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# JESUS AND THE MARGINALIZED: ATTACHING PASTORAL MEANING TO LUKE 4:14-30

## ABSTRACT

In Luke 4:14-30, Jesus revealed Himself in fulfilling the prophecy of Elijah and Elisha and being the Saviour of the marginalized. The calling of the pastoral caregiver is to be the hands and feet of Jesus, especially to the marginalized. Jesus also brought reconciliation and spiritual transformation to the person in need. Luke portrays Jesus as the anointed one through the Spirit. Three keys provide access to the understanding of the passages in Luke, of which the first is exegeses of the passages themselves and in historical context. Secondly, interactive internalization provides the reader of the passages with the opportunity to focus on the Word and Spirit and to internalize the event. Thirdly, through the process of appropriation, spiritual growth and transformation takes place.

## 1. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND METHODOLOGY

The article aims at deducing from Luke 4:14-30 guidelines concerning reconciliation (as imperative in pastoral care) for the pastoral caregiver. In this pericope, Jesus focuses on the marginalised (the poor/suppressed/outcasts) and wants to bring reconciliation through the Spirit. According to Bezuidenhout (2005:3), pastoral care can be defined as the ministry of reconciliation in accordance with 2 Corinthians 5:19-20, namely "that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's

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ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God".

However, a ministry of reconciliation cannot be practised without taking into consideration the covenant between God and humankind. In our view, Johan Janse van Rensburg's research on the "covenant as proprium" in pastoral care is his most dynamic contribution, if one has to single out something.

According to Janse van Rensburg (1996:152-153), the covenant as "the most important Biblical foundational motive" offers an "excellently fitting and all-inclusive proprium for poimenics as science and pastoral care as a strategy of ministry" (own translation). By making use of a comparative analysis and interpretation of literature on the topic, Janse van Rensburg came to the conclusion that, from a Biblical and theological perspective, the covenant is appropriate as a proprium for a reformed theory of pastoral care.

The covenant presupposes and includes all other foundational motives that should be found in pastoral care, i.e. the Council of God, the kingdom, kerugma and change, koinonia, bipolarity and the power of binding and releasing eschatology, soteriology and pneumatology. However, the covenant does not figure sufficiently in the practice of pastoral care.

If one were to accept that the task of the pastoral caregiver entails the reconciliation of man in need with God, one cannot but ask: What is the contribution of Luke 4:14-30 to the meaning of the new covenant God has concluded with man in Jesus Christ, and what are its implications for pastoral care? Methodologically, this article also touches on the question of the use of the covenant in pastoral care, because Luke 4:14-30 is used to deduce guidelines for the pastoral care of the marginalized. The work of Senekal (2005) concerning the "functioning of the Biblical contents in a narrative-pastoral discussion" (own translation) offers a useful grounding of the use of the Bible in pastoral counselling, especially for the pastoral narrative approach and thus also for the methodology of the current article. The history of the movement for pastoral care in South Africa and abroad indicates that there have been/are proponents who view the use of the Bible in pastoral care as essential, but there are also clear voices warning against the legalistic and prescriptive use of the Bible in pastoral care (Senekal 2005:78). Still in the foreground is the search for principles that could guide the use of the Bible.

The principles Capps (1990:82-83) formulated twenty years ago could still be regarded as providing direction:

- Whatever use is made of the Bible in pastoral care, it should be guided by the particular needs and circumstances of the patient.

- Its use should reflect pastoral sensitivity to the patient's acute or chronic physical and psychological limitations.
- Whatever use is made of the Bible in pastoral care or counselling, it should be consistent with the counselling principles and method that inform the pastoral intervention as a whole.
- Once we recognize that the dynamic power of a Bible text is its capacity to disclose a world, we can also see how the Bible (as a whole) may play a more decisive role in pastoral care.

In this article, the hermeneutic use of the Bible to deduce principles for pastoral care is supported. As such, the Bible does not provide direct and simple answers to the questions and problems of life that one encounters in the pastoral situation. Heitink (1998:80) determined that pastoral care has moved from a kerygmatic and a therapeutic phase to a hermeneutic phase such as "understanding, insight, meaning, construal and interpretation" of Scripture. In this process, the "narrative, language, predisposition, context and epistemological approach will strongly influence the process of understanding" (Bezuidenhout & Janse van Rensburg 2006:19, own translation).

