

**A Broken Hallelujah: A Theology of
Martin Luther's Liturgical *Simul***

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A Broken Hallelujah: A Theology of Martin Luther's Liturgical *Simul*

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A Broken Hallelujah: A Theology of Martin Luther's Liturgical *Simul*

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	15
The Need Behind this Study: Lament is the First Step to Hope	15
Main Theme: The Broken Hallelujah	16
Material: Psalms of Lent and Easter	17
Method: The Two Moves of Life and Faith	19
Theses: The Liturgical <i>Simul</i> Yields a New Orientation	20
The State of the Art	23
Key Sources of Contemporary Liturgical Theology	27
The Setting of the Subject	28
Structure of the Dissertation.....	30
CHAPTER ONE.....	32
LATHROP, LANGE AND PICKTOCK’S LITURGICAL CONCEPTS	32
What is Liturgical Theology?	32
The Problematic Confusion of <i>Confiteor</i> and <i>Kyrie</i>	34
Gordon W. Lathrop’s Liturgical Concept.....	36
Secondary Liturgical Theology: The <i>Ordo</i>	36
Primary Liturgical Theology: Holy Things	38
Pastoral Liturgical Theology: Solidarity Requires Laments	39
Dirk G. Lange’s Concept of Liturgy	40
Liturgy as the Place of Return.....	41
The Trauma of God's Absence	43

Catherine Pickstock’s Concept of Liturgy.....	44
Theology of Radical Orthodoxy.....	45
A Passionate Cry.....	46
CHAPTER TWO	48
THE PSALMS: A FUNDAMENT IN LUTHER’S LITURGICAL THEOLOGY	48
A Repressed Lament.....	48
The Shape of the Psalter.....	49
Theological Significance of the Hallelujah.....	50
“The Broken Hallelujah”	52
The Pattern of <i>Kyrie</i> and <i>Gloria</i>	53
<i>Tehillim</i> : Source for Many Cultures and Contexts	56
Tehillim or Tepillot?.....	59
Gender Issues in the Language of The Psalter	59
Multilingual Quality: Luther on Language	61
CHAPTER THREE	63
MARTIN LUTHER’S LITURGICAL THEOLOGY	63
Secondary Liturgical Theology: Testament and Sacrament.....	64
Primary Liturgical Theology: Doctrine and Worship	64
Pastoral Liturgical Theology: Solidarity in Need and Praise	66
Luther on the Psalter: A Resource for Knowing Luther’s Liturgical Theology	67
Participation: By Faith Be Free and by Love Be Bound	68
The Priesthood of All Believers	70

Lex Exercitandi.....	72
CHAPTER FOUR	76
LUTHER’S EXPOSITIONS OF THE SEVEN PENITENTIAL PSALMS	76
Psalms of Penitence.....	76
Luther’s Liturgical Use of the Penitential Psalms	78
Psalm 34: The Introitus to The Seven Penitential Psalms	80
<i>Primitia Cognitionis</i> : The Perpetual Introit	85
The Illusion of Preparation.....	86
Luther’s Expositions.....	90
Psalm 6: The Pattern of The Journey	90
Preface	91
Disorientation: Staring into the Face of Death.....	93
<i>Coram Deo</i> : The Fundamental Position of Human Beings.....	94
Definition of Trauma	97
The Trauma of Being Terrified and Forsaken	98
The “Sitz im Leben” of the Hidden God.....	101
A New Orientation: From Death to Life.....	103
The Signification of <i>Conformitas</i>	103
Turning Away and Returning	105
Psalm 32: Self-knowledge Through the Depth	106
Preface	108
Luther’s Linguistic Movement	110
Lament and Self-Knowledge.....	111

“Bringing God to God”	114
Lament and Crucifixion Passages	117
Psalm 38: A Prayer from the Edge.....	118
Preface	121
The Unspoken <i>Gemitus</i>	121
Misery Narratives of Disorientation.....	123
Embodied Lament and Self-Knowledge	124
Psalm 51: From Death to Life Anew.....	125
Preface	127
The <i>Kyrie</i> Connects Us to the World	129
Identity and Journey	130
Orality and Literacy of Baptismal Language.....	133
The Baptismal Pattern: Process and <i>Ordo</i>	135
Eschaton and <i>Lex Exercitandi</i>	137
Psalm 102: Blessed Are They Who Complain	139
Preface	142
A Tepillot Psalm.....	143
Words of Lament are Dignified.....	145
Blessed Are They Who Complain.....	146
Eschatological Aspects on Worship.....	148
<i>Lex Exercitandi</i> in Loving God and the Creation.....	150
Psalm 130: Out of the Depths	151
Preface	152

The Psalms Speak for Us “Out of the Depths”	154
Hitting Bottom: The Return of the Cross	155
Crying and Cross-Bearing: A Place of Hope.....	156
To Live Before God is to Insist on Grace.....	158
Liturgical Language: Mediator or Struggle?	158
Same Order, Different Consequences	160
Daily Training in loving God and Neighbor	163
Not Letting God “Slip Away”	164
Psalm 143: Life as <i>Conformitas</i> and Solidarity	166
Preface	168
Lamentation as an Act of Solidarity.....	170
A Penitential Rite Obscures the Significance of Baptism.....	172
The Broken Hallelujah, a Matter of <i>Conformitas</i>	173
Naming the Enemy as an Act of Solidarity.....	175
CHAPTER FIVE.....	179
LUTHER ON EASTERTIDE PSALMS	179
Luther on Hymns of Praise	179
Psalm 23: Word and Table	180
Preface	181
Hermeneutic Functions through Liturgical Music	182
The Polyphonic Quality of Worship.....	184
The Juxtapositions of <i>Ordo</i> Take Hold of Critical Issues.....	185
Speaking of God Necessitates At Least “Two Words”	187

Liturgical Use of the “Noble Treasure”	187
The Eucharist as an Act of Resistance Against the Enemies	190
Doctrine and Worship	192
Eternal Struggle: Joy and Lament	194
To Speak Earnestly to God and with God	196
The <i>Lex Exercitandi</i> of Hermeneutic	198
Psalm 111: Easter Festival	199
Preface	200
“Eat and Preach”	200
Liturgical Chanting	203
A Pictorial Hermeneutic.....	204
Learning is a Matter of Experiencing	205
Sacrificium Laudis.....	207
Liturgical Cosmology	207
Sacrificium Orationis	210
Psalm 118: “My Beautiful <i>Confitemini</i>	212
Preface	215
Comfort and Help	216
“Gemitus Inenarrabiles”	217
The First Commandment <i>Coram Deo</i>	220
“Singen und Sagen”	221
<i>Confitemini</i> : A Song of Experience.....	224
A Sacrament of Love and Solidarity	226

Solidarity with Cosmos.....	228
“The Channel of Another’s Intercession”	230
Summary	232
Conclusion One: Let Us Lament!	236
Conclusion Two: Let Us Be Courageous!	237
Sammanfattning och perspektiv	240
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES	243

INTRODUCTION

There's a blaze of light
In every word
It doesn't matter which you heard
The holy or the broken Hallelujah.¹

The Need Behind this Study: Lament is the First Step to Hope

Being a priest for many years in the Church of Sweden, and later a lecturer of homiletics and liturgy at the practical theological seminar in Lund, I have acquired a growing interest in liturgical theology. A decisive experience in the 90s is actually the beginning of this analysis. In the cathedral of Lund, a colleague² and I, together with lay people, started "Sök i natten" (Seeking in the Night) by opening the church on Friday nights. The medieval cathedral offers extraordinary spaces and opportunities, and we invited people to look for whatever called out to their mind and body, such as praying in the baptistery transept, silence in another transept filled up with icons, reading spiritual texts, small talks around a cup of coffee, counselling, celebrating the eucharist at midnight, and so on. Down in the crypt I put up a symbolic "lament wall" with some stone bricks, pencils and small pieces of paper. On a poster I wrote: "Here you can express laments to God, put your note into the wall. Nobody but God will read your words. Afterwards, the pieces of paper will be burned." Two of us were seated in hidden spaces and loudly read Psalms of lament. To me it was quite a new experience to see people coming all the time and placing their notes into the wall. Even if nobody knows what was written on the pieces of paper it pointed to something essential, a need to express lament before God.

Another fundamental experience originates from my years as hospital chaplain, when I also visited persons who had been arrested for severe crimes, ordered by the court to undergo observation at the Forensic Psychiatric Clinic in Lund. These are two different kinds of circumstances, the one dealing with questionable suffering and the other with suffering embedded in the question of guilt and mental status. However, in both contexts I found a serious

¹ Leonard Cohen, "Hallelujah" in *Various Positions* (Columbia Records: 1984), song nr. 5. Cohen's inspiration comes from Psalm 51, and it is king David's 'voice' singing after his fatal involvement with Bathsheba.

² Maria Kjellsdotter Rydinger, newly ordained priest at that time.

need for expressing lament and abandonment. In fact, just being a human, in a world of suffering, injustice and fear concerning the climate transformations necessitates space and earnest language to provide a “lament wall.” As hospital chaplain, when meeting persons who had committed harsh crimes such as, murder, armed robbery and rape, I experienced the potential of lamenting, for example the first lines of Psalm 130: “Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord, hear my voice!” That is, I am not alone in my suffering and in my desolation, in my hospital bed or in my jail cell. Lamenting lines, such as Psalm 130, turned into consolation and the sense of not being alone. For many centuries people have cried out their despair and sorrow.

Nevertheless, I find an insufficiency of lament in contemporary liturgy, which jeopardizes the possibility of finding hope.

“Lament is the first step to hope!”³

Main Theme: The Broken Hallelujah

This dissertation is related to Martin Luther’s liturgical theology, with special attention to the concept of juxtaposition of lament and praise concerning the “Hallelujah.” By tradition, the Hallelujah is linked to victory with the outset from the narrative of Eastertide. Therefore, during Lent seasons the liturgical element of Hallelujah is left out, both in the time of Luther as well as in contemporary churches. This model is poles apart from Luther’s theological understanding of liturgy. In his interpretation, Hallelujah reveals a brokenness between victory *and* passion, neither of which should be left out when speaking earnestly about the experience of God and ++being a human. This is most clearly exposed in Luther’s commentary on the Hallelujah in his early worship order, from 1523. Here, Luther formulates his liturgical theological concept of lament and joy in *An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg*.

Hallelujah enim vox perpetua est Ecclesiae, sicut perpetua est memoria passionis et victoriae eius. [The Hallelujah is the perpetual voice of the church, just as the memorial of His passion and victory is perpetual.]⁴

³ A phrase of Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac in the Palestine–Swedish digital dialogue, June 2021, in the Diocese of Lund.

⁴ LW 53, 24, *An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg*, 1523, (hereafter cited as *An Order of Mass*). See also WA 12, 210, 11–12.

The praise of the church embodies the victory of the risen Christ, the *memoria victoriae*. But this praise is always simultaneously accompanied by the memory of Christ's sufferings on the cross, the *memoria passionis*, which, in turn, is a constant reminder of the lamenting cry. In the words of Psalm 22: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"⁵ Consequently, the polarity between the memorial of Christ's Passion and Christ's victory is a basic tenet of Luther's liturgical theology. He points out that this polarity is perpetual, that is, the Hallelujah is always broken, anew and anew, by *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*.

This significance of brokenness, in this study called Luther's liturgical *simul*, is the main theme elaborated in various ways: passion and victory, Kyrie and Gloria, Lent and Easter, lament and joy.

Material: Psalms of Lent and Easter

First and foremost, I will point out that my study does not deal with Luther's theology as a whole. This means that only the theological issues which Luther brings up concerning his liturgical works will be dealt with in my analysis. Regarding the English interpretation of Luther's work, I myself translate the central material, namely the ten selected Psalms, though for supplementary texts I use the American *Luther's Works*⁶ due to the fact that this translation is used by international English-speaking scholars. In order to expose the dynamics of Luther's liturgical *simul*, I have chosen the source which plays a predominant role in Luther's liturgical theology, *The Book of Psalms*. With the perspective of brokenness in many ways focused on the juxtaposition of passion and victory, I have selected seven Psalms of Lent and three Psalms of Eastertide, all well-known in the majority of churches today. Therefore, the main material consists of *The Seven Penitential Psalms* and Psalms 23, 111 and 118. These Psalms are (aside from Psalm 23) related to the period when Luther was developing principal orders of worship, that is, 1523–1526. *Concerning the Order for Public Worship*⁷ and *An Order of Mass and*

⁵ *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989; hereafter cited as NRSV) Psalm 22:1.

⁶ *Luther's Works*, eds., Jaroslav Pelikan & Helmut Lehmann. Philadelphia and St. Louis: Fortress and Concordia, 1955–1986. 55 volumes. (Henceforth cited as LW).

⁷ LW 53, 11–14, *Concerning the Order of Public Worship*, 1523; WA 12, 35–37. The other two liturgical writings are *An Order of Mass* and *The German Mass*.

Communion for the Church at Wittenberg (both 1523), *A Christian Exhortation to the Livonians Concerning Public Worship and Concord* (1525)⁸ and *The German Mass and Order of Service* (1526)⁹ are my primary texts regarding service orders. Two issues have been decisive when considering the material:

1 Some expositions should be connected to the period when the Reformation was being officially settled and the worship orders were generally in use, that is, around the establishing of the *Augsburg Confession* in 1530.¹⁰

2 The selected Psalms should have ecumenical implications with regard to the liturgical year, particularly to Lent and Easter.

Concerning *The Seven Penitential Psalms*¹¹ the analysis concentrates on the expositions of the year 1525, and not that of the year 1517.¹² Luther's earlier expositions of these Psalms have their outset from Jerome's translation of the Bible into Latin. However, in 1525 Luther's exposition is based on his own translation of the biblical scriptures. This is, why I do not include the Latin version of these Psalms.

The penitential Psalms have belonged to the liturgical tradition of the church since the third century, and since medieval times they have been particularly connected to the Lenten season.¹³

The expositions of Psalms 111¹⁴ and 118¹⁵ (both 1530) and Psalm 23 (1536)¹⁶ are all deeply connected to the Holy Week and the Easter period of many of today's churches. Luther's exposition of Psalm 23 came out in the year 1536, and I will add this Psalm to the analysis, because it is one of the most distinct expositions, ecumenically linked to the Easter season and

⁸ LW 53, 45–50, *A Christian Exhortation to the Livonians Concerning Public Worship and Concord*, 1525; WA 18, 417–421.

⁹ Martin Luther, *The German Mass and Order of Service*, 1526 (hereafter cited as *The German Mass*), LW 53, 69–72. See also *Deutsche Messe und Ordnung Gottesdiensts*, 1526, WA 19, 80, 31–86, 12.

¹⁰ *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche: herausgegeben im Gedenkjahr der Augsburgerischen Konfession 1930*, (Die Evangelische Kirche Deutschland, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979).

¹¹ LW 14, 139–205, *The Seven Penitential Psalms*, 1525; WA 18, 480–530.

¹² WA 1, 154–220, *Die sieben Bußpsalmen 1517* (not represented in LW). It could be of special interest to compare the two expositions of the seven penitential Psalms. The fact that the early exposition of Penitential Psalms of 1517 is written in German is noteworthy (as well as the Penitential Psalms of 1525). It surely indicates the attention Luther pays for these Psalms to become accessible to everyone. However, a comparison is not the aim of my analysis.

¹³ LarsOlov Eriksson & Nils-Henrik Nilsson, *Evangelieboken i gudstjänst och förkunnelse: Homiletiska och liturgiska perspektiv* (Stockholm: Författarna och Verbum Förlag, 2003), 150.

¹⁴ LW 13, 351–387, *Psalm 111*; WA 31.I, 391–426.

¹⁵ LW 14, 43–106, *Psalm 118*, 1530; WA 31.I, 66–182.

¹⁶ LW 12, 147–179, *Psalm 23, Expounded One Evening After Grace at the Dinner Table by Dr. Martin Luther*, 1536. WA 51, 267–295.

the Sunday of the Shepherd.¹⁷ Therefore, I consider Psalm 23 to be of vital importance to the study of Luther’s expositions of the Psalms.

Along with the Luther material, the main resources in this study are the works of the three liturgical theologians, Gordon W. Lathrop, Dirk G. Lange, and Catherine Pickstock. Alongside the conclusions of my analysis, some reflections on the importance of lament in contemporary liturgy will be offered.

In addition to the selection of Psalms, this analysis also refers to other parts of Luther’s works for the sake of liturgical reflection. Besides the worship orders already mentioned, I will pay attention to *A Treatise on the New Testament that is the Holy Mass* (1520) and some of Luther’s letters from the years 1520–1530.¹⁸ Together with Johannes Schilling, I emphasize the importance of the letters to understanding Luther’s writing and his continual dialogue with God as well as with his neighbors.¹⁹ Luther’s Preface to the Psalter also plays an important role in understanding the liturgical *simul*.

Method: The Two Moves of Life and Faith

The method of this study is based on Walter Brueggemann’s concept on the *two moves of faith*, that is, the move from *disorientation to a new orientation*. These two moves are constantly underway through surprises in a context where humans thought all was lost, and then in a new context of joy and grace. The two moves are linked to Brueggemann’s construction as follows:

<i>Orientation</i>	<i>Disorientation</i>	<i>New orientation</i>
Songs of guaranteed creation	Songs of disarray	Songs of surprising new life

The first move

The second move

¹⁷ Eriksson and Nilsson (2003), 232–233. Eriksson and Nilsson assume Psalm 23 to be the most well-known of all Psalms. They stress the significance of the ecumenical implications of Psalm 23 in Lutheran, Anglican and Catholic churches, all in the Easter lectionary, at the Sunday of the Shepherd.

¹⁸ LW 48, 143–186, *Letters I* (Selections), 1520–22 and LW 49, 3–439, *Letters II* (selections). See also WA *Briefwechsel*, Band 1–18 (hereafter cited as WA BR) WA BR 1, 1501–1520, 608–619; WA BR 2, 1520–1522, 1–642; WA BR 3, 1523–1525, 1–654; WA BR 4, 1526–1528, 1–631; and WA BR 5, 1529–1530, 1–702.

¹⁹ Johannes Schilling, “Einleitung,” in Karin Bornkamm & Gerhard Ebeling, eds., *Martin Luther: Ausgewählte Schriften: Briefe*, Sechster Band, (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, zweite Auflage 1983 [1982]), 7 (hereafter cited as *Ausg. Schr.* (1983) with the addition to the *Band* in question).

Brueggemann employs this structure on various Psalms as a whole, as follows. The category of orientation are Psalms of “guaranteed creation,” which are the departure of the first move leading to disorientation. “Disarray” signifies Psalms of disorientation, that is, lament Psalms. Supposing everything is lost gives rise to a surprise, a new orientation, such as Psalms of thanksgiving.

The first move Brueggemann identifies with a relinquishment, such as Jewish suffering and Jesus’ crucifixion. In the second move he sees a surprise, that is, Jewish hope and Jesus’ resurrection.²⁰

Moreover, Brueggemann highlights how the Psalms relate to experiences of life and faith by naming the three phases (orientation, disorientation, and new orientation) altered “seasons” in human existence. Life has a rhythm, and we step from one phase to the next.

What I find of special interest in Brueggemann’s concept is the phase he calls “new orientation.” Whether the juxtaposition between the first and the second move leads to something *renewed* or something *quite new* is heavily debated in liturgical research, mostly regarding the eucharist, though also complete worship. I would say that there is a considerable difference between renewed and something entirely new, which is my motivation for making use of Brueggemann’s model.

Brueggemann generously invites us not to take his concept to be overly schematic: “Thus while I have offered a matrix, I do not want it taken too precisely, for life is in fact more spontaneous than that.”²¹ Given this invitation, I utilize his three-part pattern to analyze specific themes in my study, with a focus on the two moves from disorientation to new orientation regarding Luther’s liturgical theology.

Theses: The Liturgical *Simul* Yields a New Orientation

My primary concern is that lament is the first step to hope. Therefore, lament is of utmost significance in contemporary liturgy. Unfortunately, I consider lamenting as repressed in churches of today and, the corollary is a clear deficiency of solidarity with a suffering humanity and a mistreated environment. My theses are based on the following statements based on Luther’s liturgical theology:

²⁰ Walter Brueggemann, *Spirituality of the Psalms* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2002), 12.

²¹ Brueggemann, 2002, 14.

Firstly, my guiding hypothesis is that Luther's liturgical theology is based on a *simul* which is already indicated in his first worship order (The Latin Mass), by emphasising the significance of the Hallelujah in the two moves, from disorientation, that is, *memoria passionis*, to a new orientation, that is, *memoria victoriae*. Traditionally, the meaning of Hallelujah is one-sidedly understood (the victory and Easter atmosphere) which represses the passion (the lament and Holy Saturday atmosphere). A short search in WA reveals the fact that the word *simul* appears just over four thousand times. Consequently, this concept is of importance when dealing with Luther's theology. The most well-known *simul* statement is the human being as *simul iustus et peccator*, at the same time both justified and sinner.²² Even so, what matters is not the words themselves but the idea behind them, what this "two-ness" represents in Luther's theology. First of all, the *simul iustus et peccator* doctrine reveals the fundament of Luther's view on humans, such as that no one is more or less justified or more of less of a sinner than any other. In a way, this is a very equal view of humanity, presenting equality in justice as well as in sin. Considering this statement, the Psalter is of a certain interest, which Luther claims to be "the mirror" of our selves just as we are, justified and sinners.

To Luther, this polarity corresponds to the Christ-event, that is, the ongoing journey from death to life anew. The Christ-event is not in any way about repetition, such as re-construction or a kind of liturgical manual (which explains Luther's reluctant approach to putting up a worship order), but a matter of life and death, of conflict and grace in experiencing God as absent as well as present. This polarity is based on the *simul* doctrine, two issues apparently opposite to one another, though they belong together. In terms of liturgy, this polarity – this two-ness of opposites – is an essential element for worshiping life and comes about in various *simul*, for instance, Kyrie and Gloria, Lent and Eastertide, passion and victory. Without this *simul* of opposites the Christ-event, the ongoing journey from death to life anew, is ruled out and the liturgy turns into ceremony, an event without opposites.

Consequently, I would argue that this polarity, this liturgical *simul*, constantly yields a *new orientation*. It is certainly not about re-enactment, which leads to a kind of orthodoxy, a sort of control and clerical power which is unfamiliar to Luther's liturgical theology.

Secondly, a surprising and a new orientation is related to what I call *lex exercitandi* in my study of Luther's liturgical theology.

²² Curious though, in Danish and Swedish the "sinner" is frequently mentioned first, followed by the "justified" (that is in Christ). "På samme tid synder og retfærdig/Både syndare och rättfärdig."

The predominant and traditional concept for describing liturgy as the interaction between *lex orandi* and *lex credendi* is by no means sufficient in understanding Luther's liturgical theology. Experiencing passion and victory, the trauma of God's absence and the grace of God's presence is a constantly new liturgical journey and is to be learned anew every time. I name this pattern *lex exercitandi*, 'the law' of exercising, of learning God's grace anew, the perpetual journey of the Christ-event, that is constantly a new orientation. In other words, the everyday life of baptism, according to Luther.

Thirdly, the Psalms play a supreme role in Luther's liturgical theology. It was sensational that Luther, already in his first exposition of the Psalter (1513–1515) during his Latin period, wrote in German. Evidently, he considers the Psalms to be of importance for everybody, and for the liturgy of the assembly. In his second exposition of the entire Psalter in 1525, also in German, Luther once again points out the significance of the Psalms.

Fourthly, Luther does not consider *The Seven Penitential Psalms* to be about penitence, but rather about learning how to express your lament before God.

What motivates Luther is to encourage people to carry out a straightforward and honest language *coram Deo*, before God. Here, too, it has to do with a *lex exercitandi*, an order for training oneself in a trustful and honest language before God. In sum, the aim of this analysis is two-fold:

1. To examine the significance of lament, and the traumatic experience of the abyss, in Luther's exposition of *The Seven Penitential Psalms* (1925).

2. To unearth Luther's liturgical theology by juxtaposing his study of *The Seven Penitential Psalms*, intended for the Lenten season, with that of the three Psalms of Easter season, Psalms 23, 111 and 118 (1530–1536).

“What happens when the lament is repressed?” is the question that permeates this analysis. Is lament a forgotten language in Christian liturgy today? In elaborating this question, I will use as a concept the liturgical juxtaposition of *Kyrie* and *Gloria*. This concept is employed both *figuratively* and in the *factual* discussion of liturgy. For this reason, a short background will be provided, showing the problematic mixture of the confession of sins and the cry for mercy. The Psalter is a source for many cultures and raises a number of language issues.

Above all, I would argue that Luther's understanding of *The Seven Penitential Psalms* is not predominantly about penitence but about lament and confronting God with suffering.

The corollary is that lament is the first step to hope.

The State of the Art

Since my study mainly deals with Luther's liturgical theology related to contemporary issues, I present modern sources in addition to Luther's own work.

A lot of research has been done concerning Luther and the Psalms. In his doctoral thesis (2010), Lars Christian Vangslev presents the importance of affect in Luther's interpretation of the Second Lectures on the Psalms, *Operationes in Psalmos* (Psalms 1–21). According to Vangslev, Luther emphasizes the right approach of reading the Psalms, concerning spelling out one's relationship with God. Not only do Luther's expositions on the Psalms reveal the importance of affect, but so too does Luther's theology on the whole.²³

In another dissertation, Matthias Mikoteit (2004) explores Luther's lectures on Psalms 1532–1535 (Psalms 2, 45, 51, 90 and 120–134). Mikoteit identifies these Psalms as an interconnected section which he calls the Third Lectures on the Psalms. By pointing out different aspects of prayer throughout these Psalms, Mikoteit observes the close connection between devotional life and theology in Luther's lectures. To understand Luther's lectures on these Psalms, the profound connection between theology and prayer must be considered.²⁴ Both Vangslev and Mikoteit propose praising God as the peak point of Luther's understanding of the Psalms.

A work which systematically analyzes Luther's expositions on the penitential Psalms published in 1525 is hard to find. However, selected Psalms are frequently analyzed; penitential Psalms as well as Psalms connected to Eastertide. Bernhard W. Anderson is an excellent example of someone who continuously enlarges the study of Psalms. Taking account of penitential Psalms 6, 32, 51, 102 and 130, he highlights the experience of being near death, near the abyss, as significant. Primarily, Anderson points out the pattern in these Psalms: a move from lament to praise and joy.²⁵

Luther's second version of the penitential Psalms is based on the Hebrew text, unlike his first version grounded on the Latin text (1517). There is a short but interesting comparison between these two editions of Luther on the seven penitential Psalms, by Jonathan R. Seiling. Seiling claims that the notion of "enemies" takes quite a different meaning in Luther's commentaries on

²³ Lars Christian Vangslev, *Res ipsa theologiae-om salmerne og affekterne i Luthers anden salmeforelæsning* (Det Teologiske Fakultet, Københavns Universitet: 2010), for example 59–62.

²⁴ Matthias Mikoteit, *Theologie und Gebet bei Luther: Untersuchungen zur Psalmenvorlesungen 1532–1535* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 2–30, 296.

²⁵ Bernhard W. Anderson with Steven Bishop. *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today*, 3rd Edition Revised and Expanded. (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000). In the latest edition three new chapters are added, with a focus on the poetic character of the Psalms.

the two versions. In the edition of 1517, the “enemies” signify a spiritual situation in general, but in the second version of 1525 the “enemies” have turned into concrete individuals. Former partners, such as Karlstadt and Müntzer, who try to take hold through force and pressure are now considered as antagonists in the view of Luther.²⁶

Dennis Ngien, scholar of systematic theology, lays bare how the Psalms offered Luther the language for his theology, not least his lifelong struggling with God. Giving an analysis of Luther’s commentaries on penitential Psalms 6 and 51 as well as the Easter Psalm 118, Ngien points to the importance of lament in Luther’s theology and in his life. First and foremost, Ngien turns down the idea of lamenting as a kind of malfunction, as this must necessarily lead to confession of sins or be considered a blasphemy. By contrast, lament is the first move to joy and praise²⁷ – lament is the first step to hope.

In my opinion, it is not possible to discuss the Psalms without mentioning Walter Brueggemann, one of the most prominent interpreters of the Old Testament of today. Since 1982, Brueggemann has been working on the Psalter by writing the book *Praying the Psalms*²⁸ followed by *The Message of the Psalms*,²⁹ *Spirituality of the Psalms*,³⁰ and a great deal of commentaries and articles with reference to the Psalms. What I find extraordinary is Brueggemann’s talent to reach out to many people, also beyond the theological areas.³¹ Brueggemann is also the scholar from whom I borrow the methodology employed in this thesis.

Regarding the three Eastertide Psalms 23, 111 and 118, they are all represented in the lectionaries of the worldwide church. In many churches Psalm 118 is connected to Easter celebration, while Psalms 23 and 111 have their place in the following Sundays of Eastertide. This is evidently a long-standing tradition, as we will see below. Of interest to my study is the fact that Luther pays attention to these Psalms by relating them to Eastertide.

The Vatican Council (1962–65; Vatican II) and the World Council of Churches in Uppsala (1968; WCC 1968) inspired a new perception of liturgy. By tradition, liturgy at large ensured a

²⁶ Jonathan R. Seiling, “The ‘Radical Revisions of the Commentary on the Seven Penitential Psalms: Luther and His Enemies (1517–1525)’” in *Reformation and Renaissance Review*, 8.1, (University of Edinburgh, editor Simon J. G. Burton, 2006), 26-44. Of interest, though not the aim of my study.

²⁷ Dennis Ngien, *Fruit for the Soul: Luther on the Lament Psalms*, Foreword by Robert Kolb, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015), 19–20.

²⁸ Walter Brueggemann, *Praying the Psalms: Engaging Scripture and the Life of the Spirit*, 2nd Edition (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2007).

²⁹ Brueggemann, *Message of the Psalms* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishing, 1985).

³⁰ Brueggemann, *Spirituality of the Psalms* (Facets), (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001).

³¹ One of many examples, [Walter Brueggemann The Power of Lament \(Psalms\), YouTube, 2021.03.02.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2021.03.02)

focus on the presider of worship, and thereby also a hierarchy pervading the service. However, the two councils in the sixties imparted the signification of “participation,” the leading word in later liturgical renewals. One of the leading liturgical scholars of today, Gordon W. Lathrop, influenced by Luther’s theology, follows up upon key subjects originating from the liturgical movements of Vatican II and WCC 1968. Particularly his liturgical trilogy *Holy Things, Holy People* and *Holy Ground*³² made a significant impact on contemporary liturgy. First and foremost, I find Lathrop’s familiarity of pastoral theology as well as his academic studies on liturgy highly valuable.

Looking at Luther’s theology as it is interpreted today, I want to point out the feminist, womanist and mujerista perspectives in *Transformative Lutheran Theologies* (2010). The contributors take up pivotal themes from Luther, in various texts addressing contemporary matters. I find these absolute ground-breaking viewpoints of Luther’s theology an important step, just like the Reformation, for the transforming of the church and the world anew.³³ Undeniably, these theologians present a new orientation to the abounding history of Luther’s theology.

In my contact with the Iglesia Luterana Costarricense (ILCO), I experienced the radicality of Lutheran theology of today.³⁴ Martin Hoffmann, theologian at the University of San José and engaged in ILCO, points to the consequences being a church in a context of discrimination and poverty. Taking his point of departure in diverse texts by Luther, Hoffmann presents various interpretations for the congregation to discuss.³⁵ One of the consequences of unearthing Luther’s theological thinking in the contemporary world is the generation of an all-inclusiveness regarding fellow humans. That is, ILCO is the only church in Costa Rica which includes LGBTQ people. My contacts in Costa Rica say that Hoffmann contributes to what they call “Un nuevo paradigma para la teología de hoy” [A new paradigm for today’s theology]. In his work of 2009, Hans-Martin Barth analyzes a wide range of subjects in Luther’s theology. Barth goes along with the Reformation in terms of theological disputes and conflicts. However, I find it most

³² See the section “Gordon W. Lathrop’s Liturgical Concept” below.

³³ Mary J. Streufert, ed., *Transformative Lutheran Theologies: Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista Perspectives* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010).

³⁴ Katarina and Magnus Leonardi Hedqvist, priests in the Church of Sweden, engaged in a Lutheran congregation in ILCO for six years, introduced “the inclusive mass” in Sweden, based on the priesthood of all believers. They also introduced the work of Martin Hoffmann.

³⁵ Martin Hoffmann, *La Locura de la Cruz, La Teología de Martin Lutero: Textos originales e interpretaciones* (San José, Costa Rica, Universidad Bíblica Latinoamericana en San José, 2014),

interesting that Barth argues for the Reformation as first and foremost a counselling enterprise. The conclusion of Barth's critical study turns to the counselling and therapeutic perspectives of Luther's theology as fundamental.

Variations of Juxtaposition

The general definition of juxtaposition is to set up two components next to each other in order to create a new understanding, for instance similarity or contrast. In literature, art, and mathematics we observe the significance of juxtapositions to illuminate a new view on the subject in question. Lathrop is using the concept of juxtaposition throughout his liturgical writings to display the theory of *ordo*. In my study it is very helpful in terms of define the basic elements of worship, that is the coordinated juxtaposition of similarities such baptism and eucharist, the preaching of the word and the sacraments, and the relation between the Sunday liturgy exciting faith and the ethical calls of everyday life during weekdays. At the same time, Lathrop points to juxtapositions of contrasts too. He does so by referring to contrasts of prayer and praise within the liturgical order, including also the contrasting themes of death and resurrection in the Christ-event, manifest in the liturgy of baptism, and of the contrast between receiving the bread in the eucharist, and the concern for those in need for bread in everyday life outside the liturgy.

Lange points, in particular, to the juxtaposition of contrasts, related to the motives of the absence and presence of God, the abyss of despair and loss, and the regaining of faith in such difficult situation. Both Lathrop and Lange are important in my analysis to sort out what is important in the interpretation of liturgical theology, with a special emphasis on the contextual awareness expressed by Lange.

Lathrop

Bath/Table

Word/Eucharist

Weekday/Sunday

Lange

Presence/Absence

Writing/Abyss

Surprise/Loss

In my own study the basic juxtaposition is characterized by the contrast entailed in the Hallelujah, between the *memoria passionis* and the *memoria victoriae*.. *This coordinated contrast* is expressed in various ways, such as *kyrie* and *gloria*, Lent and Easter, lament and joy.

In this sense, Lange's emphasis on the contextual contrast motives of the liturgical juxtapositions is central to this study.

Key Sources of Contemporary Liturgical Theology

For my study I have chosen three key players to interact with Luther's expositions. Firstly, I discuss contemporary theologians, since my ambition is to find liturgical expressions tuned into the life of today. Secondly, I call for liturgical scholars acquainted with Luther's theology, and here I consider Gordon W. Lathrop and Dirk G. Lange be very appropriate. I think Lathrop is one of the most skilled liturgical theologians of today, addressing as he does a range of liturgical issues relating to contemporary questions. Lathrop's research contributes to the development of liturgy as an academic field relevant for the church. Moreover, Lathrop looks, in large measure, at the liturgical significance of Martin Luther in worship issues today. As does Luther, Lathrop uses his theological competence to investigate contemporary liturgy from the perspective of the early church, with an intense ecumenical interest. Lathrop deals with liturgy through a theological lens that captures both ecclesiological and cosmological perspectives.

Dirk G. Lange is another theologian who pays heed to Luther and liturgical theology. Through his experience as a brother of the ecumenical community in Taizé, and working with underground prayer groups in Eastern Europe, Lange challenges liturgical instrumentality. He finds the medieval position on the sacraments to still prevail today, "[a]s if the word and sacraments were like instruments channeling grace."³⁶ Lange pays special attention to Luther's re-readings of the Psalms and his struggle for meaning. The lens for Lange's thesis in liturgical theology is trauma theory.

For that reason, I have looked for a skillful liturgical scholar who has a view different to that of Lathrop and Lange, and with a different context. Catherine Pickstock, the third key player, offers perspectives different from Lathrop and Lange's. Pickstock, an English theologian who criticizes the modern and post-modern conceptualization of Christianity, holds a philosophical position, using an interpretation of Plato's *Phaedrus* to point out the primacy of liturgy. What I find interesting for my study is the fact that both Luther's and Pickstock's liturgical starting point is a recognition of the medieval Roman Rite. Even if Pickstock does not primarily deal with Luther,

³⁶ Dirk G. Lange, *Trauma Recalled: Liturgy, Disruption, and Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 3. The medieval position is *ex opere operato* [from the work done].

it is of interest that both are considerably familiar with the Latin Mass and liturgical issues, although with a separation of almost 500 years.

Thus, Gordon W. Lathrop, Dirk G. Lange and Catherine Pickstock are the primary contemporary theorists of liturgical theology in my study.

The Setting of the Subject

Is the language of *memoria passionis* a forgotten language in the Christian liturgy of today? South African theologian Denise M. Ackermann, referring to the painful testimonies of apartheid, asks: “Have existing liturgical traditions anything to offer lamenting hearts?”³⁷ Experiences of catastrophes and worries about future life on earth do challenge the language of God in the liturgy. A growing anxiety concerning climate change as well as a strong feeling of the incomprehensibility of what happens to human life, puts essential questions to the traditional Christian language of God. Some theologians regard this issue to be a critical problem in current theology and argue for an enlarged understanding of language, one that is sensible to suffering and to theodicy.³⁸ In my study, the definition of theodicy is: *How to live with the question of “human suffering and belief in a loving God...”* Though I would add the suffering of the whole creation, not merely humanity, in accordance with Mark 16:15: “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to *the whole creation*” (italics added).

I would argue, together with Ackermann, that we have to search for a language of lamentation within the liturgical framework in order to “learn to speak Jesus’ lost language.”³⁹ A liturgical

³⁷ Denise M. Ackermann, “Lamenting tragedy from the ‘other side,’” in James R. Cochrane & Bastienne Klein, eds., *Sameness and Difference: Problems and Potentials in South African Civil Society*, South African Philosophical Studies, I (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2000), 213–242. See also, Nancy J. Duff, “Recovering Lamentation as a Practice in the Church,” in Sally A. Brown & Patrick D. Miller, eds., *Lament* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 4: “Our hearts may cry out with all the anguish and rage expressed in biblical lamentation, but *our contemporary liturgies provide very few ritualistic means for expressing our grief, despair, and anger* in the presence of others and in the context of faith in God” (italics added).

³⁸ Johann Reikerstorfer, “Über die ‘Klage’ in der Christologie,” in *Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie: Klage*, Band 16 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2001), 269–270: “Die Wucht, mit der sich heute unter dem Eindruck der Katastrophenerfahrungen der jüngsten und jüngeren Geschichte der Theologie die *Theodizeefrage* aufdrängt, mag die tiefe Erschütterung, die Krise und Herausforderung der Gottesrede angesichts der Leidens- und Katastrophengeschichten spürbar machen. Sie ist ihr zum „Schicksalsort“ geworden und könnte – so die Vermutung – uns die „Gottespassion“ Jesu und ihr Gotteszeugnis auch für eine leid- und theodizeesensiblere Gottesrede heute näher bringen.”

³⁹ Michael Card, *A Sacred Sorrow: Reaching Out to God in the Lost Language of Lament* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2005), 63, 138. Quotation by John D. Witvliet, *The Biblical Psalms in Christian Worship: A Brief*

language that enables the communication of lament is at the core of the intention of finding honest, intelligible worship in a human landscape of suffering, threats and catastrophes. According to Johann Baptist Metz, there is a troubling lack of “Holy Saturday-atmosphere” in today’s Christology. Human experiences of desertion and abandonment are, for Metz, “Holy Saturday-experiences.” To be open for a “Holy Saturday-language” of Christology is, he claims, of paramount importance. A language that responds to the exceedingly great need to cope with anger, grief, anxiety and powerlessness must be considered a fundamental dimension of a liturgical theology.

In order to provide a language capable of expressing different states of mind, Martin Luther over again points to the biblical Book of Psalms. He declares this book to be a possibility for every human being to identify his or her own life:

Hence it is that the Psalter is the book of all saints; and everyone, in whatever situation he may be, finds in that situation psalms and words that fit his case...⁴⁰

To pray and sing the Psalms is, to Luther, to be a part of the *Communio sanctorum*. This holy community shares a language of joy as well as a language of the deepest despair, and the Psalms offer expressions for the different states of mind. Authentic worship requires a vocabulary and a grammar that includes praise as well as lament, thanksgiving as well as the cry “Why?”

In a way, the Psalms are “the foundational mentor,” offering language for an authentic worship. Luther calls the Psalter “a little Bible” and considers it to be a summary of Christian faith, but also a mirror of self-knowledge, and of knowing God.⁴¹ Luther is often considered to be a theologian without liturgical qualifications,⁴² despite the remarkable attention he pays to the Psalter, the most “liturgical” of all the books in the Bible and in the tradition of Christian worship. Certainly, it is a question of how to define “liturgical qualifications.” If we refer to complete books of services, or to something like a “canonical” agenda, Luther was not

Introduction and Guide to Resources (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 31.

⁴⁰ LW 35, 256, *Preface to the Psalter*, 1545 (1528); WA DB, 10.I, 102, 23–25.

⁴¹ LW 35, 254; WA DB, 10.I, 98, 22–24.

⁴² Martin Nicol, *Grundwissen Praktische Theologie: Ein Arbeitsbuch* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2000), 58: Luther war kein Liturgiker.” There are, however, theologians who acknowledge liturgical aspects of Luther, for instance Rainer Volp, *Liturgik: Die Kunst Gott zu feiern* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag, 2 Bände 1992–1994. Johann Baptist Metz, *Memoria passionis: Ein provozierendes Gedächtnis in pluralistischer Gesellschaft* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Verlag Herder GmbH, 2006), 4–8.1994), 746–747.

liturgically gifted. On the contrary, he was quite reluctant to formalize general orders for worship life.⁴³ But if liturgy is defined as a theological task, in which the pattern of worship drawn from the Bible, the *Ordo*,⁴⁴ is acknowledged, we cannot disregard Luther as an ambitious and qualified theologian of worship and liturgical theological thinking. Gordon W. Lathrop asserts the idea that Luther's two main liturgical writings are "narrative descriptions" with a pattern, an *Ordo*, of Christian liturgy.⁴⁵

In order to unearth a language of "Holy Saturday-atmosphere" we may ask: Is there a language of lament in Luther's understanding of the biblical Psalms?

I took my point of departure in an experience in the cathedral of Lund where the event of lamentation came to the fore. From the inspiration of the poet and singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen and his famous opus "Hallelujah," I deal with the significance of brokenness in order to define the very kernel of liturgical theology. Correspondingly, the essential question "What is liturgical theology?" is exposed.

Structure of the Dissertation

The structure of the dissertation entails five chapters with an additional concluding summary and considerations.

Chapter one presents the motivation behind this study, the main theme of the broken Hallelujah, and the problematic underscore of "repressed lament" in contemporary liturgy. Luther's liturgical theology is elaborated on through *The Seven Penitential Psalms* (1525) and the three Easter Psalms; Psalms 23, 111 and 118 are referred to as the leading theme. In this chapter, Gordon W. Lathrop, Dirk G. Lange and Catherine Pickstock, the three key players, are introduced regarding the contemporary liturgical issues.

Chapter two deals with the fundamental importance that Luther pays to the Psalter and the implications of "repressed lament". These issues are signified by the requests of the juxtaposition of the patterns of *kyrie* and *gloria* concerning the main theme of the broken Hallelujah.

⁴³ LW 53, 53, "Introduction" to *The German Mass and Order of Service*, 1526. See also *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe, Schriften*, Band 1–61 (Weimar: Herman Böhlau Nachfolger, 1883 ff.), (hereafter cited as WA), WA 19, 45.

⁴⁴ Gordon W. Lahtrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 15–53.

⁴⁵ Lathrop (1998), 35.

Furthermore, a focus is placed on the language of matters concerning gender, multilingualism, and dignity.

Chapter three contains Luther's liturgical theology from three perspectives: secondary liturgical theology, primary liturgical theology, and pastoral liturgical theology with special attention on the significance of the Psalter. I also highlight the elements of *The Freedom of a Christian* and the principle of the priesthood of all believers, which play an essential role in Luther's liturgical thinking. Moreover, I set up the theory of *lex exercitandi* (the law of training) in order to criticize the traditional *lex orandi* and *lex credendi*.

Chapter four is the central section which is focused on my reading of Luther's expositions of the seven penitential Psalms. In addition, Psalm 34 is added as an introit to the seven Psalms. Displaying the model of the two steps, from disorientation to a new orientation, is fundamental in the interpretation.

Chapter five sets the counterpart of chapter four in dealing with Luther's exposition of the three Psalms of Eastertide. The significance of lament in the seven penitential Psalms is also a pivotal question in these Psalms of joy and confidence.

Chapter One

LATHROP, LANGE AND PICKTOCK'S LITURGICAL CONCEPTS

Here I present the liturgical concepts of the three key players, Lathrop, Lange and Pickstock. As this study deals with liturgy, we have to first define what is meant by “liturgical theology.” Moreover, I point to the problematic liturgical issues, such as the confusion of *Confiteor* and *Kyrie*. This problem will also be discussed later, when it comes to Luther’s expositions of the penitential Psalms.

What is Liturgical Theology?

So, what is liturgical theology? The question entails a number of other questions, including “what is liturgy?” Is it fruitful to distinguish “worship” from “liturgy”? And what about the relationship between liturgy and theology? When we hear statements like “the worship was not liturgical” or “Martin Luther was not a liturgist,” what is meant by such utterances? Some theologians see the distinction between “worship” and “liturgy” as liturgy requiring “ritual action; worship may or may not.”⁴⁶ I agree, here, with Stephan Burns, who regards so-called “non-liturgical” worship as a misnomer. If, with Burns, we consider *λείτούργια* to be “the work of the people” in terms of *participation*, then “worship” and “liturgy” are plainly the same.⁴⁷ To Gordon W. Lathrop, the word “liturgy” is just the ancient term for the people's gathering for worship and its rituals.⁴⁸ The vital point according to Lathrop, however, is that liturgical theology focuses on service to God and service to the neighbor. Here the reference is to service

⁴⁶ Dwight W. Vogel, “Liturgical Theology: A Conceptual Geography,” in Dwight W. Vogel, ed. *Primary Sources of Liturgical Theology: A Reader* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 6. Here I want to insert a critical component into the definition of “ritual action.” When the assembly rises, every Sunday, in order to participate in the *Credo*, is this not a “ritual action?”

⁴⁷ Stephan Burns, *SCM Studyguide to Liturgy* (London: SCM Press, 2006), 6, 5.

⁴⁸ Lathrop (1998), 3.

in a narrower sense, that is, to service in the church, particularly in the Sunday gathering. But Lathrop's statement also embodies a wider perspective of everyday life with God, neighbor, creation and the world.

Worry about the future on earth comes to the fore in many of the liturgical theological works of the last 50 years. Many of these studies include references to the Second Vatican Council of 1962–1965 and, to a certain extent, to the World Council of Churches Assembly in Uppsala of 1968. On the latter occasion “the worship of God in a secular age” was a key theme. At the centre of the discourse was an emphasis on the world as a unity. Inspired by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, among others, the theological challenge was to break up a “two-rooms” construct. There should exist no barrier between what is regarded as holy or as profane between God and the world. One of the prominent arguments is that Christ was sent to the world, not just to the church.⁴⁹ The consequences of humankind's lifestyle, in relation to one other and to the whole creation, was a central topic. Working from his liturgical cosmology, Lathrop names liturgy in life as “Ordinary Holiness.” Gathering in the Sunday liturgy calls on the subject to partake in the life and responsibility of the world. The root juxtaposition is that of *Ordo*, Jesus Christ, the “name” whose implications include a constant calling of the liturgical subject to take part in the world:

The 'name' that is at the heart of Christian liturgy calls you to walk on the ground, under the sky, next to your neighbor and all creatures, in mutuality and communion, honest about the goodness of all things, honest about the need of all things, in thanksgiving and beseeching. One of the clearest lines that runs out onto the earth from virtually every liturgical interaction of the faithful Christian assembly and from the tensions in the word 'Christ' itself is the line of thanksgiving and beseeching.⁵⁰

At its core, “Ordinary Holiness” implies the Christ-event of brokenness, such as the journey from death to new life. In terms of worship, “the name” indicates a liturgical *simul* along the lines of thanksgiving and beseeching, joy and lament. A “liturgical cosmology” offers a serious

⁴⁹ Åke Andrén, “Liturgiska utvecklingslinjer i världens kyrkor under de senaste decennierna,” in Statens offentliga utredningar, 1974:67, *Gudstjänst i dag: Liturgiska utvecklingslinjer*, bilaga I, Svenska kyrkans gudstjänst, 1968 års kyrkohandbokskommitté: Huvudgudstjänster och övriga gudstjänster (Stockholm: Utbildningsdepartementet, 1974), 13–15.

⁵⁰ Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 70, 79.

challenge for the twenty-first century. As Lathrop postulates, the *Ordo* itself calls for attention to the earth's issues. The biblical witnesses regard the creation as God-given, and the sacramental use of earthly gifts like water, bread and grapes constantly involve the liturgical subject in the root juxtaposition of the *Ordo*, the Christ-event.⁵¹

By problematising the question "What is liturgical theology?" I agree with Dwight W. Vogel: "Liturgical theology must deal with the liturgy, and it must be theological in nature."⁵²

The Problematic Confusion of *Confiteor* and *Kyrie*

Luther does, in fact, differentiate between *Kyrie* and *Confiteor* in his outlines of worship orders.⁵³ Since the biblical pattern of *Kyrie eleison* originates in conditions of earnest need and suffering, I regard the considerable confusion between *Confiteor* (I confess) and *Kyrie* in contemporary liturgies to be problematic, primarily for theological reasons, but also in regard to pastoral care. Now and then the confession of sins in Christian worship is immediately followed by the liturgical song of *Kyrie eleison*. Not until after this prayer for the Lord's mercy is the absolution of sins pronounced by the presiding minister. A connection between the theological themes of human sin and its consequences in the life of the individual as well as in the life of the world is easily detected. However, I would argue that it is not a primary inheritance or purpose of Christian liturgy to link the confession of sin with the *Kyrie*. In Luther's two main outlines of Sunday worship, *An Order of Mass*⁵⁴ and *The German Mass*, he leaves out the *Confiteor* and includes the Introit.⁵⁵ Various outlines emerge later in different areas and countries of the

⁵¹ "The liturgical cosmology" is of great interest. However, it is not the intention in my study. Though, by mentioning the issue I want highlight the importance of it.

⁵² Dwight W. Vogel, "Liturgical Theology: A Conceptual Geography," in Dwight W. Vogel, ed. *Primary Sources of Liturgical Theology: A Reader* Collegeville (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 13.

⁵³ Luther pays significant attention to the early fathers and mothers of the church in his reflection on liturgy. It follows that Luther points out "that under Basil the Great, the *Kyrie eleison* was in common use by all the people." (That is, sung by both clergy and people). See LW 21; WA 12, 207, 1–2.

⁵⁴ Martin Luther, *An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg*, 1523 (hereafter cited as *An Order of Mass*), in *Luther's Works*, vol. 53, eds., Jaroslav Pelikan & Helmut Lehmann (Philadelphia and St. Louis: Fortress and Concordia, 1955–1986), 55 volumes (hereafter cited as LW and the volume in question), 22–23. See also Martin Luther, *Formula Missae et Communionis pro Ecclesia Vuittembergensi*, 1523, in *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (hereafter cited as WA and the work in question), Schriften, 12. Band (Weimar: Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1891), 208, 14–209, 13.

⁵⁵ Martin Luther, *The German Mass and Order of Service*, 1526, LW 53, 69–72. See also *Deutsche Messe und Ordnung Gottesdiensts*, 1526, WA 19, 80, 31–86, 12.

Reformation. For instance, in the Danish service books of the sixteenth century we observe that the so-called Malmoe Mass has retained the *Confiteor*.⁵⁶

The *Introitus* (entrance) of the medieval Mass indicates the beginning of worship and appears in many contemporary liturgies. Certainly, the Introit has marked the Sundays of the liturgical year in many churches. Every Sunday, parts of a Psalm, or an entire Psalm, were sung as the entrance, *Introitus*, of the Mass. The first Latin word (or words) of the Psalm (or one of its verses), served to designate the theme of a particular Sunday, and is still used in numerous Christian contexts.⁵⁷ For example, the first word of the Medieval Introit for the third Sunday in Lent, *Oculi* (my eyes),⁵⁸ from Psalm 25, remains in use in diverse churches today.⁵⁹ Another example is *Cantate* (sing!) from Psalm 98, which belongs to one of the Easter Sundays indifferent churches.⁶⁰ In this way, the Book of Psalms has had, and evidently still has, a great impact on the delineation of the liturgical year.

Drawing on Luther's concept of the opening turn in the Sunday service, we find *Introitus* followed by *Kyrie* and *Gloria*, in addition to the succeeding liturgical songs of the Mass, *Credo*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*.⁶¹

The pattern of these liturgical chants is undoubtedly drawn from the biblical context. Indeed, there is a cry for mercy in the *Kyrie* that is similar to the beggar at the roadside, and the praise to God in the *Gloria* is like the angelic hymn in the night of God's incarnation. The "broken

⁵⁶ S. H. Poulsen, "Reformationstidens danske Liturgi," in *Danske Messebøger fra Reformationstiden*, Udgivet i facsimile af Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund med en liturghistorisk redegørelse af S. H. Poulsen (København: J. H. Schultz Forlag, 1959), 24.

⁵⁷ *Confiteor* originates from the prayer of the priest in the sacristy before the beginning of worship (around the seventh century). In time, the *Confiteor* became the assembly's confession of sin (around the eleventh century). Since medieval times, questions have been raised regarding at which point the Mass begins, for example, with the *Confiteor* or *Introitus*? The old *Confiteor* was put in question in the Danish service in 1555. Even though the *Confiteor* was left out of the Danish service book (*Alterbogen*) of 1556, the Hymnbook (*Tausens Psalmebog*) maintained the *Confiteor* until 1569. Another complication in Denmark was the fact that the *Introitus* was called *Officium*. In other words, it is a rather muddled situation, or points to the process concerning liturgical renewal. See Poulsen, 1529, 46–48.

⁵⁸ Ps. 25:14: "My eyes are ever looking to the Lord, who shall pluck my feet out of the net." See *Psalter for the Christian People: An Inclusive-Language Revision of the Psalter of The Book of Common Prayer 1979*, eds., Gordon Lathrop & Gail Ramshaw (Collegeville, Minnesota: A Pueblo Book, Liturgical Press, 1993) (hereafter cited as *Psalter ILR*).

⁵⁹ For example, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, the Church of Sweden and the Roman Catholic Church, though with different stanzas.

⁶⁰ *Psalter ILR*, Ps. 98:1: "Sing to the Lord a new song, for the Lord has done marvelous things." In the Evangelical Lutheran Churches of Germany, Finland and Sweden, on the fifth Sunday of Easter season; the Sunday following, in the Roman Catholic Church and Church of England.

⁶¹ Though Luther also offers the alternative of excluding *Gloria*, but not the *Kyrie*. Almost every element of the Mass was sung, including biblical texts and prayers.

Hallelujah” requires a liturgical *Simul*, meaning a locus for both pleading to God and praising God, without mixing up the confession of sins (*Confiteor*) in it. I believe the problem emerges when *Kyrie* does not represent an open request to God like the cry on the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?"⁶²

Gordon W. Lathrop's Liturgical Concept

Lathrop's exposition of liturgical theology is three-dimensional, comprising: *the biblical pattern* of liturgy, the *Ordo* (secondary liturgical theology), the prevalent *experience of holy things* (primary liturgical theology), and *criticism of the local liturgy* (pastoral liturgical theology).

Secondary Liturgical Theology: The Ordo

Lathrop argues that the ecumenical *Ordo* of Christian worship is the pattern of liturgical juxtapositions found in the Bible. Secondary liturgical theology is reflection on the structure of *Ordo*, one thing set to the other in a mutual pattern of reinterpretation. Every event in worship needs to be 'broken' to another, that is, juxtaposed, in order to let God's grace speak anew. Whatever is said of God in liturgy is juxtaposed to everyday life, in society, in the world, and on planet Earth. Polarity is the fundamental principle of liturgy, drawn from the Bible's narrative of the Christ-event: cross and resurrection. Lathrop expresses this polarity in various terms, including juxtapositions of the *Ordo*, liturgical dualism, paradoxes of theological statements, broken symbols, ambiguity and dialectic events. In my analysis of Luther's liturgical theology, I will mainly make use of Lathrop's term "juxtaposition" as a tool for the reinterpretation of God's renewal of grace anew, but also the terms of liturgical components' brokenness, dialectics, polarity and ambiguity. Most importantly, the recognition of this *tension* in liturgy (whatever we call it) provides new openings for the discovery of God's grace and spaces of hope. As Lathrop

⁶² Ps. 22:1.

puts it: "For the liturgy, the tensions of the *ordo* are the bow or the lyre, God and humanity spoken together."⁶³

Lathrop adds one caveat, however: God is not "[a]n eternal yin and yang." The juxtapositions of the liturgy are indicators that God's judgment and grace keep the ambiguity together for the benefit of humanity and all of creation. This ambiguity also serves humanity, in the sense that it provides possibilities for identifying the truth of God, communicated in experiences of everyday life.⁶⁴

The root elements of the *Ordo* are bath, word and table, "[t]he classical juxtapositions of the *ordo*."⁶⁵ One of these root elements is always juxtaposed, set next to the other; for example, bath next to word, in order to say something new about the baptismal journey from death to life. The patterns of worship, from the earliest Christian communities to contemporary congregations, are perpetually "organized" anew around these root elements, in different juxtapositions. Sunday is set opposite to the weekdays, teaching next to baptism, word beside table, thanksgiving faces lament, praise opposite to beseeching, the Jewish Pasha next to the Christian Easter, table next to the poor. Christians gathering on the first day, as well as Sunday itself, is set next to the day beyond days, the last day, and so on. "But in any of these situations the new word may be spoken."⁶⁶ For instance, Lathrop emphasizes the connection with the Jewish inheritance, as well as with the universal act of hospitality, the welcoming of outsiders, by calling the Eucharist "table" or "meal."⁶⁷ Juxtaposition refers to the possibility of receiving the new grace of God: "The scheduling of the *ordo*, the setting of one liturgical thing next to another in the shape of the liturgy, evokes and replicates the deep structure of biblical language, the use of the old to say the new by means of juxtaposition."⁶⁸ Juxtaposition yields a third element, an opening up to something fresh and new. To speak truthfully of God, the *Ordo* always requires "two words" to create a third thing, namely, God's grace spoken anew. Through the dialectic of the *Ordo* the Christian assembly⁶⁹ is formed and becomes the *communion*. These two-fold actions are

⁶³ Lathrop (1998), 82.

⁶⁴ Lathrop (1998), 126.

⁶⁵ Lathrop (1998), 127. Lathrop names baptism "bath" and eucharist "table." "Word" indicates the proclamation of the Gospel in various forms. Lanthrop's pervading liturgical theology is the idea of the close relationship between Sunday service and everyday life.

⁶⁶ Lathrop (1998), 41.

⁶⁷ Lathrop (1998), 24–27.

⁶⁸ Lathrop (1998), 33.

⁶⁹ Lathrop uses the word "assembly" in correspondence with the Greek word συναγωγή.

fundamentally rooted in the Christ-event. An honest language for speaking of God and to God can only emerge when the dialectic of *Ordo* is centred on Jesus Christ, dead and risen.⁷⁰ The “two words” embody a brokenness of liturgy, which permanently embraces contrasts, in order to let the old speak the new.⁷¹ If the juxtapositions are bound together, the deepest meaning of worship is lost. Lathrop points, for example, to what happens when the Christian assembly exclusively turns into a thanksgiving and a praising community. In this case, the experiences of vulnerability and suffering are pushed out of sight, and the social-critical dimension is gone.⁷²

Primary Liturgical Theology: Holy Things

The primary liturgical theology, that is, the liturgy itself, deals with *things*. Lathrop asserts that the word “thing” does not exist in terms of “objective” independence, but rather that “[i]t indicates a matter of concern, a state of affairs, an event, an act.”⁷³ The significant juxtaposition implies that things are in fundamentally relationally constituted. Things are not mere static objects, but objects in relationship. In order to speak genuinely of God, people gather around certain central things, that is, the things necessary for the *Ordo*. In this sense, people and objects are all “things” because, in their juxtapositions, new ways of speaking truly of God will appear, ways which entail significance for all things. Lathrop declares people to be the primary “things.” The assembly, the gathering of people, characterizes Christian worship. Of all things, nothing is more essential for liturgy than the assembly of believers.⁷⁴ All the same, the assembly is not an assembly for its own sake. Regarding the New Testament’s narratives of Christians gathering, Lathrop claims that no constitution of the church nor service book was presented. In effect, the assembly communicates Jesus Christ, “[s]een and known amid *ordinary things* - water for washing, words for telling important stories and for prayer, a shared meal. It gives us an assembly centered round these things.”⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Lathrop (1998), 212–213.

⁷¹ Lathrop (1998), 24.

⁷² Lathrop (1998), 164.

⁷³ Lathrop (1998), 90. Here Lathrop also refers to old language mirrored in the parliaments of Iceland and Norway called 'Things', that is, "[a]n assembly for action."

⁷⁴ Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 21–23.

⁷⁵ Lathrop (1999), 110 (italics added).

Ordinary things, water, word, and bread and wine, when set next to each other in various juxtapositions, speak truly of God and the world. In thanksgiving *and* sharing the bread, for example, the assembly receives God's grace anew. But the bread also points outward to people who lack food. Essential from the perspective of people gathered at the table, is the acknowledgment of the "things" as "holy things." Lathrop also calls them "sacred things," that is, all things in service of God are transcendent beyond human boundaries and reveal the potential in the "thing." Bread can be death or hope. An unwillingness to share the bread with the poor yields destruction and death, but bread distributed to the needy evokes hope and awareness of the entire creation and cosmos of God.⁷⁶

Christian worship's aim is to speak truthfully about God, and to God, in these juxtapositions. Accordingly, at the least, *two words* are required in order to communicate something about God. Likewise, Lathrop calls the interactions of the assembly "two-ness."⁷⁷

Pastoral Liturgical Theology: Solidarity Requires Laments

Lathrop's basic thesis is that "Christianity came into existence at table." By this he means Christianity is encountering a meal, a communion. Participating in the sharing of bread and wine is an invitation to the assembly to understand both God and the world *anew*, "from the perspective of that table." Just like the four Gospel narratives of people troubled by Jesus' openness and welcoming attitude to sharing the meal, assemblies of today are challenged in their solidarity. The place of eating and drinking in the Eucharist is continually juxtaposed to the places everywhere in society and the world where people have no food. The third thing yielded by the dialectic of thanksgiving, when it is linked to the poor, is the action of solidarity.

Eucharist, from the Greek *eucharistein*, "to give thanks," is a meeting of both praise and lament.⁷⁸ Each and every juxtaposition in *Ordo* paves the way for a reimagination and a reinterpretation of the Gospel. Thanksgiving, and the sharing of bread and wine, opens the imagination to environmental matters, including people without anything to eat and drink. Imagination creates places of hope, but *Ordo* is evident only "[w]hen thanksgiving is paired with lament, when words about God are paired with the shared signs, when the double actions of

⁷⁶ Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 51–67.

⁷⁷ Lathrop (1998), 121.

⁷⁸ Gordon W. Lathrop, *The Pastor: A Spirituality* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 59.

word and table and bath yield the third thing.” Thus, lamentation is an act of thanksgiving, expressing solidarity and awareness of suffering, individual and structural, in the assembly and in the world. *Verbalising* lament deepens compassion and focus on factual needs and deficiencies. From the perspective of the table, the dialectic of thanksgiving and lament returns to the assembly as an expanded consciousness that targets places of hope. This means that we can say that *solidarity requires lamentation*. According to Lathrop, the assembly speaks truthfully of God and the world when praise and lament are mutually juxtaposed. The truth of Jesus Christ, dead and risen, elaborated in the liturgy, always needs “two words” to speak God's grace anew, broken for a new purpose.

In conclusion, *Ordo* describes the pattern of Christian liturgy organized around bath, word and table in a series of juxtapositions. The juxtaposition of these root elements, for example bath and teaching (word), yields a third thing that renders meaning to the experiences of those participating. Worship *order* is not necessarily the same as *ordo*. The order usually consists of “building stones” within prevailing tradition. But if the juxtaposition of root elements is deficient, *Ordo* is not present, and worship tends to become a ceremonial performance instead of a sharing and participating. In large measure, this was Luther’s captious objection to the medieval Mass. The significance of *Ordo* connotes not only the patterns of worship, but also the patterns of the entirety of life. Defining “liturgy” is a matter of concern both for the Sunday service as well as for everyday life.

Dirk G. Lange’s Concept of Liturgy

Other liturgical theologians also understand the principle of polarity to be fundamental in Christian liturgy. Reference can be made to, for example, Lathrop as well as Dirk G. Lange. Lange departs, as does Lathrop, from a dynamic of the juxtapositions of liturgical theology based on the polarity of absence and presence and of dying and rising. The encounter with the “absent thing” emerges from a need, from an awakening of a loss. This entry point, *res absens* (sic), leads to a disruption of both context and subject.⁷⁹ This was the situation for Luther, who “turns to the liturgy to disrupt the theology of his day.”⁸⁰ Luther began the Reformation by liberating

⁷⁹ Lange (2010), 162–167.

⁸⁰ Lange (2010), “Preface,” x–xi.

the liturgy from “the baggage of metaphors that have bound it down. A theological disruption begins *in and through* the liturgy.”⁸¹ For Lange, a clear conception and understanding of Luther’s liturgical thinking is equal to a study of his theology in its entirety. As the model for his analysis of Luther’s journey, Lange uses trauma theory.⁸² Insight into loss led Luther to a disruption, and to a confrontation with the biblical texts. He struggled to find a new grammar of the Gospel. His liturgical language is continually a language of confrontation with the “absent thing.” The trauma of a loss entails dissemination and struggle, so that a new place of grace, a new beginning, can be found. Lange also points to Luther’s praying and his reinterpretations of the biblical Psalms as events of continual confrontation in searching for a new grammar of God’s presence. The juxtaposition of absence and presence is an ongoing iteration of the question *Cur Deus Homo*: why did God become human? It is not possible, though, to grasp the ongoing iteration of dissemination that emerges in confrontation with this question. The liturgy is not a place for remembering an event, or trying to repeat this event, but “[a] surrendering, a submission, through an iterable structure” which could lead to “[t]he continual return of the resurrection,” a new grammar of God’s grace anew.⁸³ Luther urges a new language that is adequate to the Christ-event. Lange argues that Luther finds this new language in and through the liturgy.⁸⁴

Liturgy as the Place of Return

Lange stakes his liturgical ground position on the claim that the Christ-event is trauma. The trauma of the Christ-event, enacted anew in the Sunday service and in everyday life, entails new beginnings. Liturgy, that is, life before God, the neighbor and the world, is not furnished by a memory or imitation of an event 2,000 years ago. Rather, the Christ-event is a *continual disruption of context and subject*. It is not, therefore, a matter of deconstruction, but the constant disruption of context and subject, that is, a thorough disorientation. Instead of trying to control and master the event, the position of surrender provides a new place, and a new beginning.

