




'The spirit of the Lord God is upon me' (Is 61:1): The use of Isaiah 61:1–2 in Luke 4:18–19

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Copious citations of the Old Testament (OT) by the New Testament (NT) writers confirm the continuity of the divine revelation in both parts of the sacred scripture and at the same time underscore the newness of the NT. This is evident in the theological development of the reality of the 'spirit of the Lord' from the OT to the NT. In this article the writer traces the development of this biblical concept from its occurrence in the context of Isaiah 61:1–2 to the use of this text in a programmatic passage of Luke 4:18–19. The aim of the research is to shed light on the concept and nature of the spirit of the Lord in its context in Isaiah and the use of this by a NT writer. Both texts are carefully compared, using a literary approach, with the intention to discover how the NT writer used this concept in his presentation of the person and mission of Jesus as a charismatic figure and the anointed of the Lord.

Introduction

The multifaceted feature of the onomatopoeic Hebrew term *rû^{ah}*, which occurs a good number of times (378 times in Hebrew and 11 times in Aramaic of the Book of Daniel) in most books of the Old Testament (OT), necessitates diligent study of the context in which it is used. Its meanings include 'wind', 'breath', 'spirit', 'life' (Tengström 2004) and a host of phrases that bear their respective nuances. The unanimity evident among translators of *rû^{ah}* in Isaiah 61:1 as 'spirit' is of immense help in limiting the spectrum of our investigation. *Rû^{ah}* in our text connotes 'spirit' and is further qualified in the phrase 'the spirit of the Lord God', which is a *hapax legomenon* in the Hebrew Bible. This means that the phrase 'the spirit of the Lord God' (*rû^{ah} 'ădōnāy YAHWEH*) occurs only here in Isaiah 61:1. The usual expression is either 'the spirit of the Lord' or 'the spirit of God'. The rarity of the combination in our text could have informed the variant readings of the ancient versions in retaining 'the spirit of the Lord'.

The concept of anointing, which also occurs in Isaiah 61:1 in association with the spirit of the Lord God, appears as well in this context, providing a significant insight into our understanding of the text. We have before us a royal (messianic) text, proved by the fact that of the three categories of persons (king, priest and prophet) anointed in the OT, only the king is explicitly said to be anointed of the Lord, anointed by God. Furthermore, the affinity of Isaiah 61:1–2 with other passages of the same book, which has one of the highest occurrences of *rû^{ah}* (51 times) in the Hebrew Bible (Albertz & Westerman 1997), links our text to an eschatological expectation of a messianic figure, anointed of the Lord and of the Davidic lineage. Isaiah 11:1–5 and 42:1 strongly tilt towards this perception. Jüngling (2003) explains that the spirit of the Lord on the I-speaker of Isaiah 61:1 is a fulfilment of Isaiah 11:2, which promises an outpouring of the spirit. It is also believed that Isaiah 61:1–3 encapsulates some of the oldest material in Trito-Isaiah (Gregory 2007).

The author of the Gospel According to Luke perceives in Isaiah 61:1–2 an apt OT text for a programmatic passage of his gospel, in which he identifies in the person of Jesus the fulfilment of an ancient prophecy. In this gospel, it was Jesus himself who unrolled the scroll of Isaiah, read Chapter 61:1–2, the words that are intentionally modified and cited in Luke 4:18–19, and addressed the audience in these words: 'Today, this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing' (Lk 4:21). He is the fulfilment of the prophecy recorded in the text he read in the synagogue on a Sabbath day. It is, indeed, programmatic for Jesus, who, as presented by the Evangelist, was the anointed of the Lord and 'full of the Holy Spirit' (Lk 4:1). In this presentation, which adopts a literary approach to biblical exegesis, we attempt to elucidate the Evangelist's use of the Isaian text in a passage that states Jesus' agenda for his earthly ministry.

