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 Luke 1:26-55; Matthew  
 1:18-25  
 Brian Morgan  
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# BLESSED ARE THE MEEK: JOSEPH AND MARY

This season of Advent we are turning our gaze upon Rembrandt's painting, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*. Figures emerge out of the darkness and fall down in worship around the cradle that is bathed in light. The painting is awash in silent awe. Rembrandt's skill has captured the mysterious way we are awakened out of our dark and ordinary lives and gently drawn to the light of God's glory in human form. With equal skill the gospel writers portray four pairs of worshipers for whom the light dawns – Zechariah and Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary, the shepherds and the Magi, Simeon and Anna. Last week Bernard Bell gave us the story of Elizabeth and Zechariah. Today we will look at Joseph and Mary in the light of the beatitude, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

The beatitude is a quote from King David's memoirs. When David was old, he wrote a concise summary of the most important spiritual lesson he had learned during his lifetime. To drive his point home, he took his theme and repeated it from various points of view in the form of an acrostic. It was then set to music and placed in the canon of the Psalms to be sung by future generations. As you think back on David's youth, his years being homeless in the wilderness and his reign as Israel's king, what do you think is the **one** thing David would want to impress upon us? In the opening line he tells us: How do we respond when we experience gross injustice?

*Fret not yourself because of evildoers;  
 be not envious of wrongdoers!  
 Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him;  
 fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way,  
 over the man who carries out evil devices!  
 Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath!  
 Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil. (Ps 37:1, 7-8)*

The repeated command "fret not" connotes getting "heated up" over something. David is saying "don't get all heated up when evil seems to carry the day." There was plenty to fret over in the first century. After the Emperor Augustus (63 b.c. – 14 c.e.) expanded his empire and brought unity and peace to most of the known world, he acquired the titles, "Son of God," "Imperator of Land and Sea," the "Benefactor and Savior of the Whole World." To support the greedy and corrupt aristocracy in Rome, he carried out a worldwide census to increase his tax base, which put an incredible tax burden on the poor. In the face of such injustice, David's counsel reminds us that though the wicked may temporarily succeed, ultimately they are no threat to your life, for they will be cut off; "the meek will inherit the land."

*For they will soon fade like the grass  
 and wither like the green herb.  
 For the evildoers shall be cut off,  
 but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.  
 In just a little while, the wicked will be no more;  
 though you look carefully at his place, he will not be there.  
 But the meek ("lowly") shall inherit the land  
 and delight themselves in abundant peace. (Ps 37:2, 9-11)*

The "meek" or "lowly" or "humble" (עָנִי) originally meant those who were poor or disenfranchised as a result of oppression or injustice. Later the term came to signify those who were spiritually poor – those who in their humility developed deep longings for God. The close connection

between the two suggests that suffering can be a very effective tool to make the soil of our hearts fertile for spiritual formation. I'll define meekness as "humility that leads to surrender." We find both ideas in Zephaniah –

*But I will leave in your midst  
 a people humble and lowly.  
 They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord. (Zeph 3:12)*

When Jesus quotes this verse in his beatitudes, he is saying that the time of waiting is over, the great reversal has begun – the *meek* are now in the process of receiving their long awaited inheritance.

## I. A Birth Announcement (Luke 1:26-38)

### A. Divine invitation (vv. 26-28)

**In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" (vv. 26-28 ESV)**

The first hint that revolution is in the air is the presence of the archangel Gabriel, who stands before God in his court. From the book of Daniel, we know that Gabriel is an eschatological messenger sent from God to help the prophet interpret visions regarding the last days (Dan 8:16; 9:21). Now after centuries, God again sends Gabriel from heaven to announce two miraculous births.

Earlier in Luke, Gabriel had been sent to the spiritual center of Israel, the Holy Place at the temple, to announce John's birth to the officiating priest, Zechariah. But rather than rejoicing in thanksgiving and song, Zechariah was slow to believe and struck dumb, symbolic of the nation's spiritual insensitivity. Despite Zechariah's hardness of heart, his wife Elizabeth received the ability to conceive, and by God's **grace** her status was restored among God's people. In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent Gabriel back to earth for a second birth announcement "to Mary, far away from the temple mount in Jerusalem, to Nazareth in Galilee – insignificant, despised, unclean."<sup>1</sup>

