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III. THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS (§ 11)

Translation of Luke 1:26–38

1 [26] In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a
city of Galilee known as Nazareth, [27] to a virgin betrothed to a man of
the House of David whose name was Joseph, and the virgin's name
was Mary. [28] He came and addressed her thus: "Hail, O favored one,
the Lord is with you." [29] Now she was startled at what he said and
wondered what such a greeting might mean. [30] But the angel said to
her: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

[31a] And behold, you will conceive in your womb and give birth
to a son,

[31b] and you will call his name Jesus.

[32a] He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.

[32b] And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father
David;

[33a] and he will be king over the House of Jacob forever,

[33b] and there will be no end to his kingdom."

[34] However, Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have had
no relations with a man?" [35] The angel responded,

[35b] "The Holy Spirit will come upon you,

[35c] and power from the Most High will overshadow you.

[35d] Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy—Son of
God.

[36] And behold, your relative Elizabeth, despite her old age, has also
conceived a son; indeed, this is the sixth month for a woman who was
deemed barren. [37] Nothing said by God can be impossible." [38] Mary
answered, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Let it happen to me ac-
cording to your word." Then the angel went away, leaving her.

NOTES

1:26. *In the sixth month.* That is, of Elizabeth's pregnancy; see NOTE on 1:24. As she had hid herself for the first half of her pregnancy, no outsider could have known that she was pregnant; and it will be revealed to Mary (1:36) before it becomes public.

to a city of Galilee known as Nazareth. In Matthew the annunciation to Joseph apparently takes place in Bethlehem where the child is born (2:1) and where the parents live in a house (2:11). Only after the return from Egypt are we told that Joseph "went off to the district of Galilee . . . to dwell in a city called Nazareth" (2:22–23—for the name and history of the city, see NOTE there). The fact that "known as Nazareth" is omitted from Luke in Codex Bezae and an OL ms. has contributed to the suggestion of Leaney, "Birth Narratives," 161–62, that originally Nazareth was named only in the stories in Luke 2.

27. *to a virgin betrothed to a man . . . whose name was Joseph.* Mary's marital status is described by the same verb (*mnēsteuein*) used in Matt 1:18, "Mary had been betrothed to Joseph," and in Luke 2:5, "Mary, his betrothed, who was pregnant." Although the situation is not spelled out in Luke as it was in Matthew, the fact that Mary is both a virgin and betrothed means that she has exchanged consent with Joseph but not been taken to live with him. For an explanation of this custom, see NOTE on Matt 1:18.

a man of the House of David. In Matthew's annunciation too it was specified that Joseph was a Davidid (1:20). Luke's phrasing is not totally clear; Origen understood "of the House of David" to refer to Mary, and John Chrysostom took it to refer both to Mary and Joseph. Grammatically it stands closer to Joseph; and if Luke meant it to refer to Mary, he would not have needed to reintroduce her as subject in the next clause ("and the virgin's name was Mary"). Elsewhere Luke refers only to Joseph as a Davidid, e.g., in 2:4 he tells us that Joseph went to Bethlehem "because he was of the house and lineage of David," and in 3:23 it is Joseph whose genealogy is traced to David.

If this phrase does not apply to Mary, there is really no other NT evidence that she was a Davidid. The argument that Joseph, a Davidid, would have married within his own tribe and house is offset by the fact that Luke gives to Mary a relative of the House of Levi or Aaron (1:5,36—note also the name "Levi" among the ancestors of Jesus as seen in ℵℵ4,32 in Table I). The Church writers were divided on this issue. Attributing to Mary a Davidic origin were the *Protevangelium of James,* 10:1; Ignatius *Ephesians,* xviii 2; and Justin *Dialogue* xlv 4; while there are hints of at least partial levitical origins (usually through Mary's father or grandfather) in Hippolytus and Ephraem. The latter position is often involved with identifying the Eli of the Lucan genealogy

(𝔐2 in Table I) as a relative of Mary. Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* xxxiii 9, takes the trouble to deny that Mary was a priest's daughter. On this question, see Fischer, "Abkunft." Both derivations, Davidic and Levitical, reflect theological conceptions. Gentile writers often did not understand how Jesus could be truly a Davidid through Joseph who did not beget him and so were forced to think of Mary as a Davidid. On the other hand, the designation of Jesus as a priest tended toward the creation of levitic ancestry. We have no idea where the *Protevangelium of James* (1:1; 2:1), which is clearly unhistorical on many points, got the tradition that the names of Mary's parents were Joachim and Anne; but certainly it patterns Anne on her namesake, Hannah the mother of Samuel. For another, unreliable tradition about the names of Mary's forebears, see footnote 7 in Appendix V.

and the virgin's name was Mary. See NOTE on 1:5, "and her name was Elizabeth."

28. *Hail, O favored one.* In the Greek expression *chaire kecharitōmenē,* words of closely related stems are involved. *Chaire* is related to the noun *chara,* "joy." *Kecharitōmenē* is from the verb *charitoun,* a factitive verb, "to make one favored, to give one grace," of the same stem as *charis,* "grace, favor." If one presupposes an underlying knowledge of Hebrew in the account, *kecharitōmenē* virtually translates the name Hannah and may be an echo of motif of the birth of Samuel found in these chapters.

the Lord is with you. The Greek has no verb, and some translators would give it a subjunctive tone ("be with you"). However, W. C. van Unnik has made a minute study of this formula in *New Testament Essays in Memory of T. W. Manson,* ed. A. J. B. Higgins (Manchester University, 1959), 270–305; and he points out (p. 283) that (a) in the instances where a verb is supplied, the note of certainty is stronger than the subjunctive note of wish or possibility; and (b) when a verb is not found (as here), the phrase is practically always a declaration. While the phrase assures Mary of God's support, it does not mean that the Lord Jesus is within Mary's womb. After this phrase the Codices Alexandrinus, Bezae, and many of the versions, including the Latin, add: "Blessed are you among women." This is almost certainly a scribal borrowing from 1:42, but it has influenced the "Ave Maria" prayer.

29. *she was startled.* A stronger variant of the verb which was used in 1:12. Codex Alexandrinus follows it by adding: "when she saw (him)"; but the Vulgate is closer to Luke's meaning when in some mss. it adds: "when she had heard." Many psychological explanations have been advanced for Mary's reaction: a human being's reaction to the presence of an angel; a maiden's reaction to the presence of a man; Mary's modesty. However, disturbance is part of the literary pattern of an angelic annunciation of birth (number 2 in Table VIII); and Mary's wonderment is a reaction to the great grace or favor that the angel has announced. See A. M. Lobina, *Revista Bíblica* (Argentina) 21 (1959), 15–21.

might mean. Literally, "might be"—an optative. BDF 65[2]: "The optative appears only in the Lucan corpus with any frequency," and only Luke employs the optative in indirect discourse (BDF 386).

30. *you have found favor with God.* The noun is *charis;* see NOTE on "fa-

vored one" in vs. 28. The expression "to find favor" is a Semitism, e.g., "Noah found favor before the Lord God" (LXX of Gen 6:9).

31. *And behold.* See NOTE on this expression (*kai idou*) in 1:20.

you will conceive. As we saw in footnote 44, § 5, the Hebrew participial expression in announcements of birth can be understood as either a present (already pregnant) or a future. Luke's future verb cannot be explained away as a misunderstanding of a putative Semitic original, for the verbs in 1:35 are also future.

you will call his name. A Semitism as in 1:13; see NOTE on Matt 1:21. This is a command and not a simple continuation of prophecy. In Matt 1:21,23 it is Joseph who does the naming; but there are many OT antecedents for the naming of children by divinely favored women, e.g., Hagar (Gen 16:11), Leah (Gen 30:13), the mother of Samson (Judg 13:24), and the mother of Samuel (I Sam 1:20). This naming by Mary constitutes no proof that Luke thinks of Mary as a Davidid. Actually in 2:21 it is not specified who did name the child.

Jesus. For the meaning of this name, see NOTE on "for he will save" in Matt 1:21.

32. *will be called.* In this instance, "calling" brings to expression what one is, so that it means no less than "he will be." Interchangeability of the two phrases is seen by comparing Matt 5:9, "they will be called sons of God," and Luke 6:35, "you will be sons of the Most High."

Most High. In the NT this name for God is encountered most frequently in Luke (1:35,76; 6:35; Acts 7:48; etc.).

34. *How can this be . . . ?* The textual evidence for omitting this question is negligible. See B. Brinkmann, *Biblica* 34 (1953), 327–32, refuting H. Vogels, ZNW 43 (1950–51), 256–60. It is omitted by the OL ms. b, dating from the fourth or fifth century. Perhaps the scribe was embarrassed by the attribution to Mary of seeming disbelief. Or he may have understood the question to mean (as does the curious RSV translation), "How can this be, since I have no husband?", a question that would contradict 1:27 and 2:5 (where this ms. reads "his wife")—Mary has a husband. The eighth-century writer John of Damascus (PG 95:188c) has been cited as evidence for omitting the "since" clause from the question, but his commentary goes on to mention that Mary asked a question about the manner of the conception.

since. The causal conjunction *epei* occurs only here in Luke, and has been used as proof that this verse is non-Lucan. However, it is not a frequent conjunction in the Gospels (Matthew three times, Mark once, John twice), and three times Luke/Acts uses the closely related causal conjunction *epeidē.*

I have had no relations with a man. Literally, "I do not know a man." The verb "to know" is a Semitism for sexual relations; see Matt 1:25: "He did not know her until she brought forth a son." While the tense is present, it describes a state resultant from a past pattern of behavior, as the OL recognized by using a perfect tense (*novi, cognovi*)—see the series of acticles by Quecke. The word for "man" is the specific *anēr,* "male, husband," not the generic *anthrōpos.* Here it should not be translated "husband" since Luke's intent is wider: Mary has not known *any* man and so is a virgin (1:27).

35. *The Holy Spirit.* This expression is anarthrous as it was in the Matthean

annunciation (1:18). See NOTE there justifying the supplying of an article in translation.

will come upon you. Eperchesthai is a Lucan verb, occurring seven times in Luke/Acts, as compared with twice in the rest of the NT. In Acts 1:8 it is used proleptically of the Holy Spirit coming upon the disciples at Pentecost. See also Isa 32:15: "until the Spirit comes upon you [or us] from on high"; and I Sam 16:13: "The Spirit of the Lord came upon David." These parallels make it clear that the sense is not sexual.

power. In this abstract sense *dynamis* occurs some seventeen times in Luke/Acts, as contrasted with twice each in Matthew and Mark. The combination of spirit and power is very Lucan, occurring in Luke 1:17; 4:14; Acts 1:8; 6:5,8; 10:38. Not knowing the rules of parallelism in biblical poetry which make it clear that "power from the Most High" is synonymous with "Holy Spirit," some patristic and medieval theologians thought that the references in 35b,c were respectively to the Third and Second Persons of the Trinity, so that "power" was the Second Person descending to take flesh in Mary's womb. As we shall see, there is no evidence that Luke thought of the incarnation of a Pre-existent.

will overshadow you. In the COMMENT I shall discuss the use of *episkiazein,* "overshadow," in the OT to describe God's presence in the sanctuary, and in the Gospels at the transfiguration—a somewhat literal usage where a cloud of glory overshadows. Two other suggestions have been made, however, which should be discarded. Occasionally, the power overshadowing Mary has been interpreted as a euphemism for a quasi-sexual union, a *hieros gamos.* Strangely enough this appears in one form in the Spanish post-Reformation theologian Cardinal Toletus (1532–96). A modern variation is the thesis of D. Daube, ZNW 48 (1957), 119–20, who sees an allusion to a rabbinic debate over Ruth 3:9 where Ruth presents herself at night to Boaz as his *handmaid* (cf. Luke 1:38) and asks him to *spread* (*periballein*) his mantle *over* her. As I reported in footnote 24, § 3, some saw this as seduction and an invitation to sexual relations. The rabbis denied it by arguing that *ṭallît,* "mantle," had been misread for *ṭallēl,* "overshadow." It is difficult to see how this would affect Luke's meaning; and it is even more difficult to think that Luke was making a subtle allusion to a debate supposing the knowledge of Hebrew or Aramaic, especially since the evidence for the debate is medieval. There is no real evidence for the sexual use of *episkiazein;* and, if anything, the Lucan language of virginal conception is less open to sexual interpretation than Matthew's "begotten . . . through the Holy Spirit" (NOTES on Matt 1:16 and 1:20). Another dubious suggestion was made by H. Leisegang, *Pneuma Hagion* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922), 14–71, esp. 25–33. He sees here a reflection of Hellenistic mystery religions with a spirit-demon overshadowing the mind or spirit of Mary, so that she was possessed by God almost as if she were a mantic or a sibyl. However, there is no other echo of such a pagan context in the scene; and parallelism suggests that overshadowing by the power of the Most High is no more mystical (or sexual) than having the Holy Spirit come upon Mary—a symbolism that, as we saw, is quite biblical. Dibelius, "Jungfrauensohn," 19–22, gives an

important refutation of both the sexual and mystical interpretations of *episkiazein.*

Therefore. Of the nine times *dio kai* occurs in the NT, three are in Luke/Acts. It involves a certain causality; and Lyonnet, "L'Annonciation," 61[6], points out that this has embarrassed many orthodox theologians, since in pre-existence christology a conception by the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb does *not* bring about the existence of God's Son. Luke is seemingly unaware of such a christology; conception is causally related to divine sonship for him.

the child to be born. This translates *to gennōmenon,* a neuter passive participle, present tense, of *gennan,* "to beget (as a father), to bear (as a mother)"; see the NOTES on this verb in Matt 1:16,20 and footnote 23 in § 5. In itself, the translation "the one begotten" is equally possible, and certainly the aorist passive participle has the meaning "begotten" in Matt 1:20. But the situation in Luke is quite different from the situation envisaged by Matthew where Joseph is worried about the paternity of the child. Everything in Luke is from the viewpoint of the virgin mother, and paternity is not even mentioned. Consequently the verb seems to mean "born" here. In that case the present participle must have future significance (BDF 339[2b]), as recognized by the Vulgate's *quod nascetur.* Why a neuter? This is probably more an instance of the general possibility of using the neuter for persons. BDF 138[1] suggests that we are to understand an implied neuter noun for "child," such as *teknon* (or *paidion,* as in 2:40). A. Fridrichsen, in *Symbolae Osloenses* 6 (1928), 33–36, argues that the participle used by Luke is a recognized idiom for "the child (in the womb)," and that the whole question of "born" or "begotten" can be bypassed. Yet Vicent, "La presunta," insists that the verbal sense is not lost, so that "the child" is not an adequate translation. Greek mss. of minor importance and some versions insert "of you" after *to gennōmenon.* This reading represents the cross influence of Matt 1:20: "the child begotten *in her.*"

will be called holy—Son of God. See NOTE on "will be called" in vs. 32; it is tantamount to saying "he will be." And so I cannot follow those theologians who try to avoid the causal connotation in the "Therefore" which begins this line by arguing that for Luke the conception of the child does not bring the Son of God into being, but only enables us to call him "Son of God" who already was Son of God. The translation of this line is difficult because it is not certain whether the neuter form *hagion,* "holy," modifies the subject ("The holy child to be born will be called Son of God") or is a predicate. If it is a predicate, the translation I have given is more likely than: "The child to be born (will be) holy; he will be called Son of God," since that involves an implicit verb, and an unusual word order for the second clause. The subjectival use of *hagion* is slightly favored by the rhythm of the line and by the fact that it makes "Son of God" the only predicate of "called," thus matching 32a: "will be called Son of the Most High." However, if one examines 32a carefully, a strong argument can be made for the predicate translation I have adopted—in 32a there are two predicates, "great" and "Son of the Most High," even as there are two predicates here, "holy" and "Son of God." Moreover, the logic of vs. 35 favors the child being called holy, since the Holy Spirit comes upon Mary. If one looks

ahead to 2:23, one finds "holy" as a predicate for the child: "Every male child who opens the womb will be considered consecrated [called holy] to the Lord." Indeed, "to be called holy" is a LXX expression found in Isa 4:3, a passage that, as we saw in § 7, B3, may be the background for Matthew's "He will be called a Nazorean" (2:23). Jesus is called "the Holy One of God" in Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; and John 6:69; see also Acts 3:14.

