

Notes on the Greek text of Luke 1 – 2

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Introduction

The first two chapters of Luke show clearly several important aspects of his use of the Greek language. Already the opening verses portray a writer who has a clear command of Greek and an ability to write in a literary style. Yet in the actual narration of events the nature of the Greek changes significantly. It is not only overtly Semitic, but quite specifically *Hebrew* in nature. This fact is best illustrated by the use of the *waw*-consecutive clause exactly as it is used in Hebrew (*waw*-consecutive + temporal phrase + verb + subject + object). Such a clause is foreign to Aramaic. In this respect Luke stands in stark contrast to most of the rest of the New Testament writings. The Semitisms of the other writings can more easily be attributed to the influence of Aramaic, the spoken language of Jews in the Middle East. Hebrew was the language used by scholars of the Bible. In the synagogues, the Bible was read in Hebrew, but often immediately translated into Aramaic. As far as Luke's Greek is concerned, it may be noted that now and then, when introducing his own comments, Luke falls back into his own literary Greek style (cf. 2:19). The Hebraic syntax notwithstanding, Luke's Greek is often generally Jewish in its vocabulary and includes a number of Aramaic words which had passed into Jewish Greek (e.g. σίκερα, πάσχα).

Now it may be presumed that much of the information contained in these chapters will have been provided by Mary, who according to a solid tradition took up residence with the apostle John in Ephesus. Nevertheless, Mary's native language will have been Aramaic and any Greek she spoke will have been influenced by this language, and not that of the Hebrew of Jewish scholars. This naturally poses the question as to why Luke is clearly imitating Hebrew language. It is improbable that he was using a Hebrew source. If Luke was a gentile, as is generally supposed, he may not even have known Hebrew himself, for it is possible that his Hebraic Greek has been adopted from a well-grounded knowledge of the Septuagint. However, there is no direct evidence that he was a non-Jew. And the fact that he acknowledges that David's hometown was Bethlehem may point to a knowledge of the Hebrew text. This information is only mentioned in 1 Sam. 17:12-14 and 17:58 and both passages are missing from the Septuagint! In any case, one can conclude that he has deliberately couched his narrative in traditional *biblical* language.

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Chapter One

Dedication (1:1-4)

The first dedicatory sentence (vs.1-4) of Luke's Gospel is written in a different style to the rest of the work. It is what the Greeks called a περίοδος,¹ a word which refers literally to travelling around in a circle until one arrives back at the beginning. A periodic sentence was a carefully constructed sentence whereby the main clause was often broken apart by several subordinate clauses thereby suspending the syntax. Only at the end of the sentence would the complex of thoughts be rounded off and the meaning become clear.² Loveday Alexander has argued that this preface is quite close, not to the prefaces of historical works, but to those of Hellenistic technical ('scientific' – in the broad sense) treatises.³

v.1

ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν

The verb is unusual and would normally mean 'to rehearse' / 'to rank up again'. Here it seems to be equivalent to the much more common συντάσσω 'to put together' / 'to compile'. Luke seems to be treating the prefix ἀνα- in the sense of a 'series', i.e. 'putting together in an orderly series'. He has therefore treated the verb as a coinage, by adding the prefix. Coining new compounds in this way was very common in the literature of the period, as was the use of the middle voice.

πεπληροφορημένων

Apart from one case in Ctesias (iv/v BC) this word seems to originate in a Jewish milieu.

v.2

παρέδοσαν

Note the correct use of the 2nd aorist in the plural. Elsewhere Luke uses the (typically Hellenistic) 1st aorist plurals.

οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται

Only one article is used and thus one group of people is described, not two, i.e. 'eye-witnessing ministers'. Luke was not busy interviewing eye witnesses, but has given us the account according to the apostles he knew. The phrase οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται would, interestingly, seem to exclude the one apostle he most associated with, namely, Paul. Compare Acs 1:21-22 (of the requirements for replacing Judas Iscariot) δεῖ οὖν τῶν συνελθόντων ἡμῖν ἀνδρῶν ἐν παντὶ χρόνῳ ᾧ εἰσηλθεν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς, ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος Ἰωάννου ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ἧς ἀνελήμφθη ἀπ' ἡμῶν, μάρτυρα τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ σὺν ἡμῖν γενέσθαι ἓνα τούτων.

Van Bruggen interprets v.1 to be referring to structured verbal accounts of what had happened, such accounts through which Theophilus had been instructed. Luke here gives testimony that he knew the apostles ("the eyewitnesses who have become servants of the message"). This is further borne out by his detailed description of the transfiguration (where only three apostles were present). It seems to imply that he knew neither Mark nor Matthew, and this is Van Bruggen's point, namely that the similarities between the synoptic Gospels are *not* evidence of literary dependence, but a common oral tradition.

v.3

ἄνωθεν

Is this an allusion to the fact that he will not just be beginning from the work of John the baptist, but also covering the conception and birth of both John and Jesus? Or is he suggesting that he, "having followed alongside all things from the beginning", was an eyewitness on the sideline.

1 For a more detailed discussion of the περίοδος, see my *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms Connected to Methods of Argumentation, Figures and Tropes from Anaximenes to Quintilian* (Leuven: Peters, 2000).

2 This typically Greek sentence structure cannot be found anywhere in the letters of Paul. His sentences can sometimes be lengthy, but that is because they are stretched out by a multitude of coordinate clauses which always remain structurally linear (in contrast to the circular περίοδος).

3 Loveday Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary Convention and Social Context in Luke 1.1-4 and Acts 1.1* (Cambridge: University Press, 1993).

γράψαι

The implied object is surely διήγησιν περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων.

κράτιστε

Here, functioning as the superlative of ἀγαθός, not κρατύς (see ‘Comparison of adjectives’ in *Animal Story*). It was a common title for persons of distinguished rank. Theophilus was no commoner. Luke does not seem to use ὃ in conjunction with κράτιστε (cf. Acts 24:3, 25 and contrast Acts 1:1).

v.4

περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων

This would surely have to be resolved as: περὶ τούτων λόγων περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης (*i.e.* κατηχήθης περὶ τούτων λόγων). Note that κατηχέω implies oral instruction.

τὴν ἀσφάλειαν

This word forms the climax of the whole carefully constructed sentence.