According to Louw (2000:225-25), a hermeneutic process offers the pastor the opportunity to connect the narrative of salvation (reconciliation) to the struggle, suffering, heartache and joy of the marginalized. In reality, it connects the kerygmatic and hermeneutic processes to one another. One of the unique aims of the pastor should be to change an inappropriate, obstructive and negative image of God, which inhibits the process of developing faith and a relationship with God, into an image of a God who is present – full of love and compassionate – in times of need.

Senekal (2005:78) indicates that the question concerning the "dynamic power of the Bible text itself" (own translation) is currently being asked again in pastoral care. According to him, the question pertains to the "disclosing power of the text" (own translation). Thus, the power of the Bible as God's revealed Word is central to pastoral care and this article. Amongst others, the article wishes to indicate from Luke 4:14-30 how the Biblical text is successful in creating spiritual growth in the person by means of experience and transformation.

The method of exegesis, the analysis of the cultural-historical background, interactive internalising and pastoral development (where a pastor/caregiver may be seen as one who is serving under the power of the Holy Spirit and he/she is called to preach, teach, heal and to set the captives free) will be used to indicate what the meaning of Luke 4:14-30 is for pastoral care.

In pastoral care, the Bible is used in such a way that one has to read Luke 4:14-30 in the context of the whole of the gospel of Luke. The voice of Luke in his gospel, the reader's interpretation of the text and the complete story of Jesus form part of a revelatory understanding and a dynamic power that is released to renew an old covenant when God's promises, as written down by the prophet Isaiah, are fulfilled. Thus, in pastoral care, one cannot afford a one-sided view by considering only the story of Jesus in Nazareth, because it would imply that the cultural-historical connections of Jesus' life and His story are causing the demise of the covenant as *proprium*. In this respect, We are satisfying Capps's (1990:83) last pronouncement, as indicated above, i.e. that one has to look at the essential themes of Scripture that are connected to this pericope like, amongst others, the identity of Christ as (also) revealed in/through the cross, resurrection, ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (the new covenant). The promise of reconciliation is of the essence for pastoral care and embodies the hope of humankind in need.

## 2. GOD'S PLAN REVEALED IN LUKE

In his research, Squires (1993:1-3) found that Luke reveals God's plan (His covenant promises) in his gospel. Under this theme, one of the main points of focus is Jesus' anointment with and conduct under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a theme highlighting the pneumatologic meaning given to Jesus in Luke as the one who fulfilled the covenant. Hinnebusch (1978:26) formulates the point of focus of the Holy Spirit as follows:

Jesus (like Elijah) was always moved by the Holy Spirit, because Jesus was completely available to the Father in prayerful readiness. He sought the Father in prayer before everything He did.

Recent researchers such as Longenecker (2008:179-204) and Poirier (2007:349-363) also explain that Luke, in his gospel, introduces the reader to a Spirit-filled, praying Jesus.<sup>1</sup> In the pericope, which is the focus of this article (Luke 4:14-30), Luke points to the fact that "Jesus returned to Galilee, and the power of the Holy Spirit was with him" (Luke 4:14).

In Luke 1:17, the author states that the angel had told Zechariah that John would go out in the same Spirit and power as Elijah to reconcile fathers and their children with one another. In fact, here John is compared to Elijah but as a precursor or one who has to prepare for the coming of Jesus. However, Jesus is the one who fulfilled the prophecies concerning Elijah (Poirier 2007:349).

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, before Jesus appointed the disciples, He went to the mountain to pray (6:12). He did the same before His transfiguration (9:28).

Especially in this pericope (Luke 4:14-30), Luke wants to point to the Spirit-filled Jesus who is bearing down on His<sup>2</sup> goal in a focused way; the one who is fulfilling the prophecies to bring the year of grace to the marginalized. Shepherd (1994:136) confirms these ideas by saying:

The coherence and transparency of the character of the Spirit is enhanced in this passage, as it presents a single-minded, clear, and purposeful Jesus who is motivated by the Spirit.

The Nazarenes are missing the real goal: They see only their own important position in their own kingdom and do not want to be seen as marginalized (Jesus is rendered speechless by their disbelief, Mark 6:6). Furthermore, they look down on the “everyday” son of Joseph who is appointing himself and regarding himself as equal to Elijah, the prophet, and in His own town at that.