36. *And behold.* For the *kai idou* pattern, see NOTE on 1:20, which is exactly parallel to this verse, in terms of giving a sign to Zechariah.

your relative Elizabeth. The degree of family relationship is vague; it was Wycliffe who popularized the idea that "cousin" was meant. For the historical problems raised by Luke's statement, see § 10D.

despite her old age . . . deemed barren. Both these factors were mentioned in 1:7; but only age was mentioned in Zechariah's objection in 1:18.

this is. For the *kai houtos* construction, see Luke 16:1; 20:28.

37. *Nothing said by God can be impossible.* Literally, "Because not impossible will be every word [*rēma*] with God." This OT maxim (cf. Gen 18:14; Job 42:2; Zech 8:6) contains several Semitisms, e.g., the reversed negative pattern of the sentence, and the use of *rēma,* "word," reflecting *dābār,* "word, thing"—I have tried to catch this double meaning with "No*thing said.*" See NOTE on "event" in 2:15 for a further play on *rēma/dābār.*

38. *handmaid.* The feminine form of *doulos,* "servant"; see Acts 2:18.

Let it happen to me. Optative; see NOTE on "might mean" in vs. 29. An element of wishing is involved.

according to your word. Rēma as in vs. 37.

the angel went away, leaving her. This is an ordinary feature of angelic appearances, since such a heavenly presence has to be temporary (Judg 6:21; Acts 12:10). However, there is a special Lucan pattern whereby departures terminate the scenes of the Lucan infancy narrative; see NOTE on "he went back" in 1:23.

COMMENT

I shall begin with the structure and pattern of this second Lucan annunciation narrative, comparing it to the annunciation of JBap's birth and various OT annunciations. Then I shall concentrate on features that are peculiar to the annunciation of Jesus' birth.

A. *The Structure and the Annunciation Pattern*

The annunciation of the birth of Jesus is parallel in many ways to the annunciation of the birth of JBap. In Table X I have printed side by side the

texts of the two annunciations so that the reader can see the parallels in the actual Gospel wording. In Table XI I have analyzed the parallels in terms of diptych which makes the differences apparent as well. The JBap side of the diptych reminds the reader of the structure of the JBap annunciation scene as spelled out at the beginning of the COMMENT in § 10. The Jesus side of the diptych shows a somewhat different structure. There is no full scale introduction corresponding to 1:5–7, for the presentation of the dramatis personae in 1:27 is very brief and flows right into the narrative of the angelic appearance.[1] The epilogue of the first stage of Lucan composition (1:39–45,56) was enlarged through the insertion of the Magnificat to form a separate scene, the visitation, which I shall discuss in the next section (§ 12). And so the real structural parallel is between the central part of the JBap annunciation (1:8–23) and the whole of the Jesus annunciation.

The JBap side of the diptych in Table XI shows how I subdivided the central part of that annunciation into a setting, a core, and a conclusion. Such a subdivision is not possible for the Jesus annunciation. The appearance of Gabriel to Mary in 1:26–27 mentions only time and place; it is scarcely equivalent to the detailed setting in the Temple for the appearance of Gabriel to Zechariah in 1:8–10. Nor in the Jesus annunciation is there a detailed conclusion corresponding to 1:21–23. The fact that the same angel appears in both annunciations helps Luke to emphasize the unity of God's salvific plan, but the Danielic atmosphere is absent from the second annunciation.[2] And so we may narrow further the observation made above and say that the real structural parallel is between the *core* of the JBap annunciation (1:11–20) and the whole of the Jesus annunciation (1:26–38). I have led the reader through this close comparison to make intelligible why I suggested in the previous section (§ 10) that the core of the JBap scene, i.e., the annunciation itself, might have been composed by Luke on the analogy of the Jesus scene. Comparison in itself will, of course, not establish the priority of the Jesus scene in the Lucan process of composition; but it is quite clear that the Jesus scene is the simpler structure.

[1] This difference between the two annunciations is quite intelligible. Since the parents of JBap are not mentioned in the Gospel accounts of the ministry, the reader would know nothing about them and would need more detail. But Mary would have already been known to Christian readers through the accounts of the ministry, as would also the fact that Jesus was "son of Joseph," descended from David; and so less detail was needed about the parents of Jesus.

[2] Absent, at least, are the most important motifs I listened in § 10, B1, e.g., appearance at the time of liturgical prayer when the visionary had been praying in desperation, and the subsequent effect of the muteness of the visionary. If we could suppose a knowledge of the extra-canonical imaginings about Gabriel (NOTE on Luke 1:19), the appearance of Gabriel to Mary might echo his role as the angel set over Paradise (*Enoch* 20:7), who originally drove Adam and Eve from the garden and who is now undoing the results of that first sin by proclaiming the birth of the Messiah.

TABLE X: THE TWO LUCAN ANNUNCIATION NARRATIVES

Annunciation of the Birth of John the Baptist
Luke 1:5–23

1 [5] In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a certain priest named Zechariah who belonged to the division of Abijah. He had a wife descended from Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. [6] In God's sight they were both upright, blamelessly observing all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. [7] Yet they had no children, inasmuch as Elizabeth was barren, and both were on in years.

[8] Now, while Zechariah was serving as a priest, during the time that his division was on Temple duty in God's presence, [9] there were lots cast according to the custom of the priesthood; and he won the privilege of entering the sanctuary of the Lord to burn the incense. [10] At this hour of incense the whole multitude of the people was there, praying outside.

[11] There appeared to Zechariah an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. [12] On seeing him, Zechariah was startled, and fear fell upon him. [13] However, the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer is heard.

[13d] And your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son,
[13e] and you will call his name John.
[14a] And you will have joy and gladness,
[14b] and many will rejoice at his birth.

Annunciation of the Birth of Jesus
Luke 1:26–38

1 [26] In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee known as Nazareth, [27] to a virgin betrothed to a man of the House of David whose name was Joseph, and the virgin's name was Mary.

[28] He came and addressed her thus: "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you." [29] Now she was startled at what he said and wondered what such a greeting might mean. [30] But the angel said to her: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

[31a] And behold, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son,
[31b] and you will call his name Jesus.

[16a] For he will be great before the Lord,
[15b] and he will drink no wine or strong drink.
[15c] And he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb,
[16] and he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God.

[17a] And he will go before Him
[17b] in the spirit and power of Elijah
[17c] to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children
[17d] and the disobedient unto the wisdom of the just,
[17e] to make ready for the Lord a prepared people."

[18] But Zechariah said to the angel, "How am I to know this? I am an old man, and my wife is on in years." [19] The angel responded, "I am Gabriel; I stand in the presence of God. I have been sent to speak to you and announce to you this good news. [20] And behold, you will be reduced to silence and unable to speak until the day that these things will happen, because you did not believe my words which, nevertheless, will be fulfilled in due time."

[21] Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, astonished at his delay in the Temple sanctuary. [22] And when he did come out, he was not able to speak to them; so they realized that he had seen a vision in the Temple sanctuary. For his part, Zechariah communicated with them by signs, remaining mute. [23] When his time of priestly service was completed, he went back to his home.

[32a] He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.
[32b] And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David;
[33a] and he will be king over the House of Jacob forever,
[33b] and there will be no end to his kingdom."

[34] However, Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have had no relations with a man?" [35] The angel responded,
[35b] "The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
[35c] and power from the Most High will overshadow you.
[35d] Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy—Son of God.
[36] And behold, your relative Elizabeth, despite her old age, has also conceived a son; indeed, this is the sixth month for a woman who was deemed barren. [37] Nothing said by God can be impossible."

[38] Mary answered, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Let it happen to me according to your word." Then the angel went away, leaving her.

I would now ask the reader to study the Jesus side of the diptych in Table XI against the background of the pattern of angelic annunciations of birth in Table VIII. As indicated by the numbers in the diptych, the five basic steps of the angelic annunciation are all present: (1) the appearance of the angel; (2) fear; (3) the message; (4) the objection; (5) the sign. Within the message seven of the eight usual items are present; the only absent feature is the etymology of the name Jesus ("g" in the enumeration of Table VIII).

From this perfect adherence to literary pattern I would draw two observations. The first is that the stereotyped details in which Luke repeats the pattern need little further commentary. The real concern in this section must be to comment on the material in the Lucan annunciation that is *not* explained by the literary pattern—in other words, the material used by Luke to fill in the pattern. *In particular, this consists of the peculiar manner of the conception (virginal), the description of the future accomplishments of the child (32–33,35), and the portrait of Mary in 34 and 38.* These three items will serve as subject headings in the treatment to follow, in § 11 B, C, and D, respectively.

The second observation is that such a perfect adherence to literary form raises a question about the historicity of the stereotyped features in the Lucan story (as distinct from the filler material mentioned in the preceding paragraph). Of course, one may argue that the annunciation pattern really reflects a reasonable way of procedure. If an angel did appear to Mary, in what other way could Luke (or Mary) have described it? But one may also argue to the opposite effect. If Luke had little more than the idea of a pre-conception proclamation of Jesus' birth, he could fashion a narrative around this idea by incorporating it within the five standard steps of an OT annunciation of birth narrative without any assistance from historical memory. He could read the birth stories of Ishmael, Isaac, Samson, and Samuel and emerge with the story of an appearance of an angel of the Lord[3] to Jesus' mother, fear on her part, an address calling her by name and describing her with a qualifying phrase ("favored one"), a message telling her that she would conceive and bear a son and call his name Jesus, an objection on her part, and a reassuring sign. Luke's tendency to fashion such a story would be even more understandable if in

[3] The identification of this angel as Gabriel cannot be explained by the OT annunciation of birth pattern. Luke had a few items of information concerning the priestly origins of JBap (§ 10A). Could this information have given Luke the idea of identifying the angel of the Lord who appeared to Zechariah as Gabriel, a "liturgical angel" who appeared at hours of prayer and sacrifice in the Book of Daniel? (I am supposing that the annunciation of JBap's birth was at least as much a Lucan formation as the annunciation of Jesus' birth.) In that case, by a type of "back formation," Gabriel would have been introduced into the parallel annunciation of Jesus' birth. I say "back formation" because I think Luke first shaped the annunciation of Jesus' birth, and then the annunciation of JBap's birth.

TABLE XI: ANNUNCIATION DIPTYCH
(FIRST STAGE OF LUCAN COMPOSITION)

1:5–25 **Annunciation about JBap**	1:26–45,56 **Annunciation about Jesus**
Introduction of the dramatis personae: Zechariah and Elizabeth, of priestly family, aged, barren (5–7).	The angel Gabriel sent to Mary, a virgin betrothed to Joseph of the House of David (26–38).
Annunciation of the conception of JBap delivered by an angel of the Lord (Gabriel) to Zechariah in the Temple (8–23).	Annunciation of the conception of Jesus delivered by Gabriel to Mary in Nazareth.
Setting (8–10): The priestly customs: Zechariah's turn to offer incense.	
Core (11–20):*	
1. Angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah	1. Gabriel came to Mary
2. Zechariah was startled	2. Mary was startled
3. The message:	3. The message:
a. Zechariah	a. Hail . . . Mary
	b. Favored one
c. Do not be afraid	c. Do not be afraid
	d. You will conceive
e. Elizabeth will bear you a son	e. and give birth to a son
f. You will call his name John	f. You will call his name Jesus
h. He will be great before the Lord, etc. (15–17)	h. He will be great, etc. (32–33)
4. How am I to know this? The angel's response (19)	4. How can this be? The angel's response (35)
5. The sign: Behold you will be reduced to silence.	5. The sign: Behold your relative has conceived.
Conclusion (21–23): Zechariah emerged from the Temple unable to speak. He went back home.	Mary responded with acceptance and the angel went away.
Epilogue: Elizabeth conceived; she reflected in seclusion in praise of the Lord (24–25).	*Epilogue:* Mary went to the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth, who was filled with the Holy Spirit and proclaimed the praise of the mother of the Lord. Mary returned home (39–45,56).

* See Table VIII for the numbered steps in the annunciation.

pre-Lucan circles, popular reflection had begun to develop an annunciation tradition about the birth of Jesus.

It is here that we should bring into the discussion the Matthean annunciation narrative which has many of the same stereotyped features, but quite different filler material (except for the virginal conception and Davidic descent). As I argued in § 5, C1, there is reason to posit a pre-Matthean annunciation of birth; and I suggested that this pre-Gospel an-

nunciation tradition upon which both Matthew and Luke drew concerned the birth of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah. Motivated by this tradition,[4] independently each evangelist fashioned a narrative of the annunciation of Jesus' birth which would suit the main lines of the respective infancy narrative. Matthew fashioned the story of an annunciation to Joseph because he was working with an infancy narrative based on the careers of the patriarch Joseph and the baby Moses in Egypt. Luke fashioned the story of an annunciation to Mary in whom he saw symbolic possibilities as a representative of the "poor" remnant of Israel (the *anawim* to be discussed in § 12, C2 below). In footnote 45, § 4, and footnote 74, § 5, we saw OT antecedents for the variation between Joseph and Mary as recipients of the annunciation.

The judgment that the Lucan annunciation pattern may have been borrowed from OT models and that therefore the appearance of an angel to Mary may not be historical tradition should not be equated with a denial of divine revelation pertinent to the birth of Jesus. The discussion of the material that Luke has fitted into the annunciation pattern will begin with the topic of the virginal conception. Precisely since this is a feature that cannot be explained from the OT annunciation pattern, we have to seek other origins for the concept of a virginal conception; and history may enter at this point. If there was a historical factor in the virginal conception (and I show in Appendix IV that this suggestion must be taken seriously), seemingly Mary should have received some divinely given insight. My contention is that, if there was such a revelation, the way in which it could be pictured and described was supplied to Luke by OT birth narratives.[5]

B. *The Virginal Conception (1:34)*

In 1:27 Luke tells us twice that Mary was a virgin at the time of the annunciation. This detail is not something that can be explained from the literary pattern of OT annunciations of birth since none of the classic instances cited in Table VIII concerned a woman who was a virgin. A conception by a virgin who had not known a man (1:34) would be something more startling in the biblical record than the oft-attested conception

[4] I am deliberately using the vague word "tradition" because I do not want to commit myself to a fixed story that each drew upon. I think rather of a tendency in popular reflection to construct an annunciation of the birth of the Davidic Messiah, perhaps a tendency already at work in Judaism and adapted to Jesus by Christians.

[5] The remark of McHugh, *Mother*, 128, is all the more significant because he is conservative: "It is therefore reasonable to begin by asking whether the Annunciation to Mary is not Luke's way of presenting to the reader an account of some more spiritual and wholly interior experience, of which no bystander could have been a witness."

by a set of parents whose barrenness God had overcome. It would be consonant with a theology of a new creation wherein God's Spirit, active in the first creation of life (Gen 1:2), was active again.

However, the existence of the theme of a virginal conception in Luke has been sharply challenged in different ways;[6] and before we can move in the theological direction I have just indicated, we must settle several questions. First, does the present Lucan account truly contain the idea of a virginal conception? Second, if it does, has this idea been secondarily introduced into an account that originally did not contain it? Third, how are we to understand the logic of the question asked by Mary in 1:34?

1. Does the Present Account Contain a Virginal Conception?

While an affirmative answer has usually been assumed, recently J. A. Fitzmyer[7] argued: "When this account is read in and for itself—without the overtones of the Matthean annunciation to Joseph—every detail of it could be understood of a child to be born to Mary in the usual human way. . . ." What has made such an assertion possible is the fact that Luke has no explicit statement that Mary did not have sexual relations with Joseph after the annunciation, a statement comparable to Matt 1:25.[8] Theoretically, if Mary and Joseph had relations and the child was naturally conceived, Luke might still have looked upon the conception as the work of the Holy Spirit, on the grounds that an angel had foretold the conception and that the child was to have a unique role as God's Son.

I would agree with the majority of scholars that Luke *does* intend a virginal conception; but before I present my reasons, I must mention a common argument that in my judgment is not convincing, namely, that the Lucan narrative clearly refers to a virginal conception because it has woven through it an exegesis of Isa 7:14.[9] Two features are often selected as linking Luke 1:26–38 and Isa 7:10–14:[10] (a) In Luke 1:27 Joseph is said to be of "the House of David," and the Isaian sign is addressed to the "House of David" (7:12). (b) In Luke 1:27 Mary is twice called a "virgin," and in 1:31 Mary is told, "You will conceive in your womb and give

[6] I am not speaking here of challenges to the historicity of the virginal conception; I shall treat those in Appendix IV. I am speaking of challenges about Luke's intent and/or that of his sources.

[7] Fitzmyer, "Virginal Conception," 566–67.

[8] We should remember, however, that Matthew asserts this as part of his apologetics against any suggestion of illegitimacy. Luke shows no apologetic tendency here; he does not allow any possibility of scandal to touch Mary, for he introduces her as a virgin. Indeed, Luke omits all mention of when the conception took place or of when Joseph took her to his home.

[9] This argument is accepted by such scholars as Vögtle, "Offene," 46; and Schürmann, *Lukasevangelium*, 62–63.

[10] There are more points of comparison (see Fitzmyer, "Virginal Conception," 568), but many of them are insignificant, e.g., the common use of "Lord."

birth to a son, and you will call his name. . . ." This is thought to echo Isa 7:14: "Behold, the virgin will conceive and will give birth to a son, and you will call his name. . . ."[11] By way of general comment, let me first note that Matthew added Isa 7:14 to a scene that *already contained* the virginal conception (§ 5, B2), and so we cannot presuppose that only through meditation on that text did Christian writers come to the idea of Mary's virginity. Moreover, the two features that seemingly link Luke and Isaiah are far from convincing. The first feature involving the concept of Davidic descent[12] is shared with Matthew's annunciation scene and may have been part of the pre-Gospel annunciation tradition about the birth of the Messiah, without any necessary reference to Isa 7:14. As for the second feature, much of it is not peculiar to Isa 7:14 but is common to OT annunciations of birth. To Hagar it is said, "Behold, you are with child and will give birth to a son, and you will call his name . . ." (Gen 16:11). And so I would agree with Fitzmyer that there is no way of knowing that Luke was drawing upon Isa 7:14.

However, in disagreement with Fitzmyer,[13] I would use another argument to show that Luke was thinking of a virginal conception. As I indicated in § 10D, while the NT writers admit that JBap preceded Jesus, they make him subordinate to Jesus; and Luke extends this outlook to the infancy narrative by placing an annunciation of JBap's birth before the annunciation of Jesus' birth. Here too JBap comes first, but Jesus is greater. We can see this by comparing the respective descriptions:

- JBap is "great before the Lord" (1:15a), but Jesus is "great" without qualification (1:32a).
- JBap is "filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb" (1:15c), but the very conception of Jesus involves the Holy Spirit who "comes upon" Jesus' mother (1:35b).
- JBap will "make ready for the Lord a prepared people" (1:17e), but Jesus will actually rule over the house of Jacob/Israel and possess an eternal kingdom (1:33a,b).

Now this build-up of the superiority of Jesus would fail completely if JBap was conceived in an extraordinary manner and Jesus in a natural manner. But it would be continued perfectly if Jesus was virginally conceived, since this would be something completely unattested in previous

[11] The LXX expression for "conceive" is *en gastri lēpsetai,* or perhaps *en gastri hexei* (footnote 34 in § 5). Luke has *syllēmpsē en gastri.*

[12] If it is objected that Luke speaks not only of Davidic descent but more precisely of "the House of David," as does Isaiah, it must be remembered that the theme of the House of David is part of II Sam 7:8ff., the classic passage establishing the Davidic dynasty—a passage associated with the Messiah and definitely in mind in Luke 1:32–33. And so it may have been II Samuel rather than Isaiah which influenced Luke's phrasing. See C1 below.

[13] See my answer to Fitzmyer in "Luke's Description."

manifestations of God's power. It is to the virginal conception rather than to a natural conception that Elizabeth refers when she says of Mary: "Fortunate is she who believed that the Lord's words to her would find fulfillment" (1:45). No belief would really be required if Mary was to conceive as any other young girl would conceive.

Moreover, a study of the literary pattern of the two Lucan annunciations points to a virginal conception. In the JBap annunciation, when he introduces the two parents (1:7), Luke tells us of the human difficulty in their lives that prevents conception; and it is precisely that difficulty which is resumed in Zechariah's "How" objection to the angel in 1:18. In the Jesus annunciation, when he introduces Mary (1:27), Luke mentions twice that she is a virgin;[14] and it is that factor which is resumed in Mary's "How" objection to the angel in 1:34: "I have had no relations with a man." If the age and barrenness of Zechariah and Elizabeth were divinely overcome in the conception of JBap, the human difficulty of the virginity of Mary must be overcome by divine power in the conception of Jesus. It was creatively overcome without loss of virginity through the intervention of the Holy Spirit, the "power from the Most High" (1:35), with the result that Jesus was only the "supposed son" of Joseph (3:23)—a designation that makes no sense if Jesus was the natural son of Joseph. Indeed, the totality of the emphasis on Mary in ch. 1 of Luke is curious if Joseph was equally the parent of Jesus.

2. Did the Original Account Contain a Virginal Conception?

While acknowledging that the present account implies a virginal conception, many scholars have suggested that this concept was added as an afterthought in vss. 34–35 to an account that did not originally contain it.[15] (Often this theory contains the supposition that without Mary's question in vs. 34, the conception would be described as natural.[16]) Of this group relatively few think that the addition was post-Lucan, i.e., by a redactor or scribe; and in my judgment Taylor has shown conclusively that the lan-

[14] It is insufficient to claim that the reference to virginity in 1:27 is meant only to underline that Jesus was Mary's firstborn son (2:7,23). In the OT annunciations of birth, there is never an annunciation to a married virgin; yet all of them are annuciations of the birth of a mother's firstborn son.

[15] Early proponents were H. Usener, *Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen I: Das Weihnachsfest* (Bonn: Cohen, 1889), and J. Hillmann, "Die Kindheitsgeschichte Jesu nach Lukas kritisch untersucht," *Jahrbuch für Protestantische Theologie* 17 (1891), 192–261. It was made respectable by A. von Harnack, "Zu Lk 1:34–35," ZNW 2 (1901), 53–57. There are minor variations: Kattenbusch would regard as added just the crucial clause "since I have had no sexual relations with a man"; on the other hand, Bultmann and Burger would extend the addition to include 36–37, while Clemen pushes it to 38. Other scholars who hold a form of this theory are Cheyne, Conybeare, Holtzmann, Loisy, Schmiedel, J. Weiss, and Zimmermann.

[16] I find the virginal conception hinted at in 1:27, 1:45; and 3:23.

guage of 34–35 is Lucan.[17] The real question is whether 34–35 was added by Luke himself to a previous account (Lucan or pre-Lucan) that did not contain those verses.

In proposing his thesis that Luke received the tradition of a virginal conception after he had composed the annunciation narrative and that he intercalated this tradition in 34–35, Taylor has brought forward arguments for an addition; and the following are the most important: (a) 1:30–33 may be smoothly joined to 1:36–37, resulting in a long angelic message similar to that in 1:13–17. However, to argue from the parallelism of the two annunciations backfires in my judgment. The biblical pattern of the annunciation of birth (Table VIII) provides for a "How" question to be posed by the recipient and to be answered by a sign. It is farfetched to posit an earlier annunciation of Jesus' birth which just happened to be missing a regular feature of the annunciation pattern, and that Luke came along with an entirely new theological notion which he was able to fit in by inserting the missing feature. Luke 1:34–35 is perfectly parallel to 1:18–19,[18] and is just as integral to its respective annunciation. (b) The parallelism between 1:34 and 1:18 has been challenged, since Mary's "How" question receives no punishing response, while Zechariah's does, in the form of his being struck mute.[19] This difficulty disappears, however, if one regards both narratives as basically Lucan constructions to fit his theological interests. As I showed in § 10, B1, Luke modeled the Gabriel-Zechariah interchange on the Gabriel-Daniel interchange—Daniel was struck mute, and so was Zechariah. Luke has modeled Mary closely on Hannah, the mother of Samuel, and Mary's Magnificat will echo Hannah's canticle in I Sam 2; and so it does not fit Luke's purpose to have Mary afflicted in any way. (c) It is argued that vs. 35 has a different christology from vss. 32–33. In the earlier passage Jesus is called "Son of the Most High" in a context of Davidic expectations, while in 35 he is called "Son

[17] Taylor, *Historical*, 40–87. The only non-Lucan word is *epei*, "since" (see NOTE); and an isolated conjunction amidst thirty-seven words is scarcely probative. The question pattern of 1:34 is Lucan both in wording and narrative style (Gewiess, "Marienfrage," 247–51); the clause "The Holy Spirit will come upon you" resembles the phrasing of Acts 1:8; the combination of spirit and power is Lucan, as is the designation "Most High" (NOTE on vs. 32). The structural resemblance between vss. 34 and 18 must be attributed to the final arranger of the chapter. For a minute analysis of the many Lucan features in 34–35, see Schneider, "Jesu," 109–10.

[18] Even to the point that 1:13–17 can be smoothly joined to 1:20 (omitting 1:18–19), just as 1:30–33 can be smoothly joined to 1:36–37 (omitting 1:34–35). It is curious that scholars who have proposed the latter omission have not proposed the former.

[19] Scholars concerned to defend the justice of God have tried to detect a subtle difference in the two "How" questions. Zechariah's "How am I to know this?" is said to imply a doubt about God's power, while Mary's "How can this be?" is said to accept God's power and only to wonder about the manner (so Machen). This is pure fancy. It neglects the fact that the answer to Mary assures her of God's power ("Nothing said by God can be impossible"), as well as the more important fact that Zechariah's "How" question is almost verbatim Abraham's "How" question in the LXX of Gen 15:8. Abraham's question is not treated as a doubting question at all; and Abraham is blessed, not afflicted.

of God" in a context of divine begetting. Thus, it is suggested that we have a Hellenistic addition to a Jewish description of the Messiah. This contention is dubious on every score. An Aramaic fragment from Qumran puts "son of the Most High" and "son of God" in parallelism,[20] and so the terminology scarcely proves Jewish and Hellenistic differences—a somewhat dubious distinction in any case at this period of history. Moreover, below when I discuss the sequence of the Davidic Messiah in vss. 32–33 and the Son of God in 35, I shall stress that it reproduces a sequence in early Christian creedal formulae, such as Rom 1:3–4. Thus, the christology in the Lucan annunciation narrative offers no reason for suspecting a secondary addition.

