



NORWEGIAN
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An Interpretation of the “Paulinisms” in Acts 13:38-39, with a Particular Emphasis on the Concept of Law and Justification.

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1. Introduction: Proposal and Method

1.1 The Problem

In this thesis I will try to answer two questions connected to each other:

- What does Luke mean by the concepts “the law” and “justification” in Acts 13, in light of his use of these concepts in Luke-Acts?
- Is Luke’s reproduction of these concepts coherent with Paul’s understanding of these concepts?

My focus in this thesis is going to be Acts 13:38-39, with some comparative elements with the Pauline letters. Acts 13:38-39 are part of Paul’s speech in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch and they are the verses in Acts that I found most recall the vocabulary Paul uses in his own letters when he is writing about justification. It is the only place where the word δικαίωω, to justify (alt. freed), appears in Acts (it appears two times in these verses). In addition δικαίωω is also connected here to the words νόμος (the law) and πιστεύω (to believe), which are also important Pauline concepts. This Pauline language may be called “Paulinisms.”¹ Even if these “Paulinisms” are similar to Paul’s own letters, the way they are used is a bit different from the Pauline letters.²

Because of the similarities and differences regarding these concepts it is interesting to compare Acts 13:38-39 with the Pauline letters and examine whether Luke’s³ meaning of these concepts seem to contradict or be compatible with the Pauline letters. This may say something about these verses’ relationship to the historical Paul.

It would have been too extensive a task to go into the debate regarding the interpretation of the law and justification in the Pauline letters, where especially representatives of the New Perspective on Paul have made important contributions. Therefore this thesis will focus on Luke’s understanding of these concepts in Acts 13:38-39, and will compare it with the language found in the undisputed Pauline letters.⁴

¹ For my use of this word, see chapter 2.2.2.1.

² See Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary: Volume 2: 3:1-14:28* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 2074-2077.

³ I use “Luke” as the name of the author without asserting that Luke, the physician that is found in Phlm 24, Col 4:14 and 2 Tim 2:14, necessary is the author.

⁴ With undisputed letters I mean following seven letters: Rom, 1 Cor, 2 Cor, Gal, Phil, 1 Thess and Phlm. Cf.

1.2. Structure of the Thesis

In chapter 2, I am going to *describe* the scholarly debate regarding Paul in Acts versus Paul in his own letters. First, I am going to present the general debate and describe some of the main arguments. Because this is a comprehensive debate there is not room here to cover all arguments and views or go deeply into them. Instead I will give an overview of *some* issues in the debate by presenting the scholars in two groups; those who are more sceptical for using Acts as a source to the historical Paul and those who are more positive. This will be a generalization, which may cost the presentation some nuances, but hopefully it will make the different tendencies in the debate more clear.

After the more general debate I will focus on Paul's speeches in Acts. I will start with a very short presentation regarding the question of genre. Then I am going to describe some of the elements in the debate regarding the relation between the language and content of Paul's speeches and the Pauline letters. I will use the Miletus speech (Acts 20:18-35) as a case study to illustrate the debate.

In chapter 3, I am going to make an exegesis of Acts 13:38-39. First I will present the literary context of the speech to place it in a large story, because Luke may use the speech in a narrative argument. Then I will look at the addressees of the speech and these verses. This is an important question, because the conclusions may have relevance for how one should understand Luke's view of the law and justification in regard to different groups (primary Gentiles versus Jews). After that I will look at the place and function of Acts 13:38-39 in the speech as a whole. This may be important to see how the speech's other parts may contribute to understand Acts 13:38-39.

I will then make an interpretation of verses 38-39. The primary approach of the exegeses is going to be semantic. I will focus on how the words, expressions and concepts are used in their Lukan context, both the immediate and larger context of Luke-Acts. I will on that basis interpret how Acts 13:38-39 may be understood. Special focus and space will be given to the concepts of νόμος and δικαίω.

James D. G. Dunn and John W. Rogerson, *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1274.

In chapter 4 I am going to consider the relationship between Acts 13:38-39 and the undisputed Pauline letters by discussing the views and arguments of three prominent scholars: Philipp Vielhauer, Richard Pervo and Ben Witherington III. They all represent different views and nuances in the discussion. Vielhauer has had a large impact on the discussion, while Pervo and Witherington are more recent scholars. Pervo represents a rather sceptical view of the historicity of Acts and Witherington a more positive view. On the basis of the debate regarding the relationship between Paul in Acts in chapter 2, and the exegesis of Acts 13:38-39 in chapter 3, I will discuss and evaluate the views of these scholars and present my conclusions.

In the last chapter I am going to conclude and make a summary of the most important findings in this thesis.

2. A Perennial Debate: Paul in Acts Versus Paul in His Letters. Pauline Language in the Speeches of Acts with Acts 20 as a Case Study

There has been an endless and very longstanding debate among scholars regarding the extent Acts is reliable as a source on the historical Paul. Especially the historical reliability of the speeches attributed to Paul is questioned, including the speech in Acts 13. In this chapter I am going to set forth some of the main issues in the debate regarding the relation between Paul in Acts and Paul in his own letters and regarding Acts as a source on the historical Paul. In the first part I will describe the general debate, and in the second I will focus on Paul's speeches.

2.1 General Issues Regarding the Reliability of Acts Versus the Pauline Letters as Historical Sources on Paul

Here, I will describe the discussion of the relationship between Paul in Acts and the historical Paul. I will do that by giving an overview of the debate where I will divide the scholars into two groups; those who are more sceptical of using Acts as a source to the historical Paul and those who are more positive. This is of course a simplification and this approach will not give the whole picture of the debate or all its nuances. Within both of these groups the views and arguments differ. But in this paper there is not space to cover all views, aspects and arguments and I think this approach will give an overview of the debate. I will refer to a few different representatives of these two views, well aware that I also could have used others.

2.1.1 The Source Sceptical Position

In the 19th century F. C. Baur questioned Acts as an early historical document and in extension of that he expressed scepticism regarding Acts as a source to the historical Paul. Bauer thought the differences compared with Paul's own letters were so significant that only one of the writings could describe the historical truth.⁵ In the German biblical

⁵ E.g. F. C. Baur, *Paulus, der Apostel Jesu Christi: Sein Leben und Wirken, seine Briefe und seine Lehre* (Stuttgart, 1845). Later translated into English: *Paul: His Life and Works* (trans. A. Menzies; 2 vols.; London: Williams & Norgate, 1875).

scholarship this scepticism was mainly maintained.⁶ In 1952 Phillip Vielhauer published the article "Zum 'Paulinismus' der Apostelgeschichte,"⁷ and in 1971 Ernst Haenchen *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*.⁸ These works had a major impact on the following scholarly debate regarding the relationship between Paul in Acts and Paul in his own letters.⁹ Examples of newer representatives for a more source sceptical view of Acts are Richard Pervo and Todd Penner.¹⁰

2.1.1.1 Differences Between Acts and the Pauline Letters and Other Historical Sources

The more source sceptical school has been sceptical regarding Acts' portrayal of Paul. They often emphasize differences between Acts and the Pauline letters, as well as with other ancient sources. These differences are understood to be so extensive that they couldn't just be explained by such factors as time and circumstances.¹¹ Paul in his uncontested letters is viewed as the "real" Paul, while Paul in Acts is considered to be of less historical value.¹²

Scholars have also found historical matters in Acts that seems to be inconsistent with what we know about this time from non-Biblical sources. One example is Acts 23:31 where Paul was brought from Jerusalem to Antipatris overnight, but this distance is considerably longer than a day's journey normally was.¹³ There are also historical matters in Acts that do not seem to be compatible with the Pauline letters. One example is Paul's visits to Jerusalem in Acts, which may not seem to match Paul's own

⁶ Stanley E. Porter, *The Paul of Acts* (WUNT 115; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 187-188.

⁷ Philipp Vielhauer, "Zum 'Paulinismus' der Apostelgeschichte," *EcTh* 10 (1950-1951), 1-15. Later translated into English: Philipp Vielhauer, "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts," in *Studies in Luke-Acts* (ed. L. E. Keck and J. L. Martyn; Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), 33-50.

⁸ Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (trans. B. Noble and G. Shinn; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971).

⁹ Other works with similar views concerning the relationship between Paul's letters and Acts e.g. Hans Conzelmann, *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. (trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, and Donald H. Juel; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987); Martin Dibelius, *Studies in Acts of the Apostles* (London: SCM Press, 1956).

¹⁰ Richard I. Pervo, *The Mystery of Acts: Unraveling its story* (Santa Rosa: Calif.: Polebridge Press, 2008); Todd Penner, "Madness in the Method? the Acts of the Apostles in Current Study," *CBR* 2 (2, 2004): 223-293.

¹¹ Pervo, *Mystery*, 31.

¹² Pervo, *Mystery*, 31. See also Erwin R. Goodenough, "The Perspective of Acts," in *Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays Presented in Honor of Paul Schubert*, Buckingham Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale University (ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn; Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), 51-59.

¹³ Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on The Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Crossroad, 1997), 240.

descriptions in Gal 1-2.¹⁴ These differences have been used as arguments *against* the historicity of Acts.

Also the portrayal of Paul in Acts has been regarded as different from the information in the letters. To mention some examples:

- Paul is understood as a great miracle worker in Acts (13:6-12; 14:8-10, 19-20; 20:7-12; 28:3-6), while this feature is not so prominent in Paul's own letters.¹⁵ Rather, in his letters it seems like suffering and experience of the help of Christ in these sufferings is more essential (2 Cor 12:10).¹⁶
- Paul is described as an outstanding orator in Acts (17:22-31; 21:40; 22:1-2; 24:1ff, 10ff) while Paul describes himself as an unimpressive speaker in his letters (2 Cor 10:10).¹⁷
- In his letters Paul demands to be recognized as an Apostle in highest sense (Gal 2:8, see also 1 Cor 15:5-8). In Acts, however, only the Twelve are deemed Apostles in a special way because they were called by Jesus and had lived with him. Paul is not included among them (Acts 1:21-22; 10:41; 13:31).¹⁸
- Paul seems to have a much more positive attitude towards the law and Judaism in Acts than in his letters: Paul in Acts is a Jewish believer who is very loyal to the law. E.g. he submitted to the authorities in Jerusalem (which are considered to not be as sceptical toward the law as Paul),¹⁹ he circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3),²⁰ he spread the apostolic decree (16:4), he travelled to Jerusalem for Jewish festivals (18:21, 20:16), he participated in different Jewish vows (18:18; 21:18-28) and he stressed that he was a Pharisee during his trial (23:6; 26:5).²¹ The Pauline letters, however, are understood to give a much more sceptical attitude towards Judaism and the law (e.g. 2 Cor 3:4-18 and Gal 5:1-12).²²

¹⁴ Pervo, *Mystery*, 123-125. There is not space here to go into this issue here. For this discussion see e.g. Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 86-97.

¹⁵ Haenchen, *Acts*, 113-114; Pervo, *Mystery*, 32.

¹⁶ Haenchen, *Acts*, 113-114.

¹⁷ Haenchen, *Acts*, 114.

¹⁸ Haenchen, *Acts*, 114-115. See also Pervo, *Mystery*, 31, 148.

¹⁹ Pervo, *Mystery*, 32; Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 37-38.

²⁰ Haenchen, *Acts*, 480-482; Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 40-41.

²¹ Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 37-38.

²² Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 40-41.

It has also been claimed that theological views attributed to Paul in Acts may be different from the theology in the Pauline letters. According to Vielhauer the natural theology, Christology, view of the law and eschatology of Paul in Acts are different from the Pauline letters. E.g. Paul in Acts seems to have a more positive natural theology than in the Pauline letters (Acts 17:22-31; Rom 1:19-20) and he interprets the Christology in Acts as “adoptionistic” (Acts 13:33), while it is interpreted metaphysically in Paul’s letters.²³ Pervo has also pointed out several differences between Acts and the Pauline letters regarding theology. E.g. Paul in Acts has a “theology of glory” while Paul in his letters has a “theology of the cross.”²⁴ Paul in Acts emphasizes continuity, while Paul in his undisputed letters discontinuity; in the letters it seems to be a more clear rupture between old and new than in Luke-Acts.²⁵

I have now showed some examples of things that scholars with a more source sceptical position claim are different between Acts and the Pauline letters. These scholars think the differences between Acts and the Pauline letters (as well as other different sources) exceed what one would expect just because of different circumstances and time.²⁶ Their conclusion is that Acts gives a picture of Paul that is different from the historical Paul. Its portrayal is created by later generations and not by someone who had met Paul or was a fellow-worker to him and Paul is not portrayed in a way that would have been familiar for people in his own days.²⁷

2.1.2 The Source Positive Position

But the source sceptical position has been opposed and challenged by scholars such as William Ramsay, F. F. Bruce, I. H. Marshall, Jacob Jervell, Colin Hemer and Ben Witherington III.²⁸ They find Acts and Paul’s letters to be much more coherent and they

²³ Vielhauer, “Paulinism,” 33-49

²⁴ Pervo, *Mystery*, 33. Even if it is true that the resurrection is emphasized many places in Acts (e.g. Acts 13:30-37), it does not mean that the cross is not important for Luke (e.g. Acts 20:28).

²⁵ Pervo, *Mystery*, 33-34.

²⁶ Pervo, *Mystery*, 31.

²⁷ Haenchen, *Acts*, 116.

²⁸ E.g. William M. Ramsay, *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1915); F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990); I. Howard Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles* (TNTC 5; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); Jacob Jervell, “Paul in the Acts of the Apostles: Tradition, History and Theology,” in *Les Actes des Apôtres: Traditions, rédaction, théologie* (ed. Jacob Kremer; BETL 48; Gembloux, Belg.: J. Duculot; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979) 297-305; Jervell, *The Theology of the Acts of the Apostles* (NTT; Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Colin J. Hemer,

argue for Acts being a more reliable historical source than the scholars in the more source sceptical position think. Among these scholars there are a variety of opinions regarding to what degree they find Acts as a reliable source to the historical Paul, but common for all of them is that they find Acts as a significant source for giving information about the historical Paul. In addition to finding the differences from the more source negative position to be less significant/not incompatible, they argue from similarities between Acts and the Pauline letters (and knowledge from other historical sources).

2.1.2.1 Response to Claim of Differences Between Acts and the Pauline Letters

Several of the differences mentioned by the scholars from the more source sceptical position have been questioned. In regard to the portrayal of Paul they have for example given following responds:

- Regarding Paul as a miracle worker, it has been pointed out that the number of miracles in Acts is not so large relative to Paul's significance in Acts and compared to Jesus in the gospel of Luke.²⁹ Others claim instead that one would not expect the miracles to occur much more frequently than other aspects of Paul's evangelistic ministry in his letters. Instead, miracles are more expected to occur in a narrative.³⁰ When the miracles do occur in the letters (e.g. Rom 15:19 2 Cor 12:12), they seem to be quite important.³¹
- Regarding Paul as an outstanding orator, it has been shown that Paul uses ancient rhetoric in his letters, which shows that Paul was a good orator.³²
- Regarding Paul as not described as an Apostle like the Twelve,³³ it has been argued that Paul emphasized his Apostleship when his authority was questioned or challenged, like in Galatia and Corinth, or places that he hadn't been, like in Romans. But in letters like Philippians and 1 Thessalonians, where his authority

The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History (ed. Conrad H. Gempf; WUNT 49; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989); Witherington, *Acts*.

²⁹ Porter, *Paul*, 193-194.

³⁰ Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary: Volume 1: Introduction and 1:1-2:47* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 238. Porter, *Paul*, 194. See also Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 250.

³¹ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 238.

³² Stanley E. Porter, "The Rhetoric of Paul and his Letters," in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330 B.C.-A.D. 400* (ed. S. E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 433-485. See also Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 254; Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 250.

³³ Witherington, *Acts*, 437. In regard to chapter 14, where Paul is called an Apostle, Witherington writes that it probably means "a missionary agent or emissary of the Antioch church."

does not seem to be challenged, he does not emphasize himself as an Apostle. Acts is about church planting and not so much about internal struggles, which may be an explanation of why Paul's authority as an Apostle was not focused on there.³⁴

- Even if scholars with a more source positive position do not find the differences between Paul's view of the law in Acts and his own letters to be as significant as those with a more sceptical view, their understanding of the historical Paul's view of the law may differ. Some of them, such as Jervell and Hvalvik, think Acts portrays Paul as continuing to be a practicing Jew after his conversion, similar to Vielhauer and Haenchen:³⁵ Paul did not think that Jewish believers should give up Jewish practices, even though he did not think Gentiles should follow everything and that these practices were necessary for salvation. But in contrast to Vielhauer and Haenchen, these scholars do not find this to be incompatible with the view in Paul's own letters (cf. e.g. 1 Cor 9:19-21).³⁶ Other more source positive scholars, such as Witherington and Porter, think Paul in Acts has a more negative view of the law (e.g. Acts 13:39; 21:17-26) and therefore is not very different from the view they find in the Pauline letters.³⁷ Even if Acts in many ways seems to be more positive towards the law in Acts, it does not mean that Paul after his "conversion"³⁸ thought he needed to keep all requirements of the law.³⁹ Both groups conclude that Paul is not as different as the source sceptical school suggests, but the arguments for this view are different. In favour of the historicity of Paul in Acts it is argued that Paul seems to have been quite flexible for the sake of the gospel (e.g. 1 Cor 9; Rom 14:5-6), and could probably have also been that in regards to things like circumcision (because Timothy was partly

³⁴ Witherington, *Acts*, 437. See also Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 250.

³⁵ Reidar Hvalvik, "Paul as a Jewish Believer-According to the Book of Acts," in *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries* (ed. Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2007), 122; Jervell, "Paul in the Acts," 299-303.

³⁶ A more positive view of the law in the Pauline letters is also vindicated by representatives from the New Perspective, e.g. James D. G. Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul," *BJRL* 65 (1983): 95-122; E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1977); N. T. Wright, *Justification: God's Plan & Paul's Vision* (London: SPCK, 2009).

³⁷ Porter, *Paul*, 190-193; Witherington, *Acts*, 434-436.

³⁸ By using the term "conversion" I am not making a judgement regarding how this occasion should be understood. Others would e.g. instead argue that it is "commissioning." Cf. Dunn, "The New Perspective," 259.

³⁹ E.g. Paul often had fellowship and stayed with Gentiles.

Jewish, Acts 16:3), vows and participation in Jewish festivals (18:18, 21; 20:16).⁴⁰

In regard to theology, scholars with a more source positive view emphasize that neither the Pauline letters nor Acts are written to give a theological exposition.⁴¹ They also think more source critical scholars exaggerate the differences.⁴² One example is the natural theology that is argued to not be incompatible with Paul's writing (as Vielhauer seems to think), even if it is expressed quite differently (e.g. Acts 17:24-27; Rom 1:19-23).

Another example is Christology: In response to Vielhauer's claim that it is "adoptionisticly" in Acts but not in Paul's letters, it is argued that Paul himself has different focuses on Christology among his own letters and there are passages in the Pauline letters that could have been interpreted "adoptionisticly" (e.g. Rom 1:3-4) if one just look at that passage.⁴³

From a more source positive position it has been emphasized that differences do not necessarily mean that Acts must be considered as having little or no value for information about the historical Paul. The differences may be regarded as not greater than one would expect differences to be from two different authors describing the same event.⁴⁴ In addition the Pauline letters and Acts are different as writings: They are different genres⁴⁵ and they are dealing with different circumstances: while the letters are written to *established* churches, Acts is primary about Paul planting *new* churches.⁴⁶ These differences should be taken into account when comparing Acts with the Pauline letters, and may explain why things in Acts and the Pauline letters seems to differ.

It has also been argued that Paul was a "manifold and complex figure." There are also passages in the Pauline letters that may seem to be in tension (e.g. Rom 2:6-13 versus Rom 4:5). Paul's theology may have developed and changed during his life. Therefore one should not be surprised that there are tensions between Acts and Paul's own

⁴⁰ Bruce, *Acts*, 55-59; Hvalvik, "Paul as a Jewish Believer," 135-145; Witherington, *Acts*, 435.

⁴¹ Hemer, *Book*, 246.

⁴² Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 147; Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 251.

⁴³ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 251-252. Note also Luke's emphasis on Jesus' deity in Acts 2:21, 38 and Paul's emphasis on resurrection in 1 Cor 15.

⁴⁴ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 230; Porter, *Paul*, 206.

⁴⁵ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 250-251.

⁴⁶ Witherington, *Acts*, 433.

letters.⁴⁷

2.1.2.2 Correspondences Between Acts and the Pauline Letters and Other Historical Sources

Scholars with a more source positive position have often emphasized the similarities between Acts and the Pauline letters and correspondences with other sources.

