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**Lukan and Johannine Tradition in the Qur'an: A Story of *Auslegungsgeschichte*
and *Wirkungsgeschichte***

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Introduction

In the context of two editions of *Beyond the New Testament* (1990, 2000) and many other publications, Heikki Räsänen has written a book entitled *Marcion, Muhammad, and the Mahatma* (1997).¹ The latter book has gained even greater importance since September 11, 2001. The destruction of the two towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and the attack on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. – and President George W. Bush's subsequent wars on Afghanistan and Iraq – have raised especially serious issues about the relation of Christians, Jews, and Muslims throughout the world. It was serendipitous that my two special colleagues, Professors Gordon D. Newby and Laurie L. Patton, and I had used Räsänen's later book in a Ph.D. seminar on Comparative Sacred Texts during Spring, 2000. My familiarity with Räsänen's book helped to persuade me, by December, 2001, to begin programmatic investigation of biblical tradition in the Qur'an. During the last two years, then, investigation of biblical tradition from the Hebrew Bible to the Qur'an has become my special way of moving "beyond the New Testament." With the aid of wonderful colleagues in Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies at Emory University, I have begun this new venture with an equal measure of trepidation and excitement.²

¹ Heikki Räsänen, *Marcion, Muhammad and the Mahatma: Exegetical Perspectives on the Encounter of Cultures and Faiths* (London: SCM Press, 1997).

² See an initial presentation of some of this work in Vernon K. Robbins and Gordon D. Newby, "A Prolegomenon to the Relation of the Qur'an and the Bible," in John C. Reeves (ed.), *Bible and Qur'an: Essays in Scriptural Intertextuality* (Symposium Series; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 23-42.

The following essay focuses on a special story about New Testament tradition that began to emerge during my investigations of biblical tradition in the Qur'an during 2002. Little by little, I began to see that Jesus tradition in the Qur'an emerges from modification and elaboration of the Gospel of Luke from the second through the sixth centuries in the world east of Palestine and Western Syria. Having become familiar during the early 1980s with recitation, abbreviation, expansion, addition, and elaboration as techniques of composition, from which came *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* and my essay on "Progymnastic Rhetorical Composition,"³ the knowledge of these techniques guided me in observations about the transmission of Lukan tradition into the context of Qur'anic tradition. Then I began to deepen the analysis with strategies of socio-rhetorical interpretation as they appear in *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse* and *Exploring the Texture of Texts*.⁴ I began to realize that it is necessary to expand the traditional concepts of *Auslegungsgeschichte* ("history of interpretation") and *Wirkungsgeschichte* ("history of influence")⁵ beyond Christian tradition into the Qur'an and Islamic interpretation of New Testament tradition. The present essay is an initial account of the transmission, modification, supplementation, and appropriation of Lukan tradition in Christian, and then Muslim, tradition from the second through the sixth centuries.

It will be helpful to begin with a discussion simply of the first three Gospels in the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, and Luke.⁶ A reader of the New Testament may be surprised to discover there is no notable presence of Matthean or Markan content in the

³ Vernon K. Robbins, "Progymnastic Rhetorical Composition and Pre-Gospel Traditions: A New Approach," in *The Synoptic Gospels: Source Criticism and the New Literary Criticism*, edited by Camille Focant. BETL 110. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993: 111-147; Burton L. Mack and Vernon K. Robbins, *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge Press, 1989).

⁴ Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (New York/London: Routledge, 1996) and *idem*, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1996). Online: <http://www.emory.edu/COLLEGE/RELIGION/faculty/robbins/SRI/index.html>.

⁵ See Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary* (trans. W. C. Linss; Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1989), 95-99.

⁶ From this point on, reference to Matthew, Mark, or Luke is a reference to a Gospel book and its content, not to an author of one or more books.

Qur'an. Rather, items in the Qur'an that may appear to be related to Matthean or Markan verses are there either because they are also present in Lukan tradition or because they are interwoven with Lukan tradition in Tatian's *Diatessaron*, which was a highly influential form of Gospel tradition in the world east of Palestine and Western Syria.⁷ In other words, Qur'anic tradition about Jesus exhibits a special relation to Luke in the New Testament and to Gospels outside the New Testament containing a special relation to Luke.⁸ As this story unfolds, a special relation between the Gospel of Luke and the Gospel of John will also appear. The story about transmission of "Gospel of Luke tradition" in Christianity is, therefore, quite complex. Once a reader sees the overall outline of the story of the transmission of the Gospel of Luke and its relation to the Gospel of John, its basic features are quite easy to remember. In the end, one may acquire a new appreciation for the Gospel of Luke and its role in Christianity through the centuries.

Marcion's Gospel of the Lord (Luke)

As every careful reader of the New Testament knows, Luke is the only canonical Gospel that recounts the birth of John the Baptist, and, as a result, that refers to Zechariah and Elizabeth, his father and mother (1:5-25, 57-80). An informed reader also knows that Luke is the only canonical Gospel that features Jesus in the Jerusalem Temple at twelve years of age (2:41-52), showing in public his special wisdom and relation to God. These stories, along with other phenomena like the sending out of the Seventy (10:1-22), give Luke a special place among the New Testament Gospels. In addition, the promise to Zechariah and the pregnancy of Elizabeth (1:5-25) in Luke create events in the story that are earlier than the first events in Mark or Matthew. All of these features in Luke become

⁷ William L. Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron: Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance, and History in Scholarship* (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 25; Leiden/NewYork/Köln: E.J. Brill, 1994); Tjitze Baarda, *Essays on the Diatessaron* (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing, 1994).

⁸ Gospels not in the New Testament regularly are called "extra-canonical" Gospels, which means "Gospels outside the biblical canon," which includes the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible), the Old Testament Apocrypha (often called "deutero-canonical" writings), and the New Testament.

important as the Gospels traverse the centuries together after the emergence of Christianity as an identifiable tradition.

For this essay, the special drama of the travels of Lukan tradition into the world east of Palestine and Western Syria begins in the second century with a man named Marcion.⁹ Marcion was a wealthy ship-owner and bishop's son born in Pontus at Sinope,¹⁰ a harbor city on the Black Sea where the coastline extends east to harbor cities directly north of the Tigris-Euphrates region. After Marcion went to Rome about 140 CE and joined the Christian congregation there, he was excommunicated in July 144 CE. Separating himself from the church of Rome, Marcion founded his own church and established a hierarchy of bishops, priests, and deacons, with the result that Justin could report ten years after Marcion's excommunication that "his church has spread, 'over the whole of mankind'."¹¹ There were many Marcionite communities especially in Syria through the fifth century, and some were still in existence at the beginning of the Medieval Period.

On the basis of careful reading of the epistles of Paul, Marcion decided that Christians should have only two documents of faith, which he called the *Gospel* and the *Apostle*. The *Gospel* was a version of the Gospel of Luke with Old Testament passages eliminated from it, which he was convinced was the "my gospel" to which Paul referred in his letters.¹² The *Apostle* contained ten letters of Paul, without including 1-2 Timothy or Titus (the pastoral letters), or the Epistle to the Hebrews. He placed Galatians first, changed Ephesians to the Epistle to the Laodiceans (see Colossians 4:16), and "purified" all of them by excluding recitations of Old Testament verses or references to things written in the law and the prophets. Marcion supplemented the *Gospel* (Luke) and the *Apostle* (letters of Paul) with his own *Antitheses*, which gathered Old Testament passages

⁹ See Räisänen, *Marcion, Muhammad and the Mahatma*, 64-80.

¹⁰ Johannes Quasten, *Patrology. Volume 1* (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1992), 268.

¹¹ Quasten, *Patrology*, 1:268.

¹² My gospel: Rom 2:16; 16:25; our gospel: 2 Cor 4:3; 1 Thess 1:5; 2 Thess 1:8; 2:14; Gal 1:11. See Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 35.

that showed "the bad character" of the God of the Jews and explained why it was necessary to exclude these verses from holy scripture.¹³

Marcion's writing activity created the designation of "a written document called 'the gospel',"¹⁴ which it set alongside the *Apostle* (ten letters of Paul) and *Antitheses*. The result was a distinction in Christianity, for the first time, between old scriptures of Israel and new Christian scriptures. Prior to this time, the "writings" (*graphai*) of Israel were the special "scriptures" early Christians read, and these scriptures intermingled in various ways with letters and "reminiscences" (*apomnēmoneumata*) of early Christian apostles. Viewing the writing activity of Marcion with a special eye on Lukan tradition suggests a privileging of the Gospel of Luke, rather than one of the other New Testament Gospels. In this context, Lukan tradition was first abbreviated in the Gospel itself, but then it was elaborated by means of ten letters of Paul and a treatise that explains the necessity to focus on "new scripture" rather than "old scripture." The entire process was designed to teach a person how to exclude "old Israelite scripture" from "new Christian scripture."