John’s birth foretold to Zacharias (1:5-25)

v.5

Ἐγένετο

A quite Hebraic sentence wherein the characters of the account are introduced, cf. 1 Sam. 1:1-2.

Ζαχαρίας

Hebrew: זַכְרְיָהוּ. Note how Greek vocalisation of the vocal *shewa*.

ἐφημερίας

A Jewish noun (going back to LXX) for the division of priests for the daily service of the temple, really a substantivised adjective (ἐφημέριος, ‘during the day’) presumably agreeing with τάξις.

Ἀβιά

Hebrew: אֲבִיָּהוּ. This was the 8th of 24 courses, 1 Chron. 24:10.

Ἀαρὼν

Hebrew: אַהֲרֹן.

Ἐλισάβετ

Hebrew: אֵלִישָׁבֶת.

v.6

πορευόμενοι ... ἄμεμπτοι

Jews use πορεύομαι for ἔρχομαι. ‘Walking in Gods ways / commandments’ is a common Hebraic idiom.

δικαιώμασιν

The sense ‘ordinance / decree’ is Septuagintal and not secular Greek. This second term (neuter) is subsumed under the feminine article of the first term.

v.7

προβεβηκότες ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις

The phrase ‘advanced in days’ is a Hebraism, cf. 1 Kgs 1:1 אָבָה בְּיָמָיו וְהָיָה בְּיָמָיו. Regular Greek would use ἡλικία.

vs.8-9

Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ ἱερατεύειν ... ἔλαχε

The construction is Hebrew: *waw* consecutive – temporal phrase – (*waw*) – verb. The second *waw* makes no sense in Greek and has been omitted.

v.10

πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος ἦν τοῦ λαοῦ

Hyperbaton. For the connection between the incense offering and prayer see Ps. 141:2 and Rev. 8:1-5.

v.11

ἄγγελος κυρίου

Hebrew: מַלְאָכִי יְהוָה ‘the angel of Yahweh’. Or does Luke only mean ‘an angel’?

τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου

τὸ θυσιαστήριον is Jewish Greek for ὁ βωμός.

v.12

ιδῶν

Sc. τὸν ἄγγελον.

φόβος ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ’ αὐτόν

In both Greek and Hebrew ‘fear’, in the sense of fright or panic, is said to ‘fall’ upon a person. Of course in regular Greek φόβος means ‘fright’, but in Jewish Greek φόβος is just a general word for ‘fear’ and it is the context and coupling with the verb ‘to fall’ that provides the meaning ‘fright’. In regular Greek ἐπιπίπτω takes the dative, not a preposition, which represents Hebrew לַעֲלֹכָא.

v.13

εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτόν ὁ ἄγγελος

Hebrew word-order. In Hebrew, indirect personal pronouns tend to be placed after the verb and before the subject.

μὴ φοβοῦ

Note the *present* imperative, emphasising continuing action (instead of the aor. subj.).

διότι

= διὰ τοῦτο ὅτι ...

εἰσηκούσθη

Lit. “yielded to”. This is Septuagint vocabulary and it is not common outside the Septuagint, not even in the NT. Luke uses this verb for the language of angels only.

ἡ δέησίς σου κτλ.

Luke frequently uses the Hebrew word-order for enclitic pronouns that would otherwise tend to come before their noun.

καλέσεις

This is a late Greek future. In Attic and Ionic the future tense of this verb was the same as the present.

Ἰωάννην

In Hebrew the name is יְהוֹנָתָן (from יְהוֹנָתָן), but this Greek spelling derives from the Aramaic יְהוֹנָתָן.

v.14

ἀγαλλίασις

A wholly Jewish (and later Christian) noun, which together with ἀγγαλλιάω seems to have originated from the Hellenistic verb ἀγάλλω.

ἐπὶ τῇ γενέσει αὐτοῦ χαίρονται

In regular Greek χαίρω would take the dative. The use of ἐπὶ is under the influence of Hebrew, e.g. לַע + הַתּוֹ.

v.15

ἐνώπιον

The accusative singular of ἐνώπιος used as a preposition, although not unknown in late Hellenistic Greek, is very common in Jewish Greek, being a literal translation of עֲנִי, but also substituting for עֲנִי. (This note will not be repeated, since the word is frequent)

σίκερα

This is a transliteration of the Aramaic סִרְסָא (Hebrew = סִרְסָא) which refers to an alcoholic drink distinguished from wine (probably beer). This Greek transliteration had become normal in Jewish Greek is later even found in a few secular authors. Note that the same contrast between being full of alcohol versus the Holy Spirit is made by Paul in Eph. 5:18.

ἔτι ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς αὐτοῦ

While one might expect ἐν κοιλία, the phrase ἔτι ἐκ + gen. is regular Greek for ‘ever since ...’, cf. ἔτ’ ἐκ βρέφους ‘ever since babyhood’.

v.17

Ἡλίου

Ἡλίας -ου, ὁ (Hebrew: הֵילֵאל or הֵילֵאל) Elijah

v.18

κατὰ τί

This implies מִיָּדָא (cf. LXX Gen. 15:8 κατὰ τί γνώσομαι ὅτι κληρονομήσω αὐτήν; translating מִיָּדָא here). Regular Greek would be πῶς, although κατὰ τί is not impossible.

v.19

ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἄγγελος εἶπεν

The use of the passive form for the middle is typical of late Hellenistic Greek. The idiom ‘Answered x and said’ is Hebrew, e.g. Zech. 1:12, מַלְאָכִי הִתְיַחֵד מִלְּפָנָי. See also v.35.

Γαβριήλ

Hebrew: גַּבְרִיֵּאל

v.20

μὴ δυνάμενος

In Attic we would expect οὐ. μὴ with the participle should express conditionality or generality. But in Hellenistic Greek μὴ was frequently used with the participle.

ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας γένηται ταῦτα

ἄχρι οὗ (occasionally abbreviated to ἄχρι) functions as a temporal conjunction taking the subjunctive (with or without ἄν). As such we could understand it as abbreviating ἄχρι οὗ χρόνου ... (‘until / as far as which time ...’). Here the expression has been adapted to ‘until which day’. I am not aware of any such adaptation elsewhere outside of Luke, cf. Lk. 17:27 and Acts 1:2 where ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας is followed by the indicative.