⁸¹ Lange (2010), 4 (italics added).

⁸² Lange (2010), 6–8. Lange especially refers to Cathy Caruth, a scholar in the field of post-traumatic stress disorder.

⁸³ Lange (2010), 168. Concerning the question *Cur Deus Homo*, Lange says: “It is the iteration of a question that has haunted Christian theology throughout two millennia.”

⁸⁴ Lange (2010), 94.

Liturgy is a place of return: "The Christ event returns as a force that confronts every subject in every context through a disruption of subject and context."⁸⁵

Luther searches for a language for this ongoing return, the God-event. According to Lange, it is in the place of the most austere struggle that Luther finds the language of the Christ-event: in the liturgy, and above all in the singing of the liturgy. For Luther, then, liturgical language turns into a language of confrontation, especially in reference to the Psalms. Re-reading and re-writing are acts of confrontation, that is, an act of a baptismal pattern in dying and rising anew. The subject and context are disrupted, "dying," and the struggling subject gets onto the cross, the focal point of the trauma. This is the moment of surrender, and dissemination of meaning. The subject is experiencing a loss, an absence of context.

This condition of being out of control, however, yields a new position, a new meaning. The liturgy turns into a place of return, a rising from the traumatising experience. The subject survives death and encompasses a new approach. Michel de Certeau has described an event as something about whose happening nothing is seen or known; it is "what it becomes." Lange shares de Certeau's view and disapproves of the traditional concept of "anamnesis" in liturgical theology. The Christ-event is not an actualisation of a memory, nor the repetition of a past event. The effort to organize high-flown liturgies in "perfect" performances of well-defined sacraments or commemoration, even if ecumenically framed, "[m]erely attempts to capture the Christ event through 'remembering' rather than submissions to the addition, to the return, of that event."⁸⁶ Accordingly, with reference to de Certeau, Lange claims that the event is not an actualisation or a memorial act, but a "*coming to be*." There is no predetermined discourse; the event constantly breaks into a new place, a new "grammar." Thus, the traumatising circumstance of surviving "death" conveys something new, an addition to life before the event, the *accessio*. Lange illustrates the addition of the Christ-event through Luther's advocacy of a new ministry, the ministry of the Word. As Luther struggles with his identity as an Augustinian friar, he surrenders and loses an authority. In the loss, however, in the disruption of the context, he gains a new authority, an *accessio*, a gift. He is "coming to be" in the new relation, "the ministry of the Word."⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Lange (2010), 117.

⁸⁶ Lange (2010), 139–142. Here Lange refers to Michel de Certeau, *The Capture of Speech and Other Political Writings* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 20.

⁸⁷ Lange (2010), 89–91.

The corollary is then that liturgy is not a simple remembering or repetition. It is the continual return of the haunting event which represents Christian faith, the constant fracture of the Christ-event. In other words, the *accessio* continuously leads to a new orientation.

The Trauma of God's Absence

“A Liturgical Cry” is Lange’s notion of the experience of *absence* and loss of meaning. The traumatising event turns into the abyss, into something incomprehensible and beyond access. Lange refers to one of Luther’s Table Talks, to exemplify the sequence of events in the traumatic journey. Lange designates this experience as the journey from *res absens* to *res libertas*: a journey from the absent thing to the liberated thing.⁸⁸ The question, however, is whether this journey is characterized by law-like regularity leading toward discovery of the hidden meaning, the substance of words (comprehended as the word of God), or toward disruption, the salvation; history as unforeseeable events. Lange calls this law-like regularity *lex*, that is, *res* as substance. Unpredictable events he designates *libertas*, that is, *res* as event. Heiko A. Oberman’s reading of Luther is what gives Lange the impetus to study the *res* as *lex* or *libertas*.⁸⁹ Lange’s most profound critique of Oberman centres on the idea of a definite breakthrough by Luther. Oberman finds this breakthrough, according to Lange, when Luther achieves a connecting of his *assensus*, “assent,” to the *grammatica*, the “grammar.” The *assensus*, in other words, is the “assent” to God's Word, and the *grammatica* is the “grammar” of God's revelation, of God's Word.

In his analysis of Oberman’s interpretation of a *Table Talk* from 1540, Lange questions Oberman’s understanding of Luther’s approach to Psalm 32, the second of the *Seven Penitential Psalms*. According to Lange, Oberman claims that Luther moves from assent to verification in the Psalm text, that Luther experiences a progression in his perceptive of the Psalm. By contrast, Lange asserts that it is not a matter of progression but of disruption, of an absence of meaning. Luther says: “I shrank back and was an enemy to the words.”⁹⁰ In his effort to interpret the words, Luther *reads and sings* the Psalm. Lange observes the exclamation mark made by Oberman in the German Luther text: “Da ich erstlich im psalmen lass und sang [!]” [Since I first

⁸⁸ Lange (2010), 34.

⁸⁹ Heiko A. Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Later Medieval and Early Reformation Thought* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986).

⁹⁰ Lange (2010), 33. (Lange refers to Oberman’s translation of WA TR 5, 5247:26, 18–26).

read and sang[!] in the Psalm]. In Lange's view this implies a surprise to Oberman, whereas to Lange it signifies the way Luther usually worked with biblical texts.⁹¹

Luther's struggling with the text, reading and singing, is similar to the liturgical act, the act of confrontation. In this liturgical act of experiencing the abyss, the *absence* of meaning, Luther at the same time counts on the *presence*, the proximity of God. It is an act of the "death" of absence, but implies "life," the presence of God. Beginnings reside in death, and Luther continually returns to re-readings and new interpretations of the Psalms. Oberman's translation of Luther's words "[d]a ich die *res* verstunde" into "I understood the *substance*" (italics added) is not accurate, according to Lange, for whom *res* here is event. Luther's reading and singing of the words corresponds to the baptismal pattern, from death to life anew. It is not a matter of trying to catch "the substance," a kind of not-yet-revealed meaning. Conceptualising Luther's *res* as *event* (not "substance"), Lange underscores the journey from an absence to a presence of meaning. A discovery of a new grammar, *grammatica*, is an experience of trauma. The breakthrough is not once and for all time, but a constant struggle with God's Word. Luther describes the struggle with enmity as follows: "Then did I understand the grammar [*grammatica*], and only then was the psalter sweet to me."⁹²

Through the example of the Table Talk mentioned above, Lange highlights Luther's work as simultaneously written and oral. *Res* and *grammatica* are intertwined, and there are no "hidden" meanings, but an event of baptismal pattern. The sequence of events begins with *a liturgical cry*, a cry of absence in the presence, that is, before God, *coram Deo*.⁹³

Catherine Pickstock's Concept of Liturgy

Luther is not a topic for Catherine Pickstock, the third key source of liturgical theology in this study, as he is for Lathrop and Lange. Lange, in fact, takes a critical view of Pickstock. Nevertheless, like Lathrop and Lange, Pickstock clings to the dialectic of liturgy. Along the same lines as Lange, Pickstock begins with the juxtaposition of absence and presence within the

⁹¹ Lange (2010), 32–33.

⁹² Oberman's translation. Lange also mentions the German text: "[D]a verstunde ich die *grammatica*, und *schmeckt* mir erst der Psalter" (italics added). See Lange (2010), 33. We recognise once again "the realm of incorporeity" in the English translation which Lange pays attention to. See Lange (2010), 31. In effect, Lange argues that this is one reason why the liturgical act in Luther's writings is hard to observe.

⁹³ Lange (2010), 32–41.

liturgy as a place of redemptive return. To Pickstock, the liturgy accommodates “oxymoronic combinations” of liturgical space, all of them in service of the resurrection as a perpetual process, “a process at work.”⁹⁴ Like Lathrop and Lange, she emphasizes the reciprocal character of the course of events of liturgy. The reciprocal character sheds light on the significant ambiguity of worship life.

As an example of this ambiguity, Pickstock chooses the juxtaposition of identity and journey. Pickstock claims that the subject is constituted through the liturgy: “[w]ithout the liturgy, there is no subject.”⁹⁵ The liturgy is an on-going restoration of the subject, related to the experience of both absence and presence. The subject continually experiences the “I” as a journey towards the divine presence of the “Thou.” At the same time, the absence of the “Thou” is at hand. In a way, the subject arrives before it can travel; the identity of the liturgical subject is perpetually restored, in a reciprocal process of identity and journey, of arrival and travel.⁹⁶ Pickstock asserts the impossibility of liturgy, in the sense that the liturgical journey of restoring the identity cannot be comprehended. Both Lange and Pickstock declare the dialectic process of liturgy to be out of the liturgical subject’s control. Where Lange and Pickstock differ is in their views of whether this process entails both written and oral elements. To Pickstock, the liturgical journey is solely an oral process. To speak truthfully about God is, however, in one way or another, for Lathrop, Lange and Pickstock, a two-fold action grounded in the Christ-event of dying and rising.

Theology of Radical Orthodoxy

Pickstock represents the theology of radical orthodoxy. In its critique of secular modernity, and especially the philosophy of Kant, this movement wants to reclaim the “authentic” Christian doctrine. The source material is primarily the patristic and matristic corpus of the early church, and especially the Augustinian idea of all knowledge as God-given. The break between ontology and theology creates a nihilistic conceptualisation of society and ends up in an immanent city

⁹⁴ Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1998), 230, 265.

⁹⁵ Pickstock (1998), 196.

⁹⁶ The notion of “the liturgical subject” is not clear-cut. In correspondence with Pickstock I define the liturgical subject as the “I” in relation to the divine “Thou,” that is, the worshiper. See Pickstock, 169–177. To be a liturgical subject is to worship and live in connectedness with others. In this sense the liturgical subject is at the same time the assembly as a whole. I consider Pickstock's exposition of the medieval Latin Mass, in analyzing “the arrival-travel concept,” to be the safeguard against the objectification of the liturgical subject.

lacking its “roots” in the divine, in transcendence. By turning to the “tradition” of the early Middle Ages, the dualism of faith versus reason will be extinguished. Instead of the immanent city, “the sacred polis” will come forth. Liturgy is the fullest form of language; it verbalizes and performs at the same time. The outermost quality of this language is its doxological character, meaning its recognition of transcendence.⁹⁷ “The sacred polis” is a “[f]ully Christianized ontology and practical philosophy consonant with authentic Christian doctrine.”⁹⁸

By recovering the “tradition” of the early church, the movement of radical orthodoxy arrogates an ecumenical approach, and goes beyond confessional bounds. Hence, this movement criticizes the Reformation as well as Vatican II. Even though there is a distance, in time and theology, between Luther and radical orthodoxy, there is also some affinity. In many of his works, and particularly in his various expositions of the Psalms, Luther displays great interest in the Fathers and Mothers of the early church. Not least, it is his occupations with the legacy of Augustinian thinking. Moreover, regarding liturgy, Luther is concerned that the performance of worship be as close as possible to the first Christian assemblies.⁹⁹ Pickstock and Luther have a similar point of departure, the medieval Latin Mass, however they reach quite divergent conclusions.

A Passionate Cry

One of Pickstock’s main concerns is to display what happens when liturgical language is instrumentalized. In her critical review, Pickstock considers Jacques Derrida’s view of writing as thoroughly neutral and without point of reference to either place or time to be equal to “death.” Pickstock observes just objects, and no subjects, in Derrida’s interpretation of the writing act. This position leads to “death,” that is, a condition of nihilism entailing loss of the doxological language and of transcendence. Pickstock also singles out Duns Scotus’ thinking as fatal to “the sacred polis.” By differentiating essence from existence, as Duns Scotus does, society develops into an immanent city maintaining a non-doxological distance between subject and object.

⁹⁷ Pickstock (1998), 40–48.

⁹⁸ “Introduction” in John Millbank, Catherine Pickstock, Graham Ward (editors) *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology* (Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge, 1999), 2.

⁹⁹ For instance, Luther proposes: “In the true mass, however, of real Christians, the altar should not remain where it is, and the priest should always face the people as Christ doubtlessly did in the Last Supper.” See LW 53, 69; WA 19, 80, 28–30. However, Luther does not want any compulsion in introducing a new worship order – it must wait for its own time.

Space, as well as time, becomes controlled and governed, and the divine gifts are not acknowledged.

In contrast to Derrida's deconstruction of Plato's *Phaedrus*, Pickstock asserts that the “[m]ost pertinent Platonic distinction is that of non-doxology and doxology.”¹⁰⁰ In her reading of *Phaedrus*, Pickstock detects subjectivity expressed as primarily oral, and liturgical language as coterminous with erotic language. Liturgical language is characterized by the dialectic of contingency and openness, like the language between the lover and the beloved in *Phaedrus*. Central to Pickstock is her emphasis on Plato's “[r]estoration of language as a medium of doxology.”¹⁰¹ Pickstock disagrees, nonetheless, with two aspects of Plato's philosophy: that the body is left behind and that the relationship between the lover and the beloved depicted in *Phaedrus* is out of contact with the community around them. Pickstock regards these aspects of both *physical* and *relational* matters as constitutional of the liturgical journey. The liturgical subject is first of all “not so much a journey toward God, as a journey of God's entry into our body- both physical and relational - which *really happens*.”¹⁰² The place where God's entry into the liturgical subject is fulfilled is at the altar, that is, in the Eucharist.

¹⁰⁰ Pickstock (1998), 37. Pickstock refers to Derrida's distinction “[b]etween the absolute rule of language on one hand, and a supra-linguistic philosophical logos on the other.”

¹⁰¹ Pickstock (1998), 49.

¹⁰² Pickstock (1998), 273.

Chapter Two

THE PSALMS: A FUNDAMENT IN LUTHER'S LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

The Psalter plays a significant role in Luther's spirituality and liturgical theology. In the following, some aspects concerning Luther's views of the Psalms will be featured, which are of interest for this study, not at least regarding his understanding of the liturgical Hallelujah. Given that Luther calls the Psalter a "mentor," that is, a guide into an earnest communication, I will add some thoughts about Luther's understanding of language. Further, since the Psalter connects us to other religions, cultures and contexts, I will also offer some remarks in this regard.

A Repressed Lament

Can there be any reason to disconnect suffering, lamentation and the memory of the cross from the singing of the Hallelujah? Martin Luther represents a strong contrast to the one-sided tradition of contemporary liturgy, that is, the exclusive emphasis on victory and joy in the Gospel acclamation. In his criticism of the well-known Hallelujah of the Mass, Luther presents the central tenet of his liturgical theology: the Hallelujah is a "broken Hallelujah," broken between passion and victory.

Lament that awakens hope, and lamentation that strengthens compassion and solidarity, is also the shape of the Psalter. What happens, though, if lament is repressed, for the sake of praise and joy? What becomes of empathy when any outburst of suffering is removed from liturgy? What does it mean to the congregation, theologically, when lament is mixed up with confession of sins, or altered into "advocating" the experience of divine absence, instead of questioning "My God, why?"

The question of theodicy does not play a key role in Luther's theology, though it is certainly of vital importance today.¹⁰³ Throughout my many years of experience as a priest in the Church of

¹⁰³ Hans-Martin Barth, *Die Theologie Martin Luthers: Eine kritische Würdigung* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2009), 198.

Sweden, I would say that one of the most common questions put to Christianity by people in our time is that of theodicy. How can there be a loving God and still so much suffering in the world and in the life of the individual? If we take this question seriously, it becomes necessary to acknowledge the “repressed lament” in contemporary Christian liturgy.

As mentioned previously, my analysis does not focus explicitly on the notion of theodicy. Rather, my concern is: *How are we to live with the question* of incomprehensible suffering and desperation? What are we to do with the experience of God’s absence? I would argue that Luther’s interpretations of *The Seven Penitential Psalms* are of crucial significance in learning how to deal with the issue of theodicy.

The Shape of the Psalter

The juxtaposition of lament and joy is the outstanding shape of the Psalter. The words are broken, that is, they are continually in a basic dialectic of lament and joy. This primary juxtaposition incorporates various expressions, predominantly death and life, far and near, absence and presence. This basic dialectic is a weak point in contemporary liturgies where psalmic words of joy frequently overturn psalmic words of lament. In view of this fact, we may ask: What are the consequences for worship life when lament is undercut? How do we speak honestly about God in a world of frequent catastrophes? What becomes of the language of solidarity with suffering people when the liturgy underrates lament? Lamentation is not a matter explicit to the supplicant. After all, lament is also the assembly's need to verbalize its concern for, and solidarity with, suffering people near and far.

Luther dealt with the Psalter during his entire life, struggling, in effect, with the words of the Psalms. In Luther’s study of the Psalter, we discover his liturgical theology as well as his spirituality. According to Luther, the Psalter is a mentor, an aid to expressing all kinds of situations, bitter and sweet. Moreover, taking part in the assembly's worship and life means taking part in the *Communio sanctorum*. Sharing the broken language of lament and joy in the Psalter is similar to sharing words and prayers with saints of all times. Therefore, verbalising and praying with psalmic words is the same as taking part in a *non-solitary assembly*, that is, the

communion of the saints. This communion provides the broken language of lament and joy, in order to experience and exercise self-knowledge and solidarity.¹⁰⁴

Theological Significance of the Hallelujah

Luther's liturgical theology prevents one from taking over the traditional understanding of the *Hallelujah*. This stance is of extreme importance in trying to understand Luther's liturgical theology. It constitutes a deep source for an analysis of the connection between dogma and liturgy in Luther's work, as we will see further on.

In the liturgy of the early church, the *Hallelujah* was an outstanding moment of praise and joy. Particularly during the season of Easter, the assembly rose in extolling hymns with repetitions of the liturgical responsory; the word "Hallelujah" recurred in vast number. In fact, the *Hallelujah* was "the Easter song par excellence," and the early church teachers regarded it as a subject itself, embedded with mystic meaning. In the same way, the medieval church considered the *Hallelujah* to be nearly a person. During the season of Lent, the *Hallelujah* was "buried" and not practiced in the liturgy. Come the season of Easter, the *Hallelujah* was "resurrected" with tremendous exulting, occurring in both hymns and readings. *Hallelujah* is the heavenly song of joy expressing the response to the doctrinal statement: "Christ is risen!" The Hallelujah, therefore, originated in an early form of the liturgy.¹⁰⁵ At the outset of the Reformation, the Gradual, with the accompanying *Hallelujah*, the Gospel acclamation, was, in terms of musical magnificence, the most superior part of the Propers, *Proprium*.¹⁰⁶ In other words, the *Hallelujah* "welcomed" the proclamation of the Gospel reading. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) noted that the wordless, flamboyant melody was elaborated in order to emphasize the jubilation of the *Hallelujah*, called *jubilus*. By way of jubilation, the *memory of joy* in eternal life was conveyed.¹⁰⁷ This practice gave an impetus to a number of diverse jubilation according to highlights of the church year

¹⁰⁴ The "brokenness," that is to say the dialectic between "lament and joy," can also be named as "lament and praise" (most frequent in studies of the Psalter); nevertheless, I choose the former expression in accordance with Luther's "words of joy" in LW 35, 255, WA DB 10. I, 102, 8: "wort von freuden."

¹⁰⁵ Philip H. Pfatteicher, *Liturgical Spirituality* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1997), 129.

¹⁰⁶ The *proprium* are the liturgical components that change according to the church year, by contrast to the ordinary *ordinarium*, that is, the liturgical components which remain the same. The Gradual is the hymn between the readings of the Epistle and the Gospel.

¹⁰⁷ Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 218–221.

(Lent excepted), and commemoration services of various saints. By and by, especially in the ninth century, a range of manifold texts, called sequences, followed the *Hallelujah*. Some well-known theologians, including, for example, Thomas Aquinas, contributed with a *sequentia* “*Lauda Sion*.” Moreover, this part of the liturgy developed into a form of theatre in particular Easter dramas and gained great popularity among the people.¹⁰⁸ It appears from Luther’s worship outlines that he was familiar with liturgical traditions from the early church, as well as works of the church fathers and the church mothers, by way of their music and their theology.

In conclusion, the *Hallelujah* is a prominent liturgical element of the early church, and well-known throughout the Middle Ages.

At the point when Luther works out *An Order of Mass*, he distinctly identifies the significance of the traditional *Hallelujah*. For this reason, he frames up the *two facets* of welcoming the Gospel: passion *and* victory.¹⁰⁹

I would argue that this statement is a key to understanding Luther’s liturgical theology. Because of Luther’s knowledge of the early church’s liturgy, he stays close to the traditional elements in his worship outlines but invests in them a complete new theological interpretation.¹¹⁰ The “perpetual voice of the church” does not exclusively give voice to the jubilation, the *jubilus*, of the risen Christ, the memorial of Christ's victory. On the contrary, in order to plumb the mystery of the Christ-event, the perpetual tension between Christ's passion and Christ's victory should be exposed, to speak the truth about God and humanity. Luther’s commentary on the *Hallelujah* is certainly not a liturgical marginal note, but the powerful affirmation at the core of his theology. Consequently, the traditional liturgical *Hallelujah* cannot solely express triumph in accordance with the victory and be symbolically “buried” at Lent.¹¹¹ The victory jubilations are integral to the remembrance of the Passion, and to the lament on the cross: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ F. M. Allard, *Från Luther till Bach: Liturgisk-musikaliska studier från den evangeliska kyrkosångens klassiska tid* (Stockholm: Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelses bokförlag, Skriftserien Svenskt Gudstjänstliv, N:o 3, 1932), 19–21.

¹⁰⁹ LW 53, 24, *An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg*, 1523; WA 12, 210, 11–12.

¹¹⁰ At the very least it concerns Luther’s view on the eucharist, however this is not the topic of my analysis.

¹¹¹ The suppression of *Hallelujah* in the Lent season has been prominent in the Western liturgy. For example, in the beginning of the sixth century a monastic prescript commands the extended suppression of *Hallelujah* from the day after Epiphany to Easter. Medieval sources recount the “Burial of the *Hallelujah*.” See Thomas J. Talley, “The Liturgical Year,” in Robin A. Leaver & Joyce Ann Zimmerman, eds., *Liturgy and Music: Lifetime Learning* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 27.

¹¹² NRSV, Psalm 22, 1.

In conclusion, there can be no victory without the cross. That is the pattern of the lifelong baptismal journey from death to life. This is Luther's epistemological approach, and it looms large in his works of catechism, preaching, counselling, in his theology of the cross and, not least, in his liturgical theology. In every way, Luther's new interpretation of *Hallelujah* is displayed in his ecclesiology and liturgical theology as expressed in *An Order of Mass*. My analysis will focus on the latter, Luther's liturgical theology, with selected Psalms as the point of departure.

The ambiguity of the baptismal journey is conceptualized, first and foremost, as a matter of life and death, which offers several implications for liturgical theology. According to Luther, the ambiguity of the *Hallelujah* needs be brought out in every worship service, in order to speak the truth about life before God, *coram Deo*. For this reason, Luther criticizes the one-sided rendition of the well-known *Hallelujah* embedded in a range of jubilations. The Christ-event of cross and resurrection is integral to the baptismal journey, and it is the fundamental juxtaposition of the *Ordo*. Therefore, the *memoria passionis* shall not be "put to rest" at Easter time, nor shall the *memoria victoriae* be "buried" in the season of Lent. Instead, expressing passion *and* victory is "the perpetual song of the church," and belongs to everyday life before God and neighbor. In terms of liturgical theology, this fundamental juxtaposition connotes a liturgy built on polarity. Correspondingly, this polarity permeates, at large, the entire liturgy. It is expressed in various ways, for instance in the polarity between *Kyrie* and *Gloria*. Luther clearly affirmed these traditions from the Latin Mass, but gave them another framework. Just as the polarity of these liturgical elements is the shape of the Mass, the polarity of lament and joy is the shape of the Psalter.

"The Broken Hallelujah"

In conclusion, to Luther, "the broken Hallelujah" is grounded in the Christ-event, and conveyed in the perpetual liturgical *Hallelujah* song of the church.¹¹³ Nevertheless, this brokenness is not

¹¹³ The Hebrew word "Hallelujah" appears in Greek, ἀλληλουϊά (New Testament). In Luther's early worship order I recognise the Latinised word, *alleluia*. In a way, we can claim that these three various spellings of "Hallelujah" represent the development of liturgical terminology in the Western churches, that is, turning more and more into Latin language. However, the title of this study, "A Broken Hallelujah," indicates the Jewish inheritance in Christian worship, and the connectedness with the Psalter. In effect, there are quite few reminiscences of Hebrew language in the Christian liturgical terminology.

an easy and straightforward step from passion to victory, from death to life, from lament to joy. In the midst of suffering there is struggle and a search for God's presence in the abyss that is the experience of divine absence. In other words, the middle matters; that is, the traumatic position of being abandoned and forsaken is the significant "step" in the process between passion and victory, between lament and joy. We are dealing here with the disregarded Holy Saturday, the day overshadowed by Good Friday and Easter. Holy Saturday is the aftermath of the traumatic event, and still without signs of hope. The liturgical journey, such as the transformation from death to life, is a locus of tension between lament and joy, or figuratively speaking, between *Kyrie* and *Gloria*. As mentioned, a problematic position emerges when the liturgical cry for mercy, *Kyrie eleison*, is mixed up with the confession of sins, the *Confiteor*. The lamenting cry of a traumatized person, terrified and forsaken, is not necessarily related to, or alleviated by, the confession of sins, though is related to a complete disorientation.

I would argue that Luther's eagerness to translate *The Seven Penitential Psalms* into the vernacular twice, in 1517 and 1525, indicates his conviction that these Psalms offer a locus of lamentation. Correspondingly, Luther displays his strong belief in God's promise and the renewal of grace, forcefully expressed in the Psalms of the Easter season, such as Psalms 23, 111 and 118.

In short, the broken Hallelujah is an on-going iteration of the Christ-event as the fundamental trauma in the assembly as a whole as well as in the life of the individual. In this trauma there is always a touch of Holy Saturday-atmosphere that cannot be overcome by a theological triumphalism incapable of harboring the abyss.

The Pattern of *Kyrie* and *Gloria*

Tehillim, meaning praises, is the Hebrew title for the Book of Psalms.¹¹⁴ To praise God, in Hebrew *Hallelujah*, is surely associated with the Psalms, though it is a "broken Hallelujah." Praise is set next to lament, joy to sorrow, life to death, and God's presence to God's absence.¹¹⁵ Granted, "Hallelujah" and singing songs of praise do not preclude a cry for compassion. In the tradition of Christian liturgy, the song of praise, *Gloria*, is juxtaposed to the imploring song for

¹¹⁴ *Tehillim* derives from the Hebrew verb *hallel*, "to praise."

¹¹⁵ *Hallelu-jah*, Hebrew for "praise the Lord." Additionally, there are a lot of other juxtapositions in the Psalms.

mercy, *Kyrie*.¹¹⁶ Expressed in metaphorical language, we can say that there is no *Gloria* without the way passing through *Kyrie*. In fact, the oldest of the liturgical songs of the Mass is the *Kyrie*. The *Kyrie* was originally a litany characterized by diaconal concerns: it incorporated cries for the healing of the world and of oneself.¹¹⁷ In other words, the first liturgical song of the Mass expresses the assembly's compassion and worry for creation and the individual, *Kyrie eleison*. This plea for the Lord's mercy is followed by the next liturgical song, praising God's grace and expressing the hope of peace on earth, *Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax*. This so-called angelic hymn entered the liturgy via the Easter celebration.¹¹⁸ The pattern of *Kyrie* and *Gloria* (together with the other liturgical songs, *Credo*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*) is well established in the medieval Mass and was well-known to Luther. Today, the pattern of these five “building blocks” is represented in the liturgies of numerous Christian denominations around the world.¹¹⁹

I consider the tension between *Kyrie* and *Gloria* to be of utmost importance to authentic worship. In the cries of *Kyrie*, the assembly verbalizes uncertainty and hope for healing, and sometimes also calls into question whether God is present in the actual situation. Similar to the blind beggar sitting by the roadside crying “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!,” the assembly verbalizes its present needs and sufferings. Noteworthy is Jesus' question to the beggar: “What do you want me to do for you?”¹²⁰ The reader of this biblical narrative, I would say, actually understands what kind of help the blind beggar is seeking; still, Jesus wants to know *what* the problem is, according to the beggar himself. Here we find the pattern of *Kyrie eleison*, that is, begging for help. “Have mercy, on me/on us” presupposes a *vocalisation* concerning the situation.¹²¹ The pattern of *Kyrie* juxtaposed next to *Gloria* is an image of life itself, painful and joyous, like the shape of Baptism, moving from distress to new life.

In addition, in church music the juxtaposition of *Kyrie* and *Gloria* prevails, in order to communicate lament as well as thanksgiving, sorrow as well as joy. This juxtaposition not only describes the baptismal pattern from death to life, it actually proclaims the Gospel through the

¹¹⁶ The five classical liturgical songs of the Mass are: *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*. *Kyrie* is an abbreviation of *Kyrie eleison* (Lord, have mercy), and *Gloria* is an abbreviation of *Gloria in excelsis Deo* (Glory in the highest to God).

¹¹⁷ W. Jardine Grisbrooke, “Kyrie,” in *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, ed. Paul Bradshaw (Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 268.

¹¹⁸ Another name for *Gloria* is the angelic hymn, reminding the birth of Jesus, see, Luke 2:13–14.

¹¹⁹ Karl-Gunnar Ellverson, *Handbok i Liturgik* (Stockholm: Verbum Förlag, 2003), 87–93.

¹²⁰ Mark.10:46–52.

¹²¹ *Kyrie* is the vocative form of κύριος, “Lord,” and the *eleison* is the imperative form of ἐλεέω, “to have pity, mercy.”

music. As in preaching, in their music church musicians address the *kerygma* of the Christian faith to the assembly. Luther claims that God is also preaching the Gospel through music.¹²² In some contemporary discourses, the character of the liturgical *Kyrie* is called into question: Does the *Kyrie* explicitly express the cry for help in terms of lament and plight? I would argue, along the lines of Luther's worship outlines as well as traditional church music, that the tension between *Kyrie* and *Gloria* is of kerygmatic significance in mirroring the baptismal pattern of going from death to life, from experiencing plight to encountering grace anew.¹²³

To worship music belongs grief and joy, respectively lament *and* praise, the powerful and pressing *Kyrie* as well as the praising *Gloria*. Skilful compositions of the worship Propers and Ordinary express these, as do the regular songs of the assembly.¹²⁴

In Martin Luther's interpretation of *Tehillim* we find this pattern in several manners, all implicating the theological significance of Baptism: from death to new life in Christ. Luther's prefaces to the Psalter convey the conditions for praying Hallelujah, that is, in the tension between joy and sorrow, and between danger and safety. Luther describes the shape of the Psalms in general to be from "fair and happy thoughts toward God" to "pitiful words of sadness." These diverse conditions, Luther claims, are not solitary positions; "the Psalter holds you to the communion of saints."¹²⁵ Crying for mercy and praising God distinguishes the liturgical subject in the perpetual *non-solitary journey* within the *Communio sanctorum*. In addition, the non-solitary journey is also a constant traveling into solidarity and compassion. Singing and praying

¹²² Jochen Arnold, "Musik und Gottesdienst: Ein trinitätstheologisches Votum aus evangelischer Perspektive," in Hans-Peter Großhans & Malte Dominik Krüger, eds., *In der Gegenwart Gottes: Beiträge zur Theologie des Gottesdienstes* (Frankfurt am Main: Edition Chrismon, Hansisches Druck- und Verlagshaus GmbH, 2009), 259–260.

¹²³ As an example, Arnold displays two works of one prominent Luther interpreter, Johann Sebastian Bach. Firstly, by referring to BWV 12, 2, "Weinen, klagen, sorgen, zagen" ("cry, lament, grieve, hesitate"), Arnold shows how, through various musical components, Bach animates lament, the *Kyrie*. Secondly, by mentioning BWV 31, 2, "Der Himmel lacht, die Erde jubiliert" ("The heaven laughs, the earth rejoices"), Arnold shows how in this Easter cantata Bach conveys the *Gloria*, expressions of resurrection and joy through different musical items. See Arnold (2009), 258–259.

¹²⁴ Arnold (2009), 259, my translation from German: "Zur gottesdienstlichen Musik gehören Trauer und Freude beziehungsweise Klage *und* Lob, das kraftvoll pochende Kyrie ebenso wie das jubelnde Gloria. Kunstvolle Kompositionen zum Proprium und Ordinarium des Gottesdienstes bringen dies ebenso zum Ausdruck wie einfache Gemeindegesänge." (The Propers are the liturgical texts which alter according to the church year, in contrary to the fixed liturgical texts in the Ordinary, for instance the five components of the Mass: *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*).

¹²⁵ LW, 256; WA DB, 10. I, 102, 12–13, 33–34.

with words from the Psalter, this "well-trying guide," is participating in the *Communio sanctorum*. The shape of the Psalms could be conceptualized by various images, for example oscillating between landscapes of both "pleasant flowers" and "into hell itself."¹²⁶

***Tehillim*: Source for Many Cultures and Contexts**

The poetry, devotion and prayer of *Tehillim* are prominent sources for Jewish, Christian, and Muslim cultures, in such different contexts as writing, music, and art. The *Zabur* noted in the Qur'an refers to the Psalms, identified as the book of David.¹²⁷ There are also examples of intersections between Jewish, Christian and Muslim issues of the *Tehillim*. For instance, regarding the issue of "Who is entitled to inherit the land, to whom is the earth assured?" Psalm 37:29 responds, "The righteous shall inherit the land, and live in it forever," which entails a connection to the New Testament as well as to the Qur'an.¹²⁸ The Beatitudes, Matthew 5:5, bear a strong resemblance to the mentioned quotation, "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."¹²⁹ Correspondingly, the Qur'an says: "And We have already written in the book [of Psalms] after the [previous] mention that the land [of Paradise] is inherited by My righteous servants."¹³⁰

Alicia Ostriker, poet and midrashist, says that the Psalms are both glorious and terrible, both love and hate. Ostriker points to "a split-screen effect" of the Psalter, that is, its contradiction and ambiguity. Though there is a steadfast tune, end-to-end in the Psalms, what truly "does remain constant throughout is faith that God exists, whether present or absent."¹³¹ The contradictory shape and poetic language in the Psalms surpass time and space, and have inspired a number of artists, and still do. U2, the Irish rock group, is most deeply in touch with the spirituality of the

¹²⁶ LW 35, 255–256; WA DB 10. I, 102, 10–11, 14.

¹²⁷ <http://quran.com/>, see Q 4:23 (download 14.10.2014).

¹²⁸ Anton Wessels, *The Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an: Three Books, Two Cities, One Tale* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 121–128. (Foreword by Nicholas Wolterstorff). In the example mentioned above, Wessels is focusing on "three books" (the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an) though with "one tale." The narrative of Abraham indicates that all nations of the earth will be blessed; see Genesis 12:3: "And in you [Abram] all the families of the earth shall be blessed" and Q 21:71: "And We delivered him [Abraham] and Lot to the land which We had blessed for the worlds." References in Wessels (2013), 128.

¹²⁹ Another reference, see Psalm 37:11: "But the meek shall inherit the land, and delight in abundant prosperity."

¹³⁰ <http://quran.com/>, see Q 21:105 (download 14.10.2014).

¹³¹ Alicia Ostriker, "Psalm and Anti-Psalm: A Personal Interlude," in Lynn Domina, ed., *Poets on the Psalms* (San Antonio, Texas: Trinity University Press, 2008), 20, 24.

Psalms. Their performances have a liturgical connection; the lead singer Bono declares that "They're all songs of praise to God and creation – even the angry ones!"¹³² In mentioning "the angry ones," Bono expresses a profound characteristic of their music and lyrics, a lamenting of injustice, and compassion with the oppressed people of the world. Throughout numerous world tours, U2 finished their concerts with the song "40," a paraphrase of Psalm 40,¹³³ interleaved with a lamenting chorus from one of *The Seven Penitential Psalms*, Psalm 6:3: "How long (to sing this song)?"¹³⁴ Bono explains the lyrics of "40" in his introduction in *The Book of Psalms* (1999), by questioning: "How long... hunger? How long... hatred?" He claims the Psalms expressing abandonment and displacement to be his favorites, as they evoke compassion and hope. It is in despair that the psalmist brings out his or her special relationship with God. In effect, Bono compares the Psalms to blues music.¹³⁵ "How long hunger and hatred?" clearly points to the solidarity expressed in Psalm 6. I will highlight this dimension of *solidarity* in the selected Psalms in Luther's exposition.

Struggle and solidarity frequently open up the possibility for a rewriting of the Psalms in one's own words. The Nicaraguan poet and liberation theologian Ernesto Cardenal has done this, as has American and Hispanic Benedictine Sister Juanita Colón.¹³⁶ Another example of a free rewriting of the Psalms is *Book of Mercy* by Leonard Cohen, musician and poet. His Jewish tradition and personal reflections permeate "the Psalms," for example in his "Psalm 28:"

Blessed are you, who opens a gate in every moment, to enter in truth or tarry in hell. Let me be with you again, let me put this away, you who wait beside me, who have broken down your world to gather heart.¹³⁷

¹³² Steven R. Harmon, "U2: Unexpected Prophets," in *Singing Our Lives: Christian Reflection, A Series in Faith and Ethics* (Baylor University: The Center for Christian Ethics, 2006), 82. Harmon citing an interview with Bono on CNN, May 14, 2005.

¹³³ Ps. 40:1.

¹³⁴ Harmon (2006), 82.

¹³⁵ See "Introduction by Bono," in *The Book of Psalms: Authorised King James version* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Canongate, 1999).

¹³⁶ See for example "Psalm 150" in Ernesto Cardenal, *The Psalms of Struggle and Liberation* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971) and "Psalm 3" in Juanita Colón, *The Manhattan Psalter: The Lectio Divina of Sister Juanita Colón* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2002).

¹³⁷ Leonard Cohen, *Book of Mercy* (Toronto, Ontario: McClelland & Stewart Ltd, 1984), 28.

Even if Cohen does not refer to any particular Psalm, we can recognize the psalmic language as well as the personal prayer.

A prominent focal point of numerous prevalent interpretations of the Psalms is the *trauma of exile*, in terms of individual as well as communal perspectives. Jamaican musician Jimmy Cliff received worldwide attention with his song “By the rivers of Babylon,” quoting Psalm 137: “By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion.”¹³⁸ In the context of Jimmy Cliff’s version of this Psalm, the depiction of exile, extorted by the colonial era’s slavery, is associated with a return to Africa. The song achieved a symbolic status among oppressed people in Jamaica and was initially banned. Evidently, the term “Babylon” is applied to injustice and a suppressive system.¹³⁹

Stephen Breck Reid demonstrates the devastating ethnocentrism of earlier efforts to comprehend theological anthropology. Still, meeting “the self” in the Psalter exposes “a *theological* anthropology, one in which the doctrine of God is essential to the task of understanding what humanity is.”¹⁴⁰ Self-knowledge, *gnothi seauton*, is a component of decisive concern in Luther’s understanding of the Psalter.¹⁴¹

The Psalms are a "foundational mentor and guide" in liturgical language and the grammar of worship. They are prayer masters that deepen the understanding of the "DNA of Christian faith" and of worship.¹⁴² To Luther, the Psalms were indeed “prayer masters” and an all-important resource in his liturgical theology. One ambition of my analysis of Luther’s liturgical *Simul* is to offer some reflections on how the Psalms can be an inspiring mentor for current liturgical theology.

¹³⁸ Psalm 137:1.

¹³⁹ See the soundtrack of the film “The Harder They Come” (directed by Perry Henzell, Jamaica: 1972). In the song “By the Rivers of Babylon” there is also a reference to Psalm 19:14: “Let the words of our [my] mouth and the meditation of our [my] heart be acceptable in thy sight.” Originally, the song was written and recorded by Brent Dowe and Trevor McNaughton of the Jamaican group The Melodians (Trojan Records, London: 1970). See also Ostriker (2008), 28.

¹⁴⁰ Stephen Breck Reid, *Listening In: A Multicultural Reading of the Psalms* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 103–104.

¹⁴¹ LW 35, 257; WA DB 10.I, 104, 7–9.

¹⁴² John D. Witvliet, *The Biblical Psalms in Christian Worship: A Brief Introduction and Guide to Resources* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 12–13.

Tehillim or Tepillot?

As stated, the Hebrew title for the Psalter is *Tehillim* תהילים, or a “Book of Praises,” *seper tehillim* (it is noteworthy that for the feminine singular noun, “tehilla,” a masculine plural, “tehillim,” is indicated). Nevertheless, the verb *hallel*, הלל (“praise”), is frequently represented in the Psalms, and points to the Psalter as a hymnbook.¹⁴³ The name “Psalm” originates from the Greek word ψαλμός (praise-song), which relates to a stringed instrument, ψαλτήριον, the psaltery.

The Psalter is also a “Book of Prayers,” *seper tepillot*, a term found in Psalm 72, where it refers to David’s prayers.¹⁴⁴ Additionally, another five Psalms have the word *tevilla* in their header, including Psalm 102 (the fifth of *The Seven Penitential Psalms*). The Hebrew word תפלה (“tevilla,” prayer) indicates lament and request in praying. To sum up, pertaining to liturgy, *tehilla* refers to the Psalter as a hymnal, with strong emphasis on praise and thanksgiving, though *tevilla* points to the Psalter as a prayer-book, in the main containing prayers of lament and petition.¹⁴⁵ I would argue for the importance of holding together the dialectic of praise and lament. Figuratively speaking, “tevilla” and “tehilla” are the fundamental dimensions of the Psalms, just as Luther points out in his preface of the Psalter: bitter and sweet, pitiful words and words of joy.

Gender Issues in the Language of The Psalter

Alicia Ostriker indicates the dearth of contemporary women scholars conducting research on the Psalter during the last two decades. Ostriker notes the total absence of women in the Psalms. In her main critique, she sheds light on the psalmist as the interpretation of a public man more than of a general human being.¹⁴⁶ This conveys a review of the Psalter based on feminist principles, including the gender-exclusive language of male pronouns and attributes. Philosophers Jenefer Robinson and Stephanie Ross bring up the highly problematic issue of what happens when a woman must identify herself *against herself*, in order to understand specific

¹⁴³ Gillingham (1994), 209. “Psaltery” originates from the Greek verb, ψάλλω, “to pluck” (that is, with the strings).

¹⁴⁴ *Biblia Hebraica*, Psalm 72, 20: " ׀ ׀ תפילות ׀ ׀ ("the prayers of David").

¹⁴⁵ Gillingham (1994), 231–237. Likewise, Psalms 72 and 102; Gillingham also mentions Psalms 17, 86, 90 and 142 concerning “tevilla” in the headings. The entire Psalter can be analyzed from various angles, such as literary issues, however it is the liturgical theology which is the primary framework of this study.

¹⁴⁶ Ostriker (2008), 26.

contexts. Is it possible, for example, for women to find a kind of identification when the implicit presumption is a male reader?¹⁴⁷ Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza shows the connection between hierarchy and language. Schüssler Fiorenza considers the Aristotelian influence on Christian theology, from Augustine to Thomas Aquinas, to be fundamental to the patriarchal system predominant in churches and theological scholarship today. Not least, this hierarchy develops androcentric language within theology and liturgy.¹⁴⁸ Schüssler Fiorenza asserts that a shift in paradigm is required in order to provide equal conditions for men and women. Androcentric language confirms the identity of men but alienates women in relation to their own identity. “While androcentric scholarship defines woman as the 'other' of man or a male God and reduces us to 'objects' of male scholarship,” writes Schüssler Fiorenza, “feminist studies insist on the reconceptualization of our language as well as of our intellectual frameworks in such a way that woman as well as men can become the subjects of human culture and scholarly discourse.” Since language stamps human perspectives on life and identity, women have to surmount “semantic roadblocks” and “symbolic violence,” which are results of one-gendered language.¹⁴⁹

Now and then, the difference between the German text in “Weimarer Ausgabe” and the English translation in the American edition *Luther Works* is noteworthy. The “menschen” of the German text is, for instance, translated as “man” in the English version, an example pertaining to gender issues and language. Language mirrors and forms a view of the world; therefore, language issues also have an impact on theological interpretations.¹⁵⁰

Contemporary churches regularly show an awareness of gender and language in the renewal of their service books.¹⁵¹ Regarding the interaction between language and theology, I want to mention the inclusive language edition of the Psalter, *Psalter for the Christian People: An Inclusive-Language Revision of the Psalter of The Book of Common Prayer 1979 (Psalter ILR)*.

¹⁴⁷ Jenefer Robinson & Stephanie Ross, “Kvinnor, moral och fiktion,” in Ewa Jeanette Emt & Elisabeth Mansén, eds., *Feministisk filosofi* (Nora: Bokförlaget Nya Doxa, 1994), 166–168. Robinson and Ross refer to *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978) by Judith Fetterley.

¹⁴⁸ Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, “Breaking the Silence-Becoming Visible” in Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, ed., *The Power of Naming: A Concilium Reader in Feminist Liberation Theology* (New York: Maryknoll, 1996), 160–174. Schüssler Fiorenza's standpoint is the Aristotelian idea of men as rulers in society and slaves and free women as subordinated within this system. This hierarchy produces androcentric language in a number of fields.

¹⁴⁹ Schüssler Fiorenza (1996), 168–169.

¹⁵⁰ Though, the gender issue is not the aim of my study. However, I want highlight the importance in dealing with liturgy.

¹⁵¹ For example, see *Lectionary for the Christian people: Cycle A, B, C of the Roman, Episcopal Lutheran Lectionaries, Revised Standard Version texts emended*, eds., Gordon Lathrop & Gail Ramshaw (Yukon, Okla: Pueblo Co., 1986).

This version provides an introduction to the use of the Psalms and proposals for singing them in worship.¹⁵²

Multilingual Quality: Luther on Language

According to Luther, language is a divine gift, and through the Holy Spirit humans receive inspiration and adequate tools for communication. Human language is the "Mittlerin" (mediator) of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵³ Luther regards all languages to be of great value, given by God to humanity in order to learn something about ourselves and the divine presence in everyday life. Language is like a jewel box, safeguarding the precious treasure (that is, the Gospel), as the cask protects the drink, the larder preserves the food, the baskets hold the bread and fish. Without language there is no Gospel. In contexts where the development of language comes to a standstill, the Gospel will decay. Luther has great confidence in language's capacity to convey the Gospel. The connectedness between language and Gospel serves not only church and theology but also the entire society. In writing to schools, Luther emphasizes the importance of every girl and boy's right to learn the vernacular, as well as another language. The polyphony of different languages creates spiritual and intellectual wellness in a country. Knowledge of languages builds bridges and widens horizons to include foreignness and otherness. Different languages provide possibilities for discovering creation and God's presence in the world. Four languages are essential to the Gospel, namely Hebrew, Greek, Latin and the vernacular. Linguists and theologians have a responsibility to use these four basic languages in an ongoing quest to produce competent translations able to communicate with contemporary people in up-to-date languages.

It is the assembly's responsibility to elaborate languages, these gifts from God. Luther strongly criticizes Christian settings of a unilingual character that are unable to go beyond familiar language. In this case, the assembly will end up in stagnation without options or communication with the world around it. Anybody learning another language will discover something new about the identity of faith. In other words, according to Luther, exploring languages is an activity of

¹⁵² *Psalter for the Christian People: An Inclusive-Language Revision of the Psalter of The Book of Common Prayer 1979*, eds., Gordon Lathrop & Gail Ramshaw (Collegeville, Minnesota: A Pueblo Book, Liturgical Press, 1993). (Hereafter cited as *Psalter ILR*).

¹⁵³ Peter Meinhold, *Luthers Sprachphilosophie* (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1958), 17.

spiritual importance. He considers the Pentecost narrative in *The Acts of the Apostles* to be the image of all the languages of the world becoming tools of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵⁴ Every language has its status, and is the expression of the Holy Spirit by whom all languages are connected into wholeness.¹⁵⁵ The polyphony of languages signalizes the unity of faith and Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, this unity will not resound if Christian discourse only cultivates a unilingual dimension. In the Sunday service, at least four languages should be used in readings and songs.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ The Acts of the Apostles 2:1–13.

¹⁵⁵ Meinhold (1958), 19–20.

¹⁵⁶ LW 53, *The German Mass*, 1526, 63. WA 19, 74, 8–9. Luther refers to the classic languages and the vernacular.

Chapter Three

MARTIN LUTHER'S LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

What is greater than crushing eternal death? Than for the soul to rise from sins and become a daughter of God, an heir of the heavenly kingdom, a brother of Christ, an associate of angels, a friend of the Holy Spirit?¹⁵⁷

Martin Luther pays scant attention to worship orders or to draft service books; they deal simply with external matters. A worship order easily turns into disorder if maltreated, and Luther likens the order to a pair of shoes: when the shoes are worn out, find new ones! He claims that no order is valid in itself: "But the validity, value, power, and virtue of any order is in its proper use."¹⁵⁸ Luther's liturgical concern is, inevitably, the *Ordo*, that is, the pattern of worship drawn from the Bible, enacted in juxtapositions of word and sacrament. In *The German Mass*, Luther distinctly affirms the "proper use" of Christian worship: "[T]he whole service should center in the word and sacrament."¹⁵⁹ All-important is his connecting of doctrine and liturgical topics as fundamental to revealing the significance of worship. In contemporary terminology, we would say that Luther's works on liturgy are an intersection between systematic theology (secondary theology) and practical theology (primary theology). Using Lathrop's three-dimensional outline of liturgical theology as the point of departure, the following issues can be observed in Luther's liturgical theology.

¹⁵⁷ Luther's exposition on Psalm 77. LW 11, 29; WA 3, 543, 23–26.

¹⁵⁸ LW 53, 90; WA 19, 113, 2–3.

¹⁵⁹ LW 53, 90; WA 19, 113, 4–19.

Secondary Liturgical Theology: Testament and Sacrament

Luther's focus is clearly the assembly, gathered to share the promise of God, embodied in the word (testament), and the sharing of bread and wine (sacrament). Luther advocates this as the right way to enact worship: "[W]here the mass is used, there is true worship."¹⁶⁰ The juxtaposition of *two things* render a third thing, God's grace anew: "[I]n every promise of God there are two things [zwey ding]." Luther claims that these two things are *the word* and *the sign* (wort und zeychen), the basis on which the promise of God is revealed in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the only true worship requires word and sign, that is, testament and sacrament. In Baptism the "two things" are "[t]he word of the baptizer and the dipping in water"; in the Mass "[t]here are the words and the bread and wine." In calling the word "Testament," Luther distinctly indicates the sacrament as an act of giving.¹⁶¹ A testament is something given to the heir or heiress, that is, it is not a term or gifts gained by good works. Luther's repudiation of the Mass as a work dependent on human conditions is of central importance. The sacrament is thoroughly a gift of God.¹⁶² A reflection on this theme yields, more and more, a comprehensive insight into Luther's liturgical theology.

Primary Liturgical Theology: Doctrine and Worship

In Luther's doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, as well as in his conceptualisation of a Christian as simultaneously both free lord and dutiful servant, there is a main topic often brought to the fore. The importance of these ideas in Luther's outlines of worship orders will be examined later in this study.

The genuine priestly office is faith, and Christ alone is the connection between God and the human person. Consequently, all believers, *men, women, and children*, are priests.¹⁶³ Everyone who in faith longs and desires to share word and sacrament partakes in the priesthood of all

¹⁶⁰ LW 35, 81, *A Treatise on the New*, 1520. WA 6, 354, 25–26: "[D]en die meß, und wo die geuebt wirt, da ist der recht gottis dienst."

¹⁶¹ LW 35, 91–93; WA 6, 363, 1–4, 364, 17–20.

¹⁶² *A Treatise on the New Testament* (1520) is an eminent source in order to study Luther's idea of "real presence" by disqualifying "transubstantiation" and works of humans. All the same, this is not the intention of my analysis.

¹⁶³ In answering the question of whether people who lack the ability to hear, speak or see are invited to share the Word and the sign, Luther announces that they perhaps have a better knowing and faith than others in the assembly. Luther also refers to St. Cyprian in Carthage, a bishop who distributed both bread and wine to children. Here Luther brings up the Gospel of Mark, where Jesus says: "Let the children come to me; do not stop them." See NRSV, Mark 10:14. LW 35, 110–111. WA 6, 377, 19–34.

believers, in which Christ is the one assuming the priestly office. Gathering for Sunday service is always a gathering in and through Christ. At the table, the proper sacrifice is the assembly, offering themselves in their prayer, need and praise. Luther also expresses another facet of this doctrine: the mutual relationship of faith within the assembly. Human life, Luther emphasizes, by virtue of its being a bodily existence, reveals the value of gathering physically in prayer, praise and thanksgiving. The Mass as *corporeality* points, again, to “two things”: sharing the body of Christ in bread and wine and sharing faith with one another. In its face-to-face meeting at the table, the assembly can “[e]ncourage, move, and inflame one another to press close to God... and through the outward seeing and receiving of the sacrament and testament to move each other to the increase of this faith.”¹⁶⁴ Consequently, the priesthood of all believers is an ongoing enactment; in sharing the *word* and *body* of Christ, members of the assembly experience one another, embodied in the Mass.

The address “given for you,” delivered at the table, must also be heard in the word. It is key that, in the preaching, the address “given for you” shall be heard. The juxtaposition of word and table yields “Christ, given for you.” Lathrop highlights the fact that Luther regards preaching and Eucharist as two liturgical events with the same address: “given for you.”

Luther’s thoughts in *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520)¹⁶⁵ provide another theological example of the obvious reciprocity between doctrine and worship. In Luther’s outlines of worship orders, he emphasizes the freedom of assemblies to relate to their needs and miscellaneous circumstances. But in writing the *Ordo*, the pattern of liturgy drawn from the Bible, Luther underscores the boundary and unity set by love. As an “antidote” against division among Christ’s beloved people, connected in unity and love, Christ “[a]ppointed in return but one law or order for his entire people, and that was the holy mass.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ LW 35, 98, 105. WA 6, 368, 14–15 and WA 6, 373, 4–5. In the WA context of the latter reference, Luther constantly speaks about “*leypflich* meß, *leypflich* zu sammen kummen” and “*leypflich* sehen” (italics added). The LW translates this to “observe mass outwardly, come together” and “the outward seeing.” I would say that this is one of several examples in which the connection to the body is lost. As Lange states: “The English lures the German back into the realm of *incorporeity*” (italics added). See Lange (2010), 31.

¹⁶⁵ LW 31, 333–377, *The freedom of a Christian*, 1520. See also WA 7, 49–73.

¹⁶⁶ LW 35, 80–81. WA 6, 354, 20–22.

Pastoral Liturgical Theology: Solidarity in Need and Praise

The break that comes in the juxtaposition between the courses of events is something new, something beyond what existed at the outset. In designing *An Order of Mass* and later *The German Mass*, Luther did not begin with a *tabula rasa*. The new had to be broken into the tradition, “old words and old actions, by their pairings, are made to speak a new grace.”¹⁶⁷ A new narrative, a new grammar, is elaborated. Luther is most certainly a theologian of juxtapositions. The concept of *simul* is closely associated with the theology of Luther, one thing broken by the other. Jane E. Strohl underscores the “condition of simultaneous totality” in the theology of Luther, and claims this totality to be of relational matter, and not some ontological condition. The believer as justified and sinner does not represent “a transitional state” with one part expanding and another decreasing. In contrast, it is a narrative that highlights the significance of Luther’s bipolar spirituality and his way of dealing with the paradoxes of life in relation to the Gospel.¹⁶⁸ Markus Wriedt is another theologian who pays attention to Luther’s continual word pairs, such as freedom and service, hidden and obvious, law and Gospel. He focuses on the dynamics between the several “*simul*” in Luther’s style of opposites, pointing to the space of tension between word pairs as fundamental to the reception of Luther’s theology: “Not the individual statement itself, but *the space of tension* related between the two extremes or even contradictions is the content of his theological concept.”¹⁶⁹

This space of tension is also a main issue for Hans-Martin Barth, who refers to the importance of holding together tension, dialectic and genuine complementary items within the theology of Luther. Barth especially underlines the word “and” in the understanding of Luther’s many word pairs. If the tension is maintained, the theology of Luther comes out in its true dynamic, regarding both clarity and plurality.¹⁷⁰ Not least, the space of tension is the outstanding characteristic of Luther’s liturgical thinking. In conclusion, Luther saw the *order*, but also the lack of *ordo*, as the root elements drawn from the Bible.

¹⁶⁷ Lathrop (1998), 67.

¹⁶⁸ Jane E. Strohl, “Luther’s spiritual journey,” in Donald K. McKim., *Martin Luther* (Cambridge: University Press, 2003), 155–156.

¹⁶⁹ Markus Wriedt, “Luther’s theology,” in McKim (2003), 103 (italics added).

¹⁷⁰ Hans-Martin Barth, *Die Theologie Martin Luthers: Eine kritische Würdigung* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2009), 31–33.

Luther on the Psalter: A Resource for Knowing Luther's Liturgical Theology

Luther is a theologian of the church, and the definition of the church is, according to Luther, the assembly celebrating the Christ-event of death and resurrection. In Luther's view, theology and liturgy are seamlessly fused. This close relation between theology and liturgy emerges particularly in Luther's various expositions of the Psalter.¹⁷¹

As we saw above, Luther finds this new language, a new theological grammar, *in* and *through* the liturgy, and especially in his frequent reference to the Psalms.¹⁷² The entry point in the search for a new language is always an experience of an "absent thing, a grammar of absence." Lange asserts the idea of language as an event that always has to be reiterated in order to find the meaning anew. It is impossible to distinguish language from event. Language is a constant confrontation with words containing presence as well as absence.¹⁷³ The words themselves that confront the reader, or the liturgical subject, imply no hidden meaning; "they are not signs or symbols of some deeper meaning." On the contrary, it is the struggle with the words themselves, at the outset of an experience of absence, that calls into question whether there is a particular meaning at all. This struggle could lead to a "force of return," a presence, that is, a receiving of the Christ-event in a new manner. Lange considers the liturgy to be the most significant place where Luther finds this struggle. According to Lange, that is why Luther turns to the liturgical language to "translate this force of return," the Christ-event spoken anew, in a "new grammar." In other words, it is the baptismal language of dying and rising, an experience of loss and absence, and a regaining of meaning, that has to be reiterated again and again.¹⁷⁴ The Psalms, especially, hold a unique position in the effort to gain an essential knowledge of Luther's understanding of the relationship between theology and liturgy. That is why, according to Lange, Luther has ongoing new interpretations of the Psalms throughout his whole life. Luther is always searching for new beginnings. As he says, "[*r*]edieram ad Psalterium denuo interpretandum" [returned to interpret the Psalter anew].¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Lars Christian Vangslev, *Res ipsa theologiae - om salmerne og affekterne i Luthers anden salmeforelæsning* (København: Københavns Universitet, Det Teologiske Fakultet, 2010), 168–169. In particular, Vangslev points to Luther's experience of partaking in the regular liturgy of the Hours in his years as an Augustinian friar.

¹⁷² Lange (2010), 4, 32–40.

¹⁷³ Lange (2010), 43–47.

¹⁷⁴ Lange (2010), 119–120, 55–57.

¹⁷⁵ Lange (2010), 52. LW 34, 336, *Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Writings*, 1545; WA 54, 185, 12. Here I take the liberty of correcting Lange's Latin WA quotation, who writes *Psalterium* instead of the Latin original in WA 54, *Psalterium*.

Presumably, Luther knew every Psalm by heart. As an Augustinian friar, he was used to the monastic office, in conformity with Benedict of Nursia's rules for daily prayer.¹⁷⁶ Consequently, Luther experienced singing and praying the entire Psalter, in one week, in accordance with the so-called "liturgy of the hours."¹⁷⁷ A clear reference to Psalm 119:164 is found in the depiction of "the hours": "Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous ordinances."¹⁷⁸ In view of Luther's lifelong occupation with the Psalms, I would compare him with a later theologian, Dorothee Sölle. Sölle claims the Psalms to be the most "important foods" of spiritual life. To her, the Psalms are like bread:

I eat them [the Psalms], I drink them, I chew on them. Sometimes I spit them out and sometimes I repeat one to myself in the middle of the night.

Without the inspiration of, and struggle with, the Psalms, Sölle speaks of the danger of a "spiritual anorexia" with devastating consequences to one's spiritual depth.¹⁷⁹ Luther would have agreed with Sölle, and most certainly also with Thomas Merton, who calls the Psalms "our Bread of Heaven in the wilderness of our Exodus."¹⁸⁰

Participation: By Faith Be Free and by Love Be Bound

Participation has become an ecumenical keyword, frequently in reference to Vatican II. The change from a minister-oriented liturgy to an assembly-oriented liturgy based on participation has been called a "major turnabout."¹⁸¹ In the Vatican II liturgy document *Sacrosanctum consilium*, the participation of the people is regarded as essential to "the very nature of the

¹⁷⁶ James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship: Third Edition Revised and Expanded* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000 [1980, 1990]), 137.

¹⁷⁷ McKim (1996), 133: "Traditionally these have been matins (with lauds), prime, terse, sext, none, vespers, and compline." Also called "the hours," "canonical hours" or "the divine office."

¹⁷⁸ White (2000), 133.

¹⁷⁹ Luise Schottroff, "'Come, Read with My Eyes': Dorothee Soelle's Biblical Hermeneutics of Liberation," in Sarah K. Pinnock, ed., *The Theology of Dorothee Soelle* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003), 51.

¹⁸⁰ Thomas Merton, *Bread in the Wilderness* (New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1953), 38. Quoted by Witvliet (2007), 137–138.

¹⁸¹ Godfried Cardinal Danneels, "Liturgy Forty Years After the Second Vatican Council: High Point or Recession," in Keith Pecklers, SJ, ed., *Liturgy in a Postmodern World* (London/New York: Continuum, 2003), 7. See also page 23: "The assembly has the most important place in the Christian liturgy, and rightly so."

liturgy.”¹⁸² The notion of participation is linked to the doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers.”¹⁸³ In Luther’s exposition of the constitution of the church, the relation of the word of God and the “Christian holy people” is the basis of the “true *ecclesia sancta catholica*.”¹⁸⁴ All believers in Christ are priests and have a common duty to worship life.¹⁸⁵

That, I maintain, is exactly what Luther does in his treatment of liturgical matters. In sketching *A Christian Exhortation to the Livonians Concerning Public Worship and Concord* (1525),¹⁸⁶ Luther applies his elementary theological reflections in *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520)¹⁸⁷ directly to the order of worship. Luther works out an explicitly liturgical theology by applying secondary liturgical theology to the sphere of primary liturgical theology. The main concept in his proposal of worship order is to “by faith be free” and to “by love be bound”: “By faith be free in your conscience toward God, but by love be bound to serve your neighbor's edification.”¹⁸⁸ Luther asserts, on the one hand, the idea of freedom concerning rites and orders. They are external and can do nothing toward salvation. On the other hand, he advises one uniform order, so that people do not get confused or doubtful. Luther is anxious to maintain the standpoint of love, always with a view to the consequences for others. The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is another theological position that provides an extraordinary dimension to Luther’s liturgical thinking. This doctrine is central to Luther’s view of liturgy as the *participation* of God's people. Every member of the assembly is called to take an active part in worship. Most profoundly, the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers was apparent in the congregational hymnody, which was of paramount importance in establishing a new grammar of theology.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸² Burns (2006), 6–7.

¹⁸³ Barth (2009), 407–408.

¹⁸⁴ *On the Council and the Church*, 1539, LW 41, 150; WA 50, 629, 28–31. Quotation by Alister E. McGrath, see the following note.

¹⁸⁵ Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction: Third Edition* (Oxford, UK/Malden, Massachusetts, USA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd/Inc., 1999 [1988, 1993]), 202–204.

¹⁸⁶ See “Introduction” section of this thesis.

¹⁸⁷ LW 31, 333–377, *The Freedom of a Christian*, 1520. See also WA 7, 49–73.

¹⁸⁸ LW 53, 48; WA 18, 419, 22_23. Here Luther refers to Romans 15:2: “Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor.”

¹⁸⁹ Robin A. Leaver, “Liturgical Music as Corporate Song 1: Hymnody in Reformation Churches,” in Robin A. Leaver & Joyce Ann Zimmerman, eds., *Liturgy and Music: Lifetime Learning* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 283: “[U]nison congregational song was a powerful demonstration of the doctrine of universal priesthood, since every member of the congregation was involved in the activity.”

The Priesthood of All Believers

The fundamental interaction between liturgy and theology is implemented by Luther through his employment of different musical forms of liturgical recitative.¹⁹⁰ In *The German Mass* (1526), Luther sets the same melody for the reading of the Gospel as for the Words of Institution. I hold that the underlying theology is, in fact, Luther's way of saying that word and sacrament are two facets of the same proclamation of the Christ-event. It should be noted that Luther's aim was not only to revivify preaching, but also the Eucharist, grounded in his idea of participation of the assembly. The role of the assembly was not merely to certify the implementation of the Eucharist by the minister in terms of *ex opere operato*.¹⁹¹ Luther's position on the sacrament was certainly one of his most profound theological contributions. By juxtaposition of word and sacrament, Luther claims the task of preaching to be nothing less than Christ's statement in the Words of Institution, "Das ist mein Leib, das ist mein Blut"¹⁹² [This is my body, this is my blood]. By using the resources of liturgical music, Luther creates a most significant theological emphasis on the dialectic of word and sacrament.

The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers denotes the participation of the assembly in the entire worship. By carrying the Eucharist and the Gospel in the same melody, I would say, Luther points to the wholeness of liturgy as one *corpus*. Thus, the congregation is called to participate in this *corpus*: receiving the grace of God in the proclamation of the word in preaching and meal, and responding in "prayer and praise." One of Luther's most frequently quoted definitions of worship is the so-called "Torgau formula."¹⁹³ In the *Sermon at the Dedication of the Castle Church in Torgau* (1544), Luther includes a statement of the intention of this newly built church:

My dear friends, we are now to bless and consecrate this new house to our Lord, Jesus Christ...[I]n order that the purpose of this new house may be such that nothing else may ever

¹⁹⁰ Almost every part of the worship was sung or recited, based on a certain tone, except for preaching.

¹⁹¹ McKim (1996), 97–98, "the view that the efficacy of a sacrament depends on it being a valid sacrament and not on the spiritual goodness of the one who administers it."