Immediately, of course, the story about Lukan tradition becomes more complex. A Christian named Irenaeus (ca. 180 CE) tells us that Marcion's Luke "removes all that is written respecting the generation of the Lord, and sets aside a great deal of the teaching of the Lord's discourses in which the Lord is recorded as most clearly confessing that the creator of the universe is his Father."¹⁵ This means that Marcion wanted Jesus to descend from heaven in the form of a grown man, rather than to be generated as a baby that was born on earth. In pursuit of his goal, Marcion did not want Luke to contain the stories of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus in Luke 1-2, or the preaching of John the Baptist (3:2-20), the Baptism of Jesus (3:21-22), the genealogy of Jesus (3:23-38), or the Testing of Jesus (4:1-13). Reconstructions of Marcion's version of Luke, therefore, begin with Luke 3:1/4:31: "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Jesus descended [out of heaven] into Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and was teaching [in the synagogue] on the Sabbath days; and they were

¹³ Quasten, *Patrology*, 1:271.

¹⁴ Koester, *Gospels*, 36.

¹⁵ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.25.1; Koester, *Gospels*, 334.

astonished at his doctrine, for his word had authority."¹⁶ Without being generated by humans, Jesus descends into the world (Capernaum) from the heaven of the Creator and begins to offer salvation to people (Tertullian, *Adv Haer* IV.7). After first appearing in Capernaum, Jesus goes to Nazareth and addresses people in the synagogue with his authority and power without reading from Isaiah (4:16ab, 21a, 23).¹⁷ Marcion's version of Luke therefore omitted all of Luke 1-2, most of Luke 3, and some of Luke 4 – in other words, major portions of the beginning of the Lukan account of Jesus' life.

As mentioned above, Marcion's Luke regularly omitted portions of verses referring to Old Testament scripture. Thus, Luke 24:44-46 appears to have omitted "that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled. Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written." With this omission, these verses read:

44a And he said to them, "These are the words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, [omit 44b-46a] 46b that thus it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day ..."¹⁸

According to early witnesses, Marcion also omitted references to Jesus' Father as the Creator of the earth, since the God of Israel was the Demiurge who created the earth, while Jesus' Father was the God above all things. Thus, omitting "Father" and "earth" from Luke 10:21, Marcion revised the verse to read: "I thank you Lord of Heaven, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants."¹⁹ This means that Marcion "abbreviated" the Gospel of Luke in a context where he gave it a place of privilege by selecting it alone as "the Gospel of the Lord." This privileged Gospel was the beginning point for elaboration of the meaning of the Gospel through Pauline letters that argue what the Gospel "is" and Antitheses that argue what the Gospel "is not." The Gospel is a story about Jesus' descent in the form of a man into an authoritative ministry that ended in suffering, death, and ascension back

¹⁶ Epiphanius, *Panarion*, No. 42 (Dindorf, *Opera II*, 315); Tertullian, *Adv Marc* IV.7. Online: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Ithaca/3827/Library.html>.

¹⁷ Tertullian, *Adv Marc* IV.7.

¹⁸ Tertullian, *Adv Marc* IV.43.

¹⁹ Epiphanius, *Panarion* No. 42 (Dindorf); Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* IV.25.

into heaven. This Gospel is not a story that continues the history of Israel's prophets, sages, or kings. Rather, it is a story that breaks into the created world from the highest heaven, where God the unseen Father dwells.

When the history of Lukan tradition is viewed "backwards" from Jesus tradition in the Qur'an, an interpreter sees Marcion's activity as the beginning of a process of subtracting from, adding to, interpreting, and reconfiguring Lukan tradition about Jesus. This process, which has not been displayed programmatically in previous accounts of the *Auslegungsgeschichte* and *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the Gospel of Luke, is the topic of this essay.

Canonical Luke

Viewed from the perspective of Marcion's version of the Gospel of Luke, "canonical" Luke (the one in our editions of the New Testament) contains a "backfilling" of the story in Marcion's Gospel of the Lord to include the births, naming, blessing, and circumcising of John the Baptist and Jesus (1:5-2:40), Jesus' public session with teachers in the Jerusalem Temple at twelve years of age (2:41-52), the baptism of Jesus in the context of John's preaching (3:1-22), the genealogy of Jesus (3:23-38), Jesus' responses from Deuteronomy to the devil in the Testing (4:1-13), and Jesus' reading of Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth (4:16c-22). In other words, canonical Luke contains information that fills Marcion's Gospel "backwards" by telling about important births (namely the births of John the Baptist and Jesus) and events prior to Jesus' adult appearance in Capernaum and Nazareth. As we will see, this process of "backfilling" of Lukan tradition continues in Christian writing in a manner that is important for understanding the content of the story of Jesus in the Qur'an.

Gospel of Luke, Infancy Gospel of Thomas, and Gospel of John

The next Gospel of importance for our discussion is the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, which is not in the New Testament but probably was written during or shortly after Marcion's activity in the second century CE. The earliest existing manuscript for

this Gospel is a sixth century Syriac manuscript in the British Museum.²⁰ The existence of this manuscript exhibits the popularity of this Gospel in eastern Christianity during the time of the emergence of Qur'anic tradition about Jesus. This Gospel contains a "backfilling" from the Lukan story of the twelve year old Jesus in the Jerusalem Temple (Luke 2:41-52; InfThom 19:1-12) to Jesus playing on a Sabbath day at five years of age (InfThom 2:1-3). In other words, the Infancy Gospel of Thomas begins with Jesus at five years of age and reaches its end point in the Lukan story of Jesus in the Temple at twelve years of age. There are two items of special importance in the Infancy Gospel of Thomas for the story of the transmission of Lukan tradition in this essay.

The initial insight of importance emerges with the special prominence of Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the account of Jesus in the Temple at twelve years of age at the end of the Infancy Gospel of Thomas. When Jesus' parents return to Jerusalem and find Jesus in the Temple, Infancy Thomas names "His mother Mary" as the major actor in the event (InfThom 19:6). In contrast, Luke 2:48 emphasizes the "astonishment of his parents" and the entire Lukan account never names Jesus' mother as "Mary." In InfThom 19:6, Mary "comes to" Jesus and begins to interrogate him about his "coming back up" to Jerusalem after they had started home (InfThom 19:2).²¹ In InfThom 19:8-10, Mary's action calls forth a three-step, public interchange that is an addition to Luke 2:48-49. First, the "scribes and Pharisees" (names never appearing in the Lukan account)²² ask Mary if she is "the mother of this child" (19:8). Second, when Mary identifies herself as the mother of Jesus, the scribes and Pharisees say to her, "Blessed are you among women, because God has blessed the fruit of your womb! For we have never seen nor ever heard such glory and such virtue and wisdom." The Infancy Thomas account, then, transports language from Elizabeth in Luke 1:42 to scribes and Pharisees in the Jerusalem Temple when Jesus is twelve years old. These activities focus in a special way on Mary, placing her in a central position of action as the mother of Jesus. The overall effect is to

²⁰ S. Gero, "The Infancy Gospel of Thomas: A Study of the Textual and Literary Problems," *NovT* 13 (1971): 46-80.

²¹ Cf. Luke 2:43, where Jesus simply "remains in Jerusalem."

²² The Lukan account identifies those present with Jesus in the Temple as "teachers" (*didaskaloi*: Luke 2:46; cf. InfThom 19:4).

heighten the image of the mother of Jesus as blessed by God. In addition, through the special role of Mary it emphasizes the role of God as the "true" Father of Jesus and the one in whose house (InfThom 19:7/Luke 2:49) Jesus has shown his amazing glory, virtue and wisdom (InfThom 19:10).