Insight into Isaiah 61:1–3

As divine dynamic vitality bestowed on human beings for specific purposes, a premonarchical concept of *rû^{ah}* conveys that the spirit of the Lord was generally effective in two categories of persons. The first was the category of charismatic leaders depicted in various types of ‘saviours’ called judges, particularly in the Book of Judges. These were imbued with the spirit of the Lord (*rû^{ah} YHWH*), which enabled them to carry out their mission as God’s instruments for saving his people from the grip of their enemies (cf. Jdg 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 1 Sm 11:6). In the second category, *rû^{ah}*, construed exclusively in the phrase *rû^{ah} ‘lôhîm* [the spirit of God], temporarily took possession of those in the circle of ecstatic prophecy (1 Sm 19:24) and persons near them (1 Sm 10:10; 19:23).

In both charismatic leaders and ecstatic prophets, the effect of *rû^{ah}* persisted as long as the persons possessed had some specific functions to perform. In other words, the effect of the *rû^{ah}* was a dynamic-eruptive force (Albertz & Westerman 1997), which was also spontaneous. Generally, spirit is the principle of life and of vital activity; it is a substantial source of force and activity (McKenzie 1965). ‘The spirit of Yahweh or of God (Elohim) is a force which has unique effects upon man’ (McKenzie 1965). It has a charismatic effect on persons who have a special duty to perform.

There was clearly a shift in the concept of *rû^{ah} YHWH* from the monarchical era. It was no longer a temporarily dynamic force given to persons for a specific time and event; rather it became a static, permanent gift for YHWH’s anointed. It is said to be bestowed on the person (cf. Nm 11:25, 29; Is 42:1) or ‘to rest on’ the person (cf. Nm 11:25; 2 Kgs 2:15). This permanent gift was linked to the rite of anointing (1 Sm 16:13; Is 61:1) and it is fully seen in the messianic kings in prophetic oracles of salvation (Is 11:2; 42:1; 61:1). The spirit of the Lord endowed the king with the capabilities needed for his duty. One received the spirit through the rite of anointing as in 1 Samuel 16:13. In point of fact, ‘in the Old Covenant, anointing had become the external symbol of the gift of the Spirit’ (John Paul II 1986). It is against this background that one can understand the text of Isaiah 61:1–2, part of which is cited in Luke 4.

Isaiah 61:1–3 is a unit in a series of poems seen in 60:1–62:12 that focuses on the coming glory of the new Zion (Stuhlmüller 1992). The new Zion, according to these poems, will be characterised by integral restoration (60:10b, 15), its inhabitants being gathered from distant places (60:4, 9), affluence (60:5–7, 16), being served by foreign kings (60:13), providing light to other nations (60:3), security (60:12, 14; 62:8), liberated from past shame (62:4–5), and fulfilment of ancient promises (60:22). In Isaiah 61:1–3 Yahweh’s anointed servant introduces himself as one who will proclaim this era of the Lord’s favour. If Isaiah 60:1–62:12 is considered as a remote context of 61:1–3, 61:1–11 is the immediate context, for it is about this divine agent of the new Zion (Watts 1987).

The Hebrew text of this self-introduction of the messenger is as follows:

¹rû^{ah} ‘ādōnāy YHWH ‘ālāy ya’an māšāh YHWH ‘ōtī
 l^ebaššēr ‘ānāwîm š^elāhanî lahābōš l^enišb^erê-lēb
 liqrō’ lišbūyim d^erōr w^ela’āsūrîm p^eqah-qô^h
²liqrō’ š^enat-rāšōn laYHWH w^eyôm nāqām lē’lōhēnū
 l^enahēm kol-‘ābēlîm
³lāsūm la’ābēlê šiyôn
 lātēt lāhem p^e‘ēr taḥat ‘ēper
 šemen šāsōn taḥat ‘ēbel
 ma’āṭēh t^ehillāh taḥat rû^{ah} kēhāh
 w^eqōrā’ lāhem ‘ēlê ḥassedeq maṭṭa’ YHWH l^ehitpā’ēr

The Hebrew text of these three verses is well preserved, such that variant readings are minimal. An outstanding variant, however, is the last phrase of v.1, *p^eqah-qô^h*, which many translations read as one word (*xwqxqp*) following the text of Isaiah of the Qumran manuscript (DSS^{isa}). It is described as one of the rare Hebrew conjugations (Joüin & Muraoka 2006). It is a reduplicated form of the single root with the meaning ‘opening’ or ‘release’. The LXX reads *anablepsin*, which means ‘recovery of sight’, because this Greek version replaces ‘prisoners’ in the Hebrew text with the term ‘blind’.

The New Revised Standard Version translates Isaiah 61:1–3 in this way:

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me;
 he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted,
 to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;
²to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favour, and the day of vengeance of our God;
 to comfort all who mourn;
³to provide for those who mourn in Zion –
 to give them a garland instead of ashes,
 the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
 the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
 They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

This varies from the LXX (Hanhart 2006) in some words and expressions:

¹Pneuma kupiou ep’eme hou heineken echrisen me euangelisasthai ptōchois apestalken me iasasthai tous suntetrimmenous tē kardia kēruksai aichmalōtois aphin kai tuphlois anablepsin
²kalesai eniauton kupios dekont kai hēmeran antapodoseōs parakalesai panta tous penthoutas
³dothēnai tois penthousin Ziōn doksan anti spodou aleimma euphrosunēs tois penthousin katastolēn doksēs anti pneumatōs akēdias kai klēthēsontai geneai dikaiosunēs phuteuma kupiou eis doksan. (p. 33)

A translation (Lancelot 1970) of this is as follows:

¹The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken in heart, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; ²to declare the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of recompense; to comfort all that mourn; ³that there should be given to them that mourn in Zion glory instead of ashes, the oil of joy to the mourners, the garment of glory for the spirit of heaviness: and they shall be called generations of righteousness, the planting of the Lord for glory. (p. 121)

A cursory comparison of the Masoretic text (MT) and the LXX manifests some significant variants. The LXX, for instance, omits *'ādōnāy* [Lord], probably because the expression 'the spirit of the Lord God' is not common in the OT. According to the MT, the good news is preached to the oppressed; the LXX reads 'poor'. Again, the LXX also changed the MT 'release to the prisoner' to 'recovery of sight to the blind'. This brief comparison appears necessary here because Luke's appropriation of Isaiah 61:1–2, as we are going to see, seems closer to the LXX than to the MT. Significant to both the MT and the LXX is the correlation of 'the spirit of the Lord' and 'anointing', which denotes consecration to YHWH (de Vaux 1994).

This special messenger, speaking most probably during the exilic period, describes himself as one specially endowed with God's gift through the religious rite of anointing, which among the kings was accompanied with a coming of the Spirit (1 Sm 10:10; 16:13). The king as an anointed person shared in the holiness of God and became sacrosanct (1 Sm 24:7, 11; 26:9, 11, 23). The speaker in Isaiah 61:1 might be speaking of anointing in a figurative sense (De Vaux 1994), bearing in mind the effect of anointing symbolised in the gift of the spirit of the Lord. It is a means through which a person is given the Spirit and a full authorisation bestowed (Westerman 1969). It has been observed that the phrase 'the spirit of the Lord is upon me' is a stereotyped form current in prophecy of salvation (Westerman 1969), as we can read, besides Isaiah 61:1, in Isaiah 42:1 and Micah 3:8. The gift of God's spirit symbolised through anointing empowers a person to perform special and specific tasks; the person is appointed and commissioned by God (Whybray 1975). Based on this, one perceives that the message of Isaiah 61 was so essential that the messenger had to be empowered by God through his spirit. He is also authorised by God for it is said that God himself sent him (cf. *š'lahani* in v.1).

Opinions vary on the identity of the messenger in Isaiah 61:1–3. Spans (2012), for instance, based on the Hebrew version of this text, argues for a post-exilic prophetic group in Jerusalem. This group was solicitous about the social issues of the masses. Their apparent concern for the social welfare of the people put them at variance with the perspective of the LXX priestly translators, who desired the liberation of the people so that they could occupy sacerdotal posts as new priests. Another opinion is that Isaiah 61 was a text employed at the investiture ceremony of a high priest at the post-exilic temple (Achenbach 2007). This view finds support in the

Qumran document (11Q Melk), which identifies Isaian text with the figure of Melchizedek, who it was believed would appear at the end of time. Still on the figure of the high priest as the identity of the speaker in Isaiah 61 is that this high priest was addressing other priests and the community after his investiture (Grelot 1990:414). A third view on the identity of the speaker in Isaiah 61 maintains that it was neither a king nor a priest but an eschatological community represented by the prophet (Austin 1999). How this can refer to a community does not seem to tally with the context of the pericope, because the speaker has been prepared, through the gift of the divine spirit and authorisation for the good of the community. The speaker could be the prophet who perceived his mission in the consolation of Zion. Actually, the NT authors, particularly Luke, understood this Isaian passage in this way. The OT is fulfilled in Jesus, who is presented in the NT as a prophet.

In Isaiah 61:1–3 the one who was anointed and endowed with the spirit of the Lord had some specific functions to perform as his active participation in the restoration of Zion. These functions are delineated in verses 1–2, with verse 3 as further specification of the last function. With the spirit of the Lord permanent in him through anointing, he was made capable of performing these functions for the good of the community. He was anointed and sent to execute these duties. His first function was to bring good news to the oppressed (*l'baššēr 'anāwīm š'lahani*), echoing Isaiah 40:9 (cf. 41:27), where the same verb for bringing good news occurs. The first function serves as a summary of all others that follow because they are part of the good news. In verses 1–2, the prospective beneficiaries of his mission are described in these terms: the oppressed, the broken-hearted, the captives, the prisoners and all who mourn. All these depict the situation of the exiles, who very much longed for God's favour and to be free.

Included in the task of the messenger in Isaiah 61 is 'to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour', which could be an allusion to the Jubilee year. The year of the Lord's favour is also the theme of Isaiah 40:1–11; 51–52; 60; a common theme of the divine consolation seen in Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah. The Lord looks with pity on the sufferings of the people and liberates them from their oppressors. The messenger of Isaiah 61 would not merely announce this time of divine restoration but would be an instrument through which this would be realised. He is able to do this because he has been empowered by the spirit of the Lord. Although the language of the Jubilee Year described in Leviticus 25 is not reflected in Isaiah 61, the concept of extraordinary favour spurred by the Lord creates an affinity between these texts and makes the Jubilee transcend time; it is not bound to time for it is always Jubilee in effect (Croatto 1999). The proclamation of this demanded a special gift of the Lord: his spirit.

Another task of the messenger is to proclaim 'the day of vengeance of our God' (*w'yôm nāqām lē'lōhēnū*). This is the complementary element of the year of God's favour

(Watts 1987) (cf. Is 34:8; Prov 6:34.). The righteous God applies corrective measures to the oppressors in order to restore his people. It reveals a hope of God's active presence in human history. He makes Israel and the nations be the way he wants them and not the way they were or wished to be (Ederer 2014).

The last mentioned task of this anointed of the Lord is a theme central to this part of the book of Isaiah, and it is introduced in 40:1 with the literary technique of repetition and the nuance of a dramatic effect: 'Comfort, O comfort my people'. In Isaiah 61:2, the speaker is to comfort all who mourn, explained further in verse 3 as mourners in Jerusalem. With this the integral mission of the anointed of the Lord for those in need is assured. The author of the Gospel According to Luke perceived in this pericope a good description of the person and mission of Jesus, of whom he said from the onset: 'the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove' (Lk 3:22). He is also presented as anointed by God (Ac 4:27; 10:38).

Isaiah 61:1–2 in Luke 4:18–19

The two concepts that are outstanding in Isaiah 61:1–2 in the life of the prophet in this text are the gift of the spirit of the Lord and anointing. Luke also predicates these two on Jesus. In Isaiah, the prophet said he was anointed, endowed with the spirit of the Lord and sent to accomplish some special functions for the people. Similarly in Luke's two books (his gospel and Acts of the Apostles), the Holy Spirit played significant roles in the life of Jesus, the Messiah (the anointed) and in the life of his followers.

In his explicit OT quotation in Luke 4:18–19, the Evangelist conflated two Isaian texts; these are 61:1–2 and 58:6d. According to Meizan (2003:n.p.) the quotation reads:

¹⁸Pneuma kupiou ep'eme
hou heineken echrisen me
euangelisasthai ptōchois
apestalken me, kēruksai aichmalōtois aphesin
kai tūphlois anablepsin,
aposteilai tethrausmenous en aphesei
¹⁹kēruksai eniauton kurios dekten.

The context of this citation is Luke 4:16–30, recognised as a programmatic passage in Luke. It narrates the first instance of Jesus' teaching at Galilee, where 'he had been brought up' (Lk 4:16). He entered a synagogue where he was well known and he was one of the lectors of the Sabbath service that day. The text given to him to read coincided with his person and mission. He confirmed this when he addressed them in these words: 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing' (v. 21). The rejection he experienced in the course of his first preaching is reminiscent of the prophecy of Simeon in 1:34–35 and subsequent opposition and persecution. The special gift of the Holy Spirit and anointing also calls to mind the activities of the Holy Spirit on him and other individuals

before and after this passage, particularly the Virgin Mary, his mother, who conceived him by the Holy Spirit. In fact, 'from a purely narrative point of view, Luke 4:16–30 gives a specific and graphic setting for the beginning of Jesus' work' (Maddox 1982).

In his citation and appropriation of the OT texts, Luke omits two phrases of Isaiah 61; the first is from Isaiah 61:1, 'to bind up (heal) the brokenhearted', at the end of Luke 4:18; and the second is from Isaiah 61:2b, 'the day of vengeance of our God', at the end of Luke 4:19. While very little or no explanation is proffered for the first omission, the second is often explained as Luke's 'deliberate suppression of a negative aspect of the Deutero-Isaian message' (Fitzmyer 1981). Furthermore, the omission is necessary here because 'it is scarcely suited to the salvific period now being inaugurated' (Fitzmyer 1981). He follows the LXX closely; some of the exceptions to this are as follows: in Isaiah 61:2a he uses the infinitive *kēruksai* [to proclaim] in place of *kalesai* [to call for] in the LXX. From the LXX text of Isaiah 58:6d, he takes the phrase *aposteilai tethrausmenous en aphesei* [translated as 'to let the oppressed go free'], which he joins to Isaiah 61:1d: *kēruksai aichmalōtois aphesin* [to proclaim liberty to captives]. The two texts of 58:6d and 61:1d have the key word *aphesin* [release] in common; this could explain why they are conflated in this quotation (Fitzmyer 1981).

With these texts from Isaiah, Luke delineates aspects of the mission of Jesus, presenting him as a prophet anointed and endowed with the spirit of the Lord: (1) to bring good news to the poor; (2) to proclaim release to the captives; (3) to recover the sight of the blind; (4) to let the oppressed go free. Jesus also proclaims the year of the Lord's favour, which is his own period and the salvation he brings. The spirit of the Lord played an important role in all these, as also in the two texts of Isaiah cited here. Jesus identifies himself as a prophet in attributing these functions to himself. In Luke 4:24 when his interlocutors are amazed at his teaching he claims the prophets' fate: 'Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown'. In these words from the programmatic passage, he foretold the persecution and rejection that he would experience in his mission (Lk 7:47–51, 13:34; Ac 7:52). The prophets Elijah and Elisha, whom he cited in his inaugural speech and explanation, were sent to the marginalised and non-Jews, as he also would be identifying with these two categories of persons (marginised and non-Jews); thus, he compared himself with prophets. Actually, 'the New Testament draws a particular clarification from the marvelous light contained in these Old Testament texts' (John Paul II 1986).

The text of Isaiah 61:1–2 fits well into Luke's understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in the life and mission of Jesus and of Christians. The Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove at his baptism (Lk 3:21–22). He was full of the Holy Spirit and was led by the same Spirit into the wilderness, where he was tempted by the devil (Lk 4:1–2).

At the beginning of his ministry he was filled with the Holy Spirit as he returned to Galilee (Lk 4:14–15). The text of Isaiah 61:1–2, which he read in the synagogue, was fulfilled in his life and mission. The Spirit actually was upon him, for he experienced this during his baptism which was also the time of his anointing. We recall that in the OT, particularly from the monarchical era, anointing was associated with the gift of the spirit of the Lord. From the narrative and the active presence of the Spirit, the aim of the quotation in Luke 4:18–19 is to underscore ‘the goal of that gift of the Spirit’ (Karris 1992). Anointed by the spirit of the Lord, Jesus comes as the eschatological prophet to preach the good news to his people and, as Messiah (the anointed), to set his people free (Rosik & Onwukeme 2002). What Isaiah said about himself is applied to Jesus; there is a comparison between the prophet Isaiah and Jesus (John Paul II 1986):

Both in Isaiah and in the whole of the Old Testament *the personality of the Holy Spirit* is completely hidden: in the revelation of the one God, as also in the foretelling of the future Messiah. (n.p.)

This progressively emerged with the incarnation; God became like us and revealed the mysteries latent in the OT. There are many texts in Luke-Acts that convey the personality of the Holy Spirit and his role in the life and mission of Jesus and his disciples (O’Toole 2008). In Luke-Acts the Holy Spirit is called a ‘gift’ (Ac 2:38; 10:45) given by the Father through Jesus. The Spirit means power (Lk 4:14; Ac 1:8; 10:38) and equips one for a mission or task to be performed. The nature and extent of the mission are decided by the Holy Spirit (Ac 1:8; 8:29, 39; 10:19; 11:12; 13:2, 4; 16:6–7; 19:21; 20:22–23). At baptism one receives the Holy Spirit (Lk 3:16, 22; Ac 1:5; 10:38, 44, 45, 47; 11:15–16; 15:8; 19:6). The Holy Spirit acts as a witness and gives human beings the capacity to be witnesses (Ac 5:32). He inspires the prophets in their work (Ac 1:16; 2:17–21; 4:25; 11:28; 21:11; 28:25). The Spirit is teacher (Lk 12:12; Ac 6:10; 7:51) and comforter (Ac 9:31).

In using the texts from Isaiah, particularly Isaiah 61:1, the concept and activity of ‘the spirit of the Lord’ are to a reasonable extent clarified. What is obscured in the OT was gradually revealed. The Spirit is no longer, as conceived in the OT, an abstract dynamic force that inspired persons in their special functions; rather the Spirit is more concretely perceived, and his personality becomes tangible. The Spirit descended on Jesus and ‘established him as “Christ”’ (CCC 695) and concretely on his disciples on the day of Pentecost (Ac 2:1–13).

Christian anointing and the Holy Spirit

The terms ‘spirit’ and ‘holy’ are divine attributes of the three divine persons of the Trinity; therefore the combination of the two concepts designates the inexpressible person of the Holy Spirit (cf. CCC 691). We believe in the three persons of the Trinity: Father, Son and

Holy Spirit. Among the symbols of the Holy Spirit in Christian belief is anointing with oil. It is almost a synonym of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Jn 2:20, 27; 2 Cor 1:21). The gift of the Holy Spirit is conferred through anointing. It is the sacramental sign of the sacrament of baptism. In Hebrew the etymology of the word ‘Messiah’ is the same as the verbal root for anointing (*mšh*); the Messiah is one anointed by God’s spirit. Similarly in Greek, ‘to anoint’ is *chriō* and from this is the word ‘christos’ (compare ‘Christ’ and ‘Christians’), one anointed by God’s spirit. Jesus is ‘the one who possess the fullness of this Spirit, the one who marks the “new beginning” of the gift which God makes to humanity in the Spirit’ (John Paul II 1986); in bearing the name ‘Christians’, followers of Christ participate in his life as the anointed of the Lord. He states:

Because the Holy Spirit is the anointing of Christ, it is Christ who, as the head of the Body, pours out the Spirit among his members to nourish, heal, and organise them in their mutual functions. (CCC 739:n.p.)

Our gift of faith as Christians has its source in the Holy Spirit, for ‘no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit’ (1 Cor 12:3). ‘To be in touch with Christ, we must first have been touched by the Holy Spirit’ (CCC 683). The Spirit initiates our life of faith and sustains it to the end through our cooperation. Like Jesus, our life and activities are permeated by the active presence of the Spirit, who is the principle and vitality of our life.

As Christians, persons anointed and possessed by the Holy Spirit, we receive special functions like Jesus. We share in his mission delineated in the programmatic passage. We share in this according to the varied charisms bestowed on us by the Spirit through anointing. Each person has received a special gift from God for the edification of others. Our varied gifts from the Holy Spirit manifest the different ways the Spirit operates in the church. ‘There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit’ (1 Cor 12:4; see vv. 5–11). With all our gifts we become like a multicoloured mosaic ornamenting the church. Like the speaker in Isaiah 61 and the Christ of the NT, the mission of Christians is primarily altruistic, selfless and unconditional. The Holy Spirit is God’s gift and fundamental in the gifts of the Spirit is love; God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us (Rm 5:5).

Through our anointing, we become a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19), who dwells in us as in a house. This entails ethical responsibility in conformity with our life as Christians based on the Good News of Jesus, for we ought to live as a true dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. As teacher and comforter, the Spirit guides the believers in their journey of faith.

Conclusion

The ineffable mystery of God and about God is revealed by God himself and at the time and manner he so desires.

Concealed in the multivalent meaning of the Hebrew word *rûḥ* is the mystery of God. In his wisdom, God unveiled this through the tangible but highly elusive effect of his presence. From the perceptible effect of the presence of this divine vitality, human beings were gradually prepared for its revelation in the fullness of time.

Part of the process of this revelation was the divinely endowed aptitude of the NT writers, who perceived in the event of Jesus the fulfilment of the dimly revealed features of the salvation history recorded in the OT. The writers of the NT cited parts of the OT explicitly or implicitly in order to demonstrate their fulfilment in Jesus.

The author of the Gospel According to Luke, as one of these divinely inspired writers, recorded how Jesus is the fulfilment of the OT events and how the mystery of God's active presence in human history is concretely articulated in an expression, the Holy Spirit, which still evokes ineffability. We have attempted, without in any way purporting to be exhaustive, to demonstrate in this paper how Luke made use of a prophecy recorded in Isaiah 61:1–2, which in its own specific life situation was so received by its first recipients. The words of the prophets became in Luke's gospel a programmatic text outlining the mission of Jesus, accomplished through the Holy Spirit, who was active right from his incarnation. The same Holy Spirit works in the lives of all who believe in and profess Jesus.

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Authors' contributions

M.J.O. carried out the research. F.C.U. provided editorial assistance and additional literature for the article.

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