¹⁹² *Ausg. Schr: Erneuerung Ein Sermon von dem neuen Testament, das ist von der heiligen Messe*, 1520, zweiter Band (1983), 107: "Denn die Predigt soll nichts anderes sein als eine Erklärung der Worte Christi, durch die er die Messe einsetzt, indem er sagt: *Das ist mein Leib, das ist mein Blut* usw" (italics added).

¹⁹³ For example, see Nicol (2000), 47 or White (2000), 22.

happen in it except that our dear Lord himself may speak to us through his holy word and we respond to him through prayer and praise.¹⁹⁴

Luther here brings to the fore the dialogue of worship: the word of God addressed to the assembly, and the response of the assembly “through prayer and praise.” The language of worship exists above all “in the vocative case,” a veritable communication.¹⁹⁵ Still, what does this juxtaposition mean, “through prayer and praise”?

We can, without hesitation, declare that Luther had a very widescreen view of the notion of “worship.” In addition to the gathering of the assembly to share the word and the meal, Luther regards every activity incorporating a focus on God as worship. A lecture with his students, or a morning prayer, are basically on the same “ground,” they are all *coram Deo*, before God. In fact, all daily occupational work, craft, caring for children, is life and worship *coram Deo*. Fundamentally, the various ways of speaking about God and to God make no difference, according to Luther. Hans-Martin Barth establishes that, to Luther, there is no principal difference between the language of theology and the language of faith.¹⁹⁶ Luther claims that even writing letters is an act of being “before the face of God.”¹⁹⁷ Recognition of the whole of life as *coram Deo* is also a position represented by Catherine Pickstock. To her, there can be no subject without the liturgy, that is, the liturgy perpetually restores and constitutes the subject. Life itself is “a liturgical journey” of ambiguous quality, an arrival into God and, at the same time, a traveling towards God, “[t]he Christian supplicant must, uniquely, arrive before he can travel.”¹⁹⁸

Pickstock's definition of this dialectic is “the impossibility of liturgy.” Worship is a constant “re-beginning,” in order to reconstruct the liturgical subject anew. The liturgical journey is the journey of contradiction, “a sending out of God and a going into God,”¹⁹⁹ and these dimensions are fused seamlessly. Pickstock denotes the dialectic of worship as “exaltation” and

¹⁹⁴ LW 51, 333; WA 49, 588b, 12–13, 15–18.

¹⁹⁵ Graham Hughes, *Worship as Meaning: A Liturgical Theology for Late Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 282–283.

¹⁹⁶ Barth (2009), 123.

¹⁹⁷ *Ausg. Schr: Briefe*, Sechster Band, 30: “Ich fürchte mich nicht davor, daß sie Dir und allen zugänglich werden, weil ich *vor dem Angesicht Gottes schreibe*” (italics added). Luther’s commentary on the critical review of his antagonists in a letter to Michael Muris, October 20, 1520. By this time, Luther’s *The Babylonian Captivity* had been abandoned in Saxony. See also WABr. 2, 202, 33–34: “(Q)uae tibi et omnibus palam fieri non metuo, quia sub conspectu *Dei scribo*” (italics added). This letter is not represented in LW.

¹⁹⁸ Pickstock (1998), 191–192.

¹⁹⁹ Pickstock (1998), 180–183.

“subsidence”; experiences of both “absence” and “presence.”²⁰⁰ Luther expounds the same dialectic, using the baptismal language of dying and rising, the perpetual song of the church. What brings Luther and Pickstock together is the position that the perpetual polarity of worship is not possible for the liturgical subject to grasp. Accordingly, to Luther as well to Pickstock, it is a matter of God's initiative, out of the control of the individual. Although the liturgical journey is beyond the worshipper's control, Pickstock affirms “*the aporia of learning*.” This oxymoronic learning process is possible through the liturgical journey itself: the absence and the presence of the divine. The liturgical subject is not a solitary traveler but originates in a specific context of “historical retellings” and in its “present and future narrations.”²⁰¹

Lex Exercitandi

Another concept in liturgical theology is the *lex orandi*, the law of prayer, as related to primary liturgical theology, and *lex credendi*, the law of belief, as linked to secondary theology. The intention of this concept is to reveal the intrinsic relation between *theologia prima* and *theologia secunda*, the relation between worship and doctrine. As the material heart and soul of worship should be of doctrinal indication, so the doctrines of the church are of essence to liturgical life, even though a number of theologians would place priority on either worship or doctrine.²⁰²

Lex orandi, lex credendi as an axiomatic formula for liturgical theology today is a problematic issue and qualification is required. First of all, this concept provokes an idea of liturgy as apprehensible, that is, in “human hands.” Two of my three key sources (Lange and Pickstock) are consistent in their view of liturgy as out of our control, the perpetual process of signs juxtaposed in order to conceive significance anew. Of course, we may say that *lex orandi, lex credendi* is the fundamental juxtaposition of liturgical theology, in a constant process of acquiring the meaning anew. But I find this firm juxtaposition questionable by virtue of its focal

²⁰⁰ Pickstock (1998), 189.

²⁰¹ Pickstock (1998), 268–270. Pickstock is analyzing Plato's *Phaedrus*. One of her critical points is the lack of context; the lover and the beloved in *Phaedrus* remain separated from an existent community. There is no connection between a “relational space” and “the time of past, present, and future.” In the contrary case, she refers to the first section of the *Confessiones*, and emphasises the commencement of Augustine within a social and ecclesial tradition.

²⁰² Maxwell Johnson, “Liturgy and Theology,” in Paul Bradshaw & Bryan Spinks, eds., *Liturgy in Dialogue: Essays in Memory of Ronald Jasper* (Cambridge: University Press, 1993), 202–225. As an example of priority on *lex orandi*, Johnson mentions Aidan J. Kavanagh, and of priority on *lex credendi* he names Geoffrey Wainwright.

point. In general, the reception of *lex orandi, lex credendi* is understood as “the law of our prayer is the law of our belief” or vice versa.²⁰³ What we pray and what we believe is the interaction of worship and doctrine. With this starting point, there is a temptation of an impression of liturgical mastery. Lange and Pickstock stress that liturgy is beyond human mastery, and they deal with the juxtaposition of “absence” and “presence” (that is, the experience of God's absence and of God's presence). They consider the liturgical journey to be one of both identity and loss of identity, to be at home and to be homeless. Additions to *lex orandi, lex credendi* sometimes emerge in contemporary liturgical theology, for example *lex agendi*,²⁰⁴ as a way of deepening the understanding of the interplay between liturgical life and doctrine. The addition of *lex agendi* represents a familiar alteration in current liturgical theology: to underscore the interaction with pastoral liturgical theology, *theologia pastoralis*. In order to understand a central dimension of Luther's liturgical theology I would argue for another addition, a *lex exercendi*.

My outset is Luther's view on the daily services as a form of *training*, letting the assembly become acquainted with scripture: “Thus, Christian people will by daily training become proficient, skillful, and well versed in the Bible.”²⁰⁵

Many of Luther's works imply a liturgical theological approach, not only with regard to explicit items such as word or sacrament, but also liturgy in its entirety. One important example of Luther's reflections on worship can be found in his *A Treatise on the New Testament, That is, The Holy Mass*, (1520).²⁰⁶ Throughout his 40 statements on the Eucharist, Luther claims everything in the liturgy to be *an exercise* (Übung). To exercise living in faith and to exercise loving one's neighbor is the purpose of the liturgical course of events. In other words, Luther regards every moment of worship to be an exercise in faith and love *coram Deo* and *coram hominibus*. The word “exercise” corresponds to various expressions in the German text of “*Weimarer Ausgabe*.” One of these expressions includes the meaning “training oneself,

²⁰³ Wainwright (1980), 223.

²⁰⁴ Dwight W. Vogel (ed. Vogel, 2000), 12. Vogel refers to Kewin Irwin and “what is experienced in actual liturgical rites.”

²⁰⁵ LW 53, 12, *Concerning the Order of Public Worship*, 1523. See also WA 12, 36, 7–8: “Also das durch tegliche *ubunge* der schrifft die Christen ynn der schrifft verstendig, leufftig und kundig werden” (italics added). Here it is a matter of bringing up the notion of “*ubung, uben*,” that is, the significance of these words. The words “trained or training” in LW are linked to various words in WA, for example “ziehen” (WA 19, 78, 13), “geubt” (WA 19, 73, 9–10), “zu uben” (WA 19, 75, 25) and “zu zyhen” (WA 19, 112, 2). I would also stress that the word “train” is frequently represented in many other works in LW, as well as congenial words in WA.

²⁰⁶ LW 35, 79–111, *A Treatise on the New Testament, That is, The Holy Mass*, 1520 (hereafter cited as *A Treatise on the New Testament*); WA 5, 353–378.

developing oneself.” In connection to Luther’s outline of *The German Mass*, I will call this aspect of training *lex exercitandi*, the rule of learning. Liturgy as a whole is an ongoing education, learning to know God, neighbor, creation and self.

Luther’s focus, above all, is on the young and on people not familiar with the faith and liturgy of the church. They have to be trained in scripture and the liturgy.²⁰⁷ Luther, referring to the ancient Psalms and hymn singing practices of the Christian church, is convinced that singing the words of the Bible is a way to learn and to embed God’s word and Christian teaching.²⁰⁸ Just as the assembly must practice the melodies of the liturgy “*exercitatio odder ubunge*” [exercise or practice],²⁰⁹ people also have to practice and exercise the words of the liturgy and of scripture. Christians cannot live without the day-to-day training and infusion of God’s word, if they are to live in solidarity and love toward God and neighbor. To be baptized, and to participate in Mass, always entails a connection to the word of God. The word is “trained” in the liturgy and in everyday life in the world. Luther writes: “It [the word of God] must be used and inculcated daily, not only because Christians are born, baptized, and trained every day, but because we live in the midst of the world.”²¹⁰

Liturgy, as Luther approaches it, is consistently a place of freedom, polyphony and process, with the word of God, revealed and present in Christ, as the *cantus firmus* in the pattern of *Ordo*. According to Luther, it may be said that liturgy is a perpetual place of training, a *locus exercitatio*, where people learn to love God and their neighbor. To the formula of *lex orandi, lex credendi* we could add, inspired by Luther’s intention for liturgy, a *lex exercitandi*, “the law of training.” The interpretation of liturgy as a *locus exercitatio* does not, by any means, imply people working or sacrificing for their own salvation. In one of the first orders of worship, *The Formula Missae*,²¹¹ and in the last, *A Treatise on the New Testament, That is, the Holy Mass*,²¹² Luther strongly stresses that redemption is entirely a work of God. Still, Luther speaks about training and practicing liturgy in everyday life. What does he mean by that? I propose a reading of “training” as equivalent to *exposing oneself* to liturgy and to the word of God. Hans-Martin

²⁰⁷ LW 53, 64, *The German Mass*, 1526. See also WA 19, 75, 25. “To train” in LW and in WA, “*zu uben*” (italics added).

²⁰⁸ LW 53, 315, *Preface to the Wittenberg Hymnal*, 1524. See also WA 35, 474, 2–10.

²⁰⁹ LW 53, 84; WA 19, 102, 15.

²¹⁰ LW 35, 102, *A Treatise on the New Testament*, 1520; WA 6, 373, 9–13.

²¹¹ For example: LW 53, 25, *An Order of Mass*, 1523 and LW 35, 93, *A Treatise on the New Testament*, 1520. WA 12, 211, 14–17 and WA 6, 365, 1–26.

²¹² LW 35, 75–111, *A Treatise on the New Testament*, 1520. WA 6, 353–378.

Barth points to Luther's definition of theological study as a ceaseless process. It is, according to Barth, a perpetual diving into the water and swimming like a fish.²¹³ By using Barth's metaphor of diving and swimming, I understand Luther's "training" to be a constant diving into liturgy and scripture, in order to discover God's grace anew. People must expose themselves to the "water," that is to the liturgy, "swimming" in it over and over again. Of three years of fighting with his conscience, Luther affirms in 1522 that, "I did it by exercising myself in the gospel daily."²¹⁴

Gordon W. Lathrop sees the pattern of Luther's *Small Catechism* (1529) as a model of spirituality training, for the pastor as well as for the assembly. Lathrop shows that the texts of the *Small Catechism* are, for the most part, liturgical passages: the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the sacraments of baptism and the supper. A regular training in these liturgical texts is living in liturgy, within a "strong center and an open door." It provides a lifetime of training in loving God and in showing solidarity with the poor and the outcast.²¹⁵ Training liturgy also allows the texts to "be imprinted on your body." Learning texts by heart, in order to come into the presence of God, is a task of spirituality, enabling the believer "to see that liturgy is not in the book but in the present actions of the assembly."²¹⁶ Liturgy as *locus exercitatio*, in its historical continuity and its embrace of a new grammar of God's grace anew, is a non-solitary journey. We may well also postulate creatures, as an antidote to Christian fundamentalism.²¹⁷ The liturgical journey in time is "the God-given opportunity to learn to love."²¹⁸ You will not be perfect, but new doors will open to learn God's grace anew. It is not possible, according to Lange and Pickstock, to control the perpetual non-solitary journey. This journey, unlike fundamentalism, accommodates the ambiguity of arrival and travel, presence and absence at the same time, the liturgical *simul*. Swedish poet Tomas Tranströmer has another way of verbalising "the antidote to perfectionism":

Do not be ashamed of being human, be proud!

Inside you vault opens behind vault infinitely.

²¹³ Barth (2009), 120.

²¹⁴ LW 36, 250, *Receiving Both Kinds in the Sacrament*, 1522. WA 10. II, 25, 19: "[E]rloebet hab mit teglicher ubung des Euangeli."

²¹⁵ Gordon W. Lathrop, *The Pastor: A Spirituality* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 37.

²¹⁶ Lathrop (2006), 25.

²¹⁷ By definition, a fundamentalist theology is one which accentuates the doctrinal position of biblical inerrancy and dispensationalism. See William Vance Trollinger, Jr., "Fundamentalism," in Donald W. Musser & Joseph L. Price, eds., *New and Enlarged Handbook of Christian Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 206–209.

²¹⁸ Olivier Clément, *Transfigurer le temps* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1959). Quotation by Wainwright (1980), 34.

You will never come to an end, that is how it meant to be.²¹⁹

In other words, the *lex exercitandi* overrule the idea of having control, regarding the firm concept of prayer and doctrine (*lex orandi* and *lex credendi*). In accordance with the method of my study, I would say that the two latter “laws” affirm the “orientation,” but the “law of training” brings about moments out of control, that is, “disorientation,” which open us for something new, a “new orientation.”

Chapter four

LUTHER’S EXPOSITIONS OF THE SEVEN PENITENTIAL PSALMS

Through the days of shame that are coming
Through the nights of wild distress
Tho’ your promise count for nothing
You must keep it nonetheless.²²⁰

Psalm of Penitence

The Seven Penitential Psalms appeared in many prayer books and achieved an extraordinary popularity at the beginning of the Renaissance. Manifold expositions and commentaries were produced and were considered a great help for reflection and for mirroring personal spiritual life. In reference to the Psalter, Bernhard W. Anderson and Steven Bishop point to the issue of theodicy: Why do bad things happen to people who venerate God? They also draw attention to

²¹⁹ Tomas Tranströmer, ”Romanska bågar,” in *För levande och döda* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1989). My interpretation to English.

²²⁰ Leonard Cohen, “Heart Without Companion” in *Various Positions* (Columbia Records: 1984), song nr. 8.

the other side of the question in many of the Psalms: Why do people who neglect God achieve success and prosperity?²²¹

Yet, many of the penitential Psalms are not included in the liturgical season of Lent today, other than in the *Laudes* in several traditions. Without doubt the seven penitential Psalms were well-known to Luther, not least from his time as a monk. He was deeply familiar with them and their influence on contemporary literature and music. Luther's favorite composer, Josquin des Prez, created motets connected to two of the penitential Psalms, Psalm 51, *Misere mei Deus*, and Psalm 130, *De Profundis Clamavi*. All of the penitential Psalms have a close connection to the beginning of Lent, that is, to Ash Wednesday.²²²

Many attempts have been made to classify the Psalms.²²³ In general, the seven penitential Psalms are categorized as *individual laments*, with one exception, Psalm 32.²²⁴ However, it is also possible to include Psalm 32 in the group of individual laments,²²⁵ which I find more congenial with Luther's interpretation of Psalm 32 (see below).

In the setting of this study's subject, the analysis of the penitential Psalms will focus on lament, the language of despair, sorrow and experiences of abandonment. Denise M. Ackermann's question, "Have existing liturgical traditions anything to offer lamenting hearts?" resounds in the foreground. The liturgical concepts of Gordon W. Lathrop, Catherine Pickstock and Dirk G. Lange are of principal concern. These are:

The necessity of broken things and juxtapositions in order to experience a third thing (Lathrop).
The subject's continuant restoration in the non-solitary journey of arrival and travel (Pickstock).
Traumatizing experiences, disruption and the addition of something new (Lange).²²⁶

²²¹ Bernhard W. Anderson with Steven Bishop, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today*, 3rd Edition Revised and Explained (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 78, 194.

²²² Breck Reid (1997), 23.

²²³ For example, Howard Neil Wallace's overview of Psalms classified into fourteen diverse types in *Words to God, word from God: The Psalms in the Prayer and Preaching of the Church* (Hampshire, England/Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing Limited/Company, 2005), 187–188.

²²⁴ For instance, Susan E. Gillingham, *The Poems and Psalms of the Hebrew Bible*, The Oxford Bible Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 231. Gillingham denotes Psalms 6, 38, 51, 102, 130 and 143 as *Individual Laments*, but Psalm 32 as an *Individual Thanksgiving*.

²²⁵ See K. Jesurathnam, "Towards a Dalit Liberative Hermeneutics Re-reading The Psalms of Lament" in *Bangalore Theological Forum*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 1, June (Bangalore: United Theological College, 2002), 29, note 39.

²²⁶ See the relevant sections on the liturgical concepts of Lathrop, Pickstock and Lange, above.

Luther's Liturgical Use of the Penitential Psalms

Luther's liturgical thinking is obvious in his use of the penitential Psalms. In *An Order of Mass*, he calls for poets to write new hymns in German taking inspiration from the Psalter.²²⁷ At the end of the same year, he asks Georg Spalatin to help work a Psalm into a hymn, provided that the sense of it remain close to the Psalm. In order to perceive the sense of the Psalm, Luther suggests that he expound on *The Seven Penitential Psalms*. Most of all, Luther wants him to work on the first or the seventh of the penitential Psalms.²²⁸ Luther informs Spalatin that he himself has already done "Out of the depths," Psalm 130, and that another two of the Psalms are assigned to other of his collaborators.²²⁹ The paramount concern of Luther's liturgical project is to produce appropriate hymns. In a letter to Georg Spalatin, dated 1523, Luther writes:

[Our] plan is to follow the example of the prophets and the ancient fathers of the church, and to compose psalms for the people [in the] vernacular, that is, spiritual songs, so that the word of God may be among the people also in the form of music.²³⁰

Evidently, in Luther's work in progress of developing the *Ordo* of Christian worship, the penitential Psalms play a prominent role.

Luther returns to the penitential Psalms anew, at the outset of his own translation of the entire Psalter in 1524.²³¹ Another example of Luther's ongoing work with the book of Psalms is his "*redieram ad Psalterium*,"²³² his ceaseless wrestling with the meaning of the text is plain in his preface to the second version of *The Seven Penitential Psalms* in 1525. He finds nothing in his first exposition of 1517 to be of detrimental effect, though he confesses: "[Y]et I often missed the meaning of the text."²³³ Nevertheless, the next statement in the preface is extraordinarily

²²⁷ LW, 36; WA 12, 218, 21–23.

²²⁸ Psalm 6, "O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy anger," and Psalm 143, "Hear my prayer, O Lord."

²²⁹ Psalm 32 and Psalm 51.

²³⁰ LW 49, 69 (Nr. 140); WA BR 3, 220, 1–3 (Nr. 698): In reality, Luther writes about singing: "Consilium est, exemplo prophetarum & priscorum patrum Ecclesie psalmos vernaculos condere pro vulgo, id est spirituales cantilenas, quo verbum dei vel cantu inter populos maneat."

²³¹ WA 1, 154–220, *Die sieben Bußpsalmen*, 1517 (not translated in LW). Luther applied the Vulgate, the version of Hieronymus and Johann Reuchlins "Septene." See WA 1, 158, 7–10.

²³² Quotation by Lange referring to WA 54, 185, "Interim eo anno iam redieram ad Psalterium denuo interpretandum. See also LW 34, 336, "Meanwhile, I had already during that year returned to interpret the Psalter anew." Here, that is 1545, Luther recalls his way to the Reformation. However, Luther returns to his beloved book, the Psalter.

²³³ LW 14, 140; WA 18, 479, 5.

significant: Luther is working *by returning* to the text and thereby *moving forward*. This was how Augustine dealt with the texts, as a daily improvement in “writing and teaching,” Luther says. By this means he affirms:

I also have made some progress in the meantime, I considered it good to publish the work again.²³⁴

Luther undoubtedly reckons the task of liturgical theology to be both a written and an oral process, a constant return to the texts as well as to the liturgical practice. Lange describes these continual “returns” as Luther’s “dynamic of beginnings.”²³⁵

Exploring liturgy is for Luther a work of both *theologia prima* and *theologia secunda* in the ambition to serve, at the same time, the *theologia pastoralis*.

Here, I would call attention to Dirk G. Lange’s and Catherine Pickstock’s divergent conceptualization of the liturgical theological process. Pickstock, holds orality to be the veritable liturgical process. Pickstock is critical of Derrida’s notion that writing is entirely neutral and in no need of a speaker. Without any point of reference to subjects, place and time, that is, only “objects” are at hand. The consequence is that sooner or later this standpoint will lead to death. When Pickstock employs Plato’s *Phaedrus* in order to elevate orality, it is in terms of connectedness to physical embodiment, spatiality and temporality. Written language itself belongs to the immanent city, and will never, on its own, link up with transcendence. In other words, written language must be expressed in orality, in the spoken word of doxology, before God, through the liturgy. Written language turning into oral doxology is the genuine link to transcendence, which characterizes the “sacred polis.” That is why Pickstock ends up with the conclusion that language is, primarily, orality. Moreover, Pickstock considers the liturgical language to be the only language that actually makes sense.²³⁶

²³⁴ Italics added in order to highlight the process (see above, “Process and *Ordo*”), LW 14, 140; WA 18, 479, 11–12. The German text in WA reveals more of the “journey,” the drive in Luther’s work. For example, “some progress” in WA, “*weiter komen bin*,” and “first attempt” in WA, “*ersten aus flug*” (italics added). WA 18; 479, 12, 6.

²³⁵ Lange (2010), 52.

²³⁶ See Pickstock (1998), Part I, “The Polity of Death,” particularly 20–23 and 57–81. In the view of Pickstock, Derrida establishes his thesis within the Cartesian epistemology.

In his consideration of Luther's endeavors with the texts, Lange puts emphasis on the process of writing and re-writing. I would argue that Luther's way of dealing with liturgical theology is a matter of *both* oral and written activity. His concept of *oratio* (praying), *meditatio* (reflecting) and *tentatio* (struggling) is a profound method open to orality as well as to a process of re-writings. All the same, oral or written, it is all about gaining knowledge by experience, *sapientia experimentalis*.²³⁷

Luther's work in *The Penitential Psalms* (1525) shows that he is cognizant of the wholeness and the intertextuality within this group of Psalms. Already in the first penitential Psalm 6, he hints at the fourth Psalm in this group, Psalm 51, as we will see further on. In fact, Luther is constantly working with the Psalter in its entirety, as he states in his preface to *The Penitential Psalms* (1525). The paramount drive of Luther is to speak aloud before God over and again. His concern also includes communication with ordinary people, and he provides resources for becoming vocal before God, for better or worse. This is the case with the seven penitential Psalms, and this explains his choice to write in German.²³⁸

Psalm 34: The Introitus to The Seven Penitential Psalms

The way Luther deals with the core voice ("*eine Stimme*") is noteworthy, due to its liturgical implications. As already noted, Luther is concerned with the theological implications of the communication between tradition and renewal regarding liturgy. Luther largely remains close to the traditional components of the Mass, but he reinterprets their theological meaning. In reference to the role of the Psalter, and the view of worship as the gathering of the priesthood of all believers, Luther emphasizes the importance of participation. Everybody is invited to sing the traditional liturgical parts of the Mass, such as the *introitus*. In *The German Mass*, Luther proposes Psalm 34 for the Introit, the opening part of the Mass. It is obvious that Luther is well informed about the liturgy of the early church, in which Psalm 34 was often an invitation to the communion.²³⁹ Luther therefore selects this Psalm as the Introit to *the whole service*, instead of

²³⁷ Bayer (2004), 28–34.

²³⁸ See Preface, LW 14, 140; WA 18, 479, 2–14.

²³⁹ John Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels*, translated with supporting documents and notes by John Wilkinson (Oxford OX1 1HN: Aris & Phillips, Oxbow Books, Park End Place, third edition, 1999), 56. Here Egeria refers to Psalm 34, 9: "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (in NRSV, Psalm 34, 8). Egeria, probability from Spain,

just to the communion! This, I would argue, is an example of how primary and secondary theology are integrated in Luther's work. Preaching *and* communion is a fundamental juxtaposition of *Ordo*; it is the pattern drawn from the Bible, and the basic line in Lathrop's liturgical theology. Apparently, Luther anticipated this principle by choosing the entire Psalm 34 as the opening section of the whole Mass, that is, both word and table. Even in musical terminus this close connection between word and table is demonstrated in *The German Mass*, where Luther picks out the same tone,²⁴⁰ the fifth, for the Gospel as well as for the institution narrative:

Here is a clear demonstration of the theological consistency and liturgical integrity of Luther's reforms. Right from the very beginning Luther understood that the chanting of the Gospel pericope and the chanting of the Verba Testamenti would be connected since they both had the same theological function: the declaration of God's forgiveness and grace in Christ.²⁴¹

By frequent reference to Psalm 34 in *The Seven Penitential Psalms*, Luther focuses on what he considers to be key in all the Psalms: God's prevailing mercy. In his exposition of the first Psalm in this group, Psalm 6:8 ("For the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping"), Luther characterizes the disposition of God as someone who "gladly hears those who cry and lament." With regard to the fourth penitential Psalm, Psalm 51:17, and its emphasis on the true sacrifice to God in a broken spirit and a contrite heart, Luther strengthens his core line by referring to Psalm 34:18: "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted." For this reason, weeping and loudly crying out to God, even if the supplicant experiences God as absent, are "preferred to works [*wircken*], and suffering exceeds all doing."²⁴² Another link to Psalm 34 emerges in the commentary on the second penitential Psalm, Psalm 32:8b ("I will counsel you with My eye upon you"), where Luther passes along the pastoral counsel in God's divine words:

documented in the late fourth century the church services in Jerusalem, and she also described the church year, such as Lent and the Great Week. *The Jerusalem Liturgy* has had a great impact on churches all over the world.

²⁴⁰ These are the so-called "church tones." See section below, "Liturgical Chanting."

²⁴¹ Leaver (2007), 182. Leaver also refers to the different voices appearing in the Gospel, for instance the words of Christ which requires "a fourth below the words of the evangelist." By this lower pitch the assembly is entitled to differentiate the words of Christ in the Gospel as well as in the institution narrative. Luther uses the medieval church tones in order to emphasize different liturgical characters.

²⁴² LW 14, 145; WA 18, 484, 7–13. The German "*wircken/werck*" is by and large translated into "working/work." However, "*arbeit/arbeiter/arbeiterin*" have mostly positive connotations in Luther's work. Therefore, a more proper translation would be something like "striving/strive after/for," in my opinion.

I will not leave you; you shall not go down and perish; I will not forget you. Your eyes shall be closed because My eyes are open over you.²⁴³

Here, once again, a kind of “divine formulation” can be seen, that is, Luther puts God’s statement in his own mouth. By reference to Psalm 34:15 (“Have you not read that ‘the eyes of God are towards the righteous’”), Luther reinforces his main claim regarding God’s presence in the traumatic depths.²⁴⁴ The same issue appears side by side in the analysis of another of the penitential Psalms, Psalm 38, in which Luther accentuates the mercy of God by yet another reference to Psalm 34. In Psalm 38:17 (“For I am made for trouble [*leyden*] and my pain is ever with me”), Luther depicts the life of the traumatized individual at the point where the pain seems to be without any end, in correspondence with the main theme expressed in Psalm 32, that God preserves from trouble likewise in Psalm 34:19 (“Many are the afflictions [*leiden*] of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all”).²⁴⁵ And then, in the last of the penitential Psalms, Psalm 143, Luther finds the main topic of the entire Psalter: “every Psalm, all Scripture, calls to grace.”²⁴⁶

Nevertheless, the call for grace is never without the “imploring, desiring, searching” mentioned above, for this is the true inner essence of a human being. Accordingly, the perpetual baptismal movement between death and life, between experiencing God as absent as well as present, is, accordingly, a becoming more than a being, an ongoing seeking for God’s grace anew. In no fewer than three references to other Psalms, Luther demonstrates what he considers to be the *cantus firmus* of all the penitential Psalms (as well as the entire scripture). Along with the preface to Psalm 143, the exposition of the first stanza deepens the importance of seeking God in order to find grace, and contains a link to Psalm 105:4 (“Seek His presence [*andlitz*] continually.”)²⁴⁷ In fact, there is a differentiation between the abstract word “presence” and the concrete word “face” [*andlitz*].

An additional example can be found in Lange’s commentary on Luther’s writings. Lange points to the problematic translation, that is, when the English translation in LW “de-bodies” the

²⁴³ LW 14, 152; WA 18, 489, 31–33.

²⁴⁴ LW 14, 152; WA 18, 489, 33.

²⁴⁵ LW 14, 161; WA 18, 496, 16–22. Where the English LW has various expressions: “trouble, suffer, and affliction,” the German WA throughout has “leiden” (suffer).

²⁴⁶ LW 14, 196; WA 18, 522, 1.

²⁴⁷ LW 14, 196; WA 18, 522, 15–17.

original text: “Suchet sein *andlitz* [face, countenance] allezeit” (italics added) is rendered as “seek for God’s *presence*.” The English “lures the German back into the realm of incorporeity.”²⁴⁸ At the point where the English translation “de-bodies” the original text, the liturgical link often gets lost. The *andlitz* is in Luther’s writing mostly connected to liturgical issues, for instance in the *Betbüchlein* (Personal Prayer Book) of 1522, where he advises that Psalm 67 ought to be prayed for an increase of faith.²⁴⁹ Another link, Psalm 67:6–7, is one of Luther’s proposals for an alternative to the benediction in *An Order of Mass*: “God, even our own God shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.” Luther here also evokes the idea of using the Aaronic Blessing which is still today the predominant benediction in Evangelical Lutheran churches.

Regarding Psalm 143, Luther describes as self-conceited the people who never seek after God, since they claim they have already found God.²⁵⁰ The true inner essence of a human person is to be on the ongoing journey of “imploring, desiring, searching for” God. To assert that one has already found God is the utmost arrogance; it is the denial of the continual baptismal-patterned journey of baptism, from death to life. All the same, by means of the quotation from Psalm 34:10, Luther offers the assurance that the supplicant who searches for God is not travelling without divine concern: “Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.”²⁵¹

To search for God’s grace anew entails more of a *becoming* than a being. In short, Luther employs Psalm 34 to underline the core content of the penitential Psalms. Whatever the circumstances may be, whether experiencing the trauma of losing everything, or experiencing the trustworthy divine presence, God’s mercy is continually at hand. Psalm 34 likewise serves as the Introit to *The German Mass*, just as it introduces the *cantus firmus* of the penitential Psalms. In this sense, Psalm 34 could be called the Introit to *The Seven Penitential Psalms*; it paves the way for the substantive matter. In any case, Luther juxtaposes the penitential Psalms with Psalm 34 in order to highlight the brokenness between lament and joy. This is clearly seen at the point

²⁴⁸ Lange (2010), 31.

²⁴⁹ “Gott sey uns gnedig und segene uns, Er las uns seyn *andlitz* leuchten.” (Italics added). See WA 10.II, 411, 23–24. In LW the Psalm 67 is not out written, only mentioned, see LW 43, 41.

²⁵⁰ LW 14, 19; WA 18, 522, 16–17, LW 14, 196. Besides, the notion “God’s face” is a stronger link to *coram Deo*, before God, such as, in the benediction in worship (Numbers 6, 24–26), “The Lord make his *face* to shine upon” (italics added). Luther suggests in *The Order of Mass* (1523) that this benediction can replace the customary one. See LW 53, 30; WA 12, 213, 28–31. Psalm 14:3: “There is none that seeks after God they have already found Him.” LW 14, 196; WA 18, 522, 17–18.

²⁵¹ LW 14, 196; WA 18, 522, 15–16.

where Luther is dealing with *The Order of Mass*, and requires hymns in the vernacular, based on the Psalter. As mentioned above, the penitential Psalms are of primary concern in Luther's liturgical theological work, and he proposes to Georg Spalatin that he put into hymn one of these Psalms via Luther's exposition. However, if Spalatin should find this group of Psalms hard to cope with, he ought rather to turn to Psalms of joy and thanksgiving. Luther suggests Psalm 34 as an alternative ("I will bless the Lord at all times"), as well as another two Psalms of the same character.²⁵² Evidently, in order to improve the liturgy with spiritual songs (*spirituales cantilenas*), Luther embraces both the distress and lament of the penitential Psalms as well as the joy and thanksgiving of the Psalms of praise to God. Psalm 34, then, plays an important role in the liturgical *simul*, whereby the brokenness between lament and joy incarnates the pattern of the baptismal journey from death to life anew.

The letter to Spalatin at the end of 1523 gives evidence of Luther's wish to have hymns for liturgical use. At this time, Luther was occupied with the improvement of worship according to his basic liturgical theology, which leads to *The Order of Mass* in December 1523. It is of extraordinary significance that Luther gives prominence to *The Seven Penitential Psalms* in his work on the new worship order. When Luther asks Spalatin to work out a hymn from the first or the seventh penitential psalm, that is, Psalm 6 or Psalm 143, this shows their first-hand importance. Spiritual songs in the vernacular play a profound role in inviting the assembly to share in the fundamental ideas of Reformation theology.

In a letter to Melanchthon two days after the Diet of Augsburg (June 25, 1530), Luther tries to comfort his friend and colleague, who was apparently troubled, and calls his own capacity into question. Luther, in telling Melanchthon about his own frequent anguish and fear, is directing him toward God's proximity, even in the abyss, by referring to Psalm 34:19 ("God is near to the brokenhearted").²⁵³ In the same way, the *introitus* of *The German Mass*, Psalm 34, conceptualizes an Introit into the experience of God's mercy and grace anew.

²⁵² The other two Psalms mentioned are Psalm 33, "Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous," and Psalm 104, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." See LW 49, 70. Here, Psalms 33, 32 and 103 are mentioned, which is incorrect. This letter is written in Latin, that is, the Psalms are enumerated from the Vulgate version, see WA BR 3, 1523, 220, 1–15. (That is, Psalms 34, 33 and 104.)

²⁵³ WA BR 5, 399, 14–15: "*Prope est Dominus omnibus, qui invocant eum.*" According to WA this refers to Psalm 145:18, "The Lord is near to all who call him." However, Johannes Schilling's translation from Latin to German of this letter relates to both Psalm 145:18 as well as Psalm 34:19. The letter is not represented in LW.

Primitia Cognitionis: The Perpetual Introit

Many different positions are given regarding Reformation discovery, not least in systematic theology. Oswald Bayer brings to the fore the preface to the Latin writings generally considered to be an essential testimony of what Luther describes as the journey into a “new grammar.” Luther here pictures his discovery as being newborn, and an experience of closed gates opening. Which additional texts and works of Luther might be relevant to his statement in his preface to the Latin writings? This is a vexed question with various answers regarding continuity versus discontinuity.²⁵⁴ Dirk G. Lange also highlights the preface to Luther’s Latin writings as a localization of the so-called “breakthrough.” In his study of the narrative of the pivotal “beginning” into a new grammar of the Christ-event, Lange focuses on the significance of *primitias cognitionis* in Luther’s *Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther’s Latin Writings* (1545).²⁵⁵ In recounting his itinerary, through his past years of searching for a new narrative of the Christ-event, Luther states:

I had also acquired the beginning of the knowledge [primitias cognitionis] of Christ and faith in him, that is, not by works but by faith in Christ are we made righteous and saved.²⁵⁶

Just like Oberman, Lange rejects the idea of “the beginning” as a breakthrough moment in Luther’s theology that can be localized in time and place. Nevertheless, there is the tendency to identify a breakthrough moment that “seduces the translator into using the singular [beginning] rather than the plural.” Lange, in effect, detects in the original Latin text the plural *primitias cognitionis*, that is, the first fruits of knowledge. These indicate “multiple beginnings or, perhaps more suggestively, indeterminate beginnings.” Furthermore, Lange notes that ἀπαρχὴ in 1 Cor. 15:20: “But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, *the first-fruits* of those who have fallen asleep” (italics added) is translated in the Vulgate as *primitias*. In Lange’s view, Luther, by employing *primitias*, shows the connection between his struggle with the resurrection from the dead, and something new taking place. Accordingly, it is not a matter of “one beginning,” but the perpetual “beginnings” of the baptismal journey from dying to rising. In line with Luther, Lange

²⁵⁴ Bayer (2004), 43. Bayer refers to WA 54, 179–187.

²⁵⁵ LW 34, 327–338; WA 54, 176–187.

²⁵⁶ Quotation by Lange (2010), 51, where he refers to LW 34, 334; WA 54, 183, 27–29.

argues that the use of the plural *primitias*, “first-fruits,” is to be preferred to “beginnings.” *Primitias* accentuates the receiving event, instead of something one has begun.²⁵⁷

In dismantling the desire to find “one beginning,” one clear-cut moment of a breakthrough “event” within Lutheran scholarship, Lange calls for the *primitias* perspective. Coming from “philosophical drunkenness,” Luther turns to liturgical language and the metaphor of baptism, that is, continually experiencing the trauma of God’s absence and then receiving God’s presence by way of God’s grace. Consequently, the Introit of the Mass does not signalize “the beginning,” but the perpetual liturgical journey of dying and rising. The *primitias*, “the first-fruits” of the Christ-event, are embodied in ongoing disruption and emergence, characterizing the continual process of baptism, which is never consummated in this life.²⁵⁸

It is worth recalling Luther’s view on the interpretation of the biblical scriptures. Every encounter with the text is a new journey; there is no hidden meaning waiting to be unwrapped. The traumatic experience of being lost and dying is the position of the liturgical subject. However, this is by no means a condition of silent acceptance of the disrupted context. On the contrary, just as the crucified Jesus cried “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” the liturgical subject verbalizes the trauma of being deserted. The turnaround, the rising from the abyss, is “God’s entry into the text not as object of study” but as the addressee of lament and thanksgiving.²⁵⁹ The *introitus* indicates God’s entry into the liturgical journey anew.

The Illusion of Preparation

To sum up, Psalm 34 is a kind of “counter-voice” in Luther’s exposition of the penitential Psalms. In comforting the troubled supplicant, Luther mediates “the present God” in the experience of “the hidden God.” Catherine Pickstock notes, regarding the ambiguity of the perpetual journey of the liturgical subject, that the unknown arrival into God is the beginning. “To begin is to arrive.” Pickstock provides a typological reading of Psalm 42, the opening of the Latin Mass. By conceptualizing the antiphon, *Introibo ad altare Dei: ad Deum qui lætificat iuventutem meam*, of the Latin Mass,²⁶⁰ Pickstock evokes her pivotal image of the ambiguity of

²⁵⁷ Lange (2010), 51–52.

²⁵⁸ Lange (2010), 58–59.

²⁵⁹ Lange (2010), 38–39.

²⁶⁰ Psalm 43:4, “Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy.” The Latin Mass sets off the enumeration of the Vulgate version of the Psalter.

the perpetual journey toward God. The antiphon is preceded by naming the Trinity, *In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti*, which sets the worshipping “I” in a position of disruption:

The initial assertion of the journey is framed by the Trinitarian Name, which dislodges our deictic security: 'are we inside or outside? What is our place?'²⁶¹

In Pickstock's optic, the altar is the place where glory can be offered. Even though liturgy is an aporetic impossibility, the liturgical subject's journey toward God (the altar) cannot begin before its ending. Through the repetition of the antiphon “*Introibo*” the intention of the journey is proclaimed to be “an arrival *at*, and an entering *into*.” The arrival at the altar, the place of glory, and the entering into God, Pickstock declares to be a liturgical impossibility, as the still-repeated antiphon, *Introibo ad altare Dei*, coerces the liturgical subject into a reappraisal of the journey. It follows that the journey is perpetually inverted, arriving is beginning, and to begin implicates the concept of having arrived.²⁶² Actually, by the re-assertion of the antiphon, the liturgical subject is stranded at a distance from God.

Even though five centuries divide Luther from Pickstock, they depart from the same worship order, the Latin Mass, and both pay considerable attention to every element of the liturgy. Concerning the entry of the Mass, Pickstock sticks to the traditional position, literally as well as in her typological reading. In the initial repeated antiphon of Psalm 42, a dialogue is carried out between the presider and the assembly. Pickstock targets, all the same, this entry as a prelude to the arrival of divine presence. In a sense, the liturgical subject is not yet established. The three times repeated antiphon, *Introibo ad altare Dei*, is a step to purification. Before “the proper” journey begins, the liturgical subject has to be purified through the *Confiteor*, which Pickstock describes as “a preparation of the self, a putting-on or putting-off to render oneself fit for, or partially protected from the divine presence; in other words, a process of purification.”²⁶³

Even if Pickstock sees “structural re-beginnings” of the liturgical journey reverberating in the Latin Mass, the contradiction with Luther's interpretation is quite obvious.²⁶⁴ In his revision of the Latin Mass, in terms of liturgical theology, Luther most distinctly abolishes any kind of

²⁶¹ Pickstock (1998), 184.

²⁶² Pickstock (1998), 184–185.

²⁶³ Pickstock (1998), 186.

²⁶⁴ Pickstock (1998), 186.

preparatory elements. In *The German Mass*, he proceeds to propose Psalm 34 as the entry to the whole Mass. According to Luther, the liturgical journey, signified by the baptismal pattern, does not entail any “preparation of the self” by the self. God’s invitation to exercise love is reflected in the entry to worship, which truly is an entry, since Luther gets rid of the *Confiteor*. No human work, not even a liturgical act of self-preparation by confession of sins, will merit God’s grace. To question, like Pickstock, whether we are “inside or outside,” is not relevant in Luther’s liturgical theology. The liturgical subject is, in a sense, always inside, always being justified by God’s grace anew. At the same time, the liturgical subject is constantly outside, a sinner *incurvatus in se* (turned inward on oneself), unable to “purify” him- or herself from sin. Here, again, we have the famous formula *simul iustus et peccator*, the state of being simultaneously justified *and* a sinner. Therefore, it is a matter of “and,” not “or,” since the human condition is a “*Double-existence*.” It is the experience of God’s presence as grace, and of God’s absence in the inward turning into the self.²⁶⁵

By virtue of Luther’s liturgical theology, the integration of dogma and worship, the “double-existence” can be called the liturgical *simul*. Not being “inside or outside,” but being “inside *and* outside” is that which stamps the theology of Luther. In other words, it is an illusion to consider any kind of preparation as a precondition for participating in the liturgical journey, whether expressed in worship or in everyday life.

Hans-Martin Barth, in his interpretation of *simul iustus et peccator*, questions the traditional confession of sins practiced in many churches today. Barth affirms the fact that Luther’s point of departure is grace, not sin. That is precisely why Luther emphasizes sinfulness: the basis of life before God is grace, and only grace. Luther’s commentary on the last words of Psalm 143:12, “For I am Thy servant,” starts with the following statement:

I live in grace.²⁶⁶

It is beyond human reach to overcome sinfulness, that is solely the redemptive work of God. At its core, Luther’s conviction is that the individual ought to spell out everything before God. There is no reason to try to hide or beautify one’s guilt. Barth compares Luther’s concept of sin

²⁶⁵ Translation of the German “Doppelexistenz,” see Oberman (1982), 196. According to Oberman, Luther finds expressions in Tauler and *Theologia Deutsch* in order to describe the experience of the “double-existence.”

²⁶⁶ LW 14, 204; WA 18, 528, 37.

and guilt with the Jungian idea of “the shadow,” that is, the “dark side” of the personality.²⁶⁷ The point is to know oneself from every “side.” It is also essential to verbalize one’s full self, *coram Deo*, whatever may be the subject matter. (This is what Luther says in the preface of the Psalter).

The preparatory confession of sins makes no sense. Even if the liturgical subject receives absolution in the service, his or her status as sinner is still a reality. Furthermore, Barth claims that the ritualized sequence of confession of sins and absolution in the liturgy seems to strengthen this [awareness of being a sinner].²⁶⁸

“How about a baptismal reminder instead of a penitential act at the beginning of the service?” asks Barth.²⁶⁹ Actually, what Luther advises is an admonition or a paraphrase to be read after the sermon, and before receiving bread and wine. What really matters is to take part in the Eucharist, which is to take part of the absolution of sins. Luther wants the assembly to be aware of this:

The Testament of Christ is true faith and, above all, take to heart the words wherein Christ imparts to us his body and his blood for the remission of sins.²⁷⁰

With reference to Psalm 130, a scholar of sacred music states that it is not to “do acts of penance” that is required, but to “repent and believe.”²⁷¹ What matters is the constant journey from the traumatic experience of death to the awakening of hope, life renewed.

²⁶⁷ However, Jung’s idea of the shadow does not indicate merely iniquities and guilt. The shadow refers to the unaware parts of the self which the person has to get to know in order to understand her/himself and others.

²⁶⁸ My translation from German: “Die ritualisierte Abfolge von Sündenbekenntnis und Absolution in der Liturgie scheint dies verfestigen.” See Barth (2009), 288. Barth points to the importance of counselling in order to deal with guilt and sin. Furthermore, he claims the experience of forgiveness in the public worship is probably not relevant anymore.

²⁶⁹ Barth (2009), 287.

²⁷⁰ Preferably, Luther wants the presider of the worship to keep to a prescribed admonition so that nobody confuses the theological context. “Here we must limit our freedom and keep one form of paraphrase or admonition.” Luther refers to the early church wherein the Eucharist admonition was also practiced. Later, though, the admonition turned into a public confession. Most likely, by a prescribed wording, Luther’s intention is to rule out the possibility of a common confession. In accordance with Luther, confession of sins and absolution belongs to the counselling. See LW 53, 80; WA 19, 96, 20–33, 97, 1.

²⁷¹ Leaver (2007), 152.

Luther's Expositions

When Luther returns to interpret the seven penitential Psalms anew, he displays the fact that he is working in process and learning. As pointed out above, Luther characterizes liturgy as a place of constant transformation and learning anew, a *locus exercitatio*. In the preface to the second interpretation of these Psalms in 1525, Luther states that he, in the *meantime* between his two expositions, discovered new meanings in the text. As also discussed above, the notion “meanwhile” signifies a work in progress for Luther. This time, moreover, Luther’s reading is based on his own translation of the Hebrew text. Referring to Augustine, who “daily improved in writing and teaching,” Luther indicates his own way of elaborating biblical texts, that is, through both writing and teaching. Whether liturgy is both an oral and writing processes, or largely and entirely oral, is a question that will be dealt with later. On this point, Lange and Pickstock have divergent opinions (see below).

My translation is based on Luther’s texts, that is, the *Weimarer Ausgabe*. Of course, to be intelligible, translation must look to the context more than to every syllable. Consequently, I take in consideration Luther’s own commentaries to the Psalm in question.

Psalm 6: The Pattern of The Journey

1 Ah HERR, straff mich nicht ynn
deynem zorn, und zuchtige mich nicht
ynn deinem grym.

2 HERR, sey myr gnedig, Denn ich
byn schwach.

3 Heyle mich, HERR, Denn meyne
gebeyne sind erschrocken, Vnd meyne
seele ist leer erschrocken, Ach du,
HERR, wie lange?

4 Wende dich, HERR, und erette
meine seele, hilff myr umb deyner
guete willen. Denn ynn dem tode

1 Oh LORD, do not punish me in
your anger, and do not discipline me
in your rage.

2 LORD, be gracious to me, for I am
weak.

3 Heal me, LORD, for my bones are
terrified, and my soul is empty by fear.
You, oh LORD, how long?

4 Turn around, LORD, and rescue
my soul, help me owing to your
trustworthy will. For in death nobody

gedenckt man deyn nicht, Wer will
dyr ynn der hellen dancken?

5 Jch erbeyte mich mit meynem
sufftzen, Jch schwemme meyn
bette die gantze nacht, Und wayche
mit meynen threnen meyn lager.

6 Meyn gestalt²⁷³ ist verweset fur
dem zorn, und ist alt worden, Denn ich
allenthalben geengstet werde.

7 Weychet von myr alle ubelthetter,
Denn der HERR hat die die stym
meyns weynens gehoeret.

8 Der HERR hat meyn flehen
gehoeret, Meyn gebet hat der HERR
angenomen.

9 Es müssen sich alle meyne
feyndeschemen und erschrecken,
sichumbkeren und sich schemen
ploetzlich.

remembers your trustworthy will.

Who are going to praise you in Hell?

5 I exert myself²⁷² in my sighing,
every night I overflow my bed with
tears, and with my tears I wet my
bedstead.

6 My shape is decayed of anger and
growing old, because throughout I will
be scary.

7 Go away from me, all workers of
evil, for the LORD has heard the
sound of my weeping.

8 The LORD has heard my plea, the
LORD has accepted my prayer.

9 All my enemies ought to be
ashamed and horrified, and in turning
back, they abruptly feel ashamed.

Preface

As pointed out above, Luther's liturgy is a place of constant transformation and learning anew, a *locus exercitatio*. In the preface to the second interpretation of these Psalms in 1525, Luther states that he, in the *meantime* between his two expositions, discovered new meanings in the text. As also discussed above, the notion "meanwhile" signifies a work in progress for Luther. This time, moreover, Luther's reading is based on his own translation of the Hebrew text. Referring to Augustine, who "daily improved in writing and teaching," Luther indicates his own way of

²⁷² "I exert myself" refers to the word "erbeyte," that is, labor. In his commentary, Luther writes that even sighing is labor: "Also hie auch, ich erbeyte mich mit seufftzen, byn unruhig fur seufftzen." WA 18, 483, 5–9.

²⁷³ In his commentary, Luther juxtaposes the word "gestalt" (shape) and the word "ungestalt" (unshaped).

elaborating biblical texts, that is, through both writing and teaching.²⁷⁴ Whether liturgy is both an oral and writing processes, or largely and entirely oral, is a question that will be dealt with later.

The specific penitential issue in Psalm 6 is of little consequence. The profound “voice” of this Psalm reveals the complicated world of humanity expressed by *the language of vulnerability*; it is a “prayer with tears.”²⁷⁵ Not only tears, however, permeate this cry to God. The psalmist also calls for God to be sensible of the situation. In general, Psalm 6 is considered to be a Psalm of individual lament, and many writers give this Psalm a lot of attention.²⁷⁶ In the view of Luther, Psalm 6 has a special position of generality (see below). In Psalm 6 we recognize stanzas 1–7 as a journey from life to death, as the existential cry of *Kyrie eleison*, Lord have mercy. Even so, in Luther’s exposition of Psalm 6, the movement to death and the movement to life are intertwined. Still, the first part will focus on Luther dealing with lament as the traumatic experience of abandonment and loss of meaning, and later, the reverse, from death to life, indicating that a new beginning will be exposed.

According to Lange, liturgy is a place of return in Luther’s thinking, which the exposition of Psalm 6 indicates. It is important to acknowledge that there is no hidden meaning in the encounter with the biblical narratives. The Christ-event is no *imitatio*, no unbroken remembering, but a conformity, *anamnesis*, in the ongoing non-solitary journey within the communion of all saints. Luther, referring to the First Commandment, points to the significance of “running to God,” to cry out the experience of God's absence before God. Evidently, “the hidden God” does not indicate any speculative matter, but points to the addressee of the traumatized liturgical subject. In lamentation reside moments of uncertainty; therefore Pickstock's focus on the non-solitary journey as the tension between knowing and not knowing. Similarly, Lathrop criticizes contemporary liturgy for not holding out this ambiguity of lament and hope, this tension between dying and rising.

In accordance with Luther’s statement that Psalm 6 displays the pattern of all seven penitential Psalms, special attention will be given to it in the following analysis.

²⁷⁴ LW 14, 140; WA 18, 479, 2–14.

²⁷⁵ Eaton (2005), 74.

²⁷⁶ Breck Reider (1997), 23–25.

Disorientation: Staring into the Face of Death

The lament that emerges from trauma is an experience of moving from life to death, parallel to Luther's statement on Psalm 6 and other Psalms of the same kind:

This Psalm and others like it will never be thoroughly understood or prayed unless disaster stares man in the face as it does in death and the final departure.²⁷⁷

Luther's statement includes two important aspects. The first is the relation between understanding and praying. In order to acquire a more trustworthy language *about* God and *to* God in contemporary worship, there is a demand for less harmonization and more open conflict in conversations with God. Evidently, praying and understanding go hand in hand in Luther's search for a new meaning. We do not recognize the wrestling with God as the oddest position. On the contrary, to Luther, praying is to a great extent molded through confrontation with the divine addressee.²⁷⁸ As a matter of fact, Luther finds "a new grammar" verging on despair in his struggle for meaning.²⁷⁹

Secondly, Luther shows the necessity of experiencing the terrifying absence of meaning and divine support. This implies a loss of everything: ambition, work and power. The existence of the individual is disrupted and entirely out of control. What is left is the experience of being forsaken and condemned. Turning to Job in the Hebrew text, Luther reinforces the necessity of the traumatic loss, because it is also the way to "risen" life:

When you think you are devoured, then you shall shine forth as the morning star.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷ LW 14, 141; WA 18, 480, 34–36.

²⁷⁸ See section above, "Prayer as Confrontation." Here, I criticize Wainwright's aspects of wrestling prayer as a kind of "defence" of God, to be compared with Luther's approach to a God coping with the supplicant struggle and lament. The verbalization *coram Deo* requires earnestness and not a "proper behaviour." See Wainwright (1980), 43–44.

²⁷⁹ Henning Luther, *Frech achtet die Liebe das Kleine: Biblische Texte in Szene setzen, Spätmoderne Predigten* (Stuttgart: Radius-Verlag, 2008, Erweiterte Neuauflage), 21.

²⁸⁰ LW 14, 141; WA 481, 2–3.

Coram Deo: The Fundamental Position of Human Beings

Luther's exposition of the penitential Psalms starts with a string of words indicative of his approach to all these Psalms, as well as for his liturgical theology:

In all trials and affliction man [sic] should first of all run to God.²⁸¹

The basic condition of human beings is *coram Deo*, defined by Oswald Bayer as the fundamental anthropological constitution according to the theology of Luther.²⁸² Bayer gives attention to a number of significant dimensions of Luther's notion that every human is to be a theologian. Bayer mainly identifies "*Gemeindetheologie*" (the theology of the congregation) as the mission of all who gather in the name of Jesus Christ. The gist of Luther's reference to Matthew 18:19–20²⁸³ is, according to Bayer, the basis for setting off the significance of "*Gemeindetheologie*."²⁸⁴ Basically, this theology derives from the sixth *nota ecclesiae*, the prayer which predicates the ecclesiological importance of this sign of the church.²⁸⁵ Connections to the priesthood of all believers can be found throughout Luther's work. It is notable that, in the same period when Luther is dealing with the Latin Mass, that is, 1523, he also clarifies the position of the assembly's mandate to interpret theology:

Indeed, all Christians are priests, and all priests are Christians.²⁸⁶

Bayer also gives attention to the theological implications of being *coram Deo*, not least in consideration of the priesthood of all believers. The question of "what is theology?" is firstly a

²⁸¹ Commentary on Psalm 6:1. See LW 14, 140; WA 18, 480, 23: "Jnn allem *leyden* und anfechtung soll *der mensch* zu aller ersten zu Gott lauffen..." (italics added). I would rather prefer the word "*suffering*" in translation of the German "leyden." The word "trials" have more of a test embedded than the austere "suffering." In the German WA the more inclusive word "Mensch" is throughout translated into "man" in the English version, LW.

²⁸² Bayer (2004), 17, "[F]undamentalanthropologische Konstitution."

²⁸³ "Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

²⁸⁴ As far as I understand, the notion "*Gemeindetheologie*" (the theology of the congregation) is established by Bayer. However, I find it most important in order to highlight the heart and soul of the priesthood of all believers. Here, Bayer points to the vocation of all Christians to care for, counsel and comfort each other. Bayer (2004), 251–252.

²⁸⁵ Bayer (2004), 251.

²⁸⁶ LW 40, *Concerning the Ministry*, 1523, 19; WA 12, 178, 28–29: "*Suntque prorsus omnes Christiani sacerdotes, et omnes sacerdotes sunt Christiani.*"

question of subjectivity, that is, “who is a theologian?” The foundation of faith is the First Commandment, “I am the Lord your God.”²⁸⁷ God is continually addressing humans in order to substantiate the position of the subject. The First Commandment implies the constant question to the subject: “Where are you?” In answering the divine address, the subject is constituted anew. At this point, Bayer brings to the fore the difference between Descartes and Luther concerning the constitution of the subject. In Luther’s view, the organization of the subject is a perpetual process, a movement of continual renewal. Subjectivity is not just based on the question of “from where?” as it is for Descartes. It is a process of an ongoing divine turning to human. The entering of this divine-human dialogue is one of the *nota ecclesiae*, the *oratio*, the prayer in thanksgiving as well as in lament. These fundamental movements (“*Grundbewegungen*”) of the subject, as for example amazement and lamentation, originate in the proclamation “I am the Lord your God.”²⁸⁸ The *locus* of the subject is *coram Deo*, and whatever the content of *oratio* may be, the human “should run to God.” Even though Luther’s life and work are rife with confrontations and a struggle for meaning in the biblical readings, he is convinced that everything shall be brought to God. Concerning lament as well as thanksgiving, the human shall consider that the God of the First Commandment is *Exauditor precum*, a listener to prayers.²⁸⁹

I would say that the lifelong journey oscillates, figuratively speaking, between the “stations” of *kyrie* and *gloria*, and that Luther highlights the Psalter as an indispensable source of prayers for these and other diverse situations. By usurping the language of the *communio sanctorum*, exemplified in the “well-trying guide” of the Psalms, every person is provided with prayers of lament and joy before God. I would also say that Luther’s translation of *The Seven Penitential Psalms* into German is highly motivated by the aim to point out the significance of bringing everything *to* God and *with* God. In the preface to the Psalter (1545), Luther’s view on the intimate relation established through the Psalms, words that “burn and live,” is of crucial importance:

And that they [the saints] speak these words to God and with God, this, I repeat, is the best thing of all. This gives the words double earnestness and life. For when men [*menschen*] speak

²⁸⁷ *NRVS*, Exodus 20:2.

²⁸⁸ Bayer (2004), 15–18.

²⁸⁹ In the last letter to his wife Katharina, and four days before his death, Luther reasserts that God is the *Exauditor precum*. See LW 50, 311 and WA DB 11, Nr. 4207, 300, 13.

with men about these matters, what they say does not come so powerfully from the heart; it does not burn and live, is not so urgent. Hence it is that the Psalter is the book of all saints; and everyone, in whatever situation he may be, finds in that situation psalms and words that fit his ease, that suit him as if they were put there for his sake, so that he could not put it better himself, or find or wish for anything better.²⁹⁰

Here is the basis of Luther's "coram-Deo theology," that is to say, the human subject's first step is to turn to God, in bitter times and sweet.

Bayer's understanding of Luther's anthropological status in terms of "*Grundbewegungen*" is similar to Pickstock's point of view regarding the perpetual journey toward God. In Pickstock's view, the anthropological position is the non-solitary journey of being simultaneously arrived and in transit, a journey in which the liturgical subject is constantly restored. Although humanity's fundamental goal is to arrive in the divine presence, *coram Deo*, the subject is always travelling forward into God, "running to God." Even if a person is experiencing Hell and affliction, he or she should, like David in the Psalms, turn to God, especially in matters of lament. As Luther exclaims:

How often does David lament and cry out in the Psalms.²⁹¹

At this stage Luther's advice is "to pray, read, or sing Psalm 142."²⁹² He considers this to be of value in providing certainty in terrifying situations. Once again we notice Luther's liturgical framing of the Psalms as useful, whether in praying, reading or singing.²⁹³

²⁹⁰ LW 35, 256; WA DB 10.I, 103, 18–27.

²⁹¹ *Comfort When Facing Grave Temptations*, LW 42, 183; WA 7, 784, 13, *Tröstung für eine Person in hohen Anfechtungen: Eynn trostliche ertzney, für leut, die inn grossenn anfechtungen ligen, von anfechtungen des bosen feindts*, 1521, WA 7, 784, 13, 786, 9. In all probability the "person" in LW 42 is a woman addressed by Luther, see WA 7, 785, 5, "schwester."

²⁹² Psalm 142:1–2: "I cry to the Lord with my voice; to the Lord I make loud supplication. I pour out my complaint before you, O Lord, and tell you all my trouble."

²⁹³ LW 42, 184; WA 7, 786, 9. In all probability the "person" is a woman addressed by Luther, see WA 7, 784, 5, "Zum erstenn das ya der *schwester* rath nit uff ihr selb stehe" (*italics added*). Compare LW 42, 183, "First, such a person must by no means rely on himself."

Definition of Trauma

Dirk G. Lange applies trauma theory to his understanding of Luther's liturgical theology. Multiple fields of trauma studies exist today. Such studies have emerged, for example, in the areas of philosophy, sociology, literature and psychology. Nevertheless, we find crossover agreement on the characteristics of a traumatic event and its meaning. There is a consensus along the lines of the Greek notion of trauma as "wound" or "injury":

To be traumatized is to be slashed or struck down by a hostile external force that threatens to destroy you.²⁹⁴

Where the experience of trauma is concerned, the importance of the "invisible" wounds, the wounded soul, is the prime example. In his commentary on Psal. 6:3, Luther describes the feeling of being forsaken and rejected by God as "[t]he inner hurt of the soul."²⁹⁵ Contemporary theologians, for instance Serene Jones, emphasize the value of carrying traumas into the liturgy, in order to make them "[a]vailable for the balmlike work of human care and grace."²⁹⁶

The connectedness between theology and trauma can be described as alterations in *time*, *body* and *word*, appearing in the traumatic experience of suffering. *Time*, the first aspect, points to the fact that trauma is not a single event, nor a one-time event. Temporality is a fundamental problem of trauma. Trauma is truly the antithesis of the well-known expression "time heals all wounds." On the contrary, in trauma, the past is not gone, it permeates the present. By its return, the traumatizing event not only enacts the past, but it also adds something new. (Compare Lange's concept of *accessio*; see below). The return of the past traumatic event enacts something that was not previously fully known or comprehended. For this reason, the return of the trauma is not merely a remembering of an event, it is a *re-enacting* in the present.

²⁹⁴ Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 12. Jones is a systematic theologian studying the discipline of traumatizing events.

²⁹⁵ LW 14, 142: "But it [time] seems especially and immeasurably long to those who have that inner hurt of the soul, the feeling of being forsaken and rejected by God." See also WA 18, 481, 18–19.

²⁹⁶ Jones (2009), 13–22. Jones describes a traumatized woman's way to healing and grace through liturgy, such as biblical narratives and rituals.

Body, the second aspect, indicates human connectedness to the world through a range of physical processes.²⁹⁷ When threatened, the body gathers all its capacity to react to the traumatic event. In consequence, a number of physical processes can be damaged in one way or the other. For instance, a person's experience of violence can result in an alteration of their basic biology. This occurs especially in situations where areas of the brain shut down. It is linked, in general, to the body's attempt to respond to intense stress. That is to say, "[t]he body experiences trauma in ways that escape cognitive functioning and awareness." With reference to research of the relation between trauma and body, we notice that "[t]he body bears the marks of trauma in ways that escape cognitive knowledge."²⁹⁸

Word, the third aspect of trauma, is the loss of relevant communication. The reality of a limited language or a lack of language leads to experiences of isolation. Language is fundamental to an individual's access to the world and to all kinds of social life. In healing trauma, one paramount dimension is finding a narrative to be integrated into the traumatized person. Nevertheless, it is not always possible to find a language applicable to the trauma. Fortunately, there are different ways of communication. Communicating trauma also appears "between the lines," as a "language of the unsayable." In the end, traumatizing events need to be brought into language, in one way or the other.²⁹⁹

The Trauma of Being Terrified and Forsaken

In Luther's commentaries on the first penitential Psalm, he considers this Psalm to be of general interest, applicable to everyone. Every human being is a sinner; in reference to this fundamental position Luther claims that "[t]his Psalm is general and excludes no one" (commentary on Psalm 6:1).³⁰⁰ This Psalm is indeed both a universal and an individual matter.³⁰¹

²⁹⁷ The connection of body and world in the liturgy seeks for transformation in order to make the *accessio* possible. This issue is described in the work of Lena Sjöstrand, *Mer än tecken: Atmosfär, betydelser och liturgiska kroppar* (Det Teologiske Fakultet: Københavns Universitet, 2011), 225–241.

²⁹⁸ Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 18–21. Rambo's pivotal concern heeds to what happens between passion and victory, such as the event of Christ descending into Hell. This claim leads to what Rambo calls "A Theology of Remaining," which highlights the importance of harboring the unknown, life out of control.

²⁹⁹ Concerning the unspoken language, Rambo refers to Annie Rogers, *The Unsayable: The Hidden Language of Trauma* (New York: Random House, 2006). See Rambo (2010), 21, note 13.

³⁰⁰ LW 14, 141; WA 18, 480, 22–23.

³⁰¹ This statement is applicable to many Psalm commentaries by Luther; concerning this case it is very distinct.

Luther's exposition of the terrifying cry, depicted in his commentaries on stanzas 2 and 3, is an example quite close to Dirk G. Lange's construct of the Christ-event as traumatic. The Christ-event points to the pattern of the ongoing dying and rising of the liturgical subject. However, this traumatic experience constantly brings something new, *accessio*, such as a new context.³⁰² Lange sets forth the idea that Luther frequently turns to a new context emerging through the trauma events of dying and rising. Psalm 6, Luther claims, cannot possibly be understood or prayed without experiencing disaster, like facing death. This is the significance of the trauma, the move *from life to death*, the experience of absence of meaning. According to Lange, "Luther realized that faith begins with an absence that disrupts all contexts, including religiously grounded contexts."³⁰³ The experience of absence is the confrontation with the abyss, with "[n]othing but a lost, condemned and forsaken sinner" (commentary on Psalm 6:2).³⁰⁴ In Luther's understanding, this position is necessary in order to receive divine help. People encountering this trauma are blessed, and no one who did not come across this status can pray profoundly: "But no one who has not been profoundly terrified and forsaken prays profoundly."³⁰⁵ "My spirit shakes with terror" (verse 3a) is the traumatizing event of disruption and absence.

Lange stresses the fact that Luther's treatment of the biblical texts was indeed something quite new, a revolution of reading and writing. In Luther's view, the text does not have a hidden or profound meaning which the reader should search for. On the contrary, the reader shall start with the event of the word, the event of writing. In his criticism of medieval exegesis, Luther claims that the words engage the reading, praying and writing subject in a struggle. The struggle itself is a matter of life and death, a language of confrontation requiring a new grammar. The loss, or decreased use, of regular language is considered one of the features of trauma events.³⁰⁶ Lange asserts that Luther finds the spatiality for a new grammar in the liturgy and through the liturgical language. Pickstock claims that the only language that truly communicates meaning is the liturgical language.³⁰⁷

Luther's focus is not on a philosophical event or category, it is all about the displacement of a returning force which cannot be grasped in theoretical terminologies. Ultimately, Luther's

³⁰² Lange (2010), 89.

³⁰³ Lange (2010), 15.

³⁰⁴ LW 14, 141; WA 18, 480, 39–481, 1: [n]icht mehr denn eyn elender, verdampfer, verlassner sunder da ist."

³⁰⁵ LW 14, 141; WA 18, 481, 6–7.

³⁰⁶ Jones (2010), 17.

³⁰⁷ Pickstock (1998), Preface, xv.

struggle is solely about the Christ-event as the event that continually disrupts all presupposed meanings and contexts.³⁰⁸

In Pickstock, the ambiguity of struggling with the Christ-event is depicted as “[t]his *space between knowing and not knowing*.”³⁰⁹ I find Pickstock’s expression very applicable to Luther’s commentaries on Psalm 6:1-3. On one hand, Luther knows where to turn in every terrifying situation: humans should “run to God.” The fundamental position of human is *coram Deo*. On the other hand, for Luther, the trauma exposes loss of meaning, a condition of not knowing what comes next. The human sufferer, Luther states in his commentary on the first stanza, “[d]oes not know whether God is taking him in hand out of anger or in grace.”³¹⁰ This tension between knowing and not knowing Pickstock describes as a resurrection process that signifies worship. Pickstock regards this tension to be at the core of the liturgical journey, a “space” totally out of the liturgical subject’s control. This “chartless journey” is not at all a disadvantageous passage; in effect it is the process of restoring the liturgical subject, a process at work.³¹¹

Gordon W. Lathrop criticizes contemporary worshipping for not maintaining the *tension* between knowing and not knowing, and for not acknowledging the ambiguity between experiences of God’s presence as well of as God’s absence. In reference to the life of humankind, and the life of the church, Lathrop emphasizes “[t]he whole history of unconsolated suffering; the experience of the distance or absence of God.”³¹² Eliminating this tension in worship as quickly as possible, with comforting words of divine presence and love, will inevitably alter liturgy into a closed system. In a closed system, where the ambiguity of faith and life is seen as a threat, the trauma of being terrified and forsaken is expelled. If so, the tension between the *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae* is excluded, for there is no place for the traumatizing space of being “in-between.” In a closed system, I would say, control dominates the process. It follows traumatic experiences of the struggle between life and death are excluded. The uncontrollable “Holy Saturday atmosphere” of lost or unsayable language renders a “homelessness” without any spatiality in the liturgy. As a result, the liturgical subject runs the risk of feeling the journey as solitary, a travel of total loneliness.

³⁰⁸ Lange (2010), 12 and 22–23.

³⁰⁹ Pickstock (1998), 265.

³¹⁰ LW 14, 140; WA 18, 480, 11–13. Instead of “he” and “him,” the text in WA speaks of “menschen.”

³¹¹ Pickstock (1998), 257–265.

³¹² Lathrop (1998), 208.

The “Sitz im Leben” of the Hidden God

In his comparison of the notion of *Deus absconditus* in Luther and Calvin, Oswald Bayer shows Luther’s counselling approach, in contrast to Calvin’s more systematic position. Luther’s distinction between “the hidden God” and “the revealed God” is in no way an effort to make the “hidden God” more endurable. Consequently, dealing with the issue of theodicy, or the full comprehension of God, makes no sense in Luther’s theology. All the same, Luther speaks of “the hidden God” with the aim of establishing the “*Sitz im Leben*” in lamentation. The “hidden God” is not a speculative issue, but the addressee of lament.³¹³ Even if God’s face is hidden, even if God has turned away, Luther claims the lamenter shall “run to God,” as clearly elucidated in his exposition of Psalm 6, “Turning away and returning” (see below).

Luther says of God, in the commentary on verse 8b: “God is so disposed that He gladly hears those who cry and lament.”³¹⁴ Luther underlines this statement by reference to the fourth of the penitential Psalms, Psalm 51; he emphasizes that God does not send away the lamenting and sorrowful spirit. Furthermore, Luther brings up Psalm 34 in order to confirm that God is near to brokenhearted people.³¹⁵ In *The German Mass*, Luther suggests a hymn or a Psalm in German to begin the service. As an example, he prints Psalm 34, in German, with the instruction to sing the Psalm in the first tone. In the same tone, *Kyrie eleison* follows the Psalm.³¹⁶

To a large degree, the laments in Psalm 6 are expressed in tears and weeping, and Luther emphasizes this condition in his commentary. Moreover, Luther does not exclusively picture God as willing to hear lament, but also recognizes an image of God as evoking tears. Already in *Dictata super Psalterium* (1513–1515), in the exposition on Psalm 6, Luther affirms: “Therefore the whole psalm is the plaint and voice of this our extremely loving mother hen, and a sweet voice calling forth sweet tears.”³¹⁷

³¹³ Bayer (2004), 189–190: “Die Rede vom verborgenen Gott hat vielmehr einen unmittelbaren ‘Sitz im Leben’ – in der Klage.”

³¹⁴ LW 14, 145; WA 18, 484, 7–8: “Gott ist so *gesinnet*, das er die schreiende und klagende *gerne* höret” (italics added). Two remarks: Firstly, as Lange singles out, in the translation from German to English, not seldom an incorporeity takes place. I would say the translation of “gesinnet” to “disposed” is one of these examples. Secondly, “gladly” expresses great joy, and I presume that is not what Luther want to say. I suppose “willingly” is more up to “gerne,” at least in this context.

³¹⁵ LW 14, 145; WA 18, 484, 9–13. The Psalm references are Psalm 51:18 (“The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart”) and Psalm 34:18a (“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted”). Luther concludes by saying: “Therefore weeping is preferred to working, and suffering exceeds all doing.”

³¹⁶ LW 53, 69; WA 19, 80, 31–86, 7.

³¹⁷ LW 10, 78; WA 55.II, 89, 3–7: “Quare totus Psalmus est questus et vox huius galline nostre affectuosissime et vox dulcis dulces lachrymas prouocans, nisi lapides essemus et durita duriores.” For Luther’s reference, see,

Luther shows another link to God as the addressee of tears in his commentary on Psalm 102, the fifth of the penitential Psalms, by way of reference to the Gospel of Luke: “Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.”³¹⁸ To Luther, it is of essence that human beings “run to God” with their entire lives, in “every need of body and soul” (commentary on Psalm 102).³¹⁹ Lament expressed in weeping also provides the supplicant with a place deeper than verbal communication.³²⁰ Janowski, dealing with the anthropology in the book of Psalms, pays special attention to Psalm 6. Songs of lament imploring healing are usually concentrated on the bandaging of wounds, but in Psalm 6:2–4, Janowski says that it is about animating body and soul. In his comment on stanza 6, Luther imagines what would happen if body and soul changed places. At times when the soul suffers, if it could weep as a body, it would weep much. Conversely, if the body could be the soul, and experience the suffering, it would be like snow melting down within an hour.

Whatever the reason may be for the supplicant's sufferings, he or she shall “run to God” in the belief that God willingly hears every cry, lament and tear. Uttering pain and sorrow through weeping is a response to the traumatic event of feeling terrified and forsaken. “Therefore, weeping is preferred to working,” according to Luther, which is one of numerous illustrations of his doctrine that outward good works have no impact on salvation.³²¹ Nevertheless, the activity of showing despair and grief toward God is a necessity, that is, not running away from the suffering but turning a loss into the hope of God's help. With reference to Psalm 18:3 (“I will call upon the Lord”), Luther affirms anew the addressee of the laments and tears, that is, God. Noteworthy is that Luther gives voice to God: “I will grant you a sincerely favorable disposition toward me *in the midst of your suffering*, and this will restrain you and keep you” (commentary on Psalm 6:5, italics added).³²²

Matthew 23:37: “Jesus said, ‘How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings.’”

³¹⁸ Luke 6: 21b. LW 14, 181; WA 18, 511, 34.

³¹⁹ LW 14, 184; WA 18, 514, 2–3.

³²⁰ Majorie Hewitt Suchocki, *In God's Presence* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1996), 34. Quotation by Sponheim (2006), 89 and 153.

³²¹ LW 14, 144; WA 18, 483, 16–20 and LW 14, WA 18, 484, 12–13. Luther's commentary on Psalm 6:6b and Psalm 6:8b.

³²² LW 14, 144; WA 18, 482, 34–40. Psalm 18:3, “I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.”

A New Orientation: From Death to Life

Luther considers Psalm 6 to be an example for everybody in suffering and distress who want to turn, with their entire life, to *coram Deo*. Contemporary studies place Psalm 6 in the same category as Psalm 22, that is, prayers of lament.³²³ In Psalm 6 as well as Psalm 22, however, the turnabout appears as in almost every Psalm in *Tehillim*.³²⁴ We observe the change of direction in verse 8 of Psalm 6, or between the lines of verses 7 and 8. Psalms scholar John D. Witvliet, writing on the biblical Psalms in Christian worship, describes the transformation in Psalm 6 as the journey from lament into an anticipation of thanksgiving, as “thunderous silence cries out between the lines of Psalm 6:7–8.” What Witvliet wants to underline is the shift, the moment of transformation, in terms of liturgical use today. Witvliet’s assumption is that in the old temple liturgy, words of confidence concerning salvation were used at this moment of transformation. Hence, Witvliet proposes a melodic phrase or a silence when Psalm 6 is used in contemporary liturgy in order to emphasize the shift from death to life.³²⁵

The Signification of *Conformitas*

Liturgy is a place of return, a story of constant baptism, a movement from death to life, a receiving of God’s grace anew. The Christ-events are not simply a re-actualization (*anamnesis*) or a communication without ruptures (*testament*). Dirk G. Lange singles out the paramount difference between imitation and conformity in Luther’s liturgical theology. *Imitatio* is plainly an act of remembrance, a repetition of what once happened, through the re-actualization of an unbroken communication. According to Lange, Luther gives up the idea of *imitatio*, the idea of remembering by repetition. In Luther’s liturgical theology, there is a profound difference between *imitatio* and *conformitas*, which indicates his view on remembering. *Imitatio* points to the process of control, that is to say, the event of a simple repetition by memory of a well-known fact. Likewise, it is to have the knack of knowing what occurred through *anamnesis* (re-actualization) or through *testament* (an unbroken communication). Conversely, *conformitas* is

³²³ For instance, Witvliet (2007), 55. *NRSV*, Psalm 22:1a, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

³²⁴ Psalm 88 is one of the most profound exceptions from the regular shape of the Psalter, that is, moving from death to life. It is urgently dark and ends up in darkness.

³²⁵ Witvliet (2007), 80–81. Coming to the words of the shift in the ancient temple liturgy, Witvliet refers to Joachim Begrich, "Das priesterliche Heilsorakel" in *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 52, (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1934), 81–92.

the passive tense: it cannot be worked out through human effort, it is beyond any access code. Conformity appears in the return of the uncontrollable event, it is receiving the new context, comprehended as an addition, as something wholly new. By using the baptismal language, a matter of life and death, Luther's insight is that he cannot sort out the chaos of events himself. All the same, Luther discovers that *the events conformed him* to the Christ-event. It is of utmost importance in Lange's discourse that the baptismal narrative entails moments of doubt. The liturgical journey "permits the events to stand in all their uncertainty and chaos."³²⁶ This emerges in Luther's constant encounters with the Psalter, in his writing, praying and singing the Psalms anew. *Imitatio* does not lead Luther to new insights, but to submit and let the events conform the situation and the liturgical subject. It is a new beginning, a new grammar.

Liturgy is a place of return, in which the new grammar of God's grace comes out anew. In the words of Lange: "The moment of scattering is the moment of promise, promise given." In the witness of the meal event in *Didache*, Lange imagines that, just as the bread is broken and disseminated, so the person verbalizing the words is disseminated. In underlining the fact that liturgy is not about imitation or just repetition, Lange distinguishes between iteration and imitation. *Iteration* is the constant confrontation with the event that disrupts the context as well as subject, that is, the opposite of imitation. Liturgical iteration indicates "[d]issemination as both death and promise." Furthermore, the dichotomy of law and gospel is disrupted. Dissemination is most profound in the sacramental practice in which the breaking of the bread, or the baptismal journey from death to life, points to the dissemination of promise as well. The disseminated promise goes with the participants of liturgy out through the door, sent to the world, "[a]s many broken pieces of bread." Lange does not regard dissemination as disadvantageous; quite the contrary, it is out of human control to comprehend the meaning. This scattering of meaning allows the promise of God to be truly a promise, not through human work, but as something that can only be received as gift.³²⁷

In the liturgy, as the place of return, something new always breaks up, something new is continually added: the *accessio*. A new beginning resides in the abyss, the experience of God as absence, and the Christ-event breaks up into something new added, God's grace anew. The theological connection, therefore, between dissemination and promise, corresponds to the

³²⁶ Lange (2010), 125–126.

³²⁷ Lange (2010), 89, 152–153.

liturgical relationship between dissemination and grace.³²⁸ Consequently, in terms of liturgical theology, we may say that the force of return, the *accessio*, is the new orientation. In baptismal language, both death and promise are implied in the liturgy as the place of return.³²⁹

Turning Away and Returning

Luther sets forth the journey from death to life in his commentary on Psalm 6:4a (“Turn, O Lord, save my life”). Luther describes the divine absence as the turning away of God, like a dreadful terror, by referring to Psalm 30:7, which depicts God's hidden face.³³⁰ Nevertheless, Luther affirms that the experience of being forsaken in a journey of doubt and distress is, in effect, a journey toward God. The turnabout Luther expounds in Psalm 6:4a is God *turning away* and God *returning*. In the German text, the turnaround is clearly indicated by the terms “*abekeren*” and “*widderkeren*.” Luther interprets the cry for deliverance as imploring God to draw up the condemned soul that has fallen to the bottom of life. Returning, the experience of God as present, stands for the opposite, for consolation and hope.³³¹

The “two-words” spirituality of Luther appears frequently in his exposition of the Psalter. Lathrop underlines the importance of juxtapositions in order to speak truthfully about God. The polarity, the “two-ness” of liturgy, includes many dimensions, one of which is “now and not yet.” In the assembly's worship, the *Ordo* opens for God's grace anew, yet still “We wait for God.”³³² “Consolation and hope” are attached to the eschatological framework. One of Luther's most distinctive theological positions is the doctrine of “Justification by Faith.” In the liturgy it is embodied as “Justification by Grace” (see section “Justification by Grace”).

In one way or another, Luther pays heed to this doctrine, justification by grace, in most of the interpretations discussed in this study. In the light of Lange's interpretation, this is expressed by the *accessio*, the returning of grace anew. However, it is important to recognize the singularity of

³²⁸ Lange (2010), 17.

³²⁹ Lange (2010), 152.

³³⁰ Psalm 30:8, “you hid your face; I was dismayed.”

³³¹ LW 14, 142: “A *turning away* on the part of God implies an inner rejecting and forsaking... *Returning*, however, implies inner consolation and a sustaining in joyous hope” (italics added). See also, WA 18, 481, 28–33 *Abekeren* Gottes, das ist ynnwendig entsagen, verlassen,..”*Widderkeren* aber ist ynnwendiger trost und enthaltung ynn froelicher hoffnung” (italics added).

³³² Lathrop (1998), 197. Here Lathrop focuses on the ordination of ministries, but the assembly itself is [t]he primary liturgical symbol.” Idem, 198.

the event. Experiencing God's turning away and experiencing God's return is a "from death-to-life" trauma, not a kind of *imitatio* of any enactment. The pattern of the Christ-event is the experience of the perpetual journey of *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*. In his introduction to Psalm 6, Luther points out the universality of this Psalm: all people recognize themselves in the disrupted position of being forsaken and disoriented. Trauma is the experience of remaining before God, even if God is turning away. In other words, the liturgical subject has nothing but "*das geschrey*." Luther's commentary on verse 9 ("The Lord has heard my supplication") shows the implication of hope in "*das geschrey*": "These words refer to a soul that is poor in spirit and has nothing left but crying, imploring, and praying in firm faith, strong hope, and steadfast love."³³³

By contrast, those who consider themselves splendid, always saying and doing the right things, do not to the full recognize others as equals.³³⁴ All in all, it reflects what Luther highlights in the introduction to the Psalter, that is, the significance of *gnothi seauton*, "know yourself" (see the next section, on Psalm 32). In accepting one's own vulnerability and plight, the liturgical subject realizes an equality with all other people. In describing the Psalter as a mentor, Luther sheds light on "*das geschrey*" as expressed in every human life in situations of abandonment and sorrow.

Psalm 32: Self-knowledge Through the Depth

³³³ LW 14, 145–146; WA 18, 484, 16–18: "Nicht anders drucken aus disse wort, denn eyne geyst arme seele, die nichts mehr hat, denn *das geschrey*, flehen und bitten ynn festem glauben, starcker hoffnung und stetter liebe" (italics added). Here I want to question whether "firm faith, strong hope, and steadfast love" is at issue when there is nothing left other than "*das geschrey*." See below, conclusions.

³³⁴ LW 14, 146; WA 18, 484, 28–30.

1 Wol dem, dem die
ubertrettunge vergeben sind, des
sunde bedeckt ist.

2 Wol dem menschen, dem der
HERR die missethat nicht zu
rechnet, ynn des geyst keyn
falscheit ist.

3 Denn da ichs wolt
verschweigen, verschmahten meyn
gebeyne, durch meyn teglich
heulen.

4 Denn deyne hand war tag und
nacht schwer auff myr, mein safft
vertrockete , wie ym sommer. Sela.

5 Darumb thu ich kund meyne
sunde, und verhele meyne
missethat nicht, Jch sprach: Jch wil
dem HERRN meyne ubertrettunge
bekennen widder mich, Da
vergabestu mir die die missethat
meyner sunde. Sela.

6 Dafur werden alle heyiligen
bitten fur dyr zur rechten zeit,³³⁵
darumb wenn grosse wasserflut
komen, werden sie nicht an die
selbigen gelangen.

1 Pleased are those whose
transgression is forgiven, whose
sin is covered.

2 Pleased are those to whom the
LORD does not count the guilt,
and in whose spirit is no falseness.

3 Though I wanted to keep it in
silence, my bones withered
through my lament all day long.

4 For your hand was weighty
upon me day and night, so my
liveliness was dried up, in the same
way as in summer. Sela.

5 Therefore I announce my sin to
you, and I do not conceal my
wrongdoing, I said: I want to
confess my transgressions (against
me) to the LORD, then you
forgave me the wrongdoing of my
sin.

6 Therefore all saints will pray to
you in a time of grace, so when the
rush of mighty waters appears it
will not reach them.

³³⁵ In the commentary on “zur rechten zeit,” that is, “in the right time,” Luther refers to Isaiah 49:8 by explaining that “the right time” is a time of grace.

7 Du bist meyn schirm, du
woltest mich fur angst behuten,
und mit rhum eynes erretten mich
umgeben. Sela.

8 Jch will dyr verstand³³⁶ geben,
und dyr den weg weysen, den du
wandeln sollt, Jch wil dyr mit
meynen augen wincken.

9 Seyt nicht wie ros und meuler,
die nicht verstendig sind, wilchen
man zaum und gebis mus ynns
maul legen, wenn sie nicht zu dyr
woellen.

10 Der gottlose mus viel leiden,
Wer aber auff den HERRn hoffet,
den wird die guete umbfahen.

11 Frewet euch des HERRN, yhr
zgerechten, und seyt froelich, und
rhu met alle, die auffrichtig sind
von hertzen.

7 You are my shield, you will
protect from fear, and surround me
with the clang of the one being
saved.

8 I shall give you my knowledge
and show you the way you should
go. I will guide you with my eyes.

9 Do not be like horses and
mules, which are without
understanding, in which jaw you
have to put bit and bridle, else they
would not stay with you.

10 The godless must suffer a lot,
but those who hope in the LORD
will be surrounded by goodness.

11 Rejoice in the LORD, you the
righteous ones, and be joyful, and
shout for joy, all you truthful in
heart.

Preface

Psalm 32 is a song of thanksgiving, and a favorite of Augustine. Because of its stress on the confession of sin, it belongs to the penitential Psalms.³³⁷ Rabbi Harold Kushner puts forth Psalm 32, along with Psalm 51, as two outstanding poems that give voice to human guilt and to the need for forgiveness.³³⁸ This second penitential Psalm moves from lament to praise. Bernard W. Anderson accentuates the aspiration of the psalmist to explore God's judgement and mercy. What

³³⁶ In his commentary, Luther juxtaposes "verstand" and "unverstand," that is, knowledge (of God) and unknowledge (of human).

³³⁷ Anderson (2000), 80. John Eaton's heading of this Psalm is "A Song of Forgiveness." He also refers to Augustine remaining in terminal disease, who had Psalm 32 written on the wall. See Eaton (2005), 147, 149.

³³⁸ Harold Kushner, *Who Needs God* (A Fireside Book, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989/2002), 119.

provides the profoundest safety is the acknowledgement of God as "my refuge" (stanza 7). The beginning and end of Psalm 32 corroborate that God hears the human crying out in pain and is "[p]erforming the re-creating miracle of forgiveness."³³⁹ Luther's exposition of Psalm 32 largely emphasizes the importance of lament, of *coram Deo*, as the way to God's grace.

Luther's exposition of Psalm 32 to a large degree focuses on the relation between self-knowledge and the knowledge of God and of God's creation. Here, as in his preface to the Psalter, Luther presents the Psalms as a mirror of the self, and he emphasizes the need for self-knowledge. However, the way to self-knowledge passes through the depths, through a lack of understanding of what is at stake. The unknown side of the journey, which Pickstock names "a kenotic space," is the only way to "re-surrection, to the experience of God's grace anew. Just as Jesus on the cross cries out the psalmic words "My God, my God why have you forsaken me," so the liturgical subject ought to verbalize fear and pain before God. By way of secondary theology, this condition touches on Luther's *theologia crucis*, and by way of primary theology, it is a question of bringing God to God. It follows that the question of theodicy is by no means a speculative issue, but the "*Sitz im Leben*" of lamentation, of not knowing where to turn (see above, commentary on Psalm 6).

Along the same lines as Oberman, Lange notes the linguistic movements in Luther's writing, whereby theological implications arise, for example in a single adverb such as "*da*" (here, there, then). Singing, reading and praying the Psalms is in effect a constant struggle for meaning and self-knowledge. In this struggle, in this baptismal pattern of dying and rising, something new is added, the *accessio*, according to Lange. In terms of self-knowledge, Luther touches on an interesting linguistic move in his preface to the Psalter, provided by the adverb "*da zu*" (in addition), whereby the outcome, the *accessio*, of self-knowledge leads to knowledge of God and God's creation. Both Oberman and Lange bring to the fore the close connectedness between language and theology in Luther's work.

³³⁹ Anderson (2000), 81.

Luther's Linguistic Movement

All the penitential Psalms are characterized by their depth of lament and by cries toward God. Luther urges the necessity of self-knowledge. In the preface to the Psalter (1545), Luther says that a person can find him/herself in the Psalms:

In a word, if you would see the holy Christian Church painted in living color and shape, comprehended in one little picture, then take up the Psalter. There you have a fine, bright, pure mirror that will show you what Christendom is. Indeed, you will find in it also yourself and the true *gnothi seauton*, as well as God himself and all creatures.³⁴⁰

The German text of the last sentence reads as follows, in the *Weimarer Ausgabe*: "*Ja du wirst auch dich selbs drinnen, vnd das rechte Gnotiseauton finden, Da zu Gott selbs vnd alle Creaturn*" (emphasis added).³⁴¹ In the adverb "da zu" resides, I would say, the theological significance (see below).

It is worthy of note that Luther connects self-knowledge to knowledge of God and creation. Lange emphasizes the *linguistic movement* by pointing to the process in Luther's insights into and work with the biblical Psalms. Through his ongoing struggle with the Psalms, Luther frequently moves from a condition of distress to the moment where the elaborated Psalm "tastes sweet" anew.³⁴² Lange maintains that the linguistic movement mirrors Luther's theological work in progress.

Luther's use of adverbs reflects, at the very least, his new theological insights. In this matter, Lange refers to Heiko A. Oberman, who has revealed that just a single adverb in Luther's work can have theological significance, as for instance the German word "*da*."³⁴³ The German adverb "*da*" strongly touches on a "pointing out" of a condition or a place. I would argue for an

³⁴⁰ LW 35, 256–257; WA DB 10.I, 105, 5–9: "Svmma, Wiltu die heiligen Christlichen Kirchen gemalet sehen mit lebendiger Der Psalter malet die heilige Kirchen mit jrer rechte farbe. Farbe vnd gestalt, in einem kleinen Bilde gefasset, So nim den Psalter fur dich, so hastu einen feinen, hellen, reinen, Spiegel, der dir zeigen wird, was die Christenheit sey. Ja du wirst auch dich selbs drinnen, vnd das rechte Gnotiseauton finden, Da zu Gott selbs vnd alle Creaturn."

³⁴¹ WA DB 10.I, 105, 8–9.

³⁴² Lange (2010), 34.

³⁴³ Lange (2010), 35. With reference to Oberman, Lange shows that Luther's use of the word "*da*" points to place or situation, that is, not only or primarily to temporal relations between objects or events. See also Heiko A. Oberman, "Immo. Luthers reformatorische Entdeckungen im Spiegel der Rhetorik" in Gerd Hammer & Karl-Heinz zur Mühlen, eds., *Lutheriana Zum 500. Geburtstag Martin Luthers* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1984), 32–33.

important theological significance in “*da zu*” in the quotation above, in English translated to “as well as.” This expression, “as well as,” functions more as an equalizer of meaning; just as an individual can get to know him/herself, he or she can get to know God and creation as well. This translation assumes the standpoint to be the same, and we do not find any movement therein. In the German text, however, we observe the linguistic movement by virtue of “*da zu*.” Beginning with the act of “taking up the Psalter” and singing, reading and praying, the supplicant gets to know the communion of the saints as well as him/herself, and “*da zu*,” meaning “what is more” or “in addition,” the praying subject gets to know God and creation. This linguistic movement unquestionably reflects Luther’s theological approach. If a person starts to sing, read and pray the Psalter, something new happens, something is added or is given, namely “*da zu*,” what is more, “*Gott selbs vnd alle Creaturn.*”³⁴⁴

Indeed, this linguistic movement indicates an important concept in Luther’s liturgical theology. In confrontation and struggle with the word in singing, reading and praying, a new context arises, a “resurrection.” Furthermore, “*da zu*,” a gift is added, in this case a new understanding of God and creation. In the loss, the disruption, a new context emerges, and the liturgical subject receives an addition. What is added is what Lange defines as *accessio*, a gift that opens a new relationship to oneself and to God. According to Luther, self-knowledge implies a “death,” as it requires leaving the old context without a knowledge of the next step. In Lathrop’s terminology, we might say it is about the process of *Ordo*, two things producing a third, that is, God’s grace anew.

Lament and Self-Knowledge

Truly finding oneself, in other words, is a journey from life to death; it is the experience of God as hidden or absent. In a situation of lament and darkness, the liturgical subject descends into the “depths,” into the abyss and experience of God’s absence. At the same time, the lamenter is travelling toward God. In Luther’s view, these contradictory positions are reciprocal, in the sense of being on the same journey. Even if the supplicant cries out and does not register any change of

³⁴⁴ WA DB, 10.I, 104.

condition, Luther persists in the paradox (commentary on stanza 8): “Lack of understanding is real understanding; not knowing where you are going is really knowing where you are going.”³⁴⁵

This is the divine voice addressing the liturgical subject in times of distress and disorientation. By pointing to the way as unknown, but not without guidance, Luther accentuates a main issue in his theological thinking, namely, that the journey toward God is made thoroughly without human merit. Not knowing the way is truly knowing the way, Luther declares. It is the way of the cross, it is about submitting and submerging. The Holy Spirit and the word guide the journey. Luther’s advice is to trust the unknown journey as Abraham once did, leaving the well-known landscape in order to be guided into completely new surroundings. In addition, the baptismal metaphor comes to the fore in Luther’s proposal for how to travel in unmapped territories: “Submerge yourself in a lack of understanding.”³⁴⁶ Immersion into the depths of not knowing and not understanding is an experience of death. Pickstock calls the unknown side of the journey “a kenotic space.” It is to be empty of meaning and divine presence, in a position of self-effacement. Pickstock indicates, as does Luther, the paradox of the journey: “[T]here is no other way to be than to be on the way.”³⁴⁷

The way to self-knowledge is about surrendering and submerging.³⁴⁸ This does not imply a state of passivity. The liturgical subject is still travelling, that is, there is an addressable possibility of giving voice. Just as Jesus cried out his abandonment on the cross the supplicant has to let out her or his distress. The words and experiences exposed in the Psalter connect the liturgical subject with the *communio sanctorum* of all times, as Luther depicts it in his preface to the Psalms. The journey is characterized by its non-solitary condition. The traveler recurrently has the option of vocal expression, with help from the communion of saints, that is, the communion of justified sinners. This communication is liturgically framed, with regard both to its universality and its individuality.³⁴⁹ Self-knowledge comes by passing through depths and pain, again and again. Anyone who does not have these experiences cannot understand what it is all about. The necessity of crying out, of deploring inner suffering, is by Luther delineated as *the*

³⁴⁵ LW 14, 152; WA 18, 489, 17–18.

³⁴⁶ LW 14, 152; WA 18, 489, 11–22. The notion “Submerge yourself” corresponds to “Senck dich ynn.” WA 18, 489, 16.

³⁴⁷ Pickstock (1998), 185.

³⁴⁸ LW 14, 152: “surrender yourself to Me.” WA 18, 489, 12: [L]as mir dich.” These expressions correspond to the mystical language.

³⁴⁹ Bayer (2004), 65–70. The universality as well as the individuality take place in the communication of the assembly.

only way to God's grace: "[W]hoever does not cry out, finds no grace." The only way is the recognition of *the crucifying passages* of the journey. Self-knowledge through crying out is the way to mercy (commentary on Psalm 130).³⁵⁰

Psalm 32, the second of the seven penitential Psalms, begins with the words: "Happy are they whose transgression are forgiven" (stanza 1). Luther's exposition of this ingress indicates that the blessed are they who have transgressed, not they who have not. The "traveler" with insight into their own transgressions is on the way to self-knowledge. By bringing their laments *coram Deo*, and verbalizing their need of grace, the journey toward God emerges as trust in, and awareness of, God's presence.³⁵¹ In the transformation from lament to God's grace, the human realizes who she or he is; it is a time of self-knowledge: "This is whenever man realizes what he is"³⁵² (commentary on Psalm 32:7a). As a role model for self-knowledge, Luther mentions Mary Magdalene. In this context, Luther illuminates the way to self-knowledge by reference to Mary Magdalene's act in the house of Simon.³⁵³ In Luther's view, David in the Psalms, and Mary Magdalene, together with Peter and Paul, are examples of the way to faith and trust through self-knowledge. They all are "voices," together with all justified sinners in the *communio sanctorum*. That is, they are all mentors for how to vocalize lament and joy before God.

Luther's commentary on stanza 9a ("I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go") is a whole lesson in how to walk the way of self-knowledge. Throughout and above all, it is the divine voice speaking. The key phrases are "surrender yourself, submerge yourself, and forsake yourself," and these refer to the process of being on the way of the cross.³⁵⁴

³⁵⁰ LW 14, 190; WA 18, 517, 4, 31: "wer nicht schreiet, der findet keine gnade."

³⁵¹ Luther writes: "As soon as he *realizes* that he is a sinner and brings his *complaint* to Thee, he is *justified* and acceptable to Thee" (italics added). "Realizes" corresponds to the German "erkennen"; both languages point to the process of becoming aware of oneself. See LW 14, 150; WA 18, 488, 7–8: "Als bald er sich einen sünde *erkennt* und dir's *klaget*, als bald ist er *gerecht* und angenehm für dir" (italics added, in order to show the link between lament and self-knowledge). We could also formulate it as the connectedness between lament and justification. At large, I would argue for the German WA text which more profoundly reveals the linkage between lament and grace, for example: "[T]hey *confess* their iniquity to Thee and ask for grace." See LW 14, 151 (italics added). In WA 18, 488, 21–22 the cry ("der Schrei") is more distinct: "[D]as sie yhre bosheit dir *klagen* und gnade bitten" (italics added). Of course, we cannot be too sure about medieval German, and what Luther really intended to say. However, I find it noteworthy to observe questions of translation considering the interpretation of Luther's theology.

³⁵² LW 14, 151; WA 18, 488, 27–28.

³⁵³ Luke 7, 44–47.

³⁵⁴ LW 14, 152: "Behold, that is the way of the cross... but I, through My Spirit and the Word, will teach you the way you must go." WA 18, 489, 8–29.

Liturgy itself is an unceasing surrender, through the pattern of *Ordo* reiterating the question: “Why did God become human?” (*Cur Deus Homo?*). Liturgy and “ritual mastery” are widely different notions. Lange underlines the Christ-event as a continual loss of life, a trauma, but also the continual return of the resurrection, which Pickstock calls a “redemptive return.”³⁵⁵ This liturgical journey is not an *anamnesis* in the sense of just remembering, nor is it plain repetition. Liturgy, when seen as a perpetual iteration, takes the subject to the cross, to the recognition that someone died, anew. The redemptive return is “[a]lso the surprise of awakening to life to the continual return of the resurrection.” According to both Lange and Pickstock, the liturgical journey is not possible to grasp, and is outside of the subject’s control. In this journey of liturgical hermeneutics, Luther rewrites and struggles. The “cry” and the experience of loss of meaning drives Luther to iterate the interpretation of the seven Psalms anew. To Luther, the journey through the crucifying passages of absence and lament is his way to self-knowledge. Therefore, I would argue, Luther’s urgency regarding the seven penitential Psalms is a matter of counselling ordinary people through the way of spiritual death and distress. In his commentary on Psalm 102, he explains that, firstly, all of the penitential Psalms have the same intention: to depict the inwardly suffering.³⁵⁶ Luther’s intention, from the very beginning, is to encourage people to *verbalize* their fear and pain *coram Deo*, in order to obtain self-knowledge. In other words, without the *Schrei* in lamentation before God, the possibility of self-knowledge disappears. This, Luther’s insight, came from his own journey to self-knowledge, from death to life anew.

“Bringing God to God”

The cry and the cross, *geschrey und creutz*, originates, according to Lange, in the occurrence of trauma. Majorie Suchocki, who pictures God as a weaver, calls whatever is left in the divine hands “new stuff for the [God’s] weaving.”³⁵⁷ This approach corresponds very well to Luther’s, who urges that everything should be given back to God, hope as well as despair. The moment the liturgical subject recognizes his or her position as a sinner and a beggar and conveys a lament to

³⁵⁵ Pickstock (1998), 265.

³⁵⁶ LW 14, 179: “For this Psalm, like the others, first describes the inner suffering.” See also WA 18, 509, 19–21.

³⁵⁷ Quotation by Paul R. Sponheim, *Speaking of God: Relational Theology* (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2006), 98. See Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, *In God’s Presence* (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 1996), 34.

God a new weaving can take place., a new orientation turns up. The “new stuff for the weaving” produces new outlooks. The governing idea of Luther’s commentary on Psalm 32 is that the way of lament is a way to grace where God, at the appropriate time, “touches and visits” the subject with “the light of grace.”³⁵⁸

Oswald Bayer, dealing with the issue of theodicy, cites Luther’s concept of the three kinds of light: the light of nature, the light of grace and the light of glory. “The light of nature” appears to all of humanity, whereas *lumen gratiae*, “the light of grace,” comes to believers (as above). It follows, then, that “the light of glory” is eschatological and resides in the hope of faith. Due to this “light-doctrine,” Luther urges that the issue of theodicy be puzzled out under “the light of grace.” That is, from the perspective of eschatological hope, the idea of theodicy is bearable. Turning to this idea, Bayer criticizes Luther’s attempt to separate the issue of theodicy from the issue of predestination. The question of who gets the gift of faith (predestination) still lingers, of course. For this reason, Bayer speaks of “the open wound of theodicy.” In this context, Bayer refers to Luther’s own words in his exposition on *Operationes in psalmos* (1519–21): “*ad deum [revelatum] contra deum [absconditum] confugere.*” It is about “pushing” God against God, in order to cry out and verbalize suffering and abandonment. Consequently, to be touched with the “light of grace” also implies encountering the “hidden God,” that is, the unfathomable God, to whom the praying subject can cry out: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” For Bayer, in contrast to Leibniz – (for whom the topic of theodicy is a matter of reason and discourse *about* God) – the question of theodicy is attached to the process of “bringing God to God” (see Metz, above). The language of lament is “to call God against God.” In other words, it is “to call out” the God revealed in the Gospel. It is a matter of a communication *with* God, not *about* God.³⁵⁹ Bayer claims that Luther is in no way dealing with speculative notions of a “hidden” and a “revealed” God. Put simply: the question of theodicy is insoluble. As far as Luther is concerned, speaking about the hidden God is the *Sitz in Leben* of lamentation. In the affliction of lament, that is to say, the language of a hidden God comes out. Bayer concludes that Luther rejects the idea of a wholly comprehensible God, in favor of emphasizing the salvation,

³⁵⁸ LW 14, 150–151; WA 18, 488, 4–31.

³⁵⁹ Bayer (2004, 2. Auflage), 191–192. Regarding Luther’s concept of “the three lights,” Bayer writes about “*Lichte der Natur, Licht der Gnade,*” and “*Licht der Herrlichkeit.*”

the good gifts and the omnipotence of God. In accepting that God is not fully apprehensible, the omnipotence of the hidden God, and the goodness of the revealed God, remain.³⁶⁰

Paul R. Sponheim points to the fact that Luther frequently emphasizes the risk inherent in trying to fit God and suffering together into a kind of system. By contrast, it is of the utmost importance to keep the question “Why?” alive. Luther’s view is that God hides with the intention of being discovered. All the same, Luther claims that the “unclothed, naked” and hidden God is connected to human evil.³⁶¹ Paul Ricoeur offers a word of caution against turning every theory about suffering into a doctrine: it “[c]ould only be the scandalous theology of predestination to evil.”³⁶²

Luther’s main premise regarding Psalm 32 is that nobody is without transgression, and that insight into this status is the way to being touched with grace and forgiveness by God. “But who are they?” asks Luther, who are touched with God’s grace and forgiveness? With reference to stanzas 6 and 7, Luther, for whatever reason, accentuates the significance of verbalization before God.³⁶³ Crying and complaining *coram Deo* is a desire for God's grace. To wait and cry for the grace of God is the cross-bearing travel toward God (“*geschrey und creutz*”): “I wait for the Lord; that is, in this crying and cross-bearing.”³⁶⁴ It is, consequently, of decisive importance to Luther that the liturgical subject vocalizes the experience of pain, sin and cross-bearing before God. As he comments on Psalm 32:6: “I see that one must speak and act thus, it cannot be otherwise.”³⁶⁵

With the assistance of Pickstock's image, we can claim that the crucifixion-journey towards God is, at the same time, God’s arrival of grace. In fact, to follow that road a bit further, it can be said that the arrival of God’s grace is the start of the crying supplicant’s journey. Luther’s preoccupation with the importance of the cross-bearing lamentation is an insight into how to be aware of God's grace.

³⁶⁰ Bayer (2004, 2. Auflage), 190.

³⁶¹ Quotation by Sponheim (2006), 111. See Steven Paulson, “Luther on the Hidden God” in *Word and World*, Number 4 (Saint Paul, Minnesota: Luther Seminary, 1999), 367.

³⁶² Quotation by Sponheim (2006), 110. See Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbol of Evil* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1967), 212.

³⁶³ LW 14, 148; WA 18, 485, 29–36.

³⁶⁴ LW 14, 191; WA 18, 518, 37 (commentary on Psalm 130).

³⁶⁵ LW 14, 150; WA 18, 488, 4–5.

Lament and Crucifixion Passages

Paul Althaus draws attention to the significance of the way of the cross, the *theologia crucis*, in Luther's thinking and works. In fact, a genuine Christian theology always points to the wisdom of the cross, the *sapientia crucis*. Christ on the cross is the touchstone for every subject who wishes to learn about God, and by so doing one also learns something about oneself. On the journey toward the cross, the liturgical subject will encounter a God of powerlessness and humility. Luther calls this experience looking at God's backside, *posteriora*, with reference to the story of Moses.³⁶⁶ The *posteriora* is a journey into vulnerability and weakness. As one experiences suffering and distress in one's own life, and in the life of the world, again and again, the journey toward the cross is perpetual. Faith, Althaus states, is therefore not a static position, but a constant motion.³⁶⁷

To travel toward the cross anew is also to trust that the journey is not without guidance; the subject must have confidence in the word of God's promise as an ongoing address. This is a way of confessing the hidden God, of trusting "the back of God" through the crucifying passages. Luther holds that a mark of God's realm is the crucified life: struggling, crying, scrimping, dying and praying people are like "the children of death and sheep for the slaughter." Luther always connects this suffering to baptism. As written in Romans 6:3, anyone who is baptized into Christ is baptized into his death.³⁶⁸ According to Luther, this means that "Christians are subject to death" (Commentary to Psalm 102).³⁶⁹ *Theologia crucis* is evidently liturgically framed; it is the life of the baptized, within the priesthood of all believers, with responsibility in the assembly as well as in the world – the condition of *coram Deo* and *coram hominibus*. The liturgical subject's crucifixion journey leads to the recognition not only of one's own suffering, but also the passion of others.

The liturgical subject travelling the way of the cross is not, however, a silent supplicant, but rather the opposite. As Jesus did on the cross, the supplicant should cry out his or her pain and experience of abandonment. Genuine lamentation is the way to grace. Blessed is the one who

³⁶⁶ Exodus 33:18–23. Moses wishes to see the glory of the Lord. As Moses is not allowed to see the face of the Lord, he must be placed in a cleft of a rock. There Moses will see the back of the Lord, but not His face.

³⁶⁷ Althaus (1963), 40: "Glaube ist nicht ein Standpunkt, sondern eine immer neue Bewegung."

³⁶⁸ Romans 6:3: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?"

³⁶⁹ LW 14, 185; WA 18, 513, 33, 23–30. Luther also refers to Paul, see Romans 8:36: "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

complains (commentary on Psalm 102).³⁷⁰ Laments incorporate the chords of blues, that is, they vocalize pain and endurance. Blues and lament challenge the liturgical subject to make time within the situation, and to take time to complain. Stephen Breck Reid puts it like this: “If one subverts the lament and swiftly moves to praise, the lament is lost with disastrous consequences.”³⁷¹

In Pickstock’s terms, in that case, the experience of the redemptive return is missing. Luther asserts it to be of no use to run away from suffering, death and hell (commentary on Psalm 6:5).³⁷² The way to surmount the situation is by journeying through the trauma of the cross. For Luther, Abraham’s willingness to be guided through the unknown future is illuminating. Luther proclaims: “Behold, that is the way of the cross” (commentary on Psalm 32: 9a). This implies that the way is out of human control, as the traveler is not forced to choose this way. Luther emphasizes that God wants the travelling subject to attend, as Abraham did, “[f]reely and willingly without the pressure of the Law, in spirit and in love.”³⁷³

Psalm 38: A Prayer from the Edge

1 Herr, straffe mich nicht ynn
deinem zorn, und zuechtige mich
nicht ynn deynem grym.

2 Denn deyne pfeyle stecken ynn
myr, und deyne hand drucket mich.

3 Es ist nichts gesunds an meynem
leybe fur deynen drewen, und ist
keyn frid ynn meynen gebeynen fur
meyner sunde.

1 LORD do not punish me in your
anger, and do not chastise me in your
wrath.

2 For your arrows are stabbed into
me, and your hand pushes me.

3 There is no health in my body
because of your threat, and there is
no stillness in my bones because of
my sin.

³⁷⁰ LW 14, 179–180; WA 18, 510, 6–12. Luther’s commentary on Psalm 102:4b, “I forget to eat my bread.” Here Luther compares the bread of the dried-out heart to be God’s presence, which gives the heart new strength: Blessed are those who recognize the position and “[c]omplain about it” (italics added). In the WA version: “[d]och sehen und *klagen kan*” (italics added).

³⁷¹ Stephan Breck Reid, *Listening In: A Multicultural Reading of the Psalms* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 8–9.

³⁷² LW 14, 144: “We must overcome afflictions, death, and [H]ell. However, they will not be overcome by running away.” See also, WA 18, 482, 39–40. Psalm 6:5, “In [H]ell who will give Thee thanks?”

³⁷³ LW 14, 152, 153; WA 18, 489, 21–22, 490, 14–15.

4 Denn meyne missethat sind uber
meyn heubt gangen, wie eyne
schwere last sind sie myr zu schwer
worden.

6 Meyne wunden sind stinckend
und faul worden fur meyner
thorheyt.³⁷⁴

7 Jch kruemme und buecke mich
fast seer, den gantzen tag gehe ich
traurig her.

8 Denn meyne eyngeweyde gantz
verduerren, und ist nichts gesundes
an meinem leybe.

9 Jch byn allzu seer zestossen und
zeschlagen, ich heule fur unrüge
meynes hertzen.

10 HERR, fur dyr ist alle meyn
begirde, und meyn seufftzen ist

11 Meyn hertz bebet, meyne krafft
hat mich verlassen, und das liecht
meyner augen ist nicht bey myr.

12 Meyne lieben und freunde
stehen gegen meyner plage, und
meyne nehisten treten ferne.

13 Und die myr nach der seelen
stehen, stellen myr, und die myr ubel
woellen, reden und tichten³⁷⁵ teglich
falschheyt.

4 For my wrongdoings have gone
over my head, like a heavy burden
are they too heavy for me.

6 My wounds are stinking and have
festered due to my foolishness.

7 I am crooked and bowed down,
all day long I go around mournfully.

8 For my inside withers completely
and there is nothing healthy in my
body.

9 I am overly crushed up and
punched, I cry out because of the
restlessness of my hearth.

10 LORD, you know all of my
requests, and my sighing is not
hidden from you.

11 My heart quakes, my strength
has left me, and the light of my eyes
is not with me.

12 My dearest and friends stand
distant from my pain, and those
close to me step far-off.

13 And those who look for my soul,
and those who wish me evil, set me
up with rubbish talk and everyday
fabricate falsehoods.

³⁷⁴ There is no stanza 5 in WA.

³⁷⁵ "Tichten" means "Dichten."

14 Ich aber mus seyn wie eyn tauber, und hoere nicht, und wie eyn stumm, der seynen mund nicht aufft thut.

15 Und mus seyn wie eyner, der nicht hoeret, und der keyne widder rede ynn seynem munde hat.

16 Denn ich harre, HERR, auff dich, Du HERRE, meyn Gott, wirst antworten.

17 Denn ich dencke, das sie ia nicht sich uber mich frewen, wenn meyn fus wancket, wurden sie sich hoch rhumen widder mich.

18 Denn ich byn zu leyden gemacht, und schmerzen ist ymer fur myr.

19 Denn ich zeyge meyne missethat an, und byn sorgfeltig fur meyne sunde.

20 Aber meyne feynde leben und sind mechtig, und die mich on schuld hassen, der ist viel.

21 Und die myr guts mit boesem zalen, sind myr wider, darumb das ich dem guten nach iage.

22 Verlass mich nicht, HERR, mein Gott, ferne dich nicht von myr.

23 Eyle, myr bey zu stehen, HERRE, meyns heyls.

14 But I must be like the deaf, and I do not hear, and like the mute, who does not open his/her mouth.

15 I must be like one who does not hear, and in whose mouth is no response.

16 Because I wait for you, LORD, you, LORD, my God who will answer.

17 For I suspect they do not express joy over me, when my foot wobbles, they will loudly boast against me.

18 For I am made for suffering, and my suffering is ever with me.

19 For I do not hide my transgression, and I am wary for my sin.

20 But my enemies are alive and mighty, and those are many who hate me without reason.

21 And those who repay me evil for good are against me, because I am chasing after good.

22 Do not abandon me, LORD, my God, do not distance yourself from me.

23 Hurry to help me, LORD, my salvation.

Preface

John Eaton entitles Psalm 38 “A Prayer from the Edge.” He highlights the earnest illness, physically and spiritually, of the lamenting supplicant. The Lenten usage of this Psalm embodies the suffering of the individual as well as the suffering people of God. What is more, the atmosphere of hardship and distress is maintained throughout the Psalm.³⁷⁶ In comparing Psalm 32 and Psalm 38, we observe the different tenses noted by Janowski. It follows that Psalm 32, which to a large degree expresses thanksgiving, is written in the past tense. Conversely, the present tense dominates the heavy lament in Psalm 38. It indicates a condition of being on the verge of disaster, “on the edge.”

Luther considers Psalm 38, along with Psalm 102, to be misery narratives expressing the suffering of the soul as well as of the body. The traumatized supplicant lands in a state of alienation from familiar surroundings due to the absence of God's grace, and “it makes the body sick throughout.” Luther claims, with references to Psalm 22, that the embodied lament of the liturgical subject is linked to what happened to the crucified Christ. By getting in touch with the suffering of Christ, the lamenter experiences a journey of self-knowledge expressed by the soul and the body. Via Oberman's interpretation of *simul gemitus et raptus* in Luther's theology, the significance of sighing as an expression of faith will be exposed.

The Unspoken *Gemitus*

In his commentary on Psalm 38:9, Luther declares: “That is, my *desire* (longing) is so great that I cannot express it in words and cannot pray.”³⁷⁷ In effect, Luther's commentary suggests that the supplicant does not know *how* to pray any more: “*Jch weis nicht zu bitten*” (emphasis added).³⁷⁸ By reference to Psalm 6:6a (“I am weary with my *sighing* [moaning]”) (in German WA “*seufftzen*”), Luther pictures suffering greater than whatever a lament can be: “My *suffering* [sorrow] is greater than my *lament* [sigh]” (in German WA “*klagen.*”) Luther obviously pays

³⁷⁶ Eaton (2005), 166–169.

³⁷⁷ LW 14, 159.

³⁷⁸ WA 18, 494, 32–33: “*Das ist, mein begirde ist so gros, das ichs mit Worten nicht sagen kan, Jch weis nicht zu bitten*” (italics added).

attention to the wordless “*seufftzen*” (sighs) and the inadequacy of “*klagen*” (lament).³⁷⁹ Luther, in other words, he refers to a suffering beyond the possibility of verbalization in lamentation. Another possible interpretation is to understand “sighing” as a lamentation in and of itself. That is to say, the body itself expresses heavy lament, the body “verbalizes” distress and suffering. To heave a deep sigh, I would say, could be life-sustaining.³⁸⁰

As previously noted, the corporeity in Luther’s writings often disappears in the translation of the German WA texts into English. Lange notes the fact that bodily expressions and metaphors are, in general, related to liturgy in Luther’s works.³⁸¹ This aspect must be considered, not at least in connection with human suffering and trauma. Alterations in time, body and language or words appear in the traumatic experience of suffering. The alteration in words could end up in “an unsayable language” which, in turn, signifies a number of traumatic situations. Luther describes the inability to verbalize deep sorrow and desire, not knowing how to find the words, as indicative of the traumatic position beyond spoken language. Nevertheless, Luther gives heed to another language, the bodily “voice” in lamenting, such as sighing. Oberman highlights the significance of “*seufzen*” in Luther’s work when he points to the word-pair of *gemitus* and *raptus*, sigh and rapture. In his reading of German mystical theology, Luther finds a parallel concept to describe the ambiguity of his key word-pair, *simul peccator et iustus*, and that is *simul gemitus et raptus* – “*Seufzen und Entrückung*” – which is acquired by experience. The latter points to the simultaneity of both misery and peace, both a bodily language of lament and (to borrow Pickstock’s terminology) an “arrival into God.” Of importance, however, is that Luther’s “sighing” is not confined to trying to elevate everyday trouble and duties. By contrast, “*gemitus*” is more a matter of struggling, through lamentation and sighing, which could end up in a cry to God. To trust the unspoken “*gemitus*” is to trust the Holy Spirit, through whom the unsayable “*gemitus*” precedes humanity. “Sighing,” then, is an expression of faith, a *gemitus of faith*.³⁸² At heart, every “*simul*” is related to the simultaneous *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*. As Luther states in his commentary on stanza 4b: “Just as Christ was *at the same time* truly alive

³⁷⁹ LW 14, 159: “My sorrow is greater than my *sighing* can ever be.” In WA 18, 494, 34 the lament is to a greater extent expressed: “[*g*]roesser ist mein leid, denn mein klagen sein kan” (emphasis added).

³⁸⁰ For example, in order to help a patient to breathe a respirator is also adjusted to sighing. A deep breath, now and then, is of vital importance.

³⁸¹ Lange (2010), 30–31.

³⁸² Karl-Heinz Zur Mühlen, *Nos Extra Nos: Luthers Theologie zwischen Mystik und Scholastik*, Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, 46, herausgegeben von Gerhard Ebeling, (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1972), 223.

and dead, so also those who are real Christians must be full of sin and without sin *at the same time*" (italics added).³⁸³

At this point Luther is referring to the relationship between sin and justification. The individual who knows that he or she is living in righteousness and grace also finds the possibility to complain about and against sin. In other words, knowing oneself as *simul iustus et peccator* opens up the possibility of lamentation, through sighs or crying out. Showing Luther's idea of *simul* in the liturgical context is a considerable task. The polarity of life and death, of "full of sin and without sin," is, after all, the fundamental tension of liturgy that takes issue with "ceremony" as defined by Lathrop (see above). The significance of liturgy is, in this polarity, built on the root juxtaposition of the perpetual Christ-event.

Misery Narratives of Disorientation

Psalm 38 and Psalm 102 are veritable examples of "misery narratives" ("*Elendsschilderungen*"), where suffering of the soul and a painful body are related to each other.³⁸⁴ In his commentary on Psalm 38:10, Luther goes further down the road of despondency by quoting Psalm 22:14–15, "My heart is like melting wax, and my strength is dried up." This inner suffering is due to the painful arrows of God, and that is why the human face seems "sour, sorrowful, and dark." Luther adds that "I have become an *object of horror* even to my friends" (italics added).³⁸⁵

Not even people close to the supplicant have the courage to offer help and comfort. Luther's depiction corresponds to the status of trauma as an experience "beyond the edge." In most cases, the traumatized subject loses the ability to comprehend and respond to the situation and exhibits a range of symptoms. The inability to integrate the experience within the traumatized

³⁸³ LW 14, 158; WA 18, 493, 27–28: "...gleich wie Christus *zu gleich* lebendig und tod wahrhaftig war, also *zu gleich* müssen sie vol sunde und on sunde sein, die recht Christen sind."

³⁸⁴ Janowski (2003/2009), 176–180. Here Janowski refers to Psalm 38:3–9 and Psalm 102:2–8. He calls these sections "Sphäre der Krankheit" ("sphere of unhealthiness") in contrast to "Sphäre der Heilung" ("sphere of remedy"). The "misery narratives" are the consequence of the proximate connectedness between spiritual suffering and bodily suffering. "Sprechende Beispiele dafür [sphere of unhealthiness] sind die Elendsschilderungen von P 38,3–9 und Ps 102,2–8, in denen *seelisches Leiden und körperliche Not* eng aufeinander bezogen sind"). A quotation of Psalm 38:3–9 follows next.

³⁸⁵ LW 14, 159. The objectification is even more touchable in WA 18, 495, 9–10: "Das ist, ich bin auch meinen freunden *ein schewe* worden, das sie meinen lamer fliehen, wie er sagt anderswo" (italics added). "Ein schewe" means a scarecrow, that is, not only an abstract object but a very concrete image. (For another example of the incorporeity Lange is highlighting concerning the translation from WA to LW, see above).

individual's own identity leads to being objectified even in relation to people in well-known surroundings. The usual way of perceiving and interpreting experience vanishes, and mental as well as bodily symptoms appear.³⁸⁶ That is accurately what Luther describes when he says that the supplicant has become *an object* of horror, alienated from his friends. Luther underscores the depiction of this trauma with reference to Psalm 31: "They [my friends] flee from my misery, as the psalmist says elsewhere (31:11): 'My relatives flee from me.'"³⁸⁷ Luther clearly also has Job's trauma in mind: "He has put my family far from me, and my acquaintances are wholly estranged from me."³⁸⁸

Embodied Lament and Self-Knowledge

The suffering of the body leads to a profound search for the practice of lament. Recall the initial question posed above: "Have existing liturgical traditions anything to offer lamenting hearts?" Through the suffering of marginalized bodies, such as black South Africans during apartheid, the experience of a kind of endless Good Friday led to a need for unrestricted laments. A similar kind of experience, however, was displayed among white South Africans, regarding both the victims of apartheid and those who did not dare to question the system of discrimination. In South Africa today, many bear witnesses to the importance of embodied lament. Indeed, what emerged during and following the period of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1995–1998) was an insight that *lament has been transformed into hope*.

People with life-threatening health problems represent another example of marginalized bodies. In reference to Psalm 38:6–8, beginning with the words "I am utterly bowed down," a woman living "with a body pulsing with cancer cells" says: "Many days since my diagnosis, I have been lodged in lament. The 'Why, oh, why, Lord?'"³⁸⁹

In experiencing trauma, the body reacts in many ways and tries to respond to the dangerous situation. In his commentary on stanza 3, Luther refers to Psalm 6:2 ("Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am languishing") in order to express the suffering of the traumatized body. Luther uses the reaction of the body to describe the terrifying experience of God's arrows and God's

³⁸⁶ Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 18.

³⁸⁷ LW 14, 159–160; WA 18, 495, 10–11.

³⁸⁸ Job 19:13. See also Job 15b: "I have become an alien in their eyes."

³⁸⁹ Thompson (2010), 230–231.

“angry words.” This situation not only induces restlessness in the soul, but “it makes the body sick throughout.” Luther depicts the healing of the terrifying event in bodily terminologies by reference to the sacrament of baptism: “healed daily with the ointment of grace and the water of the word of God.”

As noted, “self-knowledge” is a key topic in Luther’s understanding and use of the Psalms. To know oneself is wisdom, but the lack of self-understanding reveals how “stinking my wounds” are: “For wisdom is the salt and water that cleanses the wounds, and this wisdom is none than thoroughly knowing oneself.”³⁹⁰ Self-knowledge, in Luther’s view, is connected to the insight of one’s own sinful status. Self-knowledge is also based on the insight of being justified, which “will not permit a man to let himself be destroyed.”

Luther affirms that the trauma of being exposed to God’s “arrows,” which causes anxiety of the soul and sickness of the body, is nonetheless connected to what happened to Christ.³⁹¹ Hence, the embodied lament of the supplicant is attached to the suffering of soul and body on the cross, that is to say, to Jesus’s own cry on the cross. Turning to the cross incorporates a moment of self-knowledge, which implies the traumatized experience of being abandoned and lost.

Psalm 51: From Death to Life Anew.

1 Gott, sey myr gnedig nach deyner
guete, und tilge meyne ubertretung nach
deyner grossen barmhertzigkeyt.

2 Wasche mich wol von meyner
missethat, und reynige mich von meyner
sunden.

3 Denn ich erkenne meyne
ubertretung, und meyne sunde ist
ymmer fur mir.

1 God, have mercy on me, according
to your benevolence, and according to
your vast compassion, wipe out my
transgressions.

2 Wash me completely from my
misdeeds, and cleanse me from my
sin.

3 For I recognize my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.

³⁹⁰ LW 14, 158; WA 18, 493, 30–38.

³⁹¹ LW 14, 157; WA 18, 493, 2–6.

4 An dyr alleine hab ich gesündigt, und ubel fur dyr gethan.

5 Darumb wirstu recht bleyben ynn deynen worten, und reyn erfunden, wenn du gerichtet wirst.

6 Sihe, ich byn untugend gemacht, und meyne mutter hat mich ynn sunden empfangen.³⁹²

7 Sihe, du hast lust zur warheyt, Du lessest mich wissen die weisheyt heymlich verborgen.

8 Entsundige mich mit Jsopen, das ich reyn werde, wasche mich, das ich schnee weis werde.

9 Las mich hoeren freude und wonne, das die gebeyne froelich werden, die du zuschlagen hast.

10 Verbirge dein andlitz von meynen sunden, und tilge alle meine missethat.

11 Schaffe myr, Got, ein rein hertz, und erneue ynn myr eynen willigen geist.

12 Verwirff mich nicht von deinem angesicht, und nym deynen heyligen geyst nicht von myr.

13 Las myr widderkomen den trost deynes heyls, und der freye geyst enthallte mich.

4 Against you alone, I have sinned, and done evil before you.

5 Therefore you will remain right in your words and found truly rightful when you are being judge.

6 Behold, I was made incomplete, and my mother received me in sin.

7 Behold, you desire truth, you let me recognize³⁹³ the wisdom in secrets concealed.

8 Eradicate my sins with hyssop so I will be clean. Wash me, so I will be white as snow.

9 Let me hear joy and delight, so the bones that you have crushed will be joyful.

10 Hide your face from my sins and wipe out all my misdeeds.

11 Create in me a pure heart, God, and renew a consenting spirit within me.

12 Do not throw me away from your face, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

13 Let me get the consolation of your salvation back again, and may the free spirit hold me up.

³⁹² It is unclear what Luther means by “empfangen” (receive). By way of the influence of Augustine we can assume that Luther refers to the conception. In his commentary he points to ontological terms, that is, “sunde mein natur und art ist” (sin is my nature and type). The question is: when does this condition appear, at conception or at birth, or through “the origin sin?” WA 18, 501, 31–37.

³⁹³ Here Luther connects “wissen” with “erkennen,” that is, “recognize.” WA 18, 502, 20–22.

14 Jch will die gottlosen deyne wege
lernen, das sich die sunder zu dyr bekeren.

15 Errette mich von den blutschulden,
Gott, der du meyns heyls Gott bist, das
meyne zunge rhume deyne
gerechtigkeyt.

16 HERR, thu meyne lippen auff, Das
meyn mund verkuendige deynen rhum.

17 Denn du hast nicht lust zum opffer,
ich gebe es sonst, und brand opffer
gefallen dyr nicht.

18 Die opffer Gottes sind eyne
zubrochen geyst, eyne zubrochen und
zuschlagen hertz wirstu, Gott, nicht
verachten.

19 Thu wol an Zion nach deynem guten
willen, bawe die mauren zu Jerusalem.

20 So wirstu lust haben zu den opffern
der gerechtigkeit, zu den brand opffern
und gantzen opffern, So wird man
farren³⁹⁵ auf deynen altar legen.

14 I shall teach the godless your
ways, so that the sinners will convert
to you.

15 Release me from bloodshed, God,
while you, God, are my salvation, and
my tongue praises your fairness.

16 LORD, open my lips, so my
mouth will preach³⁹⁴ your praise.

17 For you have no delight in
sacrifice, otherwise I would give it to
you, and sacrifices do not please you.

18 The sacrifice God cares for is a
broken spirit. A broken and crushed
heart, you, God, will not despise.

19 Do good to Zion according to
your good will, build up the walls of
Jerusalem.

20 Then you will have delight in the
right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and
whole offerings, so calves will be
placed on your altar.

Preface

Psalm 51 is closely connected to Ash Wednesday and Lent, especially verse 10, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.” In many Christian contexts,

³⁹⁴ The word “preach” corresponds to Luther’s commentary on this stanza, that is, “predigen.” WA 18, 506, 3–5.

³⁹⁵ In his commentary, Luther speaks about “kelber,” that is, calves.

these words are incorporated into a liturgical act of confession of sins.³⁹⁶ There are contemporary liturgical theologians who, like Luther, call into question this kind of “liturgical diet” in worship. Why is this one and only verse continually used without attention being paid to the integrity of the Psalm? The result is that the variety and “sound” of the Psalms vanish, and the movement from lament to praise is jeopardized.³⁹⁷ Headed as a prayer, Psalm 51 follows the most common pattern of the Psalter, that is, from lament to praise, from death to life anew.

In the early church, Psalm 51 was sung in the morning prayer (as was Psalm 118).³⁹⁸ Some theologians assert the Reformation breakthrough appears in Luther’s exposition of Psalm 51. Hans-Martin Barth, for instance, powerfully states that the bases of Luther’s theology – like sin and repentance, grace and justification, and what it really is to worship – come out in this Psalm. Though Barth finds it strange that Luther’s profound theology is expressed in Psalm 51, he gives no explanation why.³⁹⁹ Whatever the answer may be, I would argue for the significance of paying attention to Luther’s liturgical theology, that is, to observing his use of liturgy to convey theological thoughts, and vice versa.⁴⁰⁰

The ongoing journey of the liturgical subject can never be accomplished in this lifetime. Therefore, the assembly gathering around the *Ordo* is a constant process of learning God’s presence and grace anew. Pickstock’s concept of the perpetual non-solitary journey of arrival and departure is quite useful in understanding Luther’s process of searching for God’s grace anew. It follows, too, that this journey of the liturgical subject is the perpetual restoration of that subject’s identity. Lange, on the other hand, claims that Luther finds his language, his *nova*

³⁹⁶ For instance, the service book of the Church of Sweden, *Den svenska kyrkohandboken 1*, antagen av 1986 års kyrkomöte (Stockholm: Verbum, 1986–87). See the opening of the Mass (Högmässa).

³⁹⁷ Witvliet (2007), 50. This kind of “cutting out” the one and same stanza Witvliet calls “liturgical diet.”

³⁹⁸ Wilkinson (1999), 51. Concerning morning Psalms, some others are mentioned, such as Psalms 63, 67, 148–50. Wilkinson’s main case is The Jerusalem Liturgy described by Egeria though here he refers to Rudolf Zerfaß “Die Schriftlesung im Kathedraloffizium Jerusalems” in *Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen*, LQF 48 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1968), 12, note 33.

³⁹⁹ “Die ausführlichste Erörterung Luthers über den Gegenstand der Theologie findet sich *merkwürdigerweise* (strange/peculiar) in seiner Auslegung des 51. Psalms.” See Barth (2009), 117 (*italics added*). Is it strange because Luther elaborates his theological groundwork by way of the Psalms, or because he explicitly refers to Psalm 51?

⁴⁰⁰ Oswald Bayer refers to the Psalter in order to understand Luther’s thinking: “Luther’s use of the Psalter is the key in general to the understanding of his use of language, his linguistic power, as well as his experience of his world and life.” See Oswald Bayer, “Luther as an interpreter of Holy Scripture” in Donald K. McKim, ed., *Martin Luther* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 80. Even so, the more explicit “Luther’s theology” should be added, according to my reading of Lathrop and Lange.

lingua, through the liturgy, yet the question remains: To what degree is the new language oral or written?

The perpetual journey of departure and arrival, from absence to presence, does not require an explicit rite of confession of sins. On the contrary, the continual enactment of baptism entails the confessing of sins as well as the receiving of grace anew, that is, there is no need for an additional rite. The baptismal journey clearly implies the *lex exercitandi*, the lifelong exercise of loving God and God's will.

The Kyrie Connects Us to the World

The incitement of the non-solitary journey is that all humans are “on the same road”; there is a kind of traveler's equality, in the sense that everybody is a sinner and a beggar.⁴⁰¹ Through this insight of knowing oneself, the traveler realizes that he or she has actually arrived into God's open heart. Luther quite often gives an extraordinarily concrete form to his theological viewpoints, like the commentary on stanza 10: “Hence all are sinners before God, to whom the heart is as open as hand and work are open to man.”⁴⁰² However, in the same commentary, Luther turns to the sinner's perpetual travel, without end. The non-solitary journey is all about the inner righteousness of the liturgical subject; this status can never be achieved in this lifetime. Luther therefore pays heed to the eschatological facet of the journey, as he simultaneously points to the need of being a traveler: “Inner righteousness, however, is never attained completely in this life but must always be pursued.”⁴⁰³

Regarding Christian liturgy, especially “the insiders,” Lathrop notes the implication of being beggars incorporated within the whole of humanity, to be always searching and learning anew. This takes place when the assembly gathers around the various juxtapositions of *Ordo*, the bath, the word and the table. For example, when the bath is set next to the table, God is taking the beggars “deeper and deeper into the mystery of grace.” The juxtaposed holy things continually render a new thing, a third thing. Although it is all out of the control of the assembly, God's gifts

⁴⁰¹ Gordon W. Lathrop refers to a piece of paper found by Luther's deathbed: “The truth is, we are beggars.” See Lathrop (2003), 195.

⁴⁰² LW 14, 171; WA 18, 504, 5–6. The word “man” corresponds to “menschen” in WA.

⁴⁰³ LW 14, 171; WA 18, 504, 7–8.

are without protection, and granted to everybody entering the assembly.⁴⁰⁴ Learning anew, the *lex exercitandi*, is constantly an issue to every “beggar,” a reminder that he or she is integral to the whole of humankind.

Each “thing” of the *Ordo*, then, is always juxtaposed to God’s beloved world. The position *coram Deo* is to be connected to the world, *coram mundo*. Therefore, Luther proclaims that it is not a question of choosing either God or the world. To “choose” God sets the liturgical subject before the world, and to “choose” the world does not mean getting rid of God. It is about reciprocity.⁴⁰⁵

In this context I will once again refer to Luther’s rejection of a penitential act in the worship service, while he advises that the Kyrie opens the worship, after a hymn or a German Psalm. In *The German Mass*, Luther proposes Psalm 34. Note that the first hymn or psalm and the Kyrie are to be sung in the same tone, that is, in the first tone. Even if Luther mentions a plain threefold Kyrie,⁴⁰⁶ everyone in the assembly should define whatever the cry for mercy implicates, for instance personal matters and/or worldly concerns. All the same, turning to God and crying for mercy connects the liturgical subject to the world, to “choose” God is to “choose” the world. Correspondingly, every aspect of the liturgy is juxtaposed to every other aspect, not least to God and the world. Nevertheless, I find it crucial to remember that the *Kyrie eleison* involves the liturgical subject in the cry for the world. When the Kyrie gets mixed up with the confession of sins, the individualistic perspective tends to overrule any turning toward the world. The matter of solidarity is a relentless aspect in Luther’s interpretation of the Psalms.

Identity and Journey

Even if inner righteousness is not achievable, Luther invites the believer into the process of constantly striving and searching for God. A profound characteristic of Luther’s exposition of the penitential Psalms are the notions of *outwardly* and *inwardly*.⁴⁰⁷ This juxtaposition runs all

⁴⁰⁴ Lathrop (2003), 195. Lathrop names the signs, the symbols and the events of worship “things” and “holy things.” See the title of his book *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (1998).

⁴⁰⁵ “Das Sein vor Gott und das Sein vor der Welt gelten nicht etwa als wahlweise Möglichkeiten oder getrennte Wirklichkeiten, sondern im strengen Zugleich einer Wechselbeziehung. Wer sein Sein vor Gott hat, hört damit nicht auf, vor der Welt zu existieren. Und wer sein Sein vor der Welt hat, ist damit nicht das Sein vor Gott los.” See Ebeling (2006), 229.

⁴⁰⁶ LW 53, 69–72; WA 19, 86, 7–12: “Kyrie Eleison. Christe Eleison. Kyrie Eleison.”

⁴⁰⁷ However, this is not the focus of my analysis.

through every exposition of these seven Psalms. The outward spirit is a distorted spirit driven by a care for, and focus on, itself. On the one hand, this is an aspect of being human: All are sinners before God. On the other hand, there is a good will, “the upright spirit,” that is travelling toward God, “[s]eeking God alone.” This process of seeking God alone is a divine act and “must be made *anew* and poured into the innermost part of our heart by God.”⁴⁰⁸

The restoration of the subject, which perpetually returns anew, is what Pickstock denotes as “the aporetic impossibility of liturgy.” The non-solitary journey toward God cannot commence before it is finished, that is, before God has “journeyed towards us.”⁴⁰⁹ Like Luther, Pickstock in large measure frames the process of the liturgical journey with the Psalms. Pickstock analyzes the Vulgate version of Psalm 42:4 (“*Introibo ad altare Dei*”),⁴¹⁰ as applied as the *Introitus* (entrance), a component of the preparatory work in the medieval Latin Mass.⁴¹¹ Pickstock designates the opening sentence of the Mass, “*In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti*,” as an invocation to the contradictory journeys. In one perspective it is a sending out of God, in the other it is a travelling into God. Identity and journey, arrival and travelling, are at hand. The liturgical subject takes part in the simultaneous processes of restoration and of being sent out.⁴¹² Luther states that there are *two things* to be learned in every Psalm: God's blessing implies contradiction, such as the polarity of hope and despair. This polarity is embedded in the human being, but together, by the work of God's hand, they are in progress, and a new identity is growing. “Both of these [hope and despair] are in one person and even in one handiwork at the same time.”⁴¹³ This work of God in process is compatible with many of Luther's comments regarding the penitential Psalms, for example Psalm 51:12.⁴¹⁴ In regard to the Psalm's word

⁴⁰⁸ LW 14, 172; WA 18, 504, 12–14. “[M]us von *newen* gemacht werden” corresponds to “[M]ust be made *anew*” (in both German and English italics are added). Commentary on Psalm 51:10b, “and put a new and right spirit within me.”

⁴⁰⁹ Pickstock (1998), 185.

⁴¹⁰ Psalm 43:4a, “Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy.” The *Introitus* in the Latin Mass is a dialogue: “*Introibo ad altare Dei./Ad Deum qui lætificat iuventutem meam.*” This versicle is repeated a number of times. See Pickstock (1998), 182.

⁴¹¹ Pickstock argues that the medieval Latin Mass is more relevant than the liturgical renewal of Vatican II. In her opinion the medieval Mass was much closer to people's everyday life. “[T]he liturgy of the Middle Ages was embedded in a culture which was ritual in character.” For example, bread and wine for the Eucharist were products of ordinary life. Pickstock finds the liturgical outcome of Vatican II “*not radical enough*.” She claims it to be more of a textual renewal than a “re-invention of language and practice.” See Pickstock (1998), 170–171. However, it is noteworthy that Luther and Pickstock have the same starting point of their liturgical theological work.

⁴¹² Pickstock (1998), 181.

⁴¹³ LW 14, 191; WA 18, 518, 22–32. Commentary on Psalm 130:5a, “I wait for the Lord.”

⁴¹⁴ Psalm 51:12a, “Restore to me the joy of your salvation.”

about restoration of the subject by grace, Luther says that it means: “Give me *again* a conscience happy and secure in Thy salvation” (italics added).⁴¹⁵

In “running to God,” in *Introibo* and in praying in the manner of the first words of Psalm 143 (“Hear my prayer, O Lord”),⁴¹⁶ Luther sees the process of God at work in an authentic saint. After affirming that a saint receives more from God than he or she gives, Luther points to the inward and constant journey towards God: “Hence imploring, desiring, searching is the true essence of the inner man.” With a quotation from Psalm 105:4, he emphasizes the perpetual journey: “Seek His presence *continually*”⁴¹⁷ (italics added, in WA: “*allezeit*”). The opposite attitude, which Luther sees in those who claim they have already found God and no longer seek God, is self-conceited. Life is more a matter of “a *becoming* pious than a being pious” (italics added, commentary on Psalm 143). Here Luther also refers to Psalm 34:10b, “Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.”⁴¹⁸

The perpetual “*Grundbewegungen*” of arrival and travel is a non-solitary journey; the fundamental position of the liturgical subject is always *coram Deo*. Luther’s ultimate paradigm of the simultaneous journey is the voice which continually calls upon the traveler, “Where are you? I am the Lord your God.” In some ways, it corresponds to Pickstock’s point of departure. Her approach to the medieval Mass, as a pattern of the liturgical journey, begins with an identification of the journey. The “*Grundbewegungen*” are in every respect in the presence of the triune God, iterated anew: “*In nomine Patris et Fili et Spiritus Sancti.*” In whatever direction the traveler may go, it is perpetually a journey into God, that is, it is God’s coming to the liturgical subject. In reference to Psalm 130:6,⁴¹⁹ and also Psalm 123:2b,⁴²⁰ Luther says:

My soul always has its face directed straight *toward God* and confidently awaits *His coming*. (Italics added, commentary on Psalm 130:6)⁴²¹

⁴¹⁵ LW 14, 172; WA 18, 504, 29–32.

⁴¹⁶ Psalm 143:1a.

⁴¹⁷ Psalm 105:4, “Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually.”

⁴¹⁸ LW 14, 196; WA 18, 522, 11–18. Psalm 34 is also Luther’s proposal for the beginning of *The German Mass*, though he wants the entire Psalm to be sung by the assembly.

⁴¹⁹ Psalm 130:6, “My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.”

⁴²⁰ Psalm 123:2b, “So our eyes look to the Lord our God, until he has mercy upon us.”

⁴²¹ LW 14, 192; WA 18, 519, 32–35. It is noteworthy that the German WA even more strongly emphasizes the Advent of “His coming,” that is: “[s]einer zukunfft” (his future). I would say that the word “future” indicates something quite *new*. The restoration of the liturgical subject is iterated anew in the non-solitary journey, still the restoration is not a repetition of something left behind. It is constantly a new creation.

The juxtaposition of arrival and travel turns into “a third thing,” receiving God's grace anew. To have God's grace anew is a new beginning, a new creation. Referring to a new creation, Luther most frequently has implications of eschatological character.

Orality and Literacy of Baptismal Language

The description of how identity is restored is shared, in many ways, by the three key liturgists of this study, including the view that it is an ongoing journey elaborated by a liturgical framework. However, there are also different characterizations of the liturgical framing, not least in regard to the interpretation of the text as oral as well as written. Dirk G. Lange focuses on Luther's struggle with the Psalter through prayer and song, but also on the process of his constant re-writing of Psalms. According to Lange, orality and literacy are congenial in the process of identifying the liturgical subject. As stated above, Lange brings to the fore the fact that Luther returns to the Psalter in order to understand the Psalms anew. In Lange's view, Luther is “writing life,” though with a constant disruption of his writing where he experiences his language as failure. Consequently, Luther returns to the text in order to search for the meaning anew. It is, moreover, through liturgical language that Luther manages to pin down the disrupting events. More precisely, Luther employs the baptismal language to describe his struggle for new meaning.

Catherine Pickstock, by contrast, considers the liturgical journey to be primarily a matter of orality. In Pickstock's view, the liturgical language, such as the spoken language, is the superior, the highest kind of language. With reference to Socrates's preference for memory as orality, Pickstock emphasizes liturgical language as performance, and at the core it is the doxological language that really matters. Praising of the divine is the acknowledgement of transcendence, that is, it is only possible in a *doxological polis*. It follows that in the so-called “Socratic city” everybody is a *metic* in the sense of being on the “journey” of constant restoration: “In the Socratic city *everyone* is a *metic*, secured neither by fact nor contract, but by perpetual renewal

of a particular mode of life, dialectic in character, sustained through acts of liturgy, which thus ensure that subjectivity remains open and in the character of gift.”⁴²²

Pickstock, in her critique of modern/postmodern thinking, and particularly of Derrida’s philosophy, points to the disadvantageous consequence of “celebrating” knowledge as writing. The liturgical language thereby runs the risk of instrumentalization. It follows that the liturgical subject ends up as an object, as “a sign.” As noted, Pickstock sees no “existence” of the subject outside the liturgy, which is a mode of living. The memory of the Christ-event constantly performs new beginnings through the spoken language of liturgy; it is the perpetual renewal of the journey of the *metic*.

It is in the gathering of the assembly that the primary language about God emerges, according to Lathrop. By reference to Jesus addressing two disciples with “[c]ome and see,” Lathrop illustrates “the ancient evangelical and liturgical invitation.”⁴²³ For that reason, the language about God in the assembly is at the same time an experiential theology. The significance of the language is experienced in the enacted symbols, particularly in “the great symbols of water and food.” The words that the assembly uses here are grounded in the Christ-event, and therefore these words are also symbols, that is, they point to the presence of God and God’s gift of grace. The resonance of the symbol is transformed by the juxtaposition of the “holy things,” that is, the *Ordo*, the pattern drawn from the Bible: “Water for washing, words for speaking and praying, a meal for eating. Only as they

put together do they bring their symbolic resonance to the faith of the community.”⁴²⁴

Both Lathrop and Pickstock begin from the order of worship; it follows that orality is the prime terminology in their liturgical theology. Nevertheless, concerning the order of worship, they take quite divergent stands. Lathrop deals with the *Ordo*, that is, the pattern drawn from the biblical narratives in dialogue with the contemporary context. Pickstock’s liturgical theology is entirely based on the Latin Mass, pre-Vatican II council, that is, a fixed worship order. Lange deals with liturgical theology through a focus on the texts of Luther and primarily elaborates the writing event. Lange, consequently, observes the way Luther turns to liturgy in order to communicate his theological issues.

⁴²² Pickstock (1998), 37–46. In ancient Greek the *metic* refers to a migrant without citizen rights. In the Christian context it corresponds to the concept of pilgrimage, such as the perpetual journey of renewal within a liturgical framework.

⁴²³ Lathrop (1998), 101. For the quotation, see John 1:39.

⁴²⁴ Lathrop (1998), 102–103.

The Baptismal Pattern: Process and *Ordo*

Baptismal language and metaphor are close at hand in Luther's works. What is more, Luther is *living* the baptismal pattern of the continual process from death to life. Unfortunately, Luther's efforts to present baptism as a model and lifestyle did not work out very well, either in his own context or in the legacy of the Reformation.⁴²⁵ In contrast to the medieval view on the Sacraments as *ex opere operato*, Luther points to the spatiality, that is, the divine presence in the sharing of bread and life.

A prominent baptismal metaphor in Luther's exposition of Psalm 51 is "sprinkling." His commentary on stanza 7 reads: "Sprinkle me, therefore, with the true goat's blood of Jesus Christ. Then I will be truly and thoroughly cleansed, without all my works and efforts." Obviously, Luther is referring to baptism in the metaphor of "sprinkle me" as well as in the theological statement of what it means to live in Christ, such as to live baptism as a lifestyle. Luther depicts his sacramental view that communion with Christ is by no means based on human works or efforts.⁴²⁶ The *aspergillum*, the tool by which the so-called "holy water" was sprinkled on the assembly by the priest, was certainly known to Luther.⁴²⁷ In effect, the sprinkling is a reminder of baptism, and this verse, Psalm 51:7 ("Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean"), is an antiphon sung during this liturgical act.⁴²⁸ In addition, in the well-known *Sermon at the Dedication of the Castle Church in Torgau* Luther defines liturgy by referring to the "aspergillum" and the censer, instruments of consecration and blessing. With an oblique nod to the doctrine of "the priesthood of all believers," though, Luther claims that the "aspergillum" is not exclusively wielded by the priest, but by the whole assembly itself in the blessing of the new house of Jesus Christ: "This devolves not only upon me; you, too, should take hold of the aspergillum."⁴²⁹

⁴²⁵ White (1980), 190.

⁴²⁶ LW 14, 170; WA 18, 502, 37–39.

⁴²⁷ From Latin, *aspergere*, "to sprinkle."

⁴²⁸ McKim (1996), 19. See also Ramshaw (2009), 144. The asperges, "a rite of sprinkling worshipers with water from the baptismal font," reminds the assembly of the ongoing renewing dimension of baptism. This ritual originates from at least the ninth century.

⁴²⁹ LW 51, 333; WA 49, 588b, 12–18. Whereupon Luther denotes the meaning of worship, the famous so-called "Torgula formula." In WA the word for "aspergillum" is "Sprengel" – both stand for the same.

Luther clearly points out a different orientation concerning liturgy than the conventional one. Through baptism, the believer participates in the priesthood of the church, and begins a new walk of life, whereby “one is constantly being killed and born anew.”⁴³⁰ In Luther’s view, the eschatological aspect of baptism is of primary importance: “there is no end of washing and cleansing in this life” (commentary on Psalm 51:2).⁴³¹ Constantly “being killed and born anew” is a womb-to-tomb journey, a process in which the fulfilment is of eschatological significance.

In terms of *Ordo*, Lathrop refers to the juxtaposition of bath and teaching in yielding God's grace anew, broken in the perpetual journey from death to life. For this reason, Lathrop claims, it is a “life-long catechumenate,” whereby the ambiguity of baptism is exposed: “A once-for-all event, baptism takes a whole lifetime to unfold.” Everyone in the assembly and in the church at large, therefore, is invited to be a newcomer together with the newcomers: “Learners with the learners, beggars with the beggars, yet also always hosts and keepers of the bread at this center.” By exercising these dimensions, the various meanings of baptism are kept together, and when juxtaposed to the other two root components of the *Ordo*, word and table, the eschatological aspects of the bath is revealed.⁴³²

Here it is of importance to acknowledge Luther’s liturgical theology regarding the relation between the confession of sins and baptism. On the one hand, baptism is a once-for-all sacrament; on the other hand, it is a lifelong journey of perpetual dying and rising integrated into the Christ-event, namely, the base of *Ordo*. Consequently, Luther does not regard confession as an additional sacrament, for confession is “the continual enactment of one’s baptism.” As already noted, we do not find any penitential act, such as “confession of sins,” in Luther’s worship orders. On the contrary, Luther’s critical approach to the practice of confession in the Latin Mass corresponds to his distancing himself from the Anabaptist practice of baptism.⁴³³ In both cases, it drains the core of baptism and turns the attention to the significance of human works. In the confession of sins, as well as in re-baptism, the *accessio*, the gracious gift, is displaced by human work.⁴³⁴

⁴³⁰ Strohl (2003), 154.

⁴³¹ LW 167; WA 18, 500, 10.

⁴³² Lathrop (2003), 115.

⁴³³ Anabaptists rejected baptism of infants. It follows the practice of re-baptism of adults who were baptized as infants. See McKim (1996), 9.

⁴³⁴ Confession of sins, as well as Anabaptists’ use of baptism, “obfuscates the meaning of baptism itself and perverts God’s gracious gift into a required human work.” See Strohl (2003), 155.

In his commentary on Psalm 51:8, “Let me hear joy and gladness,” Luther refers to the continual enactment of baptism: “Thou sprinklest and washest me with grace and thus createst in me a good conscience, so that I hear that mysterious prompting [WA “*einünen*,” that is, whisper]: ‘Your sins are forgiven.’”⁴³⁵ As to the confusion of Confiteor and Kyrie, we can, with Luther’s understanding of the connectedness of the confession of sins and baptism as the point of departure, claim that liturgical confession of sins, without the link to baptism, is not in accordance with Luther’s liturgical theology.

Eschaton and Lex Exercitandi

The eschatological perspectives of Luther’s liturgical theology abound in his exposition of Psalm 51. As mentioned above “there is no end of washing and cleansing in this life,” notwithstanding that in every baptized individual God has begun the process. It is noteworthy that Luther associates this process with the hidden wisdom of God, poured out in the inward heart of the believer. This inner part of wisdom, Luther claims, is “nothing else than knowing oneself thoroughly” (“*sich grundlich erkennen*”)⁴³⁶ (commentary on stanza 6). As mentioned above, self-knowledge is of paramount importance in Luther’s interpretation of the Psalms. Self-knowledge, however, is a continual journey of submerging and self-emptying, an ongoing exercise, an “apprenticeship in receiving the fullness of God.”⁴³⁷ I regard this process as the dimension of *lex exercitandi* in Luther’s liturgical theology. The apprenticeship of the liturgical subject is within an eschatological framework, as Luther says; there is no end of washing and cleansing *in this life*.

The eschatological perspective becomes evident as soon as the individual acknowledges the vanity of seeking to gain the fullness of God by one’s own merit. Luther’s overriding juxtaposition, *simul iustus et peccator*, indicates a conclusive eschatology, the insight “that I am a sinner before Thee” and therefore waiting for the consummation of God’s victory, “either here

⁴³⁵ “[D]u mit gnaden mich sprengest und weschest und also mir ein gut gewissen machst, das ich hoere dein *heimlich einrünen*, 'dir sind vergeben deine sunde’” (italics added): *secretly whisper*.

⁴³⁶ LW 14, 169; WA 18, 502, 22.

⁴³⁷ I find the notion of “apprenticeship” convergent with the perpetual journey of the liturgical subject. See Strohl, 161: “For Luther, the life of faith is surrender rather than accomplishment; it is regular exercise in self-emptying, which is simultaneously apprenticeship in receiving the fullness of God.”

by His goodness or hereafter by His severity” (commentary on stanza 4).⁴³⁸ It follows that only death accomplishes the baptism. Lange emphasizes the perpetual beginnings of the baptismal pathway, that the liturgical subject is “continually baptized by fire, by events.” God is the only witness who has “the keys” to these baptismal events. It follows, then, that Luther never considers the baptism to be fully accomplished before death.⁴³⁹ “Death is a wholesome thing” because it pulverizes (“*zupulvert*”) the sinner, “so that Christ alone may be in us.”⁴⁴⁰

The most cited two sentences in the fourth of the penitential Psalms is surely stanza 10, “Create in me a clean heart, O God. And renew a willing spirit within me” (see above). Luther’s understanding of these words reveals the relation between the perpetual journey of the liturgical subject and eschatology. Even though the inward righteousness is never fully completed in this life, Luther emphasizes the importance of seeking it: “Inner righteousness, however, is never attained completely in this life but must always be pursued.”⁴⁴¹

An upright spirit is a *renewed* spirit, a new “journey” of the liturgical subject, not a new spirit but a renewed spirit. Here again, the English translation (“And put a new and right spirit within me”) does not invite a conception of a process of work, but a renewed creation.⁴⁴² Or, to put it in Lathrop’s terms, the old speaks the new. The upright spirit, by God renewed and poured (“*eingegossen*”) into the human heart, is the good will seeking God alone, the journey towards the divine. The Creator is the beginning of the process in the innermost life of the human person, and God is also the re-newer of the process, of the perpetual journey which is not fully completed in this life.

Another way of expressing the journey is through the pattern of baptism: The constant movement from death to life in order to learn to love the will of God, “[t]hat we may love the will of God from the bottom of our heart” (commentary on stanza 10b).⁴⁴³ For this reason, the eschatological pattern of baptism is stamped upon the perpetual journey of dying and rising with Christ within the liturgy of everyday life as well as in the Sunday service (actually, in every worship service). This is, I would argue, the *lex exercitandi* of liturgy: The perpetual journey of

⁴³⁸ LW 14, 168; WA 18, 501, 22, 25–26.

⁴³⁹ Lange (2010), 59.

⁴⁴⁰ LW 14, 169; WA 18, 501, 40, 502, 1–3.

⁴⁴¹ LW 14, 171; WA 18, 504, 7–8.

⁴⁴² “Und *ernewe* [renew] ynn myr eynen willigen geyst” (italics added). See WA 18, 504, 9.

⁴⁴³ LW 14, 172; WA 18, 504, 13–15. The terminology “poured into” and the German “eingegossen” indicates a baptismal metaphoric.

exercising love toward God and God's will. God as Re-newer is a God of mercy, as Luther emphasizes in his commentary on stanza 16. It is not a matter of how devoted the liturgical subject strives to be, but a journey of becoming devoted through God's perpetual renewal.⁴⁴⁴ *Lex exercitandi*, then, is a lifelong journey, not completed in this life; the liturgical subject is embraced by an ongoing apprenticeship. For Luther, faith is not about achievement, but about surrender. Faith is the journey from loss to experiencing the surprise of God's grace anew (see section above, "Loss and Surprise"). *Lex exercitandi* is a process of self-emptying in order to learn God's grace anew.⁴⁴⁵

When Luther points to the inner sprinkling and washing in his understanding of Psalm 51, he is indicating the baptismal pattern, the ongoing journey that will not be accomplish in this life. Psalm 51, like much of the Psalter, opens with a lament, with a cry for mercy, but ends with joy and praise. In the terms of liturgical theology, it can be said that Psalm 51 starts out with a Kyrie that gives way to a Gloria.

Psalm 102: Blessed Are They Who Complain

1 Herr, hoere meyn gebet, Und las meyn schreyen zu dyr komen.	1 LORD, hear my prayer, let my cry come to you.
2 Verbirge deyn andlitz nicht fur myr zur zeit der nott, neyge deyne oren zu myr, Wenn ich dich anruffe, so erhoere mich balde.	2 Do not hide your face from me in times of hardship, bend your ears to me. Answer me in haste when I call you.
3 Denn meyne tage sind vergangen wie eyn rauch, Und meyne gebeyne sind verbrand wie eyn brand.	3 For my days have passed like smoke, and my bones are burned like a fire.
4 Meyn hertz ist nidder geschlagen wie gras und verdorret, Denn ich habe vergessen meyn brod zu essen.	4 My heart is smashed down like grass and withers, for I forgot to eat my bread.

⁴⁴⁴ LW 14, 174, WA 18, 506, 14–15.

⁴⁴⁵ "For Luther, the life of faith is surrender rather than accomplishment; it is regular exercise in self-emptying, which is simultaneously apprenticeship in receiving the fullness of God." See Strohl (2003), 161.

5 Meyn gebeyne klebet an meynem
fleysche, Fur der stym meynes
seufftzens.

6 Jch byn gleich wie eyn rhordormel
ynn der wuesten, Jch byn wie eyn
kutzlin ynn den den verstoereten
stetten.

7 Jch wache und byn Wie eyn
einsamer vogel auff dem dache.

8 Teglich schmehen mich meyne
feynde, Und die mich spotten,
schweren bey myr.

9 Denn ich esse aschen wie brod,
Und mische meynen tranck mit
weynen.

10 Fur deynem zorn und ungnaden,
das du mich hast genomen und
hyngevorffen.

11 Meyne tage sind gewichen wie
eyn schatten, Und ich werde durre wie
eyn gras.

12 Du aber, HERR, bleybst ewiglich,
Und deyn gedechtnisse fur und fur.

13 Du woltest dich auff machen und
uber Zion erbarmen, Denne es ist zeit,
das du yhr gnedig seyst, und die
stunde ist komen.

5 My bones stick to my skin, because
of my loud sighing.

6 I am like a bittern⁴⁴⁶ in the desert,
like a little owl in demolished cities.

7 I am awake, and I am like a lonely
bird on the roof.

8 Every day my enemies insult me,
and those who mock me swear with
my name.

9 For I eat ashes like bread, and mix
my drink with tears,

10 because of your wrath and
disfavor, for you grabbed me and have
thrown me out of the way.

11 My days folded away like a
shadow, and I will dry up like grass.

12 But you, LORD, are forever, and
your memory lasts all over again.

13 You will open up, and have
mercy on Zion, for it is time that you
are gracious to it, the right time has
come.

⁴⁴⁶ The contemporary German Bible (Luther Bible 2017) as well as LW translate “rhordormel” to “Eule” and “Owl,” which I consider wrong. “Rhordormel,” that is, “bittern” is a waterfowl. Luther wants to point out the distress of being a waterfowl in a desert.

14 Denn yhre steyne gefallen deynen knechten, Und sind yhrem staub goenstig.

15 Und die Heyden werden deynen namen furchten, Und alle koenige auff erden deyne ehre.

16 Das der HERR Zion bawet, Und erscheynet ynn seyner ehre.

17 Er wendet sich zu dem gebet der verlassenen, Und verschmehet yhr gebet nicht.

18 Das werde geschrieben auff die nachkommenen, Und das volck, das geschaffen soll werden, wird den HERRN loben.

19 Denn er schawet von seyner heyligen hoehe, Und der HERR siehet von hymel auff erden. HERRN loben.

20 Das er das seuffzen des gesangen hoere, Und loese die kinder des todes.

21 Auff das sie zu Zion predigen seyner namen, Und seyn lob zu Jerusalem.

22 Wenn die voelcker zusammen komen Und die koenigreiche, dem HERRN zu dienen.

23 Er demutiget auff dem wege meyne krafft, Er vekurtzet meyne tage.

14 For your servants like its stones and have compassion on its dust.

15 And the pagans will fear your name, and all the kings on earth your glory.

16 For the LORD builds up Zion and appears in his glory.

17 He turns to the forsaken, and he does not despise their prayer.

18 That will be proclaimed to the offspring, and the people yet to be created will praise the LORD:

19 Because he watches from his holy high and from heaven the LORD looks at the earth.

20 So that he hears the sighing of the prisoners and releases the children of death.

21 That they preach his name in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem.

22 When peoples and kingdoms gather to serve the LORD.

23 He humiliates my way of strength, and he cuts back my days.

24 Jch sage, meyn Gott, nym mich
nicht weg ynn der helfft meyner tage,
Deyne iare weren fur und fur.

25 Du hast vorhyn die erde
gegrundet, Und die hymel sind deyner
hende werck.

26 Sie werden vergehen, aber du
bleibest, Sie werden alle veralten wie
eyn kleyd, und wenn du sie wie eyn
gewand wandelst, werden sie
verwandelt werden.

27 Du aber bist der selbe, und deyne
iare nemen keyn ende.

28 Die kinder deyner knechte
werden bleyben, Und yhr same wird
fur dyr bestehen.

24 I say: My God, do not take me
away in half of my days, your days
endure henceforth.

25 Previously you laid the
foundation of the earth, and the
heavens are the work of your hands.

26 They will pass away, but you
remain, they will all grow old like a
garment, and when you change them,
they all will be transformed.

27 But you are the same, and your
years have no end.

28 The children of your servants will
remain, and their seed will prosper
before you.

Preface

Psalm 102 has a prominent place in many lectionaries and occurs in various seasons of the liturgical year. For the most part, it takes the place in the lectionary of Lent, but also, for instance, on the last Sunday before Advent.⁴⁴⁷ In the early church, the Armenian lectionary of the Jerusalem Liturgy placed Psalm 102 on Good Friday. Eight psalms, eight prophets, eight apostles and four gospels are advised for the various devotions, readings, homilies and prayers on Golgotha. Among the eight Psalms named are Psalm 22 and Psalm 102.⁴⁴⁸ What connects these two Psalms is the openly accusatory complaint before God.⁴⁴⁹ Considering these psalms in

⁴⁴⁷ Concerning Lent, see Morning prayer on Wednesday of Holy Week, *Book of Common Prayer*, <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/the-liturgical-year.aspx> (download 15.03.2017) and the Sunday before Advent in the Swedish (Domssöndagen) lectionary, *Den svenska evangelieboken* (Stockholm: Verbum, 2002). That is Psalm 102: 26–29.

⁴⁴⁸ Wilkinson (1999), 187. The remaining psalms are 35, 38, 41, 31, 69, 88.

⁴⁴⁹ See for example Psalm 22:1–2 and Psalm 102: 2, 23.

the liturgical context of Good Friday requires vital reflection on the earnest language before God:

The journey from loss and despair transforms lament to the experience of God's grace anew, which is mostly revealed in joy and thanksgiving. However, Psalm 102 and Psalm 22 contain more of the accusatory timbre of the lamenting voice.

The dignity of language is a prominent issue in Luther's interpretation of Psalm 102. Language is a divine gift whereby God addresses humans, and the liturgical subject is given the option to answer the donor of the gift. It follows that human speech is a "noble work," in which the Holy Spirit is constantly active, promoting faith and love. Importantly, the dignity of language is not exclusively conveyed in thanksgiving and praise, but indeed also in the expressions of despair and lament.

Luther and Pickstock, as already noted, take their departure from the same worship order, the medieval Latin Mass, though they arrive at quite different outcomes. Both, however, pay attention to the significance of the continual restoration of the liturgical subject in and through the liturgy. In the exposition of Psalm 102, we find an example of a prayer as loss and surprise. In the terminology of Lange, the surprise is the additional dimension, *accessio*, and Pickstock characterizes the surprise as "the redemptive return." The new and unexpected aspects characterize Luther's approach, whereby the question of an inclusive or an exclusive eschatology rises.

According to Lathrop, the discipline of the *Ordo* is a lifelong learning. By way of Luther's terminology, we call this learning process, as mentioned above, *lex exercitandi*, which is revealed exposed in the interpretation of Psalm 102.

A Tepillot Psalm

Psalm 102 is one of the "*tepillot* Psalms," that is, it refers to the lamenting prayer in the heading: "Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to Thee!" (Stanza 1). Already in his first lectures on the Psalms, *Dictata super psalterium* (1513–1515), Luther confirms the characteristic of supplication in Psalm 102 as a prayer, "[b]ecause prayer is a certain form of cry."⁴⁵⁰ It is the desire and longing for the return of God's face, and the church also prays Psalm 102 in the hope

⁴⁵⁰ LW 11, *Dictata super Psalterium*, 1513–1515, 295; WA 4, 147, 2.

that one day this face “will be in full view.”⁴⁵¹ In one of his early writings on worship, *Concerning the Order of Public Worship* (1523), Luther refers to Psalm 102:22 to emphasize that the Christian assembly cannot do without preaching the word of God and prayer: “When the kings and the people assemble to serve the Lord, they shall declare the name and the praise of God.”⁴⁵² Without the juxtaposition of preaching and prayer, the assembly misuses its liturgical vocation. However, Luther declares that the aim is to restore the service to “its rightful use” (“ynn rechten schwang tzu bringen”).⁴⁵³ In terms of the roots of *Ordo*, word, bath and meal, we see Luther’s claim on the true use of the assembly’s service. This pattern must hold together. Without the roots of the *Ordo* there will be no “rechten schwang.” A lack of juxtaposition of these basic elements in Christian liturgy entails a loss of the liturgical pattern drawn from the Bible, in order to speak God’s grace anew, “holy things” of Christian liturgy “are always juxtaposed to each other and are themselves made up of at least two elements. When these fundamental things are set next to each other, the narratives of Jesus Christ and the life of the liturgical subject (as well as the whole assembly) will reach a new understanding, of God’s grace spoken anew. As noted, Luther strives for this basic pattern in the liturgy. The dialectic of worship also appears in each element of the *Ordo*. The Psalter, as “Words to God, word from God,” expresses both lament and praise, the narrative of both death and life.⁴⁵⁴

Luther’s exposition of Psalm 102 incorporates his own prayers, primarily *tepillot*. Luther’s own prayers appear in many other expositions of the Psalms as well. For the most part, these inserted prayers are at least two-dimensional, inasmuch as Luther gives voice to the people as well as to the liturgical subject. For instance, the commentary on stanza 12, “Thy name endures to all generations,” reads:

Therefore, my God, how do I get from myself to Thee, that my being and my name may also remain forever? Sad to say, I am too far away from Thee and too far down in the depths.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵¹ LW 11, 296; WA 4, 147, 19–20. Here Luther refers to the face of Christ in full view at the Advent, the coming of Christ.

⁴⁵² LW 53, 11; WA 12, 35, 21–23.

⁴⁵³ LW 53, 11; WA 12, 35, 2–9. Here Luther points to the restoration of the office of preaching as well as the service at large.

⁴⁵⁴ The book title of Howard Neil Wallace, see the bibliography.

⁴⁵⁵ This refers to God’s people, but also to the liturgical subject, in this case Luther himself. LW 14, 182; WA 18, 512, 25–27. Moreover, see also Luther’s exposition of Psalm 130, “Out of the depths.”

Words of Lament are Dignified

Dignity is not exclusive to the language of praise and thanksgiving; the words of lament and despair are also dignified. Even if Luther does not experience God as the “problem,” he clings to the *communio sanctorum* in verbalizing his cry as well as his hope. In his commentary on Psalm 102:24a, “O my God, I say,” Luther describes the feeling of being oppressed by God.⁴⁵⁶ However, there is no reason to escape the situation. On the contrary, to Luther this status makes him even more anxious to address God. By means of the communion of saints, Luther finds a relevant language and approach to *coram Deo*:

But I will hope in Him, cry to Him, and plead with Him all the more, *as all His saints do*.⁴⁵⁷

Pickstock argues for the superiority of the spoken word to the written. As a main point in giving prominence to the spoken word, she highlights the process of dialectic that emerges in the conversation “whereby truth is elicited.” In contrast, she considers textual communication to be just an auxiliary, a reminder of a truth already identified.⁴⁵⁸ More precisely, erotic language, such as the conversation between the lover and the beloved, is the highest form of language, according to Pickstock. Pickstock uses *Phaedrus* to exemplify this kind of discourse, and to indicate the relational dimension of language. In fact, in Pickstock’s view, erotic language is similar to the language of liturgy.

In and *through* the liturgy, the human subject is continually restored in the relationship between the divine and the liturgical subject. Here a parallel to Lange's understanding of how Luther finds communication with himself (self-knowledge) and with God appears. Lange, though, is quite critical of Pickstock’s liturgical concept. Pickstock identifies the weak point in *Phaedrus* in terms of community, past, present and future. The discourse between the lover and the beloved is enacted in isolation from the context of a community. Even if Plato describes the encounter between the lover and the beloved in terms of prospectivity and relationality, the isolation is still there. An eschatological intersubjectivity, in which the lover and the beloved continue their

⁴⁵⁶ “Although He breaks me asunder and oppresses me, I will not on this account run away from Him.” See LW 14, 186; WA 18, 515, 20–21.

⁴⁵⁷ LW 14, 186 (italics added); WA 18, 515, 21–22.

⁴⁵⁸ Catherine Pickstock, “Liturgy and Language: The Sacred Police” in Paul Bradshaw & Bryan Spinks, eds., *Liturgy in Dialogue: Essays in Memory of Ronald Jasper* (London: SPCK, 1993), 120.

intimacy beyond earthly life, does not open up for any “greater spiritual gain.”⁴⁵⁹ There is, then, no community fully linked to the historical “re-telling,” no relational space for the iteration of incarnation (that is, the Eucharist)⁴⁶⁰ or for communicating the eschatological facet of the resurrection of the body.

In Pickstock’s view, the highest form of speech, and in fact the only meaningful communication, is the liturgical language. As noted above, there is no genuine discourse outside liturgy, which in effect is the fulfilment of erotic language. The conversation between the divine, the lover and the beloved, the liturgical subject, is throughout manifested in the community which unites relational space with past, present and future time. Pickstock points to the Eucharist as the epitome of this discourse.

Pickstock’s point of departure is the same worship order as Luther, the Latin Mass, though she reaches quite a diametrical conclusion, as we have seen above. Despite their distinct differences, both Luther and Pickstock nevertheless emphasize the divine address within the eschatological community as the prime mover of the communication between God and humans. The striving of the liturgical subject to travel towards God is, after all, always the divine point of entry into the human person. Moreover, the bodily aspect is present in the communication between lover and beloved, through the incarnation and the resurrection. To sum up, the dignity of language bears a strong resemblance to God’s ongoing incarnation in the liturgical subject answering the divine address. In this communication emerges a perpetual renewal, that is, a restoration of the liturgical subject. Also, in Luther’s understanding of the renewal of the liturgical subject, the continual journey from death to life, lament plays an active and significant part in the human’s answer to God.⁴⁶¹

Blessed Are They Who Complain

Just as Luther, in his interpretation of Psalm 102:4b, says, “I forget to eat my bread,” we might repeat: Blessed are they who complain. Luther depicts the dried-out heart of the supplicant, longing for God’s presence. God is the bread, God the only nourishment which can satisfy the

⁴⁵⁹ Pickstock (1998), 272–273.

⁴⁶⁰ Pickstock considers the Eucharist to be manifestation of the “fully realized community which combines relational space with the time of past, present, and future.” See Pickstock (1998), 273.

⁴⁶¹ That is not the case with Pickstock, in her separation between quotidian and liturgical language.

heart. Therefore, blessed is the one who realizes his or her lack of remembering God as the eternal bread and laments (“*klagen*”): “But blessed is he who can realize this forgetfulness and complain about it.”

The position of sinners satisfied with their outer benefits is a bad one, and the stuck-up (“proud”)⁴⁶² saints, seemingly fulfilled with their inner good, are “they who forget the forgetting.”⁴⁶³ Here Luther indicates the significance of the *verbalization of lament*. In this example, the forgetfulness is of God as the nourishing and eternal bread.

In the Psalter, we find the “*liberté d’expression*,” the freedom to express every authentic state, even the hullabaloo not always considered appropriate in worship life. In a manner similar to the Book of Job, the Psalter contains expressions of lament and accusation in addressing God. Note that God declares the conversation with Job to be honest. Job does not hold back his lament and disappointment, and when accusing God of persecution he *verbalizes* his despair in the traumatized situation.⁴⁶⁴

I will give free utterance to my complaint; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say to God... Does it seem good to you to oppress, to despise the work of your hands.⁴⁶⁵

Luther’s commentary on Psalm 102:1–2 clearly highlights the quality of *honest speech*. At the point of hardship and distress, the supplicant shall cry out (“*geschrey*”) the troubles of the heart, though it can never be powerful enough to reach the ear of God. Luther here focuses his attention on the one experiencing suffering and persecution. However, in the commentary on stanza 2b, “Answer me speedily in the day when I call!” Luther declares:

⁴⁶² LW 14, 180, the translation “the proud saints” of WA 18, 510, 11, “die hoffertigen heyligen” I find unsatisfying. “Proud” also corresponds to the German “*stolz*,” which is not bound to mean something destructive; on the contrary, it can indicate a constructive positioning. Consequently, I prefer the translation “stuck-up,” which stands for the bad condition to which Luther is heading.

⁴⁶³ LW 14, 180; WA 18, 510, 6–12.

⁴⁶⁴ Lytta Basset, *Sainte colère: Jacob, Job, Jésus* (Bayard Presse S.A/Labor et Fides, Genève/Paris, 2003). In this book, Basset shows the importance of anger and lament before God with the outset of the Hebrew context, such as Jacob and Job, and in the New Testament focusing on Jesus. Basset especially, criticizes Western Christianity for ruling out anger and complaint, by reference to the Psalms: “Les Psaumes consonnent avec le récit de Caïn et Abel: nulle part Dieu ne censure l’expression verbale de la colère; qui plus est, l’encourage; les grands priants que sont les psalmistes en font régulièrement l’expérience et ne se privent pas de le dire: ‘Tu m’as répondu!’ Or, interdit sur plainte – et à plus forte raison sur colère – est encore largement répandu dans nos sociétés occidentales, particulièrement dans le milieu chrétiens. À croire qu’on n’a jamais lu Job ni les Psaumes ni les Lamentations de Jérémie!” See Basset (2003), 24.

⁴⁶⁵ Job 10, 1–3.

Not only when I am pursued and suffer from the others, as the foregoing verse indicates, but *in every time of need*.⁴⁶⁶

Accordingly, “in every time of need,” the liturgical subject shall turn his or her cry and lament to God. On this standpoint, Luther is adamant throughout his interpretation of the entire Psalter. As with Job, the verbalization before God also includes accusation. Lamentation is the honest, and indeed the only, way of searching for God’s grace in every need. The transitional pattern of baptism, from death to life, necessitates lament, even in positions of accusation before God:

Language that once was accusatory becomes celebratory.⁴⁶⁷

Luther claims that Psalm 102, along with the other Psalms, elucidates the inner suffering of a penitent spirit caused not only by sin, but also by maltreatment by other people. Just as Luther considers the regret of sins to be an adequate cause for lament, he also gives heed to the legitimate need for the innocent to lament. The latter condition is a consequence of the crucified life, the implication of the liturgical journey, in this study called the cross-bearing passages.

The ability of the “*mir zugesprochende Würde*” (see above) to answer the divine call presupposes that the sinner, as well as the oppressed, has to cry out his or her distress *coram Deo*. Luther turns to Job to elucidate this entering into the cross, the touchstone of the perpetual journey of the supplicant. At the point of disaster, there divine help and strength will appear. The turnaround, the journey from death to life, Luther continually describes by some means or other.

Eschatological Aspects on Worship

A profound aspect of Luther’s understanding of lament, of turning to God, is the process of prayer, even if it is simply a cry such as “Have mercy, O Lord.” In struggling, lamenting and searching for the “divine face,” hope is arousing. Luther himself undergoes this process throughout his work with the Psalter; he experiences prayer as *loss* and *surprise*, over and again.

⁴⁶⁶ LW 14, 179, WA 18, 509, 18–19 (italics added, “ynn aller notturfft”).

⁴⁶⁷ Commentary on Psalm 102, 19–20, see Anderson (2000), 86.

Therefore, I would argue that Luther's urgency in the matter of *The Seven Penitential Psalms* is counselling ordinary people on the path through spiritual death and distress. In his commentary on Psalm 102, he explains that all penitential Psalms have the same intention: to depict inward suffering. Inward pain is caused mainly by the insight that one is a sinner, but also by innocent suffering, caused by others' persecution.⁴⁶⁸ Luther's intention, from the very beginning, is to encourage people to *verbalize* their fear and pain *coram Deo*, in order to obtain self-knowledge. In other words, without the *Schrei* of lamentation before God, the possibility of self-knowledge disappears. Luther's insight came from his own journey of self-knowledge, and the surprise of encountering God's grace anew. According to Luther, the "cry" is a narrative of misery as well as a prayer permeated by the longing for grace.⁴⁶⁹ Through the lamenter's verbalization of his or her distress, there is a hope of life emerging.

Up to this point he has poured out his troubles ["geklaget"] and pressed himself upon God. Now he begins to express his desire and longing for the life that is in God, and he calls to Christ and His grace. Thus we read Psalm 63:1: "My soul thirsts for Thee."⁴⁷⁰

Lament and the longing for a renewed life are intimately intertwined. Experiencing God as "hidden" or "absent" is in constant juxtaposition to a longing for God's presence. Harboring this juxtaposition yields a surprise: God's grace, embraced anew, in a new meaning midst mostly struggling and questioning God. In his understanding of Psalm 102:12, Luther acknowledges that God's essence ("*wesen*"), name and memory remain forever, but not without opposition. With reference to Psalm 9:6 ("the very memory of them [the wicked] has perished"), Luther shows a powerful lament attached to human vulnerability.

⁴⁶⁸ LW 14, 179: "For this Psalm, like the others, first describes the inner suffering." See also WA 18, 509, 19–22.

⁴⁶⁹ LW 14, 178: "The 'prayer' is his desire for grace; the 'cry' is his story of misery." Compare the origin text in WA 18, 509, 6–7: "Das gebet ist, das er gnade begeret, Das geschrey ist, das er sein elende verkläret" (commentary on Psalm 102:1a, "Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to Thee!").

⁴⁷⁰ LW 14, 182; WA 18, 512, 15–18: "Bis hie her hat er seine not *geklaget* und sich gereitzet zu Gotte, Nu hebet er an seine begirde und [Psalm 63, 2. vgl. Psalm 42, 3] verlangen nach dem leben, das ynn Gotte ist, als ym 92. psal.: 'Meine seele hat nach dir gedurstet' und ruffet Christo und seiner gnaden" (*italics added*).

That is, just as *Thy essence* [“*dein wesen*”], so also Thy name and Thy remembrance remain forever.... Therefore my God, how do I get from myself to Thee, that *my being* [“*mein wesen*”] and my name also remain forever? (Italics added)⁴⁷¹

This, I maintain, depicts a clear-cut experience of the loss of meaning, without finding any further way to go.

Moreover, Luther describes the awareness of death as a sense of all days ending in naught, which brings a decreasing will to live.⁴⁷² Similarly, the eschatological aspect at issue is what we recognize in Luther’s interpretation of Psalm 51. In his exposition, Luther defines eschatology as the fulfilment of the baptismal journey, which is “not in this life.” Significantly, in the German WA, Luther’s eschatological question of how “my being [*mein wesen*] and my name also remain forever” is analogous to the described characteristic of God as “*dein wesen*.” The notion “*wesen*” also appears in the eschatological depiction of heaven and earth being changed, but “*Du bleibst ynn dem selben wesen*” (Thou remainest the same).⁴⁷³

***Lex Exercitandi* in Loving God and the Creation**

In the discussion of “Liturgy as *Locus Exercitatio*” above, attention was paid to the notion of *lex exercitandi*, “the law of training,” and its significance in Luther’s view of worship. The Sunday service provides continuous training, by exposing the participants to the word of God. Everyday liturgy, on the other hand, is a ceaseless training in, and infusion of, the same word, in order to live in solidarity and love with both God and one’s neighbor. As also stated above: the liturgy as a locus of training is far from establishing a solitary journey on own merits. On the contrary, it is about *exposing oneself* to the word of God in the Sunday as well as the everyday service liturgy. We see a similar approach in Luther’s commentary on Psalm 102:22 (“When peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to worship the Lord.”) Luther’s description of worship in different contexts and in various places is noteworthy; it is “*an allen orten ynn starcker ubunge*” (in full sway in all places, emphasis added). The close connection between the expression

⁴⁷¹ LW 14, 182; WA 18, 512, 23–26: “Das ist, gleich wie dein wesen ewig bleibt, so auch bleibt dein name und gedechtnis ewig, ...darumb, mein Gott, wie kome ich von mir zu dir, das mein wesen und namen auch bleibe ewiglich?”

⁴⁷² LW 14, 182; WA 18, 512, 20–21.

⁴⁷³ LW 14, 187; WA 18, 516, 9.

“*übung, üben*” and liturgy, in the sense of the day-to-day training in and of God’s word, has already been noted. “According to Luther, prayer is an exercise [Übung] and a strengthening of faith.”⁴⁷⁴

In his description of the liturgical community, Lathrop emphasizes lifelong *learning*, that is, “the discipline of the *ordo*.” For Lathrop, it is key that the assembly be the primary liturgical symbol, constantly juxtaposed in its leadership in mutual learning and mutual love.⁴⁷⁵ To put it more precisely, the *lex exercitandi* of liturgy is the ongoing “Übung” of loving God, neighbor and the whole of creation.

In his exposition of stanza 22, Luther implies the pattern of *Ordo* through the fundamental juxtaposition of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen: “Just as the word and His grace to forgive sins are for Jews and heathen alike, so also *the cross and the relief from it* are in full sway in all places. Evident here is a substantial definition of worship: worship is the gathering, in all places, founded on “the cross and the relief from it,” and is expressed by the significance of “*starcker ubunge*,” which we call the *lex exercitandi*.⁴⁷⁶

Psalm 130: Out of the Depths

1 Aus der tieffen Ruffe ich,HERR,
zu dyr.

2 HERR, hoere meyne stym,Las
deyne oren mercken auff die stym
meynes flehens.

1 Out of the depths I cry to you
LORD!

2 LORD, hear my voice! Let your
ears be attentive to the voice of my
implorations!

⁴⁷⁴ Traugott Koch, “Johann Habermanns 'Betbüchlein' im Zusammenhang seiner Theologie. Eine Studie zur Gebetsliteratur und zur Theologie des Luthertums im 16. Jahrhundert” in BHT 117 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 62. Quotation by Andreas Odenthal, “...totum psalterium in usu maneat.” Martin Luther und das Stundengebet, in: Dietrich Korsch, Volker Leppin (Hg.), Martin Luther - Biographie und Theologie (Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation 53). Tübingen 2010, 2. Auflage 2017, 78. My translation from German: “Nach Luther ist das Gebet eine Übung und Stärkung des Glaubens.”

⁴⁷⁵ Lathrop (1998), 198. Lathrop is here discussing the leader’s relation to the assembly. However, it is always about mutuality between the assembly and the leadership.

⁴⁷⁶ LW 14, 185; WA 18, 515, 1–4 (LW and WA, italics added).

3 So du will acht haben auff
missethat, HERR, wer wird bestehen?

4 Denn bey dyr ist vergebunge das
man dich furchte.

5 Jch harre des HERRN, meyne
seele harret, Und ich warte auff seyn
wort.

6 Meyne seele wartet auff den
HERRN, von eyner morgen wache zur
andern.

7 Jsrael warte auff den HERrn, Denn
guete ist bey dem HERrn, und viel
erloesunge bey yhm.

8 Und er wird Jsrael erloesen Aus
aller missethat.

3 If you want to add up my
transgressions, LORD, who could
stand?

4 But with you there is forgiveness,
so you may be worshipped.

5 I am biding for the LORD, my soul
is biding, and I wait for his word.

6 My soul waits for the LORD, from
one morning watch to the other.

7 Israel waits for the LORD, for with
the LORD there is genuine good, and
with him there is immeasurable
redemption.

8 And He will redeem Israel from all
its transgressions.

Preface

Psalm 130 (“Out of the Depths”) is one of the most famous Psalms in the liturgy. It is the sixth of the penitential Psalms, and often referred to as *De profundis*, after the Latin for its first words.⁴⁷⁷ For instance, as early as 1528, in the first edition of the Danish Malmoe Mass, we recognize Luther’s interpretation of Psalm 130 in the *Introitus*. Puzzling, though, is that Luther’s own proposal, in *The German Mass*, that Psalm 34 act as Introit, is not mentioned at all in the Danish order of Mass.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁷ The fourth of the penitential Psalms, that is, Psalm 51 (“Have mercy on me, O God”), is not only controversial but also frequently represented in many liturgical contexts.

⁴⁷⁸ “Aff dybhedsens nøed rober ieg til thig.” See S. H. Poulsen 47–48, “Den danske højmesses enkelte led.” In Denmark the Introit was called “Officium,” which shows the connection to the prayers of the Hour.

Luther's paraphrase of Psalm 130 has inspired many composers during the ages, including Johann Sebastian Bach. In the chorale cantata of the 21st Sunday of Trinity (1724), Bach uses the text of Luther's paraphrase.⁴⁷⁹ Psalm 130 is mainly read or sung in the context of funerals, as is Psalm 23.⁴⁸⁰ At Luther's own funeral, his paraphrase of Psalm 130 was sung. Luther's use of the Psalms is to a great deal characterized more by practical theological concerns than by basic liturgical theology. Nevertheless, Luther's hymn based on Psalm 130, as well as his exposition, reveals the integration of primary and secondary theology in his work. "Out of the depths" highlights the lack of meaning, the traumatic experience of God's absence, and indicates the perpetual journey of "baptismal awaking." Hence, the hidden God plays an important role in Luther's understanding of lamentation as the way to hope. That is why the lamenter shall not cease insisting on grace. Actually, this is the only way to the restoration of the liturgical subject anew.

Lange refers to the dimension of struggle in Luther's liturgical language. Pickstock, by contrast, views textual communication as a recollection of a truth already discovered. For that reason, Pickstock sticks to the Latin Mass, while Luther confronts the theological implications in the worship order with "a new grammar."

According to Lathrop, the fundamental juxtaposition of the *Ordo* is in every way grounded on the Christ-event, that is, the ongoing pattern of dying and rising. This pattern runs throughout Luther's expositions of *The Seven Penitential Psalms*, not least in Psalm 130. The tension between the uncontrolled trauma of God's absence is juxtaposed to the disruption of God's grace anew. Important, though, is that the liturgical subject's rejoicing at receiving God's grace, as well as the traumatic experience of the deep-depths, ought to be loudly verbalized *coram Deo*. Suffering is not meant to be lonely or in silence. In addition, Luther's well-known reluctant attitude to the Hours does not prevent his holding to regular prayers corresponding to the Hours, for the most part regarding the "daily training," the *lex exercitandi* in psalmic language.

⁴⁷⁹ See Johann Sebastian Bach, "Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir," Kantat BWV 38.

⁴⁸⁰ Witvliet (2007), 56.

The Psalms Speak for Us “Out of the Depths”

“Out of the Depths” could well be the heading for all seven penitential Psalms. One contemporary work that deals with the relevance of the Psalms today carries the significant title “Out of the Depths.” Just as Luther proclaimed the Psalter to be “a well-tried guide,” there is a prevailing interest in contemporary spirituality and liturgical theology of being guided *through* the Psalms rather than being primarily taught *about* the Psalms. Where most biblical texts, to a large degree, speak *to* us, the Psalms speak *for* us. In a polyphony of voices, addressing God in a range of feelings and situations, the Psalter “speaks for us,” offers and teaches us how to journey through a life before God, together with the *communio sanctorum*. The Psalms speak for us *de profundis*, out of the depths “of our human experience.”⁴⁸¹

Seven different Psalms inspire Luther to compose hymns for liturgical purposes; one of them is Psalm 130, “*Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir*.”⁴⁸² This well-known arrangement of Psalm 130 into a liturgical hymn is considered a significant expression of Reformation theology and is still represented in hymn books today.⁴⁸³ “Out of the Depths” brings together the basic components of Reformation theology with the verbalization of human vulnerability, which in Luther’s view is what the Psalter is meant to be.⁴⁸⁴

Luther’s composition based on Psalm 130 is categorized as a hymn of faith, and in this sense, it sheds light on the relationship between theological interpretation and liturgy. This hymn is used in many countries and regions today, including, for example, Scandinavia.⁴⁸⁵ Luther probably wanted hymns written in line with the Psalms to be used in liturgical contexts. There is an unmistakably close connection between Luther’s theology and his views on liturgy, which comes

⁴⁸¹ Bernhard W. Anderson with Steven Bishop, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today*, 3rd Edition, Revised and Expanded (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), “Preface,” ix–xi.

⁴⁸² The other six compositions have their outset from the Psalms 12, 14, 46, 67, 124 and 128. See Sven-Åke Selander & Karl-Johan Hansson “Introduktion” in Sven-Åke Selander & Karl-Johan Hansson, eds., *Martin Luthers psalmer i de nordiska folkens liv: Ett projekt inom forskarnätverk Nordhymn* (Lund: Arcus förlag, 2008), 18.

⁴⁸³ See for example *Evangelisches Kirchen Gesang Buch: Ausgabe für die evangelisch-lutherische Kirche in Bayern* (München: Evang. Presseverband für Bayern e. V., 1957), Hymn 195, and *Den svenska psalmboken* (Stockholm: Verbum, 1986), Hymn 537 (“Ur djupen ropar jag till dig”).

⁴⁸⁴ Janowski, 215–223. This chapter in Janowski’s book is called “Zwischenstück: Das Tor zur Tiefe” (The Gateway to the Depths). Here, Janowski deals with two poets, Paul Celan and Nelly Sachs, who employ Psalms in the quest for God in the trauma of the Shoah. Additionally, Janowski highlights the picture “Das Tor zur Tiefe” by the artist Paul Klee in connection with grief, illness and death.

⁴⁸⁵ Sven-Åke Selander, “Vägen till Norden – ett nordiskt komparativt perspektiv” in Sven-Åke Selander & Karl-Johan Hansson, eds., *Martin Luthers psalmer i de nordiska folkens liv: Ett projekt inom forskarnätverk Nordhymn* (Lund: Arcus förlag, 2008), 444–445.

through in his psalmic hymns. Conventionally, Luther's hymns based on the Psalms have been regarded as more of a practical pastoral matter than as a central point of his theology. However, the Psalm 130 hymn is an outstanding illustration of how primary and secondary theology fit together in Luther's works.⁴⁸⁶

In fact, Luther presents two hymn versions of Psalm 130. The first edition, written in late 1523, includes four stanzas, while the second version (probably written at the beginning of 1523), incorporates five stanzas. Both versions reveal Luther's way of dealing with theology as an ongoing process in which liturgical issues and doctrine cooperate. In his early interpretation, Luther starts out from a negative claim regarding the uselessness of good work, but in his later version he rewrites the first part of the hymn by beginning with a positive statement of God's grace. Due to this re-interpretation, with its beginning in *sola gratia*,⁴⁸⁷ the latter version is regarded as a Reformation hymn. Both editions end the last stanza by naming God as "the Shepherd good alone."⁴⁸⁸

Hitting Bottom: The Return of the Cross⁴⁸⁹

The passionate and strong words "*Aus der tieffen Ruff ich, Herr, zu dyr*" (Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord) emanate from the bottom of the worried heart, tormented by a guilty conscience; according to Luther, anyone who has not experienced this "bottom," and not plumbed the depths of despair, cannot understand what it means. In reality, everyone is actually in the depths of heavy distress, even if the individual does not know about it.⁴⁹⁰ This statement is another example of Luther's theological point of departure concerning the basic human condition: "we are all sinners and beggars." In the context of Psalm 130, the Hebrew word for

⁴⁸⁶ Jørgen Kjærgaard, "For att Guds ord også i sang kan forblive i folket...": Introduktion til Martin Luthers salmedigtning" in Sven-Åke Selander & Karl-Johan Hansson, eds., *Martin Luthers psalmer i de nordiska folkens liv: Ett projekt inom forskarnätverk Nordhymn* (Lund: Arcus förlag, 2008), 35–41.

⁴⁸⁷ Robin A. Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications*, Lutheran Quarterly Books (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 142–147. Leaver highlights the transformation of the second stanza. In the early version Luther writes: "Who stands by his own might alone, to cover all his failing, should fear his efforts to atone, the good works he is doing." In the latter version Luther writes: "With Thee counts nothing but thy grace forgiving all our failing. The best life cannot win the race, good works are unavailing." See 143.

⁴⁸⁸ Leaver (2007), 144.

⁴⁸⁹ "To hit bottom" is an expression by Rabbi Harold Kushner, who mentions Psalm 130 (and Psalm 51) to exemplify this experience. Kushner refers to the necessity of hitting bottom in order to break away from destructive patterns and receive a new direction in life. See Kushner (1989/2002), 129.

⁴⁹⁰ LW 14, 189; WA 517, 1–5.

“depths” (מעמקים) relates to the position of being lost, of being drowned in the bottom of the sea.⁴⁹¹ This illuminates Lange’s argument that Luther’s prayer life is confrontational and marked by a continual, traumatizing loss of meaning. Lange emphasizes that in Luther’s encounter with the biblical texts (in particular the Psalms), he experiences the return of the cross:

For Luther, every context, every subject, is exposed to a force that returns, the return of the cross, the death of God.⁴⁹²

As mentioned above, it is important to realize that Luther does not see any hidden meaning in the words or event encountering the individual. No symbols or signs stand for any sort of profound significance. Rather, it is the divine absence, *the lack of meaning*, that Luther first and foremost experiences in his struggle with the words. One way or another, the trauma of the perpetual journey from absence to presence is always operating in Luther’s liturgical theology. Lange describes Luther’s ongoing confrontation with words and events as “a baptismal awakening,” as the perpetual journey from death to life. “It was in struggle with the words themselves,” and not by an already achieved insight in terms of some theological interpretation, that Luther found new meaning.⁴⁹³ In Luther’s works, prayer of whatever content, whether lament or thanksgiving, and theological interpretation are integrated entities. Just as Luther’s liturgical journeys have their point of departure “out of the depths,” so it is with his commentary on Psalm 102:12 (“Sad to say, I am too far away from Thee and too far in the depths”). Here Luther substantiates the abyss between God and the human being by comparing his own name and essence with God’s name and essence (see above). The trauma of being lost and too far away from seeing a renewal of life is the return of the cross.

Crying and Cross-Bearing: A Place of Hope

The return of the cross does not imply a condition of silent endurance. In his exposition of Psalm 130, Luther elucidates the connection between “crying and cross-bearing” in terms of the

⁴⁹¹ Janowski (2009), 31–35. Janowski highlights the two aspects of “depths” in the Hebrew source, such as a substantial spatiality as well as an existential dimension. Additionally, Janowski underscores the significance of chaos connected to the Hebrew word מעמקים in the sense of breaking up from the well-known.

⁴⁹² Lange (2010), 118.

⁴⁹³ Lange (2010), 119–120.

place of hope.⁴⁹⁴ To cry out in abandonment and pain reveals a yearning for God's presence in terms of grace and mercy:

Crying is nothing but a strong and earnest longing for God's grace, which does not arise in a person unless he sees in what depth he is lying. (Commentary on stanza 1b).⁴⁹⁵

Experiencing the depths and the absence of God should not lead the lamenter to acceptance and silence. On the contrary, the desperation has to be verbalized, even if God does not answer, or even "despisest my desperate cry."⁴⁹⁶ This is a distinct example of the important role *Deus absconditus* plays in Luther's understanding of lamentation as a way to hope, as the baptismal journey from death to life anew. Accordingly, even if God does not answer the deep death experience expressed in the supplicant's cry, the crying-out shall not cease.

In Luther's view, fear and hope form a key juxtaposition gearing towards God's mercy. To hit bottom is the traumatized traveler's encounter with the turned-away self in relation to God, the "old human being." (In Luther's terminology we may call this position *homo absconditus*).⁴⁹⁷ However, hitting bottom indicates the perpetual baptismal journey, the awakening which sooner or later evokes hope anew. For this reason, Luther pays heed to the profound procession from death to life all over again. Luther illuminates the journey from fear to God's mercy and forgiveness, which includes "das Schrei" *coram Deo*. The individual who does not cry out in despair will not gain God's forgiveness. To move away from fear, as the absence of God, to the experience of divine presence through receiving God's forgiveness, requires an inescapable moment: the shattering lament. Luther goes so far as to claim that, "As already stated, if anyone does not fear God, he does not implore, nor is he forgiven."⁴⁹⁸ In other words, painless answers are not advertised. The perpetual journey from death to life begins with the "Yes," the real life of faith that follows the dying with Christ and his cross, and the rising, the Hallelujah, the perpetual voice of the church. Receiving God's grace anew does not mean that the human condition is altered, but a new relationship with God is established.

⁴⁹⁴ LW 14, 191; WA 18, 518, 37: "Geschrey und creutz."

⁴⁹⁵ LW 14, 189; WA 18, 517, 7–9.

⁴⁹⁶ LW 14, 190; WA 18, 517, 12. Commentary on Psalm 130:2.

⁴⁹⁷ In correspondence with Luther, it is called *curvatus in se*.

⁴⁹⁸ LW 14, 191; WA 18, 518, 12–13: "Das ist, als oben gesagt ist, Wer Gott nicht furchtet, der *schreiet* nicht, dem wird auch nicht vergeben" (italics added).

To Live Before God is to Insist on Grace

The trauma of being lost is not an acceptance of a condition of implicit endurance. On the contrary, Luther focuses on the activity of *insisting on grace*, in WA even more vigorously named, “*gnade pochen*,” that is to say, *urgently* insisting on grace. Moreover, Luther counterpoints two of his fundamental concepts, grace and good works, in his commentary on stanza 4a:

If anyone wants to amount to something before God, he must insist on grace, not on merit.⁴⁹⁹

In this context, Luther is pondering on the significance of God as the only refuge, the human being’s only source of forgiveness. Good works before God will not do, but, as mentioned above, this does not imply an unresisting position of mere endurance. This is a clear example of how “the hidden God” operates in Luther’s understanding of the baptismal journey from the deep death experience to life anew. The traumatic condition of God’s absence, in other words, requires that the plight be turned to an address. The addressee is *Deus absconditus*, the faraway God, and the addresser is the liturgical subject abandoned in the depths, in the return of the cross. Presumably, Luther’s own life-long struggle with God was, in the same manner, his continual way of insisting on grace.

Liturgical Language: Mediator or Struggle?

Lange and Pickstock both describe the liturgical journey in terms of absence and presence, though with quite different features. Pickstock stresses the doxological characteristic of the liturgical subject and describes the language of liturgy as chiefly an oral phenomenon: “It both expresses and performs shared values of what is *praiseworthy*.”⁵⁰⁰ By reference to the Socratic idea of a doxological *polis*, Pickstock criticizes modern and postmodern ways of propelling language into degradation and nihilism.

⁴⁹⁹ LW 14, 191; WA 18, 518, 9–10: “Wer fur Gott etwas sein wil, der mus alleine auff seine *gnade pochen*, nicht auff verdienst” (italics added).

⁵⁰⁰ Pickstock (1998), 40 (italics added).

There is, in effect, no difference between ontology and theology. Accordingly, transcendence vanishes, and the *polis* changes state into an “immanentist city,” at the polity of death.⁵⁰¹ The latter is the un-liturgical world, which promotes writing above orality, including the language of liturgy, the genuine language of the *sacred polis*. Building on Plato’s *Phaedrus*, Pickstock considers language to be a medium of doxology. The dialogue between the lover and beloved in *Phaedrus* is a restoration of a doxological language which always opens to dimensions of transcendence. When Pickstock criticizes Derrida for privileging written language, she claims that the dialogue is jeopardized. The un-liturgical and immanent city thus out-maneuvers the transcendent world signified by the doxological language. The corollary is the spatiality of the immanent context, that is, “reality without depth.”⁵⁰²

In some ways Pickstock reveals a view of the instrumentality of language. Beginning with Plato’s narrative of the dialogue between the lover and the beloved, Pickstock aims to show liturgical language as doxological by nature. In Pickstock’s view, the doxological context and the recognition of transcendence are two sides of the same coin. For this reason, the liturgical subject is liberated from linguistic degradation. A critical review of Descartes’ favoring of written language follows as well, and likewise a critique of Derrida.

Lange, like Pickstock, pays great attention to liturgical language. Lange does so in relation to Luther’s interpretation of the Psalms, and Pickstock in line with the medieval Latin Mass, though with rather assorted conceptualizations. Even though both Lange and Pickstock consider the ongoing events of liturgy to be beyond one’s control, they treat the divine absence in notably different ways. Lange reveals the importance of *written* as well as *oral* language by analyzing Luther’s struggle with the biblical texts in search of a new meaning. “The hidden God” is, for this reason, the addressee in this confrontation, and the significance of liturgical language is characterized by its struggle:

Luther abandons the ‘hidden’ meaning of words (as if grammar took us ever deeper into some type of spiritual and more ‘true’ reality) and rests in a grammar of event that is continually disruptive.⁵⁰³

⁵⁰¹ Pickstock (1998), 3.

⁵⁰² Pickstock (1998), 61.

⁵⁰³ Lange (2010), 40–41.

By virtue of the disruption, the encounter with the words constantly implies a struggle concerning their meaning. Even though the confrontation comes out in “sweetness” (which is mostly the case in Luther’s liturgical journey), the search for meaning is an event not without struggle.⁵⁰⁴ The “sweetness” is the *accessio*, the addition of something new, the finding of a new grammar of significance, that is, a receiving of God’s grace anew.⁵⁰⁵ In other words, a new orientation.

Unlike for Luther, for Pickstock “textual communication is no more than an aid to recollection of a truth already discovered.”⁵⁰⁶ According to Lange, however, Luther’s struggle with biblical texts is a matter of life and death by which the paschal pattern of passion and victory must be discovered anew; from death to life, from chaos to the awakening of a new meaning. Where Pickstock claims that the stylization of liturgical language stands for keeping “chaos at bay,” Lange dissents: disruption is, in fact, the basis of liturgy.⁵⁰⁷ This, I maintain, is an indication of the actual reason why Pickstock sticks to the medieval Latin Mass in such a resolute manner. The restoration of the liturgical subject involves a journey through the stylized language, characterized by its “predictable formulae.” Quotidian language should be kept out of the exactitude and predictability in the language of the sacred polis. In consequence, this is quite a different view of liturgy from Lathrop’s concept of *Ordo* and Lange’s *accessio*, that is, the ongoing process of embracing something new and surprising.

Same Order, Different Consequences

Lange presents a broader view than Pickstock, and a rather divergent view as well. Lange shows how liturgical language is characterized by Luther’s struggle in literality as well as in orality. I find Lange’s approach to be much more coherent as a means to understanding Luther’s way of dealing with the Psalms. Moreover, by pointing to the intimate relation between finding a new language and finding a new meaning, Lange shows the connection between primary and

⁵⁰⁴ Lange (2010), 38–41.

⁵⁰⁵ In arrival anew into joy and thanksgiving, after struggling with meaning using the language of the saints, that is, the Psalter, Luther speaks of words as “so sweet a fragrance.” See LW 35, 254; WA DB I., 100, 6.

⁵⁰⁶ Pickstock (1993), 120. As mentioned above, to Luther the approach to the biblical text is always a new encounter. The search for a new meaning does not lie in the past; it is constantly a new journey from death to life: the baptismal pattern.

⁵⁰⁷ Pickstock (1993), 115.

secondary theology in Luther's works. A new liturgical language is by no means a "predictable formula"; it comes out of a struggle with theological issues in order to find the meaning anew, and vice versa. As stated above, the movement from *loss* to *surprise* is signified by the liturgical language as the perpetual *struggle* for naming anew the relationship between God and human.

Living in different times, Luther and Pickstock depart from the same service order, the medieval Latin Mass, but with contrasting consequences. Luther criticizes this order of Mass by analyzing the theological implications of the service. It leads him to a confrontation with the secondary theology conveyed in the primary theology, that is, the Latin Mass. Luther, in other words, turns to liturgical language in order to illuminate the theological implications, which opens a passage to a new liturgy. A new service order, expressing a new theology through a new view of liturgy, and vice versa, is achieved by the struggle to find new meaning. Nothing in this struggle is predictable; it is, indeed, a loss, a lack of meaning, a journey that hits bottom, as in Luther's interpretation of Psalm 130. The baptismal awakening incorporates events of uncontrolled moments of traumatic experiences: "Out of the depths I cry Thee, O Lord!"

Pickstock, by contrast, clings tightly to the medieval Latin Mass to accentuate the importance of a fixed language aimed at doxology. As at the outset of my analysis, I again say that Pickstock is overall focused on the *memoria victoriae*, the unbroken Hallelujah. Within this standpoint, a universe of theological interpretations is implied, in contrast to what Luther emphasizes as a *liturgical simul*.⁵⁰⁸ The memory of the cross and the memory of the resurrection are the fundamental juxtaposition of liturgy, according to Luther. This is the perpetual song of the church, in this study is a broken Hallelujah. Doxological language, such as Pickstock's analogy of the erotic language in *Phaedrus*, does not include the return of the cross, the *memoria passionis*. In Luther, by contrast, the renewal of God's grace can be experienced: Only through the basic juxtaposition of the *Ordo*. In the same way, according to Lathrop, Easter cannot be fully interpreted without Lent. The doxological language has its origin in the language of lament, in order to speak earnestly to God.⁵⁰⁹

Even if Pickstock takes account of uncontrollability as a dimension of liturgy, she does not make room for any further experience "out of the depths," the experience of God as hidden. The

⁵⁰⁸ "A liturgical *simul*" is not one of Luther's formulations. However, I find it rather significant for describing Luther's view on worship.

⁵⁰⁹ Lathrop (1998/1993), 68–79. Here Lathrop draws the line from the complex of juxtapositions in the Jewish *Pesach*, Passover, to the interwoven pattern of the Christian Easter.

erotic language does imply uncertain and uncontrollable moments but, as in *Phaedrus*, the basic tune of the lover and the beloved is doxology.

Another rather different result of Luther's and Pickstock's work with the same worship order, the Latin Mass, is that Pickstock, in her depiction of the liturgical journey, keeps to the idea of departure and arrival as events of the same time. Accordingly, the liturgy sticks to a fixed language. The ongoing repetition is, at its core, the basis of liturgy, and the primary line in her view of doxology. As already noted, some contemporary theologians specify the aim of worship to be the praise of God, doxology.⁵¹⁰ Lange distinctly shows that disruption of context is pivotal in Luther's encounter with the biblical words. Even if Luther considers praise and thanksgiving to be the response, the *sacrificium*, to the sacrament, as depicted in the Torgau formula, the liturgical journey sets out from the lamenting language of despair, just like the beginning of Psalm 130. Luther, as we have seen, turns to liturgy in order to find a new grammar. In and through the liturgy he finds a *nova lingua*, which continually challenges a "fixed" language.

The baptismal pattern characterizes Luther's views on liturgical theology, the journey from death to life anew. The liturgical journey is an ongoing brokenness, as the *memoria passionis* and the *memoria victoriae* break through the language. Coming into the language of joy and doxology is a journey through challenge, through a language of not knowing the way. Luther's confrontation with the text often renders a language of lament and despair. It follows that the liturgical language, in Luther, is a broken language that cannot be defined according to a pre-fixed language. The final outcome of Luther's liturgical theology comes to the fore in his departure from the firm language of the Latin Mass, when he sketches out his proposal for the German Mass, based on the baptismal pattern of the ongoing journey from death to life necessarily expressed in a broken language.

⁵¹⁰ Such as Wainwright (1980). Already the title of Wainwright's book indicates the primal issue of liturgy. See *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life. A Systematic Theology*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). I would say that this is accurate of Luther's theology and view on worship, yet not without any indication to the liturgical *simul*, that is, not without mentioning the brokenness, passion and victory. The main theology of Luther incorporates at least "two words," for instance passion and victory, such as the ongoing Christ-event.

Daily Training in loving God and Neighbor

In discussion of Luther's relation to the Hours, we usually find some commentary on his reluctant position concerning this subject, or no reference at all.⁵¹¹ However, as noted, Luther brings his experience of the monastic prayer of the *horae canonicae* into the liturgy of the assembly in various ways. First, Luther takes a firm stand in connecting the Psalms to preaching. It follows that, for the daily morning and evening services of Matins and Vespers, the preacher must choose the proper Psalms, including response or antiphon, with a collect adequate to the sermon. By contrast to the monastic experience of bawling "against the walls,"⁵¹² Luther sees the chanting of the Psalms in the weekly services as a daily training, as a *lex exercitandi*:

Thus Christian people will *by daily training* become proficient, skilful, and well versed in the Bible. For this is how genuine Christians were made in former times both virgins and martyrs and could also be made today. (Italics added)⁵¹³

Thus, Luther holds to the rhythm of the office, at least regarding Matins (at four or five in the morning) and Vespers (at five or six in the evening), and also regarding the midday services. These daily services were obviously also meant to be a "training office" for future pastors, who were to be skillful in preaching and pastoral care ("*gutte prediger und seelsorger*"). Moreover, regarding "daily training" for future pastors as well as for Christian people in general, Luther emphasizes the twofold meaning: "Alone to the glory of God and the neighbor's good." It must be done willingly, without any imposed requirements or circumstances. Luther indicates here the discontinuance of working for a pay-off, "temporal or eternal." Here we find a clear-cut definition of liturgy, and a rule for how to carry out services in the assembly: It is a gathering in training to give glory to God and to evoke solidarity with one's neighbor.⁵¹⁴ With the inspiration

⁵¹¹ For instance, Andreas Odenthal criticizes Hans-Martin Barth (see Barth, 2009) for operating Luther's theology without any reference to the Hours at all. See Odenthal, 70.

⁵¹² LW 53, 12; WA 12, 36, 1–2.

⁵¹³ LW 53, 12; WA 12, 36, 7–10: "Also durch *teglliche ubung* der schrift die Christen ynn der schrift verstendig, leufftig und kundig werden. Denn daher wurden vortzeytten gar feyne Christen, iungfrawen und merterer, und sollten wol auch noch werden" (italics added).

⁵¹⁴ LW 53, 13; WA 12, 36, 27–34. Notably "*gutte prediger und seelsorger*" is translated into "preachers and pastors." Counselling "seelsorge" is of primary concern in Luther's theology and first and foremost in his view of preaching. The sermon missing pastoral care does not measure up to the purpose of preaching. Now and then, "pastor" is the translation of "Pfarrer," which is accurate. So, it is of importance to watch out for the pivotal issue of counselling in understanding Luther's theology. See Göran Agrell & Karin Löfgren, eds., *Martin Luther som själavårdare* (Stockholm: Themis förlag, utgiven med stöd från Skarpsnåcks församling och Samfundet Pro Fide

of Luther's own terminology, we call it the *lex exercitandi*, as mentioned above. Throughout his liturgical outlines, Luther pays attention to the desires and needs of the assembly. Therefore, even if he wants to abolish the daily Masses, there should be a clear concern for the individual as well as the whole assembly. If anyone asks for the Mass on a weekday, it should be done at a favorable time, because rules cannot control worship life.⁵¹⁵ Thus, pastoral care is a primary concern in Luther's work, as "*gutte prediger und seelsorger*."

Not Letting God "Slip Away"

In his exposition of Psalm 130, verse 6 ("My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning"), Luther refers to the souls who wait in despair in the darkness of the night, like in the Hours.⁵¹⁶ The city's watches or guards, who see people entering or leaving, are similar to the manner in which "[o]ne must wait for the Lord from one morning to the next, namely, constantly and steadily."⁵¹⁷ Three hours is the measure of every watch, the interval of the Hours is similar. Luther only mentions the four night watches in order to reveal the importance of trusting in God.⁵¹⁸ Like the city guard watching in the night, God guards and protects the individual. If the supplicant experiences God as absent during the daytime, he or she shall have to wait for the next morning. Waiting for God is no work, it is simply to rely on God in the hours of darkness, which to Luther is a spiritual and inward position. (It is not difficult to imagine that his unwilling attitude to the monastic night prayer, in Luther's view "smells" of

et Christianismo, 2016). A leading theme in this study is the way counselling characterizes Luther's works, preaching and letters as well as how it features throughout his theology.

⁵¹⁵ LW 53, 13: "But if any should desire the sacrament during the week, let mass be held as inclination and time dictate; for in this matter one cannot make hard and fast rules." WA 12, 37, 6–9.

⁵¹⁶ The early church carried on the Jewish practice of praying at bound hours of the day and night; the Canonical Hours, *Liturgia Horarum*. These are eight prayers, also called "the eight prayer watches," whereby the first traditionally takes place in the evening. Compare, for instance, Matthäus 27:45, "Von der sechsten Stunde an kam eine Finsternis über das ganze Land bis zur neunten Stunde." See *Die Bibel*, Nach Martin Luthers Übersetzung, Lutherbibel revidiert 2017, Jubiläumsausgabe 500 Jahre Reformation, Mit Sonderseiten zu Martin Luthers Wirken als Reformator und Bibelübersetzer, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. Not articulated in the English version, see *NRSV*: "From noon on [that is, the sixth hour], darkness came over the whole land until three [that is, the ninth hour] in the afternoon." Compare the Greek version of the sixth, ἔκτησ, and the ninth, ἐνάτησ, in the *Novum Testamentum Graece*.

⁵¹⁷ LW 14, 193; WA 18, 520, 3–5.

⁵¹⁸ The four nights watches correspond to the Hours: "The first, from six to nine [vesper]; the second, from nine to twelve [compline]; the third, from twelve to three [matins]; and the fourth, the morning watch, from three to daylight, that is six [lauds]." See LW 14, 193–194; WA 18, 519, 37–520, 27. See also LW 14, 191; WA 518, 36–37 where trusting in God also means to wait in "crying and cross-bearing."

works activity). The true “work” is the waiting for God’s presence by “living in the three supreme virtues: faith, hope, and love.” Luther finds these virtues described in the Psalms and works proceeding from them; “*affectus et opera eorum.*” He explicitly claims that the whole inner life of the human being is “masterfully described” in Psalm 130. Hence, the genuine position of the supplicant is to be a waiter, and to expect nothing but “kindness and mercy” from God. Throughout the many depths of the perpetual journey, with its “crying and cross-bearing” dimensions, the traveler should trust in God’s redemption being greater than every sin.⁵¹⁹

The tension between the experiences of God’s absence and God’s presence permeates Luther’s interpretation of the Psalms. The human condition is to wait, wait for the morning to come, when God’s mercy will arrive. No matter how long the supplicant must wait, “my soul has become a waiter,” and hope shall not be put aside. Luther regards Psalm 130 to be one of the “Pauline Psalms” because it expresses the central kernel of faith and theology: The human being cannot achieve salvation by merit. God’s mercy alone, through Jesus Christ received in faith, is the ground of redemption, in Luther’s words “justification by faith.” Waiting for God’s mercy and forgiveness in the darkness, however, does not mean suffering in silence, but rather crying out of the depths and despair. Luther’s paraphrase of Psalm 130 immediately became predominant in various contexts, for example as a catechism hymn, before the sermon, at funerals and as Introit.⁵²⁰ At the funeral of Luther himself, on February 20, 1546, his paraphrase of Psalm 130 was sung:⁵²¹

And though it last into the night,
And up until the morrow,
Yet shall my heart hope in God’s might,
Nor doubt or take to worry.
Thus Israel must keep his post,
For he was born of [the] Holy Ghost,

⁵¹⁹ LW 14, 193; WA 18, 520, 6–18.

⁵²⁰ S. H. Poulsen refers to the Malmoe Mass (Malmømessen) in mentioning Luther’s paraphrase of Psalm 130 as the Introit. See S. H. Poulsen, “Kirke-og kulturhistorisk Baggrund paa Reformationstiden” in *Danske Messebøger fra Reformationstiden*, Udgivet i facsimile af Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund med en liturgihistorisk redegørelse af S. H. Poulsen (København: J. H. Schultz Forlag, 1959), 24.

⁵²¹ Leaver (2007), 142–152.

And for his God must tarry.⁵²²

The paraphrase of Psalm 130 cannot be left out of any study focusing on Luther's hymns, since it expresses the core of Luther's faith and theology. No human act, not even acts of penance, can bring the supplicant "out of the depths."⁵²³ Nevertheless, the traumatic experience, whether caused by oneself or by someone or something else, shall be opened up and verbalized *coram Deo*; "Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord!" Even in the darkest hour of the night of God's absence, penitential acts are of no use, but struggling and waiting for the morning light – that is what faith is all about. In other words, justification by faith alone is not letting God "slip away"; it is to do as Jacob did at the ford of the Jabbok, when he wrestled in the night, and addressed the unknown presence of God, saying "I will not let you go, unless you bless me."⁵²⁴

Psalm 143: Life as *Conformitas* and Solidarity

1 Herr, erhoere meyn gebet, Vernym
meyn flehen umb deynes glaubens
willen, Antwort myr umb deynes
gerechtigkeit willen.

2 Und gehe nicht ynns gerichte mit
deynem knechte, Denn fur dyr wird
keyn lebendiger rechtfertig seyn.

3 Denn der feynd verfolget meyne
seele, und zuschlegt meyn leben zu
poden, Er legt mich ynns finster wie die
todten auff der wellt.

1 LORD, hear my prayer, pay
attention to my supplications in your
fidelity, answer me for the sake of your
righteousness.

2 Do not go into judgement with your
servant, for no one living is righteous
before you.

3 For the enemy pursue my soul, and
hits my life to the ground, he puts me in
darkness like those long dead.

⁵²² LW 53, 224; WA 35, 420.

⁵²³ "In this hymn, one of the first Lutheran hymns to have been written, that expounds the essence of Reformation faith and theology, that the response to the Law and the Gospel is not 'do acts of penance' but 'repent and believe.'" See Leaver (2007), 152.

⁵²⁴ Genesis 32:26.

4 Und meyn geyst ist ynn myr
geengstet, Meyn hertz ist myr ynn
meym leybe verstoeret.

5 Jch gedencke an die vorigen zeytten,
Jch trachte⁵²⁵ von deynen wercken, und
rede von den geschefften deyner hende.

6 Jch breytte meyne hende zu dyr aus,
Meyne seele duerstet nach dyr auff
erden.⁵²⁶ Sela.

7 HERR, erhoere mich balde, meyn
geyst vergehet, Verbirg deyn andlitz
nicht fur myr, das ich nicht werde
gleych denen die ynn die gruben faren.

8 Las mich frue hoeren decyne guete,
den ich hoffe auff dich,
thu myr kund den weg, darauff ich
gehen soll, Denn ich hebe meyne seele
auff zu dyr.

9 HERR, erette mich vor meynen
feynden, zu dyr hab ich zuflucht.

10 Lere mich thun nach deynem
wolgefallen, den du bist meyn Got,
Deyn guter geyst fure mich auff
ebenem lande.

11 HERr, mach mich lebendig umb
deynes namen willen, Fuere meyne
seele aus der not umb deyner
gerechtigkeit willen.

4 And my spirit is scared within me,
my heart in my body is distraught.

5 I remember past times, I preach your
opus, and I am speaking of the works of
your hand.

6 I stretch out my hands to you, my
soul thirsts for you like a dried acre.
Sela.

7 LORD, listen to me rapidly, my
spirit passes away. Do not hide your
face from me, I will not be like those
who go into the pit.

8 Let me hear of your goodness in the
morning, for in you are my hope. Tell
me the way I should go, for I uplift my
soul to you.

9 LORD, save me from my enemies,
in you I have my refuge.

10 Teach me to do your willpower, for
you are my God. May your good spirit
lead me on a level ground.

11 LORD, for the sake of your name,
make me alive, for the sake of your
righteousness bring my soul out of
distress.

⁵²⁵ In his commentaries, Luther mentions the word “meditabar,” with which he refers to “preach” or “speak.” WA 18, 524, 40–525,1–3.

⁵²⁶ Here Luther refers to “durrer acker,” that is, “dried acre.” WA 18, 525, 28.

12 Und verstoere meyne feynde umb
deyner guete willen, und bringe umb
alle, die meyne seele engsten, Denn ich
byn deyn knecht.

12 For the sake of your benevolence
destroy my enemies, and kill all who
upset my soul, for I am your servant.

Preface

Luther provides the introduction to *The Seven Penitential Psalms* in the first one, Psalm 6, and provides an additional preface in the last one, Psalm 143. At this point, Luther very significantly proclaims what he sees as the core of these Psalms, the whole Psalter, and indeed, the entire scripture:

Every Psalm, all Scripture, calls to grace, extols grace, searches for Christ, and praises only God's work, while rejecting all the works of man [*“aller menschen”*]. Therefore this Psalm can be readily understood in the light of the foregoing, for it speaks the same language [*“eine stimme”*].⁵²⁷

The one voice, *“eine Stimme,”* the *cantus firmus*, that is to say, the steadfast “melody” of the entire Psalter, is God’s mercy, which means that all human works are ruled out. In addition, Luther points out the purpose of praying with the Psalms in his introduction of Psalm 143. This *“eine Stimme”* is to be found within the words and experiences of the *communio sanctorum*, regarding both past times and the present. To search for God’s mercy is a verbalization, “in the name of the whole people of Christ and of each person individually,” as Luther describes it in his preface to the Psalter.⁵²⁸

To Luther’s understanding, every Psalm “calls to grace, extols grace, searches for Christ, and praises only God’s work” (see quotation above). Once more, we discern here Luther’s way of seeing faith as an ongoing process, such as a crying for God’s grace when verbalizing the depths

⁵²⁷ LW 14, 196; WA 18, 522, 1–4: “Alle psalmen, alle schrifft ruffet zu der gnaden, preiset die gnade, sucht Christum und lobet alleine Gottes werck, aller menschen werck aber verwirfft sie, darumb ist disser psalme leicht zuverstehen aus den vorigen, denn es ist *alles eine stimme*” (italics added).

⁵²⁸ LW 14, 196; WA 18, 522, 4–5.

as well as in praise. In the interpretation of the first stanza of Psalm 143, Luther reiterates what it means for the supplicant to live *coram Deo*, by reference to the perpetual process:

The life of a saint is more a taking from God than a giving; more a desiring than having; more a becoming pious than a being pious.⁵²⁹

This statement distinctly summarizes what hereto has been said about the ongoing travel of the liturgical subject: it is more a becoming than a being. Luther's first reference, in the commentaries on Psalm 143, points to Psalm 34:10, where "the true essence" of the human being is to implore, to desire and to seek.⁵³⁰ In other words, the true "work" of the supplicant is by no means a passivity. It is a lifelong process of searching for God's grace anew, through expressive and rather loud "work-outs." *Lex exercitandi* points to the necessity of providing a "work-out room" in the liturgy, especially in lament and in the experience of God as absent. The characteristic of the "law of training" is, more precisely, learning to trust in God's grace anew. As Pickstock spells it out: arrival comes before travelling, that is, "to call upon God is always already to have entered into him."⁵³¹ Pivotal here is the insight of the baptismal pattern of moving from death to life, never completed in this life but always more a becoming than a being. In Luther's liturgical theology, the baptismal journey is perpetual, though with the steady "tune" of *cantus firmus*: the reception of God's grace anew.

Christ is God's grace, mercy, righteousness, truth, wisdom, power, comfort, and salvation, given to us by God without any merit on our part.⁵³²

This is the "octave" in "the same old song" of Luther's liturgical theology. The same old song is the ceaseless, broken Hallelujah, once again in this beautiful and significant sentence:

⁵²⁹ LW 14, 196; WA 18, 522, 11–13.

⁵³⁰ LW 14, 196: "Hence, imploring, desiring, searching is the true essence of the inner man, as in Psalm 34:10: 'Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.'" WA 18, 522, 14–18.

⁵³¹ Pickstock (1998), 196–197.

⁵³² LW 14, 204; WA 18, 529, 13–14.

Lamentation as an Act of Solidarity

Solidarity is another striking and important topic in Luther's exposition of the penitential Psalms. The notion of being a "truly Christ-formed man" ("*Christformig mensch*") is mentioned in the commentary to Psalm 143:7b ("Hide not Thy face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the pit"). In this context, Luther points to the delay of God's help, but the liturgical subject still insists on God's grace. Despite despair and anxiety, a verbalization has to take place, in order for the cross-bearing experience of being "inwardly and outwardly crucified with Christ"⁵³³ to take place.

In the broader perspective, though, the Christ-formed human person is continually connected to their neighbor. This main theme in Luther's liturgical theology is manifest in his worship outlines. The preface to *The German Mass* begins by emphasizing what the freedom of a Christian means: "Do not make it [the order of service] a rigid law to bind or entangle anyone's conscience, but use it in Christian liberty as long, when, where, and how you find it to be practical and useful." There is a limit to Christian liberty, however, and that is solidarity with the neighbor:

[N]evertheless, we must make sure that freedom shall be and remain a servant of love and our fellow-man.⁵³⁴

As already mentioned, *The Freedom of a Christian* plays a significant role in Luther's perspective on worship. To live *coram Deo* also constantly places the liturgical subject *coram hominibus*. Living in God's grace connects the traveler to fellow humans; in Luther's description, to live in Christ is to live in one's fellow human being. Solidarity with the neighbor is what characterizes a Christian, it is the very essence of it.⁵³⁵ Throughout the penitential Psalms, crying out in pain and suffering is the main point, as noted above. Church tradition largely treats the penitential Psalms as a calling for confession of sins and repentance. However, since lamentation is the very essence of these Psalms (whatever the reason for complaining may be: suffering, sin, traumatizing experiences or abandonment), the fundamental approach is to cry

⁵³³ LW 14, 201; WA 18, 526, 11–16.

⁵³⁴ LW 53, 61; WA 19, 72, 5–10, 72, 20–23.

⁵³⁵ "We conclude therefore, that a Christian lives not in himself, but in Christ and his neighbor." See LW 31, 371; WA 7, 38, 6–7.

out to God. Noteworthy is that neither Psalms 6 nor 102 advocate explicitly for a confession of sins. The liturgical subject crying out to God is not something extraordinary: “it is the rule.”⁵³⁶ Lange, in particular, though also Lathrop, bring up Luther’s view of the Eucharist with regard to the significance of solidarity. It is worth recalling that Luther’s concern is to put both word and table at the center of the assembly’s gathering. The juxtaposition of word and table points to a third thing: welcoming the stranger and showing solidarity with the poor. In the sermon on the Gospel of John, with reference to the woman from Samaria,⁵³⁷ God addresses humanity:

I do not choose to come to you in My majesty and in the company of angels but in the guise of a poor beggar asking for bread... I place flesh and blood before your door with the plea: ‘Give Me a drink!’⁵³⁸

Lange accentuates the traumatic confrontation with the “Other body.” The liturgical subjects see the bread with their own eyes and hear with their own ears that Christ’s body is present.⁵³⁹ The encounter with the body of Christ is a loss that disrupts the context as well as the liturgical subject. Christ, broken, exposes the liturgical subject to the cross, to the cry of the dying and suffering. This is the ongoing return of the cross: being confronted with the broken body of Christ. It is truly a point beyond control, the demise of representation, symbolism and, in effect, of all systems. The liturgical subject is conformed to the broken body of Christ, the disseminated body which connects the traveler to the suffering and necessary body of the neighbor. According to Luther, adding the neighbor is not a matter of Aristotelian thinking, such as something added to the substance, in this case the Eucharistic bread. Instead, it is the traumatic experience of

⁵³⁶ Patrick D. Miller, “Heaven’s Prisoners: The Lament as Christian Prayer” in Sally A. Brown & Patrick D. Miller, eds., *Lament: Reclaiming Practises in Pulpit, Pew, and Public Square* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 16. Miller claims lament to be one of the “*foundation stones*, foundational for both our anthropology and our theology.” The laments “serve to define our humanness.” The lament is the voice calling out in the belief that there is a God, a God who listens, a God who can “transform human existence without destroying it.” In concentrate, lament is the primary prayer sounding throughout the scripture, from Cain and Abel to Jesus on the cross, and so on. Even in the utmost traumatizing situation, the experience of death, God has “a special set of antennae.” The story of Cain and Abel is the story of the lamenting voice of someone who is dead, who is murdered, and God is listening. See Miller, 15–20.

⁵³⁷ “A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, ‘Give me a drink.’” See John 4:7.

⁵³⁸ LW 22, “Sermons on St. John” 520. See also WA 47, 520. Quotation by Lange (2010), 124.

⁵³⁹ “The bread we see with our eyes, but we hear with our ears that Christ’s body is present.” Quotation by Lange (2010), 122. See LW 37, 29; WA 23, 86, 34–35.

being confronted with the wounded voice of the other, the neighbor. The return of the cross calls for solidarity with the needy and suffering in the world.⁵⁴⁰

As mentioned above, Lange emphasizes the radical difference between *imitatio* and *conformitas* in Luther's liturgical theology. The encounter with the Christ-event in the sacraments and in the word is by no means a matter of mere imitation and repetition.⁵⁴¹ Rather, to be touched by the Christ-event is to struggle for meaning, without any repetition to stick to and nothing to imitate. At stake is the traumatic experience of the abyss, with no anamnesis to lean on, no watchword to be pronounced.⁵⁴² Pickstock, on the other hand, holds to the idea of imitative repetition, anamnesis, with an outset from the Institution Narrative depicted in three Gospels and in I Corinthians.⁵⁴³ Even if the Institution Narrative is told with many variations, each entails the same beginning. The story is meant to be told, according to Pickstock, in "endlessly new first versions."⁵⁴⁴

A Penitential Rite Obscures the Significance of Baptism

"Have existing liturgical traditions anything to offer lamenting hearts?" is a profound question as mentioned in the Introduction. Luther's exposition of *The Seven Penitential Psalms* provides pertinent perspectives on this issue. However, Luther pays no attention to the traditional *actus pœnitentialis*. On the contrary, he abolishes the penitential rite in his worship outlines. As noted

⁵⁴⁰ "The cross 'returns' liturgically and pushes the hearer/participant out the door to be confronted by the body in the world, to find the broken body of Christ in the world, in the cry of the 'other.'" See Lange (2010), 115–124.

Lange's expression "hearer/participant" refers to his understanding of Luther struggling with the word in the written as well as in the liturgical context.

⁵⁴¹ "*Imitatio* is simply the repetition of the event by memory as if memory knew what happened, as if consciousness had captured the event either through re-actualization (anamnesis) or through an unbroken communication (testament)." See Lange (2010), 125.

⁵⁴² A recurring issue among liturgical scholars is the question why, in the narrative story, is the Words of Institution missing from the *Didache*. Lange arrogates, the omission of the Words of Institution in *Didache* indicates the dissemination of both "event" and "remembering" of the event. At this point Lange refers to Lathrop who considers that the *Didache* does not refer to "one story or act of the meal," but to the meal sharing tradition. See Lange (2010), 149 and Lathrop (1999), 188–191. *Didache*, also known as *The Lord's Teaching Through the Twelve Apostles to the Nations*, is considered to date from the late 2nd century. The text disappeared, but in 1873 metropolitan Philotheos Bryennios discovered a Greek copy of the *Didache*, written in 1056, and published it in 1883. *Encyclopæ Britannica* (download 19.10.2019).

⁵⁴³ Matthew 26:26–29, Mark 14:22–25, Luke 22:14–20, 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.

⁵⁴⁴ Pickstock compares the Institution Narrative with the bardic custom of telling tales, that is, to commemorate the "origin" as closely as possible to the first version. See Pickstock (1998), 200.

above, *The German Mass* begins with a hymn or a Psalm, such as Psalm 34, followed by the *kyrie eleison*, which is preceded by the collect:

Almighty God, who art the protector of all who trust in thee, without whose grace no one is able to do anything, or to stand before thee: Grant us richly thy mercy, that by thy holy inspiration we may think what is right and by thy power may perform the same; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.⁵⁴⁵

Of paramount importance is to show the significant connection between a penitential rite and the awareness of being a sinner. In Luther's view, the *actus pœnitentialis* smells like a human work, which is probably the reason he leaves out the *confiteor* in his worship outlines. In fact, "it obfuscates the meaning of baptism itself and it perverts God's gracious gift into a required human work." No extra or supplemental rite other than the daily baptismal journey of dying and rising is required in order to renew God's grace.⁵⁴⁶ The connection between baptism and confession is the condition of everyday life as a Christian, the acknowledgement of being *simul iustus et peccator*. It is an ongoing journey, experiencing the traumatic absence of God *and* experiencing God's presence and grace anew. No penitential rite will replace this status! In the experience of trauma, the liturgical subject needs to *verbalize* the fear of being abandoned, of being drowned in sin, not knowing just where to go next.

The Broken Hallelujah, a Matter of *Conformitas*

The broken Hallelujah, is constantly, a matter of *conformitas*, of being "Christ-formed," as Luther states in Psalm 143. Moreover, the broken Hallelujah resists a triumphal theology. Spoken in liturgical terms, Luther opposes the practice of leaving out the chanting of the Hallelujah during Lent. Throughout the church year, neither passion nor victory, neither lament nor joy, can be ruled out. The ongoing Christ-event of passion and victory, embodied in the assembly's gathering as well as in the life of the liturgical subject, is a constant *simul*. In order to speak to the truth of the Christ-event, praise and lament must both run through it.

⁵⁴⁵ LW 53, 69; WA 19, 86, 15-7, 2.

⁵⁴⁶ Strohl (2003), 155.

Solidarity gives overriding significance to harboring the two facets symbolized by the broken Hallelujah, which expresses the baptismal pattern: the juxtaposition of lament and joy, death and life. In contexts where the dominant narrative communicates a celebration of victory exclusively in “colors” of joy, empathy with suffering people falls away. Immigrant communities, in particular, are marginalized and alienated in surroundings characterized mainly by songs of joy and praise that celebrate victory. For instance, Hispanic-American communities have often found themselves left out of an underlying narrative of glory and victory. Their experiences of suffering and hardship require a narrative of lament and a verbalization of past traumas. What is more, praising communities tend to maintain the status quo, while verbalization of lament is a crying out of existing unjustness.⁵⁴⁷

To be “Christ-formed” implies the verbalization of both lament and praise. Lamentation is required, in order to maintain solidarity with a suffering world: “But if lament were offered to a suffering world, the hope that is weaved into lament will lighten our darkness and offer the possibility of genuine reconciliation.”⁵⁴⁸ Lament opens up for hope, lament is, in fact, the first step to hope. Verbalizing the traumatic experiences could yield new horizons of hope and a way to continue further, from disorientation to a new orientation.

I came across another example of recapturing a unique narrative of suffering and injustice in southern India, concerning Dalit communities.⁵⁴⁹ In the effort to name one’s own reality in the Dalit context, lament is of vital importance. At stake is the retrieval of mislaid identity, liberation, self-respect and one’s rightful place in God’s world and in the church. Here the Psalms of lament play a significant role in naming the reality of the life and daily struggle of the Dalit community.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁷ Soong-Chan Rah, “A Theology of Lament for the Immigrant Community” in *Common Ground Journal*, Vol 12, number 1, Spring (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois, 2015), 45–52. Rah’s outset is the Hispanic-American community in the USA and its challenge to cope with the narrative of the “American dream” of success and exclusive praising worship. Rah calls for a lament theology which challenges the status quo of injustice. The pivotal issue in Rah’s discourse refers to the idea of lamenting as on the way to hope, even though the theology of celebration frequently appeals to the many.

⁵⁴⁸ Rah (2015), 50.

⁵⁴⁹ My experience at the Tamil Nadu Theologian Seminary, Madurai, India, July 2014. Professor Alfred Stephen had to wait over 30 years in order to be ordained as a priest because he is a Dalit, a so-called “untouchable.” However, during a visit in Madurai, at the *Societas Homiletica*, 2014 conference, a bishop decided to ordain Alfred Stephen! It was indeed a fantastic event for all of us, participants from all over the whole world, and to our friend Alfred.

⁵⁵⁰ K. Jesurathnam, “Towards a Dalit Liberative Hermeneutics Re-reading The Psalms of Lament” in *Bangalore Theological Forum*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 1, June (Bangalore: United Theological College, 2002), 31–32.

Naming the Enemy as an Act of Solidarity

As mentioned above, there is a shortage of Psalms of lamentation in the lectionary of contemporary churches. What is more, the so-called “enemy” or “enemies” in the Psalter are also largely ignored.⁵⁵¹ In Psalm 143 alone, enemy/enemies are mentioned no fewer than three times in the supplicant’s prayer for help, which begins with the cry “Hear my prayer, O Lord” in the first stanza. Many of the Psalms of lament, for instance the two previous penitential Psalms 102 and 130, start out with the cry for God to hear.⁵⁵² In the traumatic experience of God as absent, the liturgical subject calls for God’s answer. The enemy, or enemies, apparently prevailing is found in four of the penitential Psalms (Psalm 6, 38, 102 and 143), which indicates the frequency with which the concern occurs in the entire Psalter.⁵⁵³ The significance of “enemy” and “enemies” is not the focus of this study. However, the topic must be addressed in the context of lamentation as an act of solidarity. A critical remark is mentioned above: The Christian prays for mercy, but the psalmist prays for justice in general. The predominant aspect revealed by the mention of “the enemies” in the Psalter is the belief that God will punish them, even if the supplicant needs to wait, and even if the experience is of God as absent:

The crucible of the laments is to trust in God even in the face of the apparent absence of God and the presence of the enemies.⁵⁵⁴

In Psalm 6, the enemies stand for people who regard themselves to be perfect in speech and deed, people who mostly deny that others are their equals.⁵⁵⁵ It is about people who do not acknowledge the baptismal journey from death to life, who share neither the experience of the traumatic abyss nor the embracing of grace anew. When other people are not considered to be equal, hostility is at hand. At stake is Luther’s view of human beings as *simul iustus et peccator*; that is to say, all humans are equal, for better or worse. The enemies in Psalm 6, in other words,

⁵⁵¹ As a matter of fact, the concept “enemy” appears more frequently in the Psalms than in the New Testament as a whole. See Breck Reid (1997), 29.

⁵⁵² Psalm 102:1, “Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to Thee!” And Psalm 130:1–2a, “Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice!”

⁵⁵³ The concept of “enemy/enemies” appears over 100 times in the Psalter, and at least 67 times in the most different psalms.

⁵⁵⁴ Breck Reid (1997), 35.

⁵⁵⁵ Those who “esteem themselves highly, never feel foolish, always say the right thing, do the right thing, ...and acknowledge few as their equals.” See LW 14, 146; WA 18, 484, 28–31.

stand for inequality and hierarchy with an irreverent position before their fellow humans as well as before God. In fact, according to Luther, both these attitudes, toward the neighbor and toward God, are intertwined with each other. This is the significance of *coram Deo* and *coram hominibus*, as depicted above.

In the third penitential Psalm, the liturgical subject cries out his/her abandonment by both God and by the people around him/her. Not least stanza 21 in Psalm 38 verbalizes the forsaken position: "Do not forsake me, O Lord! O my God, be not far from me!"⁵⁵⁶ At its core is the traumatic experience of God being absent, and oneself being despised by other people. The underlying doubt is the frequent question throughout many of the Psalms of lament: Why do the guilty prosper? In his commentaries on Psalm 38:19–20, Luther describes the enemies⁵⁵⁷ as powerful and self-sufficient. Similarly, in Psalm 6, "the enemies" regard themselves as more upstanding than other people. And "they persecute and repay with hatred and torture the true doctrine."⁵⁵⁸ Solidarity requires the *coram meipso*, the getting to know yourself that Luther emphasizes in his preface to the Psalter. Self-awareness could be an antidote to bullying, by evoking solidarity with others like oneself.

The significance of Luther's various uses of *coram* ought to be recalled, that is, that they are all intertwined (see above). To be before God constantly implies to be before others, oneself and the world. The *coram* structure points to an understanding of vulnerability, of what it means to be a human being. Luther clearly identifies himself with the vulnerable and needy. In his commentary to Psalm 38:22,⁵⁵⁹ Luther states: "For God is not a Father of the rich but of the poor, widows, and orphans."⁵⁶⁰ God, correspondingly, turns to the vulnerable, poor and crying, because that is what signifies God's realm. That is God's way, to embrace and help the impoverished, the afflicted, the sinners and the dying.⁵⁶¹

In Luther's commentary on Psalm 102:8,⁵⁶² the enemies are those who oppose God's word and a life in accordance with it. These "enemies" are quite satisfied with their own life and work and

⁵⁵⁶ LW 14, 156; WA 497, 31–32.

⁵⁵⁷ "But my foes..." LW 14, 162; WA 18, 497, 8: "Aber meyne feynde..."

⁵⁵⁸ LW 14, 162; WA 18, 497, 20–24.

⁵⁵⁹ "Make haste to help me, O Lord, my Salvation!" See LW 14, 163; WA 18, 498, 6.

⁵⁶⁰ LW 14, 163; WA 18, 498, 9–10.

⁵⁶¹ Luther's commentary to Psalm 102:17, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute." See LW 14, 184; WA 18, 513, 32–37. Here Luther refers to Isaiah 61:1, "I am sent to bring good tidings to the afflicted," etc. And, also with a reference to Matthew 11:28, "Come to Me, all who labor."

⁵⁶² "All the day my enemies taunt me, those who deride me use my name for a curse."

consider the needy and vulnerable to be failures. It follows, then, that identifying the “enemy/enemies” is of paramount importance in order to restore solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, in accordance with the God who is the God of the “poor, widows, and orphans.” Solidarity requires a constantly new analysis of the “enemy,” that is, of what is opposing the God of the poor and vulnerable. In this context, the Psalms’ naming of the “enemy/enemies” plays a considerable role. There are, for instance, persecuted Christians in Indonesia and India who turn to these kinds of Psalms in order to identify the character of the “enemy” as, for example, an oppressive system. Moreover, these Psalms serve as a reminder that God is on the side of the vulnerable. Oddly, it is precisely these Psalms of a suffering caused by injustice and prevalent enemies that the churches of the Western world ignore:

When we avoid lamenting, we separate our worship from the worship of many of our brothers and sisters whose spirituality, like the psalmist’s, is marked by tears.⁵⁶³

When the assembly acknowledges its own experiences exclusively, it shows a deficient view of God and of life at large. In that case, perceptions of and solidarity with the needy are jeopardized.

What, then, are the consequences of undercutting lament (including the issue of “enemy” or “enemies”) in the lectionaries of the churches of today – that is my question. Luther always emphasizes the importance of verbalizing before God joy as well as lament, and indeed all the experiences that come through in the Psalter: thanksgiving, joy, sorrow, fright, anger, revenge, abandonment and so on. No words are impermissible in addressing God; on the contrary, the words of the Psalms are audacious words. It is always worth recalling that the focus in the so-called penitential Psalms is not on a devotional confession of sin or misconduct, but on the crying-out of the traumatic situation.

I argue that the naming of the “enemy” or “enemies” is an important act of solidarity with the most vulnerable in our society, in our world and in the whole creation, not least in this time of

⁵⁶³ Perry B. Yoder highlights that one of the profound components of the lamenting Psalms is their prevailing talk of enemy/enemies. In order to avoid “an anemic spirituality,” the assembly need to hold the disparate facets of the Psalter together. One issue in the Psalms is the confidence and belief in God, but another is what truly happens to the believer. See Perry B. Yoder, “A spirituality shaped by the Psalter” in *Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology*, 1/1 (Institute of Mennonite Studies: Winnipeg, MB, Canada, 2000), 13–22. For the above-mentioned quotation, see page 16.

climate uncertainty. Naming the “enemy” touches on the theodicy issue. The question of theodicy should not be suppressed just because it cannot be solved, it must be verbalized over and over again. To live with this question is to name the “open wounds,” not to avoid them and certainly not to “defend” God. What Luther shows in his interpretation of the Psalms is the significance of an earnest communication with God, individually as well as in communal worship. To verbalize solidarity with the vulnerable, poor and those suffering under injustice does not require solutions, but it does signify loyalty to the oppressed.⁵⁶⁴ Sometimes the question of theodicy does indeed have to be verbalized, if the goal and ambition is to use an earnest language. In agreement with Luther’s expositions on the penitential Psalms, and his eagerness to speak earnest words to God, I propose that today’s liturgies let lament solidarity, and theodicy be continually and loudly spoken.

⁵⁶⁴ Of course, to name "enemy/enemies" could also encourage one to action.

Chapter five

LUTHER ON EASTERTIDE PSALMS

Luther on Hymns of Praise

Since the seven penitential Psalms are largely linked to the season of Lent, this study also includes three Easter Psalms. The penitential Psalms are classified as a group; by contrast, Luther commented on the three following Psalms individually, in 1530 and again in 1536. Nevertheless, these Psalms are all connected to the liturgical season of Easter in most churches. What is more, the seven penitential Psalms are all mainly regarded as laments of the individual, while Psalms 23, 111 and 118 primarily refer to the gathered assembly, that is, they belong in liturgical contexts. It is of significance to this study that they are all linked to Easter in the Christian tradition. Considering that the principal thesis of my analysis is Luther's liturgical *simul of memoria passionis and memoria victoriae*, it seems relevant also to focus on some Psalms associated with Easter season and the joy of victory.

As noted in the first part of this thesis, the largest collection of Psalms that can be characterized as lament are found in the first part of the Psalter. Even if there is no clear-cut division in the Psalter, the first part essentially contains more Psalms of lament, and the second part Psalms of praise.⁵⁶⁵ Psalm 23, however, holds a unique position: it expresses confidence and assurance, but contains no lament or praise.⁵⁶⁶

To unearth the liturgical theology of Luther, it is necessary and of interest to turn to the special attention he pays to these Easter Psalms, and to note a number of links to worship. The pattern of *Ordo*, drawn from the foundational biblical juxtaposition of the Christ-event of dying and rising, characterizes Luther's hermeneutic of the penitential Psalms. This paschal hermeneutic signifies the perpetual shape of the baptismal journey from the traumatic absence to God's presence anew, a matter of life and death.

⁵⁶⁵ Accordingly, to Westermann, after Psalm 90, all Psalms incorporate praise (except Psalms 120–134 and 140–143). “The first half of the Psalter is comprised predominantly of Psalms of lament, the second predominantly of Psalms of praise.” Westermann (1981, second edition), 257.

⁵⁶⁶ Eaton (2005), 123. Turning to the journey of the liturgical subject, Eaton sets out from Psalm 22, see below.

In the investigation of the following Eastertide Psalms, *A Treatise on the New Testament, That is, The Holy Mass* (1520),⁵⁶⁷ will be added to the analysis material. Because Psalms 23, 111 and 118 contain frequent references to the gathering of the assembly to share word and meal, an examination of Luther's view of the Mass is required. Which of Luther's works would be best for this purpose could be open to discussion, since there are many options. I find *A Treatise on the New Testament* to be most relevant. Here Luther clearly presents his view of the Mass, based on the doctrines of the justification by faith alone, and the priesthood of all believers. In other words, the theological basis of liturgy is here present, and continue in Luther's worship outlines in *An Order of Mass* and *The German Mass*.

Psalm 23: Word and Table⁵⁶⁸

1 Der HERR ist mein Hirte, mir
wird nichts mangeln.

2 Er weidet mich auff einer gruenen
awen und fueret mich zum frisschen
wasser.

3 Er erquicket meine seele, Er
fueret mich auff rechter strasse umb
seines namens willen.

4 Und ob ich schon wandert jm
finstern tal, fuerchte ich kein
unglueck, Denn du bist bey mir, Dein
stecken und stab troesten mich.

5 Du bereitest fur mir einen tisch
gegen meine feinde, Du salbest mein

1 The LORD is my shepherd, I will
not be deficient in anything.

2 He brings me to pasture on a
green meadow and leads me to fresh
water.

3 He revives my soul. He leads me
in right paths for his name's sake.

4 Even if I walk in the dark valley,
I fear no desolation, for you are with
me, your stick and rod, they comfort
me.

5 You prepare a table for me in the
presence of my enemies. You anoint

⁵⁶⁷ Martin Luther, *A Treatise on the New Testament, That is, The Holy Mass* (1520), LW 35 35, 79–111 (hereafter cited as *A Treatise on the New Testament*); Martin Luther, *Eyn sermon von dem newen Testament, das ist von der heyligen Messe* (1520), WA 6, 353–378.

⁵⁶⁸ "Psalm 23: Expounded One Evening After Grace at the Dinner Table by Dr. Martin Luther," 1536, in LW 12, 147–179; WA 51, 267–295. As regards the precise year of this exposition, there is an uncertainty. However, the year 1536, or the end of 1535, is assumed to be correct due to the point of reference which Luther himself provides in his commentary on stanza 5: "In this way I also have been preserved by the grace of God *the past eighteen years*" (italics added). See LW 12, 175; WA 51, 291, 27–28. In all likelihood, "the past eighteen years" refers to Luther's first public appearance in the year 1517.

heubt mit oele und schenckest mir
vol ein.

6 Gutes und barmhertzigkeit werden
mir folgen mein leben lang, Und
werde bleiben im Hause des HERRN
jmerdar.

my head with oil and fill my cup to
the brim. To

6 My whole life long, goodness
and mercy shall follow me. And
forever, I will dwell in the house of
the LORD.

Preface

Psalm 23 is one of the most well-known and widely used biblical texts in many churches today. Generally, in ecumenical terms, Psalm 23 belongs to the season of Easter, and specifically to the third or fourth Sunday of the Easter season.⁵⁶⁹ “The Lord is my shepherd” is also represented in a number of books on Psalms for children to sing or read.⁵⁷⁰ In other words, Psalm 23 holds a unique position in various stages of life and experience. What is quite uncommon in Psalm 23 is that it entails neither lament nor general praise; it does not share this common shape of the Psalter. However, it is often juxtaposed to the preceding Psalm 22 in order to include the whole journey of *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*:

To enter fully into the peace of 23, the pilgrim must first make the daunting journey through 22, through that place where the lonely representative suffers to the uttermost, holds true, and obtains victory; having stood with him in that awesome place, the pilgrim will know the joy of the homecoming.⁵⁷¹

I would nevertheless say that Psalm 23 itself provides dimensions of suffering as well as victory, as Luther’s exposition of this Psalm will show.

⁵⁶⁹ For example, the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical Lutheran churches in Norway, Germany, Finland and Sweden.

⁵⁷⁰ See for instance Christopher L. Webber & Preston McDaniels (illustrators), *The Lord Is My Shepherd: Psalm 23 for Children* (Harrisburg/London: Morehouse Publishing, 2004) and Marie-Hélène Delval & Arno (illustrators), *Les Psaumes pour les tout-petits* (Paris: Bayard Editions Jeunesse, 2003).

⁵⁷¹ Eaton (2005), 124. In addition, Eva Harasta considers Psalms 15–24 to be a group of their own, that is, expressing the relation of confidence between God and God’s people. For that reason, Harasta also presupposes the closeness between Psalm 22 and Psalm 23. See Harasta (2005), 72–73.

Many poets, as well as musicians and filmmakers, are inspired by Psalm 23.⁵⁷² The author Catherine Sasanov, after years of being bored in the pew, was one day surprised to realize that she knows Psalm 23 by heart; she would later express her thoughts on this Psalm. Sasanov submits that most of the Psalms are often experienced in affection before any intellectual comprehension appears. The intellectual reception, therefore, may open up more than one interpretation, as returning to the Psalms continually brings out new experiences to express in new words.⁵⁷³ This approach bears a strong resemblance to the way Luther deals with the Psalms; the encounter with psalmic text is a continually new journey, marked by a struggle to find a new meaning.

Hermeneutic Functions through Liturgical Music

Luther's exposition of Psalm 23 in 1536 is one of the most relevant sources to become acquainted with his liturgical theology. As already noted, an integration of doctrine and liturgy is the undeniable basis of Luther's theology in general. Lange, for instance, calls into question scholars who "cut off the liturgy" in their studies of Luther's doctrine of justification. Because Luther, in fact, turns to the liturgy to express the "new grammar" of the perpetual confrontation with the Christ-event, a theological interpretation resting entirely on an "imaginary intellectual ladder" is a misunderstanding of his theology. Heiko Oberman observes that traditional Luther scholarship is, for the most part, divided into two different camps. The one draws on the "insight" of justification through faith alone, and the other focuses on Luther's Eucharistic theology. However, one cannot have one without the other, if we want to get to the core of Luther's theology,⁵⁷⁴ and least of all if we want to approach Luther's liturgical theology, which is the pivotal purpose of this study.

Lange brings to the fore how Luther turns to liturgy in order to communicate a new grammar of reformation theology. It is worth recalling here that Luther considers the juxtaposition of word and meal to be the basis of the assembly's gathering in the Sunday service. Luther is often

⁵⁷² For instance, "Privilege Set Me Free" in the album *Easter*, performed by The Patti Smith Group, written by Mel London and Mike Leander (New York: Arista Records, Inc., 1978), track 7. The entire Psalm 23 is cited. Originally, the song was written for the movie *Privilege* by Peter Watkins (London: British Film Institute, 1967).

⁵⁷³ Catherine Sasanov, "Psalm 23" in Lynn Domina, ed., *Poets on the Psalms* (San Antonio, Texas: Trinity University Press, 2008), 79–89. Even though Psalm 23 is not about the traumatic position of suffering, Sasanov points to the comfort and trust in this Psalm as rooted in spiritual brokenness.

⁵⁷⁴ Lange (2010), 127.

characterized as a largely incompetent and conservative liturgical reformer, who mainly keeps to late medieval worship ideas. Traditional and notable studies in liturgy often rule out Luther's competence in this matter.⁵⁷⁵ Unless Luther's fundamental interaction with musical hermeneutics is taken to account, it is indeed problematic to fully grasp his liturgical theology. The doctrine of justification by faith alone is the primary principle throughout Luther's renewal of the liturgy, as well as in all his other theology, both theoretical and practical. It appears most predominantly in the juxtaposition of the Gospel pericope and the words of institution, the *Verba Testamenti*, operating by a musical hermeneutic. By emphasizing that the Gospel pericope and the narrative of institution are both proclamations of God's grace, given without any merit, Luther assigns the same melodic form to them.

Renaissance humanist music theory, as well as classical and medieval, elaborates the eight modes of tones (the so-called "church modes") by linking them to special attributes. For instance, the *modus sapiens*, mode of wisdom, was connected to Tone VIII (the Hypomixolydian), while Tone V (the Lydian) was associated with the *modus laetus*, the mode of joy. Luther transforms this tradition into something new. The practice of the medieval Mass was to recite the biblical pericopes in a monotone. Luther, however, clings to the importance of polyphony in expressing theological perspectives. He creates new hermeneutic dimensions by differentiating the chanting of the words of Christ from those of the apostles. In particular, he distinguishes Paul's words from Christ's by the employment of diverse modes. Furthermore, the custom of distinguishing between *dramatis personae*, by alteration of voice and even punctuation, characterized the chanting of the Christ-event during Holy Week. Out of this tradition, that is, this yearly custom of *memoria passionis*, the passion narrative, Luther creates a new musical hermeneutic for every week of the year, in every gathering of the assembly.⁵⁷⁶

The brokenness of lament and joy, of the traumatic abyss and the return of life given through God's grace anew, is essential to Luther's liturgical theology. In criticizing the traditional Hallelujah chant, and its focus on victory, as much too triumphant, Luther highlights the brokenness of lament and joy in order to speak the truth about God. The passion narrative is not

⁵⁷⁵ See for example the classical study of Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Glasgow: University Press, Second Edition, 1945), 629–630: "But Luther is not at all concerned with origins but only with what was then going on in Christian worship in Saxony." This statement should be compared with Luther's instruction in his worship outlines.

⁵⁷⁶ Robin A. Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications*, Lutheran Quarterly Books (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 173–184.

to be bound to one week of the liturgical year: it has constantly to be broken against the Easter testimony of victory. Just like the statement in *An Order of Mass*, “The Hallelujah is the perpetual voice of the church, just as the memorial of His passion and victory is perpetual.”⁵⁷⁷ By furnishing the traditional musical church modes with a new shape, Luther displays his liturgical theology according to the *Ordo*, the pattern drawn from the Bible, grounded in the Christ-event of passion and victory. “Here is a clear demonstration of the theological consistency and liturgical integrity of Luther’s reforms.”⁵⁷⁸

The Polyphonic Quality of Worship

The seven penitential Psalms all are individual lamentations and are largely linked to the Lenten season. The following three Psalms are characterized by trustfulness, praise and thanksgiving, with distinct connections to Eastertide. Nevertheless, the brokenness of passion and victory also comes forth in these laudatory Psalms of Easter. The non-solitary journey of the liturgical subject, following the baptismal pattern of dying and rising, points to participation in a place and a context where word and meal are shared.

It is obvious that Luther interprets Psalm 23 as an important source for an understanding of the significance of worship. In fact, everyone who enters a church “should think of this Psalm.” “Christians consider it a great privilege *to be at a place* where God’s word is taught and confessed openly and in the public domain and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s command.”⁵⁷⁹

In this place where the assembly gathers to share word and meal, then, “there is true worship” (“*da ist der recht gottis dienst*”).⁵⁸⁰ By juxtaposing the Gospel and the words of institution in a musical hermeneutic, Luther emphasizes the cornerstone of true worship: the voice of Christ, the *cantus firmus*. To put it more precisely, Luther’s objection to monotonic singing has liturgical theological implications. By differentiating the tones, there is no doubt which is the shepherd’s voice. “To the sheep of Christ this is a dear, sweet voice.”⁵⁸¹ The polyphonic quality of worship

⁵⁷⁷ LW 53, 24; WA 12, 210, 11–12.

⁵⁷⁸ Leaver (2007), 182.

⁵⁷⁹ LW 12, 150–151 (italics added); WA 51, 270, 13–15: “Denn Christens achtens seer gros, das sie *an einem ort kuennen sein*, da man Gottes Wort frey offentlich leret und bekennet und die Sacrament nach Christus befehl reichet” (italics added).

⁵⁸⁰ LW 35, 81; WA 6, 354, 26.

⁵⁸¹ LW 12, 155; WA 51, 274, 20.

indicates the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, by drawing attention to the assembly as fully competent, not exclusively the presider. In enacting faith, the assembly incorporates “[m]any voices in dialogue with a single voice.”⁵⁸² Above all, Luther understands the metaphor of the shepherd and the sheep to be the image of Christian worship. The voice of Christ, in word and sacrament, is the main subject in his exposition of Psalm 23. In “God’s communion, or church, where alone – and nowhere else we can find and have pure doctrine, the true knowledge of God, and the right worship of God.”⁵⁸³

These are all “holy things,” according to Lathrop. To be a place of worship, certain things are necessary. First and foremost, people gather, because the church is basically an assembly. In this sense, the assembly itself is a “holy thing.” Still, the assembly does not simply gather to be itself; people gather to enact faith. According to the *Ordo*, certain things are needed: water, bread and wine. However, these things by themselves are not enough, they have to be juxtaposed to something, if something new is to be yielded. The holy things need to be set into motion, water to word, teaching to bath, thanksgiving to lamentation, scriptural word to meal, Sunday gathering to daily experience, and so on. For this reason, the pattern of liturgy drawn from the Bible (the *Ordo*) is inconceivable as a firm position. On the contrary, the *Ordo* is constantly an action, in which the assembly takes part in the juxtapositions, in the movement. Therefore, liturgy can never be a matter of repeating fixed “truths” as if the end of the journey had already been attained. The polyphonic quality of worship, many voices in dialogue with the one divine voice, requires at least “two words.” At least two things ought to be set side-by-side in order to speak truth about God, and to speak God’s grace anew. Diversity “is needed to speak truthfully of God,” that is, the pattern of *Ordo* can never “allow one thing, one word, one action to be absolute.”⁵⁸⁴

The Juxtapositions of *Ordo* Take Hold of Critical Issues

According to Luther’s statement in *The Order of Mass*, we refer to this *simul* as the *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*, which sets word and sacrament at its center. The *Ordo*, therefore, insistently uncovers critical issues, that is, anything conveyed in the liturgy must

⁵⁸² Lathrop (1998/1993), 220.

⁵⁸³ LW 12, 147; WA 51, 267, 20–22.

⁵⁸⁴ Lathrop (1998/1993), 220.

correspond with the center, the root juxtaposition of the Christ-event, manifested in word and sacrament. Whatever takes place in worship “must accord with this center, enhance it, and serve it, not obscure it.”⁵⁸⁵ For example, music must be able to juxtapose to the word in order to speak God’s grace anew. Consequently, if the musical part remains “outside,” close connection to the root juxtaposition, it is problematic to identify the music as a component of *Ordo*.

The method of juxtaposition is most useful concerning cultural symbols. Every symbol needs to be critically juxtaposed to the purpose of *Ordo*, the perpetual journey from death to life. Therefore, cultural symbolism in Christian worship serves the Gospel. In effect, juxtaposition has been the method of liturgy throughout the history of Christianity: “word has been set next to sacrament, teaching to bath, texts to preaching, thanksgiving to eating and drinking, praise to lament, presider to assembly, hospitality to reverence, the local to the universal.”⁵⁸⁶ An example of the local set next to the universal is to use bread from a nearby bakery in the Eucharist, although the meal constantly involves the assembly in a worldwide community.⁵⁸⁷ Thus, the juxtaposition of two things yields a third thing. The local loaves of bread at the table, set next to the worldwide community, may turn the assembly to the poor and the marginalized, in ways congruous to the narrative of biblical witnesses.⁵⁸⁸

On the other hand, the local, juxtaposed to the “more-than-local baptismal truth in Christ,” could lead to a critical approach to cultural and social customs. For example, at the point where Paul’s baptismal proclamation – “there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus”⁵⁸⁹ – is disregarded, the root juxtaposition of *Ordo* is not in motion.⁵⁹⁰ As already mentioned, Luther sets music next to psalmic words of the Scripture in order to yield a third “thing”: the gift of God’s grace. In contrast to some of his contemporary theologians, Luther opts for musical variation. After all, there is no single unaccompanied human “tune.” The non-solitary journey of the liturgical subject constantly holds the two juxtapositions rooted in the Christ-event. The method of juxtaposition provides at least “two words” in speaking truthfully of

⁵⁸⁵ Lathrop (1999), 202.

⁵⁸⁶ Lathrop (1999), 204.

⁵⁸⁷ “Don’t you have a local bakery?” Lathrop asked when he was about to preside the morning Mass in the cathedral of Lund, Sweden, together with our students at Svenska kyrkans pastoralinstitut (Pastoral Seminary) in 2002.

⁵⁸⁸ See for instance 1 Corinthians 11:17–22. When the assembly is gathering in order to celebrate the Lord’s Supper, the lack of solidarity with the one who has nothing is criticized.

⁵⁸⁹ Galatians 3:28.

⁵⁹⁰ Lathrop (1999), 128–129. As another example of critical issues, Lathrop mentions images in worship. If they do not have the potential to interact with the root juxtaposition, the Christ-event of dying and rising, the images are not relevant to the *Ordo*.

God. In promoting the assembly to sing, Luther wishes to employ both chant and hymn. For this reason: “Here on earth we can never rightly say the truth of God with just one word, but always only with two words.”⁵⁹¹

Speaking of God Necessitates At Least “Two Words”

When Luther indicates the Hallelujah to be the perpetual song of the church, he rather distinctly points to the root juxtaposition of liturgy: the Christ-event. Speaking of God, it follows, always necessitates at least “two words,” in this study called the liturgical *simul*. This liturgical position makes it easier to understand Luther’s disapproval of an unbroken Hallelujah focused exclusively on the *memoria victoriae*. The medieval tradition of “burying” the Hallelujah during Lent (also fairly prevalent in worship today) removes the “two words” of speaking truthfully of God, as embodied in the liturgical journey of dying and rising. Undoubtedly, by lifting up the significance of the broken Hallelujah, Luther refers to something of paramount importance in his liturgical theology. No matter what the worship outline, the liturgy must bring out at least the “two words” of passion *and* victory, centered in the Christ-event. By this fundamental juxtaposition of *Ordo*, Luther criticizes the medieval tradition of removing the brokenness of these “two words,” in particular during the Lenten season.⁵⁹² Speaking of God necessitates at least “two words.” The brokenness of passion and victory, the liturgical *simul*, has to be enacted, somehow, in worship life.

Liturgical Use of the “Noble Treasure”

Throughout his interpretation of Psalm 23, Luther points to liturgical theology. Luther most distinctly focuses on word and sacrament, which, already in his introduction to this Psalm, he calls the “noble treasure.” To worship is to make use of the treasure, by receiving God’s preached word as well as the “precious bread” (“*das liebe brod*”). It is “a great privilege to be at

⁵⁹¹ Adolf Köberle, *Rechtfertigung und Heiligung* (Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke Verlag, 1929), 295. Quotation by Lathrop (1999), 127.

⁵⁹² This may explain why Luther wants the Holy Week to be the same as every week: “Holy Week shall be like any other week save that the Passion history be explained every day for an hour throughout the week or on as many days as may be desirable, and that the sacrament be given to everyone who desires it. For among Christians the whole service should center in the word and sacrament.” LW 53, 90; WA 19, 112, 25–26–113, 1–3. “Holy Week” in WA is called “die marterwoche” (“week of torments”).

a place where God's word is taught and confessed openly and publicly and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ's command."⁵⁹³ Unfortunately, not everyone accepts that treasure, even though the treasure is available at all places where the assembly gathers. Luther contrasts such worshipers with those who long for the presence of Christ in word and at the table: "And if by chance they get even a small fragment of our bread, which Christ has richly distributed to us, they receive it with great joy and thanksgiving and make very good use of it."⁵⁹⁴ This statement bears a strong resemblance to Luther's interpretation of the narrative of the Canaanite woman. For those who realize what "the treasure" is all about, a fragment received from the table is enough to give thanks and to experiencing God's grace.

Once more we should consider why Luther turns to liturgy in order to find "a new grammar." Just as the confrontation with the biblical words enacts the absence of meaning in the unmanageable journey from dying to rising, so, to Luther, the same disruption of subject and context occurs regarding the Lord's Supper. Lange asserts that Luther's movement toward liturgy is due to his understanding of ritual as "the demise of all systems." Moreover, Luther opts for "the radical singularity" of the meal sharing event. That is, Eucharistic celebration is in no way a kind of representation or commemoration of an original event. Lange, therefore, calls into question the understanding of Eucharist as representation and repetition in Luther's theology:

In the worst-case scenario, the eucharist becomes a law dictating our ritual remembering and repetition as if through ritual remembering we had ever-renewed access to the mystical or divine foundation (the Last Supper) and to some special communication of grace. In this scenario, only the (usually male) presider regulates access to the event, and the meaning of the event is controlled through faithful observance and imitation of the law (of the knowable event). This is not what Luther proposed.⁵⁹⁵

Words and event are not signs or symbols of a hidden or more profound meaning. They do, however, confront the liturgical subject (the participant/interpreter) with an absence of meaning, with a disruption. It is through constant struggle with the words themselves, and in experiencing the traumatized journey from "dying" to "rising," that Luther finds a theological grammar for

⁵⁹³ LW 12, 151 and 150; WA 51, 267, 23 and 270, 13–15.

⁵⁹⁴ LW 12, 151; WA 51, 270, 22–25.

⁵⁹⁵ Lange (2010), 121.

God's grace and justice. In other words, there is no preceding insight of theological significance which is then put into practice in some liturgical expression. In fact, by partaking in the Eucharist, the assembly is continually confronted with a dissemination and disruption of context and meaning. The struggle in the liturgy takes place in the uncontrollable baptismal journey. For this reason, in order to understand Luther's theology, we must turn to liturgy.

In Luther's understanding of the Eucharist, it is the encounter with the *Verba Testamenti* that disrupts both context and the liturgical subject. In confrontation with the words "[t]his is my body," every effort to grasp the context is blocked out. The bread juxtaposed to the words "this is my body" (and the words of institution in their entirety) yields something new. Lathrop's terminology for the new is "a third thing," while Lange speaks of something new being added, the *accessio*, the force of a return. It is important, though, to note that the Aristotelian thesis of the accident, of something added to the substance (in this case the bread and wine), is not what is at play here.⁵⁹⁶ By contrast, everything has to be let go in order to experience the divine presence in the Mass, according to Luther: "If we desire to observe mass properly and to understand it, then we must surrender everything"⁵⁹⁷ In accordance with Lange, the force of return, the *accessio*, does not depend on any kind of systematization or on rote repetition. It is instead in the confrontation with the words themselves – "this is my body" – where "a body returns or confronts the self in this eucharistic celebration – a body that cannot be controlled or captured." In Luther's view, "the word and body, are not to be separated."⁵⁹⁸

Pickstock also considers it out of the question to attempt any kind of control concerning the Eucharist. Pickstock, as noted above, refers to the aporetic impossibility of liturgy, which is what she calls the non-solitary journey whereby the liturgical subject is restored anew. The journey toward God cannot begin before God has journeyed toward the liturgical subject. In other words, the journey is out of the control of the liturgical subject. And the place where God's entry into the liturgical subject is fulfilled, both physically and relationally, is in the Eucharist.

However, in the end, Pickstock deals with the "origin," that is, the idea that liturgy is based on repetition, not least concerning the Eucharist. There is, after all, an "origin, a beginning" which has to be "safeguarded" by repetition. Using Pickstock's terminology, we may say there is

⁵⁹⁶ Lange (2010), 122–123.

⁵⁹⁷ LW 35, 82; WA 6, 355, 21–22.

⁵⁹⁸ Lange (2010), 123.

always an *Introibo* which provides the foundation of liturgy.⁵⁹⁹ The liturgical employment of repetition qualifies the identity of being the church, of being on the non-solitary journey. The restoration of the liturgical subject is constantly a new journey, though a connection to the “origin,” to the “sure” beginning, is implied. To Pickstock, ensuring the “origin” by ongoing repetition is in contrast to a post-modern preference for *asyndeton*, that is, fragmentary events without any correlative connectedness.⁶⁰⁰ Pickstock’s approach clearly differs widely from Lange’s concept of the traumatic event of disruption.

The Eucharist as an Act of Resistance Against the Enemies

The *Ordo* always implicates a confrontation, a single traumatic event, a cross-bearing journey through absence of meaning. I would say, following Luther’s liturgical emphasis on the broken Hallelujah in *The Ordo of Mass*, that this is the journey of *memoria passionis*, the cross-bearing experience, the trauma of an absence of meaning.

However, in the return experience of the cross, the cross-bearing travel is by no means a sacrifice. Lange draws a parallel between the early treatise of *Didache*⁶⁰¹ and Luther’s conception of the Eucharistic celebration.⁶⁰² In the liturgical source of *Didache*, “remembering” Jesus entails no images of the cross. *Sharing* bread and wine is the focal point. Encountering the Christ-event is a non-solitary sharing of bread and wine, and not the remembrance of the violent death: “The term *sacrifice* itself is our way of controlling death.”⁶⁰³ Quite the contrary, the sharing in the meal displaces the violence of the cross. In the commentary on Psalm 23:5a (“Thou preparest a table before me against my enemies”), Luther presents the meal sharing communion as an act of resistance against one’s enemies. Initially, Luther submits that the

⁵⁹⁹ Pickstock’s point of departure in dealing with liturgy is Psalm 43:4 (“Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy”; in Latin: “Introibo as altare Dei, ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam”). These words are the entrance of the Roman Catholic Mass. Due to Pickstock’s preference for the Latin Mass over Vatican II, she quotes in Latin and keeps to the Vulgate Bible edition. Consequently, Pickstock refers to Psalm 42 (according to the numbering in Vulgate). This is also the reason why I go along with this numbering when quoting Pickstock.

⁶⁰⁰ Pickstock (1998), 184–185. 192–193.

⁶⁰¹ Called *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, a handbook on a Christian way of living and worshipping in the church of the first century, discovered in 1873. In other words, Luther most certainly did not know the text. See McKim (1996), 77 and Lange (2010), 144.

⁶⁰² According to Luther’s instruction in *An Order of Mass*, the sharing of bread and wine could be called “[w]hatever evangelical name you please, so long as it is not polluted by the name of sacrifice or work.” He proposes the sacrament to be called the Lord’s Supper, the Table of the Lord, the Eucharist (as in Greek), the blessing (as in Latin), communion or the Lord’s Memorial. LW 53, 22; WA 12, 208, 9–12.

⁶⁰³ Lange (2010), 11.

prophet (the David of Psalm 23) has enemies. Consequently, Luther envisages that the Lord will provide a defense by building a powerful wall, complete with a deep moat and a rampart, and will bring up various weapons to prepare for battle. But what is the Lord really doing? The Lord does not turn to war; he prepares a table, inviting the one in danger to eat and drink, and in this way overcomes the enemies: “I, too, would like to wage war if, without any danger, care, trouble, and work, one could conquer one’s enemies by doing nothing more than sitting at a table and eating, drinking, and making merry.”⁶⁰⁴ In other words, to partake in the liturgical act of sharing bread and wine is an act of resistance against all enemies, against all “distresses and temptations.”⁶⁰⁵ In accepting the invitation to the table, the liturgical subject gains victory over such enemies as sin and death. This invitation indicates “the great, splendid, and wonderful power of the dear word,” whereby inward as well as outward foes are defeated.⁶⁰⁶

Luther’s concern for celebrating the Eucharist *versus populum* is notable: it is a means of “bodying forth” the sharing of the meal. It emphasizes the communion between the risen Christ and the assembly and includes the ethical implications of solidarity (see further on). Luther associates the medieval liturgical emplacement, *ad orientem*, with a sacrificial act, an expression of trying to master death. Time and again, the meal points to the disseminated body of Christ and not the violence of the cross.⁶⁰⁷ “For Luther, all life is a baptism, that is, a continually dying and rising again.”⁶⁰⁸

The perpetual journey of baptism eliminates every attempt at trying to control the Eucharistic celebration. Lange emphasizes the liturgical journey by differentiating between *imitation* and *liturgical iteration* in his interpretation of Luther’s concept of the Eucharist. The assembly, gathered to share the meal, is neither an imitation nor a repetition of an “origin” event. In other words, Eucharistic celebration is not an anamnesis, a memorial act imitated and actualized in the assembly. Liturgical iteration is different from imitation, on account of its confrontation: iteration is “a witness to the continual dissemination initiated by Jesus.”⁶⁰⁹ It is, in other words, a witness to the force of return that leads to the traumatic experience of absence and meaning, to the disruption of context and subject. As the broken and disseminated body of Christ is received

⁶⁰⁴ LW 12, 172; WA 51, 289, 9–18.

⁶⁰⁵ LW 12, 169; WA 51, 287, 2: “Inn allen truebsaln und anfectungen...”

⁶⁰⁶ LW 12, 172; WA 51, 289, 19–21.

⁶⁰⁷ *Versus populum*, that is, “against the people”; the presider standing at the table facing the assembly. *Ad orientem*, that is, “to the east”; the presider standing at the altar not facing the assembly.

⁶⁰⁸ Lange (2010), 141.

⁶⁰⁹ Lange (2010), 152.

in the meal sharing, so too is the meaning and context of the liturgical subject disrupted. At this point, Lange describes liturgical iteration as “an anti-liturgy,” by referring to Lathrop.⁶¹⁰

I do not agree with Lange in calling the position of disruption “anti-liturgy.” In the baptismal pattern of the non-solitary journey, the traumatic disruption of meaning is not an anti-liturgical event of distortion, but rather the experience of disorientation, that is, the journey of dying. Therefore “dying,” or the dissolution of every context, is an indispensable part of liturgy.

Doctrine and Worship

Luther understands Psalm 23, in its every aspect, as a metaphor of Christian worship. Through his focus on the word and the Lord’s Supper – or in Lathrop’s terms, word and meal/table – Luther brings to the fore three main metaphors in Psalm 23 in order to emphasize essential dimensions of liturgy: the staff, the oil and the cup. They all point to the juxtaposition of word and table. In his commentary on stanza 4b (“Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me”), Luther sees the Shepherd’s staff as a metaphor for the word. This word strengthens and comforts, but also gives protection against danger and evil, touching spirit as well as body. There is no other way to get rid of distress and temptations than to stick to the word and throw all concerns upon God. Once again, it is out of human control; the protection through the Shepherd’s staff, the word, is done “in a hidden and mysterious manner.” The power of the divine word comes about in the office of preaching and at the table:

Without these means [WA: “*mittel*”], word and Sacrament, we obtain none of these things [faith and doctrine]. For since the beginning of the world God has dealt with all the saints through His word and, in addition, has given them external signs of grace.⁶¹¹

⁶¹⁰ Lathrop discusses the notion “anti-liturgy” with references to Conrad Willem Mönnich, *Antiliturgica: Einige aantekeningen bij de viering van de kerkelijke festen* (Amsterdam: Ten Have, 1966). By way of a paradoxical content, Mönnich utilizes the concept of *antiliturgica*. On the one hand, “antiliturgica” points to distortions concerning liturgical issues, for example sole hierarchy splitting up the assembly into “higher” and “lower,” or enacting an elitist closed circle in worship. On the other hand, Mönnich connects “antiliturgica” to Ionesco’s (Eugène Ionesco, Romanian drama writer, 1909–1994) *antitheatre*, such as an event leaving out the scene and inviting everybody in as participant. See Lathrop (2003), 179–197 and Lange (2010), 152.

⁶¹¹ LW 12, 170; WA 51, 287, 37–41: “An diese *mittel*, wort und Sacrament, erlanget man der stuecke keines. Denn Gott hat von anbegin der welt mit allen Heiligen gehandelt durch sein wort und hat jnen neben dem selbigen eusserliche zeichen der gnaden geben & cc..” (*italics added*).

Luther asserts that, without these means, no one can establish their own way, or try to deal with God. It is through the office of preaching and the holy sacraments that God keeps people in faith and pure doctrine. Luther's liturgical theology is most distinctly exposed here: dogma and liturgy are intertwined.

Turning to Lathrop, secondary liturgical theology and primary liturgical theology are to be held together in order to speak truthfully about God. Luther says:

For through the oral preaching of the word, which enters the ears and touches the heart by faith, and through the holy Sacraments our Lord God accomplishes all these things in His Christendom, namely, that men [WA: "*die leute*"] are brought to faith, are strengthened in faith, are kept in pure doctrine.⁶¹²

Once more, Luther's disruption of his time's contemporary theology is embodied in liturgical perspective and language. Lange, in similarity with Pickstock, employs the journey as a metaphor of liturgical theology. As with Lange, the nodal point in this study is to show the intertwining of liturgy and doctrinal concerns in Luther's theology. Luther is never only interpreting the words; he is also praying the words. Lectures in theology or preaching in the assembly are activities of the same kind: a struggle with the meaning of the biblical words *coram Deo*. In turning, first of all, to liturgy, Luther finds his "new grammar" of theology, as Lange demonstrates. Already in the introduction to Psalm 23, Luther declares:

Through it [the Holy word] we are called, received, and numbered into the host which is God's communion, or church, where alone and nowhere else we can find and have pure doctrine, the true knowledge of God, and the right worship of God.⁶¹³

⁶¹² LW 12, 170; WA 51, 287, 31–35: "Denn durch die muendliche predigt des worts, das zun ohren ingehet, und das das hertz durch den glauben fasset, und durch die heiligen Sacramente richtet unser Herr Gott dis alles aus jnn seiner Christenheit, nemlich, das *die leute* ["people"] gleubig, jm glauben gestercket und bey der rechten lere erhalten werden,..." (italics added). The German word "Leute" refers not only to men and women, but also to young people and children. By addressing St. Cyprian (bishop of Carthage, 3rd century), who let the children take part in the Eucharist, receiving bread as well as wine, Luther emphasizes the significance of Mark 10:14b, "Let the children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs" (NRSV). See LW 35, 110–111; WA 6, 377, 27–33.

⁶¹³ LW 12, 147; WA 51, 267, 17–22.

Psalm 23 should appear in the mind of the liturgical subject in entering the church, as it gives praise and thanks to God for the preaching of the word, both the word distributed in the pulpit and as the word distributed at the table. For Luther, Psalm 23 in its entirety contains manifold metaphors of worship.

Eternal Struggle: Joy and Lament

Luther invites everyone who enters the church to glory in God's holy word and the comfort and joy of the table (that is, the Eucharist) by singing Psalm 23. In Luther's interpretation of this Psalm, the brokenness of passion and victory, absence and presence, is imparted. As noted, Psalm 23 belongs to the Eastertide tradition of nearly all churches. The broken Hallelujah contains passion as well as victory, and *it is on that very account* that moments of crisis and lamentation in Psalm 23 are exposed in Luther's interpretation. Luther considers David to be exemplary in his honest lament to God, pertaining to traumatic experiences of God's absence.

In his discussion of the second metaphor, the oil, Luther refers to Psalm 45:7 and the "oil of gladness."⁶¹⁴ To be invited to the table by the Shepherd, and there to be anointed with oil, stands for peace and joy in overcoming the enemies all around, and, indeed, the fear of death. Trusting in the Shepherd's invitation and protection, the liturgical subject may "say with Simeon, 'With peace and joy I now depart.'" Even so, Luther takes striking note in his interpretation of stanza 5 that dying cheerfully is not always the case. It does not matter. Just look at David: "David did not always have the ability either; indeed, at times he complained [WA: "*geklaget*"] that he had been cast away from the presence of God."⁶¹⁵

Even if many saints and "many martyrs, men and women, went to their deaths with happy hearts," like St. Agnes and St. Agatha, other saints struggled in distress and affliction. A prominent illustration of joy and confidence in God, even in times of despair and struggle, Luther finds in Paul. On the one hand, he is the one who states that nothing can separate us from the love of God. But, on the other hand, Paul speaks of himself as struggling with life, and just

⁶¹⁴ Psalm 45:7b, "Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the *oil of gladness* beyond your companions" (italics added).

⁶¹⁵ LW 12, 177, 178; WA 51, 294, 1–7; WA 51, 294, 8–11: "David hat auch alle stund, wie droben gesagt, die kunste nicht gewust, sondern hat wol unter weilen *geklaget*, er sey von Gottes augen verstossen &c.." (italics added). I find "*geklaget*" more powerful than "complain," likewise "lament" or "deplore." Moreover, here is another example of how corporeal words in German change into incorporeity in the English translation. The expression "Gottes augen" ("the eyes of God") becomes "the presence of God."

wishing to die and be with Christ. Luther claims that there is an eternal struggle in being human, living in the flesh. However, the traumatized and fragile individual shall not give up, but go on praying and lamenting and, like the Canaanite woman, stick to the word. Persisting in the word is also a process, a growing into the Christ-event, a return of a force, according to Lange and Pickstock. Luther refers to struggling not only as an individual, but also as the church itself. His way of describing the *communio sanctorum* bears a strong resemblance to his preface to the Psalter, with its depiction of the church. Here Luther says that David pictures how the church comes through in joy as well in weakness. Using metaphors of Psalm 23, he states:

He [David] gives it the proper coloration and paints a fine picture of it. Before God it is a pleasant green meadow, on which there is grass and water in abundance. That is, it is God's paradise and pleasure garden, adorned with all His gifts, and it has His inexpressible treasure: the holy Sacraments, the dear word, with which it instructs, governs, restores, and comforts His flock.⁶¹⁶

This is the condition of *Gloria*, joy and *memoria victoriae*, whereby the individual, and the assembly, are invited into the well-known words of the communion of the saints, that is, the Psalter. The words of praise and thanksgiving, for instance, are as looking “into fair and pleasant gardens, yes into heaven itself.”⁶¹⁷ How, though, Luther asks, can “Christendom, which is so weak,” withstand the tyranny of the enemies, who consider the church to be “a black, gloomy valley”? In the preface to the Psalter, the words of joy are juxtaposed to the words of sadness, as a looking “into death, yes, as into hell itself.”⁶¹⁸ Crying out words of despair and darkness has an obvious connection to the condition of *Kyrie*, similar to the two blind men sitting by the roadside, asking Jesus for help: “Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!”⁶¹⁹ The “eternal struggle” is the perpetual journey of joy and lament, living in weakness as well as in God's grace anew. To cry out *kyrie eleison* is to be in a position of traumatic experience, in the condition of “looking into death, yes, as into hell itself”; it is a *memoria passionis*. According to Luther, the

⁶¹⁶ LW 12, 173; WA 51, 290, 26–32.

⁶¹⁷ LW 35, 255; WA DB 10.I, 103, 10.

⁶¹⁸ LW 35, 256; WA DB 10.I, 103, 12–14

⁶¹⁹ Matthew 20:31, “ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, κύριε, υἱὸς Δαβὶδ” (bold added, “eleison kyrie”).

importance of crying out the traumatic situation cannot be overestimated. On the contrary: it opens the way to hope and the experience of God's grace anew.

In the second metaphor, the oil, Luther sees the action of Mary Magdalene, who "poured out precious ointment of pure perfume on His [Jesus'] head, for she saw that He was sad."⁶²⁰ The underlying theme in Luther's commentary on stanza 5, where the individual is anointed with oil just like priests and kings, is the creation of joy and the experience of being protected by God, similar to being in the Shepherd's care. The anointed one is prepared for the eternal struggle of joy and lament.

The third metaphor Luther depicts is the cup which was used in the worship to bring drink offerings and rejoicing before God. The overflowing cup reminds the liturgical subject of the word of God which continually fills "the cup," even in situations where God seems absent. David complained about being "cast away from the presence of God," and so did the saints, in traumatic experiences of losing their trust in God.⁶²¹ The Psalter, though, is a mentor, helping the traumatized find adequate words for the experience of being cast away, of being abandoned like David.

To Speak Earnestly to God and with God

In his commentary on Psalm 23, Luther focuses largely on the tension between the comfort and joy in the Shepherd's protection, and David's and other saints' lamenting their experiences of God's absence and of being cast away. However, Luther's exposition ends up affirming the significance of speaking and praying earnestly to God. Prayer is a continual confrontation with God, with a traumatic loss of meaning. Still, plumbing the depths of loss and despair

⁶²⁰ LW 12, 175; WA 51, 292, 15–16. Note that the editorship of LW and WA refers to Luke 7:38 concerning the narrative of the woman anointing Jesus. However, in Luke 7:38, the woman anoints the feet of Jesus, not the head. Most clearly, Luther refers to Matthew 26:7 and Mark 14:3, where a woman (no name mentioned) anoints the head of Jesus. Why does Luther call this woman Magdalene? Probably because Luther considers Mary Magdalene to be a profound disciple and role model of faith. To overlook the significance of the woman anointing the head of Jesus has roots as far back as, for example, here in the editorship. The Hebrew Scriptures reveal the significance of anointing someone's head, that is, the prophetic acknowledgement of having a king. See for instance the anointing of King David, 1 Samuel 16:12–13. In particular, the feminist theology pays attention to the woman anointing the head of Jesus as an enactment of prophetic signification. See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her. A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1983), 9–10.

⁶²¹ LW 12, 178; WA 51, 294, 9–12

simultaneously incorporates, in the terminology of Pickstock, an entering into God, and the surprise of experiencing the divine presence anew.

In his interpretation of stanza 6 (“Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever”), Luther emphasizes the importance of prayer, of often and tirelessly, and most of all, like David, honestly speaking to God.⁶²² In describing how the Psalter, as well as the saints of all times, teaches the supplicant to pray in joy as well as in lament, Luther says: “And that they[the saints] speak these words *to God and with God*, this, I repeat, is the best thing of all. This gives the words *double earnestness* and life” (italics added).⁶²³

The vital “double earnestness” bears a strong resemblance to the thoughts of Johann Baptist Metz, who states that the language of prayer is the only language without any restrictions.⁶²⁴ Particularly, Metz points to this unbound language pertaining to the experience of Holy Saturday atmosphere (“*Karsamstagsatmosphäre*”), which calls for total honesty. In agreement with Lange’s view of Luther’s prayer life in terms of conflict language, Metz considers prayer especially to be a language of suffering and crisis. Regarding the language of prayer in biblical tradition particularly, it comes out primarily as a language of crisis and suffering, not least in the Psalter and the Book of Job. For Christians, attention must be paid to the core of universal religious languages, which are largely languages of suffering and crisis. So it is also in the Bible. Metz emphasizes the radical and rebellious dimensions of the lamenting prayer characterized by the “*Schrei*,” which does not guarantee a change of condition. Of importance, though, is that by crying out experiences of distress, something takes place, namely the arrival of intimacy (“*Naheseins*”). In effect, the cry (“*Schrei*”) itself indicates the arrival of divine intimacy, Metz says. When the prayer is silent, a “*Gottesraum*” (“God area”) is opened up, that is, a divine space for struggle and lamentation acknowledging God’s closeness. Divine intimacy, however, cannot be compared to human intimacy; God’s closeness incorporates a “present eschatology.” The “*Schrei*,” the cry of desperation, after all, announces divine presence; the cry itself is the first

⁶²² LW 12, 179; WA 51, 295, 14–18.

⁶²³ LW 35, 256; WA DB 10.I, 103, 18–20: “Vnd (wie gesagt) ist das das aller beste, das sie solche wort *gegen Gott vnd mit Gott reden*, welchs macht, das zweyfeltiger ernst vnd leben ynn den worten sind” (italics added). By “I repeat” (“wie gesagt”), Luther refers to what he says above in the preface to the Psalter: “It [the Psalter] presents to us not the simple, ordinary speech of the saints, but the best of their language, that which they used when they talked with God himself in great earnestness and on the most important matters.” See LW 35, 254–255; WA DB 10.I, 100, 19–20.

⁶²⁴ Metz (2011), 98: “Die Gebetsprache ist die einzige Sprache ohne Sprachverbote.”

expression of a “present eschatology.” Jesus crying on the cross in abandonment turned out to be “a first step” into God’s presence again. Thus, the cry of lament and despair is an important dimension of Christian theology. Whenever Easter is celebrated in joy and glory without hearing the cry on the cross, or even forgetting it, the assembly is not gathered in the Christ-event, but in a ceremony remembering an ancient myth of victory.⁶²⁵ The *memoria passionis* constantly focuses attention to the cross, even when Eastertide has come and *memoria victoriae* is celebrated. Attention to the cross maintains attention to tending to the suffering and crisis of the neighbor and of God’s creation, the *coram hominibus* and *coram mundo*.

The *Lex Exercitandi* of Hermeneutic

Luther’s interpretation of Psalm 23 clearly refers to “the right worship,” which is the treasure of the Gospel embodied in word and sacrament. The hermeneutic approach Luther sets forth is about stepping from a literal meaning into a figurative one. To this way of understanding belongs the learning process, in this study called the *lex exercitandi*, the law of training. As mentioned above, training is an important component of liturgy, and of interpretation, as Luther claims in his commentary on Psalm 23:2, referring to David’s “fine figurative words and pictures.” What is more, to understand biblical metaphoric communication necessitates training: “Such a way of speaking is very common in Scripture, and therefore we should make every effort to *get accustomed* to it and learn to understand it.”⁶²⁶

According to Luther, then, liturgical theology and doctrine have to be kept together; one cannot exist without the other. Even so, I argue that it is not enough to describe this relationship in terms of *lex orandi* and *lex credendi*. In order to speak truthfully about God and to God, it is evident that Luther points to the importance of training in the pattern of baptism, the ongoing journey from death to life, from passion to victory – the *lex exercitandi*.

⁶²⁵ Metz (2011), 96–102. “Present eschatology” is my translation from the German “präsentische Eschatologie.” See p. 101.

⁶²⁶ LW 12, 160; WA 278, 38–39: “das man jrer *gewone*” (italics added). “Gewone” means to get used to, such as, to train oneself.

Psalm 111: Easter Festival

1 Ich danke dem HERRN von
ganzem hertzen, Im radt der
auffrichtigen und inn der gemeine.

2 Gros sind die werck des HERRN,
Ersucht zu alle ihrer lust.

3 Sein thun ist lob und schmuck,
Und seine gerechtigkeit bleibt
ewiglich.

4 Er hat ein gedechtnis gemacht
seiner wunder, Der gnedige und
barmhertzig HERR.

5 Er gibt speise denen, die jhn
furchten, Er gedenckt ewiglich an
seinen bund.

6 Er verkündigt seinem volck die
kraft seiner werck, Das er jhn geben
hat das erbe der heiden.

7 Die werck seiner hende sind
warheit und recht, Alle seine gebot
sind rechtschaffen.

8 Jmer und ewiglich werden sie
erhalten, Und geschehen ynn warheit
und richtig.

9 Er sendet seinem volck
erloesung, Er gebeut seinen bund
ewiglich, Sein name ist heilig und
hehr.

10 Die furcht des HERRN ist der
weisheit anfang, Das ist eine feine

1 I thank the LORD with my whole
heart, in the gathering of the honest
and in the congregation.

2 Great are the works of the LORD,
in great demand by those who have
desire in them.

3 His work is praiseworthy and
neat, and His righteousness remains
forever.

4 He has established a
remembrance of His wonder, the
gracious and merciful LORD.

5 He provides food for those whose
who fear Him, forever He thinks of
His covenant.

6 He proclaims His people the
power of His work, in giving them
the heritage of the pagans.

7 The works of His hands are truth
and righteous. All His
commandments are righteous.

8 They carry on for ever and ever
and take place in truth and in a
proper way.

9 He sends salvation to His people.
He commands His covenant forever.
His name is holy and dear.

10 The fear of the LORD is the
beginning of wisdom. This is a fine

klugheit aller, die dar nach thun, des
lob bleibt ewiglich.

wisdom for all those who put it into
practice, His praise lasts forever.

Preface

In many churches today, Psalm 111 is used on Maundy Thursday, primarily because of stanza 5's remembrance of the covenant of the Lord: "He provides food for those who fear Him. He is eternally mindful of His covenant."⁶²⁷ Luther considers Psalm 111 to belong to the Easter celebration. Luther wanted to compose "a new and special hymn" about the covenant of the Lord, that is, the Lord's Supper. Even so, he claims there is another and greater composer: "But the Holy Spirit, the greatest and best Poet [*or writer*], had already composed better and finer hymns, namely, the precious psalms, to thank and praise God." Consequently, Luther decides simply to expound on this "master hymn" with special attention to the Eucharist.⁶²⁸ This Psalm is doubtlessly a *Tehillim*, a hymn of praise, due to its references to thanksgiving and joyfulness.⁶²⁹

"Eat and Preach"

Luther, referring to God's institution of the Paschal remembrance of the people of Israel and of God's wonderful act of their deliverance out of Egypt, says: "Therefore it seems to me that this Psalm was composed for the Easter festival."⁶³⁰ This is the Psalm to sing when people gather around the Easter lamb in order to praise and give thanks. Luther claims, furthermore, that the assembly ought to sing Psalm 111 as the Introit of the Mass or during the Eucharist. The Christian church celebrates Easter each time the assembly gathers around the word and the meal. The liturgical *simul* of the brokenness into *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*, dying and rising, is predominant in Luther's exposition of Psalm 111:

⁶²⁷ For instance, the Lutheran churches in Germany, the evangelical Lutheran church in Finland and Sweden. See Eriksson/Nilsson (2003), 194–195.

⁶²⁸ LW 13, 351; WA 31.I, 393, 15–23. Italics above, "*or writer*," indicates the WA: "Aber weil der heilige geist, der hohest und beste Poet *odder tichter* zuvoren" (italics added, above translated into "writer"). Hence, Luther once again exposes an alternative to "Poet" in the statement that his own "Poeterey odder geticht" is deficient, in LW only translated into "poetry." See LW 13, 351; WA 31.I, 393, 15–19. Why does Luther give these two alternatives?

⁶²⁹ Gillingham divides the Psalter into two main forms. Psalms 1–89 are predominated with laments and prayers, the form of *Tepillot*, and the content in Psalms 90–150 are chiefly hymns and praise, the form of *Tehillim*. See Gillingham (1994), 245.

⁶³⁰ LW 13, 355; WA 31.I, 396, 18–21.

For we have Easter as often as we celebrate the Mass, preach, and administer the holy Sacrament. With us Christians every day is Easter, except that for ancient memory's sake we observe a special Easter once a year. And that is not wrong but good and laudable, to observe the time when Christ died and rose again, even though our remembrance of His suffering and resurrection is not restricted to such a time but may be done on any day. As He says: "As often as you do this, do it in remembrance of Me."⁶³¹

Luther's urge to interpret Psalm 111 is due to the need for people to better understand it, if this Psalm is to be sung at Mass, or during the sharing of bread and wine, as a so-called *communio*, or vernacular prose Psalm sung during communion. Consequently, Luther's exposition of this Psalm is an extraordinary source in learning of his liturgical thinking.⁶³² Once again, his work with Psalm 111 makes obvious that Luther is a skilled liturgical theologian. No liturgical renewal can be accomplished without sincere theological thinking. Even better, Luther's theological standpoints provide liturgical reforms: "Luther was in fact giving radical liturgical expression to justification by faith and deserves to be regarded as a serious Reformation liturgist."⁶³³

The long-standing difficulty of connecting Reformation theology and liturgical practice is raised by a number of issues that correspond disadvantageously to Luther's thinking.⁶³⁴ Luther himself intelligibly shows in the exposition of Psalm 111 that "eat and preach" is the main juxtaposition of the Mass: one without the other prevents speaking truthfully about and with God. A separation of word and table produces problematic positions in the quest to comprehend Luther's liturgical theology. To put it precisely, preaching is largely considered to be the domain

⁶³¹ LW 13, 355–356; WA 31.I, 397, 17–24.

⁶³² Luther dedicates the exposition of Psalm 111 to Kaspar von Köckritz at Sees who promoted the Reformation. In the view of Luther, von Köckritz stands for an example of faith. See "Preface," LW 13, 351–354; WA 31.I, 393–396, 15.

⁶³³ Bryan Spinks, *Luther's Liturgical Criteria and His Reform of the Canon Mass* (Bramcote: Grove, 1982), 37. Quotation by Leaver (2007), 190. Leaver concludes though: "But the full extent of his [Luther's] astonishing creativity as the theological liturgiologist of the Reformation only becomes clear when his innovative approach to musical hermeneutics is taken into account." See also Leaver (2007), "Luther's Theological Approach to Liturgical Reform," 174–180.

⁶³⁴ Bent Flemming Nielsen calls in question whether the overriding focus on *sola fide* and posing on the problem of *ex opere operato*, in effect, signalizes the unsolved tension between "justification by faith" and the character of ritualized meal sharing. Nielsen is also highlighting the course of events of political implications. For instance, in 1539, the king of Denmark dictated the same and strict order of rituals (that is, worship order) all over the country. See Bent Flemming Nielsen, *Genopførelser: Ritual, kommunikation og kirke*, Teologisk Serie (København: Forlaget Anis, 2004), 95–98.

of speaking *about* God, to explain and illustrate the dogmatic dimensions of the *kerygma*, mainly characterizing the *lex credendi*. On the other hand, the locus of preaching is within the liturgy the *lex orandi*, speaking *to* God.⁶³⁵ I maintain that the interpretation of Psalm 111 is a recapitulation of my analysis here of Luther's liturgical theology. The significance of keeping doctrine and worship connected characterizes the exposition of this *communio* Psalm.

Luther clearly has the Institution Narrative⁶³⁶ in mind in his commentary on Psalm 111:5, when he emphasizes the juxtaposition "eat and preach." In *A Treatise On The New Testament, That Is, The Holy Mass* of 1520, Luther points out that the Institution Narrative itself combines one of the seven penitential Psalms, Psalm 102, with Psalm 111. Both are Psalms of liturgical importance. Through his reference to the institution of the Lord's Supper, Luther exposes the close connection between eating and preaching. With 1 Corinthians 11:24–26 as his starting point, and in particular stanza 24b ("Do this in remembrance of me"), Luther declares that this is as if Jesus were saying: "As often as you use this sacrament and testament you shall be preaching of me." Luther stresses the fundamental juxtaposition indicated in 1 Corinthians 11:26, "As often as you *eat* this bread and drink this cup you *preach* and proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (italics added).

Luther turns, in addition, to Psalm 102:21–22, describing worship as people gathering, together, and to Psalm 111:4–5, setting forth "eat and preach." These passages show how preaching and the institution of the Eucharist are two sides of the same coin. They encompass the brokenness of praising Christ and proclaiming his suffering. By these means, the liturgical subject is provided grace anew in the communion, where the word, as well as the bread, is continually broken, and where God's grace is proclaimed and addressed in the words "for you."

637

⁶³⁵ This is indeed a simplification, with the intention of highlighting the connection between "preaching and eating." In effect, the *lex credendi* and the *lex orandi* are intertwined in every aspect of the liturgy.

⁶³⁶ Of later years, liturgical scholars call the Words of Institution, *verba institutionis*, the Institution Narrative, in order to emphasize the communicative aspect of these words. See for example Burns (2006), 37, and Pickstock (1998), 225.

⁶³⁷ "[A]nd Psalm 102[:21–22], 'They shall declare in Zion the glory of the Lord, and in Jerusalem his praise, as often as the kings [that is, the bishops and rulers] and the people gather together to worship the Lord'; and Psalm 111:4–5, 'He has caused his wonderful works to be remembered in that he has provided food for all those who fear him.'" See LW 35, 105–106; WA 6, 373, 9–32 and 374, 1–9.

Liturgical Chanting

Luther's musical hermeneutic operates out of his liturgical theology, that is, in the interaction between doctrine and liturgy. In other words, Luther elaborates, simultaneously, secondary, and primary theology by musical communication. The doctrines of justification by faith and the priesthood of all believers are fundamental in his work on liturgical reforms. It follows, as has been noted, that worship is the corporate action of the assembly, with no other mission than that "[o]ur dear Lord himself may speak to us through his holy word and we *on our side speak* [respond] to him through prayer and praise."⁶³⁸

The "presider" of the Sunday service is, consequently, similar to the full assembly itself: a holy thing. No priest or presider has any influence whatsoever on God's actions. I regard Lathrop's studies on the *Ordo*, identifying the course of events as "holy things," as originating in Luther's views on liturgical theology. The assembly, gathering together, are "holy people," and are constituted by its signs, its "holy things" – baptism, word and meal: "Preaching, Baptism, and Eucharist are rather living 'words' that create the assembly, calling it to do the assembly's work. The assembly cannot exist without them, but they also cannot occur without calling an assembly into being."⁶³⁹ These core actions, these holy things, are all given by God, they have to be put into use. The assembly itself is a holy thing, continuously journeying through the root juxtaposition: the Christ-event of dying and rising, enacted in the holy things, this is the assembly's work.

As I argue above, Luther's selection of Psalm 34 as the Introit of *The German Mass* underscores his comprehensive view of worship as the wholeness of the basic juxtaposition of word and meal. Particularly, the stanza "O taste and see that the Lord is good"⁶⁴⁰ has a traditional connection to the meal. A few years later, after *The German Mass*, Luther adds Psalm 111 as the *communio* and similarly to Psalm 34, and it is throughout notated in the vernacular. Moreover,

⁶³⁸ LW 51, 333; WA 49, 588, 16–18: "Denn das unser lieber Herr selbs mit uns rede durch sein heiliges Wort, *und wir widerumb mit jm reden* durch Gebet und Lobgesang" (italics added). I would say that there is a divergence between the LW "respond" and the WA "reden" (speak). Consequently, the translation would be (the words in italics) "and we, on our side, speak to him (God)," which I find the most plausible. Another possibility of translation would be, "and we in return are talking to him." All the same, to "speak" or to "respond" signalize rather different approaches. The former expression implies more of confidence which generally corresponds to Luther's view on the relationship God and the liturgical subject.

⁶³⁹ Here Lathrop refers to *On the Councils and the Church* (1539), LW 41, 150: "[H]oly people must exist there [the assembly], for God's word cannot be without God's people, and conversely, God's people cannot be without God's word." See Lathrop (1999), 82.

⁶⁴⁰ Psalm 34:8.

Luther assigns the same church tone to both, namely Tone 1. The priesthood of all believers, characterized as the gathering of the assembly, is the point at which it is important that everyone is provided an opportunity to participate, not only in the hymns but also in the liturgical chants.⁶⁴¹ This does not preclude a choir leading the assembly, but the “voices” of the priesthood of all believers shall never be shut out. The Dorian Tone 1 is considered to be rather simple to learn, allowing many to participate.⁶⁴² Luther, by choosing the same tone for Psalms 34 and 111, shows another aspect: he indicates their connection. In the exposition of these two Psalms, Luther pays attention to the pivotal issues of liturgical theology, centered on the assembly gathered around word and Eucharist. The assembly thus has access to the theology of Psalms 34 and 111 and is also capable of singing the liturgical chants. This is, in short, another illustration of the significance of Luther’s musical hermeneutic in indicating central doctrinal topics.⁶⁴³

A Pictorial Hermeneutic

To foreground the meal sharing, Luther also highlights the importance of painting, as a kind of pictorial hermeneutic. By lifting up stanza 4, but in the reverse order (see Psalm 111 above), Luther points out the importance of visualization: “Whoever is inclined to put pictures on the altar ought to have the Lord’s Supper of Christ painted, with the two verses written around it in golden letters: ‘The gracious and merciful Lord has instituted a remembrance of His wonderful works.’”⁶⁴⁴ Indeed, there is no more satisfactory painting than the Lord’s Supper surrounded with the words from Psalm 111:4 for letting the eyes read and the heart contemplate the Lord as gracious and merciful. By naming the Eucharist “a gracious and merciful institution,” Luther connotes the perpetual journey of seeking and finding grace anew, from the traumatized experience of death to receiving life anew. Luther understands the remembrance of the Lord’s wonderful works in stanza 4, as the remembrance of Christ, given through the sacrament.

⁶⁴¹ Leaver (2007), 196: “It is clear that Luther wanted the participation of the congregation not only in strophic vernacular hymns but also in vernacular chant forms.”

⁶⁴² Johan-Magnus Sjöberg, oral information 15. 03. 2017.

⁶⁴³ Leaver (2007), 195–196. Leaver claims that the *communio* Psalm 111, “sung towards the end” of the Mass, “echoes the Introit (Psalm 34) of the beginning... Luther signals their connection by using the same the same Psalm tone.”

⁶⁴⁴ LW 13, 375; WA 31.I, 415, 23–26. Here it says: “mit *grossen* guelden buchstaben,” that is, “in *large* golden letters” (*italics added*). The origin emphasizes even more the significance of this stanza.

As stated above, Luther identifies remembrance, not as an anamnesis, but as an event, the unceasing Christ-event. The baptismal pattern from death to life is evident in Luther's interpretation of Psalm 111:4 and his description of what is unceasingly given through the sacrament: "It is grace that He [Christ] shows us all His benefits and by His blood brings us from sin to righteousness, *from death to life*."⁶⁴⁵

Lange highlights Luther's relegation of representation or control of any kind in trying to understand his views on the Eucharist. As every encounter with the scriptural words means a new search for meaning, so also do the words "this is my body" in the meal sharing confront the liturgical subject. The confrontation implies a failure of meaning; that is, the liturgical subject alone cannot work out any significance. But when the context is disrupted, a body returns: "[T]he believer is conformed to Christ's broken, disseminated body. The believer is conformed to the suffering, needy, indigent body of the neighbor." Here, in another example of solidarity, the cross returns, the *accessio*, and drives the liturgical subject toward their neighbor. To be Christ-formed is a present journey, in which the liturgical subject is pushed out into the needy world. There the broken body of Christ is found in the cry of the impoverished. "This is my body" is the return of the broken and disseminated body which points to the singularity of the Eucharistic celebration.⁶⁴⁶ It is not repetition but disruption; in Pickstock's terms it is the restoration of the liturgical subject. Word and body cannot be separated; as Lathrop puts it, they are continually juxtaposed in order to yield the "third thing" anew.

Learning is a Matter of Experiencing

By the time Luther expounds on Psalm 111, his *Admonition Concerning the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Our Lord* of 1530 had just been finished.⁶⁴⁷ Accordingly, we have to take into account that this work in all probability furnishes the basis for the interpretation of Psalm 111. The connection between the two works will, to some extent, be exposed below.

First of all, even though these two treatises have long-standing associations with the Eucharist, it is important to pay attention to Luther's comprehensive view of worship: the *Ordo*, bath, word

⁶⁴⁵ LW 13, 375 (italics added); WA 31. I., 415, 37–38.

⁶⁴⁶ Lange (2010), 123–124.

⁶⁴⁷ LW 38, 97–137; WA 30.II, 595–626. Written during Luther's stay at the Coburg castle (April 16–October 13, 1530). The exposition of Psalm 111 Luther signs "Monday after St. Catherine, 1530," that is, November 28.

and table are constantly in juxtaposition; this pattern is drawn from the Bible. Consequently, Luther's work on the Eucharist is never without the juxtaposition to preaching, as in his commentary on Psalm 111:5: "That at Easter they might not merely eat but also preach and learn to know God and to trust in Him."⁶⁴⁸

Eating and preaching, the meal sharing and the word, and learning to know God with the intention of learning God's grace, is the *lex exercitandi*. The non-solitary journey of the liturgical subject is the learning of God's grace anew, constantly travelling from the trauma of God's absence to God's presence afresh. In the commentaries on stanzas 9 and 10, Luther emphasizes the lifelong process of getting to know God by depicting everyone as forever "pupil and disciple": "Whoever earnestly regards God's word as God's word knows very well that he will forever remain its pupil and disciple."⁶⁴⁹

The liturgical subject, then, is on a perpetual journey of learning, in my thesis called the *lex exercitandi*, "the law of learning/exercising." As for the people who claim to know God and to have mastered the encounter with the word, Luther holds that they are not genuinely seeking God. The individual on the baptismal journey is considered to "remain forever pupil and disciple" and so, moreover, is the church and the whole of Christendom. In order to learn God's grace anew, there must be the insight that "there is no end of blundering and erring" in life on earth. By virtue of being in the position of simultaneous sinner and justified, one's own blunders – or another's – will perpetually place the liturgical subject in traumatizing experiences of God's absence.⁶⁵⁰

In Luther's view, the theologian is one who is in the process of learning anew, with one's own life-experiences as the outset. Consequently, whether struggling with the absence of God in confrontation with a biblical context, or like the Canaanite woman struggling for the life of her child, it signifies what theology is all about. It is in crying out from the depths of distress that the way to God's presence is opened. The turnaround from lament to joy, praise and thanksgiving is the constant journey of the Christ-event, dying and rising through experience. As Luther puts it: "Yet experience alone makes the theologian."⁶⁵¹

⁶⁴⁸ LW 13, 359; WA 31.I, 401, 1–2.

⁶⁴⁹ LW 13, 386; WA 31.I, 426: "Denn wer gottes wort fur gottes wort hellt ernstlich, der weis wol, das er desselbigen schuler und junger bleibt ewiglich."

⁶⁵⁰ LW 13, 383–386; WA 31.I, 423–426.

⁶⁵¹ LW 54, 7; WA TR 1, 16, 10–11: "Sola autem experientia facit theologum."

Sacrificium Laudis

The essential intention proposing Psalm 111 as a *communion* is connected to Luther's opposition to regarding the sacrament as a human sacrifice of any kind. The great and wonderful works of the Lord are the prevailing theme in this Psalm. Luther conveys the kernel of sacrifice. First, sacrifice is joyfulness, praising and thanking God for all God's works. Thanksgiving and petition are two ways or motives for receiving the sacrament: "For we cannot deal with God in more than two ways, namely, by giving thanks and by voicing our petitions."

This is what Luther calls *sacrificium laudis et sacrificium orationis*, the sacrifice of praise and the sacrifice of prayer. It follows that the sacrament should be received with "delight and joy."⁶⁵² In the beginning of the exposition of Psalm 111, Luther states that David's first word is "Hallelujah!" Members of the assembly should inspire each other to praise, or the preacher in the pulpit can invite the congregation to sing and praise God. The focal point is precisely the opening words of Psalm 111 ("I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart"). The Psalm's opening words in Latin, *Confitebor tibi Domine in toto corde meo*, leads Luther to claim that this psalm is "a real *Confitebor*."⁶⁵³ This Psalm is "a word and trumpet" of the Holy Spirit; people around the whole world, gathered at the Eucharist, are invited to sing the Hallelujah with "full sway and power." Singing this Hallelujah implies participation in the non-solitary journey, that is, in sharing the words and experiences of "travelers" in all the times spelled out in the Psalter. Then the "journey" becomes a sharing in the experience God's presence in the assembly and in the whole cosmos, in all of God's wonders.

Liturgical Cosmology

Psalm 111 furnishes the basis of the Easter festival, Luther declares, and praising God for all God's wonders includes a cosmological dimension. By naming the four elements – earth, water, wind and fire – Luther cites stanza 2 and asks if anyone is competent to enumerate God's works:

⁶⁵² LW 38, 133; WA 30, II, 623, 1–9.

⁶⁵³ Suggested songs are "We Now Implore God the Holy Ghost" or "Christ is Arisen" and other long-familiar songs. The two songs mentioned are medieval hymns which Luther renews, another example concerning tradition and renewal within Luther's liturgical approach. See LW 13, 356; WA 31.I, 398, 1–9.

The sun and moon must shine for us day and night; the sky must give us rain, clouds, shade, and dew; the earth must give us all kinds of growing things and animals; the waters must give us fish and countless necessities; the air must supply birds as well as our breath; fire must warm us and give us countless benefits.⁶⁵⁴

Exploring and getting to know the works of God holds a significant position in Luther's understanding of the meaning of praising God. At the point where the liturgical subject focuses interest on the creation, for example on nature and animal species (in particular, birds!), he or she will rejoice and praise God even more. With reference to stanza 2, "Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who have pleasure in them," Luther makes clear the meaning of this study. It is about looking into these works, pondering them, examining them and, not least, imagining what life would be without the works of God. It follows that the liturgical subject strikes up a song, as in Psalm 92:4 ("Lord, Thou makest me glad with Thy works").⁶⁵⁵ This view corresponds to Lathrop's concept of liturgical cosmology, which does not contradict modern sciences such as astrophysics. Physics and astronomical cosmology can inspire the assembly to expand their knowledge of God's work and rejoice. The experience of God's presence in the assembly furnishes the basis of authentic liturgical cosmology; this is the reason liturgical cosmology is a kind of liturgical theology, dealing as it does with God's presence in the assembly, in the world and in the cosmos. Thus, the task of liturgical cosmology is not scientific research, nor calling astrophysics into question, but "[r]ather, it will be the actual and surprising experience of standing before God and discovering that the bush is not burned and the ground is holy. And it will be the further reflection about what this experience means."⁶⁵⁶

Liturgical cosmology, then, has two main facets: always learning more about God's works and always reflecting on what they mean in the assembly and in all earthly life.⁶⁵⁷ The position of the liturgical subject is *coram Deo*, whether he or she experiences the presence of God or not. The problem, Luther claims, is that people often overlook God's works. Since God's wonders take place in ordinary life – the shining sun, the woman giving birth to a child or the earth yielding grain – praising and thanking God is mostly left out. Nothing should be considered "a small

⁶⁵⁴ LW 13, 366; WA 31.I, 407, 12–17.

⁶⁵⁵ LW 13, 366–367; WA 31.I, 407, 9–23, 408, 26–30.

⁶⁵⁶ Lathrop (2003), 18.

⁶⁵⁷ Lathrop (2003), 18–22.

thing” just because it occurs every day. What would happen if the sun did not shine for ten days?⁶⁵⁸ Consequently, the study of God’s works has the same aim toward *sacrificium laudis*, in the service of the assembly as well as in everyday liturgy: life before God.

Luther, pointing to the Eucharist as a sacrifice of thanksgiving, asks: “For who does not know that we are in any case obligated to thank God for ourselves, for all people, for all creatures, as St. Paul teaches?”⁶⁵⁹ Therefore, the sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist, as well as of everyday life, is to pay attention to all of God’s works, to “the cosmic map.” The current ecumenical baptismal renewal of *Ordo* often implicates cosmological references, as in the thanksgiving over the water. Lathrop recalls the significance of the so-called “flood prayer” in Luther’s order of baptism. Here Luther refers to the narratives of Noah, the Red Sea and the Jordan River. Throughout all these redeeming actions of God, water is sacred.⁶⁶⁰ Partaking in the Eucharist is, like baptism, accepting an invitation to learn the “cosmic map” anew, and being willing to cross the boundary of the well-known world. Exploring and embracing God’s works includes cosmological references like the thanksgiving over the baptismal water and the Eucharistic bread. The water in the font points to all water on earth as a “holy thing,” and the bread indicates the harvest of God’s gifts.

In Lathrop’s understanding, the course of events in *Ordo*, bath, word and table, are all continually juxtaposed to God’s work in creation. It follows, then, that there is always a tension between encountering the cosmological aspects Lathrop describes as “the potential sadness of maps” and “the joyful map.” For example, water and bread in relationship to the world today awakens “the sadness of maps,” as a great part of the worldwide community suffers from the lack of water and bread. The cosmic map, in other words, juxtaposed to the celebration of the sacraments, entails a constant challenge, urging the participants not to remain with thanksgiving exclusively, but also to beseech. If the assembly searches for a genuine language to speak about God and to God, then the *liturgical simul*, the tension between joy and lament, also concerns the

⁶⁵⁸ LW 13, 367. Here Luther adopts an ironic attitude by addressing an imagined and ignorant individual: “My dear Mr. Simpleton (in German “Toelpel,” that is, “fool”) is it a small thing just because it [God’s work] happens every day?” See also WA 31.I, 407, 33–35.

⁶⁵⁹ LW 38, 122; WA 30.II, 614, 4–5. With reference to 1 Tim 4:4, “For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving.”

⁶⁶⁰ LW 53, 97: “Almighty eternal God, who according to thy righteous judgement didst condemn the unbelieving world through the flood and in thy great mercy didst preserve believing Noah and his family, and who didst drown hardhearted Pharaoh with all his host in the Red Sea and didst lead thy people Israel through the same on dry ground, thereby prefiguring this bath of thy baptism, and through the baptism of thy dear Child, our Lord Jesus Christ, hast *consecrated and set apart* [WA: “geheiligt und eingesetzt”] the Jordan and all water as a salutary flood and a rich and full washing away of sins” (italics added). See WA 12, 43, 2–33.

cosmic map. The perpetual journey of the liturgical subject is anchored in the root juxtaposition, that is, the Christ-event from death to life anew, which comes to the fore in the sacraments.⁶⁶¹ Not only thanksgiving but also the “sadness of maps,” the experience of God’s absence in a hungry and thirsty world, has to be vocalized in beseeching and lamentation on the individual level as well as on the planetary level. This is another way of dealing with God: “by voicing our petitions,” that is, the *sacraficium orationis*.

Sacrificium Orationis

The foundational, root juxtaposition of the Christ-event, the traumatic experience of God’s absence, should be vocalized in petition, that is, in the *sacrificium orationis*. In his commentary on stanza 9, regarding God’s redemption of his people, Luther recalls the cross-bearing aspect of the baptismal journey. He points to the fact that praising God is frequently based on the experience of lacking God, at least for a time: “[t]o lack God a little while.” However, the baptismal pattern from death to life, from experiencing God’s absence to experiencing God’s presence, indicates that suffering “will have an end and will not endure forever.”⁶⁶²

The fulfilment of baptism, as mentioned above, is a matter of eschatology: it takes place after death, according to Luther. As with baptism, the course of the Christ-event enacted through the word and the Eucharist will prevail until the end of the world. The institution of the Eucharist is the work of Christ alone, which he continually performs “through us and in us” (commentary on stanza 10b). In order to show its liturgical aspect, Luther explains the meaning of “through us and in us.” It is not about “an inward remembrance in the heart but of a public and expressed remembrance, of which Christ says ‘Do this in remembrance of Me.’” In other words, the remembrance is a current Christ-event taking place “through” and “in” the midst of the assembly. In the sacrament of the Eucharist, there is not simply food, but also the word of God, continually disrupting the context of the assembly.⁶⁶³ The moment the assembly presumes to have control over the Eucharistic remembrance, something new is added, an *accessio*.⁶⁶⁴ By way

⁶⁶¹ Lathrop (2003), the chapter “Baptism and the Cosmic Map,” 97–124.

⁶⁶² LW 13, 383; WA 31.I, 422, 28–34.

⁶⁶³ LW 13, 377; WA 31.I, 417, 15–22.

⁶⁶⁴ In accordance with Lange, the *accessio* does not correspond to the Aristotelian idea of something added to the essence, “the accident of a substance.” The *accessio* is an event of singularity, something surprisingly new and out of control. See Lange (2010), 122–123.

of the *acessio*, Lange shows Luther's ongoing confrontation with the word, which includes the words of institution.

Luther denounces all symbolic understandings of the Institution Narrative that wipe out the confrontation with these words. Luther also adopts a negative attitude toward the idea of representation, as it gives the illusion of having control. Luther is trying to lift up the Eucharist celebration's inaccessible core aspect, the event itself. The "remembrance" confronts the liturgical subject with a body ("this is my body") that cannot be controlled or taken hold of. "Liturgical celebration, and particularly the eucharistic celebration, confronts us with this failure of meaning with the failure of the self, of the individual, to define meaning."⁶⁶⁵

The juxtaposition of word and body entails the journey stamped by the baptismal pattern, where the trauma of absence is constantly enacted. In the confrontation, the body returns and disrupts both the context and the liturgical subject. The journey is toward a new meaning, that is, the "ritual itself is marked by the iteration of an obscurity, an absence."⁶⁶⁶ Pickstock deals with the trauma in much the same way, referring to "the insanity of the Cross," which indicates God's kenotic journey toward the traumatized. Contrary to Lathrop, Pickstock regards the kenotic journey of the liturgical subject to be a journey from A to A. Beginning with Plato's notion of *methexis*, that is, the relation between a particular and a form or "idea," Pickstock opts for "remembrance" as repetition. Although Pickstock considers the liturgical journey to be a journey simultaneously into God and away from God, it is, in effect, a copy of the eternal.⁶⁶⁷ At the stage where "the degree of leaping transitions from part to copy" increases in terms of quantity, the next phase in the ordered series "must first be aspired towards and later returned to."⁶⁶⁸

"We really must apply this psalm to the Mass," says Luther. Psalm 111 is a true *Confitebor*, "it begins: 'Hallelujah! Let us praise the Lord!'"⁶⁶⁹ However, it is a broken Hallelujah, as the liturgical subject's journey toward God's presence also implies the journey into the experience of the trauma of God's absence, a crying out of the depths. As Luther comments on stanza 8 ("The Lord is gracious and merciful"), God is constantly waiting for those in miserable conditions with

⁶⁶⁵ Lange (2010), 123.

⁶⁶⁶ Lange (2010), 123. That is to say, the Eucharist celebration cannot be incorporated into any kind of church hierarchy that takes hold of the authorization of the sacrament.

⁶⁶⁷ Catherine Pickstock, *The Literay Agenda: Repetition and Identity* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2013), 64: "There cannot first be a table which later copies the eternal; rather, a table is a table because it is a copy of eternal tableness: it is through and through a sign or a symbol of the eternal. But if the Form has somehow given the table to be at all, then the table is a partaking of tableness."

⁶⁶⁸ Pickstock (2013), 64.

⁶⁶⁹ LW 13, 363; W A 31.I, 404, 11, 404, 22–26.

lamenting hearts: “He is here and is waiting for you with hands and heart [*and everything*] wide open, for you to take and receive grace and mercy.”⁶⁷⁰ Taking and receiving grace is an ongoing journey throughout the cross-bearing experience of abandonment and loss of meaning. Stanza 8 offers a reminder not only of the “merciful institution,” in which the searching one will find grace and mercy, but it also expresses the journey “from death to life” by pointing to suffering in the Christ-event, imparted through the sacrament.⁶⁷¹

In sum, the *sacrificium* is by no means a human work. Luther, as has been noted, lays out two ways of using the sacrament: “Therefore, be careful that you do not use this sacrament in any way other than these two ways, namely, as a means of giving thanks and as a means of petition, *opinionem laudis et precis*.”⁶⁷²

Psalm 118: “My Beautiful *Confitemini*”

1 Dancket dem HERRN, denn er ist
freundlich, Und seine güete weret
ewiglich.

2 Es sage nu Jsrael, Das seine guete
weret ewiglich.

3 Es sage das haus Aaron, Das seine
guete weret ewiglich.

4 Es sagen nu, die den HERRN
furchten, das seine guete weret ewiglich.

5 Jch rieffe den HERRN an jnn der
angst, Und der HERR erhoeret mich jnn
weitem raum.⁶⁷³

1 Thank the LORD, for He is kind, and
His benevolence lasts forever.

2 Proclaim it now Israel, that His
benevolence lasts forever!

3 House of Aaron, proclaim that His
benevolence lasts forever!

4 Those who fear the LORD, now
proclaim that His benevolence lasts
forever!

5 Out of distress I cried to the LORD,
and the LORD answered in the wide,
open space.

⁶⁷⁰ LW, 374; WA 31.I, 415, 10–11: “Und ist alda und wartet auff dich, hat hende und hertz *und alles* [*everything*] auffgethan, das du solt gnade und barmhertzigkeit nemen und empfahlen.” Of course, “petition” refers to multiple subject matters.

⁶⁷¹ LW 375; WA 31.I, 415, 32–38

⁶⁷² LW 38, 133; WA 30.II, 623, 17–18.

⁶⁷³ “[J]nn weitem raum” could also be translated as “through distance.” All the same, both alternatives point to an unlimited position. See WA 31.I, 92a, 5. The unlimited position refers to an open space where the holy and the sinner, the worthy and the unworthy, the great and the little have their place. Even if humans are not equal among each other, God is the same to whom all praise, cry and pray. WA 31.I, 97a, 14–17. Given this

6 Der HERR ist mit mir, Drum b furcht
ich mir nichts, Was kan mir der mensch
thun?

7 Der HERR ist mit mir, mir zu helffen
Vnd ich wil meine lust sehen an meinen
feinden-

8 Es ist gut auff den HERRN trawen
Vnd nicht sich auff fursten verlassen.

9 Der HERR ist mit mir, Drum b furcht
ich mir nichts, Was kan mir der mensch
thun?

10 Alle heiden vmgeben mich,
Aber ym na men des HERRN wil ich
sie zerhawen.

11 Sie vmgeben mich, Sie vmgeben
mich, Aber ym namen des HERRN wil
ich sie zerhawen.

12 Sie vmgeben mich wie die bienen,
vnd dempffen wie ein feur ynn dornen,
Aber ym namen des HERRN wil ich sie
zerhawen.

13 Man stosset mich, das ich fallen sol,
Aber der HERR hilfft mir.

14 Der HERR ist meine macht mein
psalm vnd mein heil.

6 The LORD is with me therefore I am
not afraid of anything. What can humans
do to me?

7 The LORD is with me, to help me.
And I will look upon my enemies with
amusement.

8 It is sound to trust in the LORD, and
not to rely on people.

9 It is sound to trust in the LORD, and
not to rely on princes.

10 All heathens surround me, but in the
name of the LORD, I cut them off.

11 They surround me, they surround
me, but in the name of the LORD, I will
cut them off.

12 They surround me like bees, and
they quench like a fire of thorns. But, in
the name of the LORD, I will cut them
off.

13 One pushes me so I will fall down,
but the LORD helps me.

14 The LORD is my power, my Psalm
and my health.

commentary of Luther, I understand that the human crying to the Lord is not alone but together with all the
holies and sinners in the same space, that is, God's creation, "jnn weitem raum."

15 Es ist eine stim von freuden und heil
ynn den hutten der gerechten. Die rechte
hand des HERRN beweiset macht.

16 Die rechte hand des HERRN ist
erhohet, Die rechte hand des HERRN
beweiset macht.

17 Jch werde nicht sterben, sondern
leben Vnd erzelen des HERRN werck.

18 Der HERR züchtiget mich wol Aber
vbergibt mich dem tode nicht.

19 Thut mir auff die thore der
gerechtigkeit das ich hinein gehe vnd
dem HERRN dancke.

20 Hie ist das thor des HERRN Da die
gerechten hinein gehen.

21 Jch dancke dir, das du mich
demuetigest Und bist mein Heil.

22 Der stein, den die bawleute
verwerffen, Jst zum Eckstein worden.

23 Das ist vom HERRN geschehen,
Und ist ein wunder fur unsern augen.

24 Dis ist der tag, den der HERR macht,
Lasset uns frewen und froelich drinnen
sein.

25 O HERR hilff, O HERR las wol
gelingen.

26 Gelobet sey, der da komet jm namen
des HERRN, Wir segenen euch vom
hause des HERRN.⁶⁷⁴

15 There is a voice of joy and health in
the tents of the righteous. The right hand
of the LORD demonstrates power.

16 The right hand of the LORD is
raised the right hand of the LORD
demonstrates power.

17 I shall not die, but live and recount
the work of the LORD.

18 The LORD chastises me well, but
He does not give me over to death.

19 Open to me the gates of
righteousness, that I can enter and thank
the LORD.

20 Here is the gate of the LORD, where
the righteous enter through it.

21 I thank You for making me humble,
and You are my health.

22 The stone that the builders reject has
become a cornerstone.

23 This was done by the LORD, and it
is a wonder in front of our eyes.

24 This is the day the LORD creates, let
us rejoice and be glad in it.

25 O LORD, help! O LORD, let it go
well!

26 Blessed is the one who comes in the
name of the LORD. We bless you who
are from the house of the LORD.

⁶⁷⁴ Here Luther refers to 2 Mose 20:24, “[I]n every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you.” In view of that, Luther says that wherever the word of God is proclaimed, in the fields, in the

27 Der HERR ist Gott, der uns
erleuchtet, Schmückt das fest mit
meyen⁶⁷⁵ bis an die hoerner des altars.

28 Du bist mein Gott, Dir wil ich
dancken, Mein Gott, ich wil dich
erhoehen.

29 Dancket dem HERRN, das er
freuntlich ist, Und seine guete weret
ewiglich.

27 The LORD is God, who enlightens
us. Decorate the feast with twigs up to
the horns of the altar.

28 You are my God I will give thanks to
You. You are my God, I will praise You.

29 Thank the LORD, for He is friendly.
And His benevolence lasts forever.

Preface

Psalm 118 is the last of the Hallel Psalms.⁶⁷⁶ That it is one of the Psalms most quoted in the New Testament indicates its liturgical function in the early church, as well as in the synagogue.⁶⁷⁷ Psalm 118 belongs to the Jewish celebration of Passover and was associated with Easter in the early church. The earliest witness of the Jerusalem Christian liturgy originates in Egeria's travels in the fourth century. Her description of the liturgical year exposes the antiphonal use of Psalm 118 as connected to both Palm Sunday and Easter.⁶⁷⁸ Many churches today use Psalm 118 on Palm Sunday as well on Easter Day, which points to a long-standing tradition linked to early Christian liturgy.⁶⁷⁹

churches or on the sea, there you are in the house of God. See my translation into English in stanza 26. WA 31.I, 179b, 5–17.

⁶⁷⁵ Originally from the German word “Mai,” that is, the month of May.

⁶⁷⁶ In the Jewish tradition Psalms 113–118 are called the Hallel Psalms (“hymns of praise”). These Psalms of praising for God's saving power (also called the Egyptian Hallel with reference to Exodus) are mainly used during Passover, Shavout, Sukkot and Chanukka. See Eaton (2005), 392.

⁶⁷⁷ Andrew C. Brunson, *Psalm 118 in the Gospel of John: Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 158* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 2003), 2.

⁶⁷⁸ Egeria refers to stanza 26 by describing the reading from Matthew 21 about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey. By paying extraordinary attention to the children, Egeria writes: “At five o'clock the passage is read from the Gospel about the children who met the Lord with palm branches, saying, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'” This stanza is repeated all the time in the assembly's walk down the Mountain of Olives where the babies and children not yet able to walk are carried. By virtue of the older women and men the gathered, the congregation has to walk slowly. Accordingly, we get a picture of the assembly, that is, all generations included. See Wilkinson (1999), 151–152.

⁶⁷⁹ For instance, on Palm Sunday in the Church of England, the evangelical Lutheran churches in Finland and Sweden and also the *Revised Common Lectionary*. On Easter Day, for example, the evangelical Lutheran churches in Germany, Norway, Finland and Sweden, the Church of England, the Catholic Church and also the *Revised Common Lectionary*. See Eriksson & Nilsson, 187 and 216.

Psalm 118 is of particular interest with regard to Luther's liturgical theology. This Psalm is used in Lent, more precisely on the first day of Holy Week⁶⁸⁰ (Palm Sunday), and also on the first day of Eastertide; it holds together passion and victory, *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*. It is worth recalling Luther's theological understanding of the liturgical use of the Hallelujah. In claiming the Hallelujah as the perpetual voice of the church, as well as the memorial of passion and victory, Luther emphasizes the simultaneous importance of both aspects, in this study called "the liturgical *simul*." Using musical terminology, the root juxtaposition of the Christ-event, from death to life, may be called the *cantus firmus*, the prime "melody" of worship. It follows, then, that the singing of the Hallelujah belongs in Lent, the passion journey, as well as in the Easter season, the victory journey. Psalm 118 frames the entire dramatic event, from passion to victory, from death to life. Luther's exposition of Psalm 118 is extensive, but what is of interest in the liturgical *simul* keeping Lent and Eastertide together will be analyzed here.

Comfort and Help

The pervasive theme in Luther's exposition of Psalm 118 is God's "comfort and help" in every situation of distress and suffering.⁶⁸¹ In a sense, this interpretation holds a unique position in Luther's works on the Psalter: it reveals his profound views on the Psalms as well as his liturgical theology. "Comfort and help" are truly the bottom line in understanding the main subject matter of the Psalter. It is certainly no exaggeration to say that Psalm 118 is the Psalm most dear to Luther.⁶⁸² Stanza 17 ("I shall not die; but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord") turned out to be Luther's life-long personal motto. This stanza points to the outcome of eternal life, the true, everlasting blessing of God, as the core theme of this "comfort and help."

⁶⁸⁰ Also called the Great Week.

⁶⁸¹ Luther emphasizes this main theme by using capital letters: "Nemlich TROST vnd HVLF ynn allerley leiden not vnd angst." WA 31.I, 90a, 6. Usually capital letters in WA turn up in italics in LW. See LW 5, 57: "It is *comfort* and *help* in every kind of suffering, want, and trouble."

⁶⁸² Outlawed at Coburg, Luther addresses Psalm 118 to Fredrick, abbot of Saint Giles of Nuremberg, by pointing out this psalm as "my wealth, the beautiful *Confitemini*." *Ex eremo*, "out of the dessert," is the way Luther designates his unintentional stay at Coburg. Pertaining to this challenging position at the point where the Diet of Augsburg was held, Luther turns to his prevailing "comfort and help," that is, Psalm 118: "Although the entire Psalter and all of Holy Scripture are dear to me as my only comfort and source of life, I fell in love with this psalm especially. Therefore I call it my own." See LW 14, 47; WA 31.I, 66, 1–4.

“The entire Psalm has this theme.”⁶⁸³ Stanza 17, therefore, is a “masterpiece,” a true, genuine comfort and help in the depths and in the shadow of death.

Luther undoubtedly pays stanzas 16–18 the highest degree of attention, as they compound the very essence of what it is to understand Psalm 118 in its entirety. However, it is stanza 14 that furnishes the basis of these three key stanzas, Luther suggests, with the words “The Lord is my Strength and my Song; He has become my Salvation.” Luther elaborates the main theme of the Psalm through what he calls “the fine, threefold summary of the psalmist”: strength, song and salvation. The first, strength, points to unreserved reliance on God, “wholly and completely,” trusting in God’s presence in every inch of life. God “speaks, and quickens” everything in human existence.⁶⁸⁴ Song, secondly, indicates the joyful experience of God’s presence, and it has to be verbalized because there is simply no option of doing anything else.⁶⁸⁵ It is worth recalling Luther’s verbal imagery in the preface to the Psalter, where expressions of joy, and the importance of verbalizing them before God, are emphasized. The worshiper is to be like Mary of Nazareth, singing out her joy and thanksgiving in the *Magnificat* (Mary’s Song of Praise).⁶⁸⁶

“Gemitus Inenarrabiles”

The psalmist exclaims a song of joy and thanksgiving by incorporating the fact that God comforts and helps in times of trouble and traumatic situations. Luther lifts up the song of Moses as exemplary.⁶⁸⁷ Stanza 14 refers to the Lord as strength, song and salvation; song and prayer, to Luther, are offered at the point at which the liturgical subject has come out of the depths, rescued from the traumatic experience of abandonment. The song and prayer also apply at the end of this

⁶⁸³ LW 14, 86; WA 31,

⁶⁸⁴ LW 14, 77–78; WA 31:1, 134, 7–8: “rein vnd fein,” and “rede vnd lebe.” Luther frequently uses alliterations, unfortunately missing in the translation of LW. However, the immense employment of alliterations indicates Luther’s poetic skill. It is worth recalling Luther’s passion for poetry, which is a considerably dimension of his liturgical theology. However, this is not the focus of this study.

⁶⁸⁵ Of interest, Luther translates the Hebrew word שִׁיר (song) into “psalm,” which has the same root as the word for “song,” in Hebrew שִׁירָה. For instance, in NRSV, this word is translated as “might,” in Nouvelle Bible Segond (2002), “puissance,” (might) and in the Swedish Bibel (2000), “värn” (“defence”). The German Luther Bibel (1984) holds to “psalm.”

⁶⁸⁶ Luke 1:46. In the work *Magnificat*, Luther emphasizes faith to be an experience, not a doctrine, by referring to Mary’s song. Once again, Luther sets Psalm 34:8 in focus, “Oh taste and see the Lord is sweet; blessed is the man that trusts in Him.” Tasting and seeing belong to experience, likewise for Mary of Nazareth. See LW 7, 302; WA 7, 550, 9–12.

⁶⁸⁷ See NRSV, Exodus 15:2, “The Lord is my strength and my *might*, and he has become my salvation” (italics added). Luther, however, prefers the connection to singing. See WA DB, 8, 245, 2: “DER HERR ist mein stercke vnd *Lobsang*, Vnd ist mein Heil” (italics added).

life's journey.⁶⁸⁸ Luther, as has been observed above, characterizes prayer as one of the *notae ecclesiae*; he endeavors to establish the Psalms as an indispensable part of the liturgy, exercised by the whole assembly. Luther claims Moses to be, all in all, a user of good and honest prayer language. As an illustration, Luther mentions Moses throughout his exposition of Psalm 90 when discussing the liturgical aspects of prayer. Psalm 90 bears the heading "A Prayer of Moses," and Luther intensifies this claim, aiming it in the direction of the Christ-event, death turning to life anew.

In the introduction to Psalm 90, Luther highlights Moses' way of speaking of death by contrasting it with Aristotelian or Epicurean philosophy. Accordingly, neither meditation on death in order to overcome fear (Aristotle), nor abandoning the idea of hope concerning death by adopting a hedonistic lifestyle (Epicurus), leads to the hope of a remedy. In other words, the fundamental conceptualization of prayer as confrontation gains no ground in these philosophical approaches. The hope of a remedy only comes when despair and anxiety are turned over to God, even if God seems to be absent. In the lament of abandonment and despair, there is a direction to address, there is still a "you," corresponding to Jesus's cry on the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"⁶⁸⁹

Whenever the individual prays, addressing this "you," there is hope of life. In Moses, Luther sees the epitome of an honest language of faith, in joy as well as in lamentation, with its struggle and confrontation with God. Praying, even in the cross-bearing journey of crying out in despair, entails a hope. The "Prayer of Moses" heading of Psalm 90 verbalizes the supplication of the assembly. In a long-standing hardship, Luther interprets Moses' prayer to be the communication of hope: "Therefore, by titling this psalm a prayer, Moses indirectly suggests that there is still hope for life. For what does it mean to pray? Does it not mean to seek help?"⁶⁹⁰ Even so, in hardship where God is not recognized, and only sighs comprise the prayer for help, the liturgical subject ought not to give up. Sighing and lamentation signify the cross-bearing journey in which God is not discerned. Honesty, however, is of decisive importance in the traumatic situation, the sincere verbalization with the absent God, even if sighs are the only language. In painful conditions, when words fail, Luther points to the Spirit who intercedes with "sighs too deep for

⁶⁸⁸ LW 14, 77; WA 31.I, 133, 9–134, 1–6.

⁶⁸⁹ Matthew 27:46.

⁶⁹⁰ LW 13, 82; WA 40.III, 494b, 7–8.

words,” *gemitus inenarrabiles*.⁶⁹¹ Appalling thoughts and experiences cannot always be expressed in words, and they are entirely a matter of experience: “These thoughts can be felt, like all other spiritual thoughts. But they cannot be expressed in words, and they can be learned only through experience.”⁶⁹²

This statement is connected to Luther’s critical interpretation of the Dionysian concept of negative theology. Luther understands Dionysis’ definition of affirmative theology to be “God is Being” (“*Deus est Ens*”), and his negative theology as “God is non-being,” (“*est non ens*”). This theological approach collides with the very core of Luther’s theology. For Luther, the non-solitary journey is unceasingly *coram Deo*, even if the liturgical subject is experiencing God’s absence. Accordingly, the negative theology is spelled out “the holy cross”:

But if we wish to give a true definition of ‘negative theology,’ we should say that it is the holy cross and the afflictions in which we do not, it is true, discern God, but in which nevertheless those sighs are present of which I have already spoken.⁶⁹³

The non-solitary journey is not primarily about the experience of God’s absence in the sense of one form of hidden presence or another. The status of non-solitariness refers to the *communio sanctorum*, as verbalized in the polyphonic voices of the Psalter. The cross-bearing journey, in which God is hard to discern, places the liturgical subject within the communion of manifold voices throughout the continuum of prayers expressed in the Psalms. All these voices, like Jesus on the cross crying out “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” imparts the image of a “you.” Even the words of communal prayers carry corresponding traumatic experiences of abandonment and despair.⁶⁹⁴ By this means, says Luther, the Psalter is a mentor, a substantial

⁶⁹¹ Romans 8:26, “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.” Here Luther refers to the Vulgata: “*Similiter autem et Spiritus adiuvat infirmitatem nostram; nam quid oremus, sicut oportet, nescimus, sed ipse Spiritus interpellat gemitibus inenarrabilibus*” (bold type added). In the reference points to Romans 8:26, Luther uses the singular “*gemitus inenarrabilis*,” which titles this section; see above (bold italics added). See WA 40.III, 542a, 8.

⁶⁹² LW 13, 110; WA 40.III, 542a, 9–10.

⁶⁹³ LW 13, 111; WA 40.III, 543a, 1–2.

⁶⁹⁴ In certain respects, the non-solitary journey of cross-bearing traumas generates “the theology for crucified people.” See Lars Sandbeck, *De gudsforladtes Gud: Kristendomen efter postmodernismen* (København: Forlaget Anis, 2012), 15–16: “Teologien for de korsfæstede” (“the theology for the crucified”) is, in accordance with Sandbeck, similar to the theology “for uncertain people,” that is, loss of any significant existential orientation, not at least rooted in traditional Christian dogmas. Sandbeck’s primary project refers to the ambivalent approach to images of God today in the Western culture. Concerning this context, I would argue for Luther’s understanding of the Psalter as the mentor for ambiguous perceptions of the relation between God and human

“*thérapie indispensable*.”⁶⁹⁵ In this way, Luther’s liturgical *simul* signifies that there always is a divine “you” to cry out to, for better or worse.

The First Commandment Coram Deo

Luther sympathizes with the Roman rhetor Cato’s statement juxtaposing life and death: “He who fears death loses also that which constitutes life.”⁶⁹⁶ Or, in Luther’s terms, a fear of death that remains firm, but does not seek help in prayer, leads to the loss of life. To Luther, the juxtaposition of life and death is rooted in the Christ-event, which always brings about hope. That is, praying is the way to stay alive, whether God is hidden or present in the situation. On account of the Christ-event, both situations imply a hope. *Coram Deo*, as stated above, is the fundamental position of the liturgical subject. Luther refers to the *regula oratio*: “And so the principle is correct: wherever a Commandment of the First Table or works of the First Table are involved (prayer is a work of the First Table), there, of necessity, faith is included and the hope of the resurrection of the dead.”⁶⁹⁷

Bayer understands Luther’s interpretation of the First Commandment to imply hope, in seeing that the mercy of God continually addresses the human person, based on the words, “*ICH, ich will Dir*” (I want you).⁶⁹⁸ Hence, Christ “teaches us to deduce this theology” by reference to Exodus and God’s address to Moses: “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Matthew 22:32 affirms this to mean that “God is not God of the dead, but of the living.” Luther’s conclusion on these statements is a matter of liturgical theology. In claiming

(which Luther sees as fundamental in order to speak a genuine language about and to God). In addendum, Sandbeck’s conclusion points to the process of the image of God, such as the ultimate restoration of all things, the entire creation (see 1 Cor. 15:24–28): God will be the fulfilment of what it means to be God. See Sandbeck (2012), 201–214. Compare this with Luther’s idea of when humans fulfil what it means to be human, that is, the eschatological consummation of baptism.

⁶⁹⁵ Lytta Basset emphasizes the importance of not repressing experiences of abandonment and feelings of revenge. By contrast, it should be verbalized before God, and on this matter the Psalter is a “*thérapie indispensable*,” which helps the individual to overcome the questionable position. See Lytta Basset, *Le Désir de Tourner la Page: Au-delà du pardon* (Paris: Nouvelle édition au format de poche: Albin Michel Spiritualités, Collection “Spiritualités vivantes” dirigée par Jean Mouttapa et Marc de Smedt, 2011, (2006, Première édition: Presses de la Renaissance)), 80–81.

⁶⁹⁶ LW 13, 80–82; WA 40.III, 492b, 13–493b, 12–30: “*Verum enim est, quod Cato dixit: Qui metuit mortem, etiam id, quod vivit, perdit.*”

⁶⁹⁷ LW 13, 82; WA 40.III, 495b, 17–19: “*Ita vera est Regula, quod, ubicunque agitur de praecepto primae tabulae seu de operibus primae tabulae (sicut Oratio est opus primae tabulae), Ibi necessario includitur fides et spes resurrectionis mortuorum*” (bold added).

⁶⁹⁸ Bayer (2004, 2. Auflage), 217–218.

God as the God of the living, the Christ-event is continually taking place in worship life: “Therefore, the worship of God, faith, and prayer truly include the affirmation of the resurrection and of life everlasting.”⁶⁹⁹

As mentioned in the analysis of Psalm 102, the eschatological aspect of worship is linked with the ongoing liturgical journey from death to life anew. The liturgical subject, in the terminology of Pickstock, is identified by a journey which postulates a hope. At this point, Pickstock’s critical orientation is toward Plato, in what she calls “this intimation of eschatological intersubjectivity” between the lover and the beloved. They come out as isolated from others, separate from a community. According to Pickstock, the body is totally omitted from Plato’s idea of the eternal relationship between lover and beloved. Pickstock highlights here the radical nature of the Eucharist, in which the incarnation is repeated.⁷⁰⁰ Pickstock differs, in other words, from Lange’s position of seeing the singularity of liturgical events.

“Singen und Sagen”

According to Luther, cantabile expressions are essential to the exercise of faith and getting to know God anew. At the time of Luther, most parts of worship were sung, not least the Psalms which are, after all, liturgical chants to begin with. However, Luther’s view of the interaction between theology and music has the purpose of setting forth substantial liturgical theological issues.⁷⁰¹ The Reformation turned out, in several ways, to be a sung venture, in which the Christ-event was proclaimed polyphonically, that is, as appellation as well as metaphor.

Pickstock’s idea of historical events is as a series of interactions, constantly intertwined, whereby departure and arrival take place simultaneously on the liturgical journey. Pickstock states: “One might say that the totality of reality is not one big note, but instead, as Augustine says, a poem or song (*carmen*), and so, in other words, the total series of numeral

⁶⁹⁹ LW 13, 83; WA 40.III, 495b, 25–26: “*Ideo cultus Dei, fides et Oratio vere includit articulum resurrectionis et vitae aeternae.*”

⁷⁰⁰ Pickstock (1998), 272–273.

⁷⁰¹ The liturgical scholar Jeremy S. Begbie presupposes that the baffling controversy regarding eucharistic repetition will benefit from a study of musical repetition. The celebration of the Eucharist “can be usefully conceived as a multi-layered texture of metrical waves. At the lowest level, each downbeat could signify successive Eucharists; the highest wave the over-arching history of God’s engagement with the cosmos; and a multitude of waves, interacting and overlapping, lie in between.” See Jeremy S. Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time: Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 165.

interactions.”⁷⁰² Pickstock’s critical approach to liturgical development corresponds to Vatican II: She opts for a restoration of the Western musical tradition, in contrast to the “fashionable invocation of the non-Western” music.⁷⁰³ The latter stands for a post-metaphysical order that postulates the separation of time and space, as well as body and soul. This separation is the outcome of rejecting the transcendence that characterizes modernity, leading to the nihilism in what Pickstock names “so-called postmodernity.” Consequently, postmodern music theory cannot work out the *aporias* of time, because of its denial of transcendence. In effect, traditional Western music accommodates “the impossible reconciliation,” by resolving the *aporias* of time. By acknowledging transcendence, the Western musical tradition harbors the tension between time and space. By corollary, the *aporias* of time indicate “our created finitude.” By receiving the Christ-event, God’s passion and resurrection, in time, the liturgical subject is provided with an audible harmony, an echo of transcendence:

Furthermore, our hearing of the harmony despite and through undeniable worldly disharmonies can be taken as more than a mere mitigation of noise only if we take this harmony to be the echo of the re-beginning of human music in time by God himself.⁷⁰⁴

It is productive up to a point to follow Pickstock’s method of dealing with musical metaphoric symbolization in order to describe the liturgical journey. According to Pickstock, the pivotal theory of history is based on serial events, and this shapes her views on liturgy as well.

As noted above, Luther emphasizes the intrinsic relationship between “dogma” and liturgical action, not least regarding musical perspectives. For instance, Luther frequently employs the word-pair “*singen und sagen*” (“sing and tell”)⁷⁰⁵ in order to explain how to proclaim the Gospel: “For ‘gospel’ [*Euangelium*] is a Greek word and means in Greek a good message, good tidings,

⁷⁰² Catherine Pickstock, “Music: Soul City and Cosmos after Augustine” in John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock & Graham Ward, eds., *Radical Orthodoxy*, (London/New York: Routledge, 1999), 247. Pickstock refers to Augustine, *De Musica*, VI:11, *The Works of Saint Augustine (4th Release)*, electronic edition (Charlottesville, Virginia: IntelLex Corporation, 2014) VI:55–58. Quotation by Begbie (2008/2000), 82. Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford, UK/Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Ltd/Inc, 1998).

⁷⁰³ In the essay “Music: Soul City and Cosmos after Augustine,” Pickstock claims that traditional Western music ought to be comprehended as a metaphysical concept. Starting from Augustine to medieval music, Pickstock asserts that after Descartes Western music disintegrated. See Pickstock (1999), 243–244.

⁷⁰⁴ Pickstock (1999), 268–269.

⁷⁰⁵ The predominant alliterations in WA are not always consistent with the English translation in LW.

good news, a good report, which one *sings and tells* [*singen und sagen*] with gladness.”⁷⁰⁶ A number of scholars highlight Luther’s frequent use of the expression “*singen und sagen*.” They point to the fact that the office of music is equivalent to the office of preaching, as both preaching, and music have the mission of serving the Gospel. Luther considers all music, religious and profane, to be God’s created gift. The connection of “*singen und sagen*” largely appears in the context of proclaiming God’s word. A hypothesis of musical theory is not the issue for Luther: music is an existential matter for the experience of faith.⁷⁰⁷ Both “*singen*” and “*sagen*” connote an honest language with and about God. Luther’s commentary on Psalm 118 is one of the most significant works indicating the liturgical theological relationship between word and song, between singing and speaking. Starting with stanza 14, “The Lord is my Strength and my Song,” Luther targets what he considers to be the kernel of the entire Psalm 118, that is, stanzas 16–18. Luther usually interprets one stanza at a time, while holding these stanzas together in his exposition. “This is the joyful song of the righteous. It is sung by all the saints in their tabernacles, that is, where they gather and dwell.”⁷⁰⁸

The *Preface to The Wittenberg Hymnal* (1524), stresses the connection between “sing” and “say” (*singen und sagen*). Using Lathrop’s terminology, it can be said that “sing and speak” is a fundamental juxtaposition in the experience of God’s grace anew.⁷⁰⁹ Moses is again and again depicted as the genuine model for praying and singing, with reference to his song as depicted in Exodus.⁷¹⁰ Luther mentions, first of all, the prominent prophets and kings in the Hebrew text, who praise God “with song and sound, with poetry and psaltery.” Then, with reference to 1 Corinthians, Luther points out the connection between song and the word:

⁷⁰⁶ LW 35, 358, “Preface to the New Testament” (1546) (italics added); WA DB 6, 2, 23–25, “Vorrede auff das neue Testament” (1546). Quotation by Bernice Sundkvist, “Vom Himmel hoch – Från berättande till belärande berättelse” in Sven-Åke Selander & Karl-Johan Hansson, eds., *Martin Luthers psalmer i de nordiska folkens liv: Ett projekt inom forskarnätverket Nordhymn* (Lund: Arcus förlag, 2008), 207. Sundkvist analyses Luther’s hymn “Vom Himmel hoch” and points to the connectedness “*singen und sagen*” in the first stanza: “Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her, ...davon ich *singen und sagen* will” (italics added), 208. Moreover, Sundkvist highlights the way Luther carefully works out theological issues for children. In “Vom Himmel hoch,” Luther explicitly addresses the children by targeting the Christmas narrative. See 207–212.

⁷⁰⁷ Joyce Irwin, “So Faith Comes from What Is Heard: The Relationship between Music and God’s Word in the First Two Centuries of German Lutheranism” in Jeremy S. Begbie & Steven R. Guthrie, eds., *Resonant Witness: Conversation between Music and Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), 67. Regarding “singing and speaking,” Irwin refers to Christoph Krummacher, *Musik als praxis pietatis: Zum Selbstverständnis evangelischer Kirchenmusik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994).

⁷⁰⁸ LW 14, 80; WA 31.1. 140, 10–11.

⁷⁰⁹ “[Z]u singen noch zu sagen.” See WA 35, 474, 16; LW 35, 316.

⁷¹⁰ *NRSV*, Exodus 15:1–18, the so-called “Song of Moses,” in the occasion of being saved in crossing the Red Sea.

St. Paul himself instituted this [song and sound, poetry and psaltery] in 1 Corinthians 14[:15] and exhorted the Colossians [3:16] to sing spiritual songs and Psalms heartily unto the Lord so that God's Word and Christian teaching might be instilled and implanted in many ways.⁷¹¹

Here the significance of singing as a way to "instill and implant" the word is intelligibly held up. Luther's prime concern, as usual, is for the youth. By singing, preferably in a delightful style, young people are trained to experience the word;⁷¹² they are experiencing the word by *lex exercitandi*. Moreover, although Luther pays special attention to music, he also emphasizes the importance of all the arts being practiced in worship: "But I would like to see all the arts, especially music, used in the service of Him who gave and made them."⁷¹³

Confitemini: A Song of Experience

Luther clearly sees Psalm 118 as a song throughout, and by combining "sing and speak" he indicates how the main theme of "comfort and help" will best be communicated. Halfway through Psalm 118, at stanza 15, Luther identifies a turnabout. Up to this point, the psalmist has been "speaking and singing" about God's help and comfort in his/her own life. Thereafter the Psalm continues with references to other saints who found help and comfort in arduous situations, including Deborah, Hannah and various saints mentioned in the New Testament. They all belong to the same chorus, joined in "joyous songs and hymns of salvation and victory, of the help of God."⁷¹⁴ This is the song of the saints throughout the ages, in which the assembly has to join in, learning to express joy and thanksgiving. In other words, it is the song of *memoria victoriae*, the song of victory. Even though stanza 15 refers to joyful songs of victory, Luther pays special attention to suffering. Just so must the assembly join in the perpetual song and experience of victory, in sharing in the song and experience of suffering. In the same way that the song *memoria victoriae* indicates the constant sharing in joy and thanks, the song of *memoria*

⁷¹¹ LW 53, 315–316, "Preface to *The Wittenberg Hymnal* (1524); WA 35, 474, 4–10.

⁷¹² "[A]bout teaching and training the young." See LW 53, 316; WA 35, 475, 8: "[I]ugent zu zihen und leren."

⁷¹³ Obviously, Luther is differentiating from other outlooks on worship: "Nor am I of the opinion that the gospel should destroy and blight all the arts, as some of the pseudo-religious claim." Hereafter, the quotation above. See LW 53, 316; WA 35, 475, 2–5.

⁷¹⁴ LW 14, 79; WA 31.1, 137a, 6–16.

passionis implicates the perpetual sharing in suffering within the assembly. The pattern of the Christ-event is not a mere theoretical theological statement. It is an ongoing journey of experiencing suffering and salvation, passion and victory, from death to life. The Christ-event is the root juxtaposition in worship and in all of life, expressing the experiences of faith. The pattern of the Christ-event, from suffering to victory, entails compassion and solidarity. Luther's postulation of the broken Hallelujah as the perpetual voice of the church, continually broken into *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*, implicates solidarity and compassion. The identification with Christ's passion – suffering, struggling and dying – is a considerable part of the liturgical subject's journey from experiencing God's absence to God's presence anew. To be Christ-formed means accepting the depths, crying out one's despair, though also listening to the suffering of the neighbor, the one standing beside you in the liturgical journey. This is the position of being *coram hominibus*. Luther's commentary on stanza 15 is, to a large extent, about solidarity, about being united in suffering: "It is a comfort to the poor if they do not suffer alone."⁷¹⁵

The assembly is called into a journey beyond itself, beyond its own needs. Lathrop takes a critical stance toward what he calls the "belittling" of suffering, injustice, sorrow and death in the Christian community. This occurs whenever "Christ crucified is made into a distant religious cipher, a sacrifice."⁷¹⁶ With a touch of irony, Lathrop states that the assembly can afford "a little lament." If the assembly is unable to harbor the experience of sorrow and death, it risks offering only an immediate answer or a made-up consolation. More common is that topics like non-consolated suffering are just obliterated in the intercession and the readings, not to mention in the preaching. The result is that the assembly changes into "a closed system" unwilling to let the *Ordo* be juxtaposed to the disorder dwelling in the world of incapacitated, abused, poor and starving people. By expunging the disorder, the entire history of non-consolated pain is ignored. The assembly must then, to a much higher degree, include the many narratives of suffering, including the experience of the absence of God. The *Ordo* of the local assembly, constantly juxtaposed to the world order of injustice and poverty, implies a paradoxical dimension of the liturgy. The paradox of having the Christ-event at the center, rather than as a faraway cipher, is to understand the cross as God's identification with the poor, the dying and the suffering. When

⁷¹⁵ LW 14, 79; WA 31.1, 138a, 8–9.

⁷¹⁶ Lathrop (1993/1998), 208.

this insight is permitted in Christian worship, the suffering, the outsiders the “ec-centric”⁷¹⁷ people, also come to the center.⁷¹⁸ Taking part in the assembly, the presence of Jesus Christ in word and sacrament, means sharing in a shared possession, which also implies that all sufferings and sins are common property.⁷¹⁹

The non-solitary journey provides a shared community with all the experiences that can be verbalized through the “voices” in the Psalms. These “voices” offer the liturgical subject possibilities of recognizing themselves in the experiences of all the saints and provide a wide range of expressions to be shared in the liturgical journey. Furthermore, Luther points in his interpretation of Psalm 118 to the importance of sharing sufferings with the needy. Solidarity with suffering people should be spelled out loudly by crying to God for “help and comfort,” which is the main theme of Psalm 118. In other words, lament is an act of solidarity.

A Sacrament of Love and Solidarity

According to Lathrop, liturgy always needs “two words,” a double action which yields a third thing. Speaking an honest language before God necessitates the juxtaposition of at least “two words.” The two meal-acts, the thanksgiving and the familiar eating and drinking, it follows, render the third thing: the proposition that all things are gifts from God and are intended to be shared alike. Lathrop claims that when the *Ordo* is “healthy and clear,” that is, centered on Jesus Christ, it constantly yields a third thing. The double actions of the Eucharist, word (scripture reading with interpretation) and table (thanksgiving with receiving bread and wine), point, Lathrop says, to the third thing, the awakening of solidarity.⁷²⁰ Concerning the Eucharist and solidarity, Luther writes:

⁷¹⁷ Latin: *ex centrum*, “outside the center.”

⁷¹⁸ Lathrop (1993/1998), 206–208.

⁷¹⁹ LW 35, 51: “To receive this sacrament in bread and wine, then, is nothing else than to receive a sure sign of this fellowship and incorporation with Christ and all saints... Again all sufferings and sins also become common property; and thus love engenders love in return and [mutual love] unites.” WA 2, 743, 20–22, 28–30.

⁷²⁰ “The two meal-acts, thanksgiving and the common eating and drinking, propose that all things come from God and are given for all to share alike. Already, for those who are sensitive, these two double actions—scripture reading with interpretation and thanksgiving with taking food—propose an alternative vision of the world, criticizing any current order and calling us to act in such a way that our justice begins to mirror the merciful justice we believe is coming from God.” See Lathrop (1993/1998), 212–213.

Here your heart must go out in love and learn that this is a sacrament of love. As love and support are given to you, you must in turn render love and support to Christ in his needy ones. You must feel with sorrow all the dishonour done to Christ in his holy Word, all the misery of Christendom, all the unjust suffering of the innocent, with which the world is everywhere filled to overflowing. You must fight, work, pray, and – if you cannot do more – have heartfelt sympathy.⁷²¹

If nothing but “heartfelt sympathy” is possible, then a constant lamentation is of paramount importance. Lathrop maintains that the ongoing lament is a force that, in the end, hollows out “the most determined tyranny.”⁷²²

Hans-Martin Barth also points to the fact that solidarity, for Luther, applies even to economic matters. Giving something away must be done out of Christian love; worldly-minded rules are not enough. In a sermon on usury, Barth notices Luther’s commitment concerning how to deal with one’s property by identifying three levels. First, the highest and most noble way is simply to give away your money and your belongings. The second-best way is to be generous with your property. If not this, then just lend your money without charging any interest. Anyone who gives a loan that is not driven by love but by profit, badly damages the Christian communion.⁷²³ Luther takes usury truly seriously: indeed, it is a threat against love and solidarity among the Christian assembly. Essentially, somebody who practices usury is to be compared with a murderer, as by increasing costs entire life-conditions are eliminated. Anyone who practices usury or charges interest is a “*Menschenfresser*” – one who “eats” humans.⁷²⁴ It is up to the priest, preferably in the sermon, to convert usurers and those who lend money at interest. It is important to note that when usury is practiced in the assembly, it becomes a shared and common problem. It is, consequently, of great importance that the Christian community deals with this issue, as it threatens solidarity with the needy and poor.

⁷²¹ Lathrop quotes Luther, (1993/1998), 213–214. See LW, 35, 54; WA 2, 742–758.

⁷²² Lathrop (1993/1998), 213.

⁷²³ Barth (2009), 440 with reference to Luther’s “Sermon vom Wucher” (1519), see WA 6, 3, 8–19, not available in LW.

⁷²⁴ Note, “fressen” in German refers to animals, or is used to denigrate a human being. In connection with humans, the word “essen” is used. See Hans-Jürgen Prien, *Luthers Wirtschaftsethik* (Nürnberg: mabase-verlag, Erlanger Verlag für Mission und Ökumene, 1992/2012, Neuauflage), 133.

Solidarity with Cosmos

Luther sees his “beloved Psalm, the beautiful *confitemini*,” as a song of thanksgiving and joy. This song is based on the abundant, daily and everlasting goodness of God. The first stanza, “O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His steadfast love endures forever!” should be in the heart and mouth of every human every day, because of all the blessings continually given by God. These blessings are so common that everybody needs to be “aroused and trained”⁷²⁵ to see God’s gifts in everyday life. That is the quotidian *lex exercitandi*: training up the capability of really seeing God’s blessings.

The signification of the first stanza, for Luther, leads to a discussion of the translation of the Hebrew word חסד to the Greek $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\eta\mu\sigma\sigma\upsilon\nu\eta$. Rather than “*barmherzigkeit*” (“mercy”) Luther prefers the German word “*Guete*” (“goodness”) or, more precisely, “*Wolthat odder gutthat*” (“goodness in action”). In addition, Luther reflects on the Hebrew word עולם (“continually” or “always”), emphasizing the temporality of God’s “steadfast love.” It is goodness in action, in everyday life, as well as in the life eternal.⁷²⁶ In order to understand the beginning of Psalm 118, Luther says, it is of importance to wrestle with these two Hebrew words, usually translated into God’s “steadfast love endures forever.” These words occur frequently in scripture, and particularly in the Psalter. The first stanza teaches the assembly how to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving for every day’s wonder and blessings, for example for the sun and the moon, birds and fish, water, air and fire, hand and foot, and the heavens. All these things – the cosmos with all its elements – serve humanity. By seeing these cosmic elements, the liturgical subject gets to know more of God, who creates, protects and preserves humanity “every year, every day, every hour, and every minute.”⁷²⁷ Stanza 14, “The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation” is, as has been noted, Luther’s entrance into the next four stanzas. Stanzas 15–18 are central to Luther’s understanding of Psalm 118.

In the assembly’s singing of the Psalms, the liturgical subject exercises, all over again, the verbalization of joy as well as lamentation, in honest language before God.⁷²⁸ The *lex exercitandi*

⁷²⁵ “[E]rmanet vnd gewenet.” See LW 14, 49; WA 73a, 2.

⁷²⁶ Luther’s translation of the first stanza: “Dancket dem HERRN, denn er ist freundlich Vnd *seine guete weret ewiglich*” (italics added). Luther pays especial interest to the words in italics. They correspond to the Hebrew words mentioned above.

⁷²⁷ LW 14, 47–48; WA 30.I, 69,15–18, 70, 1–10.

⁷²⁸ In fact, some musicians arrogate that in hard situations singing will facilitate the communication. See for example the solo guitarist and songwriter of the *The Rolling Stones*, Keith Richards, who says, “If you can’t say it, sing it.” Keith Richards with James Fox, *Life* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2010), 56. In line with Luther’s experience of the incapability of monastery life to deal with the traumatic brokenness of life, I want to

is a matter of an ongoing education in verbalizing, for better or worse, *coram Deo*. Part One of this study focused attention on the fact that Psalms of joy and thanksgiving predominate in many churches today, even though Psalms of lament prevail in the Psalter. Luther's preface to the Psalter effectively shows the significance of juxtaposing joy to lament. What matters most is the genuine language before God, not least in the *Ordo* of the assembly. Of course, lament includes a wide range of aspects. The traumatic experience of God's absence in the life of the liturgical subject has so far been the issue. However, Luther's exposition of Psalm 118 provides an impetus to highlight another facet of lament: the importance of expressing solidarity. Solidarity with our neighbor, humanity and planet earth must also be verbalized *coram Deo*.

In his interpretation of Psalm 118:15, by describing the voices of Moses, Deborah and Hannah, Luther is mapping out the background of their rejoicing and thanksgiving. It is actually a matter of sharing in joyfulness as well as in suffering. The core "melody" of Psalm 118 is, first of all, "the comfort and help" found in the hope for God's grace anew. But, in stanza 15, Luther enlarges on the significance by referring to solidarity with other people as well: "Again, it is comforting when many suffer the same thing; for then a man does not get the horrible thought that he alone has been winnowed out and rejected." This statement applies particularly to solidarity within the Christian community, which the reference to 1 Peter exemplifies.⁷²⁹ Even if Psalm 118 is a song of victory and rejoicing, the *memoria victoriae*, in Luther's view, is also concerned with the *memoria passionis*, the cross-bearing journey of suffering. There is no such thing as an unbroken Hallelujah; the perpetual song of the church is the ongoing juxtaposition of victory and passion.

In the directing triad of "strength, song, and salvation" in stanza 14, the last word indicates the suffering; otherwise, "[t]here would be no talk of salvation and victory, or such a song of joy."⁷³⁰ As Luther points out in the exposition of Psalm 143, to be Christ-formed is to share suffering as well as victory. The journey of the liturgical subject is constantly shaped by the Christ-event, moving from death to life anew. Pointing out that the journey is non-solitary indicates the aspect of sharing within the *communio sanctorum*.

foreground another quotation: "And then I think we realized, like any young guys, that blues are not learned in a monastery. You've got to go out there and get your heart broke and then come back and then you can sing the blues." See Richards (2010), 110.

⁷²⁹ "Resist him [a roaring lion] steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering." See Peter 5:9.

⁷³⁰ LW 14, 80; WA 31.I, 138, 12–14, 139, 5–6. "A song of joy" corresponds to "Freudengesang" in WA. In the "Preface to the Psalter" Luther juxtaposes "words of joy" and "words of sadness." See above.

“The Channel of Another’s Intercession”⁷³¹

Luther refers to Psalm 50:15, “Call upon me, in the day of trouble,” to underline the significance of intercession as an act of solidarity with those who suffer. Even if God seems to be hidden, and the condition is heavy, the crying out to God shall not cease. In longing for help for other people, “[t]he channel of another’s intercession” is a way of dealing with the situation. It does not matter if the one being prayed for is an unknown or a non-believer. “God accomplishes much through the faith and longing of another, even a stranger, even though there is still no personal faith.”⁷³²

The remark on Psalm 50:15, “Call upon me, in the day of trouble,” already appears in Luther’s exposition of Psalm 118:21.⁷³³ Without a doubt, this is a main theme in Luther’s liturgical theology. Whatever the troubles may be, the liturgical subject shall turn *coram Deo* and verbalize the condition in question. And if no words can be found to express the distress, the liturgical subject simply rests before God, sighing. The profound point of Psalm 118 is, as noted, “comfort and help.” Nevertheless, the journey to that relief, to the experience of help anew, is marked by the baptismal pattern from death to life. In the Psalms analyzed above, Luther holds that the liturgical journey from God’s absence to God’s presence is not without struggle. These experiences of crying out, lamenting and fighting before God are, together, the way to “become real Christians.”⁷³⁴

In certain respects, Luther’s interest in salvation concerns the individual believer, and a focus on the future of humankind and creation comprise more of a backdrop. His thinking about resurrection, on the other hand, sounds in another note. Barth suggests that the idea of *apokatastasis* can be seen in the way Luther deals with suffering and death, at least in an oblique way. When Luther turns to the harsh circumstances of life, such as women’s miscarriages, the frontier to an exclusive eschatology is broken. God listens carefully to the sighs of mothers and fathers whose children are ill or dying, like the Canaanite woman’s daughter, the widow’s son at Nain and the royal official’s son.⁷³⁵ Here Luther envisions an inclusive eschatology, also

⁷³¹ LW 43, 250; WA 53, 208, 1–2: “Aber flux durch andere furbit gegeben wird.”

⁷³² LW 43, 250; WA 53, 207, 17–25, 208, 1.

⁷³³ LW 14, 95; WA 31.I, 170b, 29–30.

⁷³⁴ LW 14, 61; WA 31.I, 96a, 17–18.

⁷³⁵ See Luke 7, 1–17 and John 4, 46–54, *NRSV*.

concerning the religious belief of the parents. God is not bound to the sacraments or to limitations of any kind; God's activity reaches beyond every human concept. At this point it is relevant to speak about a "hidden God," in the sense of not grasping the unmitigated aspects of eschatology. In a sermon on 1 Corinthians 15 pertaining to the resurrection of the dead, Luther takes the position that God will one day be everything in everyone: "Das heist: *Deus alls etc.*"⁷³⁶ To repeat: The fulfilment of baptism is a process, a lifelong journey and, after all, a matter of eschatology. Human life is merely the stuff of a life that is coming. In death the *mortificatio* which began in baptism comes to an end, and in the resurrection new, eternal life takes place. The *apokatastasis* accommodates not just humanity but the entire creation. Luther envisions human eyes will see everything in a completely new way, the sun will shine with a maximizing power and the whole world will be transfigured. The resurrection is seen in every creature, in the trees, in the cornfields. Creation shows that there is no way to life but through death.

Luther's theological thinking includes an inclusive as well as an exclusive eschatology. Luther disapproves of the doctrine of *apokatastasis*, though he does deal with this idea, at least in an oblique way.⁷³⁷ By acknowledging the whole cosmos to be God's creation, compassion emerges for every living creature. Not least Luther's exposition of the Psalter demonstrates interest in all living creatures. The magnificence of the stars in the sky, the twittering of the birds in springtime, the splendor of a thunderstorm – all bear witness that the world is not created exclusively for humankind, but for the entire cosmos. Luther appreciates the Psalms particularly as the way to look into the heart of the saints, but also for their mighty images of nature. These depictions of nature evoke a certain affinity within Luther himself⁷³⁸

⁷³⁶ Barth (2009), 507. Barth refers to WA 36, 595, 9.

⁷³⁷ Barth (2009), 499–507.

⁷³⁸ Karl Holl, *Luthers kristendomssyn* (Stockholm: Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelses bokförlag, 1947), 117–118.

Summary

My analysis of Luther's liturgical theology is based on Brüggemann's model; the two moves from *disorientation* and *a new orientation*.

The primary issue concerns Martin Luther's liturgical theology, and the importance of the *simul* in the expression of an earnest language to, and about, God. In the worship order *An Order of Mass*, 1523, Luther brings out the significant liturgical *simul*: "*Hallelujah enim vox perpetua est Ecclesiae, sicut perpetua est memoria passionis et victoriae eius.*" The Hallelujah, broken between the passion (*memoria passionis*) and the victory (*memoria victoriae*) is the key to understanding Luther's liturgical theology. The liturgical chant of Hallelujah is widely omitted during the Lenten season in many churches today, and then "resurrected" in Eastertide. In Luther's view, however, the perpetual song of the church the brokenness lies between passion and victory. Neither of these two components can be left out if an earnest liturgical language is to be elaborated and expressed. The broken Hallelujah also serves as a significant metaphor in describing Luther's liturgical theology. In effect, it refers to Luther's theology of baptism as the primary pattern, the ongoing journey from death to life anew, that is from disorientation to a new orientation.

Another aspect of the baptismal pattern is expressed through the liturgical year, not least in the polarity of Lent and Easter. There is a tendency to overlook the significance of the tension between the polarities, that is, between being on the edge of the traumatized experience of God as absent, *Deus absconditus*, like Jesus on the cross crying, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" The neglect of the tension, the incapacity of harboring the traumatic experience of the abyss, is exemplified by the disregard for Holy Saturday. The *triduum paschale* are conventionally considered to be Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter. The Saturday in between is "silent" and first comes into play when it is about the Easter Vigil. According to Luther, there is no such "silent" day. Everything, even the traumatic absence of meaning and loss, should be verbalized before God. The "Holy Saturday-atmosphere" cannot be left out, the experience of God as absent must be addressed *coram Deo*. It is a matter of receiving God's grace anew, as in a perpetual journey from death to life without any repetition of yesterday's pattern. Receiving God's grace anew is a single, continual event just like the Christ-event.

The most common question put to Christianity by people in our time, I would say, is that of theodicy: How can there be a loving, omnipotent God and still so much suffering in the life of the individual and of the world? The issue of theodicy is not the topic of this study, nor does

Luther pay conspicuous attention to the subject. However, if the question of theodicy is seriously considered, it becomes essential to acknowledge the “repressed lament” in contemporary liturgy. Silence is not an alternative to dealing with theodicy. Living with the question, giving it attention in liturgy as well as life, is crucial. Lament is the first step to hope!

In the first three chapters I deal with liturgical issues and I also present the three key players (Luther excluded), Gordon W. Lathrop, Dirk G. Lange, and Catherine Pickstock.

The Seven Penitential Psalms are analyzed in chapter four; the outset is Luther’s commentaries of 1525 on Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130 and 143.

There are certainly various ways of incorporating *The Seven Penitential Psalms* in liturgical use, including as “prayers of confession.” Some of them are singled out for particular moments in worship, for instance, Psalm 6 as “prayer of lament,” and Psalm 32 as “words of assurance.”⁷³⁹ However, Luther takes a critical stance on penitential acts and his commentaries cling more to what he is describing in the preface of The Psalter, finding appropriate words for joyfulness and lament. We have observed the centrality of Luther’s attention to the significance of verbalizing the traumatic experience of God’s absence. Luther’s focus is, for the most part, the individual supplicant on the baptismal journey from death to life anew.

In chapter five, three Psalms with significant connections to Eastertide are analyzed: Psalms 23, 111 and 118. In contrast to the Psalms in chapter four, which Luther interprets nearly throughout on an individual level, the commentaries on the Easter Psalms refer to the assembly. Luther’s liturgical thinking comes to the fore particularly in his commentaries, not at least in those on the Eucharist.⁷⁴⁰

In order to highlight the liturgical *simul*, two Luther scholars who focus on liturgy, Gordon W. Lathrop, and Dirk G. Lange, are important sources in this study. The third scholar, Catherine Pickstock, is a liturgist as well, though in the quite different setting of philosophical theology. Pickstock does not deal with Luther’s theology,⁷⁴¹ but stimulating for this study is the fact that both Luther and Pickstock have the same starting point, the Latin Mass.

In the introduction to The Psalms analyzed in this study, Luther emphasizes earnestness in speaking *to* and *about God*. In this regard, the Psalter is a mentor in exercising genuine communication to God, as well one’s authenticated talk about the own situation, Luther says.

⁷³⁹ For example, see Witvliet (2007), 55.

⁷⁴⁰ Though, the Eucharist is not the aim in my study.

⁷⁴¹ Pickstock seldom mentions Luther and Reformation, her background is radical orthodoxy.

This lifelong journey is stamped by what Lathrop calls the “baptismal pattern” and Lange names the “baptismal grammar.” With inspiration from Luther, I call this lifelong journey, that is, this way of learning to verbalize earnestness whatever the situation requires *lex exercitandi*. Luther’s reluctant position to the Hours is well-known. However, he holds to regular prayers with the inspiration of the Hours, specifically regarding the “daily training,” the *lex exercitandi*, in psalmic language, in exercising a truthful language.

Lathrop, Lange and Pickstock characterize liturgy as a journey who I have followed though, with different perspectives. Conventionally, liturgical scholars mention *lex orandi* and *lex credendi* in describing worship life. Lange who points to the impossibility in drawing up any kind of formula concerning Luther’s liturgical theology. In particular, the employment of “law, *lex*,” in order to explain liturgical practice and its theology is not adequate in order to construe Luther’s view on worship. Accordingly, to Lathrop and Lange, Luther’s baptismal grammar is a constantly journey of dying and rising which they refer to the “Christ-event.” Lange arrogates the idea that Luther turns to liturgy in order to disrupt the theology of his contemporary and to find a new grammar. Additionally, liturgy was the place where Luther most severely experienced the struggle for *nova lingua*. Lange’s main thesis is that it was *in* and *through* liturgy Luther found the new grammar.

The singularity of the Christ-event disrupts the context as well as the subject anew and confronts the subject with the traumatic absence of meaning. There is no “anamnesis” to lean on or a hidden meaning to unwrap. The *lex exercitandi* is about exercising the unpredictable realizing there is no way of controlling the Christ-event. The traumatic absence breaks open to a place of gift, the gift, the *accessio*, the addition, in accordance with Lange. A new orientation, I call it, according to my methodical pattern in my study. The opening resides in death, the disruption of context. The event rules out every attempt to systematization or speculating and precludes the illusion of control.

Especially in The Psalms read and sung, both written and oral, Luther is confronted with the ongoing journey from dying to rising in which he finds the earnest verbalization of *grammatica theologica*. In other words, there is no way to get past the disorientation if we want to embrace a new orientation.

Lathrop’s interpretation of Luther’s liturgical theology employs a less confrontational terminology and more of the interacting in liturgical juxtapositions. The assembly gathers around “holy things,” a pattern of liturgical juxtapositions drawn from the Bible such as “bath, word and

meal,” the root elements of *ordo*. Naming the holy things in ordinary concepts is the way Lathrop underlines the connection between the Sunday gathering and everyday life. Word set next to sharing bread and wine in worship constantly confronts the assembly in considering how to welcome the stranger, how to share the bread with the needy. With references to Luther’s “two-ness,” the polarity of liturgy, the tension of the *ordo* a third “thing” is provided, a new opening to the discovery of God’s grace and places of hope. Bath next to word yields a new thing about the baptismal journey from dying to rising. To speak truthfully of God, the *ordo* always necessitates “two words” in order to create a third thing, that is, God’s grace spoken anew, broken to a new purpose. This two-fold action is basically rooted in the Christ-event, that is, the move from disorientation to a new orientation. Worship *order* is not inevitably the same as *ordo*. If the juxtaposition of root elements is lacking, *ordo* is not present, and worship tends to end up in a ceremonial performance instead of sharing and participation. In the main, this was Luther’s critique of the Medieval mass, not at least in ruling out the tension of the broken Hallelujah, that is, the perpetual song of *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*. Lathrop pays an extraordinary attention to the juxtaposition of praise and lament in order to speak the truth of the Christ-event which yields the third, the solidarity with humanity as well as with the planet earth. *Solidarity requires lamentation*, verbalizing lament deepens compassion and focus on concrete need in the entire cosmos.

Pickstock, likewise Lathrop and Lange elaborate the polarity of liturgy, and primarily the juxtaposition of identity and journey. Despite Lange’s critically approach to Pickstock (mainly because of Pickstock sympathizing to radical orthodoxy) I find some important similarities between them. Along the same lines as Lange, Pickstock’s starts out from the juxtaposition of absence and presence as a place of the redemptive return, in Lange’s terminology it is the *accessio*. In the optic of Pickstock liturgy is a non-solitary journey whereby the subject experiences the “I” as a journey towards the divine presence of the “Thou.” Simultaneously, the absence of the “Thou” is at hand. The liturgical subject arrives before it can travel, such as, the identity of the liturgical subject is perpetually restored in the reciprocal process of departure and arrival. Pickstock’s concept of the perpetual journey of arrival and departure I find useful in understanding Luther’s struggle of searching for God’s grace anew; in accordance what Pickstock calls the redemptive return. Similar to Luther, Pickstock turns to liturgy in order to elaborate a new “grammar,” and both of them set off from the same worship order, the Latin Mass. Luther’s move from his outlines of *The Latin Mass* to the *The German Mass* reflects his

theological process where we find dogmatic issues integrated throughout the liturgy. To some extent we can observe the same process in Pickstock's work however though, vice versa. What happens after the Reformation as well as Vatican I, Pickstock goes to clinch with, such as, worship in the vernacular and the "loss" of transcendence. The outcome is a heavy criticism of the language of modernity as well as of postmodernity. With the starting point from the Latin Mass Luther takes the *via moderna* and Pickstock's work leads to the *via antiqua*. Even if Pickstock depicts the restoration of the liturgical subject by way of journeying in arrival and departure it is essentially about repetition in infinite series. In other words, there is an *anamnesis* carried out by re-actualization, an unbroken communication. By this mean the Eucharist is an indispensable repetition of the Christ-event. In contrast to Lange, Pickstock claims liturgical language to be mainly oral and describes how Platonic philosophy could be useful for liturgical theory and practise. By interpreting *Phaedrus* Pickstock draws up the intimacy of liturgy, such as, first and foremost the relationship between the lover and the beloved. Therefore, the language of doxology is presumed being the all over communication in liturgy. Although, Pickstock takes a critical stand to Plato keying out the intersubjectivity since the isolated status, the lover and the beloved are not linked any community. Arrival and departure are a non-solitary journey framed within liturgy, that is, within a community.

Conclusion One: Let Us Lament!

Instead of further summarising the main conclusions of this study on Luther's liturgical theology in the context of leading contemporary liturgists, let me end by pointing to some general conclusions of this study.

Is there a repressed lament in the Christian tradition? That is the central question of this study. Yes, I claim that there is a repressed lament in contemporary liturgy. When lament is repressed, it implies an undeniable control. Nothing is left to the experience of disorientation. For example, when the *kyrie eleison* is mixed with the confession of sins or "happier" words. In the service book in the Church of Sweden, some kyrie refers to hope and happiness. However, my study highlights the significance of lament as the disorientation in order to find a new orientation. In other words, lament is the first step to hope! Here I refer to the Holy Saturday atmosphere, the importance of harboring the disorientation on the way to a new orientation.

Because of the problematic situations of today's worries about tomorrow concerning our life on earth, I find it very important to spell out our lament and disorientation. For example, without earnest language, in the kyrie, it is hard to embrace the *gloria*, the new orientation. The move from orientation to a new orientation does not deepen our understanding of *memoria passionis* and almost certainly not *memoria victoriae*.

Luther does not connect the penitential Psalms with a penitential act but with the earnest language of *coram Deo*. To Luther, the regret over his own sins is often at stake, causing him to lament. He also laments over injustice and sorrow. Still, he does not want an exclusive penitential rite. If needed, he refers to the confession of confidentiality. I find the "confession of sins" in contemporary liturgy to be exceptionally individualistic. It touches on self-righteousness. Besides, we remain as *iustus et peccator*, so instead, let us concentrate on our neighbor as Luther claims.

Even if we want to regret our sins, I consider *the lament of solidarity* much more relevant in our world of today. That is, to spell out our lament in solidarity with the starving children, the refugees all over the world, the mistreated animals, the creation which sighs over the cruelty of humanity, and so on. The theodicy was not a severe issue to Luther, but, today it is indeed many people's first question to God and the Church. Let us spell out our "why God, do you not realize that innocent children are suffering in your creation?" and so on.

If we believe that lament is the first step to hope – let us lament!

Conclusion Two: Let Us Be Courageous!

Today I notice a longing to be primordial and a reluctant attitude towards open agendas. Is it a backlash against the experimental liturgical years during the last decades of the 20th century? Maybe also, an expression of a contemporary era characterized by political and global insecurity? Turning "old school" could provide a kind of "safe space" within-well tried frames.

Being a lecturer in liturgy and homiletics for many years in pastoral training in the Church of Sweden,⁷⁴² I have observed, concerning the liturgy, a distinct change from the 90s until today. The eucharistic prayer is an illustrative example of this outcome. Every priest candidate was asked to write a eucharistic prayer corresponding to a specific Sunday or theme, for instance,

⁷⁴² Svenska kyrkans pastoralinstitut, Lund.

"peace and justice." Of course, this request was an excellent opportunity to combine their theological studies at the university with their liturgical understanding. The eucharistic prayers are hard-and-fast with the new service book 2017 (500 years since Reformation!). There are no possibilities to create new ones.

Consequently, liturgical theology is jeopardized. The questions tend to be more regarding "how to do things?" instead of considering "why." Sharply expressed, I note an emerging liturgy that loses theological references, order instead of *ordo*. Liturgical development springs up in the experiences of the assembly, and it necessitates confidence in the priesthood of all believers. "Order" or longing for the primordial are far away from Luther's concluding comment in *The German Mass*, where he indicates the risk of a worship order which has lost its ability to communicate. Only one thing ought to be done: like a pair of shoes which are worn out, you better find new ones!

I find Lange's thesis the most successful in understanding Luther's liturgical theology. By depicting Luther's constant struggle with the biblical texts, the traumatic experience of God as absent is revealed. It is indeed a matter of life and death, disrupting both the context and the subject. There is no "anamnesis" or ritualized system to repeat. Faith begins with an absence, encountering the abyss and crying out just like the shape of the Psalter following Lange's interpretation of Luther. In other words, here is an acceptance of the Holy Saturday atmosphere that is harboring the traumatic experience of being abandoned and not knowing the way out. This experience comes to the fore in Luther's exposition of *The Seven Penitential Psalms*, such as Psalm 130, "Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord." As noted above, Luther comments on this stanza by highlighting that the experience of being in "the depths" can only be understood by those who have been there, on the bottom. It follows that turning to God in lament is of paramount importance, to verbalize the traumatic situation in earnestness. Essentially this outcry is a strong longing for God's grace anew.

Accordingly, the question of theodicy is the open wound of theology. I find it vitally significant to let this issue live within the liturgy in order to be credible to ourselves and people wondering about God. In practising the *lex exercitandi*, we have what Luther calls a mentor, the Psalter, by which we can train to lament by verbalizing the traumas and sufferings of our time. It concerns not exclusively our own lives, but it is as well an act of solidarity with people in distress and anxiety and all the living things on our planet.

The broken Hallelujah of *memoria passionis* and *memoria victoriae*, that is, the Christ-event, implicates a moment of a traumatized experience corresponding to Jesus on the cross crying out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Following Luther's liturgical theology, I call for more earnest language within the liturgy.

Luther's favorite psalm frames the Holy Week in many churches, that is, Psalm 118. For instance, the Revised Common Lectionary and the lectionary of the Church of Sweden refer to Psalm 118 for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, from passion to victory, from lament to joy. Figuratively, we may say, the liturgical tradition of Psalm 118 incorporates the ongoing Christ-event from disorientation to a new orientation. So, let us be courageous!

And even though
It all went wrong
I'll stand before the Lord of Song
With nothing on my tongue but Hallelujah.⁷⁴³

⁷⁴³ Leonard Cohen, "Hallelujah." In *Various Positions*. (Columbia Records, 1984).

Sammanfattning och perspektiv

”Har dagens liturgiska traditioner något att erbjuda klagande hjärtan?” undrar den sydafrikanska teologen Denise M. Ackermann. Frågan ställs i samband med att Ackermann tagit del av rapporterna från Truth and Reconciliation Commissions arbete med vittnesbörden från apartheidtiden. Var finns det utrymme för den smärta och det lidande som ständigt på nytt ger sig till känna i våra liv och i vår värld?

Efter många år av arbete som församlingspräst i Svenska kyrkan, med tjänstgöring även på sjukhus och på Rättspsykiatriska kliniken i Lund, är Ackermanns fråga något som engagerar mig.

Genom min studie av Psaltaren, främst Martin Luthers tolkning av De sju botpsalmerna (psalmerna 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130 och 143) samt tre ”Påskpsalmer” (23, 111 och 118) vill jag peka på ett sätt att erbjuda ”klagande hjärtan” utrymme i gudstjänstlivet.

Inte sällan framställs Luther som liturgiskt omedveten vilket jag inte kan finna något belägg för. Tvärtom, finns det ett liturgiskt *simul* i Luthers teologi som utgår från dopets mönster från död till liv, från bottenlös förtvivlan till nytt mod och från klagan till glädje. Denna dialektik, detta *simul*, kommer till uttryck redan i en av Luthers första gudstjänstordningar 1523, ”Formula Missae et Communionis pro Ecclesia Vviiitembergensi:”

Hallelujah enim vox perpetua est Ecclesiae, sicut perpetua est *memoria passionis* et *victoriae* eius. (“The Hallelujah is the perpetual voice of the church, just as the memorial of His passion and victory is perpetual”).⁷⁴⁴

Detta är grundläggande i Luthers liturgiska teologi, kyrkans röst som ett ständigt brutet Hallelujah,⁷⁴⁵ brutet mot *både* lidande och seger, mot både *memoria passionis* och *memoria victoriae*. Med andra ord, ingen lovsång utan att lidandet ges utrymme och vice versa. För Luther handlar det om att använda ett ärligt språk till Gud och om Gud. I likhet med Jesu rop på korset ”Min Gud, min Gud, varför har du övergivit mig?”⁷⁴⁶ ska vi inte undanhålla Gud vår

⁷⁴⁴ WA 12, 210, 11-12; LW 53, 24, *An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg*, 1523. (Kursiv tillagd).

⁷⁴⁵ Hebreiska, ”vi lovsjunger Gud.”

⁷⁴⁶ Mark.15:34; Matt 27:46.

klagan och förtvivlan. Det är genom att ge rum för klagan och förtvivlan som en människa kan komma vidare till upplevelsen av försoning och glädje.

Psaltaren, som Luther kallar för ”Den lilla Bibeln, spelar en framträdande roll i hans liturgiska teologi. Luther kallar Psaltaren en mentor där människan kan öva sig i ett ärligt språk till Gud och om sin egen situation. För Luther är Psaltaren en spegel där en människa kan lära känna sig själv, få hjälp med att finna språkligheter för allehanda situationer i livet. Att dela språk med Psaltaren är också att dela ord och erfarenheter med bedjande människor genom tiderna, ett deltagande i ett *communio sanctorum*. I sitt förord till Psaltaren skriver Luther:

Where does one find finer words of joy than in the psalms of praise and thanksgiving? There you look into the hearts of all the saints, as into fair and pleasant gardens, yes, as into heaven itself. ...On the other hand, where do you find deeper, more sorrowful, more pitiful words of sadness than in the psalms of lamentation? There again you look into the hearts of all the saints, as into death, yes, as into hell itself.”...And that they [the saints] speak these words to God and with God, this, I repeat, is the best thing of all. *This gives the words double earnestness and life.*⁷⁴⁷

I min studie av Luthers tolkning av ovannämnda psalmer tar jag tre liturgiska teologer i anspråk: Gordon W. Lathrop, Dirk G. Lange och Catherine Pickstock. De två förstnämnda skriver om Luther och liturgi under det att Pickstock utgår från filosofi, främst från Platon. Lathrops utgångspunkt är liturgiins *ordo*, dvs att två element, t.ex. Ordet och Måltiden finns i juxtaposition till varandra, för att peka på något nytt, ett tredje perspektiv.

Med Luthers terminologi kan vi benämna detta liturgiins *simul*, något som är både-och samtidigt och som i sin tur öppnar för något nytt.

Lange lyfter fram det faktum att det är *i* och *genom* liturgiins som Luther finner sitt teologiska språk. Inte minst genom sitt arbete med Psaltaren finner Luther sitt liturgisk-teologiska språk.

Pickstocks grundläggande tes är att filosofin fulländas genom det liturgiska språket. Trots åtskilliga århundraden mellan Luther och Pickstock utgår de båda från den medeltida latinska mässan, dock med divergerande konklusioner.

⁷⁴⁷ LW 35, 255 - 256; WA DB, 10.I, 103, 7 - 10, 12 - 14, 18 - 20. Italics added.

Den första delen av min studie behandlar Luthers tolkning av de sju botpsalmerna. I många kyrkotraditioner ingår dessa psalmer (eller några av dem) i Fastans läsningar. Här visar det sig att Luthers tolkningar inte främst handlar om bot utan om att han framhäver vikten av att uttrycka sin klagan och övergivenhet inför Gud, *coram Deo*. I sina gudstjänstordningar har Luther ingen syndabekännelse. Däremot värnar Luther *Kyriet* (som kommer direkt efter den inledande psalmen). Jag argumenterar för att Luther ser syndabekännelsen som ett sätt att ställa dopet och dopets mönster ”i skuggan.” Livet är en ständigt pågående resa mellan död och liv, förtvivlan och hopp. Detta är Kristus-skeendets mönster som gestaltas varje gång vi samlas till gudstjänst och som en hjälp att tolka våra liv.

De tre följande psaltarpsalmerna ingår på olika sätt i Påskens läsningar i många kyrkor. Psalm 23, som Luther ser som en metafor för gudstjänstfirande visar på hur doktrin och liturgi hör samman i hans teologi. Detta blir tydligt också i Luthers tolkning av psalmerna 111 och 118 som i många kyrkotraditioner hör hemma i Stilla veckan och i påskfirandet. Som bekant ville Luther att både Ordet och Måltiden ska firas varje söndag. I de tre påskpsalmerna kommer detta till uttryck på ett signifikant sätt där nattvarden också belyses som en motståndshandling.

För att tala ärligt om Gud och livet krävs minst ”två ord,” *memoria passionis* och *memoria victoria*, dopets livslånga mönster, den ständiga resan från död till liv. Min analys ger vid handen att detta *simul* uppträder i såväl i de sju botpsalmerna som i påskpsalmerna. Kyrkans sång är alltid ett brutet Hallelujah med rum för både klagan och glädje, det ena inte utan det andra, om vi vill ett ärligt språk om Gud och människa. Denna livslånga resa i dopets mönster är en ständig övning, att likt Jesus på korset våga ropa ut sin övergivenhet i hoppet om en ny morgon. I min studie kallar jag denna ”övning” för *lex exercitandi* med inspiration från Luther. Dessutom pekar Luther på att detta rop är nödvändigt för att komma vidare.

Frågan är: finns det rum för klagande hjärtan i vår liturgi? I tider av återkommande katastrofer och lidande på vår jord ställs vi inför *teodicé*-frågan.⁷⁴⁸ Luther behandlar inte denna fråga direkt i samband med de 10 psaltarpsalmerna men visar ändå betydelsen av att av *leva med frågan* och tala ett ärligt språk inför Gud. Att verbalisera sin klagan inför Gud kan också handla om solidaritet med sin nästa och med världen vi lever i.

Att klaga är ett första steg mot hopp!

⁷⁴⁸ “Hur kan det finnas en god Gud när så mycket ont sker på jorden?”

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