In addition to the emphasis on Mary at the end of the story, *topoi* central to the Gospel of John energize and "theologize" Lukan tradition throughout the Infancy Gospel of Thomas. This occurs in three basic ways.

First, Infancy Thomas opens with Jesus "playing creation" (InfThom 2:1-7). While playing in a rushing stream, Jesus separates some of the flowing water into ponds and purifies it with a single command (2:1-2). Then he makes (*poiēsas*) soft clay (2:3) and shapes (*eplasen*) it into twelve sparrows (2:3, 4). When Jesus is confronted with violation of the sabbath, he claps his hands and brings the sparrows to life and to flight through a command to them (2:4-6). Jesus' separation of the water into ponds with a command is reminiscent of God's separation of water in the creation account in Gen 1:6-10. Likewise, Jesus' "making" of soft clay is reminiscent of God's making (*poiein*) of earth and other things throughout creation.²³ In addition, God shapes (*eplasen*) the birds of the air out of mud in LXX Gen 2:19. Moreover, God brings birds to life with a command in Gen 1:20. The ability of Jesus to "play creation" is an imitation of the Genesis account of creation. But it is not only this. It is an extension of John 1:1-4 into the childhood of Jesus. In John, Jesus, who is the Word (*logos*), caused all things to "become" (*egeneto*), because life (*zōē*) is in him. In Infancy Thomas, Jesus can cause life by making soft clay, forming it into birds, and making these birds "living" (InfThom 2:6: *zōntes*). Jesus is able to do these things, because he is the Word through whom all things were made (John 1:4)! While Infancy Thomas ends with Lukan tradition, therefore, it begins with Johannine tradition.

Second, the miraculous things Jesus is able to perform in Infancy Thomas are called signs (*sēmeia*) three times in the mode of Johannine tradition,²⁴ rather than powers (*dynameis*) in the mode of Synoptic Gospel tradition.²⁵ Thus, like Jesus performs signs in

²³ LXX Gen 1:1, 7, 16, 21, 25-27, 31; 2:2-4, 18.

²⁴ John 2:11, 23; 3:2; 4:54; 6:2, 14, 26,; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18, 37; 20:30.

²⁵ Matt 7:22; 11:20-21, 23; 13:54, 58; 14:2 par *et passim*.

the Gospel of John, so Jesus performs signs in Infancy Thomas. The language of "performing a sign" appears initially at InfThom 9:6, when the parents of Zeno, a boy whom Jesus just raised from death, praise God for the sign (*sēmeion*) that had happened and worship Jesus. It occurs again when Mary sees the sign (11:4: *sēmeion*) whereby the six year old Jesus brings water home in his cloak, after the pitcher he took to get the water slips from his hand and breaks in the jostling of the crowd. Then, when Jesus sows one measure of grain and it grows into one hundred measures, the text explains that Jesus was eight years old when he did the sign (12:4: *epoiēse to sēmeion*). To refer to Jesus' miracles as signs (*sēmeia*) is an "effect" (*Wirkung*) of Johannine tradition on a gospel that reaches its conclusion in the Lukan story of Jesus in the Temple at twelve years of age.

Third, Johannine vocabulary emerges in various places in the account where there is reference to Jesus having "existed before creation" and being "from heaven." In InfThom 6, Jesus tells his teacher Zaccheus that he (Jesus) existed not only before Zaccheus himself was born (6:6) but even before the world was created (6:10). Later, Zaccheus admits to Joseph that probably Jesus did exist before the creation of the world (7:4). In addition, Jesus tells his teacher Zaccheus that he will teach him "a wisdom that no one else knows except for me and the one who sent me to you" (6:6). Then he tells Jews who are advising Zaccheus: "I have come from above so that I might save those who are below and summon them to higher things, just as the one who sent me to you commanded me" (8:2). In 17:4, people who see Jesus raise a child from death say: "Truly this child was a god or a heavenly messenger of God – every word of his (*pan logos autou*) is an instant deed (*ergon*)." When Jesus raises a construction worker from death, people say, "This child is from heaven – he must be, because he has saved many souls from death, and he can go on saving life" (18:4). Johannine language, then, appears again and again in stories that are preparatory to the final scene in the Jerusalem Temple when Jesus is twelve years of age, which is Lukan tradition.

Fourth, even the Infancy Thomas account of the twelve year old Jesus in the Jerusalem Temple, an account based on Luke 2:41-52, has "Johannine dynamics" woven into it. One of the Johannine dynamics emerges when Mary answers the scribes and Pharisees with "*Ego eimi*." This language, of course, means "I am." But it is language especially associated with God's self-identification in LXX Exod 3:14; Isa 41:4; 43:10-

11; 46:4 and with Jesus' self-identification in the Gospel of John. On the one hand, Jesus uses this self-identification alone in the Gospel of John when he speaks to the Samaritan woman (4:26), when he walks on water (6:20), when he refers to himself as the exalted Son of man (8:28) and as one who existed before Abraham (8:58); when he washes the feet of the disciples during his last evening with them (13:19); and when the soldiers come to arrest him (18:5-6, 8). On the other hand, he uses "*ego eimi*" to explain his identity as the living bread from heaven (6:35, 41, 48, 51); the light of the world (8:12); the door of the sheep (10:7, 9); the good shepherd (10:11, 14); the resurrection and the life (11:25); the way, the truth, and the life (14:6); and the true vine (15:1, 5). When Mary identifies herself with "I am" as Jesus' mother in the Infancy Thomas account in the Temple, dynamics of God's presence reverberate not only from the overall biblical tradition but also from the Gospel of John. The presence of God in Jesus affects the image of Mary as the one through whom the presence of God became flesh in the world.

Indeed, the function of Mary in the Infancy Thomas account in the Temple exhibits similarities with the function of Mary at the Wedding at Cana in John 2:1-11. Mary's action at the Cana wedding produces a result that "reveals Jesus' glory" as he performs his first sign (John 2:11). In the Temple scene in Infancy Thomas, Mary's identification of herself as Jesus' mother through "I am" calls forth a testimony from the scribes and Pharisees that they "have never seen nor heard such glory" as they have seen and heard in her son (InfThom 19:10). Much as the disciples "believed in him" (John 2:11) when they saw his glory in the sign at the wedding, which Mary challenged Jesus to perform, so the scribes and Pharisees testify to Mary concerning "the glory" they have seen and heard in Jesus (Inf Thom 19:10). It is informative that manuscript tradition extends the Johannine dynamics even further. Both Greek C and the Greek-Slavonic manuscript of InfThom 19:12 add that "He was glorified by his (divine) Father"; and Tischendorf B concludes the text with: "She (Mary) glorified him (Jesus) with the Father and the holy spirit both now and always and for ever and ever. Amen" (19:13).²⁶ The language of "glorification" again is a specifically Johannine feature.²⁷ Regularly in the

²⁶ Ronald F. Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas* (Scholars Bible 2; Santa Rosa, Ca.: Polebridge, 1995), 142-43.

²⁷ John 7:39; 8:54; 11:4; 12:16, 23; 13:31-32; 16:14 (by the Spirit of truth); 17:1, 5; cf. 14:13; 15:8; 17:10.

Gospel of John, God is the one who glorifies Jesus (7:39; 8:54; 12:16, 23; 13:31-32; 17:1, 5), in the mode of Greek C and the Greek-Slavonic manuscript. Yet, in John 16:14 "the spirit of Truth" will glorify Jesus. In Tischendorf B, Mary's glorification of Jesus appears to participate in this tradition, focusing on Mary as the one who "glorifies" Jesus as a manifestation of the spirit of Truth "with the Father and the holy spirit" (InfThom 19:13). Even the Infancy Thomas account of the Lukan story of Jesus in the Temple at twelve years of age, then, displays effects of Johannine tradition in its portrayal of Mary and its statements about Jesus.

Looking back on Marcion's omission of material at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke from the perspective of the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, one can see that the effect of Marcion's reconfiguration of Luke was to make it more like the Gospel of John.²⁸ In other words, Marcion's Luke, which featured Jesus coming directly from heaven to begin his ministry in Capernaum, was much more like the Gospel of John. In John, the Logos who was "with God" (1:1) becomes flesh and dwells among humans (1:14), goes to John the Baptist who identifies him as "the lamb of God" (1:29), and then goes to Galilee with disciples following him (1:37, 43). During the second century, then, both the editing of the Gospel of Luke by Marcion and the backfilling of the Gospel of Luke by the Infancy Gospel of Thomas move Lukan tradition in the direction of Johannine tradition.

