Why did Peter ask his question and how did Jesus answer him? 
or: Implicature in Luke 12:35-48 

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ABSTRACT

The concept of implicature as defined by Leech is explained and then employed to interpret the motives for Peter's question and the intent of Jesus' answer. It is concluded that Peter is experiencing the possible extension of the rewards and the responsibilities mentioned in Luke 12:35-40 as a threat to the disciples' privileged position. His question indicates that he has no comprehension of the true foundation of their privileged position, which is the serving χύριος. The only threat to their privilege is their lack of concern for others.

1 IMPLICATURE: AN INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is implicature?

The concept of implicature developed within an extension of the speech-act theory which originated with the work of Austin (1962). Grice (1975) introduced the concept to explain sentences in which the speaker appears to mean more than he is actually saying (Leech 1983:32). The concept is thus used to describe the "extra" meaning of an utterance, that which is not explicitly stated, in other words: the meaning "between the lines" (cf Du Plessis 1987:33).

Usually the term implicature is reserved for those instances where the addressee tries to make sense of the addresser's deviation from the principles (different terms used in other terminologies) of a successful conversation or discourse and the concept "inference" is used to refer to those instances where logical deductions are made without there being any such transgressions (cf Van Coller & Van Rensburg 1984:87, following Elam 1980:172 and Grice 1975:50). Leech - to whom I shall adhere in the following - departs from the traditional use in that he includes inference in the concept of implicature (Leech 1983:42). In Leech's theory implicature is a concept used to describe the pragmatic implications of an utterance (Leech 1983:42). It is an attempt to describe not what, but why something is said.

1.2 How is implicature determined?

Leech (1983:30) stresses that:

'all implicatures are probabilistic. We cannot ultimately be certain of what a speaker means by an utterance.... Interpreting an utterance is ultimately a matter of guesswork, or (to use a more dignified term) hypothesis formation.'
He (Leech 1983:31) maintains that the process by which the implicatures are arrived at is not a formalized deductive logic, but an informal rational problem-solving strategy. It consists in (a) formulating the most likely available hypothesis, then (b) testing it, and if it fails, (c) formulating the next most likely available hypothesis, and so on.

In formulating the most likely hypothesis and in testing it, the interpreter takes into consideration the sense of the utterance, its context, as well as certain principles to guide him and to help eliminate uncontrolled guesswork.

It is these principles which are at the heart of the theory of implicature. They express the addresser's intention to ensure the cooperation and goodwill of his addressee in order that, "once conversation is underway it will not follow a fruitless or disruptive path" (Leech 1983:17). In determining implicature we try to ascertain how the addresser adheres to or flouts these principles. This gives us an indication of the social goals of the addresser.

I am not going to explain these principles fully (cf Du Plessis 1985:17-41; Du Plessis 1987:34-37). I shall rather introduce them as the analysis of the text proceeds. In this way they will perhaps be more palatable, but a summary is nevertheless necessary.

Leech (1983:16, 79-100) distinguishes - with Grice (1975, but with significant adjustments) - a "Cooperative Principle" which consists of four maxims. The function of the Cooperative Principle is that it stresses the addresser's responsibility to be truthful when he communicates (Maxim of Quality); to give sufficient information (Maxim of Quantity); to say something which advances his and his addressee's goal (Maxim of Relation) and to give a clear indication of the illocutionary goal of his utterance - that is, is he complaining, admonishing, praising, etc? - (Maxim of Manner).

Leech (1983:16, 79-84, 132) goes further than Grice in introducing a "Politeness Principle" which again consists of various maxims. The Politeness Principle may be formulated in general terms, such as "Minimize (other things being equal) the expression of impolite beliefs", with the corresponding positive version: "Maximize (other things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs" (Leech 1983:81).

These two principles, as well as those of Irony and other less important ones, together form input constraints on the formulation of the message of the discourse (Leech 1983:60).

Apart from these principles which Leech (1983:17) describes as the "interpersonal rhetoric", Leech (1983:16, 60) distinguishes textual principles which have to do with the encoding of the message in a syntactical and phonological (or graphological) form (Leech 1983:60).

The textual principles are those of Processibility (the ease with which the message may be decoded within a given time span), Clarity (the unambiguous use of syntax and phonology of the language in order to construct a text),
Economy (avoidance of excessive brevity or repetition) and Expressivity (aesthetic form).