The lack of persuasiveness in these three arguments leads to the logical conclusion that the whole annunciation scene was composed by Luke and that vss. 34–35 were always part of it.[21] However, there remains a fourth and more difficult argument against integrity, namely, that the peculiar way in which Mary's "How" question is phrased in 34 makes little sense in the present context. Let us concentrate on that problem now.

3. The Logic of Mary's Question in 1:34

At the risk of simplifying unduly, I shall divide the scholarly responses to this problem according to whether the emphasis is placed on the psychological or on the literary.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS. In the present sequence Mary is betrothed to Joseph; yet she is a virgin, and this means that she has not yet been taken to her husband's home where she would have had marital relations with him (NOTE on "betrothed" in Matt 1:18). When she is told by the angel that she will conceive a child, why does she raise a "How" question, as if there were some difficulty? Why does she not assume that the conception will occur when she is taken to Joseph's home and has relations with him? If we leave aside the naive suggestion that she did not know "the facts of life," how can we explain the psychology of her question.

A famous ancient solution is that Mary had already committed herself to a lifetime of virginity. Her question in 34, which reads literally, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?", is taken as if the verb were fu-

[20] This fragment from Qumran Cave IV (4Q243) is termed pseudo-Danielic; the crucial line reads: "He will be said to be Son of God, and they will call him Son of the Most High." See J. A. Fitzmyer, NTS 20 (1973–74), 391–94.

[21] Dibelius, "Jungfrauensohn," 12, makes the general observation that it is bad literary judgment to excise from a legend the miracle that is at the core of it.

ture: How can this be, since I shall not have sexual relations with a man? Such a theory became popular as part of a belief that Mary remained a virgin all her life, even after the birth of Jesus.[22] It presupposes that her marriage with Joseph was a mutually agreed upon marriage of convenience in which he had agreed to respect her resolve of virginity and to lend her the protection of marriage, lest she be annoyed by more ardent suitors. To support this picture Joseph is portrayed as an elderly widower, in harmony with his statement in the *Protevangelium of James* 9:2: "I already have sons and am old, but she is a girl." This approach flourished at a time when Christian women were entering ascetic or monastic orders to live a celibate life; and so it was even proposed that Mary made a vow of virginity as if she were a nun.[23] The oldest attestation of the vow theory in the East is Gregory of Nyssa in 386 (PG 1140D–1141A), but it spread to the West through Ambrose and Augustine and became the classic interpretation of 1:34. As late as 1975 John McHugh feels compelled to assure his Roman Catholic readers that Mary's vow of virginity need not be considered an infallible teaching of the Church.[24] While such a vow or intention of virginity[25] might make Mary's question in 1:34 intelligible, it is totally implausible in the context supposed by Luke. In our knowledge of Palestinian Judaism, there is nothing that would explain why a twelve-year-old girl would have entered marriage with the intention to preserve virginity and thus not to have children. Luke (1:25,48) uses the words "disgrace" and "low estate" to express what the Jewish mentality toward such childlessness would be. This theory really only makes sense in subsequent Christianity where the virginal conception, plus the virginity of Jesus and Paul, have led to a re-evaluation of celibacy.

Some Roman Catholic scholars have sought to defend the theory of an intention of virginity with more sophisticated arguments. It is claimed, for instance, that the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls shows that there was a sect of Jews that placed value on virginity or celibacy. Actually the Scrolls say very little about this question, and our evidence largely comes from

22 The perpetual virginity or *virginitas post partum;* see footnote 2 in Appendix IV.

23 When the Church won acceptance in the Roman Empire with the edict of Milan (A.D. 311), asceticism replaced martyrdom as the chief public expression of sanctity. Mary was held up as a model to Egyptian "nuns" in a Coptic document printed in the proverbs of the Council of Nicaea (325); see the English text in Hilda Graef, *Mary,* I, 50.

24 McHugh, *Mother,* 446. He denies that there was a moral unanimity of the Church Fathers on this as the only interpretation of 1:34. I would be more trenchant and question what value the moral unanimity of the Fathers on such a historical detail might have. Unanimity of the Fathers has value in interpreting God's revelation, but the Fathers of the Church had no more knowledge about Mary's historical intentions than we have and no other way of gaining that knowledge than we have.

25 A recent Catholic writer, Graystone, *Virgin,* has a lengthy defense of Mary's resolve or intention of virginity—a resolve that was not a vow. It is instructive to compare two surveys of Roman Catholic opinions on this verse, Zerwick, "Quoniam," and Gewiess, "Marienfrage," with Zerwick defending the "traditional" view, and Gewiess adopting the position I shall accept.

descriptions of *Essene* celibacy by Josephus, Philo, and Pliny.[26] The most plausible explanation of Essene (Qumran) celibacy is that it was an extension of the abstinence from intercourse demanded of Jewish priests before they offered sacrifice in the Temple; and probably the celibacy was often temporary since the community had to preserve the Zadokite priestly line by having children. Such celibacy practiced in an ascetic, quasi-monastic community withdrawn from the mainstream of Palestinian life throws no light whatsoever on the supposed resolve of virginity made by a young village girl *who had entered matrimony*. Another explanation of Mary's determination to remain a virgin is that she had meditated on Isa 7:14 and had understood that the Messiah was to be born of a virgin.[27] A sophisticated form of this thesis is that the angel's annunciation in vs. 31 reminded her of Isa 7:14, and that her question in 34 is really a question about how the virgin mother of the Messiah was to conceive: "How is this conception to take place, since according to Isa 7:14 I am not to have relations with a man?"[28] This explanation in both its simple and its sophisticated form fails if there is no reference to Isa 7:14 in vs. 31, or if Jews did not understand Isa 7:14 as a reference to the Messiah, or if Isa 7:14 says nothing about a virginal conception—all three conditions are probably true, as we have seen.

A curious variant of the intention-of-virginity theory anticipates the literary explanations to be discussed below. McHugh[29] recognizes that vs. 34 is a Lucan literary device; but he suggests that Luke wrote the words "since I am not to have relations with a man" (note the future) in light of his knowledge that Mary remained a virgin all her life. In other words Mary's words do not reflect a pre-annunciation resolution to remain a virgin, but a resolution that was a response to the annunciation of a virginal conception—a resolution deduced after the fact by Luke. Obviously this theory will have little appeal to Christians who do not accept the lifetime virginity of Mary. But even Christians who do accept it may react negatively to the dubious methodology of assuming without proof Lucan knowledge of Mary's lifetime virginity.[30] There is no indication whatsoever

[26] See JBC, article 68, §95; and H. Hübner, "Zölibat in Qumran?" NTS 17 (1970–71), 153–67. The Therapeutae in Egypt had celibate *women* (Philo *De Vita Contemplativa* 68 §155), but we do not know about the Essenes.

[27] Her perception is sometimes traced by Catholics to her immaculate conception, which told her that she was to be the mother of the Messiah. However, an intelligent belief in the immaculate conception does not presuppose any knowledge of it by either Mary or the NT writers. This doctrine is not necessarily based upon intimate information about Mary's origins passed down from the first century; rather, it is based on the insight that the sinlessness of Jesus should have affected his origins, and hence his mother.

[28] Audet, "L'annonce," 365–74.

[29] McHugh, *Mother*, 193–99.

[30] Acceptance of Mary's lifetime virginity does not necessarily posit a knowledge of it by Christians in NT times. If Mary had no further children, that could plausibly have been known and remembered. It is far less plausible, however, to assume that Mary gave a public

that any NT author had an interest in Mary's marital relations after Jesus was born. Such an interest is the hallmark of a later Christianity and cannot plausibly be invoked to interpret a crucial verse in the annunciation scene.

If one abandons the hypothesis of a married girl's resolution or vow of virginity as quite unlikely on the Palestinian scene, other attempts to find psychological plausibility suppose a misunderstanding. One theory is that Mary understood the angel's words in vs. 31 to mean that she was immediately becoming pregnant or was already so—not "you will conceive" but "you are conceiving,"[31] or "you have conceived." Since the child was or is conceived without relations with her husband, Mary is forced to ask the angel, "How can this be, since I have had no relations with a man?"[32] It is true that the Hebrew participial expression in the annunciation of birth narratives can be understood as either a present or a future (footnote 44, § 5), but Luke's Greek is clearly future. Any theory that Luke has mistranslated in vs. 31 is made unlikely by the presence of more future verbs in 35: the conception is yet to happen. And indeed it would violate the genius of the Lucan narrative to have the conception take place before Mary has given her consent in vs. 38.

Another theory posits a misunderstanding introduced by Luke. In a putative original story Mary was an *unmarried* virgin; and so when she was told that she was going to conceive a child, she naturally asked how "since I have no husband" (see NOTE on this translation for vs. 34). However, in the process of incorporating this original story into his infancy narrative, Luke was anxious to connect it to an independent narrative in ch. 2 wherein Mary was Joseph's wife. To make the connection obvious, Luke borrowed from the phraseology of 2:4–5 (Joseph was "of the house and

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explanation of her subsequent childlessness by telling people that she had no sexual relations with Joseph. The history of the doctrine demands no handed-down family tradition of this type; rather it may have been logically derived from the contention that the "brothers" and "sisters" of Jesus were not truly siblings, when that contention was related to the psychological impact upon Mary of the virginal conception—ideas joined at a time when Christians were putting a priority on freely chosen lifetime virginity (footnote 23 above). For a detailed discussion of ancient Christian theories about the family relationship of the "brothers" of Jesus (Mark 3:31; 6:3; John 2:12; 7:3), see McHugh, *Mother*, 200–54. No NT author directs our attention to such a post-biblical problem.

31 The present translation is not really different from the instant future translation: "you are immediately to conceive." A peculiar variation of this theory was advanced by R. Reitzenstein, *Zwei religionsgeschichtliche Fragen* (Strassburg: Trübner, 1901), 112–31, who drew attention to a poorly preserved fragment from sixth-century Egypt giving the dialogue between the angel and Mary in a form different from that found in Luke and which, Reitzenstein claimed, represented an older story than the Lucan. There is a gap in the manuscript which Reitzenstein interpreted as an omission of "you will conceive in your womb"; and so he argued that in this dialogue Mary thought she was already pregnant; see the refutation by Machen, *Virgin Birth*, 189–90.

32 If one follows the instant future translation (previous footnote), Mary's question may be interpreted somewhat differently, e.g., "How can this be, since I am not supposed to have relations with my betrothed until the (still distant) time when I go to live at his home?" Gaechter, *Maria*, 89–98, proposes such an interpretation, but it makes the understanding of Luke's scene dependent upon information that Luke has not given us.

lineage of David"; Mary was "his betrothed") and introduced a modifying clause into 1:27: "to a virgin *betrothed to a man of the House of David whose name was Joseph.*"[33] This unfortunate addition created a problem for understanding 1:34 which previously made perfect sense. Simple and attractive as this explanation may be, it causes more problems than it resolves. It is always risky methodologically to assume that a writer does not see the contradictions in his own narrative. It is implausible that haphazardly Luke created a situation for Mary exactly like that in Matt 1:18, namely, that she conceived as a virgin betrothed to a Davidid named Joseph. If there was no relationship to Joseph in the original story, how was that story pertinent to the birth of a *Davidic* Messiah?[34] The parallelism that we have seen between the annunciations of JBap and of Jesus favors the originality of the present Lucan form in which both parents and their tribal origin are mentioned in the introduction (compare 1:5 and 1:27).

In the long run, the various attempts to make Mary's reaction in 34 more intelligible by positing a misunderstanding are no more acceptable than the attempts to posit a resolve or vow of virginity.

LITERARY EXPLANATION. This approach contends that 1:34–35 make perfect sense in the context of the annunciation and that these verses were always part of a Lucan scene which would make little christological sense without them. However, it abandons the idea that the scene has a primary concern with Mary's psychology, as if it were meant to explain how she gained a knowledge of the way in which her child was conceived.[35] It is rather meant to tell *the reader* how the child was conceived and hence to explain his identity.

Intrinsic to this explanation is the contention that vss. 34–35 reflect standard features in biblical annunciations of birth. In Table VIII I showed that the fourth step in the annunciation pattern contained an ob-

[33] The cross-influence is clear; but I join the larger number of scholars who think that it went in the other direction. In order to connect ch. 2 to ch. 1, Luke composed an introduction to ch. 2 that drew upon what he had already written in ch. 1 (see § 14, footnote 7, below).

[34] This theory has appealed (with variations) to scholars like Kattenbusch, Sahlin, and Leaney; but the most famous proponent was Dibelius, "Jungfrauensohn," 12, who argued that in the original story Mary was of the House of David. There is no other biblical evidence for such a tradition (see NOTE on 27); and if the genealogy of Luke 3:23ff. has pre-Lucan roots, all the recognizable pre-Lucan or pre-Gospel strata have Joseph as the Davidid.

[35] Behind many of the Roman Catholic psychological explanations of 1:34 discussed above, there is the assumption that we are dealing with a conversation that actually took place between Mary and Gabriel. (I have already pointed out in A above that the historicity of 1:26–38 is not the most plausible assumption.) However, even if one recognizes that we are dealing with a narrative constructed by Luke himself, one must still seek to understand the logic of that narrative. I am suggesting that the key to that logic is not a concern with *Mary's* learning about the virginal conception but a concern with the reader's learning about that conception and its christological implications.

jection by the visionary as to how the divinely announced conception could take place (in light of the human obstacles), and that the fifth step involved an angelic reassurance. Such steps enabled the biblical authors to explain to the readers how God's plan was going to work out. Although there was a pre-Gospel tradition of an annunciation of the birth of the Davidic Messiah, it was the (respective) evangelist who shaped that tradition into its present narrative form. And so the phrasing of the "How" question in 34 and the angelic response in 35 is determined by Luke's intention. He wished in these verses to explain the identity of the Davidic Messiah whose birth the angel had proclaimed in 31–33, namely, that he is the Son of God begotten through the creative power of the Holy Spirit. Mary's objection in vs. 34 vocalizes in dialogue what the reader has already learned in narrative in 1:27 (i.e., she is a virgin), even as Zechariah's objection in 1:18 vocalized in dialogue what the reader had learned in narrative in 1:7. The objection in each case calls attention to the human impossibility to be overcome by God. The problem of why Mary would mention her virginity as an obstacle to conception (since she could have had sexual relations with Joseph to beget a child after the annunciation) disappears once we shift away from the psychological quest—Luke phrases Mary's objection the way he does because he has the tradition that the divine plan excluded a human begetting of the child. With male agency excluded by the "since" clause in vs. 34, the "How" part of the objection opens the way for the angel to explain the divine creative begetting in 35. Mary is a spokeswoman for Luke's christological message even as Gabriel is a spokesman; and between them they fill in the picture of the Messiah's conception as God's Son, a conception not through marital intercourse (Mary's contribution) but through the Holy Spirit (Gabriel's contribution).

This interpretation of the logic of 1:34–35 is not purely literary as if Luke could have fitted any content he wished into steps 4 and 5 of the standard pattern. His narrative was determined both by the pre-Gospel tradition of the annunciation of the Davidic Messiah's birth (which dictated the general literary form) and by the pre-Gospel tradition of the christology of divine sonship through begetting by the Holy Spirit—a christology which had been applied to Jesus' birth in terms of a virginal conception.[36] From my analysis of Matthew's narrative of the annunciation to Joseph (§ 5, C2), I concluded that already on a pre-Gospel level these two elements had been joined, and that the popular tradition of the

[36] One must explain why the christology of divine sonship, when it was associated with Jesus' birth, found expression in terms of a virginal conception. In Appendix IV I shall suggest that a historical catalyst was required; and so I do not regard the theologoumenon interpretation of the virginal conception as adequate, as if the concept of divine sonship would have automatically led to the conclusion that Jesus had no human father.

annunciation of the Davidic Messiah's birth had become the vehicle of a christological statement about the begetting of God's Son, which thus became the message (step 3) in the angelic annunciation of Jesus' birth. I think that this literary explanation[37] in which a pre-Gospel tradition plays a role offers a totally satisfactory explanation for Mary's question in 1:34.

C. *The Future Accomplishments of the Child (1:32,33,35)*

In A above when I was studying 1:26–38 in the light of the standard annunciation pattern, I pointed out the features in the narrative that are standard to OT annunciations, and I said that our real concern here must be to comment on the material that is *not* totally explained by the annunciation pattern. I mentioned three such items, the first of which (the virginal conception) we have just finished discussing. At the end that discussion led me to mention the content of the angelic message to Mary (step 3 in Table VIII), which constitutes the second of the items to be commented upon. The message consists of vss. 31–33 and 35.[38] Verse 31 needs no comment for it is the standard announcement of pregnancy (step 3, items d,e,f). Verses 32,33,35 constitute item h in step 3 (the future accomplishments of the child), but we must determine whence Luke derived his description of those accomplishments, even as we had to discuss the background of the Lucan description of the future accomplishments of JBap in 1:14–17. In that discussion (§ 10, B2) it seemed that the message about the future of JBap was consonant with and even derived from what Luke knew of JBap in the body of the Gospel describing the ministry of Jesus, i.e., from a Christian picture of JBap which gave him an Elijah-like role as a forerunner of Jesus. Similarly, I shall argue here that Luke composed his description of the future accomplishments of Jesus upon the basis of Christian christological reflection.

We saw that the message of Matthean annunciation to Joseph concerned the Who and the How of Jesus' identity (§ 5A)—he was the *son of David* as the genealogy indicated; yet he was this not through physical conception by the Davidid Joseph but by divine conception through the Holy Spirit, which made him Emmanuel ("God with us") or *God's Son* (Matt 2:15).

[37] Since I drew attention above to a number of psychological explanations offered by Roman Catholics, I should note that the literary explanation of the objection in 1:34 is now becoming widely accepted among Catholic scholars in all countries, e.g., Muñoz Iglesias, Ortensio da Spinetoli, Gewiess, and Schürmann. McHugh moves in that direction but then shies away from its full implications (footnote 29 above).

[38] To some extent vs. 35 has a double role: it is part of the annunciation message (step 3) and yet it comes after Mary's objection and is an element in the angelic reassurance (step 5).

Luke's annunciation to Mary has the same two facets of Jesus' identity and the same How. Instead of speaking of Jesus as the "son of David" Luke describes him as the Davidic Messiah in vss. 32–33, but more clearly than Matthew Luke speaks of Jesus as the "Son of God" in 35.

1. The Davidic Messiah (32–33)

Since in my hypothesis there lay behind Luke (and behind Matthew) a pre-Gospel annunciation of the birth of the Davidic Messiah, it is not surprising to find the Davidic theme so strong in the first half of the angelic annunciation of Jesus' future greatness. Indeed, Gabriel's words in 1:32–33 constitute a free interpretation of II Sam 7:8–16, the promise of the prophet Nathan to David which came to serve as the foundation of messianic expectation. We can see this if we set the two passages side by side, italicizing the crucial phrases in II Samuel:

Luke 1:
- 32a: He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.
- 32b: And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David;
- 33a: and he will be king over the House of Jacob forever,
- 33b: and there will be no end to his kingdom.

II Sam 7:
- 9: I shall make for you a *great* name . . .
- 13: I shall establish *the throne of his kingdom forever.*
- 14: I shall be his father, and he will be *my* son . . .
- 16: And your *house* and your *kingdom* will be made sure *forever.*

The phrases from this promise to David are echoed also in the royal psalms pertinent to the coronation and lineage of the Davidic king, e.g., God calls the king His son in Ps 2:7 (a psalm verse which Luke applies to Jesus in 3:22); and God says in Ps 89:30(29): "I shall establish his lineage forever, and his throne as the days of heaven."[39]

The idea of an annunciation of the birth of the Davidic Messiah, which is pre-Lucan and pre-Matthean, may have already existed in pre-Christian Judaism; and if so, it is not incredible that the message in that Jewish annunciation would have echoed II Sam 7:8–16. We have interesting evidence of the messianic interpretation of it in 4QFlorilegium, a Qumran *pesher* (interpretation) of II Sam 7:10–14, followed by a *pesher* on lines

[39] Also in Davidic royalty passages in the prophets, e.g., Isa 9:5–6(6–7): "For to us a child is born; to us a son is given . . . his dominion is vast and peaceful forever, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom . . . from this time forth and forever."

from the psalms.[40] Let us look at a few lines of it, first the text (italicized), then the *pesher* or interpretation:

> *The Lord declares that He will build you a House* (II Sam 7:11). *I shall raise up your lineage after you* (7:12). *I shall establish the throne of his kingdom forever* (7:13). *I shall be his father, and he will be my son* (7:14).
>
> The "he" is the Shoot [*semaḥ*] of David who will arise with the Interpreter of the Law who [will rule] in Zion in the last days. As it is written, "I shall raise up the fallen hut of David" [Amos 9:11]—the "fallen hut of David" is he who shall arise to save Israel.[41]

We note that the Qumran interpretation takes out select lines from II Sam 7, just as Luke apparently did. It has shifted the focus of Nathan's promise from a continual line of kings[42] to a single Davidic king, the messianic "shoot"[43] who will arise in the last days, even as Luke has applied the Samuel passage to Jesus. The "forever" for both Qumran and Luke is, then, not an endless series of reigns by different kings, but an eschatological description. And so there is nothing distinctively Christian in Gabriel's words in vss. 32–33 of Luke, except that the expected Davidic Messiah has been identified with Jesus.

2. The Son of God through the Power of the Holy Spirit (35)

It is in response to Mary's "How" question about the conception of the Messiah (vs. 34) that Luke has Gabriel give us the more important christological aspect of Jesus' identity:

35b: The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
35c: and power from the Most High will overshadow you.
35d: Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy—Son of God.

Of course, even in this christological statement Luke continues to use OT terminology, for all early Christian christology was vocalized in the reinterpreted terms of Jewish expectations. And not surprisingly, the terms which Luke uses in 1:35 have a relation to the description of the Davidic Messiah he has given in 1:32,33. Isaiah 11:1–2 describes a coming of the

[40] For the nature of this document, correcting J. Allegro's analysis of it as a midrash on the last days, see JBC, article 68, §80. It is noteworthy that the theme of II Sam 7 is carried on by passages from the psalms, including Ps. 2. As I have indicated, Luke may be thinking of II Sam 7 through or along with echoes of it in the psalms.

[41] 4QFlor or 4Q174, lines 10–13.

[42] Notice, nevertheless, that in the lines it quotes from II Sam 7, the "House" of David is mentioned, even as that motif appears in Luke 1:27. See footnote 12 above.

[43] For this term, see p. 212 above.

Spirit of the Lord upon the Davidic branch (*nēṣer*). Isaiah 4:2–3 associates being called "holy" with the day of the Davidic "shoot" (*ṣemaḥ*).[44] The term "Son of God" is a parallel to "Son of the Most High" (footnote 20 above), and both echo God's designation of the Davidic ruler as His "son" in II Sam 7:14 and Ps 2:7. But the way these ideas are combined in 1:35 takes us out of the realm of Jewish expectation of the Messiah into the realm of early Christianity. The action of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Most High come not upon the Davidic king but upon his mother. We are not dealing with the adoption of a Davidid by coronation as God's son or representative; we are dealing with the begetting of God's Son in the womb of Mary through God's creative Spirit. If vss. 32–33 could have been part of a purely Jewish narrative announcing the Messiah's birth, as we saw from the Qumran parallel, the same cannot be said of vs. 35, since, as we have seen, there was no Jewish expectation that the Messiah would be God's Son in the sense of having been conceived without a male parent.[45]

The real parallel for the conglomeration of ideas in 1:35 is not an OT passage but the early Christian formulations of christology. I have already discussed these formulations in general (§ 1, A2) and in relation to Matthew's annunciation narrative (§ 5, A1). There I pointed out that the Davidic king language of Ps 2:7 ("You are my son; today I have begotten you") is reinterpreted as applicable to the resurrection in Acts 13:32–33, even as the coronation language of Ps 110:1 ("Sit at my right hand") is made applicable to the resurrection in Acts 2:32–36. A passage that threw light on Matthean thought throws even more light on Lucan phraseology, namely, Rom 1:3–4, which describes God's Son:

> 3: Born of the seed of David according to the flesh;
> 4: designated Son of God in power according to the Holy Spirit [Spirit of Holiness] as of resurrection from [of] the dead.[46]

[44] For Matthew's application of Isa 4:3 to Jesus, see § 7, B3.

[45] Miguens, *Virgin*, 141–43, is partially right when he claims that the description of Jesus in 1:32,33 does not go beyond the doctrine of the OT; but he is wrong when he goes on to place 1:35 in the same category. He does not distinguish between some of the *terms* in 1:35 (which are echoes of the OT) and the main idea in 1:35.

[46] This text is doubly complicated. First, many think that this formula did not necessarily have the same meaning in the pre-Pauline stage that it has in the Pauline stage. (See H.-W. Bartsch, TZ 23 [1967], 329–39.) By stating that the whole formula applies to God's Son, is Paul correcting the pre-Pauline formula? Is he affirming that in the flesh Jesus was already God's Son and that what the resurrection added or clarified was the element of power? Second, even on the Pauline level the passage is difficult to translate. For Paul's use of *ginesthai* (which I have translated "born") rather than *gennan*, see Appendix IV(A). The verb *orizein* ("designated") can mean "appoint, set up." I have translated the preposition *ek* before "ressurection" with the ambiguous "as of"; it is not clear whether it means "by" or "from the time of." Nor is it clear whether Jesus' resurrection is meant by "resurrection of the deal [plural]." One may debate whether "Spirit of Holiness" (*pneuma hagiōsynēs*) should be capitalized and whether it is exactly the same as "Holy Spirit." Certainly many Christians, accustomed to associate the gift of the Holy Spirit with the resurrection of Jesus, would have interpreted it that way. It is interesting that in referring to the baptism of Jesus,

In the discussion that follows I am not suggesting that Luke drew upon this particular formula.[47] Most scholars agree that it was pre-Pauline, and that Paul used it because it would be familiar to the community in Rome which he himself had not evangelized. If so, it may serve as an example of a widespread christological formulation and thought pattern. The movement in Rom 1:3–4 from Davidic descendant to Son of God is similar to the movement from Davidic Messiah to Son of God that one sees in comparing Luke 1:32,33 and 1:35. The conglomeration of terms that one finds in the second half of the Romans formula (designation as Son of God, power, Holy Spirit) is remarkably like the conglomeration of terms in the second half of the angelic message reported in Luke 1:35 (called Son of God, power, Holy Spirit).

This similarity is not accidental, as may be seen from the "backwards development" of christology which I sketched in § 1, A2. The terms that the Romans formula associates with resurrection appear in the Gospels in the context of the baptism of Jesus. There the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus as a voice from heaven declares "You are my Son" (Luke 3:22), and then Jesus goes back to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit" (4:14). Luke summarizes the picture in Acts 10:37–38: "After the baptism which John preached, God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power." Thus, when the christological moment was moved back from the resurrection to the beginning of the ministry, the christological language of "called Son of God, power, Holy Spirit" was also moved back. And in the Lucan infancy narrative where the christological moment has been moved back still farther to the conception, the christological language has quite consistently been moved back too. That is what I meant when I maintained that the angelic message in 1:35 is simply the Lucan version of an early Christian christological formula. However, whereas the declaration of Jesus as God's Son at the resurrection or enthronement in heaven or at the baptism involved a figurative begetting (see respectively Acts 13:33 and the Western text of Luke 3:22, both of which have God state, "Today I have begotten you"), the association of the christological formula with the conception involves a more literal begetting. The "coming" of the Holy Spirit in 1:35b (which explains why the child is called holy in 1:35d) and the overshadowing by the power of the Most High in

Testament of Levi 18:7 says: "A Spirit . . . of sanctification [*hagiasmos*] shall rest upon him in the water."

[47] Many authors have drawn attention to the similarities between the formula in Romans and the annunciation message in Luke, e.g., Danell, "St. Paul," 99–100; Orr, *Virgin Birth*, 120–21. Often, however, their conception of the relationship was oversimplified—either that Paul knew Luke's Gospel and was drawing upon it, or that Luke, the companion of Paul, knew Paul's letter to the Romans. (Closely related to this is the thesis that the formula in Romans indicates a Pauline knowledge of the virginal conception; see footnote 6 in Appendix IV.) Much more plausible is the thesis of a common Christian theological statement of divine sonship, formulated and applied differently in Romans and in Luke.

1:35c (which explains why the child is called Son of God in 1:35d) *really* beget the child as God's Son[48]—there is no adoption here.

Yet, as I have emphasized in the NOTES on "come upon" and "overshadow" in 1:35b,c, the begetting is not quasi-sexual as if God takes the place of a male principle in mating with Mary. There is more of a connotation of creativity. Mary is not barren, and in her case the child does not come into existence because God cooperates with the husband's generative action and removes the sterility. Rather, Mary is a virgin who has not known man, and therefore the child is totally God's work—a new creation. If the appearance to Zechariah, a priest, took place in the Jerusalem Temple as a sign of continuity with OT institutions, the coming[49] of Gabriel to Mary takes place in Nazareth, a town to which no OT expectation was attached, as a sign of the total newness of what God is doing.[50] If the prophetic Spirit filled JBap from his mother's womb (1:15,41,44), the Spirit that comes upon Mary is closer to the Spirit of God that hovered over the waters before creation in Gen 1:2.[51] The earth was void and without form when that Spirit appeared; just so Mary's womb was a void[52] until through the Spirit God filled it with a child who was His Son. In the annunciation of the birth of JBap we heard of a yearning and prayer on the part of the parents who very much wanted a child; but since Mary is a virgin who has not yet lived with her husband, there is no yearning for or human expectation of a child—it is the surprise of creation. No longer are we dealing with human request and God's generous fulfillment; this is God's initiative going beyond anything man or woman has dreamed of. If in the message of the JBap annunciation, there was a reminder of evil to be

48 I have stressed in the NOTES on 1:32,35 that being "called" Son of the Most High or Son of God is tantamount here to being God's Son, and that Luke does not think of a pre-existent Son of God, as does John. Only in second-century writings do we find the Lucan and Johannine concepts combined into an incarnation of a pre-existent deity (John) in the womb of the virgin Mary (Luke). See Ignatius *Ephesians* vii 2, and *Smyrnaeans* i 1, combined with *Magnesians* viii 2; also Aristides *Apology* xv 1; Justin *Apology* I xxi and xxxiii; Melito *Discourse on Faith* 4 (*Corpus Apologetarum* 9:420). This is treated by Hoben, *Virgin Birth*, 20–21.

49 I have already noted that Gabriel's annunciation to Mary does not have the Danielic echoes that are so apparent in his annunciation to Zechariah. Similarly we are told in 1:28 that "he came" to Mary, instead of the more apocalyptic "he appeared" (1:11).

50 Although there are Isaian echoes in the Lucan scene, I see no evidence that "a city of Galilee known as Nazareth" (1:26) is an echo of "Galilee of the Gentiles" from Isa 8:23 (RSV 9:1—cf. Matt 4:15). In Lucan salvation history the passage from Jew to Gentile is dramatized in terms of passage from Jerusalem to Rome rather than in terms of passage from Jerusalem to Galilee.

51 The author of Genesis may have meant *rûaḥ* (LXX *pneuma*) in the sense of "wind" rather than "spirit"; but certainly later writings understood a reference to God's creative breath or spirit (Ps 33:6; Judith 16:14; *II Baruch* 21:4). The theme is well expressed in Ps 104:30: "When you send forth your Spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth." For references to the creative or life-giving Spirit, see Ezek 37:14; Job 27:3; 33:4; Rom 8:11; John 20:22; and the excellent treatment by Legrand, "Fécondité," 787–88.

52 In B3 above I pointed out that Luke (1:25,48) uses the words "disgrace" and "low estate" to describe the womb that has not produced the fruit of children. This concept of the womb of Mary as a void that God fills (1:53) is quite the opposite of the vow of virginity theory of later Christian writers. Again see Legrand, "Fécondité."

faced ("the disobedient" in 1:17d), here the message is entirely positive, reflecting the word of the creator God who made everything good.

Perhaps the observant reader has noticed that in tracing 1:35 to early christological formulations reapplied to the conception, while I found background for terms like "Holy Spirit," "power," and "called Son of God," I did not have an example of "overshadow" applied to the resurrection or the baptism. However, this image is applied in a christological setting at the transfiguration. In all three accounts (Luke 9:34 and par.) we are told that a cloud signaling the divine presence *overshadowed* those present, and a voice came from the cloud saying, "This is my [beloved] Son." The parallelism between the baptism and the transfiguration has long been recognized: in one the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus, while in the other the cloud overshadows;[53] but in both the divine voice speaks the same message from above. The baptism reveals the christological mystery of divine sonship to the reader; the transfiguration reveals it to chosen disciples.[54] From this comparison we may see that descent of the Holy Spirit and overshadowing by the divine presence were alternative ways of expressing how God was active in establishing and confirming that sonship. Thus Luke is perfectly correct in placing the two images in parallelism in 1:35b,c.[55] And this double expression of God's activity makes it clear that when the child is called "holy" and "Son of God," these designations are true to what he is and to his origins.

If I may return to the formulation in Rom 1:3–4, there Davidic descent and designation as Son of God are contrasted. "According to the flesh" and in his lifetime Jesus was recognized as a Davidid; but "according to a Holy Spirit" and as of the resurrection Jesus was designated Son of God. In the Lucan annunciation there is no real contrast between the two parts of Gabriel's message: the Son of the Most High in whom the Davidic royal promise is fulfilled is the child to be called the Son of God, conceived

[53] The preference for overshadowing in the transfiguration is to be related to Peter's idea of building *tabernacles* for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah (Luke 9:33 and par.). As we shall see in E below, the OT background of overshadowing is the descent of God's glory upon the Tabernacle or Temple.

[54] Legrand, "L'arrière-plan," 170–83, is excellent on this point. In the transfiguration, he maintains, the apocalyptic coming of the Son of Man with the clouds of heaven (e.g., Mark 14:62, drawing upon Dan 7:13) has been de-apocalypticized for Luke. The cloud of divine presence overshadows one who is already Son of God and Son of Man (Luke 9:44) upon earth.

[55] It is true that the transfiguration has overshadowing with a cloud while Luke 1:35c has overshadowing with power. (The word "power" does not occur in the Lucan transfiguration scene, but see the verse which immediately precedes the transfiguration in Mark 9:1; also II Peter 1:16–17.) Some light is cast on how power might overshadow by the only other use of "overshadow" in the Lucan writings, namely, Acts 5:15–16 wherein Peter's shadow overshadows the sick and they are healed. Peter received the Spirit at Pentecost and this brought divine power: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8); it is by that power that he heals (3:12); and sometimes this life-giving power is brought to bear when his shadow falls upon the sick. The creation of life in the womb of Mary is simply a higher level of the combination of Spirit, divine power, and overshadowing. See P. W. van der Horst, "Peter's Shadow," NTS 23 (1976–7), 204–12.

through the Holy Spirit and power. By moving the christological moment from the resurrection to the conception, Luke tells us that there never was a moment on this earth when Jesus was not the Son of God.[56] Now neither baptism nor resurrection gives a new status in contrast with what went before; these events reveal to a wider audience what was already there.

D. *The Portrait of Mary as Handmaid (1:38)*

Mary has two lines of response in the annunciation. We have already seen that the first line, the question-objection of 1:34, represents part of the stereotyped pattern of biblical annunciations of birth (Table VIII). It is Luke's way of calling attention to the virginal conception and offers an entrée into the christological formula of 1:35. If therefore it is likely that this verse does not constitute a historical reminiscence of Mary's reaction to the revelation of the forthcoming conception, some have sought a historical reminiscence in the final response of Mary to the annunciation in 1:38 —*ipsissima verba* expressing her humility as the handmaid of the Lord. This needs comment precisely because the type of response we find in 1:38 is not a step in the stereotyped annunciation pattern. It is lacking even from the JBap annunciation; and it constitutes one of the three items that I have said cannot be explained simply as an expected feature in this literary form.

In treating the previous scene I suggested that Luke drew the portraits of those who are not mentioned in the body of the Gospel (Zechariah and Elizabeth) from OT models (Abraham and Sarah), whereas he drew the portrait of the future JBap from what he knew of the descriptions of JBap in the Gospel story of the ministry. I suggest that he has done the same thing here, and that the portrait of Mary in 1:38 is shaped from Luke's account of her in the ministry.[57]

[56] Exactly what Luke means by "Son of God" is not totally clear. I have stressed that pre-existence is not involved (footnote 48 above). I think Lyonnet, "L'Annonciation," 66, is too narrow when he sees only two choices: to take it in a broad sense as equivalent to messianic king or in a proper sense as equivalent to "God." It must be remembered that Luke uses "son of God" for Adam, who had an origin different from other men, because of the direct creative action of God's Spirit (see Luke 3:38). Luke is certainly using "Son of God" in a proper sense in 1:35d, but he is not necessarily saying what Ignatius said twenty or thirty years later: "Our God, Jesus Christ, was conceived of Mary" (*Ephesians* xviii 2; also vii 2).

[57] Filling in a story in this way is a Lucan technique. In the conversation between the risen Jesus and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, the discussion of the death and resurrection of Jesus in terms of OT fulfillment (Luke 24:19–27) is simply a digest in conversational form of the preaching of the early Church on this problem as Luke presents it in Acts. Luke had no historical tradition of what was said on this occasion; at most he had a tradition of a "private" appearance of the risen Jesus to two disciples, a tradition which he filled in plausibly.

Mary appears in only one scene in the common Synoptic tradition.[58] As it is narrated in Mark 3, it has two parts. First, in 3:20–21 "his own"[59] go out to seize him because the frenzied pace of his ministry is provoking charges of madness. Second, in 3:31–35 his mother and his brothers arrive and stand outside the place where he is, asking for him; but Jesus responds that the listeners seated around him who do the will of God are his mother and brothers. The first part of the Marcan scene reveals the attitude of Jesus' relatives toward him, and it is scarcely one of belief. The second part reveals Jesus' attitude toward family relationship. His true family is established through a relationship to God, not by human origin. (The Johannine parallel is in 2:4 where Jesus resists his mother's interference, seemingly because she has no role in the coming of his "hour.") When the two parts of the Marcan scene are read together, the impact of 3:33–34 is very strong:

> And Jesus replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking around on those who sat about him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!"

It is a replacement of his natural family and *might* be read as a rejection of them, especially since Mark 6:4 has Jesus complain that a prophet is without honor among his own relatives and in his own home.

Luke's parallel scene is thoroughly modified.[60] Luke omits the first part of the Marcan scene (Mark 3:20–21) which is so hard on "his own."[61] He also omits the verses just quoted from the second part of the Marcan scene. The total scene in Luke 8:19–21 reads as follows:

> Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. He was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you." But he said to

[58] Mary is mentioned but does not appear in Mark 6:3 where Jesus returns to Nazareth. There is a parallel in Matt 13:55 and John 6:42, but not in Luke 4:22 which mentions Joseph but not Mary.

[59] *Hoi par' autou,* literally "those from him," which theoretically could mean emissaries. But if we consider the sequence in Mark where "they set out to seize him" in 3:21 is followed by "his mother and his brothers came and, standing outside, sent to him" (3:31), it seems likely that Mark understood the *hoi par' autou* to be his mother and his brothers. The absence of an equivalent for Mark 3:21 in Matthew and Luke, plus the fact that the Johannine parallels are widely separated (John 7:4; 2:4), raises the possibility that Mark has joined two once independent traditions. The Johannine parallel confines disbelief to Jesus' brothers; in the NT Mary is never identified as a disbeliever.

[60] Matt 12:46–50 follows Mark 3:31–35 closely, so that Luke's differences from the second part of the Marcan scene are probably to be attributed to his editing. The Marcan account itself may be composite, but its prehistory is not of major concern for our purposes here.

[61] Matthew also omits it—an indication that both evangelists probably understood it to refer to Mary and found it irreconcilable with the virginal conception. Their reaction to the first part of the Marcan scene constitutes an argument that Mark could write it only because he did not know the tradition of the virginal conception; see Appendix IV.

them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."

This is not to be read as if the hearers of the word of God replace Jesus' mother and his brothers as his real family (so Mark), but as a statement that his mother and his brothers are among his disciples.[62] The physical family of Jesus is truly his family because they hear the word of God. Luke preserves Jesus' insistence that hearing the word of God and doing it is what is constitutive of his family, but Luke thinks that Jesus' mother and brothers meet that criterion. Unlike Mark 6:4, Luke (4:24) does not have Jesus rejected by his relatives. Luke is quite logical, then, in reporting that among the one hundred and twenty "brethren" who constituted the believing community after the resurrection/ascension were "Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers" (Acts 1:14).[63]

It is this Lucan tradition that already during the ministry of Jesus his mother was one of "those who hear the word [*logos*] of God and do it" which supplied the response placed on Mary's lips at the end of the annunciation scene: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Let it happen to me according to your word [*rēma*]" (1:38).[64] Luke needed no special source nor personal reminiscence from Mary for this response; he needed only to make the portrait of Mary in the infancy narrative consistent with what he knew of her from her sole appearance in the common Synoptic tradition of the public ministry. He is voicing a Christian intuition that the virginal conception of Jesus must have constituted for Mary the beginning of her confrontation with the mysterious plan of God embodied in the person of her son.[65] In Jesus' lifetime and after the resurrection, according to Lucan tradition, Mary responded to that confrontation as a true disciple obedient to the word of God; and Luke assures us that her initial confrontation was also that of an ideal disciple.[66] From the first moment that the grace of

62 A few of the Church writers (Tertullian, John Chrysostom) followed Mark in seeing the scene (along with John 2:4) as containing a rebuke to Mary who was not sufficiently obedient to God's word, but the majority followed the more benevolent Lucan form. See Graef, *Mary*, 43, 76.

63 Other NT works confirm that at least one "brother of the Lord," James, became a prominent believer (Gal 1:19; 2:9; I Cor 15:7). See also Jude 1.

64 The use of *rēma* rather than *logos* is not a meaningful difference. It was determined by the use of *rēma* in the preceding verse, "Nothing said [*rēma*] by God can be impossible" (1:37), which in turn was determined by Gen 18:14, "Can anything said [*rēma*] by God be impossible?"

65 It is to this confrontation that Luke refers twice with the formula: "Mary kept with concern all these events [*rēma*], interpreting them in her heart" (2:19,51). Lyonnet, "L'Annonciation," 62–63, maintains that one of the points which Luke wishes to affirm with certainty is that a divine demand was addressed to Mary and that she freely assented to it. I would agree provided it is recognized that this point could have come from Luke's analysis of God's plan known to him from the body of the Gospel and that it does not depend upon Mary's personal recollections.

66 In a chapter on an ecumenical understanding of Mary in my book *Biblical Reflections on Crises Facing the Church* (New York: Paulist, 1975), 84–108, I have suggested that discipleship is the key to the interpretation of Mary in the NT and, indeed, explains the remarkable plasticity of her image through the ages.

God (the *charis* or "favor" of 1:30) was proclaimed, it began to attract disciples. It is in this sense that Luke has learned from Mary as a "minister of the word" (1:2), the first Christian disciple.

Mary's obedient, and even enthusiastic, acceptance[67] of God's word in 1:38 is highlighted by the context in which Luke has placed it. Verse 36 picks up the theme of the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy—the theme with which Luke introduced the annunciation of Jesus' birth in 1:26. The news of this pregnancy is a sign because it has been hidden from all (1:24). In the annunciation of JBap's birth Luke modeled Zechariah and Elizabeth upon Abraham and Sarah, and so it is not surprising to find the reference to Elizabeth's pregnancy in 1:36 followed by a reintroduction of the Abraham motif. When Sarah heard about the conception of Isaac, she laughed in ridicule, since she knew she was too old to bear a child. God had to challenge her, "Can anything said by God be impossible?" (Gen 18:14). And *Jubilees* 16:12 tells us that it was in the *sixth month* (of the year) that the Lord visited Sarah and made her pregnant according to His word. In the same setting of the sixth month (of Elizabeth's pregnancy) the angel repeats God's challenge, "Nothing said by God can be impossible." Mary's reaction is just the opposite of Sarah's —not a cynical laugh but a total and joyful acceptance. She is closer to Hannah, the mother of Samuel, who reacted to the news that God would grant her petition for a son with the words, "Let your handmaid find favor in your eyes" (I Sam 1:18).[68] Mary, the Lord's handmaid (1:38), has already found favor in His eyes (1:30). Luke's decision to close the scene with an evocation of Hannah is an example of his artistry. The next scene will have Mary recite the Magnificat which is closely parallel to Hannah's canticle in I Sam 2:1–10.

E. *Mary and Old Testament Symbolism?*

In the Lucan infancy narrative the annunciation of Jesus' birth is directed to Mary the mother, rather than to Joseph the legal father. As we have seen, this is a legitimate option within the OT annunciation pattern. However, we may ask whether, having chosen the female figure, Luke intended

[67] McHugh, *Mother*, 65, criticizes Plummer, *Luke*, 26, for interpreting Mary's response totally in terms of submission, excluding "an expression of joy at the prospect." In an attempt to prove the presence of joy in Mary's response, McHugh may be oversanguine about the extent to which one may depend on the literal meaning of the optative in "let it happen," which he renders as "O may it be so." However, he is certainly right in seeing Mary's response as joyful and enthusiastic. The "word" to which she responds affirmatively is a word of salvation, as she states in her Magnificat: "My spirit has found gladness in God my Savior" (1:47).

[68] Note the OT antecedent for the use of *charis* used to describe a divinely guided conception of a son, as in Luke 1:30. "Favor" is also mentioned in the Abraham/Sarah story (Gen 18:3), but with a more general application.

us to recognize OT symbolism that such a female figure might evoke. Many scholars have responded affirmatively to this question, detecting numerous implicit OT echoes in the Lucan portrait of Mary. Yet it is difficult to be certain that Luke intended all these symbolic hints, discovered only with great effort; and so other scholars have classified these efforts as eisegesis.

1. Daughter of Zion in the Old Testament

The most frequent suggestion of OT symbolism attached to Mary in the Lucan account is that of the Daughter of Zion, and as a preliminary step we should review the origins of this phrase in the OT. Zion was the name of the fortified hill of pre-Israelite Jerusalem, so that David's accomplishment was to conquer the "stronghold of Zion" (II Sam 5:6–10), i.e., the southern section of the eastern hill. As the city was enlarged to the north, Mount Zion came to designate the hill on which the Temple stood. Eventually the name was attached to the western hill. For practical purposes, however, Zion in the Bible may be said to serve as a synonym for Jerusalem. With relation to a geographical entity, "daughter" designates a subdivision, e.g., a city, town, or village. Thus, the cities of a country are the "daughters" of that country, so that Ps 97:8 speaks of the "daughters of Judah," with Zion as one of them, and Ezek 16:27 mentions the "daughters of the Philistines." The villages or suburbs of a city are the "daughters" of that city, so that Num 21:25 mentions "Heshbon and its daughters," while Josh 17:11 speaks of "Bethshan and its daughters."

It is in Micah 1:13 (*ca.* 700 B.C.) that we first encounter the phrase "Daughter of Zion"; and Henri Cazelles[69] contends that it referred to a new quarter or suburb of Jerusalem, north of the Temple area (Zion), first inhabited about the time of King Hezekiah by refugees from the Northern Kingdom after the fall of Samaria in 721. Thus it was to a section of Jerusalem filled with poor, displaced people who needed encouragement that Micah addressed his words of hope when he spoke to the "Daughter of Zion" in 4:8,10,13. Eventually, since the part frequently stands for the whole, "Daughter of Zion" would become a personification of Jerusalem (which in turn would become a synonym for all Judah and even Israel);[70] but if Cazelles is right, the connotation of the poor and the dependent may linger in the appellation.

Before we discuss the "Daughter of Zion" symbolism in relation to Mary, we should note a particular aspect of the OT picture, namely, the term "virgin" applied to Zion (or Israel). In 1:27 Luke twice calls Mary a virgin; he is preparing for 1:34 and the virginal conception of Jesus. Is he also evoking the image of the virgin Daughter of Zion or of virgin Israel,

69 "Fille de Sion"; also McHugh, *Mother,* 438–44.

70 This process would be facilitated by similar biblical personifications: "Daughter of Babylon" (Jer 50:42); "Daughter of Edom" (Lam 4:21).

familiar in the prophets? The ravaging of nations and cities by foreign conquerors is often compared to the rape of a virgin; and so most of the specific OT references to Israel or Zion as a virgin portray her in a state of oppression, and even of waywardness, lusting after foreign lovers and untrue to her God.[71] A partial exception may be Jer 31:3–4: "I have loved you with an enduring love . . . I shall build you again . . . O virgin Israel"; but even there one may find a connotation of Israel's past unfaithfulness. Thus it would seem that the echoes of the "virgin" passages concerning Zion and Israel in the OT are quite inappropriate as background to Luke's description of the virgin Mary. She is to be identified with those of low estate and the poor (the Magnificat); but she is not oppressed or violated, and is totally faithful (1:45) and obedient to God's word (1:38).

2. The Salutation in 1:28

Leaving aside the OT references to virgin Israel, let us discuss the Lucan Mary simply as the "Daughter of Zion," the poor one to whom in the prophets a salvific message of joy and hope is addressed. This is a symbolism that has been accepted by both Roman Catholic (Lyonnet, Laurentin, Benoit) and Protestant scholars (Sahlin, Hebert, Knight, Leaney).[72] A foundation for this symbolism is a particular exegesis of 1:28, wherein three phrases of the angelic salutation are thought to have a deeper connotation than might at first appear. Often the phrases of 1:28 are seen as expanded and interpreted in the second angelic statement of 1:30–31, and so let me set them side by side:

1:28	1:30–31
Chaire ("Hail")="Rejoice"	"Do not be afraid"
kecharitōmenē ("favored one") ="Full of grace"	"You have found favor (*charis*) with God"
"The Lord is with you"	"You will conceive in your womb"

Let us take the three phrases one by one.

CHAIRE AS "REJOICE." While "rejoice" is the literal meaning of the verb *chairein,* the imperative is the normal Greek secular salutation: "Hail, hello, good day, greetings."[73] The Latin translation of Luke's annunciation

[71] For oppression, see Amos 5:2 ("Fallen, no more to rise, is virgin Israel, forsaken on her land"); Isa 23:12; 37:22; and Jer 14:17 ("The virgin daughter of my people is smitten with a deep wound"). For waywardness, see Jer 18:13 ("The virgin Israel has done a really horrible thing"); 31:21; 46:11.

[72] It is fascinating to compare two Protestant books on Mary, respectively for and against this symbolism: M. Thurian, *Mary, Mother of All Christians* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1964), 13–65; and S. Benko, *Protestants, Catholics, and Mary* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson, 1968), 93–108.

[73] See its use as an ordinary greeting in Matt 27:29; 28:9; II Cor 13:11; James 1:1; II John 10; and in the early Church writers: Ignatius *Ephesians,* initial greeting; *Barnabas* i 1.

reflected in the *Ave Maria* shows that the translators understood the equivalence between *chaire* and the ordinary Latin greeting *ave*. Similarly the Syriac Peshitta rendering as "Peace" shows the equivalence between *chaire* and the ordinary Semitic greeting (Hebrew *shālôm*). However, Lyonnet[74] has made a case for translating it as "Rejoice," so that it evokes highly theological OT passages featuring the Daughter of Zion.

He argues that if Luke wanted the angel to give Mary an ordinary greeting in 1:28, he would have used *eirēnē*, "Peace," reflecting the Hebrew *shālôm*, as he does in 10:5 and 24:36; for that is Luke's custom in scenes set in a Semitic background. If it is objected that Luke uses a form of *chairein* as an ordinary greeting in Acts 15:23 and 23:26, the answer is that there Luke is quoting from letters written in Greek and adapting his style to the Greek context. Before I move onto the theological significance that is drawn from *chaire* taken as "Rejoice" rather than "Hail," I want to point out a weakness in this interpretation of Luke's use of greetings. Luke certainly knows that *eirēnē* translates the ordinary Semitic greeting and that *chaire* is the ordinary Greek greeting. There is good reason to think that when he is freely composing in Greek for his Greek readers, he chooses *chaire* as standard Greek usage. But his choice of *eirēnē* in 10:5 and 24:36 need not mean that he uses a Semitized greeting when the scene has a Semitic background; his usage there is more plausibly explained by the fact that he is following sources that contained a reference to "peace."[75] Accordingly, one may just as well argue that he would have used *eirēnē* as an ordinary greeting in 1:28 only if he was reproducing a source that would have directed him in this way, and that if he was composing freely in Greek (as I think) he would have used *chaire* for the ordinary greeting. The claim that an ordinary greeting would be out of place in a revelation scene does not do justice to the influence of the standard pattern of the annunciation narrative which is so designed as not to alarm the visionary. Laurentin,[76] who opposes the "Hail" meaning of *chaire* as too banal, is forced to admit that the parallel expression in 1:30, "Do not be afraid," is part of the banal and stereotyped language of angelic appearances and has no real psychological import.

But let us move onto the use of *chairein* in the OT: there are some eighty occurrences in the LXX, about one-quarter of which refer to the joy that

[74] He began his reflections with the article "*Chaire*" in 1939 and resumed them with "Le récit" in 1956. In the interim the Daughter of Zion relationship had been developed by Sahlin, *Messias*, 102–4, and popularized in English by Hebert, "Virgin." Lyonnet's translation of *chaire* has been rejected by Strobel, "Gruss," who argues for interpreting it as a secular greeting; and by Räisänen, *Mutter*, 86–92.

[75] Luke 10:5 is from the "Q" source; see the parallel in Matt 10:11–13, and the context in Luke 10:6 which explain why Luke used the greeting "Peace." Luke 24:36 (slightly dubious textually) is parallel to John 20:26, and there is every reason to think that the Lucan and Johannine accounts reflect an earlier form of the narrative.

[76] *Structure*, 664.

greets a divine saving act, announcement, or promise.[77] In Exod 4:31 *chairein* describes the rejoicing over God's having visited His people in their affliction in Egypt; in I Kgs 5:21 it expresses joy that God gave David a son and successor with the wisdom of Solomon; etc. In a particularly relevant scene in Isa 66:7 God promises that He will cause Zion to give birth and bring forth sons, and urges those who love her to *rejoice*—a promise of deliverance from the exilic and immediately post-exilic tragedies. But Lyonnet and Laurentin concentrate on the four instances in which the specific form *chaire* is used in the LXX; or, more exactly they concentrate on three of the four[78] where *chaire* is addressed to the Daughter of Zion (Zech 9:9; Zeph 3:14) or to the land of Israel, the children of Zion (Joel 2:21–23). At least one of the three passages (Zech 9:9: "*Rejoice* greatly, O Daughter of Zion, . . . behold your king is coming to you . . . he is meek and mounted on an ass") was known to early Christians, for it is cited in Matt 21:5 and John 12:14–15—yet it is not cited specifically in Luke, and neither of the authors who cite it quote the *chaire* opening.

It is particularly Zeph 3:14–17 that has been suggested as the Lucan background for 1:28,30. For the sake of comparison, let us juxtapose the two texts, heightening the parallelism by selecting lines from the longer Zephaniah passage:[79]

Zeph 3:14–17:
Rejoice [*chaire*], O Daughter of Zion, . . .
The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst [*en mesō sou*] . . .
Take heart, Zion . . .
The Lord your God is in you [*en soi*];
the Mighty One will save you.

Luke 1:28,30,31:
Rejoice [*chaire*], O favored one,
the Lord is with you [*meta sou*] . . .
Do not be afraid, Mary,
for you have found favor with God . . .

[77] There are instances in the LXX where *chairein* serves as the normal Greek greeting (I Macc 10:18,25; 11:30,32; Tobit 7:1; 13:13), but they are dismissed on the grounds that the books which contain them were written originally in Greek (McHugh, *Mother*, 39). That is incorrect: there is very good reason to think that I Maccabees was written originally in Hebrew, and the Qumran discoveries make it virtually certain that Tobit was written in Aramaic.

[78] The fourth passage, "Rejoice [*chaire*] . . . Daughter of Edom . . . you shall become drunk and strip yourself bare" (Lam 4:21) is dismissed by Laurentin (*Structure*, 651) as "very peculiar," since *chaire* seems to be used ironically. In other words, one of the four instances does not fit the theological approach to *chaire* at all! Instead of dismissing it, I would see it as proof that *chaire*, even when understood as "Rejoice," was likely to evoke no specific theological background.

[79] I am following the Greek of Zephaniah. One may highlight the resemblances more by shifting back and forth between the Hebrew and Greek, according to what most resembles

You will conceive in your womb
and give birth to a son.

In part the supposed parallelism is based on relating the phrase "the Lord is in your midst" to "the Lord is with you," and the phrase "the Lord your God is in you" to the presence of the child in Mary's womb—points to be discussed (and challenged) below. If we leave those aside for the moment, would Luke's readers, because of the use of the word *chaire,* be aware of the Zephaniah passage (or the other two *chaire* passages) which has nothing to do with childbirth? *Chaire* is not always salvific in the LXX (footnotes 77,78 above), and Luke's readers would hear it used every day of their lives with the meaning "Hail, hello." If a modern English writer used "Goodbye" in a farewell without any interpretative comment, would his readers recognize that he was giving it its ancient religious value as "God be with you"? If Luke did not want a typical greeting at the beginning of the annunciation but wanted to evoke messianic joy, why would he not have used a non-ambiguous verb like *euphranein,* found in Isa 54:1 in the context of a conception, a verb that Luke uses elsewhere for joy at messianic salvation (15:32; Acts 2:26)? That verb is used in a Daughter of Zion passage in Zech 2:14–15(10–11), "Rejoice [*euphrainou*][80] O Daughter of Zion, for behold I come and dwell in your midst [*en mesō sou*], says the Lord."

In short, the *chaire* connection is too fragile to establish either that Luke had Zeph 3:14–17 in mind or that he was thinking of Mary as the Daughter of Zion. Of course, the typical expectation of divine deliverance vocalized by Zephaniah, or indeed by Zechariah in the passage just quoted, played a role in Luke's outlook—but that expectation is a distillation of a whole series of OT passages and not evidence of a particular symbolism. Since Luke's *chaire* leads into the homonym *kecharitōmenē* ("O favored one") and a reference to God's favor in sending the Messiah who is His Son, there may well be an element of religious rejoicing in it—but it is a joy that comes from the context of the annunciation, and not because *chaire* should be given an unusual translation which evokes an OT passage.

"THE LORD IS WITH YOU." Part of the case for the resemblance between Zephaniah and Luke depends on connecting this phrase to Zephaniah's "The Lord is in your midst." Such a connection is dubious in the extreme. Zephaniah presumably refers to the presence of the Lord in the Temple or

Luke. For instance, the Hebrew of 3:16 has "Do not be afraid, Zion" instead of "Take heart, Zion." Laurentin, *Structure,* 68, adds to the parallelism by seeing a connection between "the Mighty one will *save* you" and the meaning of Jesus' name as "God saves" (NOTE on Matt 1:21)—a dubious connection since Luke draws no attention to this etymology.

80 It is interesting that Justin, *Dialogue* cxv 1, cites this text of Zechariah with *chaire* rather than the *euphrainou* of the LXX.

to His presence with the forces of His people (Exod 34:9). The Lucan "The Lord is with you" is an ordinary greeting, as exemplified in Ruth 2:4 in the exchange between Boaz and the reapers.[81] In the context of an angelic appearance, the phrase need not be totally banal when addressed to Mary; it reassures her that this divine visitation is benevolent and need not be feared. If Luke is recalling an OT passage, it is not Zephaniah but the scene of the angelic annunciation to Gideon in Judg 6:12. The opening address there, "O mighty man of valor, the Lord is with you," is close in context and wording to Luke's "O favored one, the Lord is with you."

In the attempt to relate Luke to Zephaniah, particularly dubious is Laurentin's shift from the Greek of Zephaniah to the Hebrew in seeking to read *bᵉqirbēk* (the phrase behind "in your midst" and "in you" in 3:15,17) as "in your interior parts" and thus equivalent to Luke's "you will conceive a child *in your womb*." In the many times that the LXX uses the expression "to conceive or have a child in the womb," the noun *qereb* is never in the underlying Hebrew.[82] Such arguments do nothing to strengthen the case based on *chaire*.

KECHARITŌMENĒ AS "FULL OF GRACE." The discussion of this phrase is not directly related to the Daughter of Zion question, but it is illustrative of the tendency to eke every drop of theological and even mariological significance from 1:28. There can be no doubt that *kecharitōmenē*, which I have translated "O favored one," does have theological significance—indeed, more obvious significance than the standard greeting *chaire* and the salutation "The Lord is with you." The use of a qualifying phrase describing the visionary is a standard feature in the biblical annunciation of birth (Step 3b in Table VIII), and the quality that is thus underlined usually has something to do with the message of the annunciation.[83] The difference of rank of the two children Ishmael and Isaac is already hinted at in the different designations of the respective mothers: "Hagar, maid of Sarah" (Gen 16:8), and "Sarah, your wife" (17:15). Joseph is called "son of David" in the Matthean annunciation (1:20) because his role as a Davidid will be to name Jesus and thus give him Davidic descent. Gideon

[81] Thus McHugh, *Mother*, 48–49, exaggerates when he says that in the OT the formula is never addressed to a person in ordinary circumstances, and that the greeting "The Lord is with you" implies that God has a formidable task in hand for Mary. He is right to point out that many times it serves as an assurance of God's helping presence (Gen 26:24; Exod 3:12; Jer 1:8), although usually not as a greeting but as an affirmative statement that God will be with someone.

[82] Laurentin, *Structure*, 68–71, points to this noun in the phrase *bᵉqirbâ* used in Gen 25:22 when the unborn Esau and Jacob are already struggling within Rebekah. Since they are within her womb, he stresses that sense of *qereb*. However, the noun covers various inner organs, including the entrails of animals; and the reference to the womb depends totally upon the context. Translations that say "the children struggled together *within her*" have caught the vagueness of the expression. It is certainly no equivalent for the Lucan *en gastri* (1:31).

[83] Audet, "L'annonce," considers these qualifying phrases almost to constitute a new name which fits the addressee for a role in God's plan.

is called a "mighty man of valor" in Judg 6:12 because God will employ his valor to liberate Israel from the Midianites.[84] Thus, Mary's designation in Luke 1:28 as *kecharitōmenē* plausibly has something to do with the annunciation to follow.

How are we to translate this passive participle from the denominative verb *charitoun?* Such a verb has the possibility of reflecting the various ideas contained in the noun *charis,* "grace, favor, charm." Some have chosen the translation "beautiful lady," since a lady who has been "graced" may be considered graceful, beautiful, charming.[85] However, Mary's physical beauty has nothing to do with the scene, and it is more plausible to interpret *kecharitōmenē* to refer to her as one who has been favored or graced by God. It is this interpretation of *kecharitōmenē* that explains why Mary "wondered what such a greeting might mean" (1:29). And Gabriel responded by insisting: "You have found favor [*charis*] with God" (1:30).[86] As the reader will be told, this *charis* which makes her *kecharitōmenē* is the grace of conceiving the Son of the Most High.

Such a theological meaning of *kecharitōmenē* which seems entirely justified by the context is to be kept distinct from another interpretation which has come about by way of the Latin rendering *gratia plena,* "full of grace."[87] It is true that a denominative verb sometimes has the sense of plenitude,[88] and certainly Luke would not be opposed to regarding the grace bestowed upon Mary as a fullness of God's favor. Some modern translations catch this by rendering *kecharitōmenē* as *"highly* favored one." But "full of grace" is too strong. Luke knew that expression since it appears literally in Acts 6:8; yet he chose not to use it here. It is open to the interpretation that Mary already possesses the grace or perfection involved, whereas for Luke Mary's special state is to be constituted by the divine favor involved in the conception of Jesus. Later theology stressed the *fullness* of grace and made it a cardinal principle of mariology, so that Mary was thought to possess every perfection possible for a creature.[89] In-

84 An additional example might be that Gabriel addresses Daniel (10:11,19) as "Man greatly beloved," or in the Greek translations as a man to whom (divine) mercy is shown or a man who is the object of (God's) desire.

85 Sirach 18:17 uses *kecharitōmenos* to describe a man who is gracious or charming.

86 The other NT instance of the relatively rare verb *charitoun* is similar in meaning: "The grace [*charis*] with which He has graced us [*charitoun*] in His beloved Son" (Eph 1:6). The verb occurs only about a dozen times in literature between the second century B.C. and the fifth century A.D. (Cambe, "La *Charis,*" 194). It was probably chosen by Luke because of a paronomasia with the preceding *chairein.*

87 The Syriac Peshitta supports this translation. The Old Latin (Codices Palatinus, Monacensis) *gratificata* was more literal but perhaps ambiguous; for the verb *gratificari* may mean "to show oneself gracious," and thus may lose the sense of *gratia* (*charis*) that Luke intended. The translation "full of grace" is not peculiarly Roman Catholic, since it was accepted by Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, and Cranmer.

88 Yet see MGNTG, II, 393–97: the dominant force of denominative verbs is rather instrumental or factitive. *Charitoun* means to constitute someone in *charis.*

89 The famous medieval *Mariale Super Missus Est,* long thought to be the work of St. Albert the Great, gives almost a classic interpretation of the plenitude of grace: Mary had

deed, it lies at the root of the axiom *numquam satis* (i.e., one cannot claim too much for Mary). No matter what one may think of this theological reasoning (and some within Roman Catholicism today would want to reconsider it), it certainly goes beyond what Luke meant by *kecharitōmenē*.[90] On this point, as on the others, it is wise to be conservative about how much Marian symbolism Luke intended in the relatively stereotyped salutation of 1:28.

3. The Ark of the Covenant in 1:35?

Many of the exegetes (Lyonnet, Sahlin, Hebert, Laurentin) who think that Luke portrayed Mary as the Daughter of Zion also find the symbolism of Mary as the Ark of the Covenant or as the Tabernacle of divine glory. The key to this symbolism is 1:35c: "Power from the Most High will overshadow [*episkiazein*] you." I have shown above (C2) that this clause and its parallel ("The Holy Spirit will come upon you") represent the language of early christology, echoing phrases used in Gospel ministry accounts of the baptism and the transfiguration. Yet the cloud of divine presence that overshadows at the transfiguration is set against the background of Peter's offer to build *tabernacles* for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah (Luke 9:34–35). This reminds us that *episkiazein*, "to overshadow" (along with *skiazein*, "to shadow") was used to describe how the cloud of God's glory cast a shadow upon the Tabernacle in the wilderness (Exod 40:35; Num 9:18,22). Indeed, the verbs for overshadow and shadow described several forms of the divine presence in the OT, e.g., the cloud overshadowing the renewed Mount Zion and its festal assemblies (Isa 4:5); the cloud overshadowing the Israelites when they departed from the desert camp (Num 10:34[36]); God overshadowing His chosen ones (Deut 33:12; Ps 91:4); and the winged cherubim overshadowing the mercy seat or top of the Ark of the Covenant (Exod 25:20; I Chr 28:18).[91]

From this background we may deduce that Luke is thinking of a divine presence overshadowing Mary, a deduction also possible from the parallel line wherein the Holy Spirit comes upon her.[92] The power of that presence creatively brings about the conception of the child, but that is not necessarily the same as Jesus being the embodiment of the divine presence in the womb of Mary.[93] I rejected above the contention that "The Lord is

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every gift, not only spiritual but secular, even above those given to the angels. See Graef, *Mary*, I, 270–73.

[90] This is admitted by Lyonnet, "L'Annonciation," 68–69, an exegete with a good control of patristic and scholastic interpretations.

[91] This may be related to a bird whose wings overshadow and protect those beneath (Pss 17:8; 57:2[1]).

[92] The parallelism with overshadowing would be heightened if I am right (footnote 51 above) in relating this action of the Holy Spirit to that of the creative Spirit of God which hovered over the face of the waters in Gen 1:2.

[93] It is in *Johannine* theology that the Divine Word "tabernacled" (John 1:14, *skēnoun*) among us, so that Jesus' body becomes the Temple (2:21).

with you" is the same as Zephaniah's "The Lord is in your midst." And it is totally a guess to assume from the verb *episkiazein* that Luke thinks of Mary as the Tabernacle or the Ark of the Covenant overshadowed by or containing the divine presence.[94] To be precise, in the OT the cherubim rather than God are said to overshadow the Ark; moreover, the Ark and Tabernacle are not the only places overshadowed by divine presence.

We have not finished the discussion of Mary as the Ark of the Covenant, for it will reappear in the next scene of the visitation (§ 12B on 1:43), even as will the theme of the Daughter of Zion. If the evidence thus far adduced for either symbolism is not convincing, the proponents argue that the evidence is cumulative. Let me reserve judgment. But in showing myself dubious thus far, I do not wish to convey the impression that in my opinion Luke did not think of Mary against the background of the OT. As I have shown in D above, he draws her dialogue from what he knows of her during the ministry. But her portrayal as a mother conceiving a child is deeply influenced by OT portraits (especially that of Hannah whose very name means "grace, favor"—see NOTE on "favored one" in 1:28), as is the whole annunciation pattern. Moreover, by stressing Mary's acceptance of God's word in 1:38, Luke has begun to associate her with those in Israel who were "poor ones" (*anawim*) in the sense of being totally dependent upon God for support. Luke will develop that theme beautifully in the Magnificat.

[94] Benoit, "L'Annonciation," 207, although not opposed to OT symbolic background for Mary, is uncertain about the applicability of the imagery of the divine presence in the Tabernacle, since the motif of being filled with glory is not present as it is in Exod 40:35. (However, that motif is not in Num 9:18,22.)

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(See also the Bibliography for Appendix IV on the virginal conception.)

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