Gospel of Luke and Tatian's *Diatessaron*

The second century CE was a busy time in early Christian Gospel traditions, and one can see even more interaction between the Gospel of Luke and the Gospel of John in the context of these activities. In addition to Marcion and others, a Christian named Tatian was also very important. Tatian describes himself as "born in the land of the Assyrians" (*Oration 42*).²⁹ A geographer named Claudius Ptolemaeus, who lived during the time of Tatian, described Assyria "as extending from the Tigris River in the West to Media in the East, from the Armenian mountains in the North to Ctesiphon in the South."³⁰ This location is, of course, very important for the Qur'anic tradition that would

²⁸ Cf. Räisänen, *Marcion, Muhammad and the Mahatma*, 71.

²⁹ Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 68.

³⁰ Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 68.

emerge just south of this region during the seventh century CE. Tatian became a traveling student during the second century, journeying to Rome, where he met Justin Martyr, became one of the hearers of his teachings, and converted to Christianity.³¹ After an extended period with Justin in Rome, Tatian had students of his own, and even his own school there. It appears that one of the influences of Justin on Tatian was to transmit to him a "harmony approach" to gospel traditions. Instead of reciting traditions about Jesus with reference to "different gospels," Justin recited sayings and traditions from "memoirs of the apostles" that interwove gospel sayings and traditions in a manner that does not exhibit distinctive Matthean, Markan, Lukan, or Johannine wording.³² After the death of Justin (between 163-67 CE), Christian leaders in Rome complained that Tatian "created 'his own peculiar type of doctrine'."³³

Tatian left Rome around 172/3, founded a school in Mesopotamia, and became highly influential "in the regions of Antioch of Daphne (Syria, on the Orontes), Cilicia, and Pisidia."³⁴ Victor of Capua, writing 2 May 546 CE, states that after Justin died, Tatian "embraced the heresy of Marcion, the error, rather than the truth of Justin, the philosopher of Christ."³⁵ In this context, one can well suppose that Tatian gained a special appreciation for the Gospel of Luke. Yet the overall project of Tatian was a "harmony of the four gospels" that came to be known as the *Diatessaron*, which means either "through four" or "fourfold." Tatian interwove all four "canonical" Gospels into one "Gospel of our Saviour."³⁶ No complete text of Tatian's *Diatessaron* has survived. Only fragments of it can be reconstructed from specific instances of recitation of it. Yet, as we will see below, the order of Tatian's *Diatessaron* can be reconstructed from three extant manuscripts of Ephrem of Syria's (*d* 373) commentary on it. Also, many early Christians say specific things about it. One of the things on which they agree is that it

³¹ Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 69-70.

³² See Koester, *Gospels*, 360-402.

³³ Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 70.

³⁴ Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 71.

³⁵ Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 47.

³⁶ This is the title Aphrahat of Persia (*d ca.* 350) used for Tatian's *Diatessaron* in *Demonstrations* I.10 (Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 45).

began with John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word."³⁷ This means that opening verses from the Gospel of John begin the *Diatessaron* and establish the environment for the recitation of the other three Gospels that come after it. If Tatian gives a place of privilege to Luke rather than Matthew immediately after the opening Johannine verses, this would mean that the beginning of his *Diatessaron* has an interesting relation to the Infancy Gospel of Thomas. In other words, both Infancy Thomas and Tatian's *Diatessaron* would begin with a Johannine focus on Jesus at creation and move from there toward Lukan tradition about Jesus before his adult activity.

Eusebius of Caesarea, writing in the early 300s, tells us that Tatian's was not the only *Diatessaron* in existence in early Christianity. A man known as Ammonius of Alexandria wrote a *Diatessaron* in which "he set running beside a section of [the Gospel] according to Matthew the same pericope of the other Gospels, so that of necessity it happened that the order of the succession [of the pericopes and verses] of the [other] three was destroyed, as far as the reading-text was concerned."³⁸ This is important for our story about Lukan tradition, since Ammonius' *Diatessaron* put Luke's tradition in a context of primary interaction with the Gospel of Matthew rather than the Gospel of John. In the sixth century (546 CE, just 24 years before the birth of Muhammad), Victor of Capua wrote the following statement in a context where he was looking at a *Diatessaron* that appeared to have followed Tatian's procedures:

For the following reason I think that the edition of the above mentioned volume was not by Ammonius but by him [Tatian], namely because Ammonius is said to have joined to Matthew's narrative the wordings [which had been] lifted out of the narrative of the remaining Evangelists. But here the principles of Saint Luke [presumably his sequence of material] have been adopted, although for the most part he joined the words of the remaining three [gospels] to the gospel of Saint Matthew. Hence it can be rightly disputed whether the discovery of the same work ought to be thought Ammonius' or Tatian's. Even if the author of this edition is the heresiarch Tatian, I recognize and embrace with pleasure the

³⁷ Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 45.

³⁸ Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, 33.

words of my Lord, for if the interpretation had been his [Tatian's] own, then I would cast it away.

The remarkable thing is Victor's observation that "the principles of Saint Luke have been adopted" in Tatian's *Diatessaron*. Victor observed that Tatian had, in some way, privileged Luke over Matthew as he organized his *Diatessaron*! Another important piece of information stands alongside this. Ephrem of Syria's Commentary on Tatian's *Diatessaron*, which exists in one Syriac and two Armenian versions, follows "for its sequence of pericopes and variant readings ... those of the Arabic Harmony quite closely." This Arabic Harmony exists in full, and in it we see a place of privilege for the Gospel of Luke at the beginning of the *Diatessaron*. After John 1:1-5, the Arabic Harmony recites Luke 1:5-80, which contains not only the opening scenes of promise of the births of John and Jesus (1:5-56) but also the birth, circumcision, and blessing of John the Baptist (1:57-80) before it inserts the story of the birth of Jesus from Matthew 1:18-25. After inserting the Matthew birth story in the Lukan context, it continues further with Luke 2:1-39 (the birth, circumcision, and purification of Jesus, plus the accounts of Simeon and Anna) before inserting Matthew 2:1-23. Immediately it returns again to Luke 2:40-3:6, then to John 1:7-28 and Matthew 2:4-6 which links to Matt 2:7-10/Luke 3:7-9 before continuing with Luke 3:10-18.³⁹ Clearly, then, the principle of organization in the opening parts of Tatian's *Diatessaron* privileges the Gospel of Luke over the Gospel of Matthew at the beginning, just as Victor of Padua observed. From the perspective of the present essay, therefore, not only Marcion's Luke and Infancy Thomas establish a dynamic relation between the opening chapters of the Gospel of Luke and the Gospel of John. The opening chapter of Tatian's *Diatessaron* embeds the first chapter of Luke in a context established by the first five verses of the Gospel of John.

³⁹ Codex Fuldensis, in contrast, recites only Luke 1:5-15, breaking in the midst of Gabriel's promise to Zechariah of the birth of John before introducing verses from the Gospel of Matthew.

Gospel of Luke and Infancy Gospel of James

The next step in our investigation of Lukan tradition takes us to the Infancy Gospel (Protevangelium) of James, for which there are multiple manuscripts in Syriac, Ethiopic, Georgian, Sahidic, Old Church Slavonic, Armenian, and Arabic in Syriac script, as well as Greek and Latin.⁴⁰ While Infancy Thomas backfills the Lukan miracle activity of Jesus, the Infancy Gospel of James backfills the Lukan birth stories by telling the birth of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Infancy James, then, gives Mary the mother of Jesus an even more central role than Infancy Thomas. Infancy James "backfills" the Gospel of Luke by beginning the story with Joachim, who will soon become the father of Mary, being rejected from making his usual "double" offering to the Lord because he is childless (InfJas 1:1-5). Soon after this, an angel of the Lord God visits Joachim's wife Anna while she is praying, mourning, and lamenting to tell her that she will give birth to a child (InfJas 2:1-4:2). When Anna gives birth to a girl and names her Mary, Anna changes her bedroom into a holy sanctuary to keep Mary from anything profane or unclean (6:4) and lets her play only with undefiled daughters of Hebrews until she is three years old (7:1-3). At age three, Joachim and Anna send Mary to live in the Temple, where a priest looks over her and keeps her free from all impurity (7:4-8:2). When Mary is twelve years of age and a home must be found for her outside the Temple so she does not pollute it with her menstrual cycle, Zechariah is the high priest who oversees her appointment to Joseph (8:3-9:12) and soon after becomes mute (10:9).

