

Jesus, the personified temple in Lukan 'L'



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Prayer and the temple were two of the most prominent themes in the Third Gospel and they have garnered scholarly interest. However, the discussion about prayer vis-à-vis the temple in Luke's special source (L) has gone unnoticed. Using source criticism and narrative criticism, the research shows a connection between prayer and the temple in L. The relationship between the two reflects the development from a belief in the temple as a place for praying and receiving an answer, to Jesus who intercedes for the people. This article argues that the prayer in Luke's special source revealed Jesus as the new, personified temple through whom the L communities prayed and received answers to their prayers. Based on this finding, this article then shows the possible reconstruction of the separation between Judaism and Christianity from the perspective of L communities.

Contribution: This article contributes to the discussion on Lukan Christology by proposing that Jesus is the new personified temple as understood by the L communities. Such a depiction lends new support to Dunn's reconstruction of the parting of the ways between Jews and Christians.

Keywords: the Gospel of Luke; Jesus; prayer; L; the temple; L communities.

Introduction

Christology has been considered 'the decisive factor in the partings of the ways', according to James Dunn (2006:xxvi). The fundamental impetus behind the separation between Judaism and Christianity is the christology factor. Recently, Dunn's statement has been the subject of extensive discussion and debate (Becker & Reed 2007; Lieu 1994, 2016; Schröter, Edsall & Verheyden 2021; Segal 1986). An aspect that remains unexplored by contemporary scholars is the potential for christology, the temple, and prayer to serve as a gateway to the reconstruction of the partings of the ways. The three themes of christology: the temple, and prayer, according to this article, serve as entry points for the reconstruction of the separation of Judaism and Christianity. Temple and prayer are significant thematic elements in the Gospel of Luke. Scholars have paid attention to each of these themes (Bovon 2005; Han 2000, 2002; Holmås 2005, 2011; Nygaard 2012). However, it seems that scholars have not paid much attention to examining the connection between the temple and prayer. Moreover, in an effort to reconstruct the separation between Judaism and Christianity, the connection between christology, the temple, and prayer has yet to be investigated. This article thus represents a humble endeavour to address the existing gap.

By focusing on Luke's special materials, this article seeks to fill that gap. Despite the fact that the theology of the Lukan prayer has started to take shape, this construction is still weak because it does not account for the characteristic of prayer in Luke's special material (L). The significance of studying the theme of prayer in L and its relation to the temple is that such a study would indicate the development of the understanding of prayer in L communities (cf. on L communities, see Brown 1997:269–271). An examination of the relationship between prayer and the temple reveals the L communities' understanding of Jesus. In this article, we will argue that the L communities initially believed that the temple was the place where they could receive answers to their prayers, but they eventually realised that Jesus was the personified temple. When L communities embraced Jesus as the personified temple, the conflict with Judaism reached its zenith.

Furthermore, the findings from this research bear important implication for Christian communities in our world today. This is especially with regard to those who experience displacement, whether geographically or socially. By replacing the geographically and socially bound temple with the personified temple (Jesus), the L communities in fact opened up the possibility for the displaced Christians to worship and encounter their God.

Note: Historical Thought and Source Interpretation.

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To substantiate our argument, we will firstly analyse the prayer lexemes used in Luke and especially in L. This will help us delimit our analysis. Secondly, we will exegete each prayer-text in L. Those texts are the following: the prayer of Zechariah (L 1:13), of Simeon (L 2:25), of Anna (L 2:37), an eschatological prayer (L 21:36), and Jesus's prayer for Peter (L 22:32). Narrative criticism (see Barus 1999), which is based on the text in its final editing form, will be used in conjunction with source criticism to conduct the research on prayer vis-à-vis the temple in L. Finally, we will reconstruct the development of the understanding of prayer vis-à-vis the temple within the L communities and its implication for Christians today.

Prayer vis-à-vis the temple in Luke's special material (L)

A survey on the prayer lexeme in the four Gospels indicates that Luke has a significantly more emphasis on prayer than in Matthew, Mark, and John (Barus 2022:110). Prayer lexemes are used 97 times in Luke, whereas the Fourth Gospel contained 79, followed by the Gospel of Matthew with 61 times and the Gospel of Mark with 60. Not only does the Third Gospel contain a large number of prayer lexemes, their usage is also more diverse in comparison to the other three gospels. Luke employs three unique lexemes: *δέομαι*, *δέησις*, *παράκλησις* (Barus 2022:110). It is important to notice that *δέομαι* appears only once outside the Third Gospel (Mt 9:38). The unique use of the prayer lexeme in the Gospel of Luke is listed in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, Luke's unique use of prayer lexeme spreads from the Infancy narrative to the Passion narrative. As suggested by Joseph Fitzmyer (1981:83–84), prayer lexemes in L passages as they appear in the Gospel of Luke include: Luke 1:13; 2:25, 37 (1:5–2:52); 21:36 (21:34–36); and 22:32 (22:31–32). Based on L passages suggested by Fitzmyer, this article will examine prayer vis-à-vis the temple in L in those passages. We will begin with the prayer of Zechariah in the Jerusalem Temple (L 1:13).

The prayer of Zechariah (L 1:13)

L 1:13 is part of the narrative of the birth of John (Lk. 1:5–25). It begins with the depiction of Zechariah who 'belonged to the priestly order of Abijah' (v. 5; 1 Chr 24:10; 2 Chr 8:14). He married Elizabeth who also had priestly origin. According to Jewish belief, this is an ideal marriage (cf. Green 1997:64; Marshall 1978:52). Furthermore, Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth lived righteously (*δίκαιοι*) before God. The expression 'righteous before God' refers to a balanced theological and ethical life by carrying out all God's commandments and decrees (cf. Green 1997:65).

TABLE 1: The unique use of the prayer lexeme in Luke.

Prayer lexeme	Usage in Luke
<i>δέομαι</i> [to ask]	Luke 5:12; 8:28, 38; 9:38, 40; 10:2; 21:36; 22:32 (8x)
<i>δέησις</i> [prayer]	Luke 1:13; 2:37; 5:33 (3x)
<i>παράκλησις</i> [consolation]	Luke 2:25; 6:24; (2x)

This situation is supported by the participle *πορευόμενοι*, which is used in OT to describe moral or ethical action (Hauck & Schulz 1968:570–571; Marshall 1978:52). In other words, Luke describes Zechariah and Elizabeth as living a blameless life.

The narrator, however, reports that they had no children because Elizabeth was barren (v. 7). Elizabeth recognised that their predicament is a disgrace (v. 25) because of the belief of the society that childlessness was the result of sin and divine punishment (Lv 20:20–21). The situation, however, changed radically when God sent the angel Gabriel (Dn 8:16; 9:21; 1 En 9:1; 10:9; 20:7; 40:9; 54:6; Apoc. Moses 40:1; 2 En 21:3, 5; 24:1) to meet Zechariah, not Elizabeth, who was in charge of burning incense in the Temple. It is not clear when Gabriel appeared to Zechariah because the focus of the narration is the place, namely the Temple. The assignment of praying by burning incense by lots indicates God's intention to communicate with Zechariah through Gabriel, his special servant (Dn 8:16; 9:21; 1 En 9:1; 10:9; 20:7; 40:9; 54:6). God chose to have a private conversation with Zechariah in the Temple rather than at his home.