ἀνθ' ὧν

Abbreviation for ἀντὶ τούτων ὅτι

v.24

περιέκρυβεν

This is the imperfect of the late form περικρύβω, derived from περικρύπτω.

Jesus' birth foretold to Mary (1:26-38)

v.26

Ναζαρεθ

The etymology of this place-name is obscure. It is from the root נצר and not נזר (ז = צ in the Hebrew spelling of Nazareth).

v.27

ἐμνηστευμένην

Irregular spelling for μεμνηστευμένην.

Μαριάμ

מַרְיָם in Hebrew.

κεχαριτωμένη

The verb χαριτόω, typically used in the passive, is Jewish Greek.

v.29

ποταπὸς

Hellenistic spelling for ποδαπός, originally limited to 'of what country'? but later more generally 'of what sort'?

εἴη

Note the use of the optative in indirect discourse after a secondary tense. Luke is the only NT author who does this.

v.30

εὗρες ... χάριν

To 'find favour' is typically Hebraic, cf. Gen. 6:8; 18:3; 19:19 etc.

v.31

καλέσεις

Late future. In Attic/Ionic the future was the same as the present.

v.33

βασιλεύσει ἐπὶ

Greek takes the genitive of that which is ruled over. This construction comes from the Hebrew מלך לע.

v.34

ἄνδρα οὐ γινώσκω

While this pregnant sense of γινώσκω is typically Hebraic, it is also common enough in Greek.

Mary visits Elisabeth (1:39-45)

v.39

εἰς τὴν ὄρεινὴν [*sc.* χώραν]

εἰς πόλιν Ἰούδα

As it stands this phrase can be reasonably read as 'to a city of Judah' (cf. 2 Chron. 25:28 בְּעִיר יְהוּדָה,

not read as such in the LXX, however). Black,⁴ however, has suggested that πόλιν may be a mistranslation (or could it be an idiosyncratic Jewish use of πόλις?) going back to the Hebrew (or Aramaic) תְּיָרָה which could mean either ‘province / administrative district’ or ‘town / city’. Luke's intention would then have been ‘in the district (χώρα) of Judah’.

v.44

ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει

See v.14.

v.45

τοῖς λελαλημένοις [*sc.* λόγοις]

Mary's word of praise (1:46-56)

v.47

ἠγαλλίασεν

A wholly Jewish (and later Christian) verb, which together with ἀγαλλίασις seems to have originated from the Hellenistic verb ἀγάλλω.

v.48

ἐπὶ τὴν ταπείνωσιν τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ

The difference in use of the noun ταπείνωσις between regular and Jewish Greek lies along the same lines as the cognate adjective: ταπεινός -η -ον, which in regular Greek means ‘lowly / base / vile’ and in Jewish Greek ‘lowly / humble’.

v.50

τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν

See ‘A note on fear’ following *Animal Story* 6.

v.51

διανοία καρδίας αὐτῶν

A Septuagintal expression, cf. 1 Chron. 29:18; Baruch 1:22.

v.52

καὶ ὕψωσεν ταπεινούς

See note to v.48.

Birth and naming of John (1:57-66)

v.57

ἐπλήσθη ὁ χρόνος τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτήν

An Hebraic expression, cf. Gen. 25:24 תָּלַלְתָּ הַיָּמִי וְאֵלְמָנָה.

ἐγέννησεν

Although γεννάω is generally used of the father, it is also occasionally used of the mother in regular Greek.

v.58

ἐμεγάλυνεν κύριος τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ μετ’ αὐτῆς

Another typically Hebraic expression, cf. Gen. 19:19 וַיַּגְדֵּם יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי אֲרָם לְדָגְלָתוֹ.

v.59

Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ὀγδόῃ ἦλθον

Once again a *waw*-consecutive clause, showing the *Hebrew* (not *Aramaic*) nature of the Greek.

ἐκάλουν αὐτὸ ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ

Cf. Neh. 7:63 וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמֵוֹ (‘and he was called on their name’, i.e. by their name).

4 Matthew Black, *An Aramaic approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 3rd ed. (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1967) p.11.

v.60

ἀποκριθεῖσα ... εἶπεν
See note to v.19.

v.61

εἶπαν

The confusion of 1st and 2nd aorists in this verb is typically, both of Jewish Greek and the Egyptian papyri.

v.62

ἐνένευον δὲ τῷ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ

The implication is that Zachariah was both *deaf* and dumb and indeed κωφός (v.22) can imply this. The amazement in v.63 could be interpreted in the sense that, not having heard Elisabeth's suggestion of 'John' (being deaf as well as dumb), he writes down the same name.

τί ἂν θέλοι καλεῖσθαι αὐτό

For a wish the ἂν is not necessary, but adds a cautious politeness here.

v.63

ἔγραψεν λέγων

Hebraistic, cf. 2 Kgs 10:6 וַיִּכְתֹּב אֲלֵיהֶם סֵפֶר שְׁנִי לְאָמַר ('And he wrote to them a second bookroll [i.e. letter], saying ...').

v.65

ἐπὶ πάντας φόβος τοὺς περιοικοῦντας αὐτούς

Once again, the narrative comment of Luke is done with hyperbaton (noun phrase).

πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα

See note to v.15.

v.66

ἔθεντο

The implied object is the πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα from the previous verse. The phrase is Hebraic, cf. 1 Sam. 21:13 וַיִּשֶׂם דָּוִד אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּלִבּוֹ ('And David placed these things in his heart')

χεῖρ κυρίου

The phrase יהוה יד is typically Hebraic. The lack of the article before κυρίου implies the divine name.

Prophecy of Zacharias (1:67-80)**v.67**

ἐπροφήτευσεν λέγων

Hebraism, cf. 2 Chron. 20:37 וַיִּתְנַבֵּא ... לְאָמַר.

v.68

Εὐλογητός

The prophecy begins with a בְּרָכָה, vs.68-75, which consistently begins ... בְּרוּךְ (= εὐλογητός) and is followed by a justification for the blessing (i.e. 'word of praise'), e.g. Gen. 9:26; 14:20; 24:27; Ex. 18:10; Ruth 4:14; 1 Sam. 25:32f; 2 Sam. 6:21; 18:28; 1 Ki. 1:48; 5:7 (21); 8:15, 56; 2 Chron.2:12 (11); etc. Psalms 41:14 and 106:48 are identical in their initial wording בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

κύριος ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ

Once again, anarthrous κύριος represents יהוה here.