The internal link between Infancy James and the Gospel of Luke is Zechariah, with whom the Lukan story begins (1:5-23). Infancy James precedes the event that left Zechariah mute (Luke 1:20-22; InfJas 10:9) with events surrounding the birth of Mary and her childhood in the Jerusalem Temple (InfJas 1:1-10:8). The high priest in the Temple becomes the special protector of Mary at three years of age, when she enters the Temple. Zechariah is the high priest when Mary is twelve years of age and a guardian must be found for her outside the Temple (InfJas 8). After Mary's time in Joseph's household, where she becomes pregnant, and after she gives birth to Jesus in a cave while traveling to be enrolled (InfJas 18-20), Infancy James ends in the context of Herod's actions to kill all infants two years and younger (22:1). When Mary becomes aware of

⁴⁰ J. K. Elliott (ed.), *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 48, 52-55.

Herod's actions, she wraps Jesus in cloths and puts him in a feeding trough used by cattle (22:2; cf. Luke 2:7). When Elizabeth hears about Herod, she takes John into the hill country (22:5: *oreinē*; cf. Luke 1:39) and hides him in a mountain that splits open and lets them in (22:7-9). At this same time, Herod's executioners confront "Zechariah serving at the altar" (23:2; cf. Luke 1:8-11) about the location of his son John. When he will not tell them where his son is, they kill him (23:2-9); and when his death is discovered and appropriately mourned (24:1-11), they appoint Simeon as his successor (24:12-14; cf. Luke 2:25-35).⁴¹

Infancy James, then, backfills the Gospel of Luke from the time of Zechariah's serving in the Temple (Luke 1:5-9) to the fasting, praying, and lamenting of both Joachim and Anna (InfJas 1:10-3:8) until an angel of the Lord appears both to Anna and Joachim (4:1, 4) and announces the birth of Mary to each of them. As with Infancy Thomas, so Infancy James is an expansion and elaboration of Lukan tradition. In addition, the special focus on Mary at the end of Infancy Thomas has a relation in Christian tradition to the extended focus on Mary in Infancy James. A major difference between the two Gospels is the people who praise Mary. In Infancy Thomas, we recall, scribes and Pharisees praise Mary with speech that in Luke is attributed to Elizabeth: "Blessed (*makaria*) are you among women, because God has blessed (*ēulogēsen*) the fruit of your womb" (InfThom 19:10; Luke 1:42). In Infancy James, in contrast, the priest in the Temple, rather than scribes and Pharisees, praises Mary twice with language from Luke 1-2. When Joachim and Anna take Mary to the Temple at three years of age, the priest greets her with: "The Lord God has exalted your name among all generations. In you the Lord God will disclose his redemption to the people of Israel during the last days" (7:7-8; cf. Luke 1:46, 68; 2:38). When Mary spins a purple and scarlet thread and takes it to the high priest, after she is twelve and has been placed in the house of Joseph, the high priest says: "Mary, the Lord God has extolled your name and so you will be blessed by all the generations of the earth" (12:2; cf. Luke 1:46, 48). This means that Infancy James emphasizes the purity and holiness of the Temple in relation to priests, like the opening verses of Luke that emphasize the priestly lineage and holiness of both Zechariah and

⁴¹ Space does not permit a discussion of Matthean features that are inserted at certain points in the overall elaboration of Lukan tradition in Infancy James.

Elizabeth (1:5-9), rather than emphasizing teaching in the Temple before elders and teachers, which is the focus when Jesus visits the Temple at twelve years of age (Luke 1:46; InfThom 19:4-5). In the opening chapters of the Gospel of Luke, there is a transition from the Temple as a place of priestly holiness to a place of teaching. The Temple is a place of priestly holiness for the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth (1:5-23), and for the purification and consecration of Jesus for his task of leadership in Israel (1:22-38). Throughout Infancy James, the Temple remains a place run by priests, and its function is the maintenance of holiness in the center of Israel. In contrast, the Temple is a place of teaching in Infancy Thomas, building on the emphasis that emerges in Luke 2:41-52. Jesus' teaching in the Temple creates a context for scribes and Pharisees to praise Mary for the glory, virtue, and wisdom of her magnificent son (InfThom 19:4-13). Infancy James, on the other hand, features the priest in the Temple praising Mary for having a name that will be remembered by all generations (InfJas 7:7-8; 12:2) as the one "raised in the Holy of Holies and fed by the hand of angels" (InfJas 15:11; cf. 19:8). Both Gospels place Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the center, and both elaborate tradition in the Gospel of Luke. Infancy Thomas builds on the powerful signs of Jesus to present Mary as the mother of a wise, authoritative, glorious teacher in the Temple. In contrast, Infancy James builds on the priestly lineage of Zechariah and Elizabeth to establish Mary as a "priestly" woman through the holiness of her birth, her childhood in the Temple, and her bearing of a child who immediately heals the hand of the midwife Salome when she worships him and picks him up (InfJas 20:10-11). The Gospel of Luke is, therefore, central both to Infancy Thomas and to Infancy James. Infancy Thomas interacts with Johannine tradition to present Mary as the mother of a glorious healer and teacher named Jesus. Infancy James, in contrast, builds on the priestly lineage of Zechariah and Anna, the parents of John the Baptist, to present Mary as the pure and blessed mother of a child named Jesus whose holiness heals the hand of one of the midwives when she worships him and holds him in her arms.

"Lukan" Tradition in Al-'Imran 3:33-51

Now it is time to turn to Lukan tradition in the Qur'an, which is energized by Johannine tradition. An initial glimpse of elaborated and reconfigured Lukan tradition

emerges vividly from Qur'an 3:33-51. The surah is entitled Family of 'Imran (Al-'Imran), which is the name of Jesus' extended family, which also includes the family of John the Baptist. The surah begins to narrate the story of Jesus in ayah 33: "Lo! Allah preferred Adam and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imran above (all His) creatures" (Q 3:33). It is immediately noticeable to a New Testament reader that this ayah reconfigures the genealogy of Jesus in Luke rather than Matthew. The genealogy in Matthew begins with Abraham (Matt 1:2); thus it does not include Adam and Noah. In contrast, the Lukan genealogy reaches back to "Adam, the son of God" (Luke 3:38) and includes Noah (Luke 3:36) and Abraham (Luke 3:34) on its way to the birth of Jesus through, "as it was supposed," Joseph (Luke 3:23). Qur'an 3:33 reconfigures the Lukan genealogy by ending with "the family of 'Imran," which is the family of Zechariah, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, Mary, and Jesus. This means, of course, that Mary is the essential person in the lineage rather than Joseph.

All of the people in Mary's "family" result from assertions in the Gospel of Luke which are not in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, or John. When the angel Gabriel comes to Mary in Luke, he tells Mary that her "relative" (*sungenis*: kinswoman) Elizabeth "has also conceived a son" (1:36). Qur'anic tradition accepts the assertion by the angel Gabriel that Mary and Elizabeth are part of the same extended family, and it follows the logic of Gabriel's assertion. If Mary is part of the family of Elizabeth, then she shares in the priestly lineage of Elizabeth, who is "a daughter of Aaron" (Luke 1:5), back to Aaron, whom Moses appointed, along with his family, as priests (Exod 28:1). The exact relation of Mary to Elizabeth is disputed in tradition. The most common view is the one held by Ibn Ishaq: Elizabeth was the sister of (H)anna(h), the mother of Mary, making Elizabeth the aunt of her young niece Mary.⁴² For the Qur'an, this means that Mary is a "sister of Aaron" (Q 19:28), meaning that she is a member of the priestly "family of Aaron,"⁴³ alongside Elizabeth, who is also a "daughter of Aaron" (Luke 1:5).

Qur'an 3 moves from the ancestry of Jesus (Q 3:33-34; Luke 3:23-38) to the prayer of Anna (Hannah), when she vows to name the child in her womb Mary and to

⁴² Brannon M. Wheeler, *Prophets in the Qur'an: an Introduction to the Qur'an and Muslim Exegesis* (London/New York: Continuum, 2002), 297.

⁴³ Neal Robinson, *Christ in Islam and Christianity* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1991), 18.

consecrate her child as an offering to God to protect her from Satan (Q 3:35-36; InfJas 4:2). The Lord accepts Anna's gift of her child Mary and assigns Mary to Zechariah, the priest in the Temple, as her guardian (Q 3:37; InfJas 7:7). When Zechariah comes to the Temple and asks Mary from where the food which is continually before her comes, Mary answers: "It is from God. God gives without measure to whom He wills" (Q 3:37; InfJas 8:2). When Zechariah sees the generous goodness of God to Mary, he prays to his Lord, "the Hearer of Prayer," to give him a child out His bounteous goodness (Q 3:38). The angels call to Zechariah as he is praying in the sanctuary and report to him the "good news" of a son to be named John (*Yahya*). It is emphasized that John will come as a "lordly, chaste, prophet of the righteous" (cf. Luke 1:15, 76) to "confirm a word from God." In Q 3:38-39, one sees Qur'anic tradition related to the Lukan scene where the angel Gabriel comes to Zechariah in the Temple (1:8-20). The last part of Q 3:39 is worded in such a manner, however, that it seems not only to refer to the birth of John the Baptist as confirmation of the word that Gabriel brings from God to Zechariah (Luke 1:19-20), but it points toward the function of John the Baptist in John 1:6-15 as a witness who testifies that Jesus is the "word" from God who comes as light that gives people life in the world.

The last part of Q 3:39 merges "Word," who was in the beginning with God in John 1:1, with the "word" which Gabriel brings to Mary in Luke 1:35-38 and makes her pregnant with Jesus.⁴⁴ The key verse occurs in Luke 1:38, where Mary says, "Let it be according to your word." After Mary says this, the angel Gabriel departs from her and Mary is pregnant with Jesus in her womb (1:38-45). A thesis of this essay is that this merger of "Word" in John with "word" in Luke has been encouraged in Christian and Muslim tradition both through Tatian's *Diatessaron* and the Infancy Gospel of James.

The arrangement of Johannine and Lukan tradition in the opening verses of Tatian's *Diatessaron* placed John 1:1-5 thirty-three verses before Mary's assertion to Gabriel, "Let it be according to your word." A person reading from the beginning of the *Diatessaron* through its first section sees a continuous story from the presence of the "word" in the beginning with God to the presence of the "God's word" in Mary's womb in

⁴⁴ Räisänen, *Marcion, Muhammad and the Mahatma*, 86; Robinson, *Christ*, 6-7, 11, 156-58.

the form of the child Jesus.⁴⁵ In addition, InfJas 11:5 portrays an angel telling Mary, "Do not fear, Mary, because you have found favor before the Lord of all. You will conceive of his word" (*ek logou autou*). This formulation of the speech of the angel encourages a dynamic correlation between the "word" (*logos*) with God in John 1:1 and the "word" (*logos*) from God which makes Jesus present in the womb of Mary. From the perspective of this narration, Gabriel brings God's special word to Mary and pronounces it into her. The statement in Q 3:47 is a natural commentary on the sequence of the Gospel story: "God creates what he will. When he decrees anything He only says to it 'Be!' and it comes into being." The angel Gabriel brought the word 'Be!' to Mary, Mary said, "Let it be according to God's word," and Jesus was in her womb! Thus, a dynamic relation between "word" in John and Luke was already active during the centuries between the New Testament and the Qur'an, and it is vividly present in the Qur'an. This has been noticed by many commentators, Muslim and otherwise.⁴⁶ It is not clear, however, how many have correlated the observation with an understanding of the transmission of Lukan tradition from the time of the New Testament to the time of the Qur'an.

Q 3:40-41 continues with the Zechariah scene that opens the Gospel of Luke. Zechariah inquires how it will be possible to have a son when he is old and his wife is barren (Luke 1:18). The angel responds in the Qur'an simply with, "So (it will be). God does what he wills" (Q 3:40). This is an abbreviation of the angel's response in Luke 1:19-20, which includes a description by the angel of the time when these things "will be" (*genētai*) and a specific reference to the words (*logoi*) he has brought from God to him and Elizabeth (Luke 1:20). In Luke 1:24-25, the words happen in exactly the manner the angel says they will. Zechariah responds in Q 3:41 by asking the angel for a "token" to confirm his appearance to him with the special message. The angel gives him a token in the form of muteness for three days, making him unable to communicate except by making signs. Luke 1:22 explains how people immediately perceived, on the basis of Zechariah's muteness, that he had seen a vision in the temple and how Zechariah made signs to them to communicate (cf. InfJas 10:9). Q 3:41 ends with an exhortation to Zechariah to remember the Lord continually, and to praise him in the early hours of the

⁴⁵ Cf. Robinson, *Christ*, 18-19.

⁴⁶ Robinson, *Christ*, 69.

night and morning. Zechariah appears to embody the faithfulness the angel exhorted after this, if the words on the lips of Zechariah in Luke 1:67-79 are a true indication of the heart, mind, and soul of Zechariah after their son John is born.

Q 3:42 continues with an appearance of the angels to Mary,⁴⁷ which is the next scene in the Gospel of Luke (1:26-38). The Qur'anic assertion: "O Mary! Lo! God has chosen you and made you pure, and has preferred you above (all) the women of creation" (3:42) stands in relation to Luke 1:28: "Greetings (*chaire*), O favored one. The Lord is with you"; Luke 1:30: "... Mary ... you have found favor with God"; and Luke 1:42: "Blessed are you among women." Most noticeably, the Qur'an adds: "God has made you pure" (Q 3:42). This addition is the result, above all, of the reconfiguration of the story of Mary in Infancy James. In the InfJas account, when Mary walks on the ground seven steps at the age of six months, her mother Anna vows that the child "will never walk on this ground again until I take you into the temple of the Lord" (InfJas 6:3). Anna turns Mary's bedroom into a sanctuary (*hagiasma*), permits nothing profane or unclean to pass the child's lips, and only allows undefiled daughters of the Hebrews to play with her (InfJas 6:4-5). When Mary is one year old, the featured guests Joachim invites are the high priests and priests who pronounce a special blessing on her (InfJas 6:6-9). When Mary is three, Joachim and Anna take her to the temple, where she is protected from impurity and fed by an angel until she is twelve years of age (InfJas 7:4-8:5). When Joseph is convinced that someone has defiled (*emainen*: 13:4-5) Mary, Mary responds immediately that she is pure (*katharos*: 13:8). Again, when the high priest interrogates her, she asserts that she is pure (*kathara*) before the Lord God (15:13). When the high priest confronts Joseph, he also asserts that he is pure (*katharos*: 15:15). After both Joseph and Mary pass the high priest's test of the "water of bitterness for unfaithfulness,"⁴⁸ it becomes clear that they are both pure. The emphasis on Mary's

⁴⁷ One difference in Lukan tradition and Qur'anic tradition is the plural "angels" who come to Zechariah and Mary, although the narration may suggest a single angel in Q 3:41. This appears to be related to the plural "We" of the divine voice in a majority of instances throughout the Qur'an. Thus, while the narration refers to angels in plural (Q 3:39, 42, 45), both Zechariah and Mary consistently address the "angels" as "My Lord" (Q 3:35, 38, 40, 41, 47).

⁴⁸ InfJas 16:4-8; cf. Num 5:11-31; Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon* 8.3.3; 6:1-15; 13:1-14:2.

"purity," then, comes primarily from the reconfiguration of Lukan tradition in the Infancy Gospel of James.