There are several correspondences between Acts and the Pauline letters in regard to persons. This may not be explained by dependence upon Paul's letters because Acts is sometimes using less formal names than in the letters.⁴⁸ Also many other "facts" that are mentioned in Acts seem to be in agreement with the letters: Adolf von Harnack has found at least 39 correspondences.⁴⁹ To just give a couple of examples: James, the brother of Jesus, did not have less authority than Peter and John (Acts 12:17 15:13ff; 21:18; 1 Cor 15:7; Gal 2:9, 12) and Paul escaped from Damascus in a basket (Acts 9; 2 Cor 11:32). Even chronology of Paul's movements in Acts seems in many ways to correspond to the facts we get from Paul's letters.⁵⁰

Many historical facts in Acts are also found to be right compared to non-Biblical sources.⁵¹ One example is Acts 25:1-27. Here Paul encounters several persons: the high priest Ananias, procurator Felix, Drusilla, Festus, King Agrippa II and Bernice. The facts about them and the time they were part of the story seem to be right.⁵²

Also several things in regard to the portrayal of Paul in Acts seem to correspond with his own letters (or at least they are not in disagreement), like:

- In Acts, Paul is portrayed as a person with considerable social status. He is an educated person with rhetorical skills and knowledge of Greek philosophy and

⁴⁷ Jervell, *Theology*, 3; Jacob Jervell, *The Unknown Paul: Essays on Luke-Acts and Early Christian History* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 56-57.

⁴⁸ E.g. he is using the name Pricilla instead of Prisca (Acts 18:2-3, 18, 26; Rom 16:3-4; 1 Cor 16:19). Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 237.

⁴⁹ Adolf von Harnack, *The Acts of the Apostles* (trans. J. R. Wilkinson; NTS 3; London: Williams & Norgate, 1909), 264-274. See also Bruce, *Acts*, 46-52; Hemer, *Book*, 251-255; Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 238-241; Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts-Luke in its Mediterranean Milieu* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 203-208.

⁵⁰ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 239-250; Talbert, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 203-204; Witherington, *Acts*, 444-449.

⁵¹ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 237.

⁵² Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 239. Pervo opposes this view. Pervo, *Mystery*, 141-143.

Jewish beliefs (e.g. Acts 17).⁵³ The letters seem to point in the same direction. The letters show a man with knowledge of both Jewish religion, Greek Philosophy and Greco-Roman Rhetoric.⁵⁴

- In Acts Paul is said to be a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37; 22:25). Even if this is not mentioned in Paul's letters, there is nothing saying he wasn't. It is historically neither impossible nor improbable for a Jew in the diaspora to be a Roman citizen.⁵⁵
- In Acts Paul is portrayed as a man that is "equally at home with Jews and Gentiles, with those of low and high social status, with men and women" (e.g. Acts 17:16-34 versus 21:17-26). This could also be found in Paul's letters where he seems to be a man of considerable status that is stepping down and generally is not holding on to his own rights (and these rights seems to be presupposed for him to have)(e.g. Phil 3:4).⁵⁶

These (and other) similarities have been used to argue in favour of Acts giving a credible portrayal of the historical Paul. It may be objected that Luke knew these things but just invented things about Paul. But to this objection it has been responded that accuracy is not typical in fiction (see also Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1).⁵⁷

2.1.2.3 Acts as More Objective Than the Pauline Letters

From the source positive position it has also been claimed that in some regard Acts may be viewed as a better source (especially if the author of Acts was a travel-companion or partner to Paul).⁵⁸ There has been several reasons given for that:

1. Other people are often more objective than oneself.⁵⁹
2. Paul was writing in a specific, often polemical, situation. One should therefore be careful to consider a letter, like Galatians, which has a highly polemical character, as representative for Paul's theology. Acts may instead describe a more average,

⁵³ Jerome H. Neyrey, "Luke's Social Location of Paul: Cultural Anthropology and the Status of Paul in Acts," in *History, Literature, and Society in the Book of Acts* (ed. Ben Witherington III; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 251-279.

⁵⁴ Bruce, *Acts*, 446; Witherington, *Acts*, 432-433.

⁵⁵ Witherington, *Acts*, 433.

⁵⁶ Witherington, *Acts*, 432-433.

⁵⁷ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 237.

⁵⁸ E.g. Bruce and Jervell find this suggestion to be probable. F. F. Bruce, "Paul in Acts and Letters," in *DPL*, 679-692; Jervell, *Theology*, 4-8. See also Witherington, *Acts*, 432.

⁵⁹ Bruce, "Paul in Acts and Letters," 680; Witherington, *Acts*, 431.

un-polemical theology of Paul.⁶⁰

3. Paul is not trying to give a complete picture of himself (or his theology) in his letters.⁶¹ Acts is instead giving more directly biographical information about Paul.⁶²

Therefore the more sources positive position may understand Acts and Pauline letters as *complementary* sources that together gives a better understanding the historical Paul.⁶³

2.2 Paul's Speeches in Acts

Here, I will study the relationship between Paul's speeches in Acts and Paul's letters and the question of the historicity of the speeches. First, I will make a short presentation regarding the genre-issue. In regard to the historicity of the speech in Pisidian Antioch it could have been useful to investigate this issue more. However, the focus in this thesis is the relationship between Acts 13:38-39 and the Pauline letters and therefore I am not going deeper into this debate.

Then I am going to focus on the debate regarding relationship between the language and content in Paul's speeches and the Pauline letters. In this presentation I will use the Miletus speech (Acts 20:18-35) as a case study to illustrate the debate. This is the only speech by Paul in Acts that is directed to people who already believe, which is the audience that is closest to the addressees of Paul's letters. Therefore one would expect this speech to be most similar to Paul's own letters if it has historical roots.⁶⁴ Therefore the conclusions regarding this speech's relationship with the Pauline letters and the historical Paul may also have relevance for the speech in Acts 13, even if the language and content may not be as similar as in Acts 20. One objection against using this speech as a case study may be that the audience and context is very different from Acts 13 and

⁶⁰ Hemer, *Book*, 246; Hvalvik, *Jewish Believers*, 152-153; Jervell, "Paul in the Acts," 300; Jervell, *Theology*, 3; Witherington, *Acts*, 431.

⁶¹ Witherington, *Acts*, 431; Hemer, *Book*, 246; Hvalvik, "Paul as a Jewish Believer," 152-153; Jervell, *The Theology of the Acts of the Apostles*, 3.

⁶² Witherington, *Acts*, 432-433.

⁶³ Hvalvik, "Paul as a Jewish Believer," 152-153; Jervell, "Paul in the Acts," 300.

⁶⁴ This is generally considered to be the case. Charles K. Barrett, "Paul's Address to the Ephesian Elders," in *God's Christ and His People* (ed. Jacob Jervell and Wayne A. Meeks; Oslo, Bergen, Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1977), 107-121.

therefore the conclusions from this speech's relation to Paul may not apply to Acts 13. Another objection could be that it is in a "we"-part of Acts, which some scholars think indicate Luke's presence, while Acts 13 is not. Nevertheless I think the discussion concerning the Miletus speech could shed light on the relationship between Paul's speeches in Acts and his letters that has implications for Acts 13.

2.2.1 Genre of the Speeches

There have been several suggestions regarding the genre of Acts; scientific treatise,⁶⁵ travel narrative,⁶⁶ ancient novel,⁶⁷ and biography.⁶⁸ But most scholars seem to regard it as a historiography (like a historical monograph),⁶⁹ even if many scholars also may say that it is a blending of genres.⁷⁰

Even if it is historiography it is not evident what historiography meant in ancient time. Some scholars think that an understanding of history existed that valued careful investigations and truth-telling.⁷¹ Two historians who seem to have been accurate were Polybius and Thucydides, and Acts is sometimes regarded as similar to their writings in some ways.⁷² But it does not seem like all historians in the antiquity followed these high standards.⁷³ Rhetoric may also have had a major influence on historiography and rhetoric did not emphasize objectivity and truth, but was primary concerned with convincing, which may have affected the reliability of historiography.⁷⁴

Many ancient historians seem to have been very free in composing speeches. Speeches

⁶⁵ See Witherington, *Acts*, 14-15. Witherington is referring to Loveday C. A. Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary Convention and Social Context in Luke 1.1-4 and Acts 1.1* (SNTSMS 78; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Contra Witherington, *Acts*, 14-15.

⁶⁶ Wilfred L. Knox, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), 55. See also Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 53-54.

⁶⁷ Pervo, *Mystery*, 170-171.

⁶⁸ E.g. Talbert, *Acts*, 255-258. Contra: Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 54-62; Witherington, *Acts*, 15-21.

⁶⁹ E.g. Dibelius, *Studies in Acts*, 123-137; James D. G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Epworth: Peterborough, England: Epworth Press, 1996), xv-xiv; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 124-127; Hemer, *Book*; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (SP 5; Collegeville; Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 3; Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 90-147; Witherington, *Acts*, 21-24. There is not place here to discuss the different alternatives when it comes to genres; therefore I will follow the majority view and regard it as historiography.

⁷⁰ See Mikael Parsons, *Acts* (Paideia; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 15.

⁷¹ E.g. Witherington, *Acts*, 24-32.

⁷² E.g. Hemer, *Book*; Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 51; Witherington, *Acts*, 25.

⁷³ Witherington, *Acts*, 26.

⁷⁴ See Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 15.

in ancient writings are often understood to be the author's composition, which he created on basis of what he thought was appropriate for the speaker and the occasion of the speech; and not what he actually said.⁷⁵ Different ancient reproductions of the same speech are sometimes very different from each other.⁷⁶ Sometimes they may have had sources to base the speech upon, but sometimes they may have completely composed it himself.⁷⁷ But there also seems to have been ancient writers that were not as free in creating speeches to historical persons. The historian Polybius seems to be critical to historical writers who invented the speeches. Instead he thought one should try to find out what was actually said.⁷⁸

Because of the differences regarding speech-writing among ancient historians, it is not evident how one should consider the speeches' historical reliability from just the genre. But some things may be probable regarding the speeches in Acts:

- The author had probably an active role in the editing work.⁷⁹ We may see this in the stories of Paul's conversion; even if the main feature in the story is the same, different versions have different emphasis and details (Acts 9; 22; 26).⁸⁰ The role of an editor also means Luke had agendas which influenced the writing, e.g. he seems to have emphasized the unity of the church's leadership.⁸¹
- Many of the speeches in Acts were probably summaries. Paul seems to have frequently preached for quite long time (cf. Acts 20:7). Therefore it is probable that the speeches referred in Acts were longer and the reproduction only shows the highlights or main themes.⁸²

2.2.2 Language and Content of the Speeches

To consider if Luke's reproduction of Pauline concepts in Acts 13:38-39 is coherent with Paul's understanding, one needs to compare the speeches with the language and content in the undisputed Pauline letters, which in general are considered among scholars to be

⁷⁵ See Dunn, *Acts*, xvii-xviii; Hemer, *Book*, 76-78, 420; Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 258, 274-275; Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 248.

⁷⁶ See Talbert, *Acts*, 248; Dunn, *Acts*, xviii; Hemer, *Book*, 76.

⁷⁷ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 274-27

⁷⁸ Hemer, *Book*, 75.

⁷⁹ See Dunn, *Acts*, xvii; Hemer, *Book*, 75.

⁸⁰ See Dunn, *Acts*, xvii.

⁸¹ Dunn, *Acts*, xvii.

⁸² Hemer, *Book*, 418; Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 282; Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 249.

written by Paul himself. From them we can see the language he used, as well as his theology. However, one should have in mind that the speeches and letters represent different genres as well as contexts.

2.2.2.1 “Paulinisms” in Paul’s Speeches

In the discussion regarding whether Luke in Acts is expressing Pauline thoughts when Paul is speaking, the expression “Paulinism” is used. I will use “Paulinism” as an expression for concepts that are used for the core content of the typical doctrines of Paul. This is independent from the question regarding whether these are genuine Pauline doctrines or if derived. However, often “Paulinism” has been associated with the uncertainty regarding if the language that is attributed to Paul is coherent with the historical Paul. But the use of the expression does not seem to be unambiguous.⁸³ I will now describe the discussion regarding “Paulinisms” and whether the language and content of the speeches is coherent with the Pauline letters.

There have been several similarities identified between Paul’s speeches in Acts and the Pauline letters, especially in the Miletus speech. I will give two examples:⁸⁴

- In Acts 20:21 Paul says that he has testified both to Jews and to Greeks. Similarly he uses the expression “Jews and Greeks” in his letters to emphasize that the gospel is both for Jews and Greeks (Rom 1:16; 10:12; 1 Cor 1:24; 10:32; 12:13; Gal 3:28) and in 1 Cor 9:20 Paul describes how he has been trying to win both Jews and non-Jews.⁸⁵
- In Acts 20:21 we have the expression “faith in our Lord Jesus Christ” (πίστιν τὴν εἰς τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν). The word faith (πίστιν) occurs frequently in the Pauline letters, sometimes like here with a preposition (e.g. Phil 1:29; Rom 10:9) and sometimes with a genitive construction (e.g. Rom 3:22; Gal 3:22; Phil 2:9).⁸⁶

⁸³ Some seems to use it as meaning that something is not genuine Pauline, while others seems to use it about something that is connected to the historical Paul. Cf. Vielhauer, “Paulinism,” 48; Witherington, *Acts*, 611.

⁸⁴ Witherington is making an overview of similarities in content between the Miletus speech and the Pauline uncontested letters in his commentary. Witherington, *Acts*, 610. See also Hemer, *Book*, 425.

⁸⁵ Witherington, *Acts*, 610; Barrett, “Paul’s Address,” 111.

⁸⁶ See Barratt, “Paul’s Address,” 111-112.

Steve Walton has made an important contribution with his book *Leadership and Lifestyle* where he has compared 1 Thessalonians with the Miletus speech with this letter.⁸⁷ He found both themes (leadership, suffering, money and work and the death of Jesus)⁸⁸ and vocabulary to have similarities. One example of similar vocabulary is the word *νουθετέω* (admonish) that is found in 1 Thess 5:12, 14. Outside the Pauline letters in the NT it is only used in Acts 20:31. Walton concludes that it is the same thought-worlds in both the Miletus speech and 1 Thess and that Luke presents Paul in a ways that is similar to the voice of Paul himself.⁸⁹

Similarities between the language and content in Paul's speeches in Acts and the Pauline letters are in general considered to indicate that Luke had knowledge about Paul's preaching and its content and language. This is especially the case if it is language and themes that are not common in other parts of Luke-Acts (and other parts of the NT).

However the "Paulinisms" seem often also to differ from the Pauline letters in some respects; the language is often used in a way that is not found in the letters.⁹⁰ One example is the expression "to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24). It contains typical Pauline words as "gospel" and "grace." In addition Paul writes about "the gospel of God" (Rom 1:1; 2 Cor 11:7; 1 Thess 2:2). But these different words are never found together in any Pauline writings. Therefore have Barrett said that they are "superficially Pauline."⁹¹

Therefore several scholars are skeptical of whether the "Paulinisms" correspond to Paul's theology. Luke may have used language he knew Paul used, but they question if he really knew or understood his theology.⁹² Sometimes scholars understand these differences to be due to the fact that Luke was closer to the deutero-Pauline letters than

⁸⁷ Steve Walton, *Leadership and Lifestyle: The portrait of Paul in the Miletus speech and 1 Thessalonians* (SNTSMS 108; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁸⁸ Leadership: Paul is referring to his and his colleague's conducts as something the addressees have knowledge of (Acts 20:18b-21, 31, 34-35; 1 Thess 1:5-6; 2:2, 5; 2:9ff; 4:1) and is using his conduct as an example for them to follow (Acts 20:34-35; 1 Thess 1:6; 4:1). Suffering: Paul is speaking about his own sufferings (Acts 20:19, 23; 1 Tess 2:2, 14-15; 3:7) and future sufferings (Acts 20:29-30; 1 Thess 3:3-4). Money and work (Acts 20:28, 33-35; 1 Thessalonians 2:5-9; 4:11-12; 5:14). Death of Jesus: Parallel language (Acts 20:28 and 1 Thess 5:9-10). Walton, *Leadership and Lifestyle*, 157-174

⁸⁹ Walton, *Leadership*, 185.

⁹⁰ Cf. Hemer, *Book*, 420-421.

⁹¹ Barratt, "Paul's Address," 107-121, 112-114.

⁹² E.g. Pervo, *Acts*, 340; Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 33-50.

to the real Paul and his undisputed letters.⁹³ But contrary to this conclusion, Witherington has observed that the language in the Miletus speech has more parallels of terms and ideas found in the *undisputed* letters than the Pastorals.⁹⁴ Similarly, Walton has concluded after comparing the Miletus speech with 1 Thessalonians (an undisputed letter) and Ephesians and 2 Timothy (considered by many scholars to not be written by Paul) that 1 Thess seems to be closer to the Miletus Speech in *both* words and ideas, while the two Pastoral letters are just sometimes close in ideas and only rarely are similar in vocabulary.⁹⁵

2.2.2.2 Lukan Language and Motifs in the Speeches

Even if there are many Pauline parallels and similarities in the Miletus speech, elements have been identified that seem to be Lukan rather than Pauline:⁹⁶

- Paul says that he had testified of repentance (μετάνοια) towards God (Acts 20:21). Repentance is a typical Lukan word and in the NT it occurs most frequently in Luke-Acts (e.g. Luke 24:47).⁹⁷
- Paul says that he declared to them “the whole counsel (βουλή) of God” (Acts 20:27). βουλή is used 10 times in Luke-Acts while just once in the Pauline literature.⁹⁸
- The expression “the word of his grace” (ὁ λόγος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ) (Acts 20:32) is also found in Acts 14:3, and is similar to Luke 4:22.⁹⁹

Even if some of the above mentioned elements are identified as more typical Lukan, it is not impossible that Paul also used them in his preaching.¹⁰⁰ E.g. even if Paul is not speaking much about repentance in his letters the word μετάνοια (repentance) is used a couple of times (Rom 2:4; 2 Cor 7:9-10; though never specified as “toward God”) and there are indications in Paul’s letters that he preached that Gentiles need to turn away

⁹³ E.g. Pervo, *Acts*, 340.

⁹⁴ Witherington, *Acts*, 611. Many scholars consider the Pastorals to not have been written by Paul.

⁹⁵ Walton, *Leadership*, 198.

⁹⁶ Barratt, “Paul’s Address,” 113; J. Lambrecht, “Paul’s Farwell-Address at Miletus (Acts 20:17-38),” in *Les Actes des Apôtres: Traditions, rédaction, théologie* (ed. Jacob Kremer; BETL 48; Gembloux, Belg.: J. Duculot; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979), 307-337; Jürgen Roloff, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, (NTD Band 5; Göttingen: Vandenhoech & Ruprecht, 1981), 301; Witherington, *Acts*, 611.

⁹⁷ Witherington, *Acts*, 611; Lambrecht, “Paul’s Farwell-Address,” 325.

⁹⁸ Barratt, “Paul’s Address,” 113.

⁹⁹ Lambrecht, “Paul’s Farwell-Address,” 325, n. 67; Roloff, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 301.

¹⁰⁰ Witherington, *Acts*, 611.

from idols (1 Tess 1:9; Rom 10:9).¹⁰¹

Paul's speeches have also been claimed to have similarities with other peoples' speeches in Luke-Acts with regard to content, structure and motives. The Miletus speech has been claimed to have same motives as Luke 22:14-38, a text that could be understood as a farewell-address of Jesus (e.g. both prepared the audience for their departure, both look back at the time with them and both Act 20:28 and Luke 22:20 mentions the blood of Jesus).¹⁰² Similarly the speech in Acts 13 has been compared to Jesus speech in the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-27) and especially Peter's speeches (Acts 2:14-40).¹⁰³

Even if the speeches contain genuine Lukan elements, they could still be reproductions of the actual speech, (although it excludes the possibility that it is a verbatim of the speech). As I noted in the section about genre, it seems likely that the speeches in Acts probably often were summaries and the editor had an active role in editing the speech. If Luke were reproducing a speech from Paul, one still would expect to see marks from Luke in them, even if he had heard the speech or used sources from the speech.¹⁰⁴

2.2.3 Theories About the Speeches' Relation to the Historical Paul

Based on their assessment of how Pauline versus Lukan the language, thoughts and content in the speeches seems to be, as well as other factors (such as the genre question and their assessment of the historical credibility of Acts in general), scholars come to different conclusions regarding the speeches' relation to the historical Paul. There are several different theories regarding the relationship between the speeches and the historical Paul:

1. One suggestion is that the speeches are verbatim of historical speeches. However, that makes the Lukan language and trait in the speeches difficult to explain, and it does not fit the genre historiography, so this suggestion is rejected by scholars

¹⁰¹ Witherington, *Acts*, 611. See also Barrett, "Paul's Address," 111.