ἐπεσκέψατο

The verb is transitive and implies τὸν λαόν.

ἐποίησεν λύτρωσιν

With this kind of periphrasis we would have expected the middle voice.

v.69

ἤγειρεν κέρας σωτηρίας

A Hebrew metaphor, cf. Ps. 75:6 אֶל־תִּרְיִמוֹ לִמְרוֹם קַרְנֶיךָ ('Don't lift up your horn on high'). The image is that of a bull lifting up it's horned head.

v.70

διὰ στόματος ... προφητῶν αὐτοῦ

Compare 2 Chron. 36:22 דְּבַר־יְהוָה בְּפִי יְרֵמְיָהוּ.

τῶν ἁγίων ἄπ' αἰῶνος

The phrase ἄπ' αἰῶνος is a Hebraism 'from of old', *not* 'from eternity, see below:

Note on the meaning of עולם

The word עולם is often translated 'eternity' in our English Bibles and this can give the impression that 'eternity' is the specific meaning of the word. In fact that word simply means 'long time' and it can refer to a long time either forwards (in the future) or backwards (into the past). How long a duration is meant is entirely according to the context. The translation 'eternal' therefore gives a wrong impression.

Some examples:

Deut. 15:17 *then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever* (עולם).

1 Sam. 27:12 *And Achish trusted David, thinking, "He has made himself an utter stench to his people Israel; therefore he shall always* (עולם) *be my servant."*

Obviously it is rather non-sensical to translate 'eternal slave/servant' here. The point is that the person will be a slave until he dies.

Deut. 32:7 *Remember the days of old* (עולם);
consider the years of many generations;
ask your father, and he will show you,
your elders, and they will tell you.

The 'eternal days' here are not days reaching back into eternity, but past generations which older people can still remember!

Ps. 143:3 *For the enemy has pursued my soul;*
he has crushed my life to the ground;
he has made me sit in darkness like those long (עולם) *dead.*

The 'eternal dead' are those that have been dead a long time.

Pr. 22:28 (cf. 23:10) *Do not move the ancient* (עולם) *landmark that your fathers have set.*

At some point in the past the fathers placed a boundary marker. The reference to the 'eternal landmark' just means that the landmark was set quite a long time ago.

Many more examples could be given, cf. Gen. 6:4; Jer. 28:8; Isa. 44:7.

Of course when God is described as עולם the context requires that we view this 'long time' as 'eternity'.

Isa. 40:28 *Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting* (עולם) *God,*

The word can also be used in the plural, which literally refers to a series of long periods of time (certainly not eternal):

Dan. 9:24 *Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness* (lit. 'righteousness of eternities / long periods of time'), *to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.*

All this shows that when Scripture speaks of statutes or even covenants being עולם the point is not necessarily that they will last forever, but that they will be valid for a long time. The theological context must determine how long that time is.

v.71

σωτηρίαν

This picks up from the κέρασ σωτηρίας of v.69.

v.72

ποιῆσαι ἔλεος

Again we would have expected the middle voice. But the phrase is a copy of the common Hebrew phrase פָּעַל עֲשׂוּ .

vv.73-75

ὄρκον ὃν ὤμοσεν

ὄρκον depends on μνησθῆναι in the previous verse and should be genitive, but is attracted in case by the relative, although it is more unusual for the genitive case to be attracted to another case. See ‘The attraction of the relative pronoun’ following *Animal Story* 16.

ῥυσθέντας

The accusative clearly marks the participle as the subject of λατρεύειν, but agrees with the dative ἡμῖν in v.73, see Smyth §1978.

ὁσιότητι

See ‘A note on words for ‘holy’’ following *Animal Story* 16.

ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ

See the note to v.15.

v.76

Καὶ σὺ δέ, παιδίον, ...

The prophecy follows directly on from the blessing with a direct address.

ἐτοιμάσαι ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ

This is surely a reference to Isa. 40:3 $\text{יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת יִהְיֶה הַדֶּרֶךְ יִשְׁׁר}$ (‘Clear the path of YHWH’), a passage which the Gospels bring to bear upon the preaching of John the baptist.

v.77

ἐν ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν

This was what John’s baptism was to be all about.

v.78

σπλάγχνα

Although σπλάγχνα as the important internal organs were associated with strong emotions such as anger and love by the Greeks, the association with mercy is distinctly Jewish (from רַחֲמִים).

v.79

ἐπιφᾶναι τοῖς ἐν σκότει καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου καθημένοις

This is surely a reference to Isa. 9:1 $\text{עַם הַהֲלָלִים בְּהַשְׁׁךְ רָאוּ אֹר וְגִּלְגָּל יִשְׁׁבִי בְּצַלְמֹת אֹר וְגַם עַל־הֶם:}$ as quoted in Matt. 4:16 $\text{ὁ λαὸς ὁ καθημένος ἐν σκότει φῶς εἶδεν μέγα, καὶ τοῖς καθημένοις ἐν χώρα καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου φῶς ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς.}$

Chapter Two

Census and birth of Jesus in David's city (2:1-7)

v.1

Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ἐξῆλθεν κτλ.

This is a typical *waw*-consecutive phrase in Hebrew: *And-it-happened*, time clause, verb-subject-object.

ἀπογράφεσθαι

Note the present (passive) tense 'to be registering'.

πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην

Sc. γῆν. The term οἰκουμένη is defined by Strabo (*Geography*, 4,1,6) as follows: καλοῦμεν γὰρ οἰκουμένην ἣν οἰκοῦμεν καὶ γνωρίζομεν.

v.2

πρώτη

Although πρώτη can theoretically have its regular sense here, the meaning in that case makes little chronological sense: 'This became the first census while Quirinius was ruling Syria'. The census under Quirinius occurred in AD 6, long after Jesus' birth. Another interpretation is to understand the adjective πρώτος as πρότερος, which is not uncommon in late Greek. The ensuing genitives on this interpretation are not a genitive absolute, but dependent on the comparative sense of πρώτη, forming noun phrase hyperbaton: 'This census occurred before Quirinius was ruling Syria'.