These two women represent two generations in Israel, the old and the new. Elizabeth is old, beyond the childbearing years. Though she was a daughter of Aaron, being barren, she had suffered disgrace. She typifies Israel's estrangement from God, and disgrace from being oppressed by tyrannical foreigners. Mary represents the new Israel. She is young, most likely twelve to fourteen years of age, and is introduced "as if she were an orphan with no family background provided; she is betrothed to Joseph, but as such has not yet entered into his house or inherited his status. Yet, she is favored by God, through for no apparent reason other than God's gracious choice."<sup>2</sup> As in Hannah's story, status is redefined and restored by one's faith. In Luke, these "little people" become the heroic models of faith and trust. Three times we are told that Mary is a virgin. When offered the choice to cooperate with God's saving activity, she must by faith count the cost of suffering shame for becoming pregnant prior to marriage, and face the possibility of losing her status in Joseph's household. Will she do it?

The angel greets Mary with, "Rejoice, favored one, the Lord is with you!" Joy is to fill her heart because she is the recipient of God's undeserved grace. Such favor raises her status to that of the greatest leaders in Israel. The phrase, "I will be with you," conveys much more significance

than a generic promise of God's traveling presence. These words were most often addressed to Israel's leaders when they were called to a task of insurmountable odds, like the Exodus, "or when setting out on an undertaking that seems very likely to fail."<sup>3</sup> This was God's pre-game speech to Moses before he sent him off to Egypt to confront Pharaoh. And now he gives the same speech to twelve-year-old Mary. If she will respond in faith, the omnipotent God will be with her to protect, encourage, and strengthen her until the task for which she has been called is completed. Called by grace with results that are guaranteed: now that is a cause for joy. But that is only the half of it.

#### B. Divine pregnancy (vv. 29-33)

**But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name 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 father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."** (vv. 29-33)

To a bewildered Mary, Gabriel explains that she will be the mother of Israel's long expected king, God's very own Son ("the Son of the Most High"), who will be given "the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." Gabriel's words echo the language of other birth announcements, especially the one given to Sarah (Gen 16:11), coupled with Daniel's description of the exaltation of "one like a son of man" (Dan 7:13-14). Taken together, one cannot help but be overwhelmed that this is the climactic moment of history, the restoration of Israel and the salvation of the world.

#### C. A New Creation! (vv. 34-37)

**And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God."** (vv. 34-37)

With the complexity of expectations whirling in her head, Mary asks, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" Unlike Zechariah's unbelief that seeks for a sign (1:18), Mary's question seeks an explanation to understand the supernatural way that the process will unfold. Gabriel's answer reveals that though Mary will indeed play a role as an obedient recipient of grace, the miracle will be all God's doing.

Once again Luke mentions the Holy Spirit, as he does six more times in his first two chapters (1:41, 67, 80; 2:25, 26, 27). The word for "overshadow" carries the sense of the holy, powerful presence of God, as in the description of the cloud that "covered" the tabernacle when the tent was filled with the glory of God (Exod 40:35; cf. Ps 91:4). The word is used in all three accounts of the Transfiguration to describe the overshadowing of the cloud (Matt 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:34). Likewise, in each account the voice comes out of the cloud identifying Jesus as God's Son, a striking reminder of Luke 1:35 where the life that results from the enveloping cloud is identified as the Son of God.<sup>4</sup>

Gabriel concludes with a reminder to Mary of God's omnipotent power. Those words ignite her memory of the Lord's statement to Sarah in Gen 18:4 (LXX): "Is anything impossible with God?" [For no word from God will ever fail (TNIV)]. With that final word, Mary's faith leaps over the wall.

#### D. Holy surrender (1:38)

**And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.** (v. 38)

The personal and social cost to Mary in making such a commitment is difficult to comprehend, but as Joel Green comments, her faith is revolutionary and becomes a model for all Israel:

Mary's response to the divine announcement contrasts sharply with that of Zechariah's, with the result that she, surprisingly in scenes of this type, has the last word. She unreservedly embraces the purpose of God, without regard to its cost to her personally... In describing herself as the Lord's servant, she acknowledges her submission to God's purpose, but also her role in assisting that purpose. Moreover, she claims a place in God's household, so to speak; indeed, in this socio-historical context, her words relativize and actually place in jeopardy her status in Joseph's household. For her, partnership in the purpose of God transcends the claims of family.<sup>5</sup>

The result of all this is that Mary, who in that world was at the bottom of the social scale in terms of age, family, heritage, gender, and so on, turns out to be the one favored and exalted by God. In this revolutionary kingdom, one's status is defined by one's obedience to God and the privilege of being used for his saving purposes. This theme is reinforced in Luke's description of Mary's journey to see her Aunt Elizabeth.