¹⁰² Lambrecht, "Paul's Farewell-Address," 326. See also Pervo, *Acts*, 517 ; Walton, *Leadership*, 99-117.

¹⁰³ E.g. Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation: Volume 2: The Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 160-161; Witherington, *Acts*, 408

¹⁰⁴ Hemer, *Book*, 421.

today.¹⁰⁵

2. Paul used (all or some) the Pauline letters for writing the speeches. This theory is based upon the observation that the similarities and parallels seem to be so extensive that a logical explanation is literary connection.¹⁰⁶ Some of these scholars think he had the letters in front of him, while others suggest that Paul had heard or read them before and had absorbed some of its content and terminology and that influenced him when writing Acts.¹⁰⁷ The lack of clear quotes may be explained by the fact that Luke had a freedom in using his sources and probably modified them and the omission of mentioning the letters in Acts may be due to that he wanted to tone down the controversies.¹⁰⁸ But many scholars are sceptical to this theory: The language does not seem to be close enough and no quotes are found.¹⁰⁹ It also seems unlikely that Luke would have used the letters as important sources without mentioning or in any way showing any knowledge of them in Acts,¹¹⁰ especially when ancient historians sometimes quoted or even invented letters.¹¹¹ Some also think that Paul did not need them, because he had enough material from other sources.¹¹²

3. Another suggestion is that Luke was present at speech and heard it. He then either wrote it from memory¹¹³ or took notes from the speech that he used when writing it in Acts.¹¹⁴ Some speeches, like the Miletus speech, occur in the “we-part” of Acts (this section of Acts is not only written in third person, but also in first person), which may, some would suggest, indicate that the author was present.¹¹⁵ Luke’s personal knowledge of Paul may explain why there are similarities with the letters; the author had himself heard him preach.

¹⁰⁵ See Hemer, *Book*, 421; Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 309.

¹⁰⁶ E.g. Morton S. Enslin, “Luke’ and Paul,” *JAOS* 58 (1938), 81-91; Michael D. Goulder, “Did Luke knew any of the Pauline Letters?” *PRSt* 13 (2, 1986), 97-112; Pervo, *Acts*, 12; Pervo, *Mystery*, 162.

¹⁰⁷ William O. Walker, Jr., “Acts and the Pauline Corpus Reconsidered,” *JSNT* 24 (1985): 3-32. For similar basic view see also Enslin, “Luke’ and Paul,” 81-91.

¹⁰⁸ Walton, *Leadership*, 15-16.

¹⁰⁹ E.g. Charles K. Barrett, “Acts and the Pauline Corpus,” *ExpTim* 88 (1, 1976): 2-5; Porter, *Paul*, 206; Walton, *Leadership*, 14-17, 212; Witherington, *Acts*, 170.

¹¹⁰ Walton, *Leadership*, 211.

¹¹¹ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 235.

¹¹² Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 235.

¹¹³ Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 388; Marshall, *Acts*, 329-330.

¹¹⁴ Witherington, *Acts*, 615.

¹¹⁵ Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 316. Contra: Barrett, “Paul’s Address,” 110.

Furthermore it could also explain the Lukan style and terms of the speech; he makes a summary of Paul's message.¹¹⁶

4. Another possibility is that the author used Pauline sources (independent from the Pauline letters) to write the speeches.¹¹⁷ These sources could be from the speech itself, but may also be from one or several general Pauline traditions.¹¹⁸ The fact that there are no quotes from the Pauline letters, even though there are many similarities in the speeches, may suggest that the speeches comes from a source that is independent from the letters. ¹¹⁹
5. It is also suggested that the author composed the speeches without any sources from Paul. Luke may not even have tried to imitate Paul's language consciously. These scholars do not think Luke demonstrating Pauline theology and they do not find the similarities to be enough precise or constant that it is probable that Luke was dependent upon Pauline language.¹²⁰

In chapter 4 I will come back to the question regarding the historicity of the speeches. There I will consider the relationship between Acts 13:38-39 and the Pauline letters. But I will first analyse these verses and interpret them.

¹¹⁶ Bruce, *Book*, 388; Witherington, *Acts*, 611, 615.

¹¹⁷ E.g. Barrett, "Paul's Address," 110; Jervell, *Theology*, 9-10; Walton, *Leadership*, 212.

¹¹⁸ Barrett, "Paul's Address," 110.

¹¹⁹ Bruce, *Acts*, 429-430. See also Barrett, "Paul's Address," 110.

¹²⁰ E.g. Hans-Joachim Michel, *Die Abschiedsrede des Paulus an die Kirche Apg 20:17-38: Motivgeschichte und theologische Bedeutung* (StANT 35, München, 1973), 83-91.

3. Exegesis of Acts 13:38-39 in Its Literary Context

3.1 The Context of the Speech in Acts

3.1.1 The Literary Context

These verses are part of Paul's speech in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:16-41). According to Acts, Paul held this speech during his first missionary journey.¹²¹ Paul and Barnabas had been sent off by the church in Antioch in Syria (Acts 13:1-3).

A recurring theme on this journey is that they preached the word (of God)/the gospel (Acts 13:5; 14:1, 21, 25), and several times it is specified that it was in synagogues (Acts 13:5, 14ff; 14:1). But only in Pisidian Antioch is it written what they actually said there. Therefore this speech could be Luke giving an example and model of Paul's preaching in synagogues and in Jewish settings.¹²²

Paul's first missionary journey is in the middle of the section in Acts dealing with the question regarding Gentile believers and the role of the law for them. It is *after* chapter 10 where Peter, after having a vision from God, says: "in every nation anyone who fears him (God) and does what is right is acceptable to him." When he saw that the Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit he also baptized them. The first mission trip is also *before* the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15 where it was discussed whether it was necessary for the Gentiles to be circumcised and keep the law. The conclusion of the council was that they did not need to be circumcised and did not need to follow the law, with a few exceptions. So this speech is in the middle of a narrative argumentation by Luke regarding the conversion and inclusion of Gentiles in the Jesus-believing community. On which basis could they become part of the community and which consequences should it have for them? Luke uses the acts of God here in his argumentation; he is answering these questions from what God is doing.

¹²¹ "Paul's first missionary journey" is not an expression found in Acts, but is a concept usually used to describe Paul's activity in Acts 13-14. See e.g. Parsons, *Acts*, 205-206.

¹²² Robert C. Tannehill, *Narrative*, 164. Tannehill shows how most of the summaries of Paul's speeches match aspects of this speech.

3.1.2 Pisidian Antioch

Pisidian Antioch¹²³ seems to have been one of the largest cities in the interior highlands of Asia Minor, even if not as large and famous as e.g. Ephesus.¹²⁴ It was a Roman colony and it seems like Latin was a language much used in the civic administration.¹²⁵

Even if there is no evidence outside Acts that proves that there was a Jewish population in Pisidian Antioch before the late empire, it is probable that there were Jews living there at this time. There are many evidences of Jewish presence in the region and then it is also likely that there was also a Jewish population in Antioch, which was one of the major cities in the region. According to Josephus, 2000 Jewish families had been brought to Phrygia and Lydia around 210 B.C.¹²⁶ A Jewish colony in Antioch had therefore probably been there for several centuries when Paul came there in Acts 13, and Hellenism had influenced them.¹²⁷

3.1.3 The Addressees of the Speech

The question regarding the addressees is important because the speech is in the middle of the section in Acts about Gentile conversions and it has consequences for the message in Acts 13:38-39. Are these verses for Jews or Gentiles or both? So the main question I am going to deal with here is the ethnicity of the addressees.¹²⁸

¹²³ There are two different readings of the name of this place. Some manuscripts, such as p45, 74, s, A, B, C, have the adjectival form, "Antioch, the [one near] Pisidia" (Ἀντιόχειαν τὴν Πισιδίαν), while other manuscripts, such as D, E, Y, 33, 81 have a genitive construction, "Antioch of Pisida" (Ἀντιόχειαν τῆς Πισιδίας). The first reading is preferable from both textual and historical arguments. The city was not in Pisidia, but near it (it was in the province of Phrygia). There were at least 16 places called Antioch in antiquity, so the name Pisidian Antioch specified which city it was. E.g. Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 509; Johnson, *Acts*, 229; Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2032; Witherington, *Acts*, 404.

¹²⁴ Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2039-2040.

¹²⁵ Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2039.

¹²⁶ Josephus, *Ant.* 12.147-153. See Paul R. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (SNTSMS 69 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 5-7. Also other sources indicate that 139-138 B.C.E. that were established Jewish communities in several cities in Asia Minor by 139-138 B.C.E. (see Macc 15:16-23). In the first century C.E. Philo writes that there were Jewish colonies in "Pamphylia, Cilicia, most of Asia as far as Bithynia and the remote corner of Pontos" (Philo, *Flacc.* 281-282).

¹²⁷ See William M. Ramsay, *The Cities of St. Paul: Their Influence on His Life and Thought* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1907), 258; Witherington, *Acts*, 405-406.

¹²⁸ In regard to the sex of the audience I found it likely that it consisted both of males and females. Even if Paul is using the word ἄνδρες (men), this word did not exclude women from being part of the audience. "The worshipping/devout women" in Acts 13:50 also indicates women presence. Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 868-869; Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2056-2057. David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 387. Witherington, *Acts*, 409.

Three times in the speech Paul clearly addresses the audience: Paul starts to say in verse 16 “men of Israel and you who fear God” (ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλῖται, καὶ οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν Θεόν) and in verse 26 he addresses them “brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God” (ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραάμ, καὶ οἱ ἐν ὑμῖν φοβούμενοι τὸν Θεόν) and finally in verse 38 he addresses the audience as “brothers” (ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί).

In both verses 16 and 26 it seems like Paul is addressing two different groups: “Men of Israel”/“sons of the family of Abraham” and “you who fear God”/“those among you who fear God”. The first group seems to be Jews. It has been suggested that “those who fear God” are the Jews themselves and not another group.¹²⁹ But I do not find this convincing: It is written “those who fear God *among you* (ἐν ὑμῖν)” (my emphasis), which suggests that it is not the Jews themselves, but a group of people that is part of the Jewish community.¹³⁰

Scholars have understood “God-fearers” as an expression for Gentiles that were associated with Judaism, but not folly converts.¹³¹ However, it does not seem like “God-fearers” was a technical term for a specific group. The expression has a variety of uses in Roman times and was used both about Jews and non-Jews.¹³² It could refer to any person that Jews found to be supporting them.¹³³ Fearing (φοβέομαι) God is about respecting, honoring and worshiping God (Matt 15:9, Mark 7:7; Acts 10:35; 18:13 in contrast to Acts 19:27).¹³⁴ In the LXX οἱ φοβούμενοι is primarily used about Israel and not Gentiles (e.g. LXX Ps 115:9-11; 118:2-4; 135:19-20; LXX Mal 3:16). But in LXX 2 Chr

¹²⁹ E.g. Henry J. Cadbury, *The Book of Acts in History*, (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1955), 91; Kirsopp Lake, “Proselytes and God-Fearers”, in *Additional Notes to the Commentary* (ed. F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake; Vol. 5 of *The Beginning of Christianity: The Acts of the Apostles*; ed. Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury; London: Macmillan, 1933), 74-96; Max Wilcox “The ‘God-Fearers’ in Acts – A Reconsideration”, *JSNT* 13 (1981): 102-122.

¹³⁰ See Charles K. Barrett, *Acts: Volume 1: Preliminary Introduction and Commentary on Acts I-XIV* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 629-639; Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 343-344. See also Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2056-2057.

¹³¹ Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *Acts* (ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 198; Johnson, *Acts*, 182; Edvin Larsson, *Apostlagärningarna 1-12* (KNT 5A; Stockholm: EFS-förlaget, 1987), 225.

¹³² In Luke-Acts see e.g. Luke 18:2, 4; 23:40. See e.g. Hemer, *Book*, 445-446; Hvalvik, “Gudfryktige,” 141-144; Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 1751; Lake, “Proselytes and God-Fearers”, 84-88; Marshall, *Acts*, 183-184; Pervo, *Acts*, 332-333.

¹³³ Reidar Hvalvik, “De ‘Gudfryktige’ hedninger- historisk realitet eller litterær fiksjon?” in *Ad Acta: Studier til Apostlenes gjerninger og urkristendommens historie* (ed. Reidar Hvalvik and Hans Kvalbein; Oslo: Verbum, 1994), 141; Pervo, *Acts*, 333.

¹³⁴ Peterson, *Acts*, 326.

5:6 οἱ φοβούμενοι is used about a group that seems to be distinguished from the Israelites.¹³⁵ In Acts 10:2 and 22 φοβούμενος τὸν Θεὸν is used about Cornelius whose name, profession and rank of centurion indicate that he was a Gentile (not circumcised and not fully observing the law).¹³⁶ Also the follow narrative confirms he was a Gentile (10:28, 45). Also Acts 10:35 “in every nation (ἔθνος) anyone who fears (φοβέομαι) him (God)” seems to includes Gentiles. Cornelius is described as devout/pious (εὐσεβής), which indicates that he was religious, giving alms generously to the people and he prayed continually to God (he observed regular prayer times). Both almsgiving and prayer are ideal Jewish piety.¹³⁷ Luke’s description of Cornelius therefore indicates that φοβούμενος τὸν Θεὸν were Gentiles connected to Judaism that were pious, and at least to some degree were obedient to Jewish way of living and practiced Jewish worship.¹³⁸ This indicates that Paul is both addressing when Paul is addressing his audience οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν Θεὸν in Acts 13, he is referring to Gentiles (who was positive towards Judaism and connected to it). Even if some scholars has questioned the existance of such a group of Gentiles that were not fully converts,¹³⁹ evidences from ancient writings and inscriptions indicates the existence of such a group.¹⁴⁰

Also the expression οἱ σεβομένοι (τὸν Θεὸν) (Acts 13:43, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; 18:7; see also 18:13; 19:27) seems in general in Acts to refer to persons that probably weren’t Jewish (Acts 13:50; 16:14; 17:4; 18:7),¹⁴¹ but were associated with the synagogue (Acts 17:4, 17; 18:7) and positive towards positive towards Jewish beliefs and practices (σέβω means to worship or to show reverence or respect for someone or something¹⁴²). In Acts 13:43 is Luke uses the word σεβομένος together with προσήλυτος: “Many Jews and

¹³⁵ Hvalvik, “Gudfryktige,” 142; John Andrew Overman. “The God-Fearers: Some Neglected Features.” *JSNT* 32 (1988): 17-26, 21; Witherington, *Acts*, 342.

¹³⁶ Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts* (ZECNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 485.

¹³⁷ Schnabel, *Acts*, 485. See also e.g. Peterson, *Acts*, 327.

¹³⁸ Pervo, *Acts*, 332.

¹³⁹ Barrett, *Acts* 1, 499-501; Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 1751; Alf Thomas Kraabel, “The Disappearance of the ‘God-Fearers,’” *Numen* 28 (1981), 113-126. Kraabel has largely used the silence of archaeological evidence to argue against the theory of the existence of such group and claimed that Luke invented this group for his theological programme. For discussions on this subject see also e.g. Bruce, *Apostles*, 252-253;

¹⁴⁰ See Hemer, *Book*, 444-447; Overman, “The God-Fearers,” 17-26; Pervo, *Acts*, 332-333; Witherington, *Acts*, 343. Philo, Josephus and Juvenal have writings that show both Greeks and Romans being attracted to Judaism and Juvenal shows that they sometimes participated fully in Jewish worship and practice: Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 2.282-286; Josephus, *J.W.* 7.3.3; Juvenal, *The Sixteen Satires* 14.96-106.

¹⁴¹ The expression γυνή ὀνόματι Λυδία in 18:7 may mean “the Lydian woman,” but it is more likely that Lydia was her name. The name Lydia suggests that she was of Greek extraction. See Witherington, *Acts*, 491. Titius Justus may also have been a Gentile. See Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 627.

¹⁴² Walter Bauer and Frederick William Danke, ed. “σέβω,” *BDAG*, 917-918.

devout proselytes” (πολλοὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τῶν σεβομένων προσηλύτων). The word προσήλυτος has generally been understood as a technical term for Gentiles that had fully converted to Judaism, including circumcision and full observance of the law.¹⁴³ However it is also possible that it here refers to the same group as those who fear God in verses 16 and 26:¹⁴⁴ The groups in verse 43 would then be parallel to the groups in verses 16 and 26,¹⁴⁵ σεβομένος seems to be about Gentiles elsewhere in Acts and in the LXX προσήλυτος is always used about non-Israelites, that in some way participated in the Israelite worship and practice, but weren’t full converts.¹⁴⁶ Even if a more specific group is addressed in 13:43 than in 16 and 26,¹⁴⁷ it still seems like Gentiles too were addressed in the speech.

In verse 38 Paul is not explicit addressing two groups, but is only saying “brothers” (ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί). The expression ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί was also used in verse 26 and there it was probably directed to both “sons of the family of Abraham” and “those among you who fear God.”¹⁴⁸ This could indicate that the Gentiles are not omitted, even if they are not mentioned explicit as a group. That he calls the Gentiles “brothers” and also using expressions as “our fathers” (13:17, 32) and “us their children” (13:33) in the speech may indicate that those who fear God seem to be included as children of the fathers of the Jews and have part in the continuity from the past.¹⁴⁹ This may be due to the universality of the gospel; that the people of God is not only open for Jews, but for all who believe.¹⁵⁰ The Gentiles that fear God become an extension of the Jewish people and as part of the people.

It has also been suggested that the word “brothers” indicates that Paul here is primarily addressing the Jews.¹⁵¹ Regardless of how one understand this word and even if he is

¹⁴³ E.g. Barrett, *Acts I*, 654; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 243; Marshall, *Acts*, 229.

¹⁴⁴ Overman, “God-Fearers,” 19. Overman states that a more technical understanding of προσήλυτος as Gentiles that were full converts to Judaism is found in late rabbinic literature. Overman thinks that it was two meanings of προσήλυτος present in the time of Luke. See also Peterson, *Acts*, 396.

¹⁴⁵ Witherington, *Acts*, 342-344.

¹⁴⁶ Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 243; Overman, “God-Fearers,” 19; Peterson, *Acts*, 396; Witherington, *Acts*, 342.

According to Overman Philo also seems to use the word προσήλυτος in this sense on several occasions. Philo, *Virt. 102-103*; Philo, *QE 2.2*.

¹⁴⁷ Peterson, *Acts*, 386-396.

¹⁴⁸ Barrett, *Acts I*, 639; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 514.

¹⁴⁹ Dunn, *Acts*, 178.

¹⁵⁰ Marshall, *Acts*, 226.

¹⁵¹ See Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 518.

addressing both Jews and Gentiles in the speech, it seems like he in the speech especially has the Jews in mind, at least in some parts of the speech. Luke portrays Paul as a missionary to both Gentiles and Jews (Acts 9:15; in 26:17 is only Gentiles mentioned), but he also seem to understands the mission of the gospel as first be given to the Jews and then to the Gentiles (Acts 3:26, Acts 13:46; 18:6; 28:28, compare with Rom 1:16; 2:1). The rejection of Paul's message by the Jews in Acts 13:45-46, may indicate that that he here primary has the Jews in mind. In his narrative argumentation he shows here how Paul is preaching to the Jews, but they reject it, while the Gentiles were "rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord" and many believed (13:48).¹⁵² When the Jews reject the message, it will become a blessing for the Gentiles, according to the Scripture (13:47 quoting Isa 49:6).

Furthermore, especially in the last part of the speech the Jews seem to be in mind: When Paul says "everything from which *you* could not be freed by the law of Moses" (13:39, my emphasis), it seems likely that *you* is referring to the Jews and not the Gentiles, because Gentiles that were not circumcised or trying to keep the whole law hadn't experienced that the law couldn't free them from everything. Further the warning in verses 40-41 for not believing the work God, seems to be directed primary to the Jews: the passage that is quoted was about Israel's unbelief (Hab 1:5) and later it is the Jews that is explicit described as rejecting of this message (13:45-46).

However that does not mean the speech is not relevant for Gentiles. As I showed earlier it seems like Paul is explicitly addressing both Jews and Gentiles. In Acts it is also clear that Luke has a universal understanding of the gospel (e.g. 15:7-9) and the message Paul is preaching in 13:38-39 is very similar to what he preached to a group of only Gentiles in 10:43. Therefore the message is for both Jews and Gentiles, but when he starts to preach in Antioch he seems to especially address the Jews. The language is adapted to make the message more relevant and/or clearer for them.