The use of πρώτος in this way is an extension of the more common (and Attic) use of the adverb πρώτον in the sense of πρότερον (cf. Jn 15:18). In later Greek the adjective was also used for πρότερος and frequently followed by a genitive. Because this usage has been controversial among commentators, it is well to illustrate it.

(Ps.-) Ocellus Lucanus, *De Universi Natura* 1.2 (ca. 1st cent. BC) (concerning τὸ πᾶν)
ἐκεῖνο πρώτον τοῦ παντός ἐστίν
That (thing/being) exists before the 'all'.

Gospel of John 1:15b
ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρώτός μου ἦν.
He who comes after me came before me, because he was earlier than me.

Hermas, *Visions* 2.8.1 (concerning the church)
πάντων πρώτη ἐκτίσθη
She was created before all things.

Aelian, *De Natura Animalium* 8.12
οἱ πρώτοί μου ταῦτα ἀνιχνεύσαντες
Those who traced out these things before me

Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 14.630c (concerning dance movements)
πρώτη εὗρηται ἢ περὶ τοὺς πόδας κίνησις τῆς διὰ τῶν χειρῶν
Movement about the feet has been invented before that through the hands. (note the hyperbaton)

Manetho Hephaestion, *Apotelesmatica* 1.329-30 (= 4.404-405)
γεννήτορα πρώτον μητέρος εἰς αἴδην πέμψει
He will send the begetter (i.e. father) to Hades before the mother.

Papyri Graecae Magicae 13.543
σοῦ πρώτός εἰμι
I am earlier than you.

Finally, we may note that Luke himself also does this again in Acts 1:1

Τὸν μὲν πρώτον λόγον ἐποίησάμην περὶ πάντων, ὃ Θεόφιλε, ὃν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδάσκειν ...
The earlier account I made concerning all things, O Theophilus, which Jesus began both to do and to teach ...

In dating the census in this way, Luke is separating this census from the very famous one under

Quirinius 12 years later (AD 6, assuming the birth of Jesus to be ca. 6 BC⁵) which sparked the (tax) revolt of Judas the Galilean. The census under Quirinius was regional, not worldwide. It is possible that the information in v.1 is meant as a generality. The temporal phrase ‘in those days’ is very vague. Census’s were held for tax purposes in all dominions on a regular basis, although we only have details about those held in Egypt. We do know that in Rome a census was held every 5 years and in Egypt every 14 years. It is interesting that a *Roman* decree ordering a census would have some kind of validity in the client kingdom of king Herod (who owed his kingship to the Romans). On this question Plummer⁶ states: “When Palestine was divided among Herod’s three sons, Augustus ordered that the taxes of the Samaritans should be reduced by one-fourth, because they had not taken part in the revolt against Varus (*Ant.* xvii. 11. 4 ; *B.J.* ii. 6. 3) ; and this was before Palestine became a Roman province. If he could do that, he could require information as to taxation throughout Palestine; and the obsequious Herod would not attempt to resist.” Tertullian (*Adv.Marc.* 4,7,7) speaks of the census taken under Augustus in Palestine as contained in the Roman archives (he had been to Rome before writing this treatise). He later adds (*Adv.Marc.* 4,19,10): *Sed et census constat actos sub Augusto tunc in Iudaea per Sentium Saturninum, apud quos genus eius inquirere potuissent.*⁷ Saturninus was the Roman governor of the neighbouring province of Syria from 9 – 6 BC. Schalit⁸ has argued that Herod developed a tax system (and census) using the model of Roman Egypt and (on the basis of two known partial remittances of taxes determined to have been held in 20 and 14 BC respectively) held a census every 6 years. This supposition might put a Palestinian census in 8 BC, although it is always possible that the next census was delayed. Schalit, in fact, states that the 5 year census in Rome was frequently delayed. It is unclear whether Herod’s census would have involved a poll tax only on males or on both males and females. In Egypt, the 14 yearly census was only for males between the ages of 14 and 60. In Rome the 5 yearly census (which was not always exactly every 5 years) was for males between 14 and 65 and females from 12 to 65.

v.3

ἐπορεύοντο

Strictly speaking the verb πορεύομαι refers to making a journey. Jews, however, tended to use this verb as a synonym of ἔρχομαι.

v.4

Ἀνάβη

Despite travelling South, the journey to the mountain city of Jerusalem is always ‘upwards’.

ἦτις

Hellenistic for ἦ (but this is found only in the nominative cases of the masc. and fem.).

Βηθλέεμ

בֵּית-לֶחֶם = ‘house of bread’. The fact that Joseph went to Bethlehem to register means that he still had entitlement to land there. Given that he was poor (Lk. 2:24) and not living in Bethlehem, either the land was abandoned or, more probably, leased out.

ἐξ οἴκου

The sense ‘household’ for οἶκος is possible in both (regular) Greek and Hebrew.

vs.6-7

Ἐγένετο δὲ ... καὶ ἔτεκεν

Hebrew syntax: *And it happened ... that she bore.*

διότι

Abbreviation for διὰ τοῦτο ὅτι.

5 Herod died in 4 BC and we know that approximately 2 years passed before the massacre of infants in Jerusalem.

6 Alfred Plummer, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, 6th ed., ICC (New York: Charles Scribner’s sons, 1903) *ad loc.*

7 “But there is historical proof that at this very time a census had been taken in Judæa by Sentius Saturninus, which might have satisfied their inquiry respecting the family and descent of Christ.” An online translation which shows quite some ‘padding’.

8 Abraham Schalit, *König Herodes: Der Mann und sein Werk*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001) pp.274-77.

ἐν τῷ καταλύματι

A κατάλυμα is a lodging place, not an inn. Luke elsewhere uses the term τὸ πανδοχεῖον, which is a specific term for an inn (10:34). The suggestion seems to be that those leasing his property were not able to offer him the guest-room (cf. Lk. 22:11).

Visit of the shepherds and angels, circumcision & naming (2:8-21)

v.8

ποιμένες ἦσαν ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ

This dates the event to a time when the animals were out in the fields, that is, *not* the winter!

v.9

ἐπέστη αὐτοῖς

2nd aor. intransitive, ‘to stand near’, but used, especially of dreams or visions, in the sense ‘to appear’.

