

GOING IN AND OUT: ISRAEL'S LEADERS IN ACTS

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When a replacement is sought for Judas, according to Acts 1:12-26 the criterion for the selection is that the candidate must have been with the apostles during the time that the Lord Jesus "went in and out" (εισῆλθεν και. εἰσῆλθεν) among them (1:21). This going in and out of Jesus is commonly understood to indicate no more than the time that he spent with his disciples. Bauernfeind, for example, says the verbs "umfassen den gesamten Lebensgang und es soll nur gesagt werden, dass die Zwölf das Leben des Herrn in allen seinen Wendungen teilten".¹ A similar expression is used in 9:28 where Luke describes Paul as εἰσπορευομενοῖ και. ἐκπορευομενοῖ εἰς ἱερουσαλημ. Commentators again take it to mean little more than "the regular conduct of life, whatever that might be".² Rackham does suspect something more is implied. Like others, he believes it is a Semitism, but then he adds that in 9:28 "it seems to imply that Saul had already become a shepherd or leader of the people".³ Bruce, seemingly unwittingly, also implies the verbs used together like this indicate leadership when he says that the phrase εἴη ἡμῶν "may

¹ O. Bauernfeind, *Kommentar und Studien zur Apostelgeschichte* (WUNT 22. J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck): Tübingen) 1980: 29.

² C.K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Acts of the Apostles*. 2 volumes (T. & T. Clark: Edinburgh) 1994: 1.470.

³ R. Rackham, *The Acts of the Apostles: An exposition* (Methuen & Co: London: 7th edition) 1912:139.

further suggest our Lord's relation to His disciples".⁴ It is that implication this article explores.

I. *eisercomai* and *exercomai*

The two verbs *eisercomai* and *exercomai* occasionally appear in tandem in the Acts narrative to describe the travel movements of Peter and of Paul. Two clear examples of this linkage are found in 10:23-24 and 14:20. The former says of Peter that "the next day he got up and went out with them, and some of the believers from Joppa accompanied him. The following day they went in to Caesarea" (*th/ de. epaurion anastaj exhl qen sun autoij kai, tinej twh adel fwh twh apo. Vlopphj sunhl qon autw/ th/ de. epaurion eishl qen eij thn Kaisareian*). And of Paul it is said that after his stoning, "when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and went into the city; and on the next day he went out with Barnabas into Derbe" (*kuklwsantwn de. twh maqhtwh auton anastaj eishl qen eij thn polin kai. th/ epaurion exhl qen sun tw/ Barnaba/ eij Derbhn*).

Nearly all translations ignore the force of the prepositional prefixes in *exhl qen* and *eishl qen*. That is because they read Acts only at a narrative level. It is natural to read these passages as descriptions of Peter and Paul's travel, but the narrative reading can conceal the fact that the two verbs *eisercomai* and *exercomai* also carry a technical sense, especially when used in tandem as they are in these passages. When used in that technical sense, the verbs add to the depiction of Peter and Paul as leaders of the restored Israel. It is a usage Luke knows from the Septuagint, where the verbs are used, independently and in tandem, of Israel's leaders, especially in their military or priestly capacity. For

⁴ F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek text with introduction and commentary* (Tyndale: London) 1951:79.

example, in Num 27:17, Moses requests God for a leader for Israel who “shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and lead them in” (οἰστίj exeleusetai pro. proswpou autw̄h kai. οἰστίj eisēleusetai pro. proswpou autw̄h kai. οἰστίj ewaxei autouj kai. οἰστίj eisaxei autouj). Joshua, a man “in whom is the spirit” (27:18) is commissioned by Moses to fulfill that role. Moses makes this request because, as he says in another passage, οὐ dunhsomai eti eisporēuesqai kai. ekporēuesqai (Deut 31:2). Given the context, and the use of these verbs in combination elsewhere, Moses means more than “I am no longer able to get about”, as the NIV translates it. Rather, he means he is no longer able to lead Israel, especially in the military conflicts awaiting them. The military sense is demonstrated clearly by Joshua himself when he says, “I am still as strong today as I was when Moses commissioned me. I am still strong enough now to go in and out of battle” (eti eimi. shmeron iscuwn wsei. ote apesteilen me Mwushj wsautwj iscuw nuh exelqeiñ kai. eiselqeiñ eij ton polemon, LXX Josh 14:11; compare also LXX 1 Macc 9:29).