¹⁵² Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 125-126. Talbert suggests that the pattern of the first mission journey is reflecting "to Jew first and also to the Greek." He finds the journey to have a structure of ABABAB where A is to Jews and B is to Gentiles: Acts 13:4-5 to Jews, Acts 13:6-12 to Gentiles, Acts 13:13-43 to Jews, Acts 13:44-52 to Gentiles, Acts 14:1-7 to Jews and finally Acts 14:8-18, 19-23 to Gentiles. That means the speech in Antioch is in the "Jew-section." However, Talbert has an obsession for structural patterns and we can seriously ask if this suggested pattern would be something the readers of Acts would have noted.

3.1.4 The Place and the Function of Verses 38-39 in the Speech

How we understand verses 38-39 is also dependent upon how we understand its relation to the rest of the speech. I am going to argue here that these verses are the goal and the center for the speech.¹⁵³

3.1.4.1 The Structure of the Speech

There have been several suggestions given of how one should divide the speech.¹⁵⁴ I am going to present here probably the most common way of dividing the speech. I am using this suggestion because it is based upon clear marks in the text: when Paul is explicit addressing the audience:¹⁵⁵

1. Verse 16: “Men of Israel and you who fear God...”
2. Verse 26: “Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God...”
3. Verse 38: “Let it be known to you therefore, brothers...”

The first part (16-25) gives a sketch of the history of the Israelites from their time in Egypt until the coming of Jesus. The second part (26-37) is about Jesus who was crucified by the people and the leaders in Jerusalem and then raised by God. The third part (38-41) is about forgiveness of sins that is proclaimed, that all who believe are justified and warning against unbelief.

It has been suggested that these parts could be linked with the traditional rhetorical sections of speeches:

1. *Exordium* (introduction, v 16) and *narratio* (statements of facts, v 17-25): sketch of the salvation history.
2. *Argumentatio* (proofs, v 26-37): the significance of Jesus as Messiah.
3. *Peroratio* (conclusion, v 38-41): urge to the listener to repent.¹⁵⁶

This way of structuring the speech may suggest that verses 38-39 are the peak and goal

¹⁵³ Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 508; John J. Kigallen, “Acts 13,38-39: Culmination of Paul’s Speech in Pisida,” *Biblica* 69 (1988): 480-506. Kigallen and Fitzmyer have the same view.

¹⁵⁴ For an overview of different suggested structures see Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2053-2055.

¹⁵⁵ E.g. Barrett, *Acts*, 623; Darrell L. Bock, *Acts* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 448; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 507; Gaventa, *Acts*, 196; Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 129-131; Schnabel, *Acts*, 570-571.

¹⁵⁶ Schnabel, *Acts*, 570.

of the speech (especially if one understand this part as the *peroratio*). It is here that the salvation is presented, which is the fulfillment of God's saving work presented earlier in the speech.¹⁵⁷ Until this point Paul has been speaking about what had happened, but the relevance of these things becomes evident for the audience in verse 38-39.¹⁵⁸ (Verse 40-41 could be viewed as a subsidiary warning, that is important but not the peak of the speech.¹⁵⁹)

3.1.4.2 Linguistical Arguments

There are also some of the words in these verses that seem to indicate these verses as the peak and goal of the speech. The word οὖν in verse 38 links the content of the speech before to verses 38-39 and marks that the goal of the previous discussion is coming (cf. Acts 3:19). Also the word τούτου ("this man") connect verses 38-39 to previous verses.¹⁶⁰ It is through this man, whom the previous part of the speech has been about, that forgiveness and justification is available.

3.1.4.3 Pauline Language

In addition these verses are also the verses in this speech that seem to be most similar to Paul's letters. If Luke intentionally used language here that he thought was Pauline, it is not probable that he used this vocabulary in a section that is only of secondary importance. The Pauline language would rather indicate that he finds this to be the center of the speech.¹⁶¹

I find therefore verses 38-39 to most probably be the peak and the goal of the speech in Pisidian Antioch and all the previous verses before are building up towards this part. It seems to be an integrated part of the whole speech and therefore these verses should be understood in relation to the speech as a whole and the other parts of the speech should

¹⁵⁷ Kigallen, "Acts 13,38-39," 480-481, n. 2. See also Schnabel, *Acts*, 583; Witherington, *Acts*, 413.

¹⁵⁸ Haenchen, *Acts*, 412. It has also been suggested that 13:38-39 fits best to the request by the rulers of the synagogue: that they will say λόγος παρακλήσεως to the people. This expression may mean to give a word of comfort/encouragement or exhortation, and if one understand the expression this way verses 38-39 seems to fit best. See Kigallen, "Acts 13,38-39," 482-483; Schnabel, *Acts*, 583; Witherington, *Acts*, 413. However λόγος παρακλήσεως could also mean expounding the text from the Scripture, which may seem to be the more likely understanding in this context. See e.g. Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2047; Johnson, *Acts*, 230.

¹⁵⁹ Kigallen, "Acts 13,38-39," 480-490, n. 2. Haenchen, *Acts*, 413.

¹⁶⁰ Kigallen, "Acts 13,38-39," 484.

¹⁶¹ Kigallen, "Acts 13,38-39," 485.

be understood in relation to verses 38-39 as the goal and center of the speech.

3.2 Analysis of Verses 38-39

3.2.1 “Let It Be Known to You Therefore, Brothers” (γνωστὸν οὖν ἔστω ὑμῖν, ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί)

This section starts with the words “let it be known to you.” Similar expressions are also found in Acts 2:14, 36 and 4:10. This formula is used to emphasize the importance of the following words.¹⁶² Paul is calling the attention of the audience here, so that they will not miss what he now is going to say.

Paul addresses the audience here with the expression ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί (“brothers”). As explained earlier, this is the third and final time in the speech Paul explicit is addressing the audience. The speech is often divided into three parts based on where Paul is addressing people, and that would mean that Paul is coming to the last and final section of the speech. The part of the speech that begins here may, as I have showed, be understood as *peroratio*; the conclusion of the speech.¹⁶³

The relevance of these verses for the audience has been hinted earlier in the speech in verses 23 (Jesus is called a Savior), 26 (“to us has been sent the message of this salvation”) and 32-33 (“we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us”).¹⁶⁴ Now Paul is unfolding what the salvation and good new means for the audience; it means forgiveness of sins and being justified.

Even if Paul is starting a new section of the speech here, he also connects it closely to the previous parts. It points back to and is based upon what Paul said previously in the speech. In other words what Paul is going to say here is a result of the things he had been speaking about until now. There are three things in these verses that points back to the previous verses: “therefore” (οὖν), “through this man” (διὰ τούτου) and “by him” (ἐν τούτῳ). We are coming back to the two latter expressions later.

¹⁶² Gaventa, *Acts*, 201.

¹⁶³ Bock, *Acts*, 458; Witherington, *Acts*, 413.

¹⁶⁴ Tannehill, *Narrative*, 167.

The word οὖν has the meaning of “denoting that what it introduces is the result of or an inference from what precedes” and could be translated “then,” “therefore” and “consequently.”¹⁶⁵ So we have to look at what Paul has been saying before: He had said that of the offspring of David, God has brought a Savior to Israel and that is Jesus (13:23). And those who lived in Jerusalem asked Pilate to execute Jesus (13:27-28). But God raised Jesus from the death and Jesus will not return to corruption (13:30, 34, 36). It is as a consequence of these things: that Jesus was executed, but did not remain there and was raised from the death by God in fulfillment of Scripture, that forgiveness of sins are proclaimed to them and everyone who believes is justified. Through Jesus and his resurrection God fulfilled the promise he had given the Israelites.¹⁶⁶ Now Paul is going to outline the conclusion of the significance of Jesus that he had preached about earlier.¹⁶⁷

3.2.2 “That Through This Man” (ὅτι διὰ τούτου)

“Through this man” (διὰ τούτου). The word is a demonstrative noun and the masculine singular form suggests that it refers back to verse 37, where Jesus is “the one whom God raised up.” Similar is ἐν τούτῳ in verse 39 meaning “in this one” and is also referring back to Jesus. τούτου is in genitive and is referring to the means by which sins are forgiven.¹⁶⁸

These expressions emphasize that major importance of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and justification. It is through Jesus and as a result of what he has done that one can proclaim forgiveness of sins and it is by him one is justified.

Jesus has been called Savior (σωτήρα) earlier in the speech (13:23). In verses 38-39 Paul speaks about what it means for the addressees that he is Savior.

¹⁶⁵ Walter Bauer and Frederick William Danker, “οὖν,” BDAG, 736.

¹⁶⁶ Tannehill, *Narrative*, 167.

¹⁶⁷ Schnabel, *Acts*, 583.

¹⁶⁸ Bock, *Acts*, 458.

3.2.3 “Forgiveness of Sins Is Proclaimed to You” (ὕμῖν ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν καταγγέλλεται)

3.2.3.1 Sin (ἁμαρτία)

Sin (ἁμαρτία) is a concept in Judaism that is related to the law (the Torah). Sin is transgression of the Torah. This understanding is due to the fact that the Torah is considered to be the revelation of the will of God. Everything in the Torah has a religious meaning, even commands regarding civic and juridical matters. To transgress them is to rebel and offence against God; in other words “to sin.”¹⁶⁹

There are two different trends in the Jewish concept of sin: One is emphasizing that even the smallest violation of the law is an offence to the law and is considered a sin. The other trend is based upon the distinction in the OT between sins done with intention (“a high hand”) and sins that are done unintentionally. Then the seriousness of the sins depends upon the knowledge one have of the law. From this understanding there are “mortal sins,” which should absolutely not be committed. One couldn’t atone for these sins through good works or rites of purification, as one could with other sins. Atonement was only possible by death.¹⁷⁰

There are also Jewish writings indicating that in Judaism, one understood all humans as sinful (see e.g. 4 *Ezra* 7:68; Philo, *Mos.* 2.147; Philo, *Flights* 158). Because Gentiles have the commands God gave to Adam and Noah, they are also sinful.¹⁷¹ That pious Jews also understood themselves as sinful is also indicated in John (8:7-9).

In Judaism it was also a trend to make the sin individual and not collective. We find this in e.g. Ezek 18:2-4. Sin is then the individual’s transgression of the law, and the consequences of the sins are concerned the person who has committed the sins. The consequences are both for this and the coming life.¹⁷² Also in Luke-Acts (and the other synoptic gospels) ἁμαρτία is normally understood as an individual act.¹⁷³ The fact that

¹⁶⁹ Gustav Stählin and Walter Grundmann, “The Concept of Sin in Judaism,” *TDNT* 1:289-293.

¹⁷⁰ Stählin and Grundmann, *TDNT* 1:289-290.

¹⁷¹ Stählin and Grundmann, *TDNT* 1:291.

¹⁷² Stählin and Grundmann, *TDNT* 1:290. However, a collective understanding of responsibility in regard to sin is also existing.

¹⁷³ This is in contrast to understand sin as a power in humans and in the world, as Paul seems to have understood it (e.g. Rom 6).

the plural form ἁμαρτίαι is used and not the singular form support this understanding of sin in Luke-Acts.¹⁷⁴

To do something about sin seems to have been an important reason for the ministry of Jesus. There are several places in the gospel of Luke where we hear about Jesus socializing with sinners (Luke 5:30; 7:34; 15:1-2; 19:7). In Luke 5:32 it is written: “I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” (See also Luke 15:4-10).

3.2.3.2 Forgiveness of Sins (ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν)

The expression “forgiveness of sins” does not occur in the LXX. The word ἄφεσις is only once connected to ἁμαρτία (Lev 16:26-27). But the verbal form ἀφίημι does occur several times together with ἁμαρτία. Similar to Lev 16:26-27 it is used about the priest making atonement for sins (see also e.g. Lev 4:20, 26; 5:6). Forgiveness was received through the sin offerings.

The word ἄφεσις often has in Greek context the meaning of “release” or “remission.” It could be about remission of debt or punishment, or releasing from legal matters such as marriage, office or obligation as well as being released from captivity.¹⁷⁵

“Forgiveness of sins” (ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν) is a typical Lukan expression; of 11 occurrences in the NT, 8 are found in Luke-Acts (Luke 1:77; 3:3; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18), while only 3 are found in other parts of the NT (Matt 26:28; Mark 1:4; Col 1:14; see also Eph 1:4). In looking at the occurrences of this expression in Luke-Acts I will point out some traits of Luke’s use of this expression:

- 1. For Luke “forgiveness of sins” is the center of the gospel and it summarizes the gospel.** The expression “forgiveness of sins” is used several times in Luke-Acts, from early in the gospel of Luke (1:77) to late in Acts (26:18). It is used regarding the preaching of John the Baptist (Luke 1:77; 3:3). The expression is used in the very important when Jesus is giving his last speech to the disciples (according to Luke) and gives the Great commission: “repentance and forgiveness

¹⁷⁴ Walter Grundmann, “Sin in the NT,” *TDNT* 1:302-316.

¹⁷⁵ Rudolf Bultmann, “ἄφεσις,” *TDNT* 1:509-512; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke: 1-9* (AB 28; New York: Doubleday, 1981), 223.

of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations” (24:47). Also in Acts the expression is important and seems to summarize the gospel. On Pentecost Peter encourages them to be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins (2:38). So forgiveness of sins seems to an important expression that is essential regarding the meaning of the gospel.¹⁷⁶

2. “Forgiveness of sins” describes the result of the work of Jesus Christ: his death and resurrection. Luke seems to use the expression “forgiveness of sins” to describe the result of the work of Jesus; of his death and resurrection.¹⁷⁷ In Acts 24:47 he also specifies that forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in *his (Christ’s)* name. This means that the forgiveness of sins can be proclaimed because of Christ. In Acts 10:43 forgiveness of sins is also specified similarly as “through his name” (cf. 13:38). In Acts 5:31 the forgiveness of sins is connected more clearly to the “Christ-event:” The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.” God raised Jesus so that forgiveness of sins could be given. The forgiveness of sins was earlier something one received through sacrificial system in the tabernacle and in the temple. Now it was through Jesus (cf. Luke 23:45).¹⁷⁸ Jesus is thereby the one that has replaced the temple cult, and not only replaced it, but also exceeded it. Through the sacrificial system, based upon the law it was not possible to be completely righteous, but that was possible through Jesus.

3. “Forgiveness of sins” is a message for all people (both Jews and Gentiles). Before Jesus departed from the disciples he said that “forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name *to all people*” (Luke 24:47, my emphasis). This specifies that the work of Christ and the forgiveness of sins is not just something for Jews, but for all people, including Gentiles (cf. Acts 1:8).¹⁷⁹ In Acts 10:43 Paul is preaching to an audience of Gentiles (probably exclusively) and is also preaching forgiveness of sins here. When Paul defends himself in front of

¹⁷⁶ See also Darrell L. Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts* (BTNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 269.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 266.

¹⁷⁸ Schnabel, *Acts*, 583.

¹⁷⁹ See also Schnabel, *Acts*, 584.

Agrippa, the king, he says that God sent him to his people (ὁ λαός) and the Gentiles (οἱ ἔθνος) so they will receive forgiveness of sins (Acts 26:17). Luke makes it clear here that forgiveness of sins is for both Jews and Gentiles.

- 4. Receiving the forgiveness of sins is becoming a part of the people of God.** In Acts 26:18 Paul says: “they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified (οἱ ἡγιασμένοι) by faith in me.” This expression alludes to Deut 33:3 where the Israelites, the people of God, are called οἱ ἡγιασμένοι (the sanctified). Now those who receive the forgiveness of sins are also part of the people of God. In Lev 20:1-7 the fact that Israel is holy (ἅγιος) means separation from Gentiles.¹⁸⁰ But in Acts 26:17 also Gentiles could be included in people of God.

- 5. The result of repentance and baptism is forgiveness of sins.** Several times in Luke-Acts is forgiveness of sins written in connection to repentance and baptism.¹⁸¹ E.g. in Luke 3:3 it is written that John was “proclaiming a baptism (βάπτισμα) of repentance (μετάνοια) for the forgiveness of sins” (see also Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31). The parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) can give us some hint of Luke’s understanding of sin and forgiveness. When the son came back to the father he said: “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.” What the son had done was to go away from his father and his father’s house and live his life in separation from the father, which led to reckless living. In the same way sin seems to be about separating oneself from God; it is “godlessness and remoteness from God working itself out in a life in the world with all its desires and its filth.”¹⁸² The son turns back to the father and the father accepts him. Similarly, repentance and forgiveness of sins seem to belong together; it is through repentance to God that one receives the forgiveness of sin.

These things may also be relevant in Acts 13:38-39. When Paul says that forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to them, it is a summary of the gospel. Further it is through Jesus and his work that the forgiveness is possible. This is clearly emphasized in the text when he

¹⁸⁰ Karl Georg Kuhn, “ἅγιος,” *TDNT* 1:100.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Bock, *The Theology of Luke and Acts*, 269.

¹⁸² Grundmann, *TDNT* 1:303.

says that it is “through this man” (διὰ τούτου) and he links the content of what he said earlier in the speech, when saying “therefore” (οὖν). The forgiveness is also offered to all people, both Jews and Gentiles (that also Paul’s address in verses 16 and 26 indicates), and all who receive the forgiveness of sins become part of the people of God. The proclamation of forgiveness of sins is probably also an invitation or exhortation for repentance and baptism.

Fulfillment

As written above, forgiveness was previously something one received through the sacrificial system. Now it was received instead through Jesus.¹⁸³ Jesus is thereby the one that has replaced the sacrificial system, and not only replaced it, but also exceeded it. Through the sacrificial system based upon the law it was not possible to be completely righteous, but that was possible through Jesus.

But the forgiveness of sins through Jesus was probably also understood as being in agreement with the Hebrew Scripture. The previous review of God’s action with Israel indicates this. The forgiveness of sins was the fulfillment of what God promised their fathers (Acts 13:32-33). The prophets had been speaking about God renewing his people and giving definitive forgiveness and cleansing (e.g. Jer 31:34; Ezek 36:25).¹⁸⁴ God raising Jesus made this forgiveness available.

Forgiveness of Sins and Justification

It seems like forgiveness and justification are associated with each other.¹⁸⁵ Forgiveness and being justified seem to both be part of the message of salvation (Acts 13:26). Acts 13:38-39 is very similar to Acts 10:43 where Peter says “to him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” The main difference is that Acts 10:43 has “forgiveness of sins,” while Acts 13:38-39 has “being justified.” Both of these things are received by believing. It seems like they are parallel expressions.

¹⁸³ Schnabel, *Acts*, 583.

¹⁸⁴ Peterson, *Acts*, 393.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Witherington, *Acts*, 413; Vielhauer, “Paulinism,” 41.

3.2.3.3 Proclaimed to You (ὕμῖν... ...καταγγέλλεται)

This message is proclaimed “to you;” it is thereby directed clearly to the audience. In verses 33 and 26 Paul said “to us,” and this shift may be due to the fact that, unlike Paul, they has not yet responded to the message of the gospel and need to do that to receive the salvation.¹⁸⁶ Here is Paul emphasizing the relevance of this message for the audience.

3.2.4 “By This Man Everyone Who Believes” (ἐν τούτῳ πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων)

Here it is made clear that Jesus is the basis not only for the forgiveness of sins, but also for justification.¹⁸⁷

The word πιστεύω occurs several times in Luke-Acts. Sometimes πιστεύω means believing that something is true (Acts 9:26; 15:11) or trusting that what someone has said will happen. It is used in regard to believe the message from an angel; believing that this message is true and God will do it (Luke 1:20, 45). Luke writes also about believing that the things Jesus says are true (Luke 20:5; 22:67) and believing that what God has said will happen (Acts 27:25). Jesus often speaks about faith and believing when it comes to miracles (Luke 5:20; 7:9; 8:25, 48, 50; 17:6, 19; 18:2). They believe that Jesus can do something about these problems. So in these cases we see that faith has to do with trusting someone (that he both is able and willing to do something) and a message.

The expression “Everyone who believes” is used both in Acts 10:43 and 13:39. But in Acts 10:43 is it is specified: “all who believes *in him*” (εἰς αὐτόν). It is a belief in someone, more particularly in Jesus from Nazareth (10:38). Even if this is not specified in Acts 10:38-39 it seems probable that this understanding is valid also here (one receives it through Jesus). It is also specified in other places that it is a belief in someone; Jesus/God/the Lord (e.g. Acts 3:16; 10:43; 11:17; 14:23; 16:31, 34; 18:8; 18:27; 29:4; 22:19; 27:25.) Believing in Jesus is to believe that he is Christ (the Messiah) (Luke 22:67), the one that the Scriptures have been speaking about. Believing in Jesus is therefore in accordance with belief in the Hebrew Scriptures. To believe in Jesus is to truly believe the message of Moses and the prophets (24:25, cf. Acts 24:14, 26:27).

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Bock, *Acts*, 458.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Schnabel, *Acts*, 584.