δόξα κυρίου

Given that there is no definite article before κυρίου the phrase is to be considered a direct translation of the construct phrase: כְּבוֹד יְהוָה. Strictly speaking, the implication is that God himself is present with the angels, which is interesting, given that God chooses not to reveal himself in the actual town of Bethlehem. The ‘glory of the Lord’ is what settled upon the original tabernacle and the first temple. But it was sorely missing from the second temple, making its appearance here all the more striking!

ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν

The use of the internal accusative is as Greek as it is Hebrew. The verb should be read as Jewish Greek, even though the regular Greek meaning (‘to take fright’) actually fits the context quite well.

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ ἄγγελος

In Hebrew, indirect personal pronouns tend to be placed after the verb and *before* the subject:

(conjunction) – verb – indirect personal pronoun – subject

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֵלָיו

And God said to him ...

(conjunction) – verb – subject – indirect object

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם

And God said to Abraham ...

μὴ φοβεῖσθε

Note the *present* imperative, emphasising continuing action, ‘don’t be fearing’, which could be interpreted: ‘don’t keep fearing’.

v.11

ὃς ἐστὶν χριστὸς κύριος

‘who is an anointed lord’, i.e. king. The anointing is, of course, still to come.

v.13

αἰνούντων τὸν θεὸν καὶ λεγόντων

The plurals are according to sense, not grammar. This is more common in Hebrew than in Greek.

v.14

εὐδοκίας

Jewish Greek for εὐδόκησις. The Jewish term is used especially of God.

v.15

τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο

Hebrew idiom: הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, ‘this thing’.

ὁ κύριος ἐγνώρισεν ἡμῖν

ὁ κύριος may refer here to the angel. It is a common term of deference to an important person.

v.16

ἦλθαν ... ἀνεῦραν

1st aor. endings on a 2nd aor. verbs. Given that Luke knows better, is it possible that he is deliberately imitating the defective speech of shepherds?

ἐν τῇ φάτνῃ

The definite article refers back to the feeding trough already mentioned in v.12.

v.18

καὶ πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες

This implies that more people were present than just Mary, Joseph and the baby.

v.19

πάντα συνετήρει τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα

Type 1 hyperbaton. Suddenly, when Luke provides commentary to the story, the style of Greek changes. Mary is, of course, Luke’s source for the events described.

v.20

ἐπὶ πᾶσιν οἷς ἤκουσαν

See ‘The attraction of the relative pronoun’ in *Animal Story*.

v.21

καὶ ἐκλήθη

The day of circumcision was also the occasion for naming John the baptist (Lk 1:59). Waiting several days until a rite of purification before naming was also common among the Greeks and Romans. Plummer summarises their practices as follows: “Among the Romans the naming of girls took place on the eighth day: of boys on the ninth. The purification accompanied it; and hence the name *dies lustricus*. Tertullian uses *nominalia* of the naming festival (*Idol.* xvi 1). Among the Greeks the naming festival was on the tenth day ; δεκάτην ἐστιᾶν or θύειν.”

Presentation & sacrifice at temple (2:22-38)

v.22

αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ αὐτῶν

Another 33 days after the circumcision in the case of a male child. The plural personal pronoun is somewhat strange, given that Lev. 12 speaks of the purification of the *woman*. There is no textual justification for the translation ‘her’ in the NKJV. The thought might be that both mother and child are purified, particularly if Luke perhaps read מְהַרְהֵט מִי for מְהַרְהֵט מִי in Lev. 12:4? However, the context of the Greek strongly suggests that the parents, Joseph and Mary are in view. It is probably just a collective, given that both Joseph and Mary journey to the temple for the ritual, which is more specifically to cleanse the mother.

The noun καθαρισμός (from καθαρίζω) is Jewish Greek for ὁ καθαρισμός (from καθαίρω). Note the the LXX uses κάθαρσις, another regular Greek term for purification. Luke’s language is more Jewish here than even the Septuagint.

v.23

πᾶν ἄρσεν διανοῖγον μήτραν κτλ.

This is not a quotation, but a reference to Exod. 13:11-16 and similar laws. See my commentary on Exod. 22:29-30 for discussion (in *The Law of the Book of the Covenant*).

v.24

τοῦ δοῦναι θυσίαν

The verb δίδωμι is not normally used in the sense of ‘offering’ θυσίαν. A verb such as προσφέρω would be expected. There are no instances of such use in the LXX. Possibly Luke is thinking of the fact that by the time of the first century sacrifices were no longer brought by the individuals concerned, but the equivalent in money was deposited into the appropriate coin-collection horn. The priests would later count the money and perform the appropriate number of sacrifices in the temple. In that sense, Mary and Joseph were ‘granting’ a sacrifice. The sacrifice of two turtle-doves or pigeons was the alternative poor person’s sacrifice for the cleansing of the mother after childbirth (Lev. 12:8).

v.25

Καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος

Hebraism. One of the common uses of the interjection הִנֵּה (= ἰδοὺ) is to emphasise the following noun.

Συμεὼν

Hebrew: שִׁמְעוֹן which shows how the Greek in this instance vocalises the *shewa*.

ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος

See ‘Greek Word Order’. This ordering indicates the aforementioned ‘man’.

εὐλαβῆς

‘Devout’ in the sense of ‘cautious’ and conservative.

παράκλησιν τοῦ Ἰσραήλ

Is this a veiled reference to Isa. 40:1 Παρακαλεῖτε παρακαλεῖτε τὸν λαόν μου, λέγει ὁ θεός, cf. Lk. 3:4-6.

πνεῦμα ἦν ἅγιον ἐπ’ αὐτόν

This appears to be an example of hyperbaton.

v.26

ἦν αὐτῷ κεχρηματισμένον

The ἦν belongs closely with the κεχρηματισμένον, the past tense of εἰμί with the perfect participle rendering an effective pluperfect tense. The periphrastic construction usually only occurs for the perfect or pluperfect middle/pass. indicative 3rd person *plural* of stems ending in a consonant. For the meaning see ‘A note on χράω / χράομαι’ in *Animal Story*. Although this construction was becoming more prevalent in Hellenistic Greek, Jews – under the influence of Aramaic – tended to use it very frequently. It may be noted, that the construction was also common in Mishnaic Hebrew (also under the influence of Aramaic).

πρὶν [ἦ] ἄν ἴδῃ

See ‘A note on temporal adverbial clauses’ in my notes to 1 Enoch 6.