Apart from the social goals of the discourse, expressed by the various principles mentioned above (in Leech's [1983:17] terms the rhetorical principles), the other important component of the concept of implicature is the illocutionary goal, that is the actual motivation the addressee has to communicate. An analysis of the implicatures of a specific utterance is incomplete without a presentation of the meaning conveyed regarding the motive to communicate, called the illocutionary force of the utterance or discourse (Leech 1983:17).

At this point a caveat is necessary. The various principles are all culturally conditioned - and none less so than the Politeness Principle. All of them - and especially the last should therefore be implemented with great caution. This aspect has not escaped my attention (cf Du Plessis 1985:31). In the present instance I have decided to apply the principles to the text of Luke 12:35-48 in order to see whether they prove effective in solving the central problem of the text as exposed below. If a solution is found which fits the context and does not clash with accepted research results, then we could claim - at least in this instance - congruence between the cultural context which formed the basis of Leech's principles and this specific text from Luke.

2 THE PATTERN OF THE DISCOURSE

2.1 Prominent features
A cursory reading of Luke 12:35-48 reveals a major break in the discourse at verse 41. Peter's question divides the discourse - which is otherwise solely conducted by Jesus on the level of the narrated characters - into two parts, namely verses 35-40 and 42-48. With regard to the communication between the (abstract) author of Luke and the (implied) reader there is a twofold disruption, generating the search for implicatures which are not immediately obvious.

In the first instance the reasons for Peter's question are not given. This constitutes a flouting of the Cooperative Principle, specifically the Maxim of Quantity, which states that the addressee should be given sufficient information.

The lack of sufficient information brings a second maxim into play - the Maxim of Relation - which states that the addressee should be relevant with his remark. Leech (1983:94) understands "relevance" as "the relevance of an utterance to its speech situation" which in turn can be defined as:

An utterance $U$ is relevant to a speech situation if $U$ can be interpreted as contributing to the conversational goal(s) of $s$ (speaker - JGduP) or $h$ (hearer - JGduP).

In short it means: "Make your conversational contribution one that will advance the goals either of yourself or of your addressee" (Leech 1983:42).
It is important to recognise that the stress on the communicative process is found on two levels, that of the discourse between Luke and his reader (Luke’s conversational goals remain obscure) and in the discourse between Jesus and Peter (the question does not reveal Peter’s conversational goals). Added to the obscurity on the level of interpersonal rhetoric is the lack of textual clarity in the formulation of the question itself. Does τὴν παραβολὴν, for instance, refer to both the preceding parables or only the one immediately preceding the question?

Furthermore, the language of the question is indicative of Lucan redaction (cf Jeremias 1980:221). Must we therefore attach a special significance to it? As a rule commentators do not pay much attention to the implications of these issues (cf Nielsen 1979; Rengstorf 1971; Schweizer 1982; Fitzmeyer 1985), although they have been recognised. Marshall (1978) is a notable exception. He (Marshall 1978:539-540) refers to Manson and Moule (1953), the latter of whom argued strongly that Matthew (cf Mt 24:45-51) dropped the question because of its "unintelligibility" (my emphasis). The question is of course whether the obscurity of the question is due solely to clumsiness on Luke’s part or whether the obscurity as such conveys a deeper significance. The obscurity of the question leads Marshall (1978:540) to conclude that it is a manipulative technique on the part of the author of the gospel:

*It looks more like a saying created in the light of the following parable and intended to make clear in advance its particular reference.*

In Leech’s terms Marshall’s explanation is an attempt at a "default interpretation" ("the initial and most likely interpretation" [Leech 1983:42]). It remains to be seen whether there is not any evidence to rebut his interpretation.

The second instance of communicative stress is that of Jesus’ indirect reply to Peter’s question. This has been noticed by Marshall (1978:540), among others: "The answer of Jesus then becomes an indirect reply..." and Schlatter (1960:314): "Durch die Weise, wie L. diese Sprüche geordnet hat, erhält aber diese Frage keine deutliche Antwort". Schlatter (1960:314) continues: "Die Frage nach dem Umfang der Verheissung Jesu war damit zum Verstummen gebracht, aber nicht beantwortet". Nowhere in the ensuing discourse (vv 42-48) is explicit information given about the recipients of the "first" παραβολήν.

As in the previous instance, the Cooperative Principle’s maxims of Quantity and Relation are both at stake.