When Jesus is explaining the parable of the sower (Luke 8:9-15) he is speaking about believing. Here, believing is about receiving the word of God and hold on to it. Believing is also indicated here to be a condition for being saved (8:12). In the preaching of Paul and Silas they said: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). Also here believing seems to be a condition for being saved. In Acts believing is a positive and accepting response to the preaching of the gospel (Acts 4:4; 8:12-13; 11:21; 13:48; 14:1; 15:7; 17:12, 34; 18:8; 19:2) or because of a miracle (Acts 13:12). This seems to be similar to the parable of the sower. To believe is to receive and accept the gospel and hold on to it.¹⁸⁸

In Acts 2:44 we find the expression "all who believe" (πάντες οἱ πιστεύοντες) which seems to refer to those who belong to the early church; those who followed Jesus.¹⁸⁹ In other places, the word "believers" also seems to refer to this group (Acts 4:32; 5:14; 15:5; 19:18; 21:20, 25; 22:19; 26:27-28). To believe (in Christ) seems to be understood here as the same as being a Christian following Jesus.¹⁹⁰

The importance of believing for being justified is emphasized in the end of the speech (Acts 13:41), in the quote from Habakkuk. It is a warning for not believing in these things. Those who do not believe will perish, which is in sharp contrast to the earlier words that those who believe will be justified.

3.2.5 "The Law of Moses" (νόμῳ Μωϋσέως)

3.2.5.1 Moses and the Law

In Luke-Acts Moses is very close associated with the law. The expression "the law of Moses" (νόμος Μωϋσέως) is found also many other passages in Luke-Acts (Luke 2:22; 24:44; Acts 15:5; 28:23). Just the name "Moses" sometimes implies the law (e.g. Luke 5:14; 20:28; Acts 21:21), as well as the expression "the custom of Moses" (Acts 6:14; 15:1; see also Acts 21:21). Moses is portrayed both as the lawgiver and as a prophet who

¹⁸⁸ Peterson, *Acts*, 394. Peterson says that believe is to trust in and relies upon the promise that is proclaimed in the gospel and on what Jesus did to make the gospel possible.

¹⁸⁹ Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2078.

¹⁹⁰ The expression Christian could sometimes be understood as something else than Judaism. It is not likely that those who believed in Jesus saw it that way; it rather seems like they still view them as part of Judaism. Therefore I will in general use the expression "believers" (implied "in Christ") in this thesis about those who belonged to the Jesus-movement; those who we would call Christians.

had written about the things that were now happening.

Therefore it seems like the word νόμος can be mainly put into two different categories of use in Luke-Acts. In some cases the law primarily seems to refer to it as Scripture; often with a predicative function. While other times it primarily seems to refer to rules and regulations; as a prescriptive function.¹⁹¹ (However in some cases it is not evident which of these uses that Luke has in mind (e.g. Luke 16:16-17; Acts 21:28).)

3.2.5.2 The Law as Scripture

Sometimes νόμος seems to be about the law as a part of the Hebrew Scriptures and in most of these cases the primary concern seems to be the predicative aspect of the law. In Luke 24:44 the expression the law of Moses (ὁ νόμος Μωσέως) is found together with the prophets (προφήταις) and the Psalms (ψαλμοῖς) which suggests that the law is referring to the Pentateuch. Here it has a predicative aspect because Jesus says that everything that is written about him in them must be fulfilled. The law referred to as part of the Hebrew Scripture is also found in other passages (e.g. Acts 13:15; 24:14; 28:23, see also Luke 16:16) and in most of these passages it has a predicative function.

When the law is used as Scripture Moses often gets a prophetic function that has foretold something that is coming (e.g. Acts 3:22; 7:37; 26:22.); the law contains prophecies. The predicative use of the law (often together with the prophets) and Moses seems to focus on Jesus (Luke 24:44-47; Acts 3:22; 7:37; 23:26; 28:23) and especially his resurrection (Luke 24:46; Acts 26:23; in Acts 3:22 and 7:37 ἀνίστημι could here both be referring to the appearance of Jesus and to the resurrection). But the suffering of Jesus is also explicitly mentioned (Luke 24:46; Acts 26:23). This is probably not everything Luke has to say about the predicative function of the law, but it indicates his main concern: the law has predicted the coming of Jesus, his suffering and his resurrection.

3.2.5.3 The Law as Rules and Regulations

Other times νόμος seems to refer to the prescriptions of the law; the rules and

¹⁹¹ S. G. Wilson, *Luke and the Law* (SNTSMS 50; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1. Wilson is also putting the uses into two categories: "the prescriptions of the law" and "the predicative aspect of the law."

regulations that the Israelites were suppose to follow. There are several different expressions with the word νόμος that is used in Luke-Acts: “the law of Moses” (ὁ νόμος Μωσέως) (Luke 2:22; Acts 13:39; 15:5), “the law of the Lord” (νόμος Κυρίου) (e.g. Luke 2:23-24, 39), “customary under the law” (τὸ εἰθισμένον τοῦ νόμου) (Luke 2:27) “the law of our fathers” (τοῦ πατρῶου νόμου) (Acts 22:3) and just “the law” (e.g. 10:26; Acts 7:53; 18:13, 15; 21:20, 24, 28; 22:3, 12; 23:3, 29; 25:8). And there does not seem to be any clear distinctions between these expressions; all of them seem to refer to the commands, rules and regulations God had issued and that the Israelites were suppose to follow. When Paul is coming to the Roman authorities, the word νόμος (found in Acts 23:29 and 25:8) clearly refers to the rules and regulation the Jews were suppose to follow, in contrast to the juridical laws by the Roman authorities.

3.2.5.4 Affirmation or Rejection of the Law in Luke-Acts?

Luke is often regarded to have a more positive view (some call it a more conservative view) of the law than many of the other NT-writers, especially Paul.¹⁹² Some examples in Luke-Acts that could support this claim: Many followers of Jesus or people connected to Jesus are described as obedient to the law, both in the gospel¹⁹³ and in Acts.¹⁹⁴ Luke omits passages where Jesus seems to oppose or criticize the law in Matthew and Mark; in some cases whole stories (e.g. Matt 5:21-48; Mark 7:1-23) and in other places just the parts that seems to questioning the law (e.g. Luke 6:1-5 omits Mark 2:37; compare Luke 16:18 versus Mark 10:1-12).¹⁹⁵ Luke has several positive statements about the law (Acts 7:38; 7:53) and in Luke 16:16 its validity seems to be emphasized.¹⁹⁶ And even if the law is sometimes reinterpreted, there is no place in Luke-Acts where it is explicitly said to be invalid.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹² E.g. Vielhauer, “Paulinism,” 37-43; Jacob Jervell, *Luke and the people of God: A new look at Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1972), 133-152.

¹⁹³ E.g. the parents of Jesus (Luke 2:21-24, 27, 39, 42), Elizabeth and Zechariah (1:6), Simeon and Anna (2:25, 37), Joseph of Arimathea (23:50) and the women following Jesus (23:56). Craig L. Blomberg, “The Law in Luke-Acts,” *JSNT* 22 (1984), 53-80, 54; Jervell, *Luke and the people*, 138. However, as I will show later, some of these law-obedient characters may not only be understood positively by Luke.

¹⁹⁴ E.g. the believers in Jerusalem attended the temple regularly (Acts 2:16; 3:1) and it seems presupposed that the first congregations followed the law of ritual purity (Acts 10:9-16, 28; 11:2-3). Paul is described many places to live according to the law (Acts 13:14; 16:3; 18:18; 21:23-24; 24:14; 25:8; 26:22; 28:17). Jervell, *Luke and the people*, 138; Blomberg, “Law,” 54-55.

¹⁹⁵ Blomberg, “Law,” 54; Jervell, *Luke and the people*, 138-140; Jervell, *Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 56-57.

¹⁹⁶ Blomberg, “Law,” 55.

¹⁹⁷ See Daniel Marguerat, “Paul and the Torah in the Acts of the Apostles,” in *Torah in the New Testament: Papers Delivered at the Manchester-Lausanne Seminar of June, 2008* (ed. Michael Tait and Peter Oakes;

However there are also some passages and traits in Luke-Acts where Luke seems to understand the law as more negatively, or at least he emphasizes its limitations (Luke 16:16; Acts 13:39; 15:10).¹⁹⁸

It has been suggested that Luke makes a distinction between the oral and the written law and that he is criticising the oral while confirming the written law.¹⁹⁹ But it does not seem like Luke is making such a distinction.²⁰⁰ Neither does it seem like he emphasizes a distinction between the ritual/cultic law and the ethical law, as others have suggested.²⁰¹

3.2.5.5 Luke 16:16-18

The passage where Jesus may most explicitly speak about the law in the gospel of Luke is 16:16-18. While Matthew has these verses in different passages Luke has put them together (Luke 16:16 in Matt 11:12-13; Luke 16:17 in Matt 5:18 (see also Luke 21:33); Luke 16:18 in Matt 5:32).

In verse 16 we find two periods: one of the law and the prophets and one of the kingdom of God that had now been introduced.²⁰² It is possible to understand this verse in an antithetical way: that the former era has ended and a new one is coming.²⁰³ But I find it

LNTS 401; New York: T&T Clark International, 2009), 98-117.

¹⁹⁸ Jervell, *Luke and the people*, 139. Jervell's statement that "in Luke's Gospel, every criticism is missing" is therefore not quite correct and must be dismissed. And to consider some of these passages as "reminiscences and echoes from tradition and never developed into a theological concept" does not seem to take Luke's editorial work seriously; if these passages would contradict Paul's theology it is not likely that he would have left them in the text.

¹⁹⁹ E.g. Werner G. Kümmel, *The Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1974), 51-53.

²⁰⁰ Luke does not make a clear distinction between "customs" and the written law. Sometimes regulations found in the written law are also included in "customs" (e.g. 15:1; 21:21). Luke does not put "the tradition of men" up against "God's commandment" as Matthew and Mark are doing (Mark 7:8; Matt 15:3-6).

²⁰¹ For this view see e.g. Stephen Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority* (Lund: Gleerup, 1978), 91. Jesus challenges both the ethical and the ritual law (see Luke 16:18 and 11:37-41) and the Apostolic council in Acts 15 decided that the Gentiles should follow a some few parts of the law, and that included both ritual and ethical matters. See Blomberg, "Law," 69.

²⁰² I do not find the question regarding which period John belonged to being relevant for this discussion. For some different views in this question see e.g. Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: Volume 2: 9:51-24:53* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 1351; Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, trans. G. Buswell (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 20, n. 237; Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 603, n. 317; I. Howard Marshall: *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 628.

²⁰³ Bock, *Theology*, 361. See also Blomberg, "Law," 60-61.

more probable that it means that an important new element has come in addition to the law and the prophets and they are not demised.²⁰⁴ The two eras are therefore in continuity. The following verse seems to suggest that the law is not just a past chapter in history.

It has been suggested that the expression that “it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than for one stroke of a letter in the law to be dropped” should be interpreted as that the law does not fail because it is fulfilled in Jesus.²⁰⁵ Luke seems to show the continuity between the law and the prophets and the kingdom of God in its predicative use (Luke 24:44; Acts 3:22; 7:37; 24:14; 26:22; 28:23). It follows Luke’s scheme of promise and fulfilment (Luke 1-2; 3:1-6; 15-20; 7:18-35; Acts 10:37; 13:34-35).²⁰⁶ The law has foretold the coming of the kingdom of God. With the coming of the kingdom of God a new era has started that is in continuity of the law.²⁰⁷

But at the same time the context seems to indicate that Luke is not only thinking about the predicative aspect of the law²⁰⁸ when writing about that it is difficult for the law to pass. Jesus is speaking about themes that have more to do with the prescriptive function of the law: Jesus addresses how to use money (16:1-13), divorce (16:18) and have concern for the poor (16:19-31). Also law-obedience among Jewish believers in Acts may also indicate that the law does not just have a predicative function in the new era.

Jesus’ saying regarding divorce is in tension with the regulations for divorce in Torah (Deut 24) and even if it may be received as less sceptical of the regulations in the law than Mark 10:11-12²⁰⁹ it is nevertheless prohibiting what the Torah permits.²¹⁰ In the time of Jesus there were different interpretations of when divorce was permitted, and some of them were quite liberal.²¹¹ In giving this rigorous understanding of divorce, he

²⁰⁴ See Wilson, *Luke*, 43-51.

²⁰⁵ E.g. R. J. Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition* (SNTSMS 28: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 214-215.

²⁰⁶ Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1351. For another view see Fitzmyer, *Luke 1-9*, 182-187.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Blomberg, “Law,” 60; Sigurd Grindheim, “Luke, Paul, and the Law,” *NovT* 56 (2014), 335-358.

²⁰⁸ In Matthew (5:18) the law’s eternal validity is more clearly associated with the prophetic use of the law.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Jervell, *Luke and the people*, 139.

²¹⁰ Blomberg, “Law,” 61.

²¹¹ There are later sources of a debate regarding divorce: The School of Hillel had a more expansive interpretation of the rules for divorce; it could allow it just because the husband found another woman

challenges and criticises the contemporary liberal rabbinic interpretations of the law.²¹² In that way his interpretation of the law may have been perceived as upholding the law.²¹³ However it could also be understood as Jesus intensifying or extending the law;²¹⁴ he is showing that the will of God is more radical than the contemporary focus on keeping the details of the law. The law does not speak for itself and could be used and understood erroneously.²¹⁵ Jesus may therefore be showing here that the kingdom of God has higher standards than the contemporary understanding of the law.²¹⁶

However in other places, especially the controversy regarding the Sabbath, it clearly seems like Jesus violated the law (Luke 6:1-5; see also 6:6-11; 13:10-17; 14:1-6).²¹⁷ If one sees this in relation to Jesus' replies it seems like Jesus is emphasizing the foundational principles of the law, before the specific commands. Also here the law could be used erroneously.

So these verses seem to indicate several things: The kingdom of God introduces something significant and new, a new era. At the same time this is not antithetical to, but in continuity with the law and the prophets (it fulfils what the law and the prophets spoke of). Neither is the prescriptive aspect of the law abandoned. Instead it seems like Jesus is pointing to a higher and more radical standard than the contemporary interpretation of it.

3.2.5.6 What to Do to Receive Eternal Life?

There are two texts in Luke where a person comes to Jesus and asks what he shall do to

more attractive. The School of Shammai were more restrictive. M.Git. 9.10. See Green, *Luke*, 604, n. 322; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, (SP 3; Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 251. See also Josephus *Life* 426-427; *Ant.* 4.253; Philo, *Spec.* 3.30.

²¹² Green, *Luke*, 603-604; Grindheim, "Luke, Paul," 353.

²¹³ Fitzmyer refers to Qumran texts (CD 4:212b-5:14a; 11QTemple 57:17-19), which could indicate prohibition of divorce. Joseph A. Fitzmyer: "The Matthean Divorce Texts and some new Palestinian Evidence," *Theol. Stud.* 37 (1976): 197-226. If this interpretation is right it shows that at least some Jews prohibited divorce. Even if this was a sectarian group that may have been in opposition to the Pharisaic view of divorce, it indicates that Jesus saying about divorce in Luke 16:18 may not necessarily need to be understood as contradictory to the law.

²¹⁴ Wilson, *Luke and the Law*, 50-51.

²¹⁵ Green, *Luke*, 604.

²¹⁶ Grindheim, "Luke, Paul," 353.

²¹⁷ Blomberg, "Law," 58-59. To pluck grain was to harvest and harvest was forbidden on the Sabbath in the law (Ex 16:25-26; 34:21).

inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25-37; 18:18-30).²¹⁸ In both of these passages Jesus seems to confirm the law; after the lawyer had quoted the double love command Jesus says “do this and you will live” and in 18:20 Jesus is quoting some of the commandments in the law. Keeping the law may look like the way of inherit eternal life. But in both passages Jesus also seems to extend the law. When the lawyer in the first passage asks Jesus who his neighbor is Jesus gives a parable that extends the expression “neighbor” to not only include Jews and Proselytes, but also Samaritans (implying also other non-Jews).²¹⁹ And in the second passage Jesus not only asks the ruler to follow the commandment, but also sell everything and give to the poor. In both stories Jesus seems to understand the demands for eternal life to be much more than what normally was considered to be the demands of the law. But then we also see differences in these two stories. In the second story, Jesus in his answer asks the ruler to follow him. When the ruler becomes sad Jesus says: “it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” And when those who listened ask who could be saved Jesus says that what is impossible for mortals is possible for God. Here two things are added regarding inheriting eternal life: the role of Jesus (that one should follow him) and that it is impossible (or almost impossible)²²⁰ for humans to manage to do it by themselves. In this way these two passages seem to be in tension regarding what is needed to inherit eternal life. But the person that is asking is never portrayed in a good light in any of these passages;²²¹ even if both of them seem to be very obedient to the law, the story rather seems to understand them as not achieving what they were concerned about; inheriting eternal life. The message seems to be that it is not enough to just keep the law, the demands of God exceed the normal understanding of the law. And in the passage in chapter 18, Luke seems to point out that it is extremely hard (or impossible) for humans to enter the kingdom of God, but that it is possible for God to do something about it.

²¹⁸ The striking fact that the lawyer in the first of these text is asking a different question than in Mark 12:28 (“Which commandment is the first of all?”) may indicate that Luke focus on the law’s practical value for salvation. Grindheim, “Luke, Paul,” 343. Jervell is instead suggesting that Luke has another question because he did not want to raise one principle above another. Jervell, *Luke and the People*, 139.

²¹⁹ The earlier quoted passages from Lev 19:18 was normally interpreted to only be applied to Jews and proselytes. Grindheim, “Luke, Paul,” 344, n. 26.

²²⁰ Wilson suggests that it may be hyperbolic language and that the expression rather speaks of the difficulty for a rich to enter the kingdom of God, than the impossibility to do so. Wilson, *Luke and the Law*, 45.

²²¹ See Grindheim, 344. E.g. Jesus’ positive comment regarding the man in Mark 12:34 is absent from Luke 10:27-34 and Luke writes that the man is coming to test Jesus.

3.2.5.7 Law-Obedience Versus Faith in the Narrative of the Gospel of Luke

Sigurd Grindheim has recently come with an important contribution regarding the law in Luke-Acts.²²² He has focused on how Luke uses his characters in the narrative for developing his theology: Several times people that are presented as law-obedient (either in their description or in the fact that they are Pharisees,²²³ scribes etc.), but in the end they do not seem to be examples to follow. One example is Zechariah who is described as “righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord” (Luke 1:6). But despite this he is not portrayed in very good light when the story continues.²²⁴ When the angel is announcing the birth of a son, he responds with disbelief and as a result of that he can’t speak until the son is born. A positive counterpart to Zechariah is Mary (1:26-38). It is remarkable that she is not described as having righteousness like Zechariah. But in contrast to Zechariah, she believes and accepts what the angel is announcing. Maria, not Zechariah, is the one that Luke portrays as a good example to follow and receives the approval of God.

Grindheim claims: “Luke consistently draws a contrast between characters that are defined by obedience to the law and characters that are defined by faith.”²²⁵ Those who believe are accepted by God, not those who are obedient to the law. And he shows several examples of Luke, in addition to the example of Zechariah and Mary, contrasting people who are “law-defined” and “faith-defined:”

- The paralytic and his friends are contrasted with the scribes and Pharisees (Luke 5:17-26). Luke comments on the faith of the first group and the paralytic receives forgiveness of sins in contrast to the scribes and Pharisees.
- The tax collector Levi is contrasted with Pharisees and the scribes (Luke 5:27-32).
- The sinful woman is contrasted with Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-50). Jesus

²²² Sigurd Grindheim, “Luke, Paul, and the Law,” *NovT* 56 (2014): 335-358.

²²³ The Pharisees was a movement that was very scrupulous in regard to the law. They had supplementary ruling, to be sure to not come close to breaking a scriptural command. They seemed to have applied purity regulations that in the Hebrew Scripture were concerned with the priests and those who visited the temple to everyday life. Oskar Skarsaune, *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influence on Early Christianity* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 117-122. Also in Luke-Acts we find these characterizations: Pharisees were people who were strictly following the law (Luke 18:11-12; Acts 26:5).

²²⁴ Many scholars has *not* noted this fact when they write about the law in Luke, e.g. Blomberg, “Law,” 57; Bock, *Luke 1*, 77-78.

²²⁵ Grindheim, “Luke, Paul,” 336.

forgives her sins and says that her faith has saved her while Simon is put to shame.

- The tax collector is contrasted with a Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14).
- Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), the tax collector, is contrasted with the rich ruler (18:18-25). The rich ruler had observed the law, but it was not he, but Zacchaeus (who is described as a sinner) who gives away his money to the poor.