This turn of mind by the Nazarenes, from accepting Jesus to rejecting Him, resonates with Dawsey’s (1984:278) views on the theme of rejection in Luke. According to him, Luke softens them in three ways, if possible: In the first place, one finds a group that rejects Jesus, such as the Nazarenes, i.e. He is rejected by people who should have been the first to accept Him in His town of birth. In the second place, this rejection is ascribed to the involvement of a “super power”, i.e. Satan. In the third place, Luke views the rejection as part of God’s predestined plan. Dawsey aptly describes the latter: *“For it is only through rejection and death that Jesus sees Himself fully the Christ”* (1987:228).

Some interpreters, for instance Geldenhuys (1983:169), point out that Jesus concludes that unless the Nazarenes and the Jewish people as a whole are going to accept Him as the promised Messiah, He will turn to the Gentiles. However, Maddox (1982) refers to expositors who prefer to view Luke 4:25-27 as the point of events at which Jesus decided to focus His attention only on the Gentiles. For researchers such as these, the main point is that the Jews (Luke 4) and Judah (1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 5) did not want to accept Jesus (God), and from that point on, Jesus would consciously focus His attention on the Gentiles only. However, together with Koet (1989:20), Longenecker (2008) and Poirier (2007), we reject this view because of the fact that Jesus continued working among the Jews. After all, it is clear that all of those who were filled with the Holy Spirit during the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Rev. 2) were Jews.

As has already been pointed out, Luke continuously focuses on the theme of Jesus as the one who was anointed by the Spirit, especially in this pericope

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2 Proneons referring to Jesus, for example “He” and “His”, are written with capital letters as a choice by the authors.

(Luke 4:14-30). Hinnebusch (1978), as well as Malina and Neyrey (1991:49), refers to various other revelations, appearing especially in chapters 22 and 23, concerning which Jesus fulfilled the covenant: Jesus as the Son of God (Luke 22: 42; 70; 23: 46); Jesus as the Redeemer (Luke 22: 51; 23: 43); Jesus as the Prophet (Luke 22: 46); Jesus as the Christ (Luke 22: 67; 23:35, 39); Jesus as the Chosen One (Luke 23: 35), and Jesus as the King (Luke 23: 2, 37).

The narratological genre of the pericope is phrased in such a way that it has a beginning and an end, with a rising climax and denouncement. Frein (2008:9) points out that Luke's story of Jesus is similar to other Biblical narratives in the sense that the point in time when the story starts is much earlier than the point in time that the events that are recounted really took place. The protagonist and main character is Jesus, guided by the Holy Spirit. Initially, the people in the synagogue are support characters until they stop accepting Jesus' teaching; then they become the antagonist, because "everybody" (Luke 4:28) was angry and chased Him out of the town. "Support characters", Isaiah (his prophecy) as well as Elijah and Elisha, are also introduced into the story. All three of the support characters presuppose earlier stories (God's covenant plan), while Elijah and Elisha are also present metaphorically to confirm the aim of the final teaching.

### 3. HERMENEUTIC KEYS

Dan Stone (2000:121)<sup>3</sup> explains that God reveals Himself to ordinary people, prophets, and priests (pastors and ministers). The following words by Stone explain the importance of both rational and revelatory knowledge:

That's difficult for people to grasp, because Western civilization processes everything mentally. We try to grasp it with the head and get the head to tell it to the heart, instead of waiting for the Holy Spirit to tell it to the heart. If it's in the heart, we will know it. If it's in the head, we will just know about it.

There are three keys towards clarifying the understanding of Luke 4:14-30. The first key is exegesis, which considers the process of constructing meaning in each verse, as well as the historic context in which the Biblical text has to be understood. The second key is an interactive internalising process in which it is determined how the Biblical text invites the reader and guides her/his heart to be in interaction with the Word and the Spirit, and to internalise the events. The third key is the process of appropriation; that is,

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3 Dan Stone is a prominent writer from the Cross-centered Approach (companion) in Pastoral Care.

how the Biblical text manages to allow spiritual growth to take place through experience and transformation. These three keys and their interaction with one another all unlock the same door. What does God want to reveal to us through Jesus? What does this revelation mean for pastoral care?