When Q: 3:43 features the angels telling Mary to be obedient to her Lord, and to prostrate herself and bow with those who bow (in worship), the Qur'an tradition is related to Mary's response to Gabriel in Luke 1:38, her Magnificat in Luke 1:46-55 and to the reconfiguration of Lukan tradition in the Infancy Gospel of James. In Luke, when Gabriel tells Mary that "with God nothing will be impossible," she says, "Behold, I am the slave of the Lord" (Luke 1:37-38; cf. InfJas 11:9). Then, when Mary is with Elizabeth, she adopts a position of worship, "magnifying the Lord," and praising God with extended verse reminiscent of the Psalms of David in the Temple (Luke 1:46-55). This enactment of obedience and worship of the Lord is deepened by the Infancy Gospel of James, as a result of Mary's life in the Temple from age three until age twelve. At age sixteen (InfJas 12:9), when she is visited by an angel in the house of David, she does not protest against the possibility that she "will conceive of God's word." Rather, she inquires whether she will "give birth the way women usually do" if she conceives in this unusual manner (InfJas 11:5-6). When the angel explains that she will not give birth in the usual way, since the power of God will overshadow her and her child will be holy, son of the Most High, and he will save his people from their sins, Mary immediately says, "Behold the slave of the Lord before him; may it be to me according to his word" (InfJas 11:7-9). Immediately in Infancy James, then, Mary shows her obedience before the Lord. Without delay, she continues her task of spinning the veil for the Temple of the Lord from the purple and scarlet thread given to her by the high priest, and she takes it to the high priest (InfJas 10:1-10; 11:4; 12:1). The high priest accepts her diligent gift to the Temple and praises her, saying: "Mary, the Lord God has extolled your name and so you will be blessed by all the generations of the earth" (InfJas 12:2). Throughout Infancy James, then, Mary displays her obedience and willingness as slave of the Lord to worship God.

Q 3:44 begins with divine address to Muhammad which is reminiscent of tradition in the Gospel of Luke where Jesus says:

I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and you have revealed them

to infants; yes, Father for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father ... (Luke 10:21-22).

In the Qur'an, Muhammad stands in the relation to God that Jesus stands in the Gospel of Luke, except there is no reference to God as Father. Thus, the Qur'an says to Muhammad:

This is of the tidings of things hidden. We reveal it to you. You were not present with them when they threw their pens (to know) which of them should be the guardian of Mary, nor were you present with them when they quarreled about it (Q 3:44).

The special issue of tidings of hidden things emerges around both Jesus and Mary in the Gospel of Luke. It emerges around Jesus in Luke 10:21 where, as noted above, God reveals all things to Jesus. For Mary also, things that are hidden to others are known to her. Regularly, she hides these things in her heart. When Jesus is born and shepherds come to visit him, "Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). Then Simeon tells Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – a sword will pierce your soul too" (Luke 2:35). When Jesus goes to the Temple when he is twelve years of age and astonishes the teachers with "his understanding and answers" (2:47), Mary "treasures all these things in her heart" as Jesus "increases in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor" (2:52). Mary possesses knowledge of "hidden things," as it says in InfJas 12:8-9: "And so Mary became frightened, returned home, and hid from the people of Israel [as she was growing in her pregnancy]. She was just sixteen years old when these mysterious things happened to her." Things about Mary, then, are especially mysterious and hidden in the Gospel of Luke and Infancy James. This dynamic surrounds Mary as her story is revealed to Muhammad in Q 3:44. The story of the "throwing of the pens (to know) which of them should be the guardian of Mary" is related to the gathering of "staffs" in InfJas 9:2-7, whereby Joseph was "chosen by lot" to be Mary's guardian. In turn, their "quarreling" about the selection of Joseph is related to the problem that emerges for the Temple assembly of priests and elders when Annas the scribe discovers that Mary is pregnant (InfJas 15:1-16:2). The problem is solved only then Joseph and Mary pass the test of

drinking the water of unfaithfulness test which the high priest requires them to perform (InfJas 16:3-8).

Q 3:45 continues yet further with Lukan tradition:

God gives you glad tidings of a word from Him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, illustrious in the world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near (to God).

This ayah is related both to the language of Gabriel when he speaks to Mary and to the angel who announces the birth of Jesus to the shepherds in Luke. To Mary, Gabriel says:

You will name him Jesus. 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 ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end (Luke 1:31-33).

To the shepherds, the angel says:

I am bringing you glad tidings of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord (Luke 2:10-11).

The "glad tidings" is specifically on the lips of the angel who comes to the shepherds. The "word from Him" is a merger of Lukan and Johannine tradition about God's word, as discussed above. The name of Jesus as Messiah is, again, on the lips of the angel who comes to the shepherds. The phrase "son of Mary" is a forceful reconfiguration of "the Son of the Most High," according to Qur'an doctrine that God could not have a son, but God said to Mary, "Be!", and he was (Q 3:47, 59). "Illustrious in the world and the hereafter" is related to "He will be great ... and the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David." "And the hereafter" is related to: "He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:33). When Q 3:45 adds: "and one of those brought near (to God)," it is surely referring to the ascension of Jesus to God, which is present in only one Gospel in the New Testament, namely the end of the Gospel of Luke (24:50-51) and summarized in Acts 1:2. Once again, then, Qur'anic tradition has a deep, internal relation to Lukan tradition. In this particular ayah we see the relationship extend beyond the birth and childhood of Jesus to the end of the Gospel story.

Q 3:46 merges a tradition that is known outside the Qur'an only in the Arabic Infancy Gospel with a special insight from the Gospel of Luke. Q 3:46a says: "He will speak to mankind in his cradle and in his manhood." Jesus' speaking from the cradle is found only in the introduction to the Arabic Infancy Gospel:

1. We find (1) what follows in the book of Joseph the high priest, who lived in the time of Christ. Some say that he is Caiaphas. (2) He has said that Jesus spoke, and, indeed, when He was lying in His cradle said to Mary His mother: "I am Jesus, the Son of God, the Word, whom you have brought forth, as the Angel Gabriel announced to you; and my Father has sent me for the salvation of the world."

It is notable that this special tradition places words in the mouth of Jesus that correlate assertions in the Gospel of John ("the Word") with assertions in the Gospel of Luke ("as the Angel Gabriel announced to you"). Q 3:46b, on the other hand, makes an assertion related directly to the Gospel of Luke: "and he is of the righteous." An interpreter can easily miss this one, since the assertion that someone is "of the righteous" is so common in Qur'anic tradition.⁴⁹ Yet this, too, is a special emphasis in Luke. Only in Luke does it say:

Now when the centurion saw what had happened he glorified God, saying:
"Certainly this man was righteous (*dikaios*)" (Luke 23:47).

Mark 15:39 and Matt 27:54, in contrast, have the centurion say, "Truly this man was a son of god." Tatian's *Diatessaron*, according to the Arabic version, privileges the Lukan assertion by putting it first, so the centurion says: "This man was righteous; and, truly he was the Son of God." Q 3:46b uses, of course, only the first part of the centurion's assertion in the *Diatessaron*, to emphasize that Jesus is "of the righteous."

The Gospel of Luke uses "righteous" specifically to describe Zechariah, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, and Jesus – in other words, the Family of 'Imran in the Qur'an. The adjective righteous is not used to describe Mary, because even more special assertions are used to describe her: "one who has found favor with God" (1:30); "slave of

⁴⁹ In the Qur'an, specific people are said to be "of the righteous" or "among the righteous," or they pray to be so in: 2:130; 3:39, 46; 6:85; 16:120-122; 21:72, 74-75; 21:85-86; 26:83; 27:19; 28:27; 29:27; 39:100, 112; 66:10; 68:50.

the Lord" (1:38, 48); "blessed among women" (1:42); "one with blessed fruit in her womb" (1:42); "mother of my Lord" (1:43); and "one whom all generations will call blessed" (1:48). The second Lukan verse that describes Zechariah and Elizabeth asserts that "they were both righteous before God" (1:5). When the angel Gabriel describes John the Baptist, who will be born to them, he says:

and he (John) will go before him (Jesus) in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous (Luke 1:17).

In this verse, not only Zechariah and Elizabeth are righteous, but also their son John and Elijah. Then, by the end of the story, the reader becomes very clear, from the assertion by the centurion (23:47) that Jesus is "of the righteous." The Qur'an emphasizes this Lukan tradition in Q 6:85: "And Zechariah and John and Jesus and Elijah; each one (of them) was of the righteous." In addition, the Qur'an emphasizes the special nature of John among the righteous in 3:39: "And the angels called to him (Zechariah) as he stood praying in the sanctuary: God gives you glad tidings of (a son whose name is) John, (who comes) to confirm a word from God lordly, chaste, a prophet of the righteous."

Q 3:47 continues with Mary's response:

My Lord! How can I have a child when no mortal has touched me? He said: So (it will be). God creates what He will. If He decrees a thing, He says to it only: Be! and it is.