In all these cases it is not the people who are described as law-obedient who Luke seems to view as good examples. Instead it is other people, many of them described as sinners, who Luke uses as examples to follow and who are accepted by God/Jesus. Luke therefore seems to emphasize that salvation is not received through law-obedience.

However, this trait must not be understood as Luke opposing the law. Luke clearly describes Mary and Joseph as obedient to the law later in the narrative (Luke 2:21, 22-24, 41), which clearly shows that the point is not that you should not follow the law.²²⁶ But the point is that in regard to the issues of salvation and being accepted by God, Luke seems to point out that law-obedience is of no value;²²⁷ instead it is one's receptiveness of Jesus and belief that is the crucial thing.

3.2.5.8 The Law in Regard to Salvation in Acts

In Acts I found two episodes especially important; one before and one after Acts 13. The episode of Cornelius is in chapter 10-11. Through a vision and the experience of Cornelius and other Gentiles receiving the Holy Spirit, God makes Peter understand that circumcision and keeping the law is not necessarily to become a believer of Jesus and be baptized. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles seems to be understood as God accepting the Gentiles (see Acts 10:47; 15:8). When Peter explains it to the believers in Jerusalem they conclude "then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life (ζωή)" (Acts 11:18). The life must be understood as being the same as eternal life (cf. Luke 10:25; 18:18, 30). Peter's words in Acts 10:43 indicate that Luke understands faith in Jesus as the important thing for forgiveness of sins, not law-

²²⁶ Also Simeon is described as righteous (Luke 2:25), but this does not seem to be about his law-obedience. See Grindheim, 241, note 12.

²²⁷ See e.g. Marguerat, 102-106; Keener, *Acts 3:1-14:28*; 2078.

obedience.²²⁸

In Acts 15 Luke is again dealing with the Gentiles' relation to the law. It starts with some people claiming that circumcision is necessary to be saved and also that the Gentile believers need to keep the law (15:1, 5). In the discussion Peter talks about the law as a yoke on the neck that they hadn't been able to bear (15:10). A "yoke" is a word for restraint, which had been used metaphorically about social and political oppression (2 Chr 10:10; Macc 8:31; LXX Ps 2:3). But it had also been used as a symbol of accepting the responsibility to follow the law in rabbinic Judaism.²²⁹ To bear the yoke of the law was understood as a privilege and something positive.²³⁰ In Acts 15:10 it seems also to be a critique of the law when calling it a yoke; it was something that no one managed to follow (Matt 11:30; Sir 51:26). It may have been an ironical use: neither they nor their fathers had been able to bear the law that was the pride of Israel.²³¹ This is in accordance with Stephen's accusation of the Jews not having kept the law (Acts 7:53). By his statement Peter emphasizes that it was not possible to keep the law, even for the most pious. Instead Paul says God was "cleansing their hearts by faith" (15:9) and emphasizes that in that regard there were no distinctions between them and Gentile believers. Peter concludes his speech by stating: "we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will." Instead of circumcision and keeping the law; this passage concludes very clearly with the statement that it is by the grace of the Lord Jesus that one is saved, both when it comes to Jews and to Gentiles. The conclusion in the Apostolic decree is therefore that the Gentiles do not need to follow the law, with a few exceptions (Acts 15:20). There are several suggestions regarding reason for the Apostolic decree.²³² However, the arguments we find in Acts 10-11 and 15 makes it very clear that it couldn't be a soteriological reason.²³³

²²⁸ However, in Acts 10:2 Cornelius is described as a pious Gentile. This indicates that even if the law is not necessary for salvation it is not dismissed.

²²⁹ See Johnson, *Acts*, 262-263.

²³⁰ Philippe H. Menoud, *Jesus Christ and the Faith: A Collection of Studies* (trans. Eunice M. Paul; PTMS 18; Pittsburgh, The Pickwick Press, 1978), 204; Witherington, *Acts*, 454.

²³¹ Marguerat, "Paul and the Torah," 107.

²³² Some think it was because of relational concern between Gentile believers and Jewish believers: E.g. Bock, *Theology*, 366; Fitzmyer, *Acts*; 556-557; Marguerat, 109-110. Others suggest that it is about ecclesiology and the Gentiles should keep the part of the law that was regarding them: E.g. Jervell, *Luke and the people*, 133-151. Others suggests that the apostolic decree replaced the law, e.g. Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, 145, 212-213.

²³³ Marguerat, "Paul and the Torah," 109-111.

3.2.5.9 Christianity as Not Breaking the Law, but Truly to Keeping the Law

A recurrent theme in Acts is that Jews again and again accuses Jesus and his followers of having abandoned the law and customs of Moses (e.g. Acts 6:11, 13, 14; 21:21, 28; 25:8; 28:17). It seems like part of Luke's agenda in Acts is to refute these accusations. Luke seems to constantly reject this claim (e.g. Acts 6:1, 13-14; 21:21ff; 25:8) and he instead accuses the Jews themselves of not following the law and Moses (e.g. Acts 7:35, 39, 53; 23:3).²³⁴

When Stephen is accused of have spoken blasphemous words against Moses and God, he shows in his defense speech that their fathers persecuted those who announced the coming of the Righteous One, and now themselves murdered him. He concludes: "You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it." (Acts 17:53) By rejecting Jesus it is they who are not following Moses and the law. To Luke it seems like believing in Jesus is the heart of keeping the law because he understood Jesus as fulfilling the law.²³⁵ The gospel of Christ is not against, but according to, and is the fulfillment of the law and Moses (e.g. Luke 24:27, 44; Acts 3:22; 7:37; 26:11).

Here the prescriptive and predicative use of the law come together. To follow the law is not just to keep the commandments, but also to believe in the Messiah of which the law speaks.

3.2.5.10 Jewish Believers and Gentile Believers and the Law

Even if Luke seems to emphasize that one is not saved by keeping the law, he does not seem by that to dismisses the practice of keeping the commandments in the law, at least not for the Jewish believers. Several things point to this: Mary who had believed the word of the angels is portrayed after that as keeping the law (Luke 2:21, 22-24, 41) and the early Jewish believers are portrayed as keeping the law (see above). Especially noteworthy is that Paul seems to be obedient to the law also after the Apostles' decree (see e.g.21:23-26), including circumcising people (16:3). This suggests that it is neither

²³⁴ Jervell, *Theology*, 54.

²³⁵ Hvalvik, "Paul as a Jewish Believer," 151.

correct that the law was given up and that the Apostolic decree replaced that law²³⁶ or that the law was “no longer directly relevant for the church *apart from* its fulfillment in and interpretation by Lord Jesus.”²³⁷

Luke also seems to make a distinction between the ways Gentile believers and Jewish believers were supposed to relate to the law. The Apostolic decree implies that Jewish believers should continue with circumcision and keeping the law, even if the Gentile believers didn't (see also Acts 21:21).²³⁸ But it is not for soteriological reasons, but because they belonged to this people.

3.2.5.11 The Law in Acts 13:38-39

Before the speech in Acts 13 they had read from the Law and the Prophets (13:15) in the synagogue. In Paul's speech he seems to try to show that Jesus is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets (13:23, 27, 29, 32-35).²³⁹ This fits well with Luke's predicative understanding of the law; the coming of Jesus is not in contradiction to the law, but it is in continuity with and is the fulfillment of the law. This also shows that the statement about the law of Moses in Acts 13:39 should not be perceived in only negative terms. The speech instead seems to confirm the law in its predicative sense, even if it is not explicitly mentioned.

Perry has suggested that the law in verse 39 should be interpreted in light of the prophet Habakkuk. Perry thinks Paul intended at least part of his audience to hear an echo from Hab 1:4 because he is quoting LXX Hab 1:5 afterwards. In doing so Paul interprets the law in continuity with the OT and gives it a further exegetical basis for his interpretation. Similarly to the words in Acts 13:39 about things the law couldn't do, Hab 1:4a writes about the inability of the law: “So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth.”²⁴⁰

Anderson understands this passage in Habakkuk not to be about priests neglecting the

²³⁶ Conzelmann, *Theology*, 145ff and 212ff.

²³⁷ Blomberg, “Law,” 70-71.

²³⁸ Marguerat, “Paul and the Torah,” 111.

²³⁹ This seems to be the case even if the neither the law (νόμος) or Moses is mentioned in the speech before verse 39.

²⁴⁰ Gregory R. Perry, “Paul in Acts and the Law in the Prophets,” *HIB* 31 (2, 2009): 160-177.

teaching of the law, or the people who did not observe the law, but rather that the law is dysfunctional.²⁴¹ Habakkuk seems to think God has failed to supply him with the law and justice.²⁴² It is about God not doing anything in a time of a declining society with violence and contention.²⁴³ It does not mean Paul thought the law should be abolished, but instead shows its inability to save.²⁴⁴ In contrast to the inability of the law in Hab 1:4, we have the “work in your days that you would not believe if told” in Hab 1:5.²⁴⁵ The word “work” (ἔργον) often refers in Acts to the work of God (e.g. Acts 5:38; 13:2; 14:26; 15:38);²⁴⁶ and with the previous speech in mind it would fit to understand “work” as God’s work of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus will bring the justice that the law was unable to.²⁴⁷

I find it hard to tell if the echo of Hab 1:4 was intended. On the other hand I find this interpretation of Hab 1 to fit well with Luke’s theology regarding the law. It gives an understanding of the law’s inability to save and this understanding has continuity back to the Hebrew Scriptures.

However, in light of Luke’s general understanding, it seems to correctly interpret the inability or the limitation of the law in this passage to be about soteriology. Both in the story about Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10-11), that is before this speech, and in the story about the Apostle Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15) that is after this story, the question about the law’s role in salvation is evident. And both of the stories seem to reject the law as a means for salvation (e.g. Acts 10:43; 15:11). The context in the speech describes the impossibility of being justified through the law. When Paul speaks here about the law it is not a question of whether Jewish believers and Gentile believers are supposed to follow the law. What Luke has in mind here is the inability for humans to be justified through the law; it is about the question of the law’s soteriological function.

²⁴¹ The law should here not be understood as a technical term for neither the written or the oral teaching of Moses. But in this time God could give the living law (תורה) through priests. Francis I. Andersen, *Habakkuk* (AB 25; , New York: Doubleday, 2001), 121.

²⁴² Andersen, *Habakkuk*, 119-121.

²⁴³ Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi* (WBC 32; Texas: Word Books, 1984), 99.

²⁴⁴ Perry, “Paul in Acts,” 165.

²⁴⁵ Keener is referring to the Qumran’s commentary on Habakkuk (*1QpHab*) where this verse is applied to endtime. Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*.

²⁴⁶ Gaventa, *Acts*, 202.

²⁴⁷ See Perry, “Paul in Acts,” 165.

3.2.6 “Is Freed from Everything from Which You Could Not Be Freed” (ἀπὸ πάντων ὧν οὐκ ἠδυνήθητε... ..δικαιοῦται)

As I have mentioned, Paul now unfolds the message of salvation (13:26). First he mentioned the forgiveness of sins and now he says that the effect is being justified (alt. freed)²⁴⁸ (for those who believe). In this passage I will consider what is meant by the word for justifying (δικαιόω).

3.2.6.1 δικαιοῦ in Luke-Acts Versus the Pauline Undisputed Letters

In this speech we find the verb two times, but this verb is not used any other places in Acts. And in the gospel of Luke we find the verb only in five occasions. Instead this word occurs much more frequently in the Pauline letters, especially in Romans and Galatians (22 times in the uncontested letters by Paul). Many scholars have pointed out the similarities of justification by Jesus here and the language Paul himself uses when writing about righteousness through the law versus righteousness through faith (Rom 2:13; 3:24-26; 4:2, 5; 5:1, 9; 8:30, 33; 1 Cor 8:11; Gal 2:16; 3:11, 24).²⁴⁹ However, other words with the same root, such as δίκαιος, occur also in Luke-Acts. I am later going to investigate the relationship between this passage and Paul's letters. But first I will examine the understanding of justification we find in Luke-Acts in general and interpret the understanding of this verse in light of that.

3.2.6.2 Being Righteous in Luke-Acts

When Luke uses the related word δίκαιος it seems to be about the piety and ethical quality of a person, related to his/her behaviour (e.g. Luke 1:6; 2:25; Acts 10:22).²⁵⁰ This ethical quality seems to be based upon conformity to God's will; and often it seems to be based on their observance of the law (see Luke 1:6: “walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord;” see also e.g. 2:25; 23:50).²⁵¹ Also the word δικαιοσύνη seems in many passages to be about the fulfillment of the will of God and

²⁴⁸ Here, ESV, as well as NRSV, translate δικαιοῦ with “free,” but many translations, e.g. NIV, translate instead δικαιόω with “justify” translations instead use “being justified.” In this thesis I will mostly use “justify,” when not quoting from these verses.

²⁴⁹ See e.g. Johnson, *Acts*, 236; Scot McKnight, “Justice, Righteousness,” *DJG*, 411-416; C. S. C. Williams, *A Commentary on The Acts of the Apostles* (2nd ed; BNTC; London: Adam & Charles Black, 1964), 165-166.

²⁵⁰ E.g. McKnight, “Justice, Righteousness,” 415; John Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20* (WBC 35A; Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 26.

²⁵¹ McKnight, “Justice, Righteousness,” 413-415.

obeying his demands (e.g. Luke 1:75; 10:35; Acts 24:25).²⁵² This understanding is also found in the OT where being righteous is often about one's relationship to God, and therefore is about living in conformity with the demands and standards of God (e.g. Gen 18:19; Deut 6:25; Ps 1:4-6).²⁵³ To be righteous is also understood in connection to salvation from God (e.g. Ps 37:29, 39 (LXX: Ps 36:29, 39); Isa 60:21).

Luke often writes that Jesus' mission is not for the righteous, but for sinners. "I have not come to call the righteous (δικαίοι) but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32, see also 15:7). These sayings may be understood literally and in accordance of Luke's concern for the poor, suppressed and sinners. But it does not seem like a coincidence that both of these sayings are found in a story where Pharisees and scribes are grumbling over Jesus socializing with tax collectors and sinners. Therefore the "righteous" is probably an allusion to the Pharisees and scribes. And Luke's general portrayal of Pharisees and scribes does not suggest that he thinks they really are righteous (e.g. 11:39-41). Therefore I found it likely that this passage should be understood ironically. They may seem to be righteous and think of themselves like that, but this is not Luke's perspective;²⁵⁴ the righteousness of the Pharisees and the scribes is not sufficient.²⁵⁵ In criticising Jesus for his company with sinners, they put themselves above others, and seem to be blind for their own need of Jesus' ministry. This understanding seems to also be present in Luke 16:15 where he says that the Pharisees are justifying themselves (δικαίω ἑαυτὸν)²⁵⁶ before men in contrast to God that knows their hearts. Even if they may have been seen as righteous, Luke does not seem to understand them like that before God. As long as they do not see their need of Jesus as the physician, Jesus can't help them. This is also in agreement with my earlier assertion that those who are portrayed as law-obedient in Luke-Acts in general do not seem to be examples to follow. Luke seems to imply that one needs to realize one's own sinfulness.

²⁵² Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: Volume 1: 1:1-9:50* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 186. See also Schrenk, "δικαιοσύνη," *TDNT* 2:192-210.

²⁵³ McKnight, "Justice, Righteousness," 412. The equivalent word to δίκαιος in Hebrew is צַדִּיק, which refers to conduct "in accordance with the requirement of a particular relationship."

²⁵⁴ Bock, *Luke: 1:1-9:50*, 498; Bock, *Luke: 9:51-24:53*, 1302; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke 10-24*, (AB 28A; New York: Doubleday, 1985), 1078; Green, *Luke*, 575.

²⁵⁵ McKnight, "Justice" "Righteousness," 413.

²⁵⁶ The expression "justifying oneself" is also found in Acts 10:29. Even if there are different views of how one should interpret this expression in this context, the person does not seem to be portrayed positively by Luke. For some difference interpretations see e.g. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1027; John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (WBC 35B; Dallas: Word Books, 1993), 592.

This indicates that Luke understands no humans as completely righteous (δίκαιος) before God. This understanding seems to have its roots from the OT. In Psalm 143:2 (LXX: Ps 142:2) it is written “for no one living is righteous before you,”²⁵⁷ and also passages like Eccl 7:20 seem to have a similar understanding. This fits with my earlier claim that there was an understanding in Judaism of all humans as sinful.

So it seems like being righteous is understood in Luke as living in the conformity of God’s will. But he also seems to think that no humans are really righteous before God, and therefore all are in need of God’s salvation.

3.2.6.3 Justification in Luke 18:9-14

The word δικαίω is used only 5 times in addition to Acts 13:38-39. I have already mentioned Luke 10:29 and 16:15. In Luke 7:29 and 7:35 it is used very differently from Acts 13 and does not seem to be directly relevant for this passage (e.g. in none of the cases are humans being justified and instead it is humans who are justifying God/wisdom). But the last passage where this word is used (Luke 18:14) seems to be very relevant for Acts 13:38-39.

The parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14) is addressed to “some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous (δίκαιος) and looked down on everyone else.”²⁵⁸ In the end of the story it is the tax collector, not the Pharisee, that goes home justified. The Pharisees were a movement that was very scrupulous in regard to the law.²⁵⁹ The tax collectors were disliked by other Jews because they worked for the Roman Empire and because they often misused their positions and were regarded as dishonest.²⁶⁰ In the gospel of Luke they are associated with sinners (Luk 7:30, 34). In this parable the Pharisee thanks God for not being like other people, like the tax collector, while the tax collector calls himself a sinner (ἁματωλός) and asks God to have mercy upon him. In the end Jesus concludes that the tax collector rather than the Pharisee “went home to his house justified (δεδικαιωμένος).”

²⁵⁷ Schlier, “δικαίω,” *TDNT* 2:211-219. The LXX (Ps 142:2) goes even further and seems to view justification also impossible

²⁵⁸ Luke does not specify who these are. Green, *Luke*, 645-646.

²⁵⁹ Skarsaune, *In the Shadow*, 117-122.

²⁶⁰ McKnight, “Justice” “Righteousness,” 413.

Several things can be noted regarding justification: First, the story seems to reject justification based upon oneself. The story has a conclusion that probably was unexpected for the listeners: it was not the one representing piety and law-obedience, but a person representing dishonesty and associated with sinners, that was justified. This fits the earlier mentioned trait in the gospel of Luke: law-obedience is not important in regard to acceptance of God. It dismisses trust in one's own righteousness in regard to justification (see also Luke 16:15; Luke 18:18-27). Also Acts 13:38-39 seems to reject justification based on one's own law-obedience.

Secondly, one is justified by someone else. In this passage, as in Acts 13:38-39, *δικαίω* is used with a passive understanding,²⁶¹ which underlines that it is not the person him-/herself that is the one that is justifying, but God.²⁶² The tax collector was praying to God, which suggests that it is God who is justifying. In Acts 13 one is justified by Jesus. Righteousness in front of God is from God himself, in contrast to depending upon one's law-obedience (Luke 18:9, 11-12; cf. Luke 16:15; Luke 18:18-27).

Thirdly, to be justified one needs to realize and admit that one is in need of God for justification. The difference between the Pharisee and the tax collector was that the tax collector understood this, while the Pharisee didn't (see also Luke 5:32; Luke 15:7). So even if faith is not explicitly mentioned as a condition for being justified, it seems implied. When the tax collector is praying to God, he is also showing a hope or trust in God. In reading Acts 13 in light of Luke 18 it seems that believing is about approaching God and trusting God instead of trusting oneself.

Fourth, in this parable sin and justification are connected, a connection not found in Luke-Acts except in Acts 13:38-39. The tax collector calls himself a sinner (*ἁμαρτωλός*), but went home justified (*δεδικαιωμένος*). Justification here means that the tax collector was forgiven his sins. Being justified in Acts 13:38-39 also seems to imply forgiveness of sins. It is not explicitly stated what "everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses" means. The most probable suggestion is sins, because Paul had just been

²⁶¹ In Luke 18:14 and once in Acts 13:38-39 is *δικαίω* in middle form, but with a passive understanding.

²⁶² Johnson, *Luke*, 272. See also Fitzmyer, *Luke: 1-9*, 1188.

speaking about forgiveness of sins.²⁶³ What I have showed in Luke 18:9-14, as well as Acts 10:43, may support this.

Fifth, the context of this parable in Luke 18 may also indicate that justification is also about being fitted for the kingdom of God. The parable starts a section in the gospel of Luke that has been suggested being about “the nature of fitness for the kingdom of God.”²⁶⁴ In the following story Jesus concludes: “whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it” (Luke 18:17). In Luke 18:18-30 the rich man is asking Jesus about how to receive eternal life (cf. 10:25) and later in the story Jesus says “it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God” (Luke 18:25). The whole section seems to be about being fitted for entering the kingdom of God and inheriting eternal life; which indicate that justification is linked to these concepts (18:14). Also other passages confirm this impression: In Luke 14:14 and Acts 24:15 being just (δίκαιος) is linked to the resurrection. In Acts 24:15 δίκαιος is also contrasted with the unjust (ἄδικοι); which may imply different destiny at the judgement. That may suggest that justification in Acts 13 may be linked to the question of being fitted for the kingdom of God and eternal life. This claim may be supported by the warning saying that those who do not believe will perish (13:40-41). Those who believe will instead live; which may connote eternal life (cf. Acts 14:22).

3.2.6.4 Juridical Understanding and Relational Understanding of δικαίω in Acts 13:38-39

Some scholars have emphasized a juridical understanding of δικαίω.²⁶⁵ By this it means to acquit/justify a person that is accused of having done something wrong, instead of judging him as guilty and to penalty. In the OT δικαίω is several places used in such a juridical setting (e.g. Ex 23:7; Deut 25:1; 2 Sam 15:4; Isa 5:23). Sometime it is about God as the divine judge who will condemn or acquit/vindicate (1 King 8:32; 2 Chr 6:23; Ps 19:9 (LXX: Ps 18:10)).²⁶⁶ This understanding emphasizes that justification means being justified from sin, guilt and punishment, so one is righteous before God.

²⁶³ Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2077. Keener rejects that it is the law one is freed from because “the law of Moses would hardly free from its own laws.” See also Johnson, *Acts*, 236.

²⁶⁴ Green, *Luke*, 644.

²⁶⁵ E.g. Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 518; Schnabel, *Acts*, 584. Schlier, “δικαίω,” *TDNT* 2:214. See also Peterson, *Acts*, 394.

²⁶⁶ Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 518; Schnabel, *Acts*, 584. See also Peterson, *Acts*, 394.

Others advocate an understanding of δικαίω that is more related to the relationship with God. To be justified is to be set in a right relationship with God.²⁶⁷ Also this understanding may be understood in light of the OT: Justification there is a concept regarding the relationship between God and humans (e.g. Ps 143:2 (LXX: 142:2)).²⁶⁸ In several places justification is understood in connection to salvation: The people of Israel have turned themselves from God, but God will restore his relationship to his people. In Mica 7:9 justification seems to be in connection with coming into right relationship with God, after bearing the indignation of the Lord. Also in e.g. Isa 45:25 Israel being justified seems to be connected to salvation (45:22). Through salvation God puts Israel in right relationship again, in contrast of being under God's judgement.

I do not think it is necessary to play these two understandings out against each other, but both may have aspects that were in mind. In addition to the OT background the fact that Paul connects it to forgiveness of sins and says that one is justified *from* something, may point to a more juridical understanding: one is justified/acquitted from sins and instead of being judged to punishment, one is released from the claim of them.²⁶⁹ But that does not mean one should dismiss a more relational understanding. Justification from sins may also mean that one is put in right relationship with God (cf. the parable of the prodigal son Luke 15:11-32). This may be supported by the fact that justification seems to be about salvation (cf. 13:26). It may also implicate that one is part of the people of God and thereby in relation with God: As I showed earlier, Luke seems to understand forgiveness in this way, and because forgiveness and justification seem to be close connected, that may also be the case for justification. They also seem to imply being fitted for the kingdom of God and receiving eternal life, which indicate a life with God, in contrast to perishing (13:41). So it seems like both a juridical and a relational understanding of justification may show aspects of Luke's understanding of justification.

3.2.6.5 The Law of Moses Versus the Work of Jesus in Acts 13:38-39

The relationship between the law of Moses and Christ in regard to justification in Acts 13:38-39 is debated. Some would suggest that they are complementary, while others

²⁶⁷ E.g. Alister McGrath, "Justification," *DPL*, 517-523; Williams, *Commentary*, 165.

²⁶⁸ Johnson, *Acts*, 236.

²⁶⁹ Walter Bauer and Frederick William Danker, "δικαίω," *BDAG*, 249. One of Bauer's translations of the word δικαίω is to make free/pure in the sense of "to cause someone to be released from personal or institutional claims that are no longer to be considered pertinent or valid."

rather suggest they are contrasts.²⁷⁰

A complementary understanding means that the law of Moses could justify partly, but not from all sin, while Jesus provided justification from everything. The result is that the justification by faith is only complementary to the justification one may get through the law.²⁷¹ Keeping the law was in this view still regarded as a means for being justified, but it was complemented with justification through Jesus when humans fall short.²⁷²

A contrasting relationship means that believers are *completely* justified by Jesus, and not only by law-observance.²⁷³ The law could not give complete justification and therefore it was impotent in regard to justification.²⁷⁴

Both suggested interpretations may be possible in regard to the grammar and language.²⁷⁵ But Luke's theology seems to reject an understanding of justification by faith as only complementary:²⁷⁶

- A complementary understanding is not consistent with Luke's understanding of forgiveness of sins.²⁷⁷ None of the other places where the expression "forgiveness of sins" appears indicates that it was partly due to the law (Luke 1:77; 3:3; 24:77; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 26:18).
- There are passages in Acts indicating that salvation is only through Jesus (4:12; 15:11) and is received through faith in Jesus (Acts 16:30-31).²⁷⁸
- The very distinct contrast between those who are defined by law-obedience and those who are defined by faith (often described as "sinners") in many of Luke's stories indicates that Luke understands faith not as complementary to the law,

²⁷⁰ Bock, *Acts*, 459; Gaventa, *Acts*, 201; Williams, *Commentary*, 165; Witherington, *Acts*, 413.

²⁷¹ Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 42. See also Bruce, *Book*, 262-263; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 518-519; Johnson, *Acts* 236; Schnabel, *Acts*, 584; Witherington, *Acts*, 413.

²⁷² Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 42.

²⁷³ Bruce, *Book*, 262; Witherington, *Acts*, 411-412.

²⁷⁴ Gaventa, *Acts*, 201.

²⁷⁵ Bruce, *Book*, 262-263; Gaventa, *Acts*, 201. See also Barrett, *Acts 1*, 650; Johnson, *Acts*, 236; Witherington, *Acts*, 413-414.

²⁷⁶ This view has been followed by many scholars: E.g. Blomberg, "Law", 65; Bruce, *Book*, 262-263; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 519; Haenchen, *Acts*, 412, n. 4; G. Walter Hansen, "The Preaching and Defence of Paul" in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* (ed. I Howard Marshall and David Peterson; Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998), 295-324; Marguerat, "Paul and the Torah," 103; Marshall, *Acts*, 228; Williams, *Commentary*, 165.

²⁷⁷ Blomberg, "Law," 65.

²⁷⁸ Menoud, *Jesus Christ*, 211; Blomberg, "Law," 65.

but in contrast.²⁷⁹ Especially noteworthy is Luke 18:9-14 which quite clearly communicates that justification do not depend on law-observance.

Neither is justification understood as complementary in the Pauline letters (e.g. Rom 3:30-26).²⁸⁰ If neither Paul nor Luke advocate this view, it is not likely that this view is expressed in these verses.²⁸¹

In addition the speech itself does not indicate that justification is partly based upon the law:

- The quote of Hab 1:5 does not indicate justification and forgiveness of sins to be built upon the law. Instead in the end of the first cycle of dialogues in Habakkuk it is written: "The righteous shall live by his faith" (Hab 2:4).²⁸²
- Nowhere in the speech is law-keeping emphasized. Instead Paul and Barnabas are urging the audience to "continue in the grace of God" (13:43).

Therefore it seems quite clear that these verses should be understood to mean that man is justified by faith, while law-observance and offerings must be dismissed as means for being justified. This justification is possible because of Jesus.

²⁷⁹ Grindheim, "Luke, Paul," 340.

²⁸⁰ Cf. Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 42.

²⁸¹ Menoud, *Jesus Christ*, 211.

²⁸² Blomberg, "Law," 65.

4. The relationship Between Acts 13:38-39 and Paul

In this section I am going to investigate the relationship between verses 38-39 in the speech in Pisidian Antioch and the Pauline letters. I will do this by discussing the view and arguments of 3 prominent scholars: Philipp Vielhauer,²⁸³ Richard Pervo²⁸⁴ and Ben Witherington III.²⁸⁵ I will evaluate their views and arguments and evaluate them in light of my exegesis of these verses. There are also other prominent scholars I could have used as well that could have given important contributions to the discussion.²⁸⁶ But I found these three scholars as useful representatives: They are all writing explicitly about the relationship between Pauline letters and these two verses and offering somewhat different perspectives. Vielhauer has had a large impact on discussion on the relationship between Acts and Paul. Pervo and Witherington are still active scholars that represent quite different views: Pervo generally has a rather skeptical view of the historicity of Acts, while Witherington has generally a more positive view.

4.1 Similarities Between the Pauline Letters and Acts 13:38-39

In regard to Acts 13:38-39 Vielhauer writes: “Clearly Acts intends to let Paul speak in his own terms; one must however point out striking differences from the statement of the letters of Paul.”²⁸⁷ I will come back to his words about the differences later. But here I will point out that Vielhauer admits by this statement that Luke had some knowledge regarding Pauline language (even if it may be limited). Pervo also finds these verses to have some roots from Paul and claims that it is almost universal consensus that this passage shows that Luke was familiar with Pauline thoughts.²⁸⁸ Similarly Witherington finds the language regarding justification and faith to “certainly echo the basic Pauline message” and that Luke knew this message.²⁸⁹ So even if these three scholars evaluate the historicity of Acts quite differently, they are all in agreement regarding the fact that Luke knew something about the language and thoughts of Paul.

²⁸³ Vielhauer, “Paulinism,” 33-50.

²⁸⁴ Pervo, *Acts*, 341-343.

²⁸⁵ Witherington, *Acts*, 413-414.

²⁸⁶ E.g. Dunn, *Acts*, 181; Haenchen, *Acts*, 405-418; Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2074-2077; Ramsay, *Cities of Paul*, 305.

²⁸⁷ Vielhauer, “Paulinism,” 41.

²⁸⁸ Pervo, *Acts*, 340, n. 87. See also e.g. Hansen, “Preaching,” 304; Menoud, *Jesus Christ*, 210; Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2076.

²⁸⁹ Witherington, *Acts*, 414.

I find it very likely that this is the case and that Luke intentionally used Pauline language and thoughts here. As I have mentioned earlier there are expressions and words in these verses that Paul uses in his letters: The language about being justified (δικαιόω) is typical Pauline language (Rom 3:24, 26, 28, 30, 4:5; 5:1, 9; Gal 2:16-17; 3:8, 24, see also Rom 8:33, 1 Cor 6:11; Gal 3:11). Furthermore, the expression “everyone who believes” is also a typical Pauline expression (Rom 1:16; 3:22; 4:11; 10:4, 11; Gal 3:22), even if this expression also occurs in Acts 10:43 (see also 13:12, 41, 48) and in other NT writings (e.g. John 3:15-16; 1 John 5:1). Several times justification is also written in connection to faith (“by faith:” Rom 3:24-25; 4:5; 5:1; Gal 2:16; 3:8, 11, 24). And the thought of not being justified by the law is also present in Paul’s letters (Rom 3:24, 26, 28, 30; 4:5; 5:1, 9; Gal 2:16-17; 3:8, 24).

The idea that Luke intentionally used Pauline language in these verses is also supported by the fact that Luke did not use the typical Pauline characteristics of justification in any of the other speeches in Acts (especially noteworthy is that he does not use the word justification in Acts 15:10-11, when he is speaking about salvation through faith).²⁹⁰ So there is very good reason to believe Luke had some knowledge of the language and theology Paul expressed.

4.2 Differences Between the Pauline Letters and Acts 13:38-39

But Vielhauer also found there to be “striking differences from the statement of the letters of Paul” in Acts.²⁹¹ He gives several examples to support this claim. Even if Pervo does not seem to think the difference to be as significant as Vielhauer, he also points out differences.²⁹² Also Witherington thinks these verses differ from the undisputed letters by Paul and writes that it is “fair” to understand it as “an incompletely Pauline way of putting things.”²⁹³ So they all find these verses to differ from the Pauline letters, but they seem to disagree about the significance of these differences. I am now first going to look at the differences they have put forth.

²⁹⁰ Menoud, *Jesus Christ*, 214.

²⁹¹ Vielhauer, “Paulinism,” 41.

²⁹² Pervo, *Acts*, 340.

²⁹³ Witherington, *Acts*, 414. Witherington is referring to Ramsay, *Cities of Paul*, 305.

4.2.1 Equation of Justification with Forgiveness of Sins

Both Vielhauer and Pervo understand these verses to equate justification with the forgiveness of sins and they do not think that is genuinely Pauline. Vielhauer writes that “justification is equated with the forgiveness of sins and this is conceived entirely negatively, which Paul never does.” My understanding of Vielhauer here is that being acquitted from sins is a negative concept, while being declared righteous is a positive concept. Justification is *from* something here and in connection with forgiveness it becomes a “negative” concept here, while this is not the case in the Pauline letters. And Vielhauer claims that “forgiveness of sins” is not found in any of Paul’s “major letters.”²⁹⁴

Pervo points out that “forgiveness of sins” is not found in the undisputed letters by Paul and thinks “the equation of justification with forgiveness of sins saying shows that his understanding is Deutero-Pauline.”²⁹⁵ I will come back to the claim regarding the passage as Deutero-Pauline and will focus here on the question of equation of justification with forgiveness.

Contrary to Vielhauer I find the idea of “forgiveness of sins” (ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν) to be present in the undisputed letters by Paul. Even if Paul does not use the word forgiveness (ἄφεσις), he uses the verbal form ἀφίημι in the sense of forgiving (Rom 4:7).²⁹⁶ And this passage seems to equate justification with being forgiven one’s sins. Paul writes about he “who justifies (δικαίω) the ungodly” and then “the blessings of the one to whom God counts righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) apart from works” and then quotes Ps 32:1-2: “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven (ἀφέθησαν αἱ ἀνομία), and whose sins (αἱ ἁμαρτία) are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin (ἁμαρτία).”²⁹⁷ Even if the expression ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν is not found the thought is clearly found here because sins (that is used two times in the quote) seem to be a parallel expression to lawless deeds. Here he equates the one who is righteous with the one who is forgiven of lawless deeds. One could object that Paul is

²⁹⁴ Vielhauer, “Paulinism,” 41. Vielhauer does not mention which letters that are the major ones, but probably he is referring to (some of) the undisputed letters. He points out that “forgiveness of sins” instead is found in Col 1:14 and Eph 1:7.

²⁹⁵ Pervo, *Acts*, 340.

²⁹⁶ In Rom 1:27, 1 Cor 7:11-13 it has another meaning.

²⁹⁷ Barrett, *Acts: 1*, 651; Hansen, “Preaching,” 304.

using a quote and that it is not Paul's own words. But Paul always uses quotes for a purpose.

Pervo mentions Rom 3:25. In Rom 3:25 the expression "passed over former sins" (ἡ πάρεσις τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων) is used in a context where Paul also says that one is "justified (δικαιόω) through his (God's) grace" (3:24) and that God is "the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (3:26). Passing over sins may be understood as equivalent with forgiving sins and being justified seems also to be understood as equated with sins being passed over. So even if the word "forgiveness" does not appear here, the thought is present and seems to be understood in connection with being justified, similar to Acts 13:38-39.

In regard to the question of justification as conceived negatively or positively I would agree that in the Pauline letters δικαιόω it is mostly conceived positively (e.g. Rom 3:28; 5:1; 8:30, 33; Gal 3:8; 3:11, 24). But the picture is not one-sided, because there are also occasions where justification seems to be conceived primary negative. As already mentioned there are two passages where Paul seems to equate justification with "forgiveness of sins" which would suggest that justification is conceived negatively here (at least partly). But there are also other passages where justification seems to be conceived negatively: In Rom 6 Paul writes about sin and in verse 7: "For one who has died has been set free from sin (δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας)." Here justification is primarily about being justified from sins, rather than more positively being declared righteous (see also 1 Cor 6:11).

So even if Paul does not often write about forgiveness of sins in his letters, this thought is present and in these cases it is connected to and seems to be equated with justification. And even if justification primarily seems to be conceived positively, there are also passages suggesting another understanding. The implication of these conclusion is that the connection of forgiveness of sins and justification in Acts 13:38-39 seem to be compatible with the Pauline letters. However the expression "forgiveness of sins" is used much more frequently in Luke-Acts (Luke 1:77; 3:3; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18), which may suggest the passage is also influenced by Luke's way of putting things, even if he also uses Pauline language and thoughts.

4.2.2 Forgiveness Tied to Jesus' Messiahship and Resurrection

Another difference from the Pauline letters is, according to Vielhauer, that forgiveness of sins is connected to resurrection, while the death of Jesus is not given any significance. He writes: "the forgiveness of sins is tied to the Messiahship of Jesus which is based on the resurrection (vs. 37), and also nothing is said about the particular significance of his death."²⁹⁸ As I understand Vielhauer, his main concern here is that Acts 38-39 seems to not mention the death of Jesus in regard to forgiveness of sins.

It is clear that the resurrection of Jesus is essential for Luke. Paul emphasizes that he believes in the promise to the fathers, which is written in the law and the prophets, about the resurrection of the dead (Acts 24:14-15; 26:6-8). The emphasis of the resurrection shows that Jesus is the Messiah that God promised the fathers; it shows that Jesus has fulfilled the promise. Luke seems to understand the resurrection of Jesus as God's vindication of him (e.g. Acts 2:23-24; 3:14-15; 4:10-12; 5:30; 17:31).²⁹⁹

But even if this is the primary agenda for Luke, he also finds the death to be of significance. As written it seems like Luke interprets the Messiahship of Jesus in light of God's Suffering Servant in Isa 52:13-53:12 (e.g. Luke 22:20; 22:37; 23:32, 47; Acts 2:23-24; 20:28). Here the suffering and death of the Messiah is emphasized. In both Luke 22:20 and Acts 20:28 Jesus' blood is mentioned and it seems like the blood implicitly has an atoning significance in these passages where Jesus is dying for his disciples/the church.³⁰⁰ Especially because Isa 53 seems to be connected to the sin/guilt offering in Leviticus. This understanding may be more explicit in Paul (e.g. Rom 5), but Luke also seems to view the death of Jesus as significant and interpret it as atoning.

When Paul speaks about forgiveness and justification he is referring to Jesus and to what Paul had been speaking about earlier in the speech (οὐν); which also included Jesus being executed (28-29) (here Jesus is portrayed as an innocent that is executed, which may allude to Isa 53:9-10). Because of this and the fact that Luke seems to connect Jesus' Messiahship to his death in other places, I do not find it likely that forgiveness (as well as

²⁹⁸ Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 41-42.

²⁹⁹ Bock, *Theology*, 204.

³⁰⁰ Bock, *Theology*, 203-204.

justification) should be understood as only being tied to Jesus' Messiahship based on his resurrection. His death seems also to be in mind.

4.2.3 Partial Justification

Vielhauer claims that these verses express partial justification (at least for Jewish believers, i.e. justification based only partly upon faith, not only by faith). He recognizes this as Lukan theology because he thinks Acts 15:10 (which describes the law as a yoke that neither the Jew nor the fathers were able to bear) also expresses partial justification. This, on the contrary, is not the case for the Pauline letters. While Luke's reason for justification by faith is that humans do not fulfill the law, the reason for Paul is because "Christ has put an end to the law."³⁰¹ Witherington is open to understanding this passage as partial justification: he says that it is not "impossible" that Luke is thinking comparison here, rather than a contrast. But he also finds it possible that one is set free from all sins through Jesus, which the law of Moses couldn't do.³⁰²

I find Vielhauer's assertion weak. The context in which Acts 15:10 is written does not make it likely that it express partial justification: in verse 11 Peter says: "we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will." The law is not mentioned as foundation for Jews and Gentiles being saved, only "the grace of the Lord." The conclusion of the Council, that Gentiles did not need to follow all aspects of the law, seems also to speak against justification by faith as just partial (compare also with Gal 5:1 and 3:11-12).³⁰³ So justification by faith as only partial does not seem to be consistent with the Lukan theology of forgiveness of sins,³⁰⁴ nor with passages saying that one is (only) saved through Jesus (4:12; 15:11). I have given a more comprehensive discussion on this topic above that stress this point even more.

Even if it is possible grammatically to understand the expression in Acts 13:38-39 as partial justification, it is also possible to understand justification by faith as being for all sins, as Witherington argued. And I find the latter suggestion to be more probable and natural because it fits better with Lukan theology (as well as Paul's that he tries to

³⁰¹ Vielhauer, "Paulinism," 42.

³⁰² Witherington, *Acts*, 413-414.

³⁰³ Menoud, *Jesus Christ*, 206-207.