#### 4. THE CONTEXT OF LUKE 4:14-30

The context of the pericope (Luke 4:14-30) in the larger context of the chapters before and after the events in Nazareth is the following (Koet 1989:26; Shepherd 1994:132):

The events in Luke 4:16-28 are preceded by an overview of Jesus' ministry in Galilee and the people's reaction to it (Luke 4:14-15). Verses 16-28 take place in the synagogue where parts from Is. 61 and 58 (Luke 4:16-20) are read, followed by Jesus' first sermon (Luke 4:21); the first reaction by the people in the synagogue and the Scribes (Luke 4:22); Jesus' reaction to this by a further explanation and the confirmation of Him being a prophet (Luke 4:23-24); an elucidation of Elijah and Elisha as examples (Luke 4:25-27); their second act of rejection. Luke 4:28-29 relates how Jesus was chased out of the synagogue and the town, which is followed by the attempted murder, and then Jesus leaving Nazareth in a miraculous way (Luke 4:30).

The story of Nazareth is preceded by Jesus' baptism (Luke 3:21-22), genealogy (Luke 3:23-38) and His temptation (Luke 4:1-13). A number of interpretations describe verses 14 and 15 as an introduction to the pericope concerning Nazareth, while others describe it as an independent or indirectly related section. After the baptism, the point of view of Jesus and the Holy Spirit is emphasized strongly.

The Nazareth story is followed by a description of Jesus' stay in Capernaum (Luke 4:31-32); the release of the possessed person in the synagogue in contrast to the disbelief in Nazareth (Luke 4:33-37); healing Peter's mother-in-law (Luke 4:38-39); healing large numbers of sick people (Luke 4:40-41); Jesus going to pray in the desert (Luke 4: 42-43); a conclusion (Luke 4:44); the fishing miracle (Luke 5:1-11); and Jesus calling His first disciples. New points of view arising here are Jesus' "popularity" in contrast to the rejection in Nazareth, further teachings and the disciples being introduced to the story. Places and times of learning – the synagogue and the Sabbath – remain more or less similar, however.

## 5. EXEGESIS AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Bosch (1991:84-89) highlights the role played by Matthean “Great Commission” and what Jesus read in the synagogue of Nazareth about the prophesy of Is. 61 as the Biblical foundation for mission. Luke has an overall theological understanding of a mission to Jews and Gentiles. He discloses the relation between the mission of Jesus and the mission of the church. Furthermore, Bosch (1991:100) explains that

the words from the Book of Isaiah become, in Luke’s gospel, a sort of manifesto of Jesus: Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing (4:21).

Nolland (1989:186) describes the portion of the Scripture (4:14-44) that introduces Jesus’ public ministry with a focus on teaching in the synagogues.

Jesus is presented as a charismatic itinerant expanding ministry is stopped neither by the murderous rage of the Nazareth synagogue (vv 29-30) nor by the attempt by the crowds of Capernaum to gain exclusive possession of Him (vv 42-43). The Nazareth and Capernaum ministries are offered as exemplifying a ministry that begins in Galilee (v 14) and expand throughout Palestine (v 44).

In verses 14 and 15, Luke notes that Jesus’ appearance caused a tremendous sensation and fame. He was favoured by people. Next (from verse 16 to verse 22a) the author maintains Jesus’ authority and fame as the people in the synagogue in Nazareth regarded Him as a Rabbi or a prophet. However, from the last part of verse 22, the audience of Jesus changed and did not believe in His teaching (Geldenhuys 1983:166-170). Jesus the Redeemer, God’s sent one and the one who fulfils the covenant, is thirty years old. “Full of the Holy Spirit” (Luke 4:1) after His baptism, He goes to pray to His Father in isolation in the desert for 40 days, and there He is tempted by Satan. Hinnebusch (1978:26) expresses it aptly:

He spends the forty days in the Spirit, in prayerful communion with the Father, before engaging in full combat with the devil.

Now, “the power of the Holy Spirit ... [being] with him” (Luke 4:14), He starts His ministry in the area of Galilee (circle area, Young 2007).

Jesus goes to live in Capernaum, a town next to the sea. As a symbol of His mission, the name means *place of solace*. He taught the people with authority (in the synagogue), healed them, and everybody spoke highly about Him. Thus, Jesus had already had a reputation as well as the necessary “qualifications” (Henry 2005:1) before He went to Nazareth (Luke 4:23). It

would enhance His chances of being successful – in the face of preconceived ideas.

He then enters Nazareth, His *heimat*, where everybody knew or had known Him as well as His parents and brothers. Did not the very name Nazareth spell out the meaning of Jesus? A twig, a new shoot (Young 2007) will sprout (Is. 11:1). Will this Twig from Nazareth be able to guide the townspeople to new shoots, and will they be able to believe the promises that He has come to fulfil, and bear fruit?

He approaches the people with the “power of the Holy Spirit” with Him (Luke 4:14) and, as was His habit, visits the synagogue on the Sabbath. Usually, there were seven readers for every Sabbath. The first was a priest, the second a Levite (servant of God but not necessarily a priest – Num 8), and the other five were Jews from that synagogue (Henry 2005). Jesus often taught the people in the synagogues, but the occasion related in Luke 4 is the only one in which we hear the Scriptures being given to Him to read. The scroll of Isaiah was given to Jesus – which was what He had to read on that day.

Jesus stood when He started reading. It was typical according to the institution by Ezra (Neh. 8:5) to sit down afterwards, before the exposition and teaching started. The scroll was closed, and Jesus opened it.

The section that Jesus read from Is. 61 does not include the complete pericope. For example, “the broken-hearted” has been left out. In Poirier’s opinion (2007:350), Luke uses Mark as a source for the same events, but as far as the section from Isaiah is concerned, as well as for the reference to Elijah and Elisha, Luke must have used another source. He argues this matter for the very reason that he wants to point out that Jesus’ priestly task is (also) highlighted here. His further reference entails that prophets were rarely anointed,<sup>4</sup> but that Jesus quotes the section “because He has anointed me” and later (Luke 4:18 and 21) shows that, in fact, He had fulfilled this prophecy. It refers to His priestly task (according to Poirier) because priests and kings were anointed. Poirier (2007:351) and Young (1984:134) refer specifically to the meaning of anointed in relationship to the meaning of concepts (anointed; anointed one; Christ, Messiah) that are nothing else but an indication of His priestly office. However, Poirier (2007:353) further indicates that the reference to Jesus as the Priestly Messiah is not recognized in the synagogue in Nazareth. Is. 61:6 serves as further proof that Christ’s

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4 According to the Hebrew Bible, only Elijah and Elisha were anointed. One can also argue that Moses and Samuel were anointed. In this regard, also compare authors quoted by Poirier (2007:352) in research concerning Jesus’ priestly role.

priestly task is under discussion here: “And you will be known as the priests of the Lord, the servants of our God.”

A characteristic of the priest that stands out in the Old Testament is God’s command for a holy life (Num. 18 and Deut. 18). God’s only Son was anointed by the Holy Spirit as our highest Prophet, our everlasting King, and our only High Priest (Hebrews 9:25; 10:11-12). Blackaby (2006:1467) contends that the main difference between the priests of the Old Testament and Christ, as High Priest, is that the Old Testament priests continuously had to work reconciliation in the temple, while Jesus brought the perfect sacrifice once and for all. As the one who fulfilled the covenant, His priestly task is to bring fulfilment for everybody.

For the purposes of this article, the priestly duties/acts of Is. 61 are connected to pastoral duties/acts as they are currently known. Here, Jesus has been led by the Spirit as Prophet, Priest and Pastor. He is thus also the spiritual Companion and Healer of those in need.

Jesus’ only comment, “This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read” (*pleroo/accomplish*), finds approval within the group. The only explanation for this concurrence is that the Holy Spirit has convinced their hearts. Their agreement, amazement and wonder (Luke 4:22), however, are in stark contrast to how the group change their mind after the one comment, “Isn’t he the son of Joseph?” Dawsey (1984:278) views this turn-about as part of the theme “The rejection of Jesus”. Jesus came to fulfil the prophecy. If everybody had accepted Him, He would not have had to leave the town.

Malina & Neyrey’s (1991:67-68) description of a “dyadic” personality and cultural role in the early church in contrast to the individualistic role of contemporary man seems to apply to this change of heart. To force honour and respect, a scribe’s views were accepted without question. Had it been a “person of distinction” who had made such a comment, the group would have accepted it immediately, and they would not have doubted the authority of His pronouncement the next moment.

With Jesus as the protagonist in the story and the people in the synagogue now changing into antagonists, with a masterful stroke, Jesus takes the “guilt of a turn of heart” on Him by quoting a proverb: “Healer, heal thyself”. It is as if Jesus understands their expectations: “You will quote this proverb to me.” On the one hand, they expect the Messiah, but on the other hand, they look down on this “common” villager – because “he did not perform many miracles there” (Matt. 13:58).

Koet (1989:42) explains that, according to classic literature, the proverb means that the healer has to heal his own social community first, i.e. his

family, neighbours, and people in his vicinity (Nazareth) before he extends his healing actions to the region (Galilee) and thereafter the Gentiles. Thus, what Jesus has done in the rest of Galilee (Luke 4:14), He also has to do here. Jesus now contrasts the proverb by providing His own meaning: The responsibility of the prophet is not to advantage his own people (He would never be honoured for that in his own town in any case); on the contrary, the prophet's task is to call people to conversion (faith).

The concept "honour" or "accept" (*dektos, accepted*) here refers to the fact that (in Luke's case) a prophet is not supposed to please his fellow townspeople or to be to their advantage, but he has to "heal" them from their disbelief; for this reason, Jesus continued by quoting Elijah and Elisha as examples (Henry 2005). Koet (1989:44-45) and Squires (1993:1-14) explain that it is not about believers or unbelievers, but about the restoration of God's covenant with Israel, as has also been the case on Mount Carmel: Yahweh or Baal. In other words, it is about developing His covenant plan, i.e. reconciliation.

According to Poirier (2007:349), Jesus connected Is. 61 to the prophetic work of Elijah and Elisha not to highlight His prophetic role but rather His priestly role. When one compares the priestly role with the pastoral role, they are nearly the same, including amongst others forgiveness (washing) of sin and healing (washing) of disease, i.e. a reconciliatory role. (Jesus also often refers to Himself as the Good Shepherd, especially according to chapter 10 of the gospel of John).

For his part, Oakman (1991:164) views the concept of the marginalized, "the oppressed and economically marginated groups", as the main point of interest here. Furthermore, he points out that this is a recurrent theme in Luke and that it is actually being conceptualised in detail here, referring to Jesus, the one who fulfils the prophecy, the one who came for the marginalized (Is. 61 and Luke 4:21).

Elijah is God's servant (prophet) and a forerunner to Jesus, just like John the Baptist (1 Kings 17:1; Luke 1:17). Jesus is the one sent by God (new covenant) and the one who has fulfilled the prophecy of Elijah (and Elisha). The name Elijah means *Yahweh is my God*. Elisha means *God is my redemption*. The name Jesus means *Yahweh saves*. Each one of these names indicates the identity of the God of the covenant. Jesus, the one who fulfils the covenant, fulfils His calling by "healing" them, the marginalized, who call to Him in need.

The reference to Elijah and the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:10-24) is typical of the marginalised to whom he has been sent. Elijah has to fulfil his pastoral task here. First, it entails physically looking after himself and the widow's family: neither the flour nor the oil will run out. She also emerges from

her connection to Elijah as a saved human being. It is amazing that, in the midst of so much idolatry, she already witnesses to the fact that God is alive when she meets Elijah (1 Kings 17:12). After her son has been resurrected, he calls out: "Look, your son is alive" and she confesses: "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the Lord really speaks through you."

The reference to Elisha concerns Naaman's healing (2 Kings 5:1-27). Lepers were viewed as unclean and thus part of the marginalized. In the case of Naaman, they also have a believer in their midst – the little girl from Israel who has been captured on one of the raids. Elisha does not only heal this man (physical need), but through his healing, he is saved, "because from now on I will not offer sacrifices or burnt offerings to any god except the Lord".

In both cases, Jesus bears witness to the fact that "there were many widows in Israel during the time of Elijah" and "there were many people suffering from a dreaded skin disease who lived in Israel during the time of the prophet Elisha". Here, Israel refers to the Jews, but in both cases, it is about the fact that many widows and many lepers had ignored God and His covenant with them. That is why Elijah and Elisha were sent to others who had also been marginalised. In these cases, the prophets were also not welcome in their own country.

As has already been explained above, it seems that, from a pastoral perspective, a larger group was included, especially if one relates Is. 61 to the stories of Elijah and Elisha. Jesus came for the marginalized. He will not force Himself on those who do not "need" Him – and it has already been indicated here that Nazareth does not honour Him (Luke 4) and does not need Him. The "gospel" is proclaimed (Jesus' quote from Is. 61 and 58) to the poor, and prisoners will be proclaimed free, the blind will see and the suppressed will be freed. This is the year of grace, the jubilee year. It is the year during which the original owners once again receive the right of possession of the land, according to the Old Testament. In this case, it is the year of joy because grace has been bestowed upon the marginalized, those without esteem and those who have been removed from the centre of society.

## 6. INTERACTIVE INTERNALISING PROCESS

In each person, the interactive process presupposes a social, psychological and spiritual unification of experiences as well as internalisation and growth in it. The factual has to be distinguished from the social-psychological-spiritual, but cannot be divorced from it. Next, a social-psychological aspect, i.e. status and honour, will be discussed because it is prominent in Luke 4:14-30.

Each human being exists in a particular social-cultural environment. The same holds for Jesus in Nazareth as His environment. Malina and Neyrey (1991:53) explain that this social-cultural environment grants a person not only status but also honour. In this pericope, Jesus' God-given status and honour is injured because His own people do not accept Him. Although He has already proven (Luke 4:14-15) His significance for the environment, He is not accepted. He introduces Himself as the one sent and anointed by God, the ONE who came to fulfil the scriptures and who is equal to the prophets Elijah and Elisha. He is the ONE who has been anointed by the Spirit to bring redemption (release) to all people (Luke 4:18-19). His fellow townspeople view His introduction as arrogant, and jealousy also plays a role here. The Messiah cannot look like this; He has been a child among us and the son of a carpenter at that! The fact that this child was conceived through the Spirit is ignored or is brushed aside as an untruth. Furthermore, one can also detect inferiority among them; their own town could not possibly produce the Messiah.

Frein (2008:9) refers to Elijah and Elisha as the benchmark against which Jesus' life and work are measured in the pericope in Luke 4. More than any other prophets in the Bible, Elijah and Elisha made God's presence visible through miracles of healing, feeding and the resurrection to life. This may have been a further contributing factor to the suspicion of the people in the synagogue and the scribes; after all, Jesus had performed miracles everywhere, but here, He "could" not.

The pastoral meaning of the "dishonouring" or the failure to appreciate Jesus' position and status is as follows: God gives His status, honour, and position to Jesus, not to (sinful) humankind. Thus, it is ascribed honour/status to Christ alone, confirmed in His anointment (Is. 61). However, Elijah shares in the acquired honour in God as a prophet, and we, after the crucifixion, share in the inherited/promised honour in Christ.

Shame is the result of failure to appreciate or confer honour. Christ is pulled down to the human level. Malina and Neyrey (1991:42), Seamands (1993:302) and Gardner (2005:127) refer to the result of "dishonouring" or the failure to appreciate as shame, which leads to inferiority and which is portrayed in the words, "I am not good enough."

Jesus' conduct bears witness to His deity and His compassion. He knows what the truth is; in His words and example, He says that He has been sent for them (us), who are easily reaching for the lie and are prisoners of the lie (the primal sin). It is ironic that He allows them to chase Him from the synagogue and the town. For us, reading the story afterwards, it is remarkable to see Jesus, the true Messiah, walking out from among them and leaving. Longenecker (2008:182) says that our own interpretations

of Scripture causes us to lose sight of the humour in Jesus' conduct (and words). They are so blinded by their jealousy and anger that Jesus walks past them! For his part, Shepherd (1994:132) wants to catch the wonder of the moment by means of the analogy between Satan looking for Jesus' life (Luke 4:6) and the people in the synagogue in Nazareth.

## 7. PASTORAL DEVELOPMENT: SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The process of appropriation is discussed by means of three questions. Firstly: Does transformation and/or spiritual growth take place by means of this pericope? Above, we considered the relevant social-psychological-spiritual aspects coming to the fore in the pericope. We learned from it that human beings exist in a particular social environment and that particular cultural aspects of the social culture influence them. For example, Malina and Neyrey (1991:46) point out that honour and status were part of the social milieu.

The Jewish woman could not claim any status in society, especially not if she was a widow and/or poor. She only had status in terms of the husband to whom she was married. If that husband were to die, she would only have had status if she had had a son. Poverty immediately classified her as an outcast or marginalized person. Inferiority was the result of a failure of recognition – which is why a woman would never have spoken to someone (especially a man) unless she was directly addressed (as in the case of the widow of Zarephath).

In Jesus' summary of Is. 61 and 58, the needs of the poor clearly had priority. To the poor, He brings the good message, the gospel that would bring peace to the poor outcast in her relationship with God. Never again would she need to be ashamed of her poverty: She has forever been redeemed thereof in Christ. In the case of the widow of Zarephath, the physical poverty surpasses the spiritual poverty. The moment when she recognises the fact that God is in charge, her situation changes from hopelessness to hope. Now she does not have to prepare her last meal and die anymore. Her need has become her prayer, and her prayer has been answered. She is freed from her imprisonment, her "spiritual" sight is restored, and she is freed from suppression as a pauper and widow. Christ, the Elijah-Messiah, has pitched up for her: The year of grace has come.

Secondly: What does God want to reveal to us through Jesus? Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Jesus reveals who He is and why He has come to earth. He points to the place of honour in which God has placed Him. He points to the fact that He has been anointed, just like the kings of His time. He points out that He is the one who is fulfilling the Scriptures (covenant)

and that He is the Messiah who has come to make good the predictions of prophets such as Elijah and Elisha, who were representatives of the Son.

For us as contemporary readers, He has come to swap our sinful characteristics (inferiority and being outcasts) for His characteristics – being a child of the King and being worthy in His kingdom. The features of hopelessness and blindness caused by our own situation are replaced. This holds from the day we were born because we are co-heirs. We are people with a new identity, who have to perform our pastoral task as “servant leaders” (Osmer 2008:188) in Christ.

Thirdly: What is the significance of this revelation for spiritual/pastoral care? It means that all of us can have a rejuvenated relationship with God in Christ because we are heirs to the “new testament” in Christ.

Practically, all believers on this earth are actually the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. In the midst of hopelessness, the church must reach people in the love of Jesus. However, the church (*ekklesia from Greek*) is defined as the sheepfold, the flock, the family of God, the field, the temple, the Jerusalem on high, the Israel of God, salt of the earth, light of the world, leaven in the dough, column of truth and the fullness of Christ.

## 8. FINDINGS

The method of exegesis, the analysis of the cultural-historical background, interactive internalising, and pastoral development brought to the fore the following points of view in Luke 4:14-30:

The main directive that this pericope offers for pastoral care is reconciliation of humankind with God. At some stage in her/his life, the person in need views her/himself as marginalized.

The Biblical content (text or pericope) has to be exploited exegetically and hermeneutically, and it has to take account of the context of the Bible as a whole, i.e. with the covenant between God and humankind.

In addition, a ministry of reconciliation / pastoral care cannot be practised without taking into consideration the covenant between God and humankind. From a Biblical and theological perspective, the covenant is appropriate as a *proprium* for a reformed theory of pastoral care, as Janse Van Rensburg concludes.

Luke 4:14-30 throws light on Jesus as “servant-leader”, especially for the marginalized. The marginalized fixes her hope on redemption (soteriology).

The history of pastoral care in the new hermeneutic phase emphasises the role of the pastor by means of the work of the Holy Spirit as redeemer (in Christ) between God and humankind.

Luke “pictures” Jesus as the Anointed of God, filled by the Holy Spirit in reaching out to the marginalized.

Jesus received the appointed place, honour and office from God and was baptised and anointed by the Holy Spirit to render Him competent. Furthermore, He is in continuous interaction with God through prayer concerning the execution of His office.

Jesus reveals Himself as the Prophet-Messiah and the Priest-Messiah through Is. 61 as well as through the stories of Elijah and Elisha. He is the one who fulfils the law and the prophets.

Jesus is central to the life of the marginalized as their Pastor (compassion and redemption). The only thing He expects from them is faith; that they would call on Him as their Redeemer, especially out of their spiritual needs.

The meaning that the revelation in Luke holds for pastoral care is that the companion has to be Jesus’ hands and feet, also for the marginalized.

The conduct of the people in the synagogue in Nazareth was coloured by their own social-cultural circumstances, and they rejected Jesus because He did not conform to their image of the Messiah.

Each one of us is poor (in spirit), blind (in spirit), and prisoners of our own past. Jesus has already brought us redemption through fulfilling the covenant as Priest, Prophet and Pastor.

## 9. CONCLUSION

The pericope in Luke 4:14-30 offers guidelines for pastoral care. Jesus reveals Himself as the one who fulfils the covenant and as the Redeemer of the marginalized. The charge to the pastoral companion is to be the hands and feet of Jesus – also for the marginalised. Jesus, the one who has fulfilled the prophecy, is also the Saviour. He was sent not only to the Jews, but also to the marginalized, to every one believing in His vicarious payment for guilt. Now the redemption has been finalised, now we can believe in and know God’s fulfilled covenant in the person of Christ and put into practice the reconciliatory relationship with God.

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