## II. A Husband's Dilemma (Matt 1:18-25)

**Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.** (vv. 18-25)

Mary's pregnancy must have come as a shock to her newly betrothed husband. We are not told if Mary tried to explain her situation to Joseph. Even if she had, I seriously doubt if he would have believed her. But being a godly man, the shock of betrayal did not lead him to act rashly or to be vindictive. In the midst of his own grief, he gave "considerable thought" (*enthumeomai* — to process information by giving consideration to various aspects — 'to think about, to consider') to his actions and the implications they would have on her. As Don Carson explains,

Because he was a righteous man, Joseph therefore could not in conscience marry Mary who was now thought to be unfaithful. And because such a marriage would have been a tacit admission of his own guilt, and also because he was unwilling to expose her to the disgrace of public divorce, Joseph therefore chose a quieter way, permitted by the law itself... [a] private divorce before two witnesses (Num 5:11-31)... That was what Joseph purposed. It would leave both his righteousness (his conformity to the law) and his compassion intact.<sup>6</sup>

God does not make promises to us only to abandon us with no support. As Joseph was considering all aspects of his dilemma, an angel of the Lord came to him in a dream to confirm the announcement he gave to Mary. Mary has conceived by the Holy Spirit, and will give birth to a son who will inaugurate a new age of forgiveness in fulfillment of the prophetic promises.

Matthew's reference to Isaiah's promise not only demonstrates God's faithfulness for the benefit of his readers, but may also give us insight into Joseph's heart. The announcement given by the angel in the dream, though seemingly impossible, was confirmed to him by the prophetic word of Scripture. And the two together ignited Joseph's faith to surrender to God's will. This tells us that Joseph was a faithful man, who knew the Scriptures well and was anticipating the coming of God's rule upon the

earth. And now, like Mary, he will risk his reputation to be an instrument for God's new family, one that is nothing less than a new creation.

### III. Miracle Mothers Meet (Luke 1:39-45)

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." (vv. 39-45)

Having been touched by an angel, Mary breaks with all social conventions to journey by herself some seventy miles to the hill country around Jerusalem to be with her aunt. As a young girl, Mary would have never been allowed to venture outside the home without accompaniment even in her own town, let alone travel clear across the country. She must have taken God's promise seriously that "the Lord would be with you!" Mary is a young woman who not only stands on her own two feet, she runs on them!

In spite of her at-risk adventure, Elizabeth responds to Mary's greeting with enthusiastic joy. The larger realities that are developing in their respective wombs transcend social and cultural norms. Three times, Luke mentions Mary's greeting and the impact it has upon Elizabeth and the unborn John. Upon hearing Mary's voice, the Spirit completely takes over and overwhelms everyone with joy, including the unborn John. In Mary's voice, John recognizes his Lord to come, and though he cannot speak, he manages to leap. Elizabeth is instantly filled with the Spirit. She gives the divine interpretation of all that has occurred, and blesses Mary for her obedience.

How revolutionary is all this? There is something remarkably new here. In previous annunciation scenes, when the announcement of a child was made to a barren woman, there was always the painful presence of jealousy between two rival women: Sarah and Hagar, Rachel and Leah, and finally, Hannah and Penninah. But now, with the announcement of the coming of Christ and the Messianic age, there is not an ounce of competition between the mothers. Instead we find mutual respect and a deep affection for one another. Each woman rejoices in the grace given to the other, for in God's kingdom there is no need for competition: we all uniquely complement one another with different gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:4-7).

On some occasions, the older and more experienced individual steps aside to bless the younger and less experienced as having a greater role to play, and finds their greatest joy in their supporting role. This will exemplify John's relationship with Jesus. Jesus says of John, "among those born of women there is no one greater than John." John, the last prophet in Israel, came to anoint Israel's final King. His word was so powerful that "all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem" (Mark 1:5). But from John's point of view, he was merely the friend of the bridegroom. John's motto was, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). This is the authentic mark of God's people in the age of the Spirit.

