

NEW APPROACHES TO MARIAN TYPOLOGY IN LUKE I Mary as Daughter Zion and Queen Mother

∴ Edward Sri ∴

Augustine Institute

In a little-known 1953 article called “The Scriptural Basis for Mary’s Queenship,” Eustace Smith makes a subtle but very important point about evaluating possible Marian types in the Old Testament. He argues that in order to build the strongest case for Marian typology, one must demonstrate that the typological connections are made by the New Testament writers themselves. According to Smith, Marian typologies based on, for example, Esther, the woman of Psalm 44 (45), and the “Lady Wisdom” figure, have been established by what he calls “extra-Scriptural agents” (such as the liturgy, the saints, or the Church Fathers) and are not developed within the Scriptures themselves. Smith comments:

Types or figures foreshadowing the Blessed Virgin undoubtedly exist in the Old Testament. Difficulty with the typical sense in this regard is had in the fact that persons, events, and things have been employed as symbols by *extra scriptural agents*. ... A mariological type must conform to all the requirements of a messianic type and above all, that it *be revealed as such in Scripture*.¹

Smith’s comment, that a mariological type *be revealed as such in Scripture*, raises an important issue. There seems to be a distinction between types and figures that are developed by “extra scriptural agents” (the Church Fathers, the liturgy, magisterial teaching) and those that are developed in the New Testament itself. Raymond Brown² and the Pontifical Biblical Commission (PBC)³ have made similar distinctions.

For example, the Pontifical Biblical Commission’s 1993 document *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* makes this point when discussing the *sensus plenior* of Scripture. Without intending to engage the discussion in Biblical schol-

-
- 1 E. Smith, “The Scriptural Basis for Mary’s Queenship,” *Marian Studies* 4 (1953): 114 (my emphasis).
 - 2 R. Brown, *Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 41; R. Brown, “Hermeneutics,” in R. Brown, et. al., eds., *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1968), 616–19; R. Brown, “Hermeneutics” in R. Brown, et al., eds., *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 1157.
 - 3 Pontifical Biblical Commission (PBC), *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, II, B, 2–3 in J. Fitzmyer, *The Biblical Commission’s Document “The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church”: Text and Commentary* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1995).

arship surrounding the notion of *sensus plenior*, I simply wish to highlight how the PBC makes a distinction between a level of *sensus plenior* that comes to be known when Scripture is read in light of “authentic doctrinal tradition or conciliar definition” and a level of *sensus plenior* that is found in “the meaning that a subsequent biblical author attributes to an earlier biblical text, taking it up in a context which confers on it a new literal sense.”⁴ In this latter case, the fuller sense is found not in an extra-Biblical agent (such as a Church Father or a magisterial pronouncement), but in the literal sense of the New Testament itself.⁵

The PBC makes a similar point when it specifically discusses Biblical typology. The document states that an authentic typological sense of Scripture is found in the connections made by the New Testament writers: “The connection involved in typology is ordinarily based on the way in which *Scripture* describes the ancient reality. ... Consequently, in such a case one can speak of *a meaning that is truly Scriptural*.”⁶ Once again, with the strongest cases for Biblical typology, the connection between the Old Testament type and the New Testament reality is not based simply on the way extra-Biblical sources such as the Church Fathers or Church councils reflected on Old Testament people, places, and events. Rather, it is based on the way subsequent *Scriptural texts* describe those ancient realities. Hence, the PBC gives special attention to Scripture as the criterion for determining an authentic typological sense.⁷

The main difference between the two kinds of typology examined here is this: “Extra-biblical typology” involves the creative discernment of the theologian who perceives connections between the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Christian faith; whereas, what one might call “inter-biblical typology” can be observed in the New Testament writer’s interpretation of the Old Testament. In the latter case, it is the New Testament itself that points out how a particular Old Testament figure foreshadows a reality in the New.

Both extra-biblical and inter-biblical typology can contribute positively to one’s understanding of God’s revelation through Scripture. Both have been used

4 PBC, *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, II, B, 3.

5 Brown makes a similar distinction when discussing the criteria by which one can determine an authentic *sensus plenior*. He notes how the “fuller sense” is grounded either in “the use of the OT in the NT” or “the use of the Bible in the post-Biblical church practice and preaching.” See R. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 41. See also his earlier treatment of this topic in R. Brown, “Hermeneutics” (1968), 616–617.

6 PBC, *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, II, B, 2, (my emphasis).

7 Similar to the PBC, Brown draws attention to the “types that have been pointed out by the NT” and “already existing scriptural patterns” as criteria for recognizing an authentic typical sense (see R. Brown, “Hermeneutics,” [1968], 619). See also R. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 41. As we will see below, Brown is also open to the possibility of extra-Biblical typologies (those which are established not by the New Testament) provided they are found in a consensus of the Fathers, the liturgy, or Church doctrine. Although he recognizes these as authentic typologies, Brown still gives a certain primacy to those types that are supported by the Scriptures themselves.

in the Church throughout the centuries and both should continue to be employed in Catholic Scriptural interpretation. But extra-biblical typology is distinguished from the inter-biblical typology that the New Testament writers themselves actually develop. As Raymond Brown has noted, “Advocates of typical exegesis have been more persuasive when the types they proposed could be related to patterns already supported in the Scriptures, e.g., Davidic typology of Jesus, exodus typology for elements of the Christian salvific mysteries.”⁸ For our purposes of considering possible Marian typologies, one should note that extra-biblical typology, while valuable, remains a step removed from the literal sense of the New Testament and its narrative presentation of Mary.