³⁰⁴ Blomberg, "Law," 65; Haenchen, *Acts*, 450.

describe).³⁰⁵

Even if the Pauline letters express an understanding of justification by faith and not the law *because* “Christ has put an end of it” (e.g. Rom 10:4), as Vielhauer expressed it, there are also passages in the Pauline letters supporting Paul’s understanding of humans not being able to keep the law (e.g. Rom 3). Therefore I find Acts 13:38-39 not to contradict Pauline theology in these matters, but rather express a view that is also in accordance with the Pauline letters.

4.2.4 Justification by Faith Only for Gentiles

Even if Vielhauer thought Luke knew Paul was preaching justification by faith, Vielhauer also claims that Luke thought the justification was primary for Gentiles and that he did not know the “central significance and absolute importance.” Vielhauer bases this conclusion upon the assumption that the law sometimes refers in Luke-Acts to cultic and ritual commands³⁰⁶ that belonged to Jews and Jewish believers, which Gentile believers did not need to follow. Luke (as a Gentile) hadn’t experienced the law as a way of salvation and because of that he did not understand Paul’s antitheses of the law and Christ; the question of the law as a condition of being saved was foreign to Luke.³⁰⁷

There are many things that can be discussed in these claims. I will comment on some things. First I find it hard to claim from this passage that Luke did not understand the Pauline antithesis of the law and the Christ. Here, Luke actually puts the law and Jesus as antitheses; through Jesus/this man (ὅτι διὰ τούτου) they are justified, but by the law of Moses (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωσέως) they couldn’t be justified from these things. This contrast between being justified by the law and being justified by faith is also found in the Pauline letters (e.g. Gal 3:11).³⁰⁸

To me it seems like Luke understands the law’s significance to be different for Jewish and Gentile believers. And here I found Pervo right in saying that Luke would not say

³⁰⁵ See also Haenchen, *Acts*, 412, n. 4; Hansen, “Preaching,” 304-305; Marshall, *Acts*, 228. See also my earlier discussion.

³⁰⁶ Regarding Luke’s understanding of the law see chapter 3.3.5.

³⁰⁷ Vielhauer, “Paulinism,” 42.

³⁰⁸ Hansen, “Preaching,” 305.

that the law is of no value for the Jews.³⁰⁹ It seems like Luke thought it was natural for Jewish believers to continue to follow the law, even if the Gentile believers weren't supposed to do that (with a few exceptions). However, as I showed in the section about the law, the value of the law for Jews wasn't concerning soteriology. They were not law-obedient in order to be justified to "earn" their salvation (fully or partly). Rather their obedience seems to be due to their identity as Jews and people of God.

Therefore Vielhauer's claim that Luke thought justification by faith was primary for Gentiles seems wrong. Not at least seems it to contradict Acts 13:38-39. Pervo, notes that the address in verse 38 "makes no distinction between Israelites proper and gentile listeners."³¹⁰ As I have showed earlier it seems like Paul was addressing both Jews and Gentiles in the speech, but that he in these final verses in the speech may have had the Jews particularly in mind (they were the ones who had experienced that the law couldn't justify them from everything). In addition Paul says "all who believe" (παῖς ὁ πιστεύων).³¹¹ Therefore it is quite clear that Luke understands the message of justification as important for Jews. This is also in accordance with Acts 5:31 where Peter speaks about God exalting Jesus to give Israel forgiveness of sins. There are many passages where it is emphasized that in regard to soteriology there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles (e.g. Luke 24:47; Acts 10:43; 15:9, 11; 26:17) and passages showing that salvation is not through the law, but through Jesus Christ (e.g. 4:12; 15:11).

It also seems unlikely that Luke did not know the significance and importance of justification by faith when he puts these verses as the peak and center of this speech (see chapter 3.1.4). And the fact that he puts these things in the center of the only Pauline mission speech in Acts where Jews were part of the audience makes it evident that he thought this was very significant for them.

4.2.5 "Blunt the Edges" of Paul's Message

In response to Vielhauer's claim that Luke did not know "the central significance and absolute importance" of justification by faith Pervo is claiming that he "*did* know the

³⁰⁹ Pervo, "Paulinism," 340, n. 87.

³¹⁰ Pervo, "Paulinism," 340.

³¹¹ Marshall, *Acts*, 228-229.

significance, but attempted to blunt its edges.”³¹² As I argued above, there are good reasons for Luke knowing the significance of justification by faith. But is he indeed blunting the edges?

Luke is redactor of Acts and its speeches and he has influenced the reduction. He had other interests, concerns and agenda than Paul. Therefore we can find different emphases in Luke-Acts and in the Pauline letters. For example, as I have written earlier, Luke seems to have emphasized the resurrection as confirming Jesus’ Messiahship (e.g. Acts 2:29-36; 13:32-37). And Luke probably also omitted things that he did not find relevant for his purposes. Therefore it is of course possible to describe and write things in a way that would tone down aspects of Paul.

But regarding these verses I do not find it likely Luke was doing that,³¹³ for several reasons: First, the letters are written to people who already believe (that Paul sometimes already knew), often in polemical situations, while Paul in Acts 13 is speaking to people hearing the gospel for the first time. Paul would probably therefore express things differently in Antioch than in his letters. Secondly, this and other speeches in Acts seem to not be fully speeches, but summaries. Therefore we should not expect to find as lengthy and thorough argumentations (with both arguments and contra argument) as we find in several of his letters.³¹⁴ Therefore it is not necessary to say Luke was blunting the edges just because we do not find anything about e.g. the law as the mean that reveals the sin of humans (Rom 3:19-20) and about Christ as the end of the law (Rom 4:10). Finally, even if he is not expressing himself as harshly as in e.g. Gal 5:1-12, he seems still to expressing himself quite clearly in Acts 13: the law is not able to justify a person completely. Therefore it does not seem clear that Paul has “blunted the edges.”

4.3 The origin of Acts 13:38-39

4.3.1 Later Reflections of Paul’s Arguments with “Judaizing Christians”

Pervo thinks that the justification in these verses is “pure Paulinism” for the readers of

³¹² Pervo, *Acts*, 340, n. 87.

³¹³ If one like Pervo thinks Luke was using passages like Gal 3 and 5 for writing this speech, I find his claim more likely. But as I will show below I do not find that presumption to be likely.

³¹⁴ Hemer, *Book*, 418; Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2076; See also Porter, *Paul*, 132.

Acts, they would have recognized it as a Pauline theme. But he also thinks that for an audience in Antioch these words would have made little sense. For them the law (Torah) was enough for justification. Pervo therefore concludes that these verses are then not “a dialogue with Jewish theology proper, but a somewhat etiolated reflection of Paul’s arguments with ‘Judaizing’ Christians.”³¹⁵ In other words, what is written here would not be uttered by the historical Paul in this setting, because the audience would not have understood the message, instead it reflects how later Christians thought of Paul’s arguments in speaking with Jews.

I believe that Luke intentionally used Pauline language to make the speech seem to be Pauline. Because this seems to be a summary, Paul probably developed these things more for the audience to make it more understandable. However, I do not find it likely that it contains later reflections of “Paul’s arguments with ‘Judaizing’ Christians,” because the text does not indicate that this was an issue in Pisidian Antioch. This is in contrast to other passages where Luke explicitly mentions this conflict (e.g. Acts 15).

4.3.2 Deutero-Pauline

As written earlier Pervo thought that the equation of justification with forgiveness of sins were Deutero-Pauline.³¹⁶ Pervo thinks “forgiveness of sins” became important in post-Pauline time among Gentile believers, while Paul did not emphasize it. One argument for this thesis is that the word “forgiveness” (ἄφεσις) is not found in the undisputed Pauline letters, while it is found in the Deutero-Pauline letters Col 1:15 and Eph 1:7. Pervo thinks “forgiveness of sins” was developed from Rom 3:25 in post-Pauline time.³¹⁷

But I do not find this claim convincing. As I have showed, Paul writes about justification in connection to forgiving sins (lawless deeds) in Rom 4:7 and passing over former sins in Rom 3:25. “Forgiveness of sins(/trespasses)” are mentioned in two deutero-Pauline letters (Col 1:14; Eph 1:7). In these letters “forgiveness of sins” is equated with

³¹⁵ Pervo, *Acts*, 340.

³¹⁶ Pervo, *Acts*, 340. See also Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 508. It is not place here to go into the discussion whether some of the letters attributed to Paul are deutero-Pauline. Therefore I will here assume the majority view; that Ephesians, Colossians and 2 Timothy are deuteron-Pauline, without having taken a position myself.

³¹⁷ Pervo, *Acts*, 340, n. 88.

ἀπολύτρωσις (redemption), but the expression is not connected with δικαίω (being justified). Therefore Rom 3:24-25 and 4:5-7 seems to be more similar to Acts 13:38-39 than to the deutero-Pauline letters. The idea of forgiveness of sins as equated with justification seems therefore to be present in the undisputed letters. Therefore Pervo's claim that the equation of justification with forgiveness of sins is merely Deutero-Pauline seems wrong. As earlier described, the expression "forgiveness of sins" is used much by Luke. Therefore it seems probable that Luke is using his own language here. But the connection of forgiveness of sins with justification seems to be Pauline.

4.3.3 The Pauline Letters as Sources

Pervo argues that Luke used a collection of the Pauline letters when writing Acts.³¹⁸ Regarding these verses, Pervo is suggesting that Luke may have used Gal 3:11 and 5:4.³¹⁹ Even if the content of these verses may be similar to Acts 13:38-39, the language does not seem to correspond much, more than the fact that δικαίω and νόμος (and πίστις in 3:11(in Acts 13 it is the verbal form)) is used. As I have shown above there are also many other verses containing language that has similarities with Acts 13:38-39, but none of them are putting it very similar. Therefore it does not seem probable to me that Luke used the Pauline letters for writing these verses.³²⁰ Even if there are many similarities also in other speeches, as I have showed regarding the Miletus speech, there are not any quotes or very close parallels to the letters. This indicates that Paul wasn't using the letters. Rather I find it more likely that he had met Paul and heard him preach, or that he used other sources, or a combination of both.

4.3.4 Portraying an Early Paul

As I have written, Witherington thinks the language regarding justification for those who believe "echoes the basic Pauline message" but he also thinks that this could be understood as "an incompletely Pauline way of putting things." He suggests that Luke is trying to describe the early message of Paul here, and thus is preparatory to or on the way towards the fuller gospel Paul preached later.³²¹

³¹⁸ Pervo, *Mystery*, 162.

³¹⁹ Pervo, *Acts*, 340, n. 87.

³²⁰ See Keener, *Acts: Introduction*, 2074-2076.

³²¹ Witherington, *Acts*, 414. Witherington is referring to Ramsay, *Cities of Paul*, 305.

It may be possible that Luke was trying to reproduce the early message from Paul, either from a source or from his own knowledge of Paul. However some things go against the idea that Luke is trying to reproduce an early message to Paul here that was only preparatory to a later message. As I have showed the language and thoughts in these verses do not have the closest parallels in early Pauline letters, but rather with e.g. Romans, generally considered to be a later letter.³²² The Miletus speech, on the other hand, that is found later in Acts, seems to have its closest parallels with 1 Thessalonians,³²³ which is considered to be an early letter.³²⁴ Neither is there any clear development of Paul's preaching regarding the law and justification in the book of Acts itself. Therefore I do not find it likely that Luke consciously tried to make a speech that only contained the preparatory message of the gospel.

4.3.5 My Conclusion

I agree with Vielhauer, Pervo, Witherington and most other scholars in that Luke in Acts 13:38-39 consciously uses Pauline language. Both Vielhauer and Pervo expressed skepticism in regard to whether the content of these verses is genuinely Pauline and not partly misunderstood (e.g. equating justification with forgiveness of sins, partial justification, justification just for Gentiles). But I do not find any of the things written in these verses to not be in accordance with the Pauline letters.

However, Luke seems to have influenced the way these thoughts have been formulated. I have already mentioned "the forgiveness of sins" as a Lukan expression, but also "the law of Moses" is Lukan (although even is using the expression in 1 Cor 9:9). The expression "everyone who believes" is used more in the Pauline letters, but is also used by Luke in Acts 10:43 and Luke writes often about believing.³²⁵ Therefore Acts 13:38-39 seems to both consist of Lukan and Pauline language and elements. Therefore it seems clear that it is not an exact verbatim of the speech.³²⁶ It is probably a summary that Luke composed of Pauline thoughts. Another thing that has been suggested as evidence of

³²² Generally considered to be written around 55-57. James D. G. Dunn, "Romans, Letter to the," *DPL*, 838-850.

³²³ General considered to be written around 49-50 Gordon D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to The Thessalonians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 5.

³²⁴ Cf. Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2077.

³²⁵ "Everyone who believes" is also used in the gospel of John (e.g. 3:15-16; 6:40; 11:26) as well as in 1 John 5:1.

³²⁶ Hemer, *Book*, 421.

Lukan redaction is parallels between this and other speeches, like Jesus' speech in the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:21-27) and in particular Peter's speech at the Pentecost (2:14-40).³²⁷ E.g. both speeches connect Jesus with David and both quoting from Ps 16.³²⁸ In Acts 13:38-39 forgiveness of sins is also a theme in the end of Peter's speech. These similarities have been understood as Luke stressing the continuity of the two apostles.³²⁹ But even if Luke has some agendas and tendencies when writing Acts, it does not mean these verses do not represent thoughts that are Pauline. And even if a summary does not give all explanations and arguments I do not find it fair to say that there are "striking differences," "deutero-Pauline" or an "incompletely Pauline way putting things." Instead it seems to be consistent with Paul's own letters.

Even if there are similarities between this passage and the Pauline letters, the similarities do not seem to be close enough to make it likely that Luke used Pauline letters to compose this speech. Therefore I find it most likely that either Luke was a contemporary of Paul who used his knowledge about his preaching, or he used other sources for composing the speech (or a combination of both). But I find it difficult to choose between these theories based upon the evidence found in this paper. Neither do I found convincing evidence regarding whether the speech in Acts is based upon a historical speech in Antioch or if it reflects more generally how Paul was preaching. As I wrote earlier the views among scholars regarding the general accuracy of ancient historians are different, not least with regard to speeches. In addition not all scholars consider Acts to be historiography. Therefore the question of the genre does not make the question regarding the origin of the speech unambiguous.

³²⁷ Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2052; Pervo, *Acts*, 334-335; Tannehill, *Narrative*, 154

³²⁸ For an overview of similarities see Keener, *Acts: 2*, 2052.

³²⁹ Keener, *Acts: 3:1-14:28*, 2052; Pervo, *Acts*, 334.

5. Conclusion and Summary

In chapter 2 I described the scholarly debate regarding the relationship between Paul in Acts and Paul in the Pauline letters. In connection to that, I also looked at the value of Acts as a source to the historical Paul. How different scholars regard this is due to several factors. One important factor is their view of the compatibility of Acts and the Pauline letters with regards to Paul, the recorded events and theological ideas. Another factor is how well historical facts seem to match extra-Biblical sources. Third, the genre of Acts is important. This includes both the choosing of the genre, and the perceived accuracy of historical matters in that genre. Finally, the author's freedom when writing a speech in a narrative like this is debated. In Paul's speeches in Acts, several similarities in language with the Pauline letters have been identified, so-called "Paulinisms." These similarities, however, are debated. Some scholars find the "Paulinisms" to only sound Pauline, and that they are in fact used differently than Paul uses them, and may not even be compatible with Pauline theology. Other scholars do not regard these differences as significant, even if they acknowledge Luke's role as an editor of the speeches. Scholars also disagree about how the speeches were created. This ranges from the view that Luke himself knew Paul and was present at the speeches, to the view that the speeches are completely Luke's own invention. Some also think Luke created the speeches using the Pauline letters.

In chapter 3 I exegeted Acts 13:38-39 in order to make an interpretation of these verses. They are part of a speech Paul holds in a synagogue in Pisidian Antioch. As I showed, he is probably addressing both Jews and Gentiles (who were associated with the synagogue). He seems, however, to have the Jews especially in mind, which emphasizes the importance of the message also for Jews. Verses 38-39 seem to be the peak and goal of the speech, which previous parts have been building up towards. Even if Paul here starts a new section in his speech, it is clear that he connected it to what he had just said. He had been speaking about Jesus, who was first executed and then raised from the dead by God, and by that, God fulfilled his promises to the fathers. In verses 38-39 Paul presents the meaning of this message of salvation (13:26) for the audience.

The first meaning of the message of salvation is, in Paul's words, "forgiveness of sins"

(13:38). Instead of atonement through sin offerings that Jews could receive, the offer of forgiveness is now to all people, both Jews and Gentiles, through Jesus. In receiving forgiveness, one also becomes part of the people of God (Acts 26:18).

The second meaning is justification. To be righteous in the OT was to live in conformity with the will of God, which was revealed through the law (the Torah) and the prescriptive understanding of the law. There are also passages, however, in the OT that indicate that no humans are completely righteous before God (e.g. Ps 143:2; Eccl 7:20). The difficulty of being completely righteous before God through law-observance is emphasized when Jesus several times in the gospel of Luke is making the standard of the law even more radical than his contemporaries interpreted it. Luke rejects the idea that one becomes righteous through law-observance. Again and again in the narrative, those defined by obedience to the law are contrasted with those defined by faith. Those defined by faith are displayed as the examples the reader should follow. In accordance with this general understanding in Luke-Acts, Acts 13:38-39 rejects the possibility of being justified through the law. Instead justification is for “everyone who believes.” This indicates the inclusive aspect of justification, but also a restriction. It is for all, both Jews and Gentiles, but one has to believe. To believe means to positively respond to the gospel that is proclaimed. It is about believing in Jesus (cf. 10:43): to believe that he is the Messiah which the law and the prophets spoke of, and to trust in him. However, Luke does not seem to find this understanding of justification as contrary to the law, but rather in continuity. The law (and the prophets) have been speaking about the predicative understanding of the law. Therefore, Luke emphasizes in Acts that those who do not believe in Jesus are the ones not keeping the law, because Jesus is the one the law has spoken of. The prescriptive and predicative understandings of the law come together.

To be justified implicates both being acquitted from all one’s sins and the claim of punishment, and being set in right relationship with God. Instead of perishing (13:41) one will live with God. It is also clear that in Acts 13:38-39 justification is something that God does, not the person him- or herself. This is possible through Jesus and not through the law. Justification through Jesus for all who believe is not complementary to justification by the law, but is in contrast to it. The law is dismissed as a means for

justification, which seems to fit Lukan, as well as Pauline theology.

In chapter 4 I looked at the relationship between Acts 13:38-39 and the undisputed letters. To do this I discussed the views and arguments of Vielhauer, Pervo and Witherington. They and I all agree that Luke at least had some knowledge of Pauline vocabulary and that he used it in these verses. However, even if Luke is using Pauline vocabulary in his narrative, it differs from the way these words and expressions are used in the Pauline letters. But in contrast to especially Vielhauer (and to lesser degree also Pervo), I do not find the “Paulinisms” in these verses to contradict or be at variance with what we find in the Pauline letters. Instead, the understanding of the law and of justification, as well as the connection of justification with forgiveness of sins, has similarities in the Pauline letters and are not incompatible with them. For example, I do not find it convincing to interpret these verses as advocating that justification by faith is only partial or that justification by faith was primarily for Gentiles. Believers received full justification, and because Luke here had especially the Jews in mind, the message is clearly for them. These things are in accordance with the general understanding of the Pauline letters. The connection of being justified and forgiven is found in the Pauline letters, and seems to be stronger in the undisputed letters than the deutero-Pauline. This indicates that the connection is not just deutero-Pauline, as Pervo claims. Even if it seems to be Pauline vocabulary and the content seems to be in accordance with the Pauline letters, the similarities are not close enough to find literary dependence upon the Pauline letters probable, as Pervo suggests. Rather, I find it more likely that the author himself knew and had heard Paul, or that he used other, extra-Biblical sources when writing this speech. The evidence presented in this thesis makes it difficult to choose between these suggestions. It is, moreover, very unlikely that it is a verbatim of the speech, because the vocabulary in these verses is more Lukan than Pauline. Therefore it seems quite clear that the author has influenced the language. But because it seems to be a summary of the speech, and written for another setting as well as audience than the Pauline letters, I do not think there is clear evidence either for Luke’s “blunting the edges” of Paul’s teaching, nor is it an incomplete Pauline way of putting it. I have not found convincing evidence regarding whether this speech is based on a specific historical speech in Antioch or whether it reflects a more general Pauline preaching. Because there are different views among historians regarding how free the writers in

general were when composing speeches in historiography, their perspectives do not shed much light on this either. It is probable that these verses give information about the preaching of Paul, and are not derived from the Pauline letters.

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