The two verbs are also used in tandem of David. He had been appointed commander in Saul’s army and had great success. It is said that all of Israel and Judah loved David because autoj exeporeueto kai. eiseporeueto pro. proswpou tou/ laou/ (LXX 1Kgs 18:16). Clearly, the verbs here are used metaphorically of David’s military leadership and do not simply describe his travel movements. Nor do they simply mean David spent time with the people. In another example where the two verbs are used in tandem, they are used to describe a protecting and providing role. Tobias is about to leave his home, and his mother weeps because she sees him as the “the staff of our hands as he

goes in and out before us” (eisporeuetai kai. ekporeuetai enwpion himwh, LXX Tob 5:18).

In addition to the combination of verb forms the Septuagint also uses the nouns exodoj and eisodoj in combination. The blessing of God is promised on Israel's “coming in and going out” (eisodoj kai. exodoj) if they keep the commands of God: “Blessed shall you be in your coming in and blessed shall you be in your going out” (Deut 28:6). That this blessing covers Israel's military movements is suggested by the next verse. The promise is that “the Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways” (Deut 28:7). The two nouns are also used together in a military sense in LXX 1 Kgs 29:6 where Achish, the leader of the Philistine army, says to David, “You should go out and in with me in the campaign” (kai. h̄ exodoj sou kai. h̄ eisodoj sou met' emou/ en th̄ parembolē). So also in LXX 2 Kgs 3:25, where Abner is reported to have joined David so that he could learn his “comings and goings” (thn exodon sou kai. thn eisodon sou). The nouns are used together of the actions of a ruler in 3 Kgs 3:7 as Solomon, having become king to replace David, prays to God for wisdom because “I do not know how to go out or come in” (ouk oida thn exodon mou kai. thn eisodon mou). Again, the military dimension cannot be ruled out; the expression certainly is used of Israel's leader. Such is also the case in LXX 4 Kgs 19:27 where the Lord says through Isaiah to Hezekiah: “I know your going out and your coming in” (thn exodon sou kai. thn eisodon sou egnwn. Compare also Is 37:28). In these two passages, as commonly elsewhere, the expression “going in and going out” is a technical term for the movements of a leader of Israel.

There are other passages where the term has a less clear military or leadership inference. According to LXX 2 Paral 16:1, King Baasha of Israel built Ramah "to prevent anyone from going out and going into (exodon kai. eisodon) the territory of King Asa of Judah (compare 3 Kgs 15:17 where ekporeuomenon kai. eisporuomenon is used instead). It is not impossible that King Baasha wanted to prevent military action. In any case, there are also a few occasions in the Septuagint where the two words are linked to mean "all the events in one's life", as most commentators understand the expression in Acts. In Wis 7:6 it is said that all humans enter life by one way and they depart it by one way: *miā de pantwn eisodoj eij ton biōn exodoj te ish.* In Ps Sol 4:14, the wish is expressed on someone's life: *genoito kurie h' merij autou/en atimia| enwpion sou h' exodoj autou/en stenagmoij kai. h' eisodoj autou/en ara|*

Better known is LXX Ps 120:7-8. This passage is not insignificant for understanding the strange incident involving Paul's stoning in Acts 14:19-20. That Acts passage talks of Paul going in and going out. In the Psalm, the pilgrim's going in and going out is promised the protection of God: *kurioj fulaxei se apo. pantoj kakou(fulaxei thn yuchn sou) kurioj fulaxei thn eisodon sou kai. thn exodon sou apo. tou nuh kai. e|wj tou/ aiw|hoj.* In Acts 14:19-20, Paul's life is certainly guarded, and his going in and going out are certainly under divine protection and blessing.

The promised blessing on the going in and going out of a pilgrim suggests another use of the two verbs in the Septuagint. They are commonly used of leaders and participators in the cult. In Lev 9:23, Moses and Aaron go in (*eish| qon*) to the tent of meeting, then come out (*exh| qon*) and bless the people. In Num 4:3, 23,30, 35, 39, 43, and 47 the expression *o' eisporuomenoj leitourgēin poihsai panta ta erga en th| sknh|*

tou/ marturiou is used, sometimes with minor variations. The term \omicron eisporeuomenoj appears to be a technical term for someone performing a liturgical role. In Ezekiel, the prince goes with his people in and out of the temple during the appointed feasts (kai. \omicron aifhgoumenoj en mesw| autw| en tw| eisporeuesqai autouj eiseleusetai metV autw| kai. en tw| ekporeuesqai autouj exeleusetai, 46: 10). In Luke's Gospel, Zachariah is said to go into the temple (eisel qwn eij ton naon, 1:9) and then to go out again (exel qwn, 1:22). Priests are those who go in and out of the Temple on their sacred duties. In the Damascus Document of Qumran, the expression “going in and going out” is used specifically in association with sabbath observance. So “no man shall carry perfumes on himself whilst going and coming on the sabbath ... No man minding a child shall carry it whilst going and coming on the sabbath” (לצאת ולבוא בשבת, CD 11:9-11). This would suggest that “going and coming” is a term used to describe a ritual or cultic action.