The first part of this ayah is related to Luke 1:34. Yet its wording is like Tatian's *Diatessaron*, saying that no man had "known" her, rather than like Luke 1:34, where Mary says that she has not "known" a man. The *Diatessaron* and the Qur'an make the male the active partner (cf. Q 3:47; 19:20), instead of presenting Mary as the one who had gone to the man.⁵⁰ The last part of the ayah reconfigures and expands the statement spoken to Zechariah in Q 3:40. First, it reconfigures it by assertion that God "creates" what He will, rather than God "does" what He will. Second, it adds: "If He decrees a thing, He says to it only: Be! and it is." The differences are related to Q 3:59, where Jesus and Adam are compared to one another. The Qur'anic statements emphasize that

⁵⁰ Robinson, *Christ*, 19; cf. K. Luke, "The Koranic Recension of Luke 1:34," *Indian Theological Studies* 22 (1985) 381-99.

Jesus was one of God's "created" beings, just like Adam was created. Yet, it emphasizes that Jesus and Adam stand out among all humans by being the only two where God simply said, "Be!", and they were. The emphasis on God's "word" as the source of the child is evident here (John 1:1; Luke 1:38), as is the broader context that includes the "spirit" that overshadows Mary (Luke 1:35) in Q 4:171: "The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was ... His word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him."⁵¹

The angel continues in the Qur'an with: "And He will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel" (3:48). Jesus' knowledge of scripture (the writings) emerges in his encounter with the devil⁵² in Luke, when he responds twice to the devil with "it is written" (4:4, 8). When the devil tries to test Jesus further with what is written in the Psalms (4:10), Jesus responds with yet another verse from scripture that says, "You shall not test the Lord your God."⁵³ These responses to the devil will be important when we get to Q 3:51 below. Q 3:48 continues with an assertion that God taught Jesus wisdom. Jesus' knowledge of wisdom that God has given to him is emphasized in Luke 2:40, 52; 7:35; 10:21-22; 11:49. Then Q 3:48 asserts that God taught Jesus Torah. Specific assertions that Jesus knows Torah are present in Luke 10:26; 16:16-17; 24:44. Then Q 3:48 says that God taught Jesus Gospel. This is especially clear in Luke 4:18, where Jesus asserts: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor." The Gospel of Luke also emphasizes Jesus' knowledge of the gospel in 4:43; 7:22; 8:1; 16:16; 20:1. And this leads naturally to the next ayah in the Qur'an.

Q 3:49 brings together many emphases both in the Gospel of Luke and the Gospel of John. When Jesus says, "Lo! I come to you with a sign from your Lord," he is using language about signs specifically characteristic of the Gospel of John.⁵⁴ The ayah is closely related to the response of believers in John 7:31 who say: "When the Messiah

⁵¹ Robinson, *Christ*, 156.

⁵² In Luke, the *diabolos*. Cf. Qur'an *iblis* (the same letters with different vowels, minus the preposition "d"; Gordon D. Newby, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002) 86-87.

⁵³ In Luke, Jesus displays his knowledge of scripture (writings) in Luke 4:14, 8, 12, 17, 21; 7:27; 10:26; 18:31; 19:46; 20:17, 37; 21:22; 22:37; 22:37; 24:27, 32, 45-46.

⁵⁴ John 2:22, 18, 23; 3:2; 4:48, 54; 6:2, 14, 26, 30; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18, 37; 20:30.

comes, will he do more signs that this man has done?" It also has a relation to John 6:14: When the people saw the sign which he had done, they said, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!" Thus, Q 3:49 begins with language characteristic of Johannine tradition. Then it continues with: "Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and I breathe into it and it is a bird, with God's permission." This is related to the opening of the Infancy Gospel of Thomas. But, as discussed above, this scene is a matter of Jesus as an infant "playing creation," which is the role of Jesus in John 1:1-5. Thus, again the reader hears Qur'anic statement that is a merger of "Lukan" tradition dynamically interacting with Johannine tradition. Then Q 3:49 continues with: "I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, with God's permission." This is related to Jesus' speech to disciples of John the Baptist in Luke 7:22: "the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached to them."⁵⁵ The Qur'anic statement does not include the lame, the deaf, and the poor, but the three miracles to which he refers occur in the sequence in which Jesus states them in Luke. Then Q 3:49 continues with: "And I announce to you what you eat and what you store up in your houses. Lo! in this truly is a portent to you, if you are to be believers." The statements concerning "what you eat" and "what you store up in your houses" are closely related to Luke 12. "What you shall eat" is Jesus' specific topic of discussion in Luke 12:22-24, and "what you will store up" is the specific topic of discussion in Luke 12:16-21. The story in Luke 12:14-21 about the man with many possessions, which is not in any other New Testament Gospel, is truly a portent for believers: this man stored all his goods in barns, rather than storing up treasures in heaven by selling his possessions and giving alms (Luke 12:33). In contrast to this man, Jesus announces, a person must not be anxious what they will eat, "For life is more than food" (Luke 12:23). Again, the Gospel of Luke has a close relation to the Qur'anic statements.

Q 3:50 continues with: "And (I come) confirming that which was before me of the Torah, and to make lawful some of that which was forbidden to you. I come to you with a sign from your Lord, so keep your duty to God and obey me." This ayah appears to continue with topics related to John 6:25-58. The topic of what a person will eat in Luke

⁵⁵ Cf. Matt 11:5.

12 reverberates with eating the bread from heaven in John 6. "Coming with a sign" is a specific issue in John 6:26, 30; confirming what was before Jesus in the Torah and then fulfilled is the topic of Luke 24:44; and the issue of keeping one's duty to God and obeying Jesus is present in John 3:36: "the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him."

Q 3:51 provides initial closure for this section⁵⁶ with: "Lo! God is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is a straight path." This is related to the emphatic assertion by Jesus in the middle of the Lukan version of the testing story, mentioned above, where Jesus responds decisively to the devil. When the devil tells Jesus that he will give him all authority over all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, if only he will worship him, Jesus tells him, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve' (Luke 4:5-8).⁵⁷ The relation of the ayah to the response of Jesus is especially apt, since Jesus shows clearly that he himself is devoted to the Lord God (thus, "God is my Lord") by responding with a recitation that emphasizes that "you" must worship "your Lord."

Conclusion

This essay has presented a special history of the transmission of the Gospel of Luke from the second century to the presence of "Lukan" tradition in the Qur'an. This history shows remarkable interest in, energizing of, reconfiguration of, and supplementing of the Gospel of Luke through the centuries. With this account, we have gotten a special view of the *Auslegungsgeschichte* and *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the Gospel of Luke. On the one hand, Infancy Thomas and Infancy James supplement Luke by "backfilling" its story of Jesus' birth and childhood. On the other hand, Infancy Thomas and the *Diatessaron* energize Lukan tradition in a special manner with the use of passages and topics from the Gospel of John. This "energizing" of Lukan tradition with Johannine tradition, as we have seen, extends dynamically into the Qur'an. There is still

⁵⁶ Surah 3:52 continues with a section devoted to disbelief, and the story of Jesus is still internal to the subject matter. The subject matter is related to the topic of belief and disbelief in the Gospel of John. There is not space to present a commentary on these ayahs in this essay.

⁵⁷ Cf. Matt 4:8-10.

much more in this regard to interpret, both for Lukan tradition and for the relation of this tradition to the Qur'an. But this will have to wait until another time and place. There has been no attempt in this essay to investigate the relation of Lukan tradition to all other extracanonical Gospel traditions, the Gospel of John, and the Qur'an. Neither has there been an attempt to explore those groups of Christians who helped to nurture this dynamic relation between Luke and John. Rather, the goal has been to introduce the special history of the Gospel of Luke down to the Qur'an and to display enough information to suggest that this is an area that merits substantive attention in the future by interpreters. Hopefully, many will respond by building on good work, much of it not cited here, that has been completed by others and moving ahead toward even greater understanding through team work designed to uncover new insights in a very complex and exciting area of study. And, again, many thanks to Heikki Räisänen for helping to pave the way for this kind of study with courageous, deeply informed, and creative study of this and many related issues and traditions that lead New Testament interpreters fruitfully "beyond the New Testament."