τὸν χριστὸν κυρίου

The lack of the article before κυρίου shows that the phrase = יהוה ישׁמְרֵנוּ תָּמִיד.

v.28

εἰς τὰς ἀγκάλας

See ‘Body Vocabulary’ in *Animal Story*.

v.29

ἀπολύεις τὸν δοῦλόν σου

It has been suggested (e.g. by Plummer) that the metaphor here is one of manumission. The choice of verb, however, speaks against that. Manumission was usually expressed in words using the stem ἐλευθ- (of freedom). The verb here indicates ‘dismissal’. In Jewish Greek (in the passive) it could also signify death, cf. LXX Num. 20:29; Tobit 3:6, but that is not really the context here.

δέσποτα

Vocative.

τὸ ρῆμά

The common translation for רָבַדָּה.

v.30

εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου τὸ σωτήριόν σου

The word order both with respect to verb-subject-object and with respect to the personal pronouns is entirely Hebrew.

v.32

φῶς εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν ἐθνῶν

This phrase coupled with the idea of salvation is found in the second servant prophecy of Isa. 49:6 וְנִתְּתִי לְאֹר גּוֹיִם לְהִיּוֹת יְשׁוּעָה עַד-קֶצֶה הַקְּצָה. The phrase in Greek does not make a lot of sense as it stands and translations usually adapt it to what must surely be the intended sense, namely ‘a light for revelation *to* the nations’.

v.33

καὶ ἦν κτλ.

Either Luke began the sentence only thinking of the father, or the expression represents Hebrew וְהָיָה, which, however, is usually translated καὶ ἐγένετο.

v.35

σοῦ [δὲ] αὐτῆς

With the accent, the personal pronoun is emphatic. Note that the 3rd person intensive pronoun can do service for the 1st and 2nd person (here αὐτῆς for σεαυτῆς).

ὅπως ἄν

ὅπως in final clauses always went together with ἄν in Attic Greek, but later on the use of ἄν diminished. In the NT ὅπως ἄν is only used by Luke and once, in a quotation, in Paul.

v.36

προφήτις

See ‘A note on ὁ προφήτης’ in *Animal Story*. I am not aware of female ‘prophets’ in the Greek sense in antiquity, although there were certainly female μάντις, of whom the Pythia at Delphi was the most famous.⁹ Does the fact that Hanna is found in the *temple* and functions only *there* as prophetess (see v.37) perhaps suggest that she functioned as a ‘prophet’ in a more *Greek* sense? Was she, perhaps, a person known for speaking about the oracles of God (i.e. Scripture) in the women’s court – rather than a ‘prophet’ in the sense of someone receiving direct revelation from God? See the description of her activities below *sub* vs.37-38.

ζήσασα

Attic Greek normally used the aorist (and perfect) tense of the verb βιώω instead of that of ζάω, restricting the use of ζάω to the present, future and imperfect. Later Greek used all tenses.

v.37

χήρα ἕως ἐτῶν ὀγδοήκοντα τεσσάρων

Assuming she married at age 14, this would make her 105, unless Luke is saying that she was a ‘widow’ and she was 84 years old. Refusal to remarry for a widow is a sign of virtue (1 Tim. 5:9; cf. Josephus, *Antiq.* 18,180).

ἢ οὐκ ἀφίστατο τοῦ ἱεροῦ νηστείας καὶ δεήσεσιν λατρεύουσα νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν

It is significant that her ‘work’ is described both as being attached to the temple and also consisting in fasting and prayers (lit. ‘entreaties’), that is, not ‘prophecy’ as such. This surely bears relation to the work Paul is envisaging for true widows in 1 Tim. 5:3-16? In v.5 he states: ἢ δὲ ὄντως χήρα καὶ

⁹ Incidentally, although she was properly called a μάντις, the term προφήτις was on occasion applied to her.

μεμονωμένη ἤλπιεν ἐπὶ θεὸν καὶ προσμένει ταῖς δεήσεσιν καὶ ταῖς προσευχαῖς νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας.
The description of Hanna fasting and praying night and day is, naturally, a deliberate exaggeration (hyperbole). While fasting at night would be possible, prayer was usually limited to the times of sacrifice.

v.38

ἀνθωμολογεῖτο τῷ θεῷ

The prefix ἀντί expresses here the notion of ‘in return’. She was confessing / professing in return to God. In the Septuagint the verb is used in the sense of returning thanks / praise to God.

παῖσιν τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν Ἱερουσαλήμ

In historical context, this must refer to the restoration of Davidic kingship, which had not been experienced since before the exile. This is an aspect of Jewish piety which is deliberately passed over in silence by Josephus, who was proud of the fact that he was related to the Hasmonean kings (usurpers of David’s throne).

Return to Nazareth (2:39-40)

v.39

ἐπέστρεψαν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν

Luke himself passes silently over the troubled history of the first few years described by Matthew. He is not interested in describing conflict, but simple Jewish piety.

v.40

Τὸ δὲ παιδίον ἠύξανεν καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο

Compare 1:80. The phrase is typically Hebrew, e.g. Gen. 21:8; Exod. 2:10 (תָּרַחַם לְתַרְחִי); and also 1 Sam. 2:21 (רָצַח לְרַחֵם). Luke’s rendering of the typically Hebrew phrase is more idiomatic than the Septuagint ἐμεγαλύνθη (2 Sam. 2:21) although Gen. 21:8 has ἠύξθη. Once again, however, all indications point to Luke’s acquaintance with the Hebrew without any mediation of the Septuagint text.

The 12 year old Jesus in the temple (2:41-52)

v.41

πάσχα

Aramaic קִרְבָּן or קִרְבָּן. The word can refer either to the feast or to the sacrificial lamb.

v.42

ἐγένετο ἐτῶν δώδεκα

The verb γίνομαι followed by τὰ ἔτη and a number is frequently used in expressing a person’s age. The noun and number can either be nominative or genitive.

v.44

τοῖς συγγενεῦσιν

A colloquial dative plural which ought to be συγγενέσι, cf. Mark 6:4. This spelling is discussed at the beginning of a treatise wrongly attributed to the grammarian Herodianus, but probably from his time, that is, the end of the second century AD. The discussion shows that this spelling was common.