The disruption in communication again occurs on two levels within the narrative discourse. In the first place the reader is not given enough information about the reply to the question, but the same holds true within the narrated world for the narrated addressees, Peter and the other disciples. The interesting fact is that the reader can try to deduce from Jesus’ reply how he understood Peter’s question. This, in turn, will shed light on the conversational goals of Jesus and Peter, as well as those of Luke.
2.2 Luke 12:35-40: benevolence

2.2.1 Luke 12:35-38: creating comity
The pericope starts with a command given by Jesus (v 35). A command is competitive to the social goal (Leech 1983:104). This means that an utterance with the illocutionary force of a command is a strain on the social goal of the communicative process, namely that of "establishing and maintaining comity" (Leech 1983:104) between the communicative partners in order that the process of communication may be sustained until the addresser has achieved his purpose.

Verse 36 is instructive and as such indifferent to the social goal (Leech 1983:104).

Verse 37a (μοικάριοι...) may be described as a benediction (Marshall 1978:536), but it may also be viewed as a promise of benediction: those whom the master will find (εὐρήσετι) prepared at some future date, will receive the blessing. The promise coincides with the social goal (Leech 1983:104).

In the second part of verse 37 the promise of the benediction is solemnised: "amen". Again there is coincidence with the social goal of comity.

The promise of benediction is then repeated in verse 38 (μοικάριοι), completing three consecutive speech acts through which the social goal of comity is emphasised.

This part contains three promises. The repetition is uneconomical, both on the level of the Principle of Cooperation (Maxim of Quantity flouted) and on the level of the Textual Principle's Maxim of Economy (the repetition of μοικάριοι, the added ἀμὴν). The combined effect is that the speaker within the narrative world, Jesus (and behind him, Luke!), is going to great lengths to demonstrate the establishing of comity with the recipients, the disciples (cf Luke 12:22), within the narrative world of the gospel. Therefore the overwhelming impression is one of benevolence towards the disciples. This is recognised by Schlatter (1960:313):


In contrast, Hartin (1987) finds "Angst" the all-encompassing theme of Luke 12:35-40, but his reading is the result of a deconstructionist methodology, which in terms of the theory of implicature can be described as a remote-order implicature forced into prominence because of a changed contextualisation.

2.2.2 Serving the servants - a closer look
Within this part of the discourse special significance must be assigned to the description of the κύριος in verse 37b. It has already been signalled at the textual level because, according to Marshall (1978:536), "Luke habitually omi-
ts ὥμην when he finds it in his sources" and therefore the fact that it is retained here indicates that "the saying is of special importance".

The parable in which the description of the serving κύριος is found, gives at first sight the impression of unambiguous instruction. Although the mere existence of the parable is indicative of communication by means of implicature (on the textual level the Principle of Clarity has already been flouted), the implicatures seem easy to deduce.

This is facilitated through an important key to the code of the parable in verse 36: ὑμεῖς ὁμοιοί. The illocutionary goal of the parable seems also to be perspicuous: The disciples are encouraged to await the return of the κύριος. This means that the Cooperative Principle's Maxim of Manner has been adhered to. Apart from the Maxim of Manner, the Maxim of Relation is also generally kept. The goal of the speaker is clear: to make sure that his recipients will adhere to his commands, by promising an extraordinary reward.

From this perspective it seems easy to arrive at a default interpretation: Jesus requests his disciples to identify with the model of reality (servants promised eventual reward should serve faithfully in the master's absence) in the text and then to affirm these values in the world outside the narrative universe of the parable (cf Du Plessis 1985:139, following Malan 1984).

But in contrast to this perspective there is also another "open end" to the parable. The description of the κύριος serving his servants is so extravagant in its benevolence towards the servants that it flouts several principles.

Schweizer (1982:140) refers to it as a Verfremdungstechnik which is employed in order that the recipients may recognise the blessing. According to him the image is "nicht undenkbar, übersteigt aber...bei weiten normalen Erfahrungen..." (Schweizer 1982:140). Marshall (1978:537) states that it is "wholly at variance with the normal behaviour of a master (17:7-10) and therefore must be allegorical".

The unusualness of the description is further emphasised because of the possible relation between the κύριος and Jesus. Grundmann (1961:265) is of the opinion that the image of the master serving the servants does not show the influence of the Roman Saturnalian festivals (where such conduct sometimes took place) but that the point of the image lies in Jesus being a servant in the midst of his disciples.

Furthermore, the ambiguous use of κύριος is found elsewhere in Luke (cf Lk 16:8 [discussed in Du Plessis 1985:69-70]). Also the figures of authority who attest to the values of the parables are often associated with Jesus within the context of the gospel's discourse (cf Du Plessis 1985:167-172). Apart from that, they may be associated with God himself (cf Brouwer 1946:58ff; Flusser 1981:44-46). Marshall (1978:537) recognises the possibility of either of these two referents. The reference to "Son of man" (v 40) supports the possibility that Jesus is the ultimate referent (cf Fitzmyer 1985:986).
The point of using these possible referents is that it heightens the effect of the extravagance because, on the referential level, it is a figure of supreme authority who acts in this unusual way.

This results in the image becoming even less credible. In terms of the theory of implicature the Cooperative Principle's Maxim of Quality, which states that the addresser must be honest, becomes an issue. The questions, "Can Jesus be speaking the truth? Is it not too good to be true?" are elicited. These questions may either be uttered with scepticism or with astonished joy.

The phenomenon of implicature which is the very essence of parabolic communication (cf section 2.2.2 above) becomes a test for the addressees. How will they react to this implicature? Or will they not react at all, missing the implicature, because they are insensitive to the sacrifice involved on the part of the κύριος.

If the addressees react with astonished joy, will they realise the extraordinary appeal made on them by the κύριος serving his servants? After all, if the κύριος is prepared to serve with such abandon, can there be any limits to the faithful service expected from the servant-disciples?

Confronted with this tremendous demand made on them, will they nevertheless be so beguiled by the promise of the parable that they will find it "too good not to be true"? (cf Du Plessis 1985:248). They are invited to make the willing suspension of disbelief which is essential to all literature in such a way that it becomes a willing suspension of disbelief in the (narrated) author of the parable, Jesus (Du Plessis 1985:248). They should therefore not only accept the parable, because they accept Jesus, but they should conversely also accept Jesus, because they accept his parable (Du Plessis 1985:249).

Formulated in this way, the partial flouting of the Maxim of Relation in the telling of the parable becomes apparent. The exposition of the implicatures reveals a subsidiary goal of the narrated speaker, Jesus: "I want to test you by confronting you with the foundation of the relationship between yourselves and the κύριος". If the κύριος is further identified with Jesus, it means that he as addresser wants the disciples to recognise him and accept him as the one who stands in a relation of unrestrained benevolence to them.

2.2.3 Luke 12:39-40: the unwelcome arrival

Verse 39 introduces a second parable. The instruction is neutral to the social goal of comity. Verse 40 contains a warning which coincides with the social goal.

This second parable presents a few unexpected deviations from the first. As such, a strain is placed on the Cooperative Principle. The image of the thief gives the first intimation of an unwelcome arrival. This theme will be pursued in the second part of the pericope, after Peter's question.

In the second instance there is a remarkable switch in the description of those waiting. Instead of servants, it is now the "owner of the house" who must be prepared. Of course, one must be careful not to decipher the images
of the parable in a crude way. After all, the "Son of man" is not depicted as a thief, he only arrives unexpectedly and unwanted like a thief. In the same way the ὀικοδεσπότης is not a transparent disguise for the disciples, but they are nevertheless expected to behave as responsible householders. Through the use of the image the status of their responsibility is upgraded.

Jesus as speaker adheres obviously to the Approbation Maxim of the Politeness Principle, which states that the speaker should maximise praise of other (Leech 1983: 132). Even in this parable with its ominous tone the benevolence of Jesus towards his disciples is still prominent.

2.3 Peter's question
Peter's question is a request and is competitive with the social goal (Leech 1983:104).

According to Schlatter (1960:314) the ἡμῶς of the question refers to the small band of disciples living and travelling with Jesus, in other words the circle of the twelve.

The form of the question (καὶ) implies that the disciples would in any case be included (Reiling & Swellengrebel 1971:486). Does this mean that Peter would be pleased if the others (all to whom the words of Jesus came [Schlatter 1960:314]) are included as well, and therefore displeased if the "all" are excluded? Or would he favour the reverse? These questions are not answered explicitly. This constitutes a flouting of the Maxim of Quantity.

Why does Peter want to know? Schlatter (1960:314) is of the opinion that it is the extent of the promise (Verheissung) and the accompanying warning with which Peter is concerned. Grundmann (1969:267) interprets it as a question about the application of the promised benedictions. Marshall (1978: 540) asserts that the question fits the first parable better.

Both Schlatter and Grundmann presuppose that τὴν παροβολήν in Peter's question refers to at least both the preceding parables. Marshall (1978:540) concedes that it may. We can therefore assume that the extension of the promise(s) of benediction to non-disciples may form part of the frame of reference of Peter's question, though this does not yet give the motive for his concern about the possible inclusion of the non-disciples in the benedictory promises.

Peter can request more information because he would like others, apart from the disciples, to be included in the promised blessing and the accompanying responsibilities. In this instance he would perceive Jesus' goals as benevolent. He would then also see his own (and the other disciples') pragmatic goal as that of voluntary sharing and caring with the "πάντως". But on the other hand he may be motivated in his request because he fears the inclusion of everybody would affect the privileged responsibility of the disciples. In this instance he would have a distrust of Jesus' goals (not having grasped the
implicatures involved in the image of the serving κύριος and he would not have a caring attitude towards the others.

Peter's attitudes towards both Jesus and the non-disciples form the basic elements of his motive for asking (even if it were only the parable in verses 39 and 40 to which reference is made).

Jesus' answer will have to be scrutinised for replies to these implicatures, but there are also other implicatures involved in Peter's question.

From the pure act of asking the question, we may infer that the preceding exposition by Jesus is not clear to Peter. The act of asking thus introduces the issue of not-knowing (cf vv 47,48), entailing possible unpreparedness because of insufficient information and therefore possible punishment which was absent in the previous discourse.

In relation to the reader, the question is raised whether the reader of the gospel forms part of the παύτος referred to by Peter. It also introduces, by way of analogy to the relationship, disciples : everybody, the relationship of the reader of the gospel to the non-reader.

2.4 Jesus' answer: severe and threatening

Jesus' answer commences with a rhetorical question (v 42) purporting to give information about the faithful manager. The rhetorical question is indifferent to the social goal.

At the same time Jesus' answer develops the issue of distinction between disciples and the rest, which was broached in Peter's question. It is the first time in Jesus' discourse that a distinction in status is made between the various servants: οἰκουμόος compared with δοῦλος.

Verse 42 contains a promise which coincides with the social goal of conversation. Verse 43 expresses a promised benediction, coinciding with the social goal. The promise is solemnised in verse 44, again coinciding with the social goal of creating comity.

Verses 45 and 46 are threatening, conflicting with the social goal of comity. The threat is twice repeated in verses 47 and 48, again conflicting with the social goal.

It is obvious that there is a certain symmetry between the part prior and the part subsequent to Peter's question: in both benediction is promised and both contain a series of three promises. In the first part, the promise is solemnised with ὁμήν, and in the second with ἀληθῶς. This is indicative of careful construction on the textual level of the discourse.

The asymmetry of the second part consists in the addition of a series of three severe threats. Whereas the first part has only promised reward, the second part threatens punishment as well.

3 JESUS' UNSPOKEN REPLY TO PETER

From the above we may infer that, while still taking pains to retain comity with his addressees, Jesus' conversational goals have altered. He does not
regard his addressees with the same benevolence as in the earlier part of the
discourse. Whereas he was encouraging them previously, he now finds it ne­
cessary to admonish and threaten them; thus Stark (1981:251): "Auffallend
stark steht der Strafgedanke im Mittelpunkt des Textes" (Lk 12:42-48 -
JGduP). The cause of this change of attitude is Peter's question.

What are the implicatures of this alteration in Jesus' conversational goals?
The gist of Jesus' reply to Peter is that the faithful manager/servant who
is prepared for the return of the κύριος is the servant who cares for his fellow
servants. This is contained both in the positive promise (v 42) and in the
threatening section (v 45).

This information was not included in the first part of the discourse. It is
new information being added and must relate to Peter's question if one is to
make sense of Jesus' conversational goals. With this information Jesus is
complying with the Maxim of Relation: necessary information, illuminating
his conversational goal, is being given. From this we can infer that Jesus finds
Peter's question lacking in benevolent concern towards the non-disciples. In
other words, Jesus interprets Peter's question as a sign of deficient dis­
cipleship, which equals unpreparedness, as the concept is illuminated in the
whole discourse.

It becomes apparent that Peter felt threatened in his position of privileged
responsibility by the possible inclusion of "all" as addressees of the two
parables in Luke 12:35-40. This boils down to a motion of distrust in the
benevolent attitude of Jesus. It becomes obvious that Peter did, in fact, not
grasp the implicatures of the parable of the serving master.

But Jesus' answer as a matter of fact affirms the privileged position of
Peter and the other disciples. Peter may not receive any information about
the addressees of the first part of the discourse, but he and the other disciples
are addressed in the second part of the pericope as people to whom supreme
responsibility is given. This privilege entails, however, more than they
bargained for. It carries with it the threat of devastating punishment. The
very fact that they are being told what is expected of them is an element of
this privilege, increasing their responsibility.

Jesus' refusal to give Peter an explicit answer shows that he is not willing
to certify the values implied in Peter's question. Peter's question cannot be
answered with a simple "either...or", because such a reply would lie outside
the scope of the discourse.

By silencing the question (cf Schlatter 1960:314) and treating it as an
illegitimate approach, Jesus is telling Peter to forget about possible rewards
to - or the responsibilities of - "others" when it comes to the execution of his
own responsibilities. In fact, he is confronted with the way in which he him­
self is coping with his responsibilities. Others will not be a threat to his (and
the disciples') position of privilege, but a lack of responsibility, defined as
neglect towards others, will.
In this context the word ἀπίστως (v 46) is significant. Peter, so concerned with the possible extension of the promised benediction to others, is now threatened with the possibility of being included with those not belonging to Jesus at all!

These implicatures reveal that Peter has not recognised one of the important implicatures of the parable of the serving master which precede his question. He has not grasped the subsidiary goal of Jesus: he and the other disciples must be confronted with the foundation of the relationship between themselves and the κύριος, namely that the κύριος serves his servants with extravagant abandon (cf section 2.2.2 above).

The severity of the reprimand given to Peter in Jesus’ answer is softened by the indirectness of the reply. This is an example of the Politeness Principle at work. By not explicitly repudiating Peter (i.e. minimising the cost to the other - Tact Maxim) Jesus is showing his goodwill towards Peter and the disciples by his concern in maintaining comity with them.

Through the discourse, as a process of imparting information, the reader has become privy to the knowledge of God’s will, which is given to the disciples by Jesus. He has therefore become a member of the privileged group who has received much. If he uses this information to live with caring concern towards other followers of Jesus, he will be included in the promised benediction.

In the final analysis it seems that there is indeed a certain clumsiness in the pericope on the textual level (the construction with τὴν πορείαν), but also that Peter’s question is handled with much more sophistication than Luke is usually given credit for.

4 AN EXTENDED CONTEXT: SOME INDICATIONS
Within an extended context some of the implicatures discovered in our reading are confirmed and even made explicit, while new implicatures are also brought to the surface.

As is well known, Luke 12:35-48 is a section within a larger separate unit of Luke, the narrative of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem (Lk 9:51-19:27) in which the theme of true discipleship is very prominent. But at the same time the journey is pointing towards Jesus’ death: the supreme service to be rendered.

In our reading of Luke 12:35-48 we have found that the teaching about true discipleship is inherently connected to the caring servanthood of Jesus. In this way the two main perspectives of the "Journey to Jerusalem" are blended in the pericope.

In the last comprehensive unit of Luke, following that of the narrative of the "Journey to Jerusalem", the theme of Jesus serving his servants is explicitly taken up (Lk 22:24-27). In verse 27 Jesus says in so many words that he is in the midst of his disciples as a servant. Interestingly enough, the context is again that of teaching about true discipleship. From the perspective of
the end, the implicatures which have been revealed in our reading become accentuated and easier to recognise.

In the light of this recurring theme, Jesus' vehement reaction to the Jewish leaders becomes understandable. As depicted by Luke, they represent the exact opposite of caring service. They are implicated as discriminating and not caring. It is therefore possible (within the extended context of the gospel as a whole) for the second part of the pericope (Lk 12:45-48) to be read as an implied comment on them as well.

Looking at the pericope from the end of the gospel it also becomes clear that the magnanimous servant-hood of Jesus, the κύριος, is not only a concluding action at the end of some vague and indefinite future when reward will be distributed, but that Jesus has pre-empted that future reward with his act of supreme sacrificial service. This makes errant discipleship in the meantime all the more incomprehensible and inexcusable.

Within the even larger context of the twofold Lucan work, the Gospel and Acts, it becomes apparent that Paul is the ideal disciple. He is the one who faces a journey to martyrdom with the same foreknowledge and resolution as does Jesus in the gospel. He is the one whose whole mission is motivated by the inclusion of "all" (albeit in a different context). In Acts he supersedes Peter who finds it difficult to disentangle himself from the "we against them" pattern of thought already expressed in Luke 12:41.

Luke's final irony is that he presents this "ideal" disciple as a former persecutor of the followers of the serving master, thereby accentuating the benevolent extravagance of the κύριος.

WORKS CONSULTED