### IV. The Song of the Meek (Luke 1:46-55)

Mary's response to Elizabeth's praise is to humbly step aside, diverting it all upward to God in jubilant song. Mary has drawn every line of her song from the Old Testament (mainly from Hannah's song and the Psalms), applying them with new significance to her own life. Like Hannah's song, Mary's praise identifies, invites, and ignites God's revolution that is turning the world upside down. Given her humble spirit, I imagine that Mary would never have approved of how the church has attempted to give her equal status to her son, and to be worshipped as the Son would

have brought her great grief. In the first stanza, Mary articulates her praise (46-47), and the reasons for her praise (48-50); in the second stanza, she further details the reasons for her praise (51-53), and applies her praise to Israel (54-55).

#### A. Life is Pure Gift! (vv. 46-50)

And Mary said,  
 "My soul magnifies the Lord,  
 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
 for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.  
 For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
 for he who is mighty has done great things for me,  
 and holy is his name.  
 And his mercy ("loyal-love") is for those who fear him  
 from generation to generation." (vv. 46-50)

Drawing upon her memory of Hannah's prayer, "if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me" (1 Sam 1:11), Mary is overwhelmed that God is doing for her what he did for Hannah. Yet in Mary's case, the gift came without Hannah's pain or her petition or vow. Mary is chosen to be part of God's revolution for seemingly no reason, except that the Lord had regard for her lowly, humble estate. This is what motivated her to turn her life completely over to God's saving purposes.

From Mary's point of view, being a bondservant in God's household is the most exalted position in life, for she knows that what God has done for her will be lauded by every generation. The virgin birth will be catalogued in the list of "Great Things" that Israel celebrated in their liturgy (Ps 71:16, 19; 77:11) to remind themselves of the many acts of salvation God had done on their behalf. For centuries, these songs lost their power and became rote rehearsals of vague memories from the forgotten past. But Gabriel's words to Mary ignited the impossible, therefore she celebrates that "the Mighty One" (i.e. "the One who can do anything") has indeed come and is doing amazing wonders once again.

The exaltation of the lowly is Mary's understanding of how God supremely manifests his holiness on earth. And she leaves the door wide open, reminding us that this amazing grace is available to any who humbly themselves to fear the Lord (Ps 103:17, Jas 1:9; 4:6,10; 4:10; 1 Pet 5:6-7).

#### B. The Revolution of Reversals (vv. 51-55)

He has shown strength with his arm;  
 he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;  
 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones  
 and exalted those of humble estate;  
 he has filled the hungry with good things,  
 and the rich he has sent away empty.  
 He has helped his servant Israel,  
 in remembrance of his mercy,  
 as he spoke to our fathers,  
 to Abraham and to his offspring forever." (vv. 51-55)

In the second stanza (made up of two strophes (51-53; 54-55)), Mary projects from the great things God has done in her womb to the "great things" God has done for Israel and the world. As in Hannah's song, it is the story of awesome reversals that turn the pecking order of Israel's social world on its head.

The opening line resonates with striking allusions to Israel's Exodus, when the Lord became Israel's "Mighty Warrior," bared his holy "arm" and "scattered" his enemies to redeem his people with "great" judgments (Exod 6:6; 15:16; Ps 68:1, 14; 89:10). Mary is announcing that the New Exodus the prophets had promised and Israel had longed for was now here. This is a decisive moment in history, when there is going to be a radical shift in the existing powers structures. God is exercising his omnipotent power, pulling down all other potentates and placing the humble in

their place. The proud who grasp for positions of honor will be scattered, brought down, and sent away empty handed.

After the Emperor Augustus (63 B.C. – 14 C.E.) expanded his empire and brought unity and peace to most of the known world, he acquired the titles, “Son of God,” “Imperator of Land and Sea,” the “Benefactor and Savior of the Whole World.” In an effort to increase the tax base for the Roman treasury, Augustus exercised his sovereignty by decreeing a registration of “all the world.” In reality, he was merely acting as God’s puppet. His decree became the vehicle to get a young couple from Nazareth to Bethlehem in order to fulfill Micah’s prophecy that the lowly city of Bethlehem would be “exalted” as the birthplace of the new King.

**But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to be ruler in Israel,  
whose coming forth is from of old,  
from ancient days. (Micah 5:2)**

Bethlehem, not Rome, will become the focus on the kingdom of heaven.

When the angels announce the birth of the Messiah, the announcement is not made to the heads of the state, but to lowly shepherds, who were poor and considered as outsiders and unclean. They were close to the bottom of the social scale in that world. With the birth of Jesus, the powerful are already being brought down, while the lowly are being lifted up as God subverts the existing social order that perpetuates such distinctions.

Mary concludes her song with the final words of Micah’s prophecy, which seals the source of her joy in God’s covenantal love.

**You will give truth to Jacob  
And unchanging love to Abraham,  
Which You swore to our forefathers  
From the days of old. (Micah 7:20)**

Just as Hannah asked God to “remember” her, so Mary realizes on a grand scale that her pregnancy is rooted in God’s covenantal faithfulness to “remember” his promises to the patriarchs. All of God’s promises in the Old Testament are now reaching their fulfillment in the conception of the seed inside Mary. The driving force behind it is God’s loyal-love. Centuries may come and go, but God never ever forgets.

## V. Bread for the Lowly

As we rightly turn our attention from Mary to Jesus as the Gospel narrative continues, we miss the profound fact that Mary’s cooperation with God guaranteed she would remain lowly for the rest of her life. Though bathed in God’s loyal-love, the stigma of illegitimacy would follow her throughout her lifetime. Not only would she endure a compromised reputation in her family and community, she would also carry the weight of the “slaughter of the innocents,” knowing that women throughout Bethlehem wept over their dead infant sons – collateral damage in Herod’s attempt to murder her own boy. Even within her own family, Mary endured relationships roiled by resentment from Jesus’ half brothers. She most likely lost her husband to an early death, and thereafter her son to a very public ministry, the scope of which was far larger than she ever imagined. Impoverished and widowed, she finally watched her boy die a gruesome, humiliating death and, despite his resurrection, Mary had to live out her remaining days without her firstborn son of promise.

Is this how “the meek will inherit the earth?”

Mary’s son will teach the truth that “once the humble are lifted up, they are “filled with good things.” Which means the life that God gives is more satisfying than physical food. As Jesus testified to the disciples when they offered him food after his interaction with the Samaritan woman – “I have

food to eat that you do not know about. . . My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work” (John 4:32, 34).

Mary knew this well, pouring out in poem and song her confidence that God would exalt the humble and fill the hungry. Perhaps this is how Jesus first learned to partake of the life God offered, at the side of his mother as she embraced her own humility with appreciation to God for his help and loyal-love.

The task of exalting those who are outcasts, poor in spirit and humble is the most fulfilling and rewarding work on earth, and it sustains us beyond what we are humanly capable of. But if the rich are the ones sent away empty handed, how is that we who are rich can hope to respond like Mary?

The demand is much too much for one particular man to consider, and Mark tells us that this wealthy man walks away grieved in spirit. As a cloud of sadness fills the air, Jesus turns to his disciples and says this man is not an isolated case, but represents all who are wealthy:

**Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! (Mark 10:23-24)**

This statement shocks the disciples. Most Jews assumed from the teaching of Deuteronomy and some of the Psalms that wealth was a symbol of God’s blessing, and if anyone had a share in the age to come it had to be the rich. Then Jesus draws them into the imaginative world of impossibility: “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” A camel, whose height, awkward gait and heavy burdens gives cause for a humorous display as the beast attempts to negotiate the narrow openings around Jerusalem. Now by means of hyperbole, Jesus asks his disciples to imagine that same camel passing through the eye of a needle. What is impossible for the camel is even more than impossible for the rich.

**They were even more astonished and said to Him, “Then who can be saved?” Looking at them, Jesus said, “With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.” (vv. 26-27)**

Jesus leads his disciples to the cliff of impossibilities and then echoes the words of Gabriel to Mary, “With God all things are possible.” God can take rich, self-assured individuals and cause them to have the faith to forsake property, family, and all worldly status to follow Jesus. God had already worked that very miracle on their hearts. Peter and Andrew left their fishing nets to follow Jesus. James and John left their father and the family business. Matthew left his profitable tax collector’s booth. And similarly, I see signs of this quiet revolution being conceived in many of us, not in pomp and circumstance, but in the humble confession of our needy and lowly estate, and the resulting excitement of playing a part in the exaltation of the humble in Cupertino and around the world. It is a wondrous revolution to be part of, and one that keeps us singing:

*“The Lord is our midst, a Victorious Warrior,  
The Mighty One has done great things for us,  
holy is his name.”*

1 Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 84.

2 Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 62.

3 Donald E. Gowen, *Theology in Exodus* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 65.

4 Walter L. Liefeld, “*Luke*,” (EBC Vol. 8, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).

5 Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 92.

6 D. A. Carson, “*Matthew*,” (EBC Vol. 8, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).