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IMPRESSED UNBELIEVERS AS WITNESSES TO CHRIST (LUKE 4:22a)

JOHN NOLLAND

REGENT COLLEGE, VANCOUVER, BC V6T 1W6

THERE have been numerous attempts to unravel the problems of Luke's account of the rejection of Jesus at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30).¹ One of the central problems in the passage is the relationship between v 22 and vv 28-9: in v 22 Luke apparently indicates a positive first response in the synagogue to Jesus' words ("all bore witness to him and were amazed at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth"); in vv 28-9, at the end of the episode, there is total hostility to Jesus ("all in the synagogue were filled with wrath"). What is the significance for Luke of a positive first response to Jesus that turns into a murderous rage? What causes the change of heart? Or is there a change of heart?

The present study confines its interest to the words πάντες ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ (v 22a). It is the conviction of the writer that an adequate understanding of these words goes a long way towards providing a proper perspective for viewing the disparate responses to Jesus in Luke 4: 16-30, and thus makes a significant contribution to our appreciation of Luke's purpose in the pericope.

The study proceeds by first assessing the adequacy of some of the suggestions which have been put forward concerning v 22a. A fresh approach is then developed to an understanding of Luke's intention at this point.

J. Jeremias has focused scholarly attention on the words ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ with his attempt to resolve the apparent inconsistencies in Luke's

¹Studies in the last ten years include E. M. Prevallet, "The Rejection at Nazareth Lk 4:14-30," *Scr* 20 (1968) 5-9; J. Bajard, "La Structure de la pericope de Nazareth en Luc 4:16-30. Propositions pour une lecture plus coherente," *ETL* 45 (1969) 165-71; L. C. Crockett, "Luke 4:25-7 and Jewish-Gentile Relations in Luke-Acts," *JBL* 88 (1969) 177-83; H. Schürmann, "Zur Traditionsgeschichte der Nazarethperikope Lk 4,16-30," *Mélanges Bibliques en hommage au R. P. Béda Rigaux* (ed. A. Descamps and A. de Halleux; Gembloux: Duculot, 1970) 187-206; D. Hill, "The Rejection at Nazareth," *NovT* 13 (1971) 161-80; W. Eltester, "Israel im lukanischen Werk und die Nazarethpericope," *Jesus in Nazareth* (BZNW 40; ed. idem; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972) 76-147; A. Strobel, "Die Ausrufung des Jubeljahres in der Nazarethpredigt Jesu; zur apokalyptischen Tradition Lc 4, 16-30," *ibid.* 38-50; R. C. Tannehill, "The Mission of Jesus according to Luke iv 16-30," *ibid.* 51-75; H. J. B. Combrink, "The Structure and Significance of Luke 4: 16-30," *Neot* 7 (1973) 27-47; B. Reicke, "Jesus in Nazareth—Lk 4, 14-30," *Das Wort und die Wörter. Fest. Gerhard Friedrich* (ed. H. Balz and S. Schulz; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1973) 47-56; E. Samain, "Aucun prophète n'est bien reçu dans sa patrie. Lc 4,21-30," *AsSeign* 35 (1973) 63-72; J. A. Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4," *Christianity, Judaism and other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty* (SJLA 12/1; ed. J. Neusner; Leiden: Brill, 1975) 75-106.

account by understanding the words to mean "they bore witness against him."² On this understanding *ἐθαύμαζον*, "they were amazed" (v 22), registers opposition to what is strange. The strange thing opposed is a message that stresses the mercy of God (*τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος*, "the words of grace"—v 22), and has no mention of eschatological vengeance on the Gentiles. (The quotation in vv 18-19 from Isa 60: 1-2 ends with "the year of the Lord's favor." Isa 60:2 continues "the day of vengeance of our God [on the Gentiles]"). Thus, according to Jeremias, there is no change of attitude: "from the outset unanimous rage was their response to Jesus."

The reconstruction is attractive, and has gained the support of K. H. Rengstorf and W. Grundmann.³ However, there are strong arguments to be levelled against Jeremias's view. I draw attention to the objections raised by H. Anderson and D. Hill.⁴ These are not here reproduced, but cumulatively they create a good deal of difficulty for Jeremias's case. To these I would add the following considerations.

(1) The mood of Luke 4:23 is not that of unanimous rage. It may be all of critical, cynical and unbelieving, but it is not to be classed with the fury that led to the attempt to lynch Jesus.

(2) On Jeremias's reconstruction the people are furious, not because Jesus spoke of God's grace, but because he spoke *only* of God's grace. This emphasis must be imported into the text which says only that "words of grace . . . proceeded out of his mouth."

(3) *χάρις* elsewhere in Luke is a very dynamic concept,⁵ and it seems unlikely that he would use it here to refer to God's-mercy-as-subject-matter. If he were to have used *χάρις* in this way we should at least have expected *τοῖς λόγοις περὶ τῆς χάριτος*, "words concerning grace."⁶

If we are not to follow Jeremias's negative understanding of *πάντες ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ* what are we to make of these words?

The *JB* translates "he won the approval of all." The *NEB* speaks of a "general stir of admiration."⁷ These translations presumably correspond to the uses of *μαρτυρέω* listed by BAG (p. 494) under the meanings, "testify favourably, speak well (of), approve (of)," and in particular to the third of

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If then, we need to find something to be supported by the synagogue-congregation's testimony then three possibilities are: (1) that Jesus' claim to be the messianic prophet is correct; (2) that Jesus' known character supports his credibility; (3) that the *φήμη*, "report," of Luke 4:14 which has also reached Nazareth is correct. The first of these cannot really be squared with the development of the episode, but Leaney, who claims that Luke has produced an "impossible story,"¹⁰ seems to opt for this view. He suggests that here the people "testified to (Jesus') special gift and claim," which must mean an acceptance of Jesus' claim.¹¹ This give us an almost Johannine sense for *μαρτυρέω* of "witness . . . to the nature and significance of (Jesus') person."¹² Luke is, however, not inclined towards using *μαρτυρέω* in this way. Apart from Acts 23:11 there is no example in Luke/Acts of the verb used to designate the religious witness of a believer to Christ or the gospel,¹³ and even in Acts 23:11 the use of *μαρτυρέω* does not stand in its own right as a reference to religious witness, but only in so far as it is Luke's shorthand for the fuller form which occurs in the previous and parallel clause concerning witness in Jerusalem, i.e., shorthand for *διαμαρτυρήσαι τὰ περὶ ἐμοῦ*, "to testify about me." This religious use of *μαρτυρέω* is particularly unlikely at Luke 4:22, for the context there means that the word would lack the "orientation to evangelization" which "distinguishes the term from *ὁμολογεῖν*."¹⁴ Further, that *ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ* is followed by *καὶ ἐθαύμαζον* suggests that we are

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¹¹*Ibid.*, 119.

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dealing here with something less than acceptance of Jesus' Christological claims, since for Luke *θανυμάζω* always refers to something less than or not yet as developed as a proper belief in Jesus.¹⁵ I find myself, then, unable to follow Leaney.

The second possibility, that the people are providing a character reference for Jesus,¹⁶ requires us to rest heavily on the "where he had been brought up" of Luke 4:16. It is more imaginative than likely and does not seem to find support among the commentators.¹⁷ What perhaps tells most decisively against this understanding is the presence at the end of the verse of the question "Is not this Joseph's son?" However we understand these words, they do not constitute the "testimony" and cannot follow after a testimony which is itself based on what the people know of Jesus as an ex-resident of Nazareth. Such a testimony would need to follow rather than anticipate this question.

The third possibility has the largest measure of support.¹⁸ As Plummer has it, "They bore witness to Him, not that what he said about Himself, but that what rumour had said respecting his power as a teacher, was true." For support we have the "report" of Luke 4:14 and the "words of grace proceeding out of his mouth" of v 22, at which the people marvel. But really it seems quite artificial to make this sharp distinction between what Jesus is saying and his power as a teacher in saying it. While the "report" of v 14 is probably not meant to include the suggestion that Jesus is Messiah, it can hardly avoid reference to what Jesus said, along with his impressive manner of expressing it, while "the words of grace" must have as part of their essential content that the day of fulfilment of God's gracious purpose has arrived precisely because the people find themselves addressed by the messianic prophet. In any case, surely it is incredible that Jesus' momentous claim can be left to one side, while they comment on Jesus' powers of oratory? I am inclined to agree with Loisy "on aurait été frappé de sa prétension plus que du charmé de sa parole."¹⁹

Eltester offers us a further possibility on the basis of what he sees as a parallel use of *μαρτυρέω* in Praedicatio Petri.²⁰ The text reads: *ἐξελεξάμην ὑμᾶς δώδεκα . . . εὐαγγελίσασθαι . . . ὅπως οἱ ἀκούσαντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες σωθῶσιν, οἱ δε μὴ πιστεύσαντες ἀκούσαντες μαρτυρήσωσιν, οὐκ ἔχοντες ἀπολογία ἐπεῖν. >οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν.<*²¹

¹⁵Cf. esp. Acts 4.13. On the use of *θανυμάζω* see G. Bertram, "θαῦμα κτλ.," *TDNT* 3 (1965) 22-42 and esp. 37-40. See below for further discussion on the significance here of *ἐθαύμαζον*.

¹⁶Cf. A. Schlatter, *Die Evangelien nach Markus und Lukas* (Schlatters Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament 2; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1947) 203.

¹⁷A. George ("La Predication inaugurale de Jésus dans la Synagogue de Nazareth," *BVC* 59 [1964] 21) may be an exception.

¹⁸A. Plummer, *Gospel according to St. Luke* (ICC; Edinburgh: Clark, 1901) 124; M.-J. Lagrange, *Évangile selon St. Luc* (Paris: Gabalda, 1948) 140; L. Morris, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (Tyndale NT Commentaries; London: Inter-Varsity, 1974) 107; etc.

¹⁹A. Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques* (Montier-en-Der: chez l'auteur, 1907), 844.

²⁰Preserved in Clem. Alex. *Str.* 6.6.48. (Misprinted as 5.48 in Eltester, "Israel," 138.)

²¹Quoted from *ΒΙΒΛΙΟΘΗΚΗ ΕΛΛΗΝΩΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΩΝ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣΤΙΚΩΝ ΣΥΓΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΩΝ*, Vol 8 (Athens: ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΗ ΔΙΑΚΟΝΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ

Eltester²² argues that the Nazareth folk are qualified as witnesses by both hearing ("in your hearing" [v 21], "the words of grace" [v 22]) and seeing Jesus ("the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him" [v 20]). It is not clear to me whether Eltester understands that the people *μαρτυρεῖν* merely by their seeing and hearing Jesus or whether their particular act of witness is to wonder at the words which proceed from Jesus' mouth.²³ In any case Luke's main point will be to emphasize that the Jews have been given every opportunity to see and hear Jesus, and in this way Luke wants to prepare for the emphasis on the guilt of the Jewish people to be found in the Acts speeches.²⁴

If Eltester means that the people *μαρτυρεῖν* by seeing and hearing Jesus then it is evident that he understands *μαρτυρήσωσιν* in Praedicatio Petri as a reference to witnessing (=hearing) the apostolic preaching. This understanding of Praedicatio Petri cannot be sustained. The activity involved in *μαρτυρήσωσιν* must be contemporary with the hypothetical alternative *εἰπεῖν >οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν<*. But the setting for this unavailable *ἀπολογία*²⁵ must be the day of reckoning and not the day of hearing the preacher, so the activity involved in *μαρτυρήσωσιν* is what hearing the preaching puts people in the position of having to do on the day of reckoning. On that day they can admit to having witnessed (=heard) the apostolic preaching, but they cannot witness (=hear) it.²⁶ Thus Eltester's appeal to Praedicatio Petri would be invalidated. Without this support Eltester would be proposing a sense for *μαρτυρέω* which is not attested elsewhere and is neither demanded nor encouraged by the Lukan context.

If on the other hand Eltester means that the people *μαρτυρεῖν* by wondering at Jesus' words, then an act of giving testimony is involved, and Eltester must be understanding *μαρτυρήσωσιν* in Praedicatio Petri in some

ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ, 1956): "I have chosen you twelve . . . to preach . . . that those who hear and believe may be saved, and that those who do not believe, having heard, may testify and not be able to excuse themselves by saying 'we did not hear.'"

²²"Israel," 138.

²³The relevant sentences are, "So wird ihre Zeugenschaft in doppelter Weise ausgedrückt: sie haben Jesus gesehen und gehört, ja sie haben sogar seine Worte der Gnade bewundert.¹³¹ Und damit haben sie Zeugnis für den Messias abgelegt." And later ". . . die Bürger von Nazareth haben gehört und sie räumen das sogar ein." The footnote (131) preferring the rendering of *χάρις* as "Anmut" inclines me towards the first alternative, but not certainly.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 111.

²⁵I.e., to say "*οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν*."

²⁶The suggestion that *μαρτυρεῖν* in Praedicatio Petri means "to be an eye-witness (of)" would not be possible without divorcing the quotation from its context in Clem. Alex. *Str.* 6.6.48. Clement is obviously paraphrasing *μαρτυρήσωσιν* when he says in the following paragraph *τὴν κόλασιν δικαίαν εἶναι . . . ὁμολογήσουσιν*, "they will confess the judgment to be just." This reinforces the conclusion that the activity envisaged in *μαρτυρήσωσιν* occurs on the judgment day. We should take the context in Clement seriously for the following reasons: (1) Here he cannot be accused of special pleading since for his own point he has no interest in the precise meaning of *μαρτυρέω*. (2) He was presumably reading the text in its original context. (It is alternatively possible that the quotation stops earlier and the use of *μαρτυρέω* is actually Clement's.) (3) He spoke Greek.

other way. We may consider for Praedicatio Petri the three possibilities: (1) They bear witness to the truth of the apostolic preaching. (2) They bear witness to the content of the apostolic preaching. (3) They bear witness about themselves, that they heard the apostolic preaching.

The first could have a stronger or weaker sense, both of which fall outside the normal lexical range for *μαρτυρέω*. It could denote religious witness by those not committed to the religious conviction involved or the weaker sense of simply admitting the truth of the matter. Besides the lexical difficulties neither of these possibilities has any particular claim to fit the Praedicatio Petri context. It is not obvious why unbelievers should be testifying to the apostolic message in the judgment day; and while they must certainly concede its truth in the judgment, the activity designated by *μαρτυρήσωσιν* is seen in Praedicatio Petri to follow from their having heard the preaching, in a manner not accounted for by this understanding.

The second alternative would seem to have no point in the Praedicatio Petri context and we may set it aside. If Eltester allows one of these suggestions, it must be the third. ("Auch die Bürger von Nazareth haben gehört und sie räumen das sogar ein."²⁷) If the reference is to bearing witness to having heard the apostolic preaching, then it is so as a testimony against themselves,²⁸ as at Matt 23:31, i.e., testimony "that we heard (and are thus guilty)." That the emphasis falls on such a confession of guilt²⁹ is supported by Clement's paraphrase in the following paragraph, *τὴν κόλασιν δικαίαν εἶναι . . . ὁμολογήσωσιν*, "they will confess . . . the judgment to be just."

Now it is not at all easy to import this emphasis on a self-condemning admission into the Lukan context. Even if it is true (with Eltester) that Luke emphasizes the exposure of the Jews to Jesus' teaching and presence to prepare for the emphasis on the guilt of the Jewish people to be found in the Acts speeches,³⁰ it is hard to put an admission of guilt onto the lips of the Nazareth folk in Luke 4:22. We would need to translate "they were testifying against themselves³¹ with regard to Jesus by wondering at the words which were coming from his mouth."

The thought is clear enough but incredibly compressed and rather involved. Luke certainly would not want to say that the Nazareth folk saw themselves to be making such a confession. Rather in a manner similar to Matt 23:31 what they do functions as such an admission without their intending it to be so. So then we have here a comment from the Lukan perspective on an item in the episode rather than something that belongs properly to Luke's recounting of

²⁷Eltester, "Israel," 138.

²⁸A more neutral "we agree that we heard" would render the following *οὐκ ἔχοντες ἀπολογία ἐπιείν* > *οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν* tautological.

²⁹It is assumed that to hear is to know. A failure to believe is not a failure to be convinced that something is true but rather a culpable refusal to respond to what is known to be true and has been placed immediately before one's attention in the proclamation.

³⁰Eltester, "Israel," 111.

³¹I.e., "making a self-condemning admission."

the episode. The thought would run: amazement indicates that they have in fact heard and that what they heard registered. It is reprehensible to hear and not believe (since the message is [self-evidently?] true). It will soon appear that the Nazareth folk do not respond with belief, therefore their amazement testifies to their guilt, since their failure to believe is not from failing to hear.

It may be fairly objected that this is too subtle for Luke. It is certainly too compressed to be unprepared for. The infancy narratives bear witness to great reversals to follow in the train of the coming of the Messiah, but there is not yet any theme of Jewish rejection of Jesus and the gospel. At this point the Nazareth folk have not even themselves rejected Jesus to make it possible for Luke to stress their guilt in this way.³² I therefore conclude that the use of *μαρτυρέω* in Praedicatio Petri cannot help us with the sense of that verb at Luke 4:22.

A suggestion which we may salvage from the discussion of Eltester's treatment of Luke 4:22a is the possibility that with *ἐμαρτύρουν* we are dealing with a Lukan perspective which is not visible from within the episode's own horizon. To repeat from above, "the Lukan perspective on an item in the episode rather than something that belongs properly to Luke's recounting of the episode." The first of our original set of possibilities for *ἐμαρτύρουν* was testimony "that Jesus' claim to be the messianic prophet was correct." Can it be suggested that Luke considers that the amazed response stands as testimony to Jesus despite the rejection which follows?³³ The amazement of the Nazareth folk makes its contribution to the evidence which is meant to bring Theophilus to faith in Jesus!

Luke seems to set quite a store on testimony which is not "from faith to faith," i.e., he has a concern for the secular evidence for Christianity. This note is set from the prologue where "The secular character of the language is very noticeable."³⁴ Flender's comments that Luke "does not water down the gospel message but points to its human exterior. The story of Jesus is not a myth but a real event and the usual means of historical research can check it."³⁵ A. A. Trites in an article, "The Importance of Legal Scenes and Language in the Book of Acts," finds much the same emphasis there. To quote from his conclusion:³⁶

The frequent use of legal language in connection with real courts of law is germane to Luke's presentation and part of his theological intention. The claims of Christ are being debated, and Luke intends by the use of lawcourt scenes and legal language to draw attention

³²The use of the imperfect *ἐμαρτύρουν* tells against this understanding since their amazement can only become a testimony against them after they have rejected Jesus, an event which is still future from the perspective of Luke 4:22a.

³³Not that they are presented as prepared to see their own response as testimony to Jesus, but that it stands as such in Luke's eyes and for his readers.

³⁴H. Flender, *St. Luke: Theologian of Redemptive History* (London: SPCK, 1967) 62; cf. M. Dibelius, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (London: SCM, 1956) 147.

³⁵Flender, *Luke*, 63-64. See the whole discussion, 62-66.

³⁶*NovT* 16 (1974) 284.

to this fact. The messiahship and Lordship of Jesus are in dispute, and this challenges Luke to demonstrate these claims by many convincing proofs. (*ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις* 1:3; cf. *Jos. Ant.* 5.39). An important part of his task is the presentation of the courtroom evidence in such a way that it will bear witness to Christ.

In this light I draw attention to Luke's concern to "document" the public impact of Jesus.

(1) Luke is concerned to point out that Jesus' activity is not only known of by those present on a particular occasion, but that its impact is such that reports spread far and wide (Luke 4: 14-15; 4:37; 5:15; 7:17; [8:39]).

(2) Luke emphasizes both the number of people attracted to hear and see Jesus (5:15; 6:17; 8:4; 11:29; 12:1) and also the range of places from which they come (5:17; 6:17; 8:4).

(3) Luke stresses the general recognition of the "good" done by Jesus. (Note the use of *δοξάζειν θεόν*, "to glorify God," to express this in Luke 5:26; 7:16.) The idea is present constantly in the healing accounts and cf. Acts 4:16; 10:38.

(4) Luke records the public astonishment caused by Jesus (Luke 4:22, 32,36; 5:26; 7:16; 9:43; [11:38; 20:26]).³⁷

Now none of this in Luke is directly a matter of people becoming disciples. It is not the beginnings of faith that Luke documents. He is concerned rather to tell us something about Jesus and not something about him which may only be discerned by the eye of faith.³⁸ The public are in some sense Luke's "impartial" witnesses,³⁹ since Jesus' ministry makes its impact on them all alike whether they be those who are committed to discipleship (Luke 19:37), or those who reject him in murderous rage (4:22) or those who cold-bloodedly

³⁷Setting aside for a moment notes of specific amazement (which may have critical overtones and in any case merely denote the extraordinary), Luke has a generally favorable attitude maintained towards Jesus by the people (as opposed to the various classes of leaders) through the gospel (7:29; 9:43; [11:27]; 13:17; 18:43; 19:48; 21:38; 22:2,6; [23:27]; 23:48). Luke 23:13 is exceptional in associating the people with the chief priests and rulers. A. George ("Israel dans l'oeuvre de Luc," *RB* 75 [1968] 504 and n.54) following G. Rau ("Das Volk in der lukanische Passionsgeschichte. Eine Konjektur zu Lk 23:13," *ZNW* 56 [1965] 41-51) and P. Winter (*On the Trial of Jesus*, 2d. ed. revised and edited by T. A. Burkill and Geza Vermes; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974) 141 n.23 = (1961) 201 n.23 eliminates the exception by reading *τοῦ λαοῦ*, "of the people," for *καὶ τὸν λαόν*, "and the people." This move is criticized by W. Radl (*Paulus und Jesus im lukanischen Doppelwerk* [Europäische Hochschulschriften 23/49; Bern-Frankfurt: Lang, 1975] 303). In 23:4-5 there is a vaguer reference to multitudes associated with the chief priests.

³⁸It is the "human exterior" of the gospel to which Flender (*Luke*, 63) draws attention.

³⁹We should also note how Luke has the crowds present for teaching which is addressed to the disciples. It may be that Luke wants to stress the availability to the crowds of the possibility of discipleship but I am inclined to see Luke stressing here the public (and not esoteric) and therefore at least theoretically verifiable nature of the teaching of Jesus (Luke 6:17-20 and cf. 7:1; [9:43]; 12:1). G. Lohfink (*Die Sammlung Israels* [SANT 39; München: Kösel, 1975] 65, 72-77, 94, cf. 33-46, 62) wants to find here represented the gathering of the people into the community of disciples in the time after Pentecost. There is also a large amount of teaching in Luke specifically directed to the public. (Luke does have a small amount of esoterica, e.g., Luke 10:23,24; 9:43?; 11:1-13?; 9:18-22.)

set out to trap him in the political machinations of the day (20:26).

Such a role for these "public witnesses" finds further support in Luke's general failure to show any interest in what might be, for the people involved, the aftermath to their having been so impressed by Jesus. This is especially acute with regard to the favorable attitude by the people to Jesus (see n.37). They simply remain as the approving public (19:48) right up to Jesus' arrest. We want to ask, isn't that an impossible position to remain in. But Luke is not conscious of any tension that needs resolving in terms of faith or rejection, since his framework at this point is not that of personal response to Jesus but rather that of "impartial" witness. Along with the approving crowd, the disciples are there as well (more widely or more narrowly viewed)⁴⁰ but with no thought of transition from the one to the other. This same phenomenon is exhibited at Acts 5:13-14. The people⁴¹ hold the band of Christian believers in high honor, but this in no way marks a transition to sharing their faith. It is more a kind of objective witness to Christianity.⁴² The following verse moves to the response framework of thought and speaks of people becoming believers. That vv 13 and 14 have been conceived in quite different frameworks of thought is at once evident from the tension between the "none of the rest dared join them" of v 13, and the "more than ever believers were added to the Lord" of v 14.

There are a number of examples of "impartial" witness by opponents of Christianity in Acts. Commenting on Luke 4:22 Leaney suggests we "Cf. Acts vi. 15 for a similar testimony from the opponents of Stephen."⁴³ The comparison is most apt. Those who stand as Stephen's opponents and will soon be his murderers cannot but register that which was undeniable about Stephen. "And gazing at him (*ἀτενίζω* as at Luke 4:20), all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel." Their witness is that which they cannot but concede. There is another clear example of this at Acts 4:13-16, esp. v 16b, "For that a notable sign has been performed through them is manifest to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it." Eltester's characterization of Luke 4:22 as "eine Art negativer Zeugenschaft"⁴⁴ fits this Acts passage admirably, since the admission is preliminary to an attempt to silence the Christian witness of Peter and John.

Further examples could be added but these suffice to show Luke's concern for the visible-in-history aspect of the Christ event. I hasten to add that this is not all Luke knows of the Christ event.⁴⁵ While Stephen's face as angelic is a matter of "secular" history, that he sees "the heavens opened, and the Son of

⁴⁰There seems to be some movement in Luke's use of the term *μαθητής*, "disciple."

⁴¹We may compare the significance of public reputation for Paul at 2 Cor 8:21.

⁴²It is because F. Sahlin has no such concept that he translates Acts 2:47, "sie erwießen dem ganzen Volk . . . Güte" ("Die Früchte der Umkehr," *ST* 1 [1947] 63) and cf. F. P. Cheetham, "Acts ii.47: *ἔχοντες χάριν πρὸς ὅλον τὸν λαόν*," *ExpTim* 74 (1963) 214-15.

⁴³Leaney, *Luke*, 119. Plummer (*Luke*, 124) also invites this comparison.

⁴⁴Eltester, "Israel," 138.

⁴⁵See Flender's discussion (*Luke*, 62-6) re the prologue to Luke.

man standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56) is a testimony spoken by a man of faith to be received by faith. This was not visible to the Council members. But things which are "visible" are of some importance to Luke and make their contribution to the witness through which Luke means to bring Theophilus to faith in the Christ.

Luke is free to use *μαρτυρέω* in Luke 4:22 for this kind of "impartial" witness to what has a place in secular history because he has not claimed the word to express the religious witness of believers (see the earlier discussion). For Luke, such witness is not unimportant to faith, since the impact of Christ in secular history points beyond itself to the genuinely divine event to be perceived.

It is appropriate that Luke should indicate in this first incident which he records from the ministry of Jesus, the significance he intends in material on the impact of Jesus, to follow throughout the gospel.⁴⁶ Luke makes this connection at the beginning to alert his readers so that they can appreciate the cumulative weight of this kind of testimony to Jesus as the course of the gospel unfolds.

To reach this understanding for *ἐμαρτύρου* we have obviously assumed a relationship between the activity involved in *ἐμαρτύρου* and that involved in *ἐθαύμαζον*. To be more exact, the activity of the first verb is achieved and defined by means of the activity of the second verb. This could be so if we have in *ἐμαρτύρου* *αὐτῷ* καὶ *ἐθαύμαζον* an example of colloquial parataxis.⁴⁷ There is an example of such parataxis at Luke 6:48, though the relationship between the two verbs is different there. Matt 8:14 is closer, but the verbs there are simple participles.

Another possibility is an exegetical use of *καί*.⁴⁸ BDF recognize a category of "explicative" uses of *καί* which are "always used to particularize." Of the list 1 Cor 8:12 is of special interest to us. We read there *ἀμαρτάνοντες εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς καὶ τύπτοντες αὐτῶν τὴν συνείδησιν ἀσθενοῦσαν εἰς χριστὸν ἀμαρτάνετε*, "sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience, which is weak, you sin against Christ." The particular way in which the brothers are sinned against is by the wounding of their consciences in the matter of sacrifice to idols. *ἀμαρτάνοντες*, "sinning," occurs by means of, and is defined more closely by, the action involved in *τύπτοντες*, "wounding" which means the verbs stand in precisely the relation I have suggested for the verbs of Luke 4:22a. This particular usage of *καί* is to be observed in the LXX, which may account for its use by Luke.⁴⁹

⁴⁶Perhaps 2:47 is already an example of such testimony. R. Glöckner (*Die Verkündigung des Heils beim Evangelisten Lukas* [Walberberger Studien der Albertus-Magnus-Akademie; Theologische Reihe 9; Mainz: Grünewald, 1975]77) contrasts the attitude expressed here with the later scribal conflict with Jesus, and speaks of Jesus as "schon grundsätzlich angenommen und damit seine kommende Sendung legitimiert" in the Luke 2 temple scene.

⁴⁷Cf. BDF § 471; BAG, 393.

⁴⁸BDF § 442 (9).

⁴⁹E.g., 3 Kgms 13:21-2 *Ἀνθ' ὧν παρεπύκρνας τὸ ῥῆμα κυρίου καὶ οὐκ ἐθύλαξας τὴν*

A third possibility is to assimilate this Lukan usage to the common tendency in NT narrative to duplicate words for speaking (e.g., *ἀποκρίνομαι καὶ λέγω*, "answer and say";⁵⁰ *μαρτυρέω καὶ λέγω*, "bear witness and say";⁵¹ *ἔρωτάω καὶ λέγω*, "ask and say"⁵²).⁵³ This usage tends to be rather pleonastic, but it can achieve a certain emphasis, and of interest to us is that the relationship between the two verbs is that which we are suggesting for Luke 4:22a. The answer (or testimony etc.) is given in what is said. In the Luke 4 context *θαυμάζω* functions analogously to a verb of speaking and it may be against this background that we should set the Lukan usage here. For a non-pleonastic example of this usage we can compare John 1:15, *Ἰωάννης μαρτυρεῖ περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ κέκραγεν*, "John bore witness to him and cried."

For our purposes it is not necessary to decide between these suggestions. It is sufficient if we have been able to demonstrate that it is a natural reading of Luke 4:22a to understand the witness borne as finding its expression in the amazement expressed at the words of Jesus.

Finally, what is the relationship between the response to Jesus in Luke 4:22 and the murderous rage of vv 28-9? Luke is not concerned to show us that the one response turns into the other. Here is no good beginning turned sour. Rather, it would be better to say that Luke wants his readers to see that even people so inimical to the claims of Jesus that they seek his death, nevertheless, cannot but be impressed by the words of this imposing figure. The response of v 22 has nothing to do with the beginnings of Christian faith. It is registered to tell us something about Jesus and not something about the spiritual state of the hearers. The impact of Jesus' words on these people stands in Luke's eyes as evidence (witness) for the authenticity of this Christ and his message precisely because they are about to be revealed as implacably opposed to Jesus. Their very rejection of him underlines the impartiality of their witness to him. And in Luke's understanding such "impartial" witness—the objective, visible-in-history impact of Jesus—has a not insignificant contribution to make to that witness through which Luke means to bring Theophilus to faith in the Christ.

ἐντολήν . . . καὶ ἐπεστρεψας. . . . It is doubtful whether these examples should be thought of in terms of exegetical *καί* rather than Semitic parataxis.

⁵⁰Luke 13:15; Mark 7:28; John 1:48, etc.

⁵¹John 13:21.

⁵²John 1:25 cf. Mark 14:61.

⁵³It is even more frequent to have one verb in participial form.