This article will consider two Marian types that have been noted by some scholars as appearing in the first chapter of Luke’s Gospel: Mary as “Daughter Zion” and Mary as “queen mother.” The study will serve as an example of how some Marian typology can be credibly supported not just from “extra-Scriptural agents,” but in and through the literal sense of the New Testament itself. By examining Mary within the context of salvation history, within the narrative structures of Luke’s annunciation and visitation scenes—and in light of the Old Testament themes that the annunciation and visitation scenes evoke—we will see that Luke’s Gospel portrays Mary in ways that recall the Old Testament prophetic figure “Daughter Zion” as well as the royal maternal office in the Davidic kingdom known as the “queen mother.”

Daughter Zion

The thesis that Luke 1:26–38 intends to portray Mary as the Daughter Zion figure of the Old Testament prophets is one that has been supported by numerous commentators.⁹ Central to this interpretation is the angel Gabriel’s first word to greet Mary in Luke 1:28, *chaire*. “*Chaire*” is the singular imperative form of the verb *chairein*, which literally means “to rejoice.” This word, some argue, echoes the

8 R. Brown, “Hermeneutics” (1990), 1157.

9 See, for example, L. Deiss, *Mary Daughter of Sion* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1972), 54; I. De La Potterie, *Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant*, 14–17; Joel Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 87; L. T. Johnson, *Luke*, 37; Arthur Just, *Luke 1:1-9:50* (St. Louis: Concordia House, 1996), 61, 66; S. Lyonnet, “*Χαίρε, χεχαριτωμένη*” *Biblica* 20 (1939): 131–141; J. McHugh, *The Mother of Jesus in the New Testament* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1975), 38; John Nolland *Luke 1–9:20* (Waco: Word Publishing, 1989), 49–50; E. G. Mori, “Annunciazione del Signore” in *Nuovo Dizionario di Mariologia* (Milan: Edizioni San Paolo, 1986), 73; J. McHugh, *The Mother of Jesus in the New Testament*, 38; J. Paredes, *Mary and the Kingdom of God* (Middlegreen: St. Paul Publications, 1991), 67–68; Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives* (New York: Image, 2012), 26–27; *Daughter Zion* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983), 42–44; “Hail, Full of Grace: Elements of Marian Piety according to the Bible” in Hans Urs von Balthasar & Joseph Ratzinger, *Mary: The Church at the Source* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 64; Alberto Valentini, *Maria secondo le Scritture* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 2007), 93; R. Tannehill, *Luke* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 48.

prophetic call for Daughter Zion to rejoice over the saving work of God (Zeph. 3:14–15; Zech. 9:9; Joel 2:21). Thus, Luke associates Mary with the Daughter Zion symbolism in this verse.

Others, however, interpret *chaire* in Luke 1:28 not as an invitation to rejoice, but as a simple, conventional greeting and one that does not recall these prophetic texts and does not associate Mary with Daughter Zion.¹⁰ It is pointed out that, although the literal meaning of the verb *chairein* is “rejoice,” the imperative of this verb was ordinarily used simply to hail someone in classical Greek, in the other three Gospels¹¹ and elsewhere in the New Testament.¹² Would the original readers of the Third Gospel have seen in this word, which ordinarily meant “hello,” anything more than an ordinary salutation? This was Raymond Brown’s objection:

Luke’s readers would hear [the word *chaire*] used every day of their lives with the meaning “Hail, hello.” If a modern English writer used “Goodbye” in a farewell without any interpretive comment, would his readers recognize that he was giving it its ancient religious value as “God be with you”?¹³

Brown’s question is a good one. There are, however, several cogent exegetical reasons for concluding that Mary is, in fact, being greeted with an extraordinary call to rejoice over the coming of the long-awaited king—reminiscent of the way the Old Testament figure of Daughter Zion, the personification of the faithful remnant of Israel, was called to rejoice over the advent of Israel’s king. Though *chaire* could mean simply “hello,” there are several indications in Luke’s narrative which suggest that Luke did intend something more than an ordinary greeting when using this word in 1:28. This article will show how those signs in the text support the interpretation that Mary is, indeed, being greeted by the angel Gabriel in ways that recall Daughter Zion symbolism from the Old Testament.

Chaire: More Than a Hello?

Though *chaire* ordinarily is used as a secular salutation in classical Greek and elsewhere in the New Testament, we must consider the way in which Luke expresses a simple greeting. This is key. Whenever Luke intends to express a conventional greeting in a Semitic context, he always uses the Semitic word “peace” (*eirene* =

10 See Brown, *Birth of the Messiah* (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 320–321, 639–640; *Mary in the New Testament*, eds. Raymond Brown, et. al. (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 128–132; Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke: I–IX* (New York: Doubleday, 1979), 344–345; Beverly Gaventa, *Glimpses of Mary* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 52; Darrel Bock, *Luke 1:1–9:50* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 109.

11 Matt. 26:49, 27:29; 28:9; Mark 15:18; John 19:19.

12 See James 1:1; Phil. 3:1; 4:4 where it is used as a greeting in the opening or closing of a letter.

13 R. Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, 324.

Hebrew *shalom*; see Luke 10:5; 24:36). The only two occasions in the entirety of Luke-Acts when the verb *chaire* is employed as a secular greeting come in a non-Jewish context for openings to letters intended for a Greek audience.¹⁴ For Luke-Acts, therefore, the word “peace” (*eirene*)—not *chaire*—is used to express an ordinary salutation in a Semitic context. It is therefore striking when Gabriel uses the word *chaire* instead of the more Semitic greeting *eirene* to address Mary in Luke 1:28.¹⁵ Paredes, for example, asks, “Why was a Greek salute used in a Jewish milieu? It would have been more normal to attribute to the angel the Hebrew greeting *shalom* (Greek = *eirene*).”¹⁶ He continues:

The Greek greeting *chaire* appears several times in the first three Gospels (compare Matt. 26:49; 27:29; Mark 15:18; John 19:3). However, whenever Luke’s Gospel refers to a greeting, except in the annunciation, the greeting is always the Hebrew word *shalom*. (Luke 10:5; 24:36)¹⁷

The unusual use of *chaire* in Luke 1:28 has led some interpreters to conclude that the word was not meant to be taken merely as an *ordinary greeting*, but as an *invitation to rejoice*. McHugh, for example, states: “Now if Luke’s only concern in 1:28 was to express a conventional greeting from Gabriel to Mary, why did he choose to write this greeting in the Greek, not the Semitic, form? Why did Luke not write ‘Peace unto thee!’, since he was so visibly striving to imitate a Semitic style and to imprint on the reader’s mind a lively picture of a thoroughly Jewish world?”¹⁸

Moreover, interpreting *chaire* in Luke 1:28 not as a simple salutation but as a call to rejoice fits the theme of joy throughout Luke’s Gospel and specifically in the infancy narrative (1:14, 47, 58; 2:10).¹⁹ Very important to this discussion is the phenomenon that the other two birth announcements in Luke’s Gospel—the annunciations to Zechariah and to the shepherds in Bethlehem—prominently include the theme of joy (1:14; 2:10). If *chaire* in Luke 1:28 is viewed merely as an

14 See Acts 15:23; 23:26.

15 W. Harrington comments: “The occurrence, in such a Semantically colored narrative, of the Greek greeting formula *chaire* (“Hail”) instead of the Semitic “Peace!” is so surprising that one hesitates to accept it at its face value.” See W. Harrington, *The Gospel of Luke* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1967), 45.

16 J. Paredes, *Mary and the Kingdom of God* (Middlegreen: St. Paul Publications, 1991), 67.

17 Paredes, *Mary and the Kingdom of God*, 79–80, n. 16.

18 J. McHugh, *The Mother of Jesus in the New Testament* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1975), 38. See also Lyonnet, “Χαίρε, χαραιομένη,” 131–41; Joel Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 87; Arthur Just, *Luke 1:1–9:50* (St. Louis: Concordia House, 1996), 61, 66.

19 See Klemens Stock, *Maria, la Madre del Signore nel Nuovo Testamento* (Rome: Edizioni ADP, 1997), 51.

ordinary greeting and not as a call to rejoice, the annunciation to Mary would be the only birth announcement in Luke 1–2 without the theme of joy.

Once it becomes plausible that the angel is doing more than simply greeting Mary—that he is, rather, *inviting her to rejoice*—other features in Luke 1:28 help shed light on the *kind* of rejoicing to which Mary is being called.

Luke's Use of Chaire in the Imperative

Luke's use of the imperative *chaire* is significant. In the Septuagint, the imperative form of *chairein* is always used in a context related to Zion being invited to share in the future joy that will come when God rescues his people (Joel 2:21–23; Zeph. 3:14; Zech. 9:9; cf. Lam. 4:21).²⁰ In two of these occurrences, the exact form of greeting used for Gabriel's address to Mary in Luke 1:28 (*chaire*) is used to address "Daughter Zion" when she is being called to rejoice over the coming messianic age.

Zephaniah 3:14 LXX uses the imperative *chaire* to call on God's people to rejoice in the Lord, the King, coming in their midst to take away their judgment and free them from their enemies:

Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion;
 Shout, O Israel!
 Rejoice [*chaire*] and exult with all your heart,
 O daughter of Jerusalem!
 The Lord has taken away the judgments against you,
 He has cast out your enemies.
 The King of Israel, the Lord is in your midst,
 You shall fear evil no more.

Similarly, Zechariah 9:9–10 uses the imperative *chaire* to direct God's people to rejoice over the king coming to Jerusalem to bring "peace to the nations" and his dominion "to the ends of the earth":

Rejoice [*chaire*] greatly, O daughter of Zion
 Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
 Lo, your king comes to you;
 triumphant and victorious is he,
 humble and riding on an ass,
 on a colt, the foal of an ass.

²⁰ In Lam. 4:21, *chaire* is used ironically in a parody of this theme as Edom is told to rejoice while the Daughter of Zion is told in the next verse that God will bring an end to her suffering in exile and punish the "daughter of Edom" (4:22). Arthur Just notes, "Therefore all the occurrences in the LXX of this form of the imperative are at least in proximity to the theme of the daughter of Zion." See Arthur Just, *Luke 1:1–9:50* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1996), 66. See De La Potterie, *Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant*, 14; McHugh, *Mother of Jesus*, 39.

I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
 and the war horse from Jerusalem.
 And the battle bow shall be cut off,
 And he shall command peace to the nations;
 His dominion shall be from sea to sea,
 and from the River to the ends of the earth.

The Threefold Pattern of the Daughter of Zion Texts

In addition to Luke's unique use of the imperative *chaire*, there are other connections between Luke 1:28 and these same prophetic texts (see immediately above) calling on Zion to rejoice. As Nolland and Green have pointed out, the words the angel uses to address Mary follow the same three-fold formulaic pattern found in these same Daughter Zion texts.²¹

First, there is the call to rejoice. The call to rejoice is followed by an address taking the form of a title: "*kecharitomene*" in Luke 1:28; "daughter of Zion" in Zephaniah 3:14 and Zechariah 9:9; "sons of Zion" in Joel 2:23; and "daughter of Edom" in Lamentations 4:21. Third and finally, a divine attitude or action is mentioned as the reason for rejoicing.

In Zephaniah 3:15–16, the basis for rejoicing is that the Lord, the King, is in their midst, coming to remove their judgment and cast out their enemies. In Zechariah 9:10, the reason for rejoicing is that their king is coming to them to bring peace to the nations and establish his reign to the ends of the earth. In Joel 2:23–24, the reason for rejoicing is that the Lord is vindicating his people, ending the curse of drought and famine while blessing the people with rain and a great harvest.²² Similarly, Gabriel calls Mary to rejoice because "the Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28).

Therefore, it is not only the imperative *chaire* that links Luke 1:28 with these OT prophetic texts calling Zion to rejoice. The three-fold pattern of *chaire* + address + divine action as the cause of joy in Luke 1:28 is also found specifically in the only OT passages where the imperative *chaire* is found—passages in which *chaire* clearly serves as more than a simple greeting, for these passages invite God's people to rejoice in His saving action.

Mary is not being given an ordinary salutation. She is being addressed in a way that recalls the invitation for Zion to rejoice over God's work of salvation and in particular, over the coming of the King as in Zephaniah 3:14–15 and Zechariah 9:9. Nolland states, "Mary here is greeted with a mini-oracle of salvation."²³ De La Potterie goes further by arguing that Luke links Mary with Daughter Zion of old.

21 Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 87; Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20*, 49–50.

22 In Lam. 4:21, where this three-fold pattern is used in a parody to mock Edom, the cause for this ironic rejoicing is the cup of judgment that is about to fall upon Edom.

23 Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20*, 50.

He notes how in these OT texts, Daughter Zion was given the command to rejoice over the future saving work of God. Now, Mary is being given this command in Luke 1:28: “The joy which was announced by the prophets in the Old Testament to the people of Israel—the Woman Zion—diffuses itself and comes to be focused on one particular woman, Mary, who unites in her person, so to speak, the desires and the hopes of all the people of Israel.”²⁴ Such a view would fit well with how Mary serves as a representative figure in the Magnificat where the celebrated blessings bestowed on her (1:46–50) are commonly seen as anticipating the blessings God desires to bestow on all of Israel (1:51–55).²⁵ Since the woman Zion figure of the OT represented the faithful Israelites, Mary’s association with Daughter Zion in Luke 1:28 could be seen as laying a foundation for Luke’s further development of Mary embodying the hopes of Israel.

Coherence with the Royal Messianic Themes in Luke 1–2

Seeing *chaire* in Luke 1:28 as a call to rejoice that is reminiscent of the Daughter Zion oracles fits the royal messianic themes in Luke 1–2 and specifically in the annunciation scene in 1:26–38. As the angel’s message to Mary unfolds, Luke underscores how Mary’s child will be the long-awaited messiah-king. The angel announces that the child will be given “the throne of his father David” (1:32)—an image that presents Jesus as fulfilling Nathan’s promise for the Davidic dynasty in which God would establish “the throne of his kingdom forever” (2 Sam. 7:13).²⁶ Furthermore, Gabriel pronounces how the child will “reign over the house of Jacob forever”²⁷ and says “of his kingdom there will be no end” (1:33). Gabriel’s words elucidate even more clearly Jesus’ royal status in terms of the hopes surrounding the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7:13; Ps. 89:36f.; Isa. 9:6f.).²⁸

24 De La Potterie, *Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant*, 16.

25 See Brown, *Mary in the New Testament*, 141–143; Joel Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 98–105; Tannenhill, *Luke* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 55.

26 According to Evans, the child being given “the throne of his father David” by God could be “an extension of Jesus’ title ‘Son of the Most High’ expressed in terms of the Davidic king who was called God’s Son (Ps. 2:7).” See Craig Evans, *Saint Luke* (London: SCM Press, 1990), 162. See also J. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 348. See also Ellis who notes how 4QFlor intertwines the messianic “Son of God” with a never-ending kingship by using the same passage 2 Sam. 7:10–14 (E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke* [London: Nelson, 1966], 71).

27 “Jacob” was an ancient designation for Israel (Gen. 46:27; Exod. 19:3; Isa. 8:17). Thus, these words refer to the child being king over all of Israel. See Johnson, *Luke*, 37. With this background, the child reigning “over the house of Jacob” probably recalls how David was the king who ruled over all of Israel. As Deiss explains, “Like David Jesus possesses the throne of Jerusalem and at the same time is king over the house of Jacob. The unification of the North and the South achieved under David was thus a prophetic foreshadowing of the spiritual unification that Jesus would accomplish, a thousand years later, in the messianic kingdom.” L. Deiss, *Mary: Daughter of Zion*, 39.

28 Fitzmyer (*Luke*, 348) comments: “Possibly Luke alludes here to Isa. 9:6 (LXX) or to Daniel 7:14, where promise of an everlasting kingdom is made. The endless character of this kingship is thus

The clear parallels between Luke 1:32–33 and the Davidic covenant promises described in 2 Sam. 7:9–16 are often noted.²⁹ Brown, for example, shows how Gabriel’s words are a “free interpretation” of Nathan’s oracle which became the foundation for Jewish messianic hopes (see more on this below).³⁰ Clearly, one of the main messages given to Mary in Luke’s annunciation scene is that she will be the mother of the messiah-king.

Interpreting the angel’s opening word *chaire* in 1:28 as recalling the prophetic call to rejoice in the coming of the king (Zeph. 3:14–15; Zech. 9:9) would prepare the reader (and Mary as a character in Luke’s narrative) for Gabriel’s explicit announcement of the coming of the king.

Queen Mother

Our second consideration of Marian typology in Luke 1 focuses on Mary as queen mother. In this section, we will first examine the role of the queen mother in the Old Testament. Second, we will look at how Luke chapter 1 portrays Mary in ways that recall this royal maternal office in the Davidic kingdom.

The Queen Mother in the Davidic Kingdom

The king’s mother played an important role in many ancient near eastern kingdoms. She was known to have influenced political, military, economic, and cultic affairs in the royal court and played a key part in the process of dynastic succession. In fact, it was generally the king’s *mother* who ruled as queen, not the king’s wife. We see this in Hittite, Ugaritic, Egyptian, and Assyrian kingdoms, as well as in ancient Israel.³¹

one of the qualities of the messianic kingdom. At this point in the Lukan Gospel the kingship should be understood in terms of the OT theme of kingdom (e.g. as in Ps. 45:7). Jesus in some sense is to be anointed descendant of David and restorer of ancient kingship (Amos 9:11).”

29 Numerous scholars have discussed these parallels. For example: E. Schillebeeckx, *Mary, Mother of the Redemption* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964), 9; J. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 338–339; J. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 88; L. Deiss, *Mary: Daughter of Zion*, 38–39; R. Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, 310–311; R. Nelson, “David: A Model for Mary in Luke?” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 18 (Oct. 1988): 139; A. Valentini, “Editoriale: L’Annuncio a Maria,” *Theotokos* 4 (1996): 286.

30 R. Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, 310–311. Brown shows how Gabriel quotes that promise from 2 Samuel 7 “in a slightly rephrased manner” (which he notes was customary at the time, as is seen in the Dead Sea Scrolls). R. Brown, “The Annunciation to Mary, the Visitation, and the Magnificat,” 253.

31 See Ted Sri, *Queen Mother: A Biblical Theology of Mary’s Queenship* (Steubenville, Ohio: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2005), 45–53; “Queen Mother: A Biblical Theology of Mary’s Queenship” in *Marian Studies* 56 (2005): 123–154. See also: N. Andreasen, “The Role of the queen Mother in Israelite Society” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 45 (1983): 179–194; L. Schearing, “Queen” in D. Freedman, ed., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:583–588; R. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 115–119; G. Kirwin, *The Nature of the Queenship of Mary* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Dissertation Services, 1973), 297–312.

The importance of the monarch's mother may seem strange to some modern readers, but one must recall that most ancient near eastern kings practiced polygamy and had large harems. Although the king may have had many wives, he only had one mother, and the queenship was given to her. This is what one finds in ancient Israel, where the king's mother was given preeminence over all the women in the kingdom of Judah, even over the king's wives. She was given the title *Gebirah*—or “Great Lady”—and reigned as queen in her son's kingdom.

The queen mother's *importance* is expressed in many Old Testament passages. For example, the succession narratives of 1 and 2 Kings present the mother of the king as having such importance that almost every time a new Davidic king is introduced in the Kingdom of Judah, the *mother's* name also is mentioned, but the wife's name is not. Thus, at the crucial transition points of dynastic succession, the narrative consistently highlights the queen mother's important place alongside the new king. As one commentator has explained, “On the throne the queen mother represented the king's continuity with the past, the visible affirmation of God's ongoing plan for his people, the channel through which the Lord's dynastic promise to David was fulfilled.”³²

Second, the Old Testament shows how the queen mother held an *official position in the kingdom of Judah*. She wears a crown (Jer. 13:18) and sits on a throne (1 Kings 2:19; cf., Jer. 13:18). In 2 Kings 24, the queen mother is listed among the members of the royal court whom King Jehoiachin surrenders to the king of Babylon. In this passage, the queen mother is the first of the king's royal court listed as being given over to Babylon to go into exile (2 Kings 24:12-15). Miguens notes how this highlights the queen mother's preeminence in the royal court:

... she is mentioned *before* the “wives of the king” (2 Kings 24:15) and before the ministers, dignitaries, and officers (2 Kings 24:12, 15; Jer. 29:2). Significantly, these biblical passages say that the *gevirah* is the second, only to the king, in the list of prominent official persons brought into captivity. This detail speaks very highly of the political significance of the mother of the king.³³

Third, the queen mother had real *royal authority*, participating in her son's reign. She did not merely hold an honorary “figure head” position. For example, consider the following prophecy, which the prophet Jeremiah addresses both to the king and to the queen mother:

32 G. Montague, *Companion God: A Cross-Cultural Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 92.

33 Manuel Miguens, *Mary “The Servant of the Lord”: An Ecumenical Proposal* (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1978), 65.

Say to the king and the queen mother: "Take a lowly seat, for your beautiful crown has come down from your head ... Lift up your eyes and see those who come from the north. Where is the flock that was given you, your beautiful flock?" (Jer. 13:18,20)

In this passage God tells the prophet to address both the king and the queen mother. The prophecy thus recognizes the queen mother's important royal office. In ominous imagery, the king and queen mother are told to "take a lowly seat"—symbolizing how both had thrones, but would lose them soon. Moreover, both are told that they will lose their crowns—also foreshadowing their political downfall. Most of all, both king and queen are described as having the responsibility to shepherd the flock of the people of Judah, a flock that is about to be taken away from them: "Where is the flock that was given you, your beautiful flock?" The important point for our purposes is to note how this prophecy portrays the queen mother as participating in the king's reign: she has a throne and a crown with the king, and she shares in the king's mission of shepherding the people.³⁴

The best example of the queen mother's royal authority can be seen in 1 Kings 1–2. Here we can observe the stark contrast between Bathsheba's role in the kingdom when she was the *wife* of the king compared to her role when she became the *mother* of the king. In 1 Kings 1, her husband David, the king, is still alive, so she is just the king's wife. When she wants to enter the royal chamber to meet him, she bows before her husband and pays him homage (1 Kings 1:16). As she leaves she honors the king, saying, "May David live forever!" (1 Kings 1:31).

In 1 Kings 2, however, David has died and Bathsheba's son Solomon has ascended the throne, making her queen mother. When she enters the royal chamber this time as *mother* of the king, she is treated much differently than when she was just the *wife* of the king. The narrative tells not of Bathsheba bowing before the king, but of King Solomon rising and bowing down before *her*. Then Solomon has a throne brought in for her, symbolizing her royal status. Even more striking is the place where Solomon places Bathsheba's royal seat: at his right hand. The queen mother being seated at the king's right hand has great significance, for in the Bible, the right is a position of authority and supreme honor.³⁵ As Gray observes,

34 T. Gray, "God's Word and Mary's Royal Office," *Miles Immaculatae* 13 (1995): 378–79. See also: L. Schearing, "Queen," 585; M. Miguens, *Mary, Servant of the Lord*, 64–65.

35 Andreasen comments: "She was seated at his right, the place offered to the king by God (Ps 110:1), i.e., she took precedence above all others." See Andreasen, "The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite Society," 189, n. 59. This is seen in particular in Psalm 110 ("Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool"). In fact, the New Testament refers to the "right hand" imagery of Psalm 110 to express Christ's reign with the Father over the whole universe. For example, the author of Hebrews cites this verse from Psalm 110 to show how Christ is above all the angels since he sits at the right hand of the Father, sharing in his Father's dominion over all creation (Heb. 1:13; compare Heb. 1:3).

“Nowhere else in the Bible does the king honor someone as Solomon does the Gebirah.”³⁶

Fourth, the queen mother often *served as a counselor to the king*.³⁷ We have some evidence of this in the Old Testament. For example, in Proverbs 31, a queen mother gives wise counsel to her son about how to serve the poor, rule the people with justice, avoid too much alcohol, and choose a good wife. Although not always quite so positive in nature, the queen mother’s counsel seems to have had the ability to greatly influence affairs in the kingdom. 2 Chronicles 22:3, for example, tells how King Ahaziah “walked in the ways of the house of Ahab [an evil king], for his mother was his counselor in doing wickedly.” This shows how at least this particular queen mother’s counsel was so influential that it led the king into wickedness.

Fifth, the Gebirah also served as an *advocate for the people in ancient Israel*.³⁸ She played an intercessory role, taking petitions from the people and presenting them to the king. Her intercessory function can be seen in the passage from 1 Kings 2 when Bathsheba went to meet her royal son Solomon. In the context, Solomon has been crowned king and Bathsheba has thus become queen mother. Her new intercessory power is immediately recognized when a man named Adonijah asks Bathsheba to bring a petition of his to the king. Adonijah expresses great confidence in her intercessory role, saying “Pray ask King Solomon—he will not refuse you” (1 Kings 2:17). Bathsheba agrees and then goes to the king. After she is welcomed by the king, who bows before her and gives her a throne at his right hand, Bathsheba tells Solomon she has a small request to bring to him. Solomon responds by saying “Make your request my mother, for I will not refuse you.” Indeed, Solomon’s words reveal the king’s ordinary commitment to the queen mother’s petitions.³⁹

36 T. Gray, “God’s Word and Mary’s Royal Office,” 377.

37 P. De Boer, “The Counselor,” *Vetus Testamentum Supplements* 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1955): 54; Andreasen, “The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite Society,” 190–191.

38 P. De Boer, “The Counselor,” 60–61; Andreasen, “The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite Society,” 194.

39 See F. Rossier, *L’intercession Entre les Hommes dans la Bible Hébraïque*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 152 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 189, who states: “On a même vu en elle, dans cette perspective, quelqu’un susceptible de représenter les intérêts du peuple à la cour. Dans de telles circonstances, Adoniah n’aurait pu choisir meilleure avocate ou meilleur intercesseur. Le fait que la reine-mère jouit de l’autorité sur toutes les femmes de la maison royale a son importance pour Adoniah vu que sa requête a justement une de ces femmes pour objet.” Also, see Gray’s important note (“God’s Word and Mary’s Royal Office,” 381, n. 16): “The fact that Solomon denies the request in no way discredits the influence of the Gebirah. Adonijah wanted Abishag the Shunammite for the treacherous purpose of taking over the kingdom from Solomon.” Taking the king’s concubine was a sign of usurping the throne in the ancient Near East. For example, see how Absalom (Adonijah’s older brother), in his attempt to take the throne from David, took his concubines (2 Sam. 16:20–23). Gray continues (“God’s Word and Mary’s Royal Office,” 381, n. 16): “Thus the wickedness of Adonijah’s intention is the reason for denial, which in no way reflects negatively upon the Gebirah’s power to intercede. The narrative bears out the fact that the king normally accepted the Gebirah’s request, thus Solomon

The Emmanuel Prophecy in Isaiah 7:14

So far, we have seen the role of the queen mother in the Davidic kingdom. She held an official position in the royal court, sharing in the shepherding responsibilities of the king and serving as a counselor for the king and as an advocate for the people. But the importance of the queen mother also is seen in Israel's prophetic tradition, particularly in the Emmanuel prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. This passage, filled with strong Davidic overtones, is important for our study because it later was related specifically to Mary and Jesus in the New Testament (Matt. 1:23). However, this passage must first be examined in its original context.

The prophecy is portrayed as coming during a period of dynastic crisis. Syria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel threaten to invade the Kingdom of Judah. Ahaz, the king of Judah, fears that the dynasty may be coming to an end with him (Isa. 7:1–6). Isaiah is sent by God to assure a doubting Ahaz that the kingdom will survive this foreign threat and to challenge him to entrust his throne to the Lord. Isaiah then gives a sign to the house of David that will serve as a confirmation of Yahweh's protection of the Davidic dynasty:

Here then O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men,
that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will
give you a sign. Behold, a young woman [*almah*] shall conceive
and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isa. 7:13-14)

The child most likely represents an heir to the Davidic throne.⁴⁰ Such a view best demonstrates how this sign for the house of David relates to the immediate context of the dynastic crisis at hand. Not only is the Davidic line in danger of expiring (Isaiah 7:6) but as a result, God's faithfulness to the Davidic dynasty is called into question (see 2 Sam. 7:11–14). It is within this setting that Isaiah specifically addressed "the house of David" with this oracle announcing the Immanuel child in 7:14. Given this context, it is likely that the child represents some type of dynastic sign guaranteeing the succession of the endangered Davidic line.

This view finds further support in that the child's name ("God with us") is bound up with the idea of the preservation of the Davidic dynasty. Since God promised to be "with" the sons of David in a special way (2 Sam. 7:9; 1 Kings 1:37;

says, 'Ask, I will not refuse you.' To say then that this illustrates the weakness of the Gebirah's ability to intercede would be to miss the whole point of the narrative, which tells how Adonijah uses the queen mother's position in an attempt to become king" (my emphasis). For more on the political symbolism of usurping a member of a king's harem, see Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 116.

40 R. Clements, *Prophecy and Covenant* (Naperville, Illinois: Alec R. Alleson, 1965), 51, n. 51; S. Mowinkel, *He That Commeth* (New York: Abingdon, 1954), 117; J. McKenzie, "Royal Messianism," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 19 (1957): 41, 43; R. Brown, "God's Future Plans for His People," in R. Brown, et. al., eds., *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), 1311; H. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 311–312.

Ps. 89:22, 25; 1 Kings 11:38), the sign of a child named “Immanuel” gives assurance that God will remain faithful to his promise to the Davidic dynasty: God will still be with his people even through this crisis in which the House of David appears to be crumbling.⁴¹ All this strongly supports an understanding of the child as a successor to the Davidic throne—an heir to King Ahaz who would continue the dynasty.

Once it is established that the Immanuel child would have been viewed as a future Davidic king, one can see how the *almah* would have been understood as the mother of the king. Furthermore, in this oracle addressed specifically to the Davidic household (Isa. 7:13), the young woman bearing the royal son, an heir to the throne, would have been understood as a queen mother.⁴² With Isaiah’s overriding concern for dynastic succession in the house of David, it is fitting that this prophecy links the royal son with his queen mother, who played an important role in dynastic succession and in the royal court.

The Annunciation to Mary (Luke 1:26–38)

The Third Gospel evokes many Davidic kingdom themes in its infancy narrative.⁴³ In the annunciation scene, Luke presents Mary’s vocation as mother of the messiah within a Davidic kingdom framework. She is introduced in the narrative as being betrothed to a man who is “of the house of David” (Luke 1:26). Luke mentions this detail of Joseph’s heritage in order to prepare the reader for understanding Jesus as a Davidic heir.⁴⁴

The angel’s announcement to her in Luke 1:32–33 highlights that her child will be the son of David, fulfilling the promises God made to David in 2 Samuel 7.

41 H. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 311–312. See also, F. Moriarty, “Isaiah 1–39” in R. Brown, et. al., eds., *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1968), 271: “The child about to be born, therefore, may be the young Hezekiah in whose birth Judah would see the continuing presence of God among his people and another renewal of the promise made to David.”

42 A. Serra, “Bibbia,” in S. De Fiores and S. Meo, eds., *Nuovo Dizionario di Mariologia* (Milan: Edizioni San Paolo, 1996), 219; G. Montague, *Companion God*, 93–94; C. Stuhlmüller, “The Mother of Emmanuel (Is. 7:14),” *Marian Studies* 12 (1961): 185–192; H. Cazelles, “La Mère du Roi-Messie dans L’Ancien Testament,” in *Mater et Ecclesia*, vol. 5 (Congressus Mariologicus Lourdes, 1958), 51–52.

43 See M. Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts: The Promise and its Fulfillment in Lukan Christology*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 110 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 75–125; D. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lukan Old Testament Christology*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 12 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 55–90.

44 J. Green comments: “Joseph—who has scarcely any role in Luke 1–2 and is only mentioned otherwise in 3:23—receives more of an introduction than Mary, the primary character in the birth narrative. Why? Luke is interested in his royal ancestry. He is ‘of the house of David’ (v. 27), and this prepares for the identification of his (albeit adopted) son as a Davidide.” See J. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 84–85.

First, she is told by Gabriel that her son will be called “Son of the Most High” (1:32). Since “Most High” was a title for God in the Old Testament and a common divine title in Luke as well,⁴⁵ the description of Jesus as “Son of the Most High” would refer to him as son of God. This expression also could be understood in light of the Old Testament designation of the Davidic king as God’s son. Thus, Jesus as “Son of the Most High” likely recalls Nathan’s oracle (2 Sam. 7:14) and the royal Psalms (Ps. 2:7; 89:26–27; compare Ps. 110:1)—which describe the Davidic king as having a special filial relationship with God.

That this is the primary meaning of the child’s divine sonship in 1:32 is made clearer in the following verses, which include even more direct allusions to the Davidic covenant and thus bring Jesus’ kingship into sharper focus. The angel goes on to tell Mary that her child will be given “the throne of his father David” (Luke 1:32), showing Jesus as fulfilling Nathan’s promise for the Davidic dynasty in which God would establish “the throne of his kingdom forever” (2 Sam. 7:13). When the angel describes how the child will “reign over the house of Jacob forever” and says “of his kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:33), these words further explicate Jesus’ kingship in terms of the hopes surrounding the Davidic dynasty (2 Sam. 7:13; Ps. 89:36f; Is. 9:6f).

Further, the following appear to be clear parallels between Luke 1:32–33 and the promises God made to David in 2 Sam. 7:9–16: both passages involve a great name, a throne, divine sonship, house, and kingdom. Indeed, Gabriel’s words draw upon Nathan’s oracle, a foundational Old Testament passage for Jewish messianic hopes.⁴⁶ Brown sums up the parallels in the following chart:

Luke 1:

- 32a: He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.
- 32b: And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,
- 33a: and he will be king over the House of Jacob forever,
- 33b: and there will be no end to his kingdom.

45 Fitzmyer notes how Luke uses this title for God more than any other New Testament author: Luke 1:35, 76; 6:35; 8:28; Acts 7:48; 16:17. See J. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1981), at 348.

46 R. Brown, *Birth of the Messiah* (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 310–311.

2 Samuel 7:

- 9: I shall make for you a *great* name ...
 13: I shall establish *the throne of his kingdom forever*.
 14: I shall be his father, and he will be *my* son ...
 16: And your *house* and your *kingdom* will be made sure
forever.⁴⁷

With these words of Gabriel, Jesus is clearly identified as the Davidic messiah. Therefore, the narrative shows that Mary is given the vocation of being mother of the king.

This obvious Davidic background is the reason why some have suggested that the queen mother tradition may be in the background of the annunciation scene.⁴⁸ Indeed, this passage portrays Mary as a mother linked with the house of David and giving birth to a Davidic son. Especially since Luke places this scene in the context of the Davidic kingdom, it seems that Mary's role should be understood in light of that Davidic tradition as well. In that context, Mary, as mother of the Davidic king, could be seen as queen mother of her royal son. So concludes Susan Ackerman: "If Jesus is characterized as the royal messiah, Israel's new king, then Mary, at least figuratively, is depicted as queen mother."⁴⁹

In summary, we have attempted to understand Mary in light of the Davidic kingdom tradition which Luke's narrative strongