PROPHECIES OF FUTURE GREATNESS: THE CONTRIBUTION OF GRECO-ROMAN BIOGRAPHIES TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF LUKE 1:5-4:15

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WHAT handle can the interpreter grasp to bring Luke 1:5-4:15 within the sphere of our understanding? Since the question of the sources of Luke 1-2 is well nigh impossible to answer[1] and that of Luke 3:1-4:15 has become increasingly difficult,[2] no argument can be framed with confidence on the basis of a comparison of the final form of the Gospel with its sources. An alternate route, the one chosen in this paper, is to attempt to indicate how a Greco-Roman reader/hearer of Luke-Acts would have understood Luke 1:5-4:15.[3]

Before taking this route, however, it is necessary to justify the focus on 1:5-4:15 as a coherent unit within the Third Gospel. A survey of the contents of the early chapters of Luke seems to support the focus. Before 1:5-4:15 we find the prologue (1:1-4); after it there is the frontispiece of the public ministry (4:16-30). Within 1:5-4:15 is a unit dealing with John the Baptist and Jesus in three episodes:[4] (1) 1:5-56, the annunciations of the births of John and Jesus; (2) 1:57-2:52, the births and early lives of the Baptist and Mary's son; and (3) 3:1-4:15, the adult ministry of John and the prelude to Jesus' public career. Each of these three episodes is built around a series of correspondences between the material about John and that dealing with Jesus that reflects the Lukan artistry; each is concerned to portray Jesus' superiority over John the Baptist. In all three episodes John is depicted as a prophet (1:16-17; 1:76; 3:1-6), not the Messiah (3:15ff.), whereas Jesus is pictured in all three as the Davidic Messiah (1:32-33; 1:69; 2:4, 11; 3:23-38) and Son of God (1:35; 2:49; 3:22). This internal coherence argues for 1:5-4:15's being a single thought unit in the Lukan narrative.

The major objection to such a claim is the possibility that the Third Gospel once began with 3:1ff.[5] Three reasons have recently been ad-

vanced to support this contention. First, there are alleged historiographical parallels to 3:1ff. in other Greek writings which argue for this passage's having been the original opening of the Lukan Gospel. Second, Acts 1:1, 22 may be interpreted to mean that the Gospel once began with the baptism of Jesus. Third, the placing of the genealogy in the third chapter of Luke makes more sense if that had been done before an infancy narrative had been prefixed. This problem, I think, is more apparent than real. On the one hand, the reasons for thinking that the Third Gospel originally began with 3:1ff. are not compelling.[6] (1) The evidence of the first argument cuts both ways. Of the two examples cited by Raymond Brown, the first (Josephus, *War,* 2.14.4 §284) comes in the middle of Josephus' narrative, not at the start of any main section. The second parallel (Thucydides, *History,* 2.2.1) may be the beginning of a section but is certainly not the start of the document as a whole. Given these facts, we may acknowledge that 3:1ff. is the beginning of the third episode of the unit 1:5-4:15. One should note, however, that 1:5 gives a similar, if not as elaborate, beginning for the first episode; and 1:26-27 and 2:1ff. give analogous beginnings in the first and second episodes for the material that relates to Jesus. The first argument is not persuasive. (2) The second argument depends on a given interpretation of Acts 1:1, 22. It seems just as plausible, however, to take Acts' reference to the baptism of John as a marker for the beginning of the adult career of Jesus as for the start of the Gospel. (3) Finally, the position of the genealogy is due to theological considerations. It is integral to the unit which begins with the baptism and ends with the temptation narrative and which focuses on the Son of God.[7] There is no need to resort to the hypothesis of the Third Gospel's beginning at 3:1ff. to account for its presence in chapter 3 rather than in chapters 1-2. On the other hand, the issue before us ultimately has nothing to do with earlier stages in the Third Gospel's development but with the question whether or not *in the present form* of Luke, 1:5-4:15 is a coherent narrative unit. The answer to that, I think, is "yes." This paper will focus, then, on Luke 1:5-4:15 as a unit within the Lukan Gospel which treats the life of Jesus prior to his public career.

What is the thrust of the material about Jesus in Luke 1:5-4:15? Anticipations of Jesus' destiny predominate. These anticipations are given in various forms. (1) There are two angelophanies.[8] (a) In the first, Luke 1:26-38, the angel Gabriel comes to Mary not only to announce the miraculous conception (1:35a) but also to tell of the child's destiny.

> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end. (1:32-33, RSV) . . . and the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. (1:35b)

(b) In the second, Luke 2:8-20, an angel of the Lord appears to the shepherds in the field announcing the birth of one who would be a Savior, Christ the Lord (2:11).

(2) There are four prophecies. (a) Luke 1:67-79, the first, is a prophecy of Zechariah when he was filled with the Holy Spirit (67). In the context of his predictions about John (76-79), there is praise to God for raising up a "horn of salvation" in the "house of his servant David" (69). This, of course, refers in its Lukan context to Jesus. (b) Luke 2:25-35, the second, gives us the prophecy of Simeon, to whom it had been revealed that he should not taste death before he had seen the Lord's Christ (26). In the Spirit, on seeing Jesus he blesses God.

> Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,
> according to thy word;
> for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared
> in the presence of all peoples,
> a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
> and for glory to thy people Israel. (2:29-32, RSV)

(c) In the third, Luke 2:36-38, we hear of the prophetess Anna who spoke of Jesus "to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" (38). (d) Finally, Luke 3:16-17 gives John the Baptist's messianic preaching. He speaks of the mightier one who is coming who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire, a prophecy the author of Luke-Acts apparently believed was fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2:3-4, 33).

(3) Closely related to the series of four prophecies is Luke 1:41, 42-45, which consists of a portent followed by a prophetic interpretation. When the pregnant Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth then exclaimed: "Why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy" (43-44, RSV).[9]

(4) Luke 3:21-22 has similarities to 1:41-45. It too has an event that is prophetic in nature followed by a verbal interpretation. Though not usually read as such, Luke 3:21-22 is a prayer scene consisting of a vision followed by an audition which interprets it. The Third Evangelist has

turned the narrative of Jesus' baptism into an episode of prayer in which there are an accompanying vision and audition. This is typically Lukan. (a) The Lukan emphasis on the prayer life of Jesus is well known (e.g., Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 9:28-29; 11:1; 22:32; 22:39-46; 23:34; 23:46).[10] (b) It is also characteristic of the Evangelist to have prayer accompanied by visions and auditions.[11] For example, Luke 9:28-36 mentions that Jesus was praying, that a heavenly apparition occurred—Moses and Elijah appeared—and an interpretative audition followed—"this is my Son. . . ." Acts 10 offers another excellent example. In this chapter both Cornelius and Peter are involved in prayer; both have visions; both receive auditions which interpret what is seen. The same tendency may be found elsewhere in Acts 12:5ff.; 1:14 plus 2:1ff.; Luke 22:39-46; 1:10ff. In Luke 3:21-22 while Jesus is praying there is a heavenly apparition. The Holy Spirit descends in bodily form as a dove upon him.[12] The symbolism of the dove in Mediterranean antiquity (i.e., the beneficence of the deity in love)[13] is then interpreted by a *bath qol:* "You are my Son, my beloved, in you I am well pleased."[14] Here is another anticipation of Jesus' destiny, one that will become more striking when viewed in the context of the pagan practice of divination by means of the flight of birds. In Luke 1:5-4:15, therefore, angelophanies, prophecies in the Jewish sense of the word, a portent followed by an interpretation, and a vision plus an audition combine to give numerous verbal anticipations of Jesus' destiny.

Three other pericopes also deserve attention. There are two stories about the youth in which Jesus displays his wisdom and prowess (2:41-51; 4:1-13). In the episode of the twelve year old Jesus in the temple, the wisdom of the lad predominates.[15] In the test in the wilderness, the young Son of God demonstrates his spiritual power by means of his wise use of scripture and thereby defeats his adversary. Finally, there is the genealogy (3:23-38) which traces Jesus' lineage back through David to the father of the human race, Adam, and through him to God.[16] The impact of this material will be felt fully only after our foray into the Greco-Roman milieu of Luke-Acts.

How would such material—verbal anticipations of Jesus' destiny, stories of a young prodigy, and a genealogy—have been understood by a Greco-Roman reader? The question can be sharpened. Elsewhere I have argued that Luke-Acts belongs to a type of biography in antiquity which has the life of a philosopher who is a founder of a school followed by a narrative (or list) of his successors and selected other disciples.[17] The very form (a + b) would have been a clue to the readers/hearers about what to expect. In this light, how would a Greco-Roman listener hear a

biography which had in its beginnings the components we have found in the Third Gospel in 1:5-4:15?

Suetonius' *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* is a good place to begin. In his "Life of Augustus" there is one section (94), set aside for "an account of the omens which occurred before he was born, on the very day of his birth, and afterwards. . . ." In this unit one finds at least fourteen omens which include: (a) portents interpreted by predictions (6 of the 14 items) which belong in the same general category as Luke 1:41-45; (b) dreams (3 of the 14 items)—e.g., a man dreamed of the savior of the Roman people, then on meeting Augustus for the first time, declared he was the boy about whom he had dreamed (cf. Luke 2:25-35); (c) prophecies (2 of 14 items), that is, verbal anticipations of the child's greatness and destiny (cf. the prophecies of Luke 1-3); (d) childhood prodigies (2 of 14 items), which tell us already that such childhood exploits were regarded as omens of the youth's destiny (cf. Luke 2:41-51; 4:1-13); (e) reference to a miraculous conception by Apollo (1 of 14 items), though the treatment of Augustus' family belongs to another section of the narrative about his pre-public life. In this section of omens from the beginning of Augustus' life we find all of the types of material that we noted in Luke 1:5-4:15 except a genealogy. It is interesting to note that here, as in Luke 1:5-4:15, the main thrust is on anticipations of the hero's destiny. His "Life of Augustus" is, moreover, typical of Suetonius' efforts.

In his "Life of Tiberius" 14, Suetonius speaks of Tiberius' "strong and unwavering confidence in his destiny, which he had conceived from his early years because of omens and predictions." There follow seven such omens and predictions, all of which belong to the category of prophecies. There are no childhood prodigies, nor is there a miraculous conception. In 1-4 we hear of the stock from which Tiberius derived his origins.

Suetonius' "Life of Claudius" 1-2 treats the emperor's ancestry. In 7 there is one portent of a prophetic nature. When Claudius entered the Forum for the first time carrying the fasces, an eagle lighted upon his shoulder. This was regarded as prophetic because of the Roman use of the flight of birds of omen to discern the decrees of Fate.[18] A classic case, as described by Plutarch, is that of Numa who was chosen king after Romulus.[19] Numa said that before assuming the kingship his authority must first be ratified by Heaven. So the chief of the augurs turned the veiled head of Numa toward the south, while he, standing behind him with his right hand on his head, prayed aloud and turned his eyes in all directions to observe whatever birds or other omens might be sent from the gods. When the proper birds approached, then Numa put on his royal

robes and went down where he was received as the "most beloved of the gods" *(theophilestaton)*. In such a thought world, the Lukan baptismal narrative would have been viewed as an omen of Jesus' status as the beloved Son of God.

Three other Lives from Suetonius' work will suffice. In the "Life of Nero" 1-6, the emperor's family is treated. In 6 we are told that omens at his birth led to "direful predictions." Four examples follow, including one on the day of his purification (cf. Luke 2:22ff.). In the "Life of Vespasian" 1-2, Suetonius treats the emperor's family line. At the beginning of 5 we hear that Vespasian began to hope for imperial dignity "because of the following portents." At least fifteen examples follow, including the prophecy of Josephus when he was captured during the first Jewish Revolt against Rome. Suetonius' "Life of Titus" includes both prophecies of his future rule (2 and 5:2) and a note about his youthful excellencies in body and mind (3). From Suetonius' *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* one can conclude that this biographer believed a Life should include something about a hero's family lineage, prophecies of his future greatness, and examples of childhood prodigies as part of his prepublic career. Sometimes there might be a reference to a miraculous conception. Is Suetonius to be considered typical of the Greco-Roman biographical tradition in this regard? The answer is "yes."

Portents, prophecies, and omens are widely used in biographical literature of Mediterranean antiquity for the period of a hero's life before he enters upon his public career. For example, Quintus Curtius,[20] Plutarch,[21] Philostratus,[22] Pseudo-Callisthenes,[23] the *Historiae Augustae*,[24] and the biographical section in Josephus' *Antiquities* dealing with Moses[25] all contain this type of information in the pre-public lives of great men. A.D. Nock rightly said: "It was normally expected that a great man would be heralded by signs and prophecies."[26] The convention, being subject to perversion, could be ridiculed in satire, as in Lucian's *Alexander the False Prophet*. Before Alexander and his partner Cocconas entered into their public routine, they went, says Lucian, to Chalcedon and buried bronze tablets, stating that very soon Asclepios and his father Apollo would come to Pontus and settle. When the tablets were found, the people voted to build a temple. Alexander then came proclaiming an oracle that he was the scion of Perseus. Next a Sibylline prediction of his activity was produced. This series of prophecies set the stage for the false prophet's public activity. Such prophecies are a convention in biographical literature.

Childhood prodigies are just as frequently a part of the Lives of great men in Mediterranean civilization. It was a commonplace of Hellenistic biography to relate tales of the precocious intelligence and of the unusual power and authority of the youths of destiny.[27] Quintus Curtius,[28] Plutarch,[29] Philostratus,[30] Pseudo-Callisthenes,[31] the *Historiae Augustae*,[32] Josephus,[33] and Philo[34] reflect the practice.

References to miraculous conceptions are also an integral part of the biographical tradition, especially when the hero's Life is told in terms of the myth of the immortals.[35] Quintus Curtius,[36] Plutarch,[37] Philostratus,[38] and Pseudo-Callisthenes[39] give abundant examples of this tendency.

Finally, one expects to find material on the hero's family lineage which may eventuate in a genealogy. One may compare Plutarch,[40] Philostratus,[41] the *Historiae Augustae*,[42] and Josephus.[43]

The point is made. The biographical tradition of the Greco-Roman world would have conditioned a person in the Mediterranean region at the end of the first century C.E. to expect an account of the hero's career before he embarked on his public activity which included material on his family background, perhaps a reference to a miraculous conception, along with omens and other predictions of his future greatness, including childhood prodigies. When the reader confronted Luke 1:5-4:15, this narrative unit fulfilled these expectations in a remarkable way.

What was the purpose of such material in the narrative of a hero's life prior to his public career? For the sake of analysis, it will help if we divide the materials into two categories: omens, portents, and prophecies on the one hand, and birth, family, and childhood prodigies on the other. (1) Many Greco-Roman people believed that there existed a divine order of things which could be known by humans either through the initiative of the gods (i.e., revelation of when they were either angry or benevolent) or through the initiative of human beings skilled in unlocking such secrets (e.g., astrology). The prophecies of the biographies fit into this context. When Philostratus says of the portent at the birth of Apollonius, "No doubt the gods were giving a revelation—an omen of his brilliance, his exaltation above earthly things, his closeness to heaven,"[44] he was speaking of the belief that Tacitus alludes to with reference to Vespasian. Certain events, says Tacitus, revealed "the favour of heaven and a certain partiality of the gods toward him."[45] Through omens the gods revealed their preferences. Tacitus also tells how astrologers could, on their initiative, uncover fate. He says that Otho accepted the astrologer Ptolemy's "prophecies as if they were genuine warnings of fate disclosed by Ptolemy's skill. . . ."[46] In a similar manner Suetonius can say that Domitian knew the very hour and manner of his death because "in his

youth astrologers had predicted all this to him. . . .''[47] Since either divine initiative or human skill could reveal one's destiny, Suetonius could write of Augustus:

> Having reached this point, it will not be out of place to add an account of the omens which occurred before he was born, on the very day of his birth, and afterwards, from which it was possible to anticipate and perceive his future greatness and uninterrupted good fortune.[48]

Sometimes, of course, such omens were not believed until after their fulfillment. Tacitus tells us that the secrets of Fate and the signs and omens which predestined *(destinatum)* Vespasian and his sons for power ''we believed only after his success was secured.''[49] And even a disregard of omens often pointed to acceptance of the assumption that there existed a higher order which was revealed through signs. So Tacitus tells us that Galba's disregard for omens was due to the fact that we ''cannot avoid the fixed decrees of fate, by whatever signs revealed.''[50] Given this way of thinking, it is to be expected that a biography of a great man would often contain one or more omens of the destiny allotted the individual and that they would be given during the period prior to his public career.

(2) When we focus on the family lineage, birth, and childhood of the hero, we find sometimes an emphasis on the supernatural dimensions of them, sometimes an emphasis on their natural character. On the one hand, sometimes a miraculous conception is joined with the theme of its manifestation in youthful prowess. For example, in Plutarch's ''Life of Romulus,'' Numitor beholds Remus' superiority in stature and strength in body and notes that his acts correspond with his looks, when as yet the twins' identity was unknown. From this, Plutarch says, he grasped the truth of Remus' identity—that is, he was a divinely conceived child of a noble family.[51] Or in his ''Theseus,'' Plutarch remarks about the youthful triumphs of the hero who was offering ''noble deeds and achievements as the manifesting mark of his noble birth.''[52] On the other hand, sometimes the youth's behavior is understood as a natural phenomenon as in Plutarch's ''Demetrius.'' He gives a story of Demetrius' boyhood and says: ''This . . . is an illustration of the strong natural bent of Demetrius towards kindness and justice.''[53] Whether the emphasis is on the supernatural or the natural, such stories of youthful behavior were taken as anticipations of the hero's future character. Plutarch says of Alcibiades: ''His character, in later life, displayed . . . many strong passions. . . . This is clear from the stories recorded of his boyhood.''[54]

Again, the biographical tradition used a combination of birth, family, and boyhood stories to give anticipations about the future life of the hero. It would not be amiss to say that all of these components functioned also as prophecies of the character of the public career of the subject of the biography. If this was their purpose in the Greco-Roman biographies, then this is how a reader/hearer of Luke would most probably have taken the material of a similar nature in Luke 1:5-4:15.[55]

Virtually the totality of the material about Jesus in Luke 1:5-4:15 would have been regarded as an anticipation of his later public greatness. The angelophanies, the prophecies of a Jewish type, the portent plus its interpretation, the vision plus its audition, the two stories of childhood prodigies, and the genealogy (and miraculous conception) would combine to foretell/foreshadow the type of person Jesus would be in his public ministry which began at Luke 4:16-30.[56] By writing in this way, the Evangelist was simply following the conventions of Greco-Roman biographical literature.

The Jewish cast to Luke's material[57] is no obstacle to this thesis. Philo's *Life of Moses*, the biographical section on the career of Moses in Josephus' *Antiquities*, and Josephus' autobiography show that the Hellenistic biographical tradition made its impact on Judaism before and alongside of its impact on Christianity. Charles Perrot's collection of haggadic materials relating to the infancy/childhood of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Samson, Samuel, Elijah, and Moses makes the same point.[58] The tendency in Mediterranean culture at large provoked a renewed interest in the early lives of heroes in Jewish circles which surfaced in the haggadah. To find material with a Jewish cast but presented in the mold of biographical convention is no impossibility, therefore. It is again rather what one would expect in an early Christian gospel.

Are we justified in speaking of a genre of an account of the pre-public careers of great men in Mediterranean antiquity? I think so. If so, then it would be a bit more inclusive than the recognized genre of infancy narratives of famous men.[59] In any case, the evidence assembled in this paper has enabled us to see that Luke made use of the conventional form of expression in his time and place for telling the story of the pre-public life of a hero.[60]

Mediterranean culture usually assumed that there was a divine order with some type of predetermined plan for human life. This order or plan was disclosed either through divine or human initiative in ''prophecy'' of some sort. Prophecy, both oral and written, belonged to the propaganda strategies of Mediterranean religion generally.[61] It was not the preserve of

Jewish and Christian traditions only. In using the argument from prophecy, then, Christians were merely working within the framework of common cultural assumptions. The particulars varied but the underlying structural assumptions were similar.[62]

NOTES

[1]For a concise survey of the discussion, see Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977) 244-50; Charles H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (SBLMS 20; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1974), 45, 50.

[2]Cf. Joseph B. Tyson, "Source Criticism of the Gospel of Luke," in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, ed. Charles H. Talbert. ABPRSSS, 5 (Danville, Va.: Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, 1978) 24-39.

[3]This type of approach has proved effective at other points in the study of Luke-Acts: e.g., G. B. Miles and G. Trompf, "Luke and Antiphon: The Theology of Acts 27-28 in the Light of Pagan Beliefs about Divine Retribution, Pollution, and Shipwreck," *HTR* 69 (1976) 259-67; Fred Veltman, "The Defense Speeches of Paul in Acts," in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, 243-56; Vernon K. Robbins, "By Land and By Sea: The We-Passages and Ancient Sea Voyages," in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, 215-42.

[4]Talbert, *Literary Patterns*, 44-48.

[5]Most recently, Raymond E. Brown, "Luke's Method in the Annunciation Narrative of Chapter One," in *No Famine in the Land*, ed. J. W. Flanagan and A. W. Robinson (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975) 180; *The Birth of the Messiah*, 240.

[6]Cf. Paul S. Minear, "Luke's Use of the Birth Stories," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. L. E. Keck and J. L. Martyn (Nashville: Abingdon, 1966) 111-30.

[7]Talbert, *Literary Patterns*, 117-18.

[8]On the form of these two narratives see G. F. Wood, "The Form and Composition of the Lucan Annunciation Narratives," STD Thesis, Catholic University of America, 1962; Benjamin Hubbard, "Commissioning Stories in Luke-Acts: A Study of Their Antecedents, Form and Content," *Semeia*, 8 (1977) 103-26.

[9]Cf. Gen 25:22-23. John Drury, *Tradition and Design in Luke* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1976) 60, says: "In both instances the phenomenon is prophetic."

[10]Cf. Allison Trites, "The Prayer Motif in Luke-Acts," in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, 168-86.

[11]Cf. 2 Esdr 9:26ff.; 2 Bar 21:1ff. for Jewish parallels.

[12]Leander E. Keck, "The Spirit and the Dove," *NTS* 17 (1970-71) 63-67, argues that *hōs peristeran* originally was adverbial, specifying the action of the Spirit. On Hellenistic soil there was a shift from adverbial to adjectival meaning, clearly evident in Luke. In the Third Gospel it is the dove-like form that is meant.

[13]E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953-) VIII, 40-41, after a survey of the uses of the dove in pagan, Jewish, and Christian tradition, concludes: "Beneath the variety of settings the dove itself shows a unity, and that unity, we may now see, lies essentially in the fact that the dove represents the beneficence of divinity in love, the loving character of divine life itself."

[14]Ultimately the textual question must be settled by determining the mind of the

Evangelist. If Luke 1-2 is an integral part of the Gospel, then Luke 1:35 indicates Jesus was not begotten Son of God at his baptism. The Western reading is thereby excluded.

[15]Henk J. de Jonge, "Sonship, Wisdom, Infancy: Luke 2:41-51a," *NTS* 24 (1978) 317-54.

[16]Rodney T. Hood, "The Genealogies of Jesus," in *Early Christian Origins*, ed. A. P. Wikgren (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961) 1-15, still seems to me to offer the best clue to Luke's genealogy.

[17]Talbert, *Literary Patterns*, chapter 8; *What Is A Gospel? The Genre of the Canonical Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977).

[18]Cf. Plutarch, "Romulus," 9 and Livy 1:7:1 for the use of such means to settle the quarrel between Romulus and Remus. Plutarch, in this context, speaks of the continuing Roman practice of taking auguries from the flight of birds.

[19]Plutarch, "Numa," 7:1-3.

[20]Quintus Curtius, *History of Alexander*, 1 (a portent plus an interpretative prophecy).

[21]Plutarch, "Romulus," 2:4; "Pericles," 6:2-3; "Alexander," 3:1, 4-5; "Caius Marius," 3:3-4:1; "Lycurgus," 5, etc.

[22]Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, 1:5.

[23]Pseudo-Callisthenes, *Alexander Romance*.

[24]"Hadrian," 2:4, 8, 9; "Severus," 1:7-8; "Antonius Pius," 3:1-5.

[25]*Antiquities*, 2.9.2-3 §215-16. John Drury, *Tradition and Design in Luke's Gospel*, 47, says: "The resemblance of this to the prophetic canticles in Luke 1 and 2 needs no advertisement." Cf. also 1 Enoch 106:13-19 (prophecy about Noah's destiny at his birth) and the Genesis Aprocryphon 2 which has a similar story about Noah.

[26]A. D. Nock, *Conversion* (Oxford University Press, 1933) 240.

[27]de Jonge, "Sonship, Wisdom, Infancy: Luke 2:41-51a," 341.

[28]Quintus Curtius, *History of Alexander*, 1.

[29]Plutarch, "Romulus," 8 (overthrow of a tyrant); 6; "Alexander," 5:1 (wisdom); "Solon," 2; "Themistocles," 2:1; "Cicero," 2:2; "Theseus," 6:4 (prowess and wisdom); "Dion," 4:2.

[30]Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, 1:7:11.

[31]Pseudo-Callisthenes, *Alexander Romance* (a number of childhood wonders, e.g., one of wisdom, one of strength, one of self-control, one of peacemaking, two of reliance on persuasion instead of war, one of respect for his father).

[32]"Severus," 1:4.

[33]*Antiquities*, 2.9.6 §231; 2.9.7 §233; 2.10.1-2 §238ff. Cf. also 1 Enoch 106:11 where Noah blesses God while still in the hands of the midwife.

[34]*Life of Moses*, 1:5:20-24; 1:6:25-29. Cf. also Jubilees 11-12 (childhood prodigies of Abraham).

[35]Charles H. Talbert, "The Concept of Immortals in Mediterranean Antiquity," *JBL* 94 (1975) 419-36.

[36]Quintus Curtius, *History of Alexander*, 1.

[37]Plutarch, "Theseus," 2, 6, 36:3 (begotten by Poseidon); "Romulus," 2:5; 4:2; "Alexander," 3:1-2.

[38]Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, 1:4:6.

[39]Pseudo-Callisthenes, *Alexander Romance*.

[40]Plutarch, "Theseus," 3; "Fabius Maximus," 1; "Brutus," 1-2; "Pyrrhus," 1; "Lycurgus," 1:4 (genealogy tracing his lineage back to Heracles).

[41]Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, 1:4.

[42]"Hadrian," 1:1-2; "Antonius Pius," 1:1-7.

[43]*Antiquities* 2.9.6 §229 (genealogy tracing Moses back to Abraham); *Life* 1 (the genealogy of Josephus).

[44]Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, 1:5 (LCL).

[45]Tacitus, *Histories*, 4:81.

[46]Tacitus, *Histories*, 1:22.

[47]Suetonius, "Domitian," 14.

[48]Suetonius, "Augustus," 94 (LCL).

[49]Tacitus, *Histories*, 1:10.

[50]Tacitus, *Histories*, 1:18.

[51]Plutarch, "Romulus," 7:3-4.

[52]Plutarch, "Theseus," 7.

[53]Plutarch, "Demetrius," 4:4.

[54]Plutarch, "Alcibiades," 2:1.

[55]John Drury, *Tradition and Design*, 131, says the order of the temptations in Luke places the Jerusalem temptation last because Jerusalem is the end and goal of Luke's gospel. "The temptations are thus made prophetic of Jesus' course."

[56]Raymond Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 28, 481-82 (following Laurentin, *Jesus*, 147-58) recognizes this principle for Luke 2:41-51. This essay suggests the principle holds for the totality of Luke 1:5-4:15 as it relates to Jesus.

[57]E.g., echoes of Old Testament material that are often called midrashic and the use of an annunciation form characteristic of the Jewish scriptures.

[58]Charles Perrot, "Les recits d'enfance dans la haggada," *RdSR* 55 (1967) 481-518, especially 507.

[59]Raymond Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 561, says the first two chapters of the Third Gospel belong to the genre of "infancy narratives of famous men."

[60]As always, the question of genre is separable from the question of historicity. Cf. Charles H. Talbert, "Oral and Independent or Literary and Interdependent? A Response to Albert B. Lord," in *The Relationships among the Gospels: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue*, ed. W. O. Walker, Jr. (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1978) 99-100.

[61]A. D. Nock, *Conversion*, 250.

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