ΠΕΡΙ ΤΩΝ ΖΗΤΟΥΜΕΝΩΝ ΚΑΤΑ ΠΑΣΗΣ ΚΛΙΣΕΩΣ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΟΣ

ΠΟΛΛΩΝ σφαλλομένων κατὰ κλίσιν δοτικῆς πτώσεως καὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος· καὶ τῶν μὲν λεγόντων τοῖς συγγενεῦσι, τῶν δὲ τοῖς συγγενεῖσιν, ἀναγκαῖον εἰπεῖν ὅσα κλιτέον. Οὕτε οὖν συγγενεῦσιν, ἐπεὶ μὴ ἔστιν ὀνομαστικὴ ὁ συγγενής·

On Questions in Relation to Every Inflexion of Nouns

Of many erring in the inflexion of the dative case of the noun; both on the one hand of those who say ‘τοῖς συγγενεῦσι’, and of those who say ‘τοῖς συγγενεῖσιν’, it is necessary to say how they ought to be inflected. So then neither συγγενεῦσιν, since

<p>μόνα γὰρ τὰ διὰ τῆς εὐ διφθόγγου ἐκφερόμενα ἐπὶ τῆς ὀνομαστικῆς, ταῦτα τηρεῖται τὴν εὐ δίφθογγον καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς δοτικῆς· οἶον, ὁ ἰππεὺς, τοῖς ἰππεῦσι· καὶ ὁ ἀριστεὺς, τοῖς ἀριστεῦσιν· ἐνταῦθα δὲ οὐκ ἔστι συγγενεὺς· διὰ τοῦτο οὔτε συγγενεῦσιν, ἢ συγγενεῖσι· μόνα γὰρ αἱ ἀπὸ τῶν εἰς μὶ ληγόντων ῥημάτων μετοχαὶ διὰ τῆς εἰ κλίνονται· οἶον τίθημι, τοῖς τιθεῖσιν· σύνειμι, τοῖς συνεῖσιν. οὔτε οὖν τοῖς συγγενεῖσιν, οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἀπὸ ῥήματος, ὥσπερ τίθημι, τοῖς τιθεῖσι· μόνως ἄρα κλιτέον τοῖς συγγενέσι, λόγῳ τοιοῦτω· ὅσα τῶν ὀνομάτων ἔστι σύνθετα, παρ' οὐδέτερον ὄνομα συγκαίμενα, τὴν αὐτὴν ἔξει κλίσειν, ὥσπερ καὶ αὐτὰ τὰ οὐδέτερα· τοιοῦτόν ἐστι καὶ τὸ συγγενῆς παρὰ τὸ γένος συγκαίμενον. ὥσπερ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους ἡ πληθυντικὴ δοτικὴ τοῖς γένεσι γίνεται, οὕτω καὶ ἀπὸ ὁ συγγενῆς, τοῖς συγγένεσι.</p>	<p>there is not a nominative ὁ συγγενεὺς¹; for only those (nouns) ending in the diphthong εὐ in the nominative (case) keep the diphthong εὐ also in the dative case; for example, ὁ ἰππεὺς, τοῖς ἰππεῦσι; and ὁ ἀριστεὺς, τοῖς ἀριστεῦσιν; but here there is not συγγενεὺς; for this reason there is no συγγενεῦσιν, or συγγενεῖσι; for only the participles of verbs terminating in μὶ are inflected through the εἰ; for example τίθημι, τοῖς τιθεῖσιν· σύνειμι, τοῖς συνεῖσιν. Therefore there is neither τοῖς συγγενεῖσιν, for it is not from a verb, as τίθημι, τοῖς τιθεῖσι; so then such a word can only be inflected τοῖς συγγενέσι; as many nouns as are compound, composed from a neuter noun, will have the same inflection, as also the neuters themselves; such (a word) is τὸ συγγενῆς, composed from τὸ γένος. Just as the dative plural of τὸ γένος becomes τοῖς γένεσι, so also the dative plural of ὁ συγγενῆς is τοῖς συγγένεσι. (my translation)</p>
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v.45

μη εὐρόντες

Hellenistic Greek tends to use μή (instead of οὐ) with the participle generally. Attic would restrict this use to a condition or a generality.

v.46

μετὰ ἡμέρας τρεῖς

Using the typical inclusive numbering, this suggests that they found him on the same day that they returned to Jerusalem.

καθεζόμενον

See 'A note on sitting in Greek' after *Animal Story* 8.

v.48

ἐποίησας ἡμῖν οὕτως

An earlier note of mine, probably from some or other textbook or commentary, suggests that οὕτως is a Hebraism for τοιοῦτο. However, ποιέω regularly takes an adverb in the sense of 'to act thus'.

v.49

ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρὸς μου

Although the Greek may refer to 'the things of my father', many commentators point to the fact that תַּבְּרָא in the Septuagint is often translated as ἐν τοῖς (name). Despite the abbreviation not being mentioned in LSJ, it is in fact found beyond the Septuagint. The 2nd century BC historian Menander of Ephesus (FGrH 783, F.1, = Jos. *Ap.* 1.118; *Antiq.* 8.145) uses the phrase ἐν τοῖς τοῦ Διὸς οἴκοις to refer to the temple of Zeus. This is a readily understandable abbreviation for ἐν τοῖς τοῦ Διὸς οἴκοις. The noun οἶκος was from ancient times used in the sense of 'room', and thus in the plural to describe a 'house'. The Septuagint clearly uses this same abbreviation in Job 18:19 ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῦ ζήσονται ἕτεροι ('but others will live in his house') and Esth. 7:9 ἐν τοῖς Ἀμαν ('in the house of Haman'). Josephus also uses it in *Antiq.* 16.302 ἐν τοῖς Ἀντιπάτρου ('in the house of Antipater'). All this suggests that the translation 'in the house of my father' is appropriate.

v.50

τὸ ῥῆμα

Here in the sense of 'the statement', a typical translation of Hebrew דְּבַר.

v.52

Καὶ Ἰησοῦς προέκοπτεν [ἐν τῇ] σοφίᾳ καὶ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ χάριτι παρὰ θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων.

Compare 1 Sam. 2:26: וְהַנְּעִר שְׂמוֹאֵל הַלֵּךְ וְגִדְלָה נְטוּבָה גַם עִם־יְהוָה וְגַם עִם־אֲנָשִׁים: