYSTUS JAKO PAN W DWUDZIELE ŁUKASZOWYM: STUDIUM PRZYPADKU WCZESNEJ CHRYSTOLOGII

Abstrakt

Artykuł bada boskie panowanie Jezusa Chrystusa w korpusie Łukaszowym, koncentrując się na teologicznej i narracyjnej funkcji tytułu Kyrios (Pan) w narracji Ewangelii Łukasza i Dziejów Apostolskich. Łukasz artykułuje boską tożsamość Jezusa poprzez

kategorie relacyjne i funkcjonalne zakorzenione w Pismach Izraela. Począwszy od narracji o niemowlęctwie, studium śledzi stopniowe i celowe stosowanie tytułu Kyrios do Jezusa, którego kulminacją jest ogłoszenie przez Piotra w dniu Pięćdziesiątnicy, że Bóg uczynił Jezusa „zarówno Panem, jak i Chrystusem" (Dz 2,36). Narracja pokazuje, w jaki sposób Jezus przyjmuje boskie role – takie jak przebaczanie grzechów, obdarzanie Duchem i przyjmowanie modlitwy – zachowując jednocześnie synowską relację z Ojcem. Dzieje Apostolskie ukazują panowanie Jezusa najpierw poprzez Jego zmartwychwstanie i wywyższenie, a następnie poprzez misję prowadzoną przez Ducha Świętego do wszystkich narodów. Artykuł argumentuje, że Łukasz przedstawia wysoką chrystologię, która potwierdza udział Jezusa w boskiej tożsamości. W ten sposób narracyjna chrystologia Ewangelii Łukasza i Dziejów Apostolskich stanowi fundamentalne świadectwo późniejszej doktrynalnej afirmacji Kościoła: że Jezus Chrystus jest prawdziwie Panem i Bogiem, godnym czci i posłuszeństwa.

S ł o w a k l u c z o w e : wczesnochrześcijański kult Jezusa, chrystologia narracyjna w dwudziele Łukaszowym, Jezus jako Pan, boskość Jezusa.

JESUS CHRIST AS THE LORD IN LUKE–ACTS: A CASE STUDY IN EARLY CHRISTOLOGY

Abstract

This article explores the divine lordship of Jesus Christ in the Lukan corpus, focusing on the theological and narrative function of the title Kyrios (Lord) in the narrative of Luke–Acts. Luke articulates Jesus' divine identity through relational and functional categories rooted in Israel's Scriptures. Beginning with the infancy narratives, the study traces the gradual and deliberate application of the title Kyrios to Jesus, culminating in Peter's proclamation at Pentecost that God has made Jesus "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). The narrative demonstrates how Jesus assumes divine roles – such as forgiving sins, bestowing the Spirit, and receiving prayer – while maintaining his filial relationship to the Father. Acts further portrays Jesus' lordship first, through his resurrection, exaltation, and second, through the Spirit-empowered mission to all nations. The article argues that Luke presents a high Christology that affirms Jesus' participation in the divine identity. Thus, the narrative Christology of Luke–Acts offers a foundational witness to the Church's later doctrinal affirmation: that Jesus Christ is truly Lord and God, worthy of worship and obedience.

K e y w o r d s : Early Christian worship of Jesus, Narrative Christology in Luke–Acts, Jesus' Divine Lordship.

JESUS CHRISTUS ALS DER HERR IM LUKANISCHEN DOPPELWERK:
EINE FALLSTUDIE ZUR FRÜHEN CHRISTOLOGIE

Abstrakt

Der Artikel untersucht die göttliche Herrschaft Jesu Christi im lukanischen Korpus und konzentriert sich auf die theologische und narrative Funktion des Titels Kyrios (Herr) in der Lukas–Apostelgeschichte–Erzählung. Lukas artikuliert die göttliche Identität Jesu durch relationale und funktionale Kategorien, die in den Schriften Israels verwurzelt sind. Ausgehend von der Kindheitserzählung verfolgt die Studie die schrittweise und zweckgerichtete Anwendung des Titels Kyrios auf Jesus, die in der Verkündigung des Petrus am Pfingsttag gipfelt, dass Gott Jesus „sowohl zum Herrn als auch zum Christus" gemacht hat (Apg 2,36). Die Erzählung zeigt, wie Jesus göttliche Rollen übernimmt – wie die Vergebung von Sünden, die Verleihung des Geistes und die Annahme von Gebeten – während er gleichzeitig die Sohnesbeziehung zum Vater aufrechterhält. Die Apostelgeschichte zeigt die Herrschaft Jesu zunächst durch seine Auferstehung und Erhöhung und dann durch die vom Heiligen Geist geleitete Mission zu allen Völkern. Der Artikel argumentiert, dass Lukas eine hohe Christologie präsentiert, die die Teilhabe Jesu an der göttlichen Identität bestätigt. Auf diese Weise stellt die narrative Christologie des Lukas in seinem Evangelium und in der Apostelgeschichte ein grundlegendes Zeugnis für die spätere doktrinäre Affirmation der Kirche dar: dass Jesus Christus wahrhaft Herr und Gott ist, würdig der Verehrung und des Gehorsams.

S c h l ü s s e l w ö r t e r : Christliche Verehrung Jesu, narrative Christologie, Herrschaft Jesu, Göttlichkeit Jesu.

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