SUMMARY


In his double work Luke gives a high level of attention to the issues of the afterlife. He not only retains some important accounts from Mark and Q (e.g., Luke 8:41–42, 49–56, 13:22–30; 20:27–40; 22:30), but also includes further passages and expressions from his own material (e.g., Luke 16:19–31; 23:39–43), and adds some important points in the Book of Acts (1:25; 7:55–60; 9:36–41; 20:7–12; 23:8; 24:15). Moreover, he uses expressive, rare or even unique images, such as paradise (Luke 23:43) or Abraham's bosom (16:22–23). However, given Luke's evident interest in the afterlife, it is remarkable that some episodes in his double work seem to be mutually incompatible: e.g., the relation between the eschatological resurrection of the righteous only (Luke 14:14; 20:35) and the general resurrection (Acts 24:15); the language of angelomorphism and immortality in Jesus' argument about resurrection (Luke 20:36–38); the seeming discrepancy in the representation of the postmortem destiny of the righteous as the Kingdom of God (13:28–29), paradise (23:42–43), or being taken into Abraham's bosom (16:22); the representation of the human component surviving death as both spirit (Acts 7:59) and soul (Acts 20:10); and God (Luke 16:22) and Jesus himself (Acts 7:59) receiving the righteous after their death.

Many of the passages above have already been extensively discussed but so far have very rarely been the subject of a specialized study focusing on Luke's views of the afterlife. The present research is designed to contribute to the investigation of Luke's representations of the afterlife in the wider cultural context of the ancient eastern Mediterranean culture (Hellenistic) to which Luke belonged, and to arrive at results for Luke-Acts as a whole. It deals with the variety of representations of the afterlife in Luke-Acts and explores the ideas current at the time regarding afterlife in general. In doing so, it describes the main characteristics of these representations (Luke's afterlife and his eschatology; several representations of the abode of the dead; and various forms of afterlife existence) and their interrelation with each other, and then attempts to answer the question how we should account for the apparent variety of ideas found in Luke-Acts. For this purpose it combines a traditio-historical enquiry with textual analysis at a synchronic level and uses elements of a source- and redaction-critical analysis. The traditio-historical investigation of Luke's views includes the analysis of the intertextual relations between Luke-Acts and Luke's pagan and Jewish sources. The meaning-making aspects of
these intertextual relations, namely the afterlife language and the conceptual system, are investigated by means of the elements of cognitive linguistics, specifically, by the use of Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT) for scrutinizing some metaphorical aspects of the conceptualization of afterlife issues.

All these issues discussed above are mentioned in the Introduction, which also contains a survey of the most important scholarly works on the subject, a discussion of the date of Luke-Acts, and a short sketch of sources for the study of Luke’s cultural environment.

The present study consists of three parts: an investigation of eschatology and the abode of the dead in Luke-Acts and in its Hellenistic environment (chapters 1-2); a discussion of the forms of afterlife in Luke’s double work and in his sources (chapters 3-4); and an analysis of the interrelations between the various views of the afterlife in Luke-Acts (chapter 5). Chapter 1 presents a traditio-historical overview of eschatological questions in Luke’s cultural-religious milieu, and analyses Luke’s perception of collective and individual eschatology as well as of final and postmortem judgment. This chapter argues that Luke deals with collective and individual eschatology in a manner similar to their representations in Jewish literature (eschatological judgment at the end of time and judgment immediately after one's death) with all their complexity and inconsistency. He supports the idea of a postmortem retribution and a differentiation of human fates: the righteous are given eternal life in a blessed reality, while the wicked are punished in the underworld. Due to his view of the Kingdom of God and salvation as already experienced in this world, the traditional understanding of the temporal aspects of collective destiny and of the fate of individual is sometimes shifted to the present. Although basically God is a judge in Luke-Acts, some episodes imply a judicial role for Jesus (e.g., Luke 5:17–26; 7:36–50; 13:22–30; 22:24–30; 23:39–43). In addition, Acts 7:55–59 emphasizes the new status of the risen Jesus as one who receives souls of the dead.


Chapter 2 aims at answering the questions how Luke’s representations of the abode of the dead relate to each other and correspond with his
eschatological views, and whether they form any coherent or hierarchical system. It concludes that Luke combines several views of the concept of Hades (the abode of all the dead and the place of punishment of the wicked) and uses some other representations of the underworld: “Gehenna” (the place of punishment for the wicked), the “abyss,” “his own place,” “perdition” (an indicator of the eternal punishment of the wicked), and “this place of torment.”

Furthermore, Luke uses several terms for the abode of the righteous: the Kingdom of God represented as an eschatological banquet and as paradise (it emphasizes the gift of eternal life, the joy of salvation and a dwelling place of the righteous ruled by the Messiah, as well as its limited character in this age); and the “eternal habitations” (the place of salvation and joy for the righteous). In addition, Luke introduces the expression “Abraham’s bosom,” which indicates the close fellowship of Abraham and Lazarus and refers to the exalted and highly honorable position of the righteous in the blessed state. It is hardly possible, however, to build any coherent system from these representations of the abode of the dead, or to define whether they refer to the separate places between which the soul of the deceased wanders and finds its final destiny. Nevertheless, Luke emphasizes the spatial difference between the locations of the different groups of the dead.

Next, the present research moves to the investigation of Luke’s forms of afterlife existence. Chapter 3 deals with eschatological and individual resurrection as well as with the restoration of physical life in Luke’s cultural-religious milieu and in Luke-Acts. Linguistically Luke’s resurrection language used for these three issues is the same and is most frequently expressed via forms of the verbs ἀνίστημι and ἐγείρω, whose meaning as awakening and standing up Luke often emphasizes. This vocabulary is found in Jewish representations of resurrection and restoration to physical life and goes back to their equivalents in the Hebrew Bible (the verbs קם, קיץ, עור, וָמַד). In Luke-Acts eschatological resurrection relates to an eschatological reward for believers and to the general resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked before the final judgment. Both these types of eschatological resurrection are typical of Jewish texts. It is not improbable, however, that for Luke the resurrection of the righteous means the positive half of the general resurrection, because, in fact, only the righteous will be resurrected to eternal life. Luke deliberately marks out the corporeality of individual resurrection, as is best seen in the case of Jesus. On the other hand, his resurrected body has
some supernatural abilities similar to those of the glorious state of the righteous at the eschatological resurrection.

Luke’s stories about the restoration of physical life refer to a temporary return to physical life. However, Luke uses for them the same resurrection language and plays with the semantic connections between resurrection, awakening, and standing up. In addition, he exploits the terms ψυχή and πνεῦμα for the human component surviving death, probably treating them as synonyms. Moreover, he regards this component as not immediately being in the otherworld, but still being in the proximity of the dead body at the time of resuscitation.

Chapter 4 continues the analysis of the forms of afterlife existence and analyzes the immortality of the soul and the celestial (angelomorphic) existence in Hellenistic sources, and explores how their elements are used in Luke-Acts. Indeed, Luke uses some elements of immortality and angelomorphism in his afterlife language and incorporates them into his discourse about resurrection in order to demonstrate that the risen ones are immortal and have eternal life and a glorious and transformed state similar to that of celestial beings. Moreover, the elements of immortality occur in those contexts where Luke describes more general ideas of the afterlife without direct reference to resurrection. In addition, the ancient Mediterranean view that the ability to stand is distinctively human, which had been developed in some philosophical works into the idea of the “uprightness” of the soul as a mark of its immortality and divine origin, is important for Luke as well. It indicates that the process of waking up and standing up was associated with the return of life as the opposite of sleeping as associated with death.

Chapter 5 discusses the interrelations between various forms of afterlife existence, several representations of the abode of the dead, and the possible connections between these matters and the eschatological issues in Luke-Acts. The application of CMT demonstrates that in the Hebrew Bible and cognate Jewish literature, as well as in early Christian texts, the metaphorical extension of the concept of death is death is sleep, while resurrection is waking up, getting up from sleep, rising up, and standing up. Inter alia, this finding helps to resolve a difficult interpretive issue: why the traditional representation of the glorified Jesus’ posture changed from sitting (cf. Mark 14:62; Matt 26:64; Luke 22:69) to standing in Acts 7:55–56. The present study suggests that Luke connects Jesus’ standing position with exaltation and resurrection imagery and uses it as a metaphor of his resurrection. Metaphorical representations of resurrection
convey the process and result of returning to life, either earthly or eternal, which is the opposite of the process and result of dying and going to the underworld. These metaphorical extensions do not emphasize the corporeal character of resurrection. Indeed, for Luke and for his audience, resurrection did not automatically relate to the resurrection of the body. However, the corporeal character of resurrection can be recovered from the context or may be specially emphasized as is done for Jesus’ resurrection (Luke 24:37–43). In eschatological resurrection Luke likens the state of the resurrected righteous to the angelic state (Luke 20:34–36), which serves as a metaphorical extension of immortality, the eschatological transformation, and glorification.

The spatial difference between the abode of the righteous and that of the wicked metaphorically marks the difference in their afterlife status. In the prototypical representations of the otherworld with their structural and orientational metaphorization as up applied to the concepts of life, immortality, and honor, and that of down for death and humiliation, the higher position designates an honorable and exalted status, while the lower position corresponds to a worse fate and a condition of humiliation. Luke uses these prototypical representations and does not concentrate on the location of the abodes of the dead more than is needed for their metaphorical extensions.

Finally, for Luke repentance brings salvation already in the earthly life. Therefore the destiny of the righteous and the wicked is assigned immediately after death with no possibility of change. This means that repentance and proper social behavior affect the afterlife. For this reason, the fate of the individual is so important for Luke.

Thus, Luke’s sources and oral traditions reflect the diverse and incoherent views on the afterlife of his cultural-religious milieu with its predominantly metaphorical religious conceptual system. Luke shares this conceptual system and does not regard this variety (or even discrepancy) as a contradiction, but, on the contrary, as consistent, because it is coherent in his conceptual system. Luke deals with religious metaphors that work in this conceptual system and readily combines them according to his own purposes and in his own context. This is why he has such a variety of views on the afterlife in his double work.