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Not Q but Elijah:

The Saving of the Centurion's Servant (Luke 7:1-10) as an Internalization of the Saving of the Widow and her Child (1 Kgs 17:1-16)

Tom Brodie.

The account of the life-giving command which healed the centurion's servant (Luke 7:1-10; Matt 8:5-13; cf. John 4:43-54) is generally attributed to Q.¹ In itself this attribution is plausible, but on closer examination there is a further explanation which is less hypothetical and ultimately more credible: Luke's text involves a systematic synthesizing and christianizing of the account of the life-giving commands which were issued to and through Elijah and which warded off the threat of death (1 Kgs 17:1-16). Thus the threat which once faced a widow and her children² has been adapted to help form the account of the threat which faced the centurion and his servant.

Of the many adaptations wrought by Luke, two are pivotal: The figure of the widow has been replaced by that of the centurion (a move which accords with the requirements of Luke's own narrative). And, most basic of all, the OT drama has been internalized. In other words, Luke has rewritten the action so that there is a far greater sense of what is happening within people. In particular, the OT picture of a relationship which is based on what is physical (mother and child) has been replaced by a relationship (centurion/master and slave) which depends for its quality not on what is physical but on factors which are internal - particularly on genuine appreciation and agapè.

There are, of course, several elements in Luke's narrative which cannot be accounted for through 1 Kgs 17:1-16; the OT text is simply one component, and Luke is also using materials which are specifically Christian. But Luke's use of that one component provides a major clue to the composition of his text.

This investigation of the relationship of Luke 7:1-10 to the Elijah-Elisha narrative means suspending the question of Luke's relationship to Matt 8:5-13 and John 4:43-54. The suspension however is temporary. Continued research into Luke's systematic use of the Elijah-Elisha narrative will ultimately have the effect not of ignoring Luke's relationship to the other gospels, nor of ignoring Q, but of setting these questions on a firmer basis. The reason for this suspension is important: Luke's relationship to the OT has a certain clarity which is missing in the inter-gospel relationships and in the invoking of Q - in the Luke-Elijah case there is no doubt about which text is older and therefore about who may be depending on whom, nor is there any major doubt about the shape of the alleged source (about the text of 1 Kgs 17:1-16) - and this clarity provides an avenue which deserves investigation.

To pursue this investigation one must (A) establish the context, and (B) compare the texts.

A. THE CONTEXT

To set Luke's use of the Elijah story in context it is necessary to take account of three basic factors: (1) Luke's general imitation of the Septuagint; (2) Luke's manifold indebtedness to the Elijah-Elisha narrative; (3) The special indebtedness of Luke 7 to the women stories of I Kings 17 and 2 Kings 4.

(1) Luke's Imitation of the LXX

It is a commonplace of NT studies that Luke is heavily indebted to the Septuagint - to its genres, narrative techniques, vocabulary and style.³

This indebtedness, this dependence, did not occur in a vacuum. Unlike modern writers, who often cultivate novelty and independence, ancient authors, including those who were gifted and original, sought to build carefully on writings which were older. Jewish writers reworked older documents, especially older biblical documents, and often adapted them radically.⁴ Hellenistic authors systematically remodelled older texts, and they described what they were doing as a process of imitation (Gk., mimesis; Lat., imitatio).⁵ Luke was involved in both worlds, Jewish and Hellenistic - in Jewish biblical literature and in hellenistic literary practices - and so it is not surprising that in using the Septuagint he should have reworked it. In fact his dependence on the Septuagint has been described precisely as a form of imitation.⁶

One of the practices of imitation was that of internalization - a process of reworking existing texts so that the focus shifted from what was external to what was internal. In some hellenistic writing, for instance, there is a change of emphasis: from what was happening among the gods to what was happening within people, and from highlighting warlike heroism to appreciating a heroism which was quieter, more within.⁷ An even stronger internalizing tendency may be found in early Christianity, particularly in Paul's move from letter to spirit, from law to faith. Thus the broad heritage both of hellenistic literature and of early Christianity provided Luke with an ample precedent for subjecting the ancient scriptures to a process of internalization.

(2) Luke's Dependence on the Elijah-Elisha Narrative

In seeking the literary background to the composition of the gospels one of the most promising texts is the Elijah-Elisha narrative. It tells of God's prophetic miracle-worker(s) and it is approximately the length of Mark's gospel.⁸ Several scholars have noted aspects of its affinity with the gospels,⁹

and R. E. Brown, for instance, concluded in 1971 that "the miracles of Elisha are...a partial analogue to the miracles of Jesus."¹⁰ Brown is unsure of the nature of the link between the gospels and the Elijah-Elisha story - he does not press the investigation - but his tentative conclusion is that the link, in some way at least, is literary: "I wonder if it was not precisely the pattern of the prophets' careers that offered the model for gospel composition...The gospel as a literary form is undoubtedly a novum, but it is not without partial precedents in the histories of the prophets of Israel."¹¹

This is the essence: not that the Elijah-Elisha narrative offered a complete model for the gospels but that it provided one crucial component.

When the investigation is pressed further one finds in the case of Luke that this partial literary link can be defined with some precision. There are at least three significant connections:

(1) The inaugural speech (Luke 4:16-30). During Jesus' inaugural speech at Nazareth, the turning-point is marked by explicit solemn references to Elijah and Elisha: "Truly, I say to you, there were many widows in the days of Elijah..." (4:25-27). The significance of these references is underlined by the fact that the speech as a whole "has a definite programmatic character."¹² In other words, Luke's very program is modelled partly on Elijah and Elisha.

(2) The two-part assumption-centered plan. The essential plan of Luke-Acts - two balancing parts centered on an assumption (Acts 1:2) - is the same as that of the Elijah-Elisha narrative. (Both use the same central verb, analambanō, "take up/assume," and both use it three times [2 Kgs 2:9,10,11; Acts 1:1,11,22]).¹³ In all of ancient literature these seem to be the only documents with such a plan, and therefore Luke's affinity with the Elijah-Elisha narrative is unique.

(3) The systematic dependence of several specific passages on episodes from the Elijah-Elisha narrative. There are several Lukan passages which, when examined closely and with due attention to the modes of imitation, show direct literary dependence on specific texts from the Elijah-Elisha narrative: Luke 7:11-17; 7:36-50; 9:51-56; 9:57-62; 24:51; Acts 1:9-10; 6:9-14; 8:9-40.¹⁴ At times Luke stays close to the length of the LXX passages (cf. Luke 7:11-17 and I Kgs 17:17-24) but quite often he compresses the older text, omitting a mass of detail and distilling the essence (e.g. Luke 9:51-56 distills 2 Kgs 1:1-2:6; and Luke 9:57-62 distills I Kings 19). In all cases Luke subjects the LXX text to a process which, among other things, involves modernization, Christianization, and adaptation to the requirements of his own narrative.

(3) Luke 7 and the Women Stories (1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 4)

Within the Elijah-Elisha narrative there are two sets of women stories

which in various ways balance and complement one another. The opening set (1 Kings 17) tells first of a widow who was threatened by death (her own and her children's, 17:7-16), and then of the widow's son actually dying (17:17-24). The later set (2 Kgs 4:1-37) tells first of a widow who, along with her children, faced another threat (4:1-7), and then of a woman whose son was born and died (4:8-37). Despite the many differences between them, the two sets of stories are inherently connected.¹⁵

What is important in the present investigation is that both these sets of stories have been used, at least partly, in the women-related stories of Luke 7 - in the raising of the widow's son (7:11-17; cf. 1 Kgs 17:17-24) and in the account of the woman who was forgiven (7:36-50; cf. 2 Kgs 4:1-37).

The present article seeks to complete the picture - to show that the one part which has yet to be accounted for, the opening story of the widow who was threatened by death (1 Kgs 17:1-16), has in fact also been used in Luke 7, namely in the opening story of the centurion's servant (Luke 7:1-10). The relationship between the texts is outlined on the following facing pages 58 and 59.

Luke's internalization of the story of the widow and her child is not a unique phenomenon. Essentially the same process is found in his reworking of the later mother-and-child story (1 Kgs 4:8-37): in place of the account of a woman who gives birth to physical life (to a child), Luke tells of a woman who found a new life which was internal, the new life of forgiveness and faith (Luke 7:36-50).¹⁶ Thus the internalizing of mother-and-child stories is found twice in Luke 7, at its beginning and at its conclusion.

To answer the question of whether Luke really did use 1 Kgs 17:7-16 it is now necessary to compare the texts more closely.

B. THE TEXTS

(1) Introductory Analysis

The OT text (1 Kgs 17:1-16) occurs at the very beginning of the Elijah-Elisha narrative and it consists of two scenes - first, a brief account of how God's commanding word controlled all the forces of life and death (controlled the sending of Elijah ["Go'...And he did so"] and controlled even the ravens so that they sustained Elijah's life, 17:1-7); and then a longer description of how God's commanding word not only sustained Elijah but also averted the imminent death of a widow and her children (17:8-16). Of these two scenes, the first, concerning the all-commanding word, is introductory or illustrative;

The Balancing Women-related Stories of 1 Kings 17 and 2 Kings 4:1-37
and Their Relationship to the Opening and Closing Episodes of Luke 7

1 Kings 17

2 Kings 4

17:1-7	17:8-16	17:17-24
God's word: command & compliance (a short scene)	<u>Mother-Child</u> God's command gives life - esp. to the threatened foreign widow and her children	Raising the widow's son

4:1-7	4:8-37
Overcoming indebtedness (a short story)	<u>Mother-Child</u> Finding new life (a longer story)

↓
Luke 7:1-10

↓
7:11-17

↓
7:36-50

Jesus' command gives life to the foreign officer's servant (a story, with a short illustration about command & compliance)	Raising the widow's son
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Overcoming indebtedness and finding new life (a long story, with a short parable about indebtedness)
--

[= Mother-Child story transformed, esp. by internalization]

[= Mother-Child story transformed, esp. by internalization]

The Prophet's Word Commands Life, Wards Off Death (1 Kgs 17:1-16; Lk 7:1-10)

1	Subsidiary scene (1 Kgs 17:1-7): God's word commands all of life, and <u>sends</u> Elijah forth	
2	The word comes to Elijah, and <u>sends</u> him to Sarepta. (17:8-9a)	When he had completed his words... he went to Capernaum. (Luke 7:1)
3	The foreign widow will care for Israel's prophet (17:9b) [She & children, about to die, 17:12]	The foreign officer whose servant is about to die, loves the Jewish people. (7:2,5)
4	Meeting the widow at the gate.(17:10a)	[Meeting a widow at a gate. (7:11-12)]
5	Requests for sustenance:(17:10b-11,13) * Elijah <u>calls</u> the widow for water; * Elijah <u>calls</u> the widow for bread; (pause, v 12) * Elijah asks the widow for cake; - the prophet's word commands many <u>goings, comings, doings</u> .	Requests for life: (7:3-4,6a) * The officer <u>sends</u> the elders. * The elders ask Jesus to go. (pause, v 5) * The officer <u>sends</u> friends.
6	[The widow recalls her sins. 17:18]	The officer's unworthiness. (7:6b-7)
		Subsidiary scene: the word commands life completely - <u>"Go...Come...Do..."</u> (7:8; cf. 7b)
7	Solemn pronouncement [about God]: The Lord's word assures life.(17:14)	Solemn pronouncement [about response to God]: See this faith. (7:9)
8	The prophetic word fulfilled: the food lasts, the widow & children live.(15-16)	Jesus' word fulfilled: they find the servant well. (7:10)

and the emphasis falls on the second, longer, story - concerning the threatened widow and her children.

The NT text (Luke 7:1-10) occurs at the beginning of one of Luke's distinctive chapters (chap. 7) - the chapter which "is thematically so closely related to the [inaugural] Nazareth pericope."¹⁷ Thus it has a certain leading role. And it tells how the word of Jesus turned away the imminent death of the centurion's servant. Contained within the NT account there is a very brief scene which is both subsidiary and illustrative - that of the commanding process within the army (Luke 7:7b,8).

The essence of both accounts is that the Lord's word has complete command over life and death. Even when death is imminent, the commanding word can turn it away.

But Luke has made several adaptations. First, concerning the characters. Unlike the OT, where there is a clear distinction between the Lord and the prophet, Jesus combines roles; in Luke 7 he is both Lord and prophet (7:6,16,29). Luke has thereby Christianized the text; he has allowed the developing Christology of the NT era, including his own Christology, to shape his reworking of the older story.

The character of the foreign widow has also been changed; it has given way to that of the foreign officer. The larger reality which governs this change is not so much that of Christology as the requirements of Luke's own narrative - specifically the pattern of widow-officer complementarity which was begun implicitly in the inaugural speech (cf. the widow and [the commanding officer] Naaman, Luke 4:25-27), and which is developed more clearly in the later figures of Tabitha and Cornelius (Acts 9:36-chap. 10; Tabitha is associated with several widows, and Cornelius was a centurion).¹⁸ Why Luke established this widow-officer pattern is difficult to say - one could debate the historical and theological reasons - but once it was set up it helped to govern other factors, including the way in which the characters in the older scriptures were reinterpreted.

Luke's next adaptation in the characters - from child(ren) to servant (doulos, NT) - is basic to his entire procedure. As already partly indicated, it is one of the primary elements in a larger process of internalization, a process which moves the focus away from externals, from the physical (including physical relationships, even of parent and child) to the internal. The OT relationship is physical, based on parenthood; the NT relationship, however, is based on something more internal, on the fact that, to the centurion, the servant is entimos, "dear," or "highly valued" - a word which in the context, particularly the context of the centurion's love (verb, agapao) for the Jews (7:5), indicates a bond that, in some way at least, is spiritual or internal.

Incidentally, this change - from child(ren) to servant - would seem to be connected with some subsequent confusion in the gospel tradition. In the Hebrew original there is only one child, a son, and in Luke the servant is referred to at one point (7:7) as a boy, pais, meaning either "servant" or "child" - a form which may be read as essentially the same as the Hebrew. Matthew highlights the word pais, using it three times, 8:5,8,13, and he omits doulos altogether. John is clearer still: though he uses pais once, 4:51, he surrounds it with words (paidion, "[small] child," 4:49; huios, "son," 4:46,47,49,53) which indicate unambiguously that the pais is indeed a son.

The process of internalization which is applied to the parent-child relationship is applied also to other aspects of the OT story. Luke has so rewritten the text that one gets a far better sense of what is going on within the various characters.

As well as adapting the characters and employing internalization, Luke has also used other procedures, particularly that of fusion or conflation. One instance of fusion was already noted - the fact that, within Luke 7, Jesus is both Lord and prophet. A further instance is his integrating of the introductory illustrative scene (concerning the all-controlling word, 1 Kgs 17:1-7) into the main story: in Luke's version the illustrative scene alludes to the army (7:7b,8), but, while it has essentially the same illustrative function as the introductory scene in the Elijah story, it has become an inherent part of the larger story.

A similar procedure of fusion is found in Luke's rewriting of the two distinct stories which occur in 2 Kgs 4:1-37 (cf. Luke 7:36-50): he fuses the two accounts into one, radically synthesizing the first, introductory, narrative so that it falls within the larger pattern of the second. (The initial story concerning indebtedness, 2 Kgs 4:1-7, has been absorbed into the larger story concerning finding new life, Luke 7:36-50; cf. 2 Kgs 4:8-37. The introductory story forms a basis for the parable concerning indebtedness, Luke 7:41-43).¹⁹

The fact that Luke's illustrative scene is drawn from the army (rather than the sending of Elijah and the ravens, etc.) may be explained in part by the requirements of his narrative - by the inclusion, at the beginning of his account, of an army officer. More on this later.

A further aspect of Luke's procedure is his striving for vivid communication. This encompasses a number of techniques, including the effort to compose a text which is concise, clear and explicit. He pursues this aim of vividness elsewhere - for example, in rewriting the account of the raising of the widow's son (7:11-17; cf. 1 Kgs 17:17-24)²⁰ - and essentially the same procedure may be found for instance in the historical writings of Livy.²¹

(2) Detailed analysis

The accompanying outline of the texts (on the facing pages) sometimes simplifies the relationship between the texts, and it does so particularly in section 5, but it provides an initial guide. The following analysis looks at the texts more closely, taking them section by section.

Generally Luke stays close to the order and content of the main OT story (17:1-6), but two small sections have been criss-crossed with the following stories: the meeting with the widow at the gate (1 Kgs 17:10a) has been used in the NT story of raising the widow's son (at Nain, Luke 7:11-12); and part of the OT story about raising the widow's son - the reference to the widow's sinfulness (1 Kgs 17:18) - has been used in describing the centurion (his unworthiness, 7:6b-7).

1. The commanding word: The Lord's word commands life completely (two subsidiary, illustrative, scenes, 1 Kgs 17:1-7; Luke 7:8; cf. Luke 7:7b)

While the larger texts (1 Kings 17:1-16; Luke 7:1-10) are primarily concerned with the encounter between the prophet and the foreigner who is threatened by death, both contain a subsidiary scene which is quite distinct - one about an obedience which involves even the ravens (at God's command the ravens feed Elijah), and the other about the obedience which operates in the army (Luke 7:8). The essential point of both these distinctive scenes is to illustrate, graphically, the idea of obedience, but - as indicated earlier - while Luke maintains the central idea of the older text he adapts it to the requirements of his own narrative, in this case the requirements posed by the figure of an army officer. Thus the scene with the ravens gives way to an army scene.

But there is a further reason why the image of the army is so suitable. As the research of Jerome T. Walsh has indicated, one of the pervasive structures of the OT text (1 Kgs 17:1-16) is that of "command and compliance,"²² and within day-to-day human experience one could scarcely find a better illustration of the dynamic of command and compliance than in the picture of a master/centurion giving orders. Three times (in vv 2-6; 9-10a; and 13-16) the OT passage uses a "structure wherein a command or the like is given with a description of its execution following in similar words."²³ And, in compact form, that is exactly what one finds in Luke. Three times there is an account of a command, and each time the execution repeats the essential word of the command: "Go,' and he goes....'Come,' and he comes....'Do this' and he does it." In other words, Luke has taken the essence of the opening, illustrative, episode - its command-compliance element - and, while synthesizing it with subsequent instances of command and compliance, has

integrated it into the flow of his narrative.

In formulating this brief scene, Luke has maintained several verbal echoes of the older text, both of the opening scene with the ravens and also of the larger OT picture of various goings, and comings and doings:

OT: vv 3,5 πορεύου...καὶ ἐποίησεν
 8,10 πορεύου ...καὶ ἐπορεύθη
 13 εἰσελθε καὶ ποιήσον κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου,
 ἀλλὰ ποιήσον ἑμὲ
 15 καὶ ἐπορεύθη...καὶ ἐποίησεν

NT: 7b ...σὲ ἐλθεῖν, ἀλλὰ εἰπὲ λόγῳ
 8 πορεύθητι καὶ πορεύεται
 ἔρχου καὶ ἔρχεται
 ποιήσον... καὶ ποιεῖ

OT: vv 3,5 Go...And he did
 8,10 ...go...and he went
 13 ...go in and do according to your word, but do/make me
 15 And [she]...went and she did

NT: 7b ...should come/go to me; but say the word
 8 Go and he goes...
 Come and he comes...
 Do this and he does it

Some of the similarities suggest an element of word-play,²⁴ but the essence of the similarity indicates a straightforward process of vividly summarizing and adapting.

2. From the word(s) to the foreign/border city (2 Kgs 17:8-9a; Luke 7:1)

In both texts the main stories begin by speaking of the word(s), rema(ta), and of a move to a town which is in some way foreign - the foreign city of Sarepta, and the border town of Capernaum. In the OT the word of the Lord is the cause of Elijah's going, whereas with Jesus the speaking of the words appears to be more the occasion of his going. (Since Jesus is himself the Lord, his relationship to the word is necessarily different from that of Elijah. The words are described as "his words").

The fact that Jesus' words are set "in the hearing of the people" accords both with the preceding context and with Luke's general strategy of emphasizing the relationship of Jesus' episodes to larger audiences (see, for

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instance, the references to crowds in 7:9.11).

3. The threatened foreigner (widow/officer) who cares for Israel (for Israel's prophet, 1 Kgs 17:9b,12; for the Jewish people, Luke 7:2,5)

As already indicated in the introductory analysis, the replacement of a foreign widow by a foreign officer brings Luke 7:1-17 into line with Luke's

broader pattern of widow-officer complementarity (cf. Luke 4:25-27; Acts 9:36-chap 10).

The OT image of nourishing the Israelite prophet gives way to that of loving the Jewish nation and building a synagogue - an adaptation which in its explicitness ("loving") and vividness (building a synagogue) corresponds to the way Luke adapts other texts. The emphasis on loving (*agapao*), insofar as it spells out what is happening within the centurion, also adds an important element of internalization.

Even though the centurion is not himself threatened by death (as is the widow), neither is he free from the death threat. What Luke has done is shift the focus somewhat from the physical death which threatens the child(ren)/servant to the inner impact which the situation is having on the centurion. He may not be in danger himself, and the threatened person may not be his child, yet to him that person is dear, valued highly, and therefore he is effected, but interiorly.

4. Meeting the widow at the gate (1 Kgs 17:10a; Luke 11-12)

Luke has adapted the meeting to suit the situation of the widow at Nain, and to include the presence of many onlookers, yet he has stayed close to the OT text:

καὶ...ἔπορευθη εἰς Σάρεπτα

εἰς τὸν πυλῶνα τῆς πόλεως

καὶ ἶδου ἐκεῖ γυνὴ χήρα

Καὶ...ἔπορευθη εἰς

πόλιν καλουμένην Ναϊν

ὡς δὲ ἤγγισεν τῇ πύλῃ

τῆς πόλεως

καὶ ἶδου...υἱὸς...καὶ

αὐτῆ ἦν χήρα

And...he went to Sarepta,
to a gate of the city,
and behold there a widow woman

And...he went to a city called Nain...
As he neared the gate of the city,

behold...the son...and she was a widow

5. Sending people to bring sustenance/life (1 Kgs 17:10b-11,13; Luke 7:3-4,6a; cf 1 Kgs 17:2,9)

Three times Elijah asks the widow for sustenance, twice in a rather

commanding way (he shouts after her, 17:10b-11), and once in an insistent plea (17:13). And three times Luke portrays a process of asking for life, twice by sending people (the centurion first sends elders and then friends, 7:3,6a), and once by pleading strongly (the elders press Jesus to go, 7:4).

Luke's rewriting involves several changes, among them expressing the sending in a form that is explicit, and placing the sendings so that they balance one another (in first and third place, rather than first and second as in the OT). (A similar balance between first and third occurs, for instance, in Luke 9:57-62 - between "I will follow you..." in 9:57 and 9:61).

In depicting a double sending, Luke apparently depends not only on Elijah's double cry or call to the woman (17:10,11) but also on God's double sending of Elijah ("Go from here...Go to...", 17:3,8). Thus he has fused together, in explicit form, elements which in the OT are scattered and less clear:

1 Kings 17: "Go from here...[to receive the sustenance of life]."

"Go to...[receive the sustenance of life]."

"He called to her ...[for the sustenance of life]."

"He called to her [again...for the sustenance of life]."

Luke 7: "He sent elders...[to request the saving of life]."

"He sent friends...[to adapt the request for life]."

Luke's procedure here appears somewhat like that which he employs when reworking the actions of the woman of Shunem (2 Kgs 4:8-37): the varied actions of the woman and her child are synthesized into into a more compact action by the sinful woman (Luke 7:38).²⁵ The present case is not as strong linguistically, but it seems to accord with Luke's practice.

Unlike the Elijah story, where the various implicit sendings originate either with God or the prophet, Luke shows the sendings as coming from the centurion - a move which, like so many others, places a greater focus on what is happening within ordinary people, particularly within the centurion. Unlike the encounter between Elijah and the widow, where it is extremely difficult to sense the inner and interpersonal dynamics, Luke's interactions are more explicit: the centurion has a high regard for the Jews, for the elders, and for Jesus and the servant; the elders have a high regard for the centurion and they trust Jesus; and the centurion sends "friends" - a word which highlights a world of the inner and interpersonal.

6. The foreigner recalls sinfulness (1 Kgs 17:18; Luke 7:6b-7)

When (in the subsequent story) the widow addresses the prophet who has come to her, she speaks of her sinfulness. And as Jesus is coming to the centurion, he speaks of his unworthiness:

καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς Ἠλαιοῦ
Τί ἐμὸ καὶ σοί,
ὁ ἄνθρωπος τοῦ θεοῦ;
εἰσηλθεὶς πρὸς μὲ
τοῦ ἀναμνησαί ἀδικίας μου

καὶ θανατώσαι τὸν υἱὸν μου;

...λέγων αὐτῷ
Κύριε,
μὴ σκύλλου,
οὐ γὰρ ἱκανός εἰμι
ἵνα ὑπὸ τὴν στέγην μου
εἰσέλθῃς,
...καὶ ἰαθῆτω ὁ παῖς μου.

She said to Elijah,
What have you with me,
man of God?
Have you come in to me
to recall my sins
and to kill my son?

...saying to him,
Lord,
do not trouble yourself;
for I am not worthy
that you come in under my roof;
...and my boy shall be healed.

Luke's rewriting involves several adaptations. The obscure "What have you with me?" (Τι ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί;) has been replaced by something simpler. "Man of God" has given way to a title which intensifies the idea of the connection with God. The reference to the roof adds a touch of vividness. And in place of the OT references to sin and death, Luke gives a rendering which, as so often in his gospel, lays the emphasis on the positive.

7. The solemn pronouncements - about the Lord's life-giving word (1 Kgs 17:14), and about the response of faith to that word (Luke 7:9)

Elijah pronounces the word of the Lord - a promise to give the sustenance of life. Jesus also makes a pronouncement - about the faith of the centurion in the granting of life. Apparently what Luke has done, rather than reproduce the promise, is to show the other side of the coin, the response of faith. Thus once again (as in the case of the sending) he has shifted the emphasis from the action of God to the corresponding reality within the centurion. It is part of his larger strategy of developing the older text, and particularly of portraying what is happening within people - in this case the working of a faith which is extraordinary.

8. The word is fulfilled, thus bringing continued life (1 Kgs 17:15-16: Luke 7:10)

In the OT the sustenance of life is maintained - thus enabling the widow and her children to eat and presumably to stay alive. And in Luke those who return to the house find that the servant is healthy. Despite its brevity, Luke's text manages, as often, to be more vivid (the house) and explicit (healthy).

Conclusion

In the preceding analysis some of the links between the texts are obvious and strong; others are weak and more debatable. When assessing such evidence it is important not to insist on what is weak. Insistence on what is weak, whether by the person presenting the evidence or by someone who is questioning it, obscures the main issue: Is there evidence which is strong, strong enough to indicate that Luke has reworked 1 Kgs 17:1-16?

It appears that there is. The following factors are particularly important.

(1) The broad context of Jewish and Hellenistic rewriting. To say that Luke's text is dependent on a text which is older is not to claim something unique. Rather it is to place Luke within the literary world of his day, a world in which the interconnectedness of texts was a commonplace.

(2) The immediate context of Luke's use of the LXX. Luke's kinship with the LXX is not a matter of dispute. It was his Scripture, and in seeking to understand and portray how Jesus fulfilled that Scripture, Luke drew on it deeply.

(3) Luke's unique affinity with the Elijah-Elisha narrative, especially in chap. 7. Luke's affinity with the Elijah-Elisha narrative is such - in the inaugural Nazareth speech, in the overall plan of Luke-Acts, and in the detailed similarities of several passages, especially in chap. 7 - that there is nothing surprising in the basic idea that Luke 7:1-10 reworks 1 Kgs 17:1-16. (The likelihood of a connection between these specific texts is heightened by the fact that, in varying degrees, both are leading texts. Luke 7:1-10 inaugurates a leading Lukan block, and 1 Kgs 17:1-16 inaugurates the Elijah-Elisha narrative).

(4) The persistence of similarities. In every section and at diverse levels - theme, order, details - there are persistent similarities, similarities which go well beyond the range of coincidence.

(5) The understandability of the differences. The differences are such, that even though they are great, they are not a confused jumble. Rather, they show a certain coherence, and as such they can be understood within the context of imitative rewriting, particularly within the context of some of Luke's most basic processes of adapting other texts - modernization, Christianization, clarification (including vividness and explicitness), fusion, adaptation to the broader requirements of his own narrative, and, above all, internalization.

In a sense the conclusion is simple: Luke, an acknowledged littérateur, employed a literary method.

It is tempting now to return immediately to the question of the relationship of Luke's text (7:1-10) to the similar accounts in Matthew (8:5-13) and John (4:43-54) and to ask whether, if Luke really is based on 1 Kings, one

can explain satisfactorily the relationships between the three gospel narratives. This task must indeed be faced - but not yet. If undertaken now such an investigation would become lost in a larger unresolved discussion about gospel relationships in general. It is better for the moment to continue the slow process of unravelling Luke's relationship to the OT, for the more that is known about that, the better will be the foundation for eventually discussing Luke's relationship to the other gospels.

What can be concluded, however, is that it is no longer possible, without further ado, to attribute Luke 7:1-10 to Q. It is not reasonable to invoke an unknown document and at the same time to bypass a source which, on the basis of multiple evidence, was known to Luke and was imitated by him.

Notes

- 1 See, for instance, H. Schürmann, Das Lukasevangelium, 1:1-9:50 (HTKNT III, I; Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1969) 396; I. H. Marshall, The Gospel of Luke (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 277-278; J. A. Fitzmyer, The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, AB 28, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981, 648-649; U. Wegner, Der Hauptmann von Kafarnaum (Mt 7,28a; 8,5-10.13 par Lk 7,1-10): Ein Beitrag zur Q-Forschung. Dissertation, Tübingen, Evangelisch-theologische Fakultät, 1982/83; J. S. Kloppenborg, The Formation of Q. Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections (Studies in Antiquity & Christianity; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 117-121; F. Bovon, Das Evangelium nach Lukas (1:1-9:50) (EKKNT III/I: Zürich: Benziger - Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1989) 346-347.
- 2 The LXX uses the plural "children." The Septuagint text used in this article is that of the critical Cambridge edition (1930).
- 3 See, for instance, M. Hengel, Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980) 30-32; W. S. Kurz, "Luke-Acts and Historiography in the Greek Bible," SBL Seminar Papers, 1980 (ed. P. J. Achtemeier; Chico: Scholars, 1980) 283-300; E. Haenchen, The Acts of the Apostles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971) 72-77; Fitzmyer, Luke, 113-118.
- 4 In analyzing certain Jewish writings G. Vermes (Scripture and Tradition in Judaism [Leiden: Brill, 1961] 76-126) has spoken of "the rewritten Bible." D. Harrington ("Palestinian Adaptations of Biblical narratives and Prophecies. 1. The Bible Rewritten [Narratives]," Early

Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters [eds. R. A. Kraft & G. W. E. Nickelsburg; Atlanta: Scholars, 1986, 242-243, 247]) while allowing the phrase "rewritten Bible", emphasizes the need to respect the individuality of each process of rewriting. And M. Fishbane (Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel [New York: Oxford, 1985] has begun to uncover the fact that the biblical writers themselves, in reworking earlier biblical texts, employed a "vast store of hermeneutical techniques" (ibid, 14).

- 5 For a survey of the relevant classical texts, see T. M. Greene, The Light in Troy. Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry (Yale University: New Haven - London, 1982) 54-80. For a general introduction to imitation, see T. L. Brodie, "Greco-Roman Imitation of Texts as a Partial Guide to Luke's Use of Sources," Luke-Acts. New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature (ed. C. H. Talbert; Crossroad: New York, 1984) 17-46.
- 6 E. Plümacher, Lukas als hellenistischer Schriftsteller (SUNT 9; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971) 38-72, esp. 63-64; F. L. Horton, "Reflections on the Semitisms of Luke-Acts," Perspectives on Luke-Acts (ed. C. H. Talbert; Danville, VA: Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, 1978) 1-23, esp. 17-18.
- 7 In order to save space it has seemed better, when discussing imitation and internalization, not to reproduce material which is readily available elsewhere. For examples of the process of internalization and for further details about it, see G. Gusdorf, Les Sciences Humaines et la Pensée Occidentale, II: Les Origines des Sciences Humaines (Paris: Payot, 1967) 24-33; E. A. Havelock, The Greek Concept of Justice. From Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1978) esp. 137, 307; T. L. Brodie, "Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization of 2 Kings 4,1-37: A Study in Luke's Use of Rhetorical Imitation" Bib 64 (1983) 457-485, esp. 463-464.
- 8 The death of Elisha is recounted in 2 Kings 13, but the main body of the Elijah-Elisha narrative consists of 1 Kings 17 - 2 Kings 8:15, a text of almost fourteen chapters.
- 9 See esp. G. Hartmann, Der Aufbau des Markusevangeliums, NTAbh 17, #2-3, Münster: Aschendorff, 1936; M.-E. Boismard, "Elie dans le Nouveau Testament," Elie le prophète, I: Selon les Ecritures et les traditions chrétiennes (Etudes Carmélitaines; Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1956) 116-128; B. Lindars, "Elijah, Elisha and the Gospel Miracles," Miracles (ed. C. F. D. Moule; London: Bowbray, and New York: Morehouse-Barlow, 1965) 63-79; J. D. Dubois, "La Figure

d'Elie dans la Perspective Lucanienne," RHPR 53 (1973) 155-176. In recent years the idea of a fundamental link between Mark and the Elijah-Elisha narrative has received fresh impetus from W. Roth's, Hebrew Gospel. Cracking the Code of Mark, Chicago: Meyer-Stone, 1988.

10 R. E. Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," Perspective 12 (1971) 95-104, esp. 98.

11 Ibid., 99.

12 Fitzmyer, Luke, 529.

13 For further details on this affinity, see T. L. Brodie "Luke-Acts As an Imitation and Emulation of the Elijah-Elisha Narrative," New Views on Luke and Acts (ed. E. Richard; Glazier Books; Colleagueville: Liturgical, 1990) 78-85, esp. 82-84.

14 See, by T. L. Brodie, "Towards Unravelling Luke's Use of the Old Testament: Luke 7.11-17 as an Imitatio of I Kings 17:17-24," NTS 32 (1986) 247-267; "Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization of 2 Kings 4,1-37: A Study in Luke's Use of Rhetorical Imitation," Bib 64 (1983) 457-485; "The Departure for Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-56) as a Rhetorical Imitation of Elijah's Departure for the Jordan (2 Kgs 1,1-2,6)," Bib 70 (1989) 96-109; "Luke 9:57-62: A Systematic Adaptation of the Divine Challenge to Elijah (1 Kings 19)," SBL Seminar Papers 1989 (ed. D. J. Lull; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989) 237-245; "Luke-Acts [esp. Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9-10] as an Imitation and Emulation of the Elijah-Elisha Narrative," New Views on Luke and Acts (ed. E. Richard; Colleagueville: Liturgical, 1990) 78-85; "The Accusing and Stoning of Naboth (1 Kgs 21:8-13) as One Component of the Stephen Text (Acts 6:9-14; 7:58a)," CBQ 45 (1983) 417-432; "Towards Unraveling the Rhetorical Imitation of Sources in Acts: 2 Kgs 5 as One Component of Acts 8,9-40," Bib 67 (1986) 41-67.

15 Explanations for the connection vary. R. Kilian, "Die Totenerweckungen Elias und Elisab - eine Motivwanderung," BZ 10 (1966) 44-56, invokes a complex interacting of traditions. P. Ellis, on the other hand, notes that some authors attribute the connection to some form of literary dependence ("1-2 Kings," JBC 10:40).

16 Brodie, "Luke 7:36-50 as an Internalization of 2 Kings 4,1-37."

17 L. T. Johnson, The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts (SBLDS 39; Scholars: Missoula, Montana, 1977) 96.

18 In fact, as indicated by Asher Finkel (in conversation, Nov 19, 1990, in New Orleans), there is a sense in which Luke's entire gospel is framed by references to widows/women and soldiers - Anna and "some soldiers" near the beginning (in 2:36; 3:14), and, near the end,

the women of Jeusalem and the centurion (23:27-29,47).

- 19 Brodie, "Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization," 470-474.
20 Brodie, "Luke 7.11-17 as an Imitatio," 258, 261.
21 See P. G. Walsh, Livy. His Historical Aims and Methods
(Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1961) 190.
22 Walsh, The Elijah Cycle: A Synchronic Approach (Diss., Univ. of
Michigan, 1982) 22. As Walsh indicates, the command structure had
already been noticed by earlier scholars (Bottini and Baumgartner).
Where he speaks of "command and compliance" they had spoken of
"comando-esecuzione" and "Auftrag und Ausführung."
23 Ibid., 8, 21.
24 Word-play was quite common in the OT - a fact which was hardly
lost on Luke. Fitzmyer (Luke, 828) sees Luke 9:51 as involving a
takeoff or word-play on a Hebrew expression, and there are other
instances in which Luke appears to play with the wording of the
LXX (e.g., see Brodie, "Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization," 473;
"Acts 8:9-40," 61).
25 Brodie, "Luke 7:36-50 as an Internalization," 477.

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