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Before John, there was Luke: A literary exploration of Lukan and Johannine Logosology

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This article aims to provide a critical evaluation of recent discourses on Logosology (Logos Christology) within New Testament scholarship, which has been largely dominated by an exclusive-non-titular view. This prevailing view maintains that within the entire New Testament, only the Gospel of John contains a Logosological discourse (exclusive), and that prior to John, the Old Testament and Second Temple Jewish literatures employed the terms 'Word' and 'Wisdom' in non-titular ways. John, it is argued, is the first to use Logos as a Christological title. Employing a qualitative–descriptive method and literary-observational techniques, I propose an alternative view that asserts: (1) the 'word of the LORD' functioned as a titular designation for a theophanic figure in the Old Testament; (2) prior to John, the writings of Luke already contained Logosological expressions; and (3) the relational nature of Logosology in the Old Testament, Luke, and John becomes evident through an examination of corresponding literary motifs.

Contribution: This article introduces a relatively new interpretive horizon into New Testament scholarship, particularly concerning Logosology, by taking into account not only the Johannine corpus but also the Old Testament and the writings of Luke.

Keywords: Logosology; Logos Christology; the Word of the LORD; literary motifs; the exclusive-non-titular view.

Introduction

The current scholarly studies concerning Logosology (Logos Christology) are predominantly shaped by what I term the 'exclusive-non-titular' view. This view comprises three central propositions. Firstly, the primary background of New Testament Logosology derives from the Old Testament and the Second Temple Jewish literature (Evans 1993; Ronning 2010). Secondly, within the New Testament, only the Johannine corpus exhibits a Logosological discourse.

Thirdly, John is also regarded as the pioneer in employing Logos as a title for Christ, drawing upon the concepts of word and wisdom from the Old Testament and the milieu of Second Temple Judaism.

Although some extreme positions maintain that 'The Logos is not found outside the Prologue' (Ashton 2007:283, 503–505; Dodd 1953:263–285), the majority of Johannine scholars hold that the Johannine corpus alone contains the Logos as a Christological title (Jn 1:1–14; 1 Jn 1:1–2; and Rv 19:13; cf. Freed 1975:267). The renowned German New Testament scholar Martin Hengel asserts, 'This enigmatic Logos appears only in the Prologue of the Gospel of John and twice elsewhere in the New Testament' (1995:366). Similarly, Joachim Jeremias affirms, 'Im Neuen Testament ist die Logosprädikation auf den johanneischen Schriftenkreis beschränkt (Jn 1:1, 14; I Jn 1:1; Apc 19:13)' (1968:85; cf. Schnelle 2009:688; Cullmann 1963:249; Ladd 1993:274; Marshall 2005:584; Schreiner 2008:254).

Building upon the aforementioned view, New Testament scholars have proposed a developmental trajectory beginning with the concept of wisdom and culminating in Logosology, wherein John employs the term Logos as a Christological title. Edwin D. Freed, for instance, suggests three stages of development as indicated within the New Testament. In the first stage, Jesus is portrayed as a figure who possesses wisdom and teaches with profound wisdom (Mk 6:2; Mt 13:54; Lk 2:52; Jn 7:15; 1 Cor 1:30). Subsequently, in the second stage, Jesus begins to be identified in a periphrastic (indirect) manner as 'the wisdom of God' (1 Cor 1:24; cf. 2:6–8; Eph 3:8–10). Finally, in the third stage, the designation 'word' [*logos*] – which initially referred to the *kerygma*, the gospel, or divine revelation, and which, in its Old Testament background, is

associated with wisdom – begins to be personified, eventually leading to the use of Logos as a Christological title (1975:262–264).

Freed's position is further affirmed by Ben Witherington III, who contends that the Prologue of the Gospel of John is a hymn composed in light of a development similar to that proposed by Freed (Witherington 2016:93–130). Thus, for Freed and Witherington, Johannine Logosology represents the climax of a theological development that began with the personification of wisdom and word, and ultimately evolved into a Christological title (cf. Collins 2009:38; McGrath 2001:52–53). John's contribution within this developmental sequence lies in assigning a technical, titular function to the Logos (Freed 1975:266; cf. Longenecker 1970:144–145), or, as Witherington argues, as the outcome of a process of theologising (2016:130). Consequently, the expressions word and wisdom in the Old Testament and in Second Temple Judaism are treated entirely as non-titular expressions – or, at most, as mere personifications.

In summary, the exclusive-non-titular view maintains that prior to John, the term Logos was employed solely in a non-titular function. The question that arises, however, is whether this exclusive non-titular view adequately represents the entirety of the available data.

Preliminary response and methodology

My preliminary response to the exclusive-non-titular view – and, at the same time, my initial assertion regarding the contribution of this article – is that this view indeed arrives at the correct destination (the Johannine corpus). It is true that, in addition to employing Logos as a title, John, as Mark L. Strauss notes, also imparts a 'deeper theological significance' to Logosology (2020:366). Unfortunately, however, the exclusive-non-titular view begins from a mistaken point of departure – namely, the conceptualisation and personification of word and wisdom.

This view also makes an unwarranted negation by overlooking the use of Logos as a Christological title in the writings of Luke, a feature that has likewise tended to be neglected – or even denied – by Lukan scholars (cf. Bock 2011; Marshall 2004:123). Moreover, the Old Testament itself, on several occasions, employs the term דְּבַר־יְהוָה [the Word of the LORD] as a theophanic title.

This article is designed to encompass three main areas of discussion. Firstly, a concise review of the views of the Church Fathers and several contemporary scholars who have identified the presence of Logosology within the writings of Luke, in a manner comparable to that of the Johannine corpus. Secondly, an examination of the use of the term דְּבַר־יְהוָה as a theophanic designation in the Old Testament, along with its literary motifs. Thirdly, an exploration of the literary motifs underlying the Logosological frameworks of both Luke and John.

The analysis will primarily employ a qualitative-descriptive methodology, that is, a review and analysis of relevant literature. However, as reflected in the subtitle of this article, I will place particular emphasis on a literary-analytical approach (Abrahams 1999:170), focusing specifically on exploring motifs associated with the Logosological discourse within the Old Testament, the writings of Luke, and the Johannine corpus.

The church fathers and contemporary scholars

An anonymous letter, The Epistle of Diognetus, demonstrates familiarity with Johannine Logosology. The author refers to Jesus as ὁ παντοκράτωρ καὶ παντοκτίστης καὶ ἀόρατος θεός, αὐτὸς ἀπ' οὐρανῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ τὸν λόγον τὸν ἅγιον (7.2; cf. Jn 1:1–3; see ed. Ehrman 2003:124–125, 127; Lightfoot 1907). The author also shows awareness of Luke's Gospel through the use of distinctively Lukan terminology. He addresses the recipient of the letter as κράτιστε Αἰόγνητε (cf. κράτιστε Θεόφιλε, Lk 1:1). A particularly interesting reference related to Lukan Logosology also appears in chapter 11, where the author refers to himself as ὑπηρετῶ γινομένοις ἀληθείας μαθηταῖς (11.1; cf. Lk 1:2). He then speaks of ὁ λόγος φανείς (11.2; cf. Lk 1:2).

When commenting on Luke 1:2, Ambrose of Milan explicitly identifies the term τοῦ λόγου as referring to the Word in John 1:14. Ambrose (2001) writes:

> There is question here not of a word that one articulates, but of the substantial Word, the Word that 'was made flesh and lived among us' (Jn 1:14). This is not simply any word, but the divine Word whom the Apostles served as His ministers. (1.5; p. 7)

Similarly, concerning Luke 1:2, Cyril of Alexandria (2009) states:

> In saying that the Apostles were eyewitnesses of the substantial and living Word, the Evangelist agrees with John, who says that 'the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us …' (Jn 1:14, p. 1)

Some contemporary scholars continue to echo the views of the Church Fathers mentioned above. I will trace this review chronologically, beginning with the Neo-Orthodox theologian Karl Barth. According to Barth, Acts 10:36 – where Jesus is described as τὸν λόγον [ὃν] ἀπέστειλεν τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ εὐαγγελιζόμενος εἰρήνην διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος – corresponds to John 1:14, in which 'Jesus is comprehensively described as the incarnate Word of God' (1958:196).

G. Forst likewise maintains that Luke provides an initial bridge towards Johannine Logosology. According to Forst, the teachings of Jesus are so powerful (Lk 4:18–19, 32–36; cf. Mt 11:4–6) that 'He is Himself in both – "the teaching of Jesus is in the fullest and deepest sense Jesus Himself"' (1963:193). Jesus not only proclaims the message of the Kingdom of God; 'He Himself is the message' (1963:193). The Word or Gospel thus becomes inseparable from the person of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, although the Synoptic Gospels refrain from explicitly calling Jesus the Word of God, it is precisely this concept they intend to convey (1963:194).

Several other scholars hold similar views (Hoskyns 1954:160; Morris 1988:73, 1991:219). However, I will conclude this section with a brief excursus from Gathercole (2006:221–227). Gathercole remains open to the possibility that Logosology is present within Luke's writings, describing this as a 'good possibility'. Nevertheless, he appears somewhat hesitant to affirm that Luke consciously develops such an idea. For this reason, Gathercole limits himself to a concise review of scholarly opinions suggesting that Luke contains a form of Logosology. He briefly discusses Luke 1:2 and Acts 10:34–38, and in agreement with Forst (2006), concludes:

> [*I*]t is quite possible that Luke regards Jesus as the embodiment (not necessarily incarnation in the full sense) of the Word of God which came upon the prophets in the OT (e.g. Jer. 1.2; 2.1; 7.1; 11.1, etc.)'. (p. 227)

The brief review demonstrates that the history of interpretation concerning Lukan Logosology has already established a trajectory worthy of further exploration. From these scholars, I derive a valuable preliminary reference point – namely, that prior to John, Luke had already employed λόγος as a Christological title. It should be noted, however, that none of the aforementioned scholars have provided an in-depth exploration of this topic. They have not yet addressed questions similar to those that have long been posed regarding Johannine Logosology. For instance, if Luke indeed uses λόγος as a Christological title, from where did he derive its precedent? Furthermore, what is the relational nature between Lukan and Johannine Logosology?

For these reasons, I will pursue a deeper investigation of Lukan Logosology in relation to Johannine Logosology, beginning with observations drawn from the Old Testament.

דְּבַר־יְהוָה: Theophanic title and visual motif

To begin this section, I must clarify the scope of my discussion. I do not engage with the textual tradition of the Old Greek of the Old Testament, primarily because of considerations of conciseness and its limited direct relevance to my argument. I consider the textual tradition of the Old Greek to be merely one interpretive option, one that is substantively closer to the 'exclusive-non-titular' view. However, I have chosen to base my analysis on the Hebrew textual tradition of the Old Testament. I am also aware that the Aramaic textual tradition of the Old Testament (the Targumim) makes extensive use of Memra as a theophanic title for the Word of the LORD (see Ronning 2010). For the same reason of conciseness mentioned above, I do not address the Targumic tradition in this section.

Savran, in his study on theophanies in the Old Testament, observes that Old Testament theophanies, while primarily involving auditory instruments, also frequently incorporate visual elements (2005:49). Referring to Savran's study, my focus here will be limited to theophanic narratives that involve visual expressions (visions) employing the phrase דְּבַר־יְהוָה. I intend to demonstrate that, on several occasions, the theophanic figure who appears to key figures in the Old Testament is designated as דְּבַר־יְהוָה (cf. Heiser 2015). These appearances of 'the word of the LORD' are closely intertwined with visual motifs that later become highly significant for analysing the Logosology of Luke and John.

When the LORD appeared to Abraham, the author of Genesis writes: 'After this, the word of the LORD [דְּבַר־יְהוָה] came to Abram in a vision [בַּמַּחֲזֶה]: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward"' (Gn 15:1). It should be noted that the word of the LORD appears here as a singular entity functioning as the subject who comes to Abraham in a visibly perceptible experience, not merely a mental or auditory one (cf. Nm 24:4, 16; Ezk 13:7). In other words, within this context, the word of the LORD is not a mere impersonal message or utterance but a divine Person who engages Abraham in dialogue. This theophanic figure is explicitly named the word of the LORD (contra Hamilton 1990:418). Consequently, Abraham addresses Him as 'Lord GOD' (Gn 15:2), and the word of the LORD self-identifies by declaring, 'I am the LORD' (v. 7). Even the narrator himself refers to this word of the LORD who came to Abraham simply as 'the LORD' (יְהוָה; cf. vv. 5, 6, 10), the one who 'made a covenant with Abram' (v. 18; cf. Gl 3:8). As Terrence E. Fretheim aptly notes, 'this is not "just another" divine word' (Fretheim 1994:1.444).

1 Samuel 3:1–21 recounts the narrative of the LORD's self-manifestation to Samuel. In verse 21, it is stated: 'And the LORD continued to appear [לְהֵרָאֶה] at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel by the word of the LORD [יְהוָה בִּדְבַר]'. The expression יְהוָה בִּדְבַר, which appears in the construct form (translated in the Indonesian Bible [ITB-LAI] as '*dengan perantaraan firman-Nya*'), is more accurately rendered – following most English translations – as 'by the word of the LORD'. Verse 21 forms an inclusio with verse 1, where the narrator remarks that visions involving the appearance of the word of the LORD were rare in the days of Samuel. Within this context, the word of the LORD performs tangible, physical actions – both auditory (vv. 4–8), gestural ('standing', v. 10), and visual (מַרְאָה, v. 15; Savran 2005:80). Heiser (2015) comments on this theophanic event as follows:

> The first verse of the chapter makes a clear association between the Word of the Lord and a visionary experience – not a mere auditory event. The idea of the visible Word – the visible Yahweh – in human form is nailed down by the 'standing' language. (p. 107)

Thus, as in the case of Abraham, Samuel hears, sees and converses with the theophanic Person identified as the word of the LORD.

A similar theophanic manifestation occurs in the calling and commissioning of the prophet Jeremiah (1:1–19). Three times Jeremiah records that 'the word of the LORD came' (vv. 2, 3, 4). Subsequently, this word of the LORD is explicitly

referred to as 'the LORD', who then 'stretched out His hand and touched my mouth' (v. 9). Savran explains that, although a similar act of touching the mouth appears in Isaiah's vision (Is 6:6–7), 'in Jeremiah's case the contact is unmediated, involving YHWH's hand coming into direct contact with Jeremiah's mouth' (2005:81). He further adds, 'The description of the movement of YHWH's hand to Jeremiah's mouth only makes sense as the description of an observed phenomenon' (2005:81; cf. Heiser 2015:109).

Once again, the word of the LORD performs both auditory and visual activities. It is evident, therefore, that the word of the LORD in this context is not merely a set of impersonal words but a Divine Person. This point is further supported by the repeated expression found throughout the Minor Prophets: הָיָה אֲשֶׁר דְּבַר־יְהוָה (Greek: λόγος κυρίου ὃς ἐγενήθη; Hs 1:1; Jl. 1:1; Jnh 1:1; Mi. 1:1; Zph 1:1; Hg 1:1; and Za 1:1). This formula indicates that the initial calling of Old Testament prophets was consistently mediated through direct encounter with a Divine Person in a theophany. Earlier, the same expression is found in association with Samuel (1 Sm 15:10), Nathan (2 Sm 7:4), Gad (2 Sm 24:11), David (1 Chr 22:8), Solomon (1 Ki 6:11), Jehu (1 Ki 16:1), Shemaiah (2 Chr 11:2), Elijah (1 Ki 17:1), Isaiah (38:4; 2 Ki 20:4), Jeremiah (1:11), and Ezekiel (1:3). The same construction even appears in the New Testament: ἐγένετο ῥῆμα θεοῦ (Lk 3:2) – although in this case, it most likely refers to the mediating role of an angel rather than a direct theophanic encounter.

One additional Old Testament text employs the term 'word' in a titular sense, although it does not explicitly contain a visual motif. The prophet Isaiah writes:

> So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. (55:11)

John V. Dahms has demonstrated that this text serves as a primary background for the Logos theology of the Gospel of John, particularly in relation to the motifs of sending and returning to the Father in chapters 13–17. John frequently speaks of Jesus as the One who is 'sent by' or 'comes from' the Father, and who 'returns to' or 'goes to' the Father. In other words, Dahms' intertextual reading demonstrates that the word in Isaiah 55:11 does not refer merely to spoken words, a message, or news, but constitutes a prophetic anticipation of the divine Logos Himself (Dahms 1981:78–88).

Finally, it is necessary to discuss 1 Kings 19:1–18. The theophany in this passage begins with the appearance of 'an angel' [מַלְאָךְ] who 'touched' [נֹגֵעַ] Elijah and instructed him to arise and eat (v. 5). This angel is subsequently identified as 'the angel of the LORD' (יְהוָה מַלְאַךְ; v. 7) – a theophanic Person who appears repeatedly throughout the Old Testament period (Gn 16:1–16; 22:1–19; 31:1–21; Ex 3:1–22; 14:15–31; 23:20–33; Nm 20:16; 22:21–35; Jdg 2:1–5; 6:11–40; 14:1–25; 2 Sm 24:16–25; 2 Ki 1:3–4, 15; 19:1–37; 1 Chr 21:1–30; Ps 34:7; 35:5–6; 37:36; Zch 1:7–14; 3:1–10; 4:1–6:15; 12:8; Ml 3:1). Interestingly, within the same narrative, another designation is employed for this theophanic Person: 'Then the word of the LORD came to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"' (דְּבַר־יְהוָה; v. 9). Here, the word of the LORD must refer to a theophanic Person, not merely to speech, a message or a report delivered to Elijah (Foreman & Van Dorn 2020:loc. 91/362).

Savran classifies 1 Kings 19 as an instance of the minimisation of visual elements in theophanic narrative (2005:86–88). However, since 'the word of the LORD' (v. 9) is the same theophanic Person as 'the angel of the LORD' (vv. 5, 7), the physical and auditory activities attributed to him necessarily imply visual manifestation as well (Foreman & Van Dorn 2020).

The observations presented above are clearly inconsistent with the exclusive-non-titular view of the Word of the LORD in the Old Testament. Furthermore, these observations also stand in contrast to the non-hypostatic interpretation advanced by Dunn, following Bultmann, who rejected the idea of the hypostatisation of the Word of the LORD and of Wisdom (cf. Ps 33:6; 107:20; 145:15, 18; Is 9:8; 55:10–11; Wis 18:14–16; 1989:218). However, several Old Testament texts (Gn 15:1–18; 1 Sm 3:1–21; Jr 1:1–19; Is 55:11; 1 Ki 19:1–18) demonstrate that the Word of the LORD functions as a titular designation for a personal (hypostatic) theophanic Being who engages in verbal (auditory), physical (gestural) and visual communication.

The Logosology of Luke and John: A literary exploration

As a framework for exploring the literary features of Lukan Logosology in relation to the Johannine corpus, I will begin by presenting several lexical observations concerning the term λόγος and its significance within Luke's writings.

The significance of λόγος in Luke's writings

According to Leon Morris, the total usage of the term λόγος in Luke's writings amounts to 98 occurrences – 33 times in the Gospel of Luke and 65 times in Acts (1991:220). However, upon reexamining the occurrences of the term in both the Gospel of Luke and Acts based on the Novum Testamentum Graece (NA28), I identified 39 instances in the Gospel of Luke (1:2, 4, 20, 29, 38, 65; 2:17, 19, 29, 50; 3:2, 4; 4:4, 22, 32; 5:1, 15; 6:47; 7:7, 17; 8:11, 12, 13, 15, 21; 9:26, 28, 44; 10:39; 11:28; 12:10; 16:2; 20:3, 20; 21:33; 22:61; 23:9; 24:8, 19) and 37 instances in Acts (2:41; 4:4, 29, 31; 6:2, 4, 7; 8:4, 14, 25; 10:36, 44; 11:1, 19, 22; 12:24; 13:5, 7, 26, 44, 46, 48, 49; 14:3, 25; 15:7, 32, 35, 36; 16:6, 32; 17:11, 13; 18:11; 19:10, 20; 20:32). The total usage, therefore, is 76 occurrences across Luke's two volumes. Even when the term ῥῆμα is included, the overall number still does not correspond with Morris's calculation. The term ῥῆμα occurs 19 times in the Gospel of Luke (1:37, 38, 65; 2:15, 17, 19, 29, 50, 51; 3:2; 4:4; 5:5; 7:1; 9:45; 18:34; 20:26; 22:61; 24:8, 11) and 14 times in Acts (2:14; 5:20, 32; 6:11, 13; 10:22, 37, 44; 11:14, 16; 13:42; 16:38; 26:25; 28:25). Thus, the total number of ῥῆμα occurrences in Luke's writings

amounts to 33 (Nggadas 2024:1–15). In addition, several key expressions in Acts deserve particular attention, such as τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου (8:25; 13:44, 48), τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ (4:31; 6:2; 13:46; 17:11), ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (6:7; 12:24; 17:13), and τὸν λόγον τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (5:7).

Naturally, not all of the lexical data presented above are directly significant for the exploration of Lukan Logosology. However, several of them are highly pertinent – especially when considered in conjunction with the key phrases just mentioned. As I need not reiterate points already highlighted by numerous scholars, I refer back to Forst's observation concerning the inseparable unity between the proclamation of the word (the gospel) and the person of Jesus himself in Luke's writings. Hence, within Luke's corpus, to proclaim the word or the gospel is to proclaim Jesus, and to proclaim Jesus is to proclaim the word or the gospel.

Bultmann sought to describe the gap between the preaching of the early Church and the *Sitz im Leben* of Jesus. Bultmann's well-known statement reads: 'He who formerly had been the bearer of the message was drawn into it and became its essential content. The proclaimer became the proclaimed …' (1951:33, 1958:16).

I would argue, however, that the extreme discontinuity emphasised by Bultmann is unnecessary. His position assumes a bifurcation or dichotomy – namely, that if Jesus proclaimed the gospel of the Kingdom of God, he therefore could not be the content of that gospel – which is not supported by a responsible reading of the canonical Gospels. In his proclamations concerning the Kingdom of God, Jesus did not merely present himself as the proclaimer, but simultaneously positioned himself as the central executor, bringer, fulfiller, and indeed the King of that Kingdom (cf. Lk 24:24–27, 44–45). The entirety of Scripture, he asserted, spoke περὶ ἑαυτοῦ (Lk 24:27; cf. Fitzmyer 1998:1567; cf. Bock 2011). The apostolic proclamation of the word (gospel) that made Jesus its central content after the resurrection should be viewed as a legitimate continuation of what they themselves had heard and witnessed from Jesus.

The 'Eyewitnesses' and 'From the Beginning' motifs (Lk 1:2)

The first Lukan text that employs λόγος as a titular expression to be discussed in this section is Luke 1:2: 'καθὼς παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου' ['Just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the Word handed them down to us']. The exclusive-non-titular interpretation mentioned earlier naturally denies any possibility of identifying a Logosological concept in this passage. This negation is explicitly reflected in the way commentators approach Luke 1:2. For instance, George Campbell remarks:

> [*B*]y ὁ λόγος some have thought that our Lord Jesus Christ is meant, who is sometimes so denominated by John. But this opinion is quite improbable, inasmuch as this idiom is peculiar to that apostle. (1811:296; cf. Meeks 2003:159)

Consequently, most contemporary commentators do not even consider it necessary to discuss any alternative interpretation beyond the consensus that the phrase τοῦ λόγου (Lk 1:2) must refer to the message or gospel proclamation (e.g. Bock 1994:loc. 96/1966; Nolland 1989:8; Stein 1992:64). In line with this consensus, the majority of English Bible translations (KJV, ASV, NAS, NIV, DRA, NAU, NET, NIB, NJB, NRS, NKJ) and Indonesian versions (BIS, TB1, TB2) render τοῦ λόγου (Lk 1:2) as 'word' (with a lowercase). Only a handful of English translations, such as DBY and YLT, translate the phrase with a capitalised Word.

These prevailing interpretations, however, suffer from a logical fallacy – specifically petitio principii or circular reasoning. They take as their premise what they have already assumed as axiomatic. Because such reasoning is inherently fallacious, we must instead adopt a more inclusive working assumption, namely, John clearly articulates a Logosology; therefore, it is reasonable to consider the possibility that Luke (or the Synoptic tradition) may also exhibit a Logosological perspective.

Returning to Luke 1:2, I will present several key observations highlighting the titular function of ὁ λόγος along with two literary motifs closely related to the Logosology of Luke and John.

Firstly, the term ὁ λόγος, which appears here in its genitive form [τοῦ λόγου], indicates a titular function. Grammatically, the construction οἱ ἀπ᾽ … αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται refers to a single group. This construction employs only one definite article [οἱ] to connect the expressions 'eyewitnesses and servants of the Word'. Moreover, this syntactic pattern is identical to that used in Paul's testimony concerning the Christophany he experienced (Ac 9:1–18) before King Agrippa:

> But rise and stand upon your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness of the things in which you have seen Me and of those in which I will appear to you later. (Ac 26:16 [author's own emphasis])

Notice that the construction ὑπηρέτην καὶ μάρτυρα in Paul's testimony refers to someone who has personally seen the appearance of Jesus [ὤφθην]. Paul identifies himself as both a servant and an eyewitness of Jesus. In Luke's context, 'the eyewitnesses and servants of the Word' refers to the 12 disciples of Jesus (Lk 6:13–16; Ac 1:21–26; 13:31; cf. Nolland 1989:8; Stein 1992:64).

Secondly, Paul's testimony in Acts 26:16 provides a concrete example of the 'eyewitness' motif, which designates a person (or group) who has directly seen or witnessed Jesus and his works.

This motif is inseparably interwoven with the Logosological framework. Consider again the clause οἱ … αὐτόπται … τοῦ λόγου. If 'the Word' were to refer merely to a message, report or utterance, the construction would indeed be, as Morris notes, 'a most unusual way of putting emphasis on

"the word"' (1991:229). In fact, John also integrates the eyewitness motif within his Logosology. In his Prologue, John declares that the Logos was God (1:1) and that the Logos became flesh (1:14), then affirms, '… and we beheld His glory' (καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ; 1:14). In 1 John 1:1, the Johannine Logos Christology is expressed even more graphically:

> That which was from the beginning, which *we have heard*, which *we have seen with our eyes*, which *we have looked upon*, and *our hands have handled*, concerning the Word of life … [*author' own emphasis*]

Thus, both Luke and John demonstrate a profound literary and theological interconnection between the Logos and the eyewitness motif, wherein 'the Word' is not merely a spoken message but a personal, visible and experiential reality.

Thirdly, the preceding observations gain further strength when examined alongside the motif of 'from the beginning' [ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς]. In 1 John 1:1, previously cited, when John speaks of 'the Word of life' [τοῦ λόγου τῆς ζωῆς], he writes: 'That which was from the beginning' [ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς]. This same motif appears again in the Gospel of John, when Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to his disciples, saying, 'And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning' (ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς; 15:27; cf. 16:4). The motif of 'from the beginning' thus already appears in Luke 1:2 – contrary to Nolland's interpretation (1989:8).

The motif of the divine envoy (Ac 10:34–38; 13:26–28)

These two texts (Ac 10:34–38 and 13:26–28) are discussed together here because both feature the motif of ὁ λόγος as the divine envoy – a missional Logosology.

Acts 10:34–38 – τὸν λόγον [ὃν] ἀπέστειλεν

The Indonesian translations (LAI-ITB, BIS) and a number of English versions (NRS, NLT, TNT, NET, NIV) tend to obscure any possible Logosological nuance in Acts 10:36. Yet the Greek text opens significant interpretive possibilities: τὸν λόγον [ὃν] ἀπέστειλεν τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ εὐαγγελιζόμενος εἰρήνην διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος.

'He sent the Word to the sons of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace through Jesus Christ – He is Lord of all' [*author's own translation*].

This translation, with a Logosological inflection, renders the Greek syntax far more coherent than readings bound by an exclusive-non-titular presupposition. Indeed, the Greek construction of Acts 10:36 is admittedly awkward. As Hans Conzelmann observes, 'Grammatically speaking, this is not a properly constructed sentence' (cf. Ps 106:20; Ac 13:26; Conzelmann 1973:83; cf. Barrett 1994:521). For this reason, Barrett concludes that the verse should be understood as meaning, 'God sent to the children of Israel through Jesus Christ the good news of peace' (1994:521). However, a Logosological reading of the passage offers a more satisfying resolution to these syntactical difficulties.

My translation above aligns with both the grammar and syntactic relations of the text, wherein the verb ἀπέστειλεν functions as the predicate containing an implicit third-person singular subject ('He'), which in the immediate context refers to ὁ θεός (v. 34; cf. Barrett, 1994:521).

The accusative τὸν λόγον clearly serves as the direct object of God's act of sending, while the dative τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ designates the indirect object, namely the recipients of the Word sent by God. The natural implication of this grammatical observation is that τὸν λόγον here carries a Logosological significance: God sent the Word, that is, Jesus Christ himself. The Word sent by God stands in direct parallel to the clause οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος, consistent with the grammatical function of the final clause as an instance of *attractio inversa* (cf. 1 Cor 10:16; Barth 1958:196).

The primary difficulty with the view outlined above lies in the appearance of the clause εὐαγγελιζόμενος εἰρήνην διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (v. 36). This clause presents a tension for a Logosological reading, in which the Word is sent to proclaim the good news 'through Jesus Christ'. Nevertheless, I still consider there to be a 'good possibility' (Gathercole 2006:226) for retaining the Logosological reading, because: (1) the non-Logosological reading also contains a similar difficulty, particularly in interpreting the clause τὸν λόγον [ὃν] ἀπέστειλεν τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ (v. 36); and (2) the motif of the Word as envoy is consistent with the Word of the LORD functioning as an emissary in the Old Testament (e.g. Ps. 107:20; Greek 106:20; Is 55:11; see my comments on Ac 13:26).

Interestingly, Craig S. Keener notes that several Church Fathers – including Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Theophilus of Antioch, and Hippolytus – read Acts 10:36 in a Logosological sense.

Yet Keener dismisses this tradition with the brief remark, 'but not to Luke's point' (2013:1798n694). One may rightly ask, however: How does Keener know that Luke did not intend a Logosological nuance here? As far as my reading goes, Keener merely asserts, 'The "word" [λόγον] here recalls Luke's frequent use of this term for the apostolic message in Acts' (Keener 2013:1798). In response, one need only recall the simple yet crucial distinction between frequent and always. Keener may indeed be correct that Luke frequently uses ὁ λόγος in reference to the apostolic message, but this does not logically exclude the possibility of its Logosological function in Acts 10:36.

Acts 13:26–28 – ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης ἐξαπεστάλη

The same Logosological idea found in Acts 10:34–38, in my view, can also be identified in Acts 13:26–28–particularly

in verse 26, which reads: Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραὰμ καὶ οἱ ἐν ὑμῖν φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν, ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης ἐξαπεστάλη ['Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to us the Word of this salvation has been sent'].

According to Fitzmyer, ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας is consistent with:

> [*A*] Lucan literary variant for other expressions that he has already used in 5:20; 6:2, 7 and will use in 16:32; 19:10, all descriptions of the Christian gospel and the benefits that it brings. (Fitzmyer 1998:514; cf. Keener 2013:266)

All the comparative texts cited by Fitzmyer indeed require the sense of 'the Christian gospel'. However, if there are good reasons to interpret Acts 13:26 Logosologically, then those parallel references become less relevant. Both Acts 10:36 and 13:26 exhibit a parallel motif of ὁ λόγος as the divine envoy, and both employ the same theological passive construction, indicating that it is God who sends forth the Word (1998:514). Likewise, in both texts, 'Paul/Luke immediately follows up the reference to "the word of this salvation" with the masculine pronoun "him" (τοῦτον in 13:27, αὐτόν in 13:28), which would normally refer to the aforementioned noun, in this case "the word of salvation"' (Gathercole 2006:226).

Furthermore, an intertextual reading of the Logos as envoy motif enhances the persuasive strength of a Logosological interpretation of this passage. The idea of the Logos as the one sent – expressed by both Peter (τὸν λόγον [ὃν] ἀπέστειλεν, Ac 10:36) and Paul (ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης ἐξαπεστάλη, Ac 13:26) – is consistent with the verbal and conceptual pattern found in both the Old Testament depictions of דְּבָר יְהוָה and Johannine Logosology.

Considering the theophanic appearances of בִּדְבַר יְהוָה in the Old Testament, where the Word functions as a divine envoy, it should no longer seem strange to read Acts 13:26 Logosologically. Psalm 107:20 declares that God 'sent forth His word' (יְשַׁלַּח דְּבָרוֹ; Greek: ἀπέστειλεν τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ, Ps 106:20). Similarly, the entire 'coming from God and returning to God' motif in Isaiah 55:11 (as previously discussed) is consistent with the Logos-as-envoy theme (Dahms 1981:78). Finally, as is widely recognised, this motif reaches its most pronounced expression in the Johannine corpus.

Conclusion

The exclusive-non-titular view that has long dominated discussions of New Testament Logosology, I have shown, is inadequate. Johannine Logosology is neither a *novum* nor a unique phenomenon. I have sought to demonstrate that there are strong reasons to affirm that Lukan Logosology predates Johannine Logosology. Yet Luke himself was not the originator of New Testament Logosology without precedent. Long before Luke, the Old Testament had repeatedly provided Logosological prototypes through various theophanies of the Divine Person known as דְּבָר יְהוָה [the Word of the LORD].

More specifically, an exploration of the literary motifs underlying both Lukan and Johannine Logosology reveals not only a profound continuity between them but also their shared indebtedness to the Old Testament. I do not intend to imply here that John had access to Old Testament Logosology solely through Luke. The rich and multifaceted nature of Johannine Logosological discourse allows for the plausible possibility of direct access to the Old Testament. However, what I wish to emphasise is that it is highly probable that such access was inspired or stimulated by John's interaction with Lukan Logosology.

This final point, of course, warrants a more detailed demonstration; yet even without such evidence within this article, I have already shown that there exists a clear literary correspondence in Logosological themes between the Lukan and Johannine corpora. Dahms may well be correct that he has 'established the indebtedness of the Fourth Gospel to Isaiah 55:11 for the 'proceeding from/returning to God motif' (Dahms 1981:88). Nevertheless, if my foregoing analysis is convincing, I would caution against minimising – let alone neglecting – the contribution of Lukan Logosology as the crucial mediating link between the Old Testament and the Johannine corpus. Before John, there was Luke; and before Luke, there was the Old Testament.

For further research, I propose that Luke's Spirit Christology be examined more fully in its relation to Logosology, which I was regrettably unable to address here owing to the article's limitations.

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