

The Gospel of Luke Birth of the Anointed One

Interpreting the Text:

1. How do the Magnificat, or Song of Mary (1:46-55) and Benedictus, or Song of Zechariah (1:67-79), relate to one another? Do they present a unified image of the significance of the births of the two boys?
2. What are the major differences between Luke and the other account of the birth of Jesus in the Gospel according to Matthew?
3. Dr. Attridge and Dr. Bartlett discussed the question, “was Luke written for the oppressed or the oppressor?” How would you answer this question?
4. The stated audience for the Gospel of Luke is Theophilus (1:1-4). Do you think Theophilus is a specific person, perhaps the patron of Luke’s writing, or an imagined ideal reader? Does this affect the way we should read Luke’s gospel?

Applying the Text:

1. What are the major claims these early chapters make about Jesus, both in actions and dialogue? How might they influence the followers of Jesus today?
2. What do you make of the strong imagery of the Magnificat? What does it mean for God to bring down the “mighty” from their thrones, both then and now?
3. Reflect on the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus. Why is this such an important place for Luke to begin his story? Do you focus on this dynamic in your own communities around Advent or Christmas?