In LXX 1 Paral 27:1, it is not clear whether a military or cultic context is to be understood. Possibly both are meant since arcontej tw| patriw| ciliarcoi kai. ekatonarcoi kai. grammateij are listed alongside oi leitourgouhtej tw| law|. These leaders serve eij pah logon tou/ eisporeuomenou kai. ekporeuomenou mhha ek mhhoj... According to LXX 2 Paral 15:5, Israel was " for a long time without the true God, and without a teaching priest and without the Law" and in those times "there was no peace tw| ekporeuomenw| kai. eisporeuomenw|. Here, the reference might be simply to the day-to-day movements of people but it could mean there was no peace for the military leadership since the next verse says “nation warred against nation and city against city” (15:6). In 1 Macc 3:45, ouk h| \omicron eisporeuomenoj kai. ekporeuomenoj probably means little more than that Jerusalem was deserted, but again it is quite possible that it was deserted in the sense

that no cultic actions took place. This is suggested by what follows in the same verse: “the sanctuary was trampled down”. It could also mean that Jerusalem had no leadership; there was no one who was “going in and going out” before them.

Priestly and military leadership are, of course, not incompatible in Jewish historical experience. The Levites, for example, were to have weapons in their hands and be with the king in his "comings and goings" (esontai meta. tou/ basilewj eisporeomenou kai. ekporeuomenou, LXX 2 Paral 23:7). David can function as both priest and captain; and one of the major concerns of some Jews in the Maccabean period was the combination of military ruler and priest. In the Qumran texts there are examples of priests taking active leadership roles in the eschatological war.⁵

Before returning to look at the expression in Acts, if one assumes a common authorship of Luke and Acts, then one might expect to find the expression also used in the Gospel. The verbs do appear there in tandem but not markedly so. The disciples, in their commissioning by Jesus, are assumed to go in and out (eisel qhte ... exercesqe, 9:4). Given the context of their commissioning as leaders with power and authority (dunamin kai. exousian, 9:1) and the fact that they go in and go out of a house (oikia in 9:3 probably refers to a Christian community), it is reasonable to see the two verbs used in this passage as a technical marker of leadership. A similar thought is found in a parallel commissioning in 10:10 where the disciples are told to go into (eisel qhte) a *polis* and to go out (exel qontej) if they are not welcomed. Going in and going out seems to describe the basic activity of a commissioned disciple of Jesus.

⁵ See especially The War Rule.

In a more general way, Jesus himself is frequently described in Luke's Gospel as going in and going out. So, for example, he went in to (εἰσῆλθεν) the house of Simon (4:38) and then at daybreak, he went out (ἐξῆλθεν) and went into the desert (4:42). Jesus is said to "go out" in 5:27; 6:12; 8:27 and 22:39. And 9:31 speaks explicitly of his exodus (τὴν ἐξοδὸν αὐτοῦ). He is also said to "go in" many times (6:6; 7:1; 7:36; 9:52; 10:38; 17:12; 19:1). While the verbs may not be used in tandem when referring to Jesus, they are used enough times separately to be able to say that the life of Jesus is characterised in Luke as one of going in and going out. They are the actions of a leader of Israel, and for Luke Jesus is the leader appointed by God to rescue and sanctify Israel. In Acts 5:31, Jesus is described as leader and savior (ἀρχηγὸς καὶ σωτὴρ).

II. NEW ISRAEL

In recent years, a number of scholars have recognised that Luke understands Christians to be either the restored or the new Israel.⁶ The restored Israel needs leaders, and to those leaders God promises to supply power (1:8). Since the Septuagint commonly uses the two verbs "to go in" and "to go out" in tandem and in connection with its leaders, we might expect that Luke would do the same when speaking of Peter and Paul (and Jesus) who are obvious leaders in the Christian communities. If that leadership is characterised by "going in and going out", then we might expect that they go in and out in the company of others. We might also expect that their going in and going out be in the context of a community. Linguistically, we might expect the verbs to be used with the prepositions *sun* and *meta*) And that it indeed the case. In 1:21, where the expression "he went in and out among us" is used of Jesus, Peter is addressing the brethren (*adelphoi*)

who need to find, as a replacement for Judas, one who had been with them (sunel qontwn, 1:22) from the baptism of Jesus by John through to his ascension. In the case of Paul in 9:28, it is explicitly said that he tried to join the disciples (epeirazen kollasqai toiŋ maqhtaiŋ) (9:26) and that he went in and out met' autwŋ. This sense of Paul as a leader with followers, by the way, might help to explain the otherwise surprising reference to "his disciples" (oi maqhtai autou) in 9:25.

When Peter goes out of Joppa (exhl qen, 10:23) and goes into Caesarea (eishl qen, 10:24), he makes these moves in the company of others. He moves with those who come from Cornelius' house (sun autoiŋ). It is also said that some of the brethren from Joppa went with Peter (tinej twŋ adel fwh twŋ apo. Vopphj sunhl qon autwŋ 10:23). Given the common military use of these verbs in the Septuagint, is it coincidental that the verbs are used of Peter when he meets a representative of the Roman army? Is the subsequent falling to the knees by Cornelius (10:25) an action expected by the reader who has been told - by Luke's choice of vocabulary - that Peter is a leader in Israel?

The two verbs are used in a similar way of Paul in 14:20. There, Paul goes into Lystra (eishl qen) and goes out to Derbe (exhl qen). As noted above, the protection promised by the Lord in LXX Ps 120 on the pilgrim's going in and going out might well be the point of the two verbs being used here of Paul. And like Peter, Paul too goes out in company with others (sun twŋ Barnabaŋ). That Paul moves as a leader in a Christian community is implicit not only in the use of the two verbs commonly associated with such leaders, but also in the context. Acts 14:19-22 uses a cluster of "disciple" words.

⁶ J. Jervell, *Luke and the People of God: A new look at Luke-Acts* (Augsburg: Minneapolis) 1972.

After Paul is dragged out of the city, presumably dead, the disciples gather around him (kuklwsantwn de. twh maqhtwh auton(14:20). They are *his* disciples! In 14:21, Paul and Barnabas go to Derbe and make many disciples there (maqhteusantej ikanouj), and in the next verse, they are said to strengthen the souls of the disciples (episthrizontej taj yucaj twh maqhtwh (14:22). This grouping of “disciple” words in 14:20-22 is probably intentional. If Paul and Barnabas are leaders in Israel who “go in and go out” before the people, they must have a community to lead. In 14:22, Paul and Barnabas are also said to “encourage” (parakalouhtej) the disciples – another act of a leader (compare Deut 3:28).

A very similar pattern can be observed in 16:40 as Paul and Silas go out of the jail at Philippi (exel qontej de. apo. thj ful akhj) and go into Lydia's home (eishl qon proj thn Ludian) and then go out again (exhl qan). The movement into Lydia's home is the movement of a leader into a community. In between the two movements of going in and going out of Lydia's home, Paul again encourages the brethren (parekalhsen touj adel fouj).

The verbs also appear together in 21:8 as Paul and his companions are said to go out of (exel qontej) Ptolemaeus and to go into (eisel qontej) the house of Philip in Caesarea. Once again, the movement from out to in leaves Paul in the company of a Christian community. There are other occasions when Paul is said to go in and out, even if not in relation to the one place. For example, in 18:19 Paul is said to go into the synagogue at Ephesus and then in 18:23, he is said to go out from Antioch. It is enough to suggest that Luke uses these verbs not simply to report on Paul's movements, but to depict him as one who goes in and goes out before the community, that is, as a leader of the new Israel.

III. CONCLUSION

Peter and Paul, like Jesus before them, are chosen by God and given a spirit which empowers them to lead the people of God. This leadership is not military in its expression and it would not seem that they are leaders in a holy war. But they do lead people to a new way of holiness. To create this image of these holy leaders, Luke uses terminology familiar to ears attuned to the Septuagint, especially to the story of God's great salvific actions known in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Such an audience knew of the leadership of Moses who went in and out before Israel, and of his successor, Joshua, who prepared Israel for entrance into Canaan. Like Joshua, Peter and Paul, as successors to Jesus as leaders in a restored Israel, go in and go out in the company of others.