

STEP PARALLELISM OF LUKE'S INFANCY NARRATIVE

I. The Angelic Announcements of the Births (1:5–56)

1. About John (1:5–25)

- A The parents introduced, expecting no child (because barren) (5–10)
- B Appearance of the angel (11)
- C Zechariah is troubled (*etarachthe*) (12)
- D "Do not fear. . ." (*me phobou*) (13)
- E Your wife will bear a son (13)
- F You shall call him John (13)
- G He shall be great before the Lord (15)
- H Zechariah's question: "How shall I know?" (18)
- I Angel's answer: I have been sent to announce this to you (19)
- J Sign given: You shall become mute (20)
- K Zechariah's mute response (22)
- L Refrain A: Zechariah "went back" (*apelthen*) home (23)

2. About Jesus (1:26–38)

- A' The parents introduced, expecting no child (because unmarried) (26–27)
- B' Entrance of the angel (28)
- C' Mary is troubled (*dietarachthe*) (29)
- D' "Do not fear. . ." (*me phobou*) (30)
- E' You will bear a son (31)
- F' You shall call him Jesus (31)
- G' He shall be Great (32)
- H' Mary's question: "How shall this be?" (34)
- I' Angel's answer: The Holy Spirit will come upon you (35)
- J' Sign given: Your aged cousin Elizabeth has conceived (36)
- K' Mary's vocal response (38)
- L' Refrain A: The angel "went away" (*apelthen*) (38)

3. Complementary Episode: Mary Visits Elizabeth (1:39–45)

- Canticle: Song of Mary or the *Magnificat* (46–55)
- Refrain A: Mary "returned" (*hypostrepho*) to her home (56)

II. The Birth, Circumcision, and Manifestation of the Children (1:57–2:52)

4. The Birth of John (1:57–58)

- A The birth of John (57)
- B Joy over his birth (58)

5. The Birth of Jesus (2:1–20)

- A' The birth of Jesus (1–12)
- Canticle: Song of the Angels (13–14)
- B' Implied joy over his birth (15–18)
- Refrain B: Mary treasured all this (19)
- Refrain A: The shepherds "returned" (*hypostrepho*) to their homes (20)

6. The Circumcision and Manifestation of John (1:59–80)

- A John circumcised and named (59–64)
- B Reaction of the neighbors (65–66)
- C Canticle: Song of Zecharias or the *Benedictus* (68–79)
- D Refrain C: "The child grew. . ." (80)

7. The Circumcision and Manifestation of Jesus (2:21–40)

- A' Jesus circumcised and named (21)
- B' Reaction of Simeon and Anna (25–38)
- C' Canticle: Song of Simeon or *Nunc dimittis* (29–32)
- Refrain A: Jesus and his parents "returned" (*epistrepho*) to Nazareth (39)
- D' Refrain C: "The child grew. . ." (40)

8. Complementary Episode: Jesus Visits Jerusalem (2:41–52)

- Refrain A: Jesus and his parents "went" (*katabaino*) home to Nazareth (51)
- Refrain B: His mother kept all this in her heart (51)
- Refrain C: Jesus grew in wisdom, age, and grace (52)

• Notes: (1) a *canticle* is a song or hymn taken from the Bible; (2) a *refrain* is a line (or lines) that is repeated in poetry or in music; (3) usually in step parallelism the last stanza is the greater or greatest of the things being compared (here Jesus is greater than John the Baptist).

• Source: Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Gospel according to Luke I–IX*, 313–314, with modifications by Robert C. Lewis