The incense offering (Ex 30:1–9) made before the morning and following the evening sacrifices was, in essence, a prayer (Ps 141:2; Rev 5:8; 8:3; Is 56:7). It is likely that Zechariah offered two types of prayer. Firstly, Zechariah prayed for the birth of a child within his family in order to eradicate disgrace (Bock 1994:82; Danker 1988:29; Green 1997:73; cf. Bovon 2002:35). Numerous scholars believe that he prayed specifically for a son (Marshall 1978:56). Initially, Zechariah as a young family still prayed for a child because he believed that childlessness is the failure of Elizabeth (v. 25). His belief might be derived from the traditions of famous Israel ancestral mothers such as Sarah (Gn 16:1), Rebecca (Gn 25:21), Rachel (Gn 30:1), Samson's mother (Jdg 13:2), and Anna (1 Sm 1–2). Nonetheless, as Zechariah and Elizabeth grew older over time, it is likely that the prayers for the birth of a child became less frequent. Gabriel, who appeared to Zechariah, announces that his prayers (*δέησις*) have been answered. This is recorded in L 1:13. Zechariah received the answer to his prayer in the holy place while serving as priest.

Secondly, Zechariah prayed for the coming of the Messiah who would save the Israelites. Zechariah might have been praying for the coming of the Messiah and the era of salvation (Marshall 1978:56). Zechariah's prayers were prompted by his personal and communal needs. Zechariah's prayers for a child and for the coming of the Messiah had been answered. The answered prayers had been received in the Temple in Jerusalem (Fitzmyer 1981:164–171; Marshall 1988:148–156) while Zechariah, who came from outside Jerusalem, was performing his priestly ministry. It is evident that prayer becomes the divine visitation in which God's redemptive purpose as set forth in the Scriptures is revealed (cf. Green 1997:72).

In sum, Zechariah delivered his prayer and received answers to his prayer in the Temple. In Zechariah's case, the focus

remains on the temple, as the people still awaited the coming of the Messiah. Similar to the prevailing Jewish belief, Zechariah considers the temple to be the dwelling place of God. The temple serves as the place for prayer and worship.

The prayer of Simeon (L 2:25)

Now we turn to Simeon. The narrator stated that Simeon, a resident of Jerusalem, was righteous (δικαιος), devout (εὐλαβής) and waiting for the restoration or consolation (παράκλησις) of Israel. Most importantly, the Holy Spirit was upon him. There is no explicit statement that Simeon was a priest or scribe. In contrast to Zechariah, Simeon appeared to be a layperson and not a priest (Bock 1994:237). The narrator portrayed Simeon as a model of Jewish piety who awaited the coming of the Messiah by observing Jewish law (cf. Marshall 1978:118).

The term righteous, which applies also to Zechariah and Elizabeth (Lk 1:6), refers to 'expressive of reverence and awe in God's presence' (Fitzmyer 1981:426), whereas devout means 'careful in religious duties' (Marshall 1978:118). While the popular phrase after Israel's return from exile, 'waiting for the restoration or consolation of Israel,' describes hope for God's eschatological salvation of Israel (cf. Fitzmyer 1981:427). Simeon's life was therefore focused on a single objective, that is, the encounter with the Messiah as the fulfilment of eschatological salvation. That was his prayer. But most significantly is the assertion that the Holy Spirit was with Simeon. The Holy Spirit directed and guided Simeon's entire life.

The leading of the Holy Spirit in Simeon's life was evident in two events as an answer to his prayer. Firstly, Simeon received a revelation from the Holy Spirit that he would not die before meeting the promised Messiah (v. 26). Simeon devoted his entire life to a single mission in the ministry. The mission is to have an encounter with the Messiah. Until the mission was accomplished, Simeon would not die. Simeon himself was already an elderly man when he first encountered the Messiah (v. 29). Secondly, Simeon was led by the Holy Spirit to the Temple one day as an answer to his prayer (v. 27). In the Temple, Simeon met Joseph-Mary and the infant Jesus. The Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that the infant Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. The encounter between Simeon and Jesus was not coincidental. The meeting was orchestrated by the Holy Spirit. As directed by the Holy Spirit, Simeon came for one and one purpose only: to meet the Messiah. His lifelong prayer was finally answered. Upon seeing Jesus, Simeon greeted the infant, carried him in his arms, and prayed to God. The *Nunc Dimitis* was really a prayer (Bovon 2005:102; Marshall 1978:119) uttered by Simeon during a pivotal moment in his life. Simeon's life was irrevocably altered by this encounter and this objective was the pinnacle of Simeon's life. This, in short, was the climax of the answer to his prayer. In response to his prayer being answered, Simeon praised God, and he was praising God at the Jerusalem temple, which was the locus of God's presence. Simeon has commenced to shift his focus from the temple to

Jesus ever since he came to the realisation that the presence of God is in Jesus. This shifting is indicated by a closer examination of L 21:36 and L 22:32. Simeon had no reason to continue his prayer life in this world (Bovon 2002:102; Fitzmyer 1981:428). Simeon's farewell prayer revealed that his encounter with Jesus altered his perspective on death. Having seen the fulfilment, 'Simeon can entrust himself to death, knowing that life and immortality have been brought to light through the gospel' (Marshall 1978:120).

As we observe the prayer text of L in the narrative of Zechariah and Simeon, we encounter a number of similarities and differences. Firstly, both Zechariah, a priest, and Simeon, a layperson, based the contents of their prayers on individual and communal needs. Secondly, Simeon received answers to his prayers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who brought him face-to-face with the Messiah, while Zechariah received answer to his prayers through God's sending of Gabriel. Thirdly, both Zechariah and Simeon voiced their prayer and received the answers for their prayer in the Temple. Finally, whereas Zechariah still awaited the coming of Messiah, Simeon encountered the infant Messiah.

The prayer of Anna (L 2:37)

Luke not only records the answer to man's prayer but he also records the encounter of the baby Jesus with a woman as an answer to her prayer. Simeon was from Jerusalem while the woman, whose name was Anna, was from outside of Jerusalem. Anna and Simeon, however, belong 'to the eschatological efflorescence of Spirit-directed prophecy' (Bovon 2002:106). In this eschatological environment, Anna's fasting is an expression of her hope, a form of prayer entreating God to set things right (Green 1997:151).

In contrast to Simeon, the narrator focuses on Anna's religious and social identity as a prophetess (cf. Harris 2018:61), the daughter of Fenuel from the Asher tribe, and the ideal of the Jewish and Christian widow (Bovon 2002:106; Green 1997:151) after 7 years of marriage and did not remarry for 84 years. But most significantly is the narrator's assertion that prophetess Anna was always in the Temple fasting and praying night and day (v. 37). The narrator seems to indicate that Anna resided in the temple precinct (Bovon 2002:106). However, it seems that this expression indicates that the centre of Anna's life is the temple, which is seen as a symbol of God's presence in the midst of Israel. In other words, one could say that Anna's life is centred on prayer to God (cf. Bock 1994:252; Marshall 1978:123). What was the real content of Anna's prayer? The use of the word *λύτρωσιν* in Zechariah's *Benedictus* (1:68) and Anna's prophetic message (2:38) that refers to 'eschatological liberation in its salvation-historical... dimensions' as well as the equivalent expressions *παράκλησις τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ* (v. 25) and *λύτρωσις Ἰερουσαλήμ* (v. 38) (Bovon 2002:102, 106) reveal the similarity between Zechariah and Anna's prayer points. Anna and Zechariah prayed for the coming of the Messiah as promised. A large number of people in Jerusalem which represents the entire people were

waiting for such λύτρωσιν (Bovon 2002:106). In short, Anna hoped for the redemption of Jerusalem, a hope which echoes Psalms 130:5–8 and Isaiah 52:8–10 (Green 1997:152).

Thus far, we discover that Zechariah, Simeon and Anna received answers to their prayers at the Temple. God answered Zechariah's prayer by sending Gabriel, Simeon was led by the Holy Spirit to meet the Messiah who was the focus of his prayer, and Anna as a prophetess endowed with the Holy Spirit also encountered Jesus. Simeon and Anna recognised in Jesus the advent of God's redemptive intervention in the world (Green 1997:150) and especially the answer to their prayers, their hopes and those of others for the redemption of Jerusalem (Green 1997:152). The meeting that was directed by God (Bovon 2002:97) resulted in praising God and bearing witness about the child to others.

Similar to Simeon, and in contrast to Zechariah, Anna received the answer of her prayer in the temple precinct when the Messiah was present. Although the temple serves as the location of the encounter, the focus has gradually shifted to Jesus. This gradual development will continue as we shift our attention from the infancy narrative to the Jesus' eschatological discourse at the dawn of the passion narrative.

An eschatological prayer (L 21:36)

The statement in L 21:36 concludes Jesus' eschatological discourse (Lk 21:5–37). Within the discourse, Jesus prophesied the eschatological fate of the temple (Lk 21:6). The temple would be utterly destroyed (Garland 2011:838; Marshall 1978:760). Throughout the discourse, Jesus made no mention of the subsequent restoration of the temple to its former glory. Instead, the destruction of the temple marked its end. Fitzmyer is correct in observing that Luke altered the Markan language to emphasise the Temple's destruction in relation to the eschaton (Fitzmyer 1985:1327, 1331; on the significance of Jesus' teaching in the Temple, see Christopher 2018:129–130).

Although Luke depicted the demise of the temple, he somewhat portrayed the teaching activity of Jesus in the temple precinct (20:1, 21:37–38). In fact, this was the last and the climax of Jesus' public teaching, and Luke made sure that it was set with the temple as the background (Fitzmyer 1985:1326–1327). These seemingly contradictory depictions of the temple's significance, its destruction on the one hand and the location of Jesus' final public discourse on the other, raise an important question: if the temple was to be destroyed, why did Jesus bother teaching there?

The answer, so it seems, lies on the depiction of the shifting from the temple to Jesus. The apparent contradictions can be resolved once we direct our attention on Jesus rather than the temple building. People came to see and hear Jesus while he was teaching in the temple. In other words, Jesus is the new focal point of the temple. Jesus is the source by which the people receive instruction, truth, and God's Word. Thus, even if the temple building were to collapse, the function of the temple would continue to exist through Jesus. The temple,

once the centre of God's presence, has now been replaced by the person of Jesus and moved to the background. In fact, we want to demonstrate that Jesus is the personification of the temple, not only because the focus and direction of the people are directed towards him but also because he represents the temple. Luke 21:36 illustrates this notion.

In his final exhortation to the people regarding the eschaton, Jesus urged the people to be on their guard (*ἀγρυπνεῖτε δὲ ἐν παντί καιρῷ*). Jesus then explained further how to be watchful: they were to pray for strength in order to stand firm in their faith (*δεόμενοι ἵνα κατισχύσητε ἐκφυγεῖν ταῦτα πάντα τὰ μέλλοντα γίνεσθαι*). Essentially, it is a request to God to remain faithful and persevere until the end. Initially, there appears to be no indication that Jesus personifies the temple. Nonetheless, two data indicate the opposite. First of all, the way in which Jesus explained it may have a nuance: they must guard themselves and pray in order to 'stand before the son of man' (*σταθῆναι ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*). They do not stand before God, but the son of man (i.e. Jesus himself). The focus now moves to Jesus. Jesus was the one who commanded them to pray. Yet, Jesus was also the one who will judge them in the eschaton. This leads to our second data, that is, the centrality of Jesus. The centrality of Jesus in the context of the temple is quite overwhelming: Jesus was teaching at the temple. Jesus was the focus. Jesus warned about the destruction of the temple – while teaching at the temple. Jesus urged them to be prepared to face the eschaton. He taught them how to pray and in the end, they were to stand before Jesus, the son of man. From Lukan perspective, the focal point has now shifted from the temple to Jesus. For Luke, the significance of the Jerusalem temple as the centre of worship, the place where his people could meet God, the place where God's name dwells, has now diminished. Jesus has supplanted it.

It would have been 'perfect' if they were to pray to Jesus rather than God – which they did not. The following text, however, shows a different development that seems to move further beyond the notion of the people praying to Jesus: it is Jesus himself who prayed for them. The temple has ceased to be the focus, especially in relation to prayer. The shift from the temple to Jesus has nearly reached the climax.

Jesus' prayer for Peter (L 22:32)

This Lukan special material (Lk 22:31–32) is part of Jesus' prediction about Peter's denial and failure (Lk 21:31–34). Luke inserted it before Peter's self-declaration on his willingness to stick with Jesus and even die for him. Here, Jesus was warning Simon Peter that Satan has requested (*ἐξήτήσατο*) to sift them like wheat (*τοῦ σιτιάσαι ὡς τὸν σῖτον*). Even though Jesus addressed Peter, the plural *ὑμᾶς* indicates that Satan was targeting all the disciples (Nolland 1989:3.1072; Thompson 2016:346). To 'sift' indicates breaking apart, hence to cause their faith to fail completely (Garland 2011:869; Marshall 1978:821; Nolland 1989:3.1072). Whereas Satan sought to destroy the faith of the disciples, represented by Peter, Jesus declared that he would pray for Peter (*ἐγὼ δὲ*

ἐδεήθην περι σοῦ), so that his faith will not fall apart (ἵνα μὴ ἐκλίπη ἡ πίστις σου). Later, it would be Peter's duty to strengthen the faith of the disciples (καὶ σὺ ποτε ἐπιστρέψας στήρισον τοὺς ἀδελφούς σου).

The insertion of L 22:32 clarified what would happen to Peter and what would become of him after his fall. Firstly, Peter's denial – and the disciples' failure to stick with Jesus – did not happen naturally. They were part of Satan's scheme to thwart the mission of Jesus. Secondly, although Jesus had predicted Peter's fall, Peter would not abandon his faith completely. Rather, he would recover and even become the leader of the group after Jesus returned to heaven. Thirdly, Luke seems to emphasise that Jesus' prayer for Peter was the reason for his faithfulness and/or return. Jesus prayed for Peter, so even though he would deny Jesus, he would not remain defeated for long. While Luke depicted Jesus praying throughout the Gospel, this was the first time Jesus prayed for someone other than himself.

It is one thing for Luke to depict the necessity of prayer to uphold faith; it is quite another for him to focus on the identity of the person who intercedes for others. In this passage, the main emphasis is not on the prayer activity per se, but rather to Jesus as the one who would pray for the sake of Peter. Why would Luke highlight the intercession of Jesus?

Many saw Satan's role in this pericope similar to the accuser in Job (Nolland 1989:3.1072). In both texts, Satan attempts to destroy the faith of the people. In both texts, Satan requires permission from God to execute his plan. The difference is that in Job, he also took the role of an advocate, the one pleading to God against the accuser. In Luke, Jesus seemed to take the aforementioned role (Crump 1992:157; Fitzmyer 1985:425; Foerster 1955:131). However, why was Jesus able to take the role of an advocate? It is possible that in this text, Jesus functions as an interceding priest (see also Ellis 1981:256). Luke depicts Jesus as 'a kind of high priest' numerous times (Perrin 2010:62). Jesus cleansed the lepers (Lk 5:12–13; 17:12–14) and forgave sins (Lk 5:20–26). Furthermore, the manifestation of the glory of God, which usually connected closely to the temple, appears directly to Jesus (i.e., the transfiguration; Lk 9:28–36) or to event related to Jesus (i.e., the announcement of the birth of Jesus to the shepherds; Lk 2:8–15). Judging from the aforesaid references, it is likely that when Jesus prayed for Peter, he took the role of the priest who interceded to God on behalf of the people, in this case, Peter and the rest of the disciples.

Here, the depiction of Jesus as the personified temple undergoes an additional development. Whereas in the preceding pericope the emphasis is on the centrality of Jesus (his authority and teaching) within the temple precinct, in this passage Jesus functions as the interceding priest apart from the necessity of the temple. In other words, the temple and its purpose are no longer relevant. Jesus is now the new personified temple (cf. Barus 2006:139).

Prayer, temple, and the L communities

Through the given analysis, we have shown a possible development in L's theology on the relationship between prayer and the temple. Before the coming of the Messiah, prayer was voiced to God in the temple (L 1:13). As the Messiah arrived, prayer and answers to prayer were still connected closely to the temple, although the focus now was on the Messiah (L 2:25, 37). Later, Jesus the Messiah was depicted as the one teaching about prayer at the temple (L 21:36). Jesus was placed at the foreground. At this point, the significance of the temple gradually diminished. Finally, Jesus functioned as the priest who prayed for his disciples, apart from the existence of the temple (L 22:32). Here the temple has finally been supplanted by Jesus, the new personified temple. L communities progressively shifted away from Judaism. They are not required to attend the temple for prayer and worship, as are the proselytes and God-fearers. Despite the fact that Jewish Christians continue to engage in worship in the temple, its significance and role as a locus of prayer and worship, consistent with traditional Jewish belief, have diminished.

The preceding discussion points to one conclusion, namely the close connection between prayer and temple motifs in Luke's special material. Prayer and the temple is one of the primary themes in the Gospel of Luke. The temple that marks the beginning and end of Jesus' life and ministry plays a crucial role in the theology of Luke (Lanier 2014:461; Moore 2022), including the Lukan theology of prayer. This point is overlooked by the majority of Lukan scholars. The use of prayer in the Lukan prayer can point us to Luke's distinctive understanding of the temple. John Kloppenborg, in his foreword to Kyu Sam Han's monograph, states that the Herodian temple is not merely a religious institution but also a major economic and political force in Jewish Palestine (Han 2002:8). In addition to the Torah, the temple is an essential pillar of Jewish life. Han conducts research on the temple and Q relationship because of the fact that Q scholarship does not yet pay attention to the temple. Han's research reinforces John Kloppenborg's view on the temple where for the Q community, the redemptive significance of the temple has already been abandoned (Han 2002:16, 210). Han (2002) wrote:

While the early stratum represented by Q 11.42a,b, 11.49–51 and 13.34–35 reflects the struggle of the community against the Temple (or Temple centered symbolism), the later stratum (Q 11.42c and 4.9–12) shows that the enmity was resolved as the Q community achieved a new social identity apart from the Temple symbolism. (p. 213)

The result of Han's research raises an important question in relation to the L communities: what is the relationship of the L communities and the temple? Was L's attitude towards the temple positive or negative? The answer to that question is important because L's attitude towards the temple helps to reflect the *Sitz im Leben* of the L communities (cf. Johnson 2013:129). Here, the prayer motif in Luke's special source can shed light on the L's attitude towards the temple.

The analysis of the motif of prayer vis-à-vis the temple in Luke's special source reveals the following findings. The early stratum of L communities composed of Jewish Christians (cf. Bovon 2002:103; Marshall 1978:46; Straus 1995:85). They held a favourable belief of the temple. They believed that the temple served as *domus dei* [house of God] where God was present to answer the prayers of his people (L 1:13; 2:25, 37). But as L communities grew and the number of Hellenistic Christians increased, L communities had come to realise that Jesus was the locus where God answered the prayers of his people. The change occurred gradually, from L 21:36 where the people prayed to Jesus to L 22:32 where Jesus himself prayed for his people. In other words, the L communities have shifted from a favourable belief of the temple in Jerusalem to a belief in Jesus as the new personified temple where Jews and the Gentiles offered prayers and received answers to their prayers (cf. Barus 2006:139). In the end, L communities were critical of the temple and they abandoned it as the *domus dei*.

The Dividing Wall between Judaism and Christianity

L's attitude towards the temple also sheds light on the history of the separation between Judaism and Christianity. James Dunn (2006) analysed how Christianity gradually departed from Judaism in his monograph *The Partings of the Ways* as a consequence of christology. Since then the parting of the ways has become an image or a metaphor for the separation of Judaism and Christianity, as opposed to a model of brotherhood (Segal 1986). Dunn presents four pillars of Second Temple Judaism: monotheism, election, Torah, and temple. Dunn examined how Christianity as a consequence of christology diverged gradually from the four pillars. Dunn (2006) states that:

Christology has been seen as a, if not the, decisive factor in the partings of the ways: the attempt to understand Jesus as on the God side of the God/human divide in the event proved totally unacceptable to Jewish monotheism. (p. xxvi)

The model of the parting of the ways as proposed by Dunn was criticised by Judith Lieu, who identified two flaws:

The metaphor of the 'parting of the ways' is first essentially a Christian model. Its concern is to maintain the Christian apologetic of continuity in the face of questions about that continuity from a historical or theological angle. Secondly, although it appears as a historical model, it actually works best with a theological agenda. (Lieu 1994:108; Lieu 2016:38)

Although the metaphor of the parting of the ways either strongly challenged or rejected (Becker & Reed 2007; Lieu 1994, 2016; Schröter et al. 2021), the metaphor continues to dominate the discussion on Judaism and Christianity. We should therefore maintain the metaphor because it presents the equality and the common origin of Judaism and Christianity in pluriform Second Temple Judaism (Dunn 2006:xiii; Gabrielson 2021:196). The term 'parting' describes the idea of separation from a common source.

As stated previously, the discussion on prayer and L communities reveals that the separation between Judaism and Christianity is a result of the development of christology in L communities. Initially, the L communities were Jewish (contra Brown 1997:270). It is therefore not surprising that they have a positive attitude towards the temple. However, the increasing number of non-Jews who are becoming Jesus' disciples, as well as the growing number of Christians from non-Jewish ethnic groups, have prompted L communities to reconsider their relationship with the temple. The enhanced knowledge and comprehension of who Jesus was intensifies the impetus. They no longer believe the temple as a place to receive an answer to their prayers, instead they come to believe that Jesus is the new, personified temple where prayers are offered and answers are received. Christology becomes a decisive factor of the separation between two religious systems. Obviously, such comprehension certainly does not necessarily lead to the separation of Judaism and Christianity. However, at least the seeds of parting the ways have been sown in the complex process of separation between Judaism and Christianity.

Finally, the attitude and strategy adopted by the L communities can teach today's Christian communities a lesson or two. As a result of a variety of circumstances, many Christians experience displacement, whether geographically or socially. Some might be uprooted and forced to leave the place they call home; others are rejected socially. Seeing Jesus as the personified temple enables such members of the Christian communities to pray, worship and experience God's presence wherever they are. Jesus, the personified temple, is not limited by any geographical or social boundaries.

Conclusion

The aforesaid analysis showed that the examination of prayer vis-à-vis the temple in Luke's special source (L) reveals that Jesus is the new, personified temple through whom the L communities prayed and received answers to their prayers. Initially, they viewed the temple as a place to receive answers to their prayers because the temple was the *domus dei* [house of God]. They eventually realised that Jesus, not the temple, served as the *domus dei*. The L communities recognised Jesus as the personified temple where prayers are offered and answered. The L communities seceded from Judaism when they embraced Jesus as the personified temple. Christology served as the driving force behind the separation between Judaism and Christianity.

The temple served as the place of worship for the L communities, which was originally Jewish. However, the L community renounced the temple as their *domus dei* in response to the growing number of Gentile members who expressed dissent towards the Second Temple. The L communities regarded Jesus Christ as the temple's embodiment and consequently redirected their prayers to him, rendering the temple obsolete.

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Authors' contributions

Both authors, A.B. and D.C., discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

Ethical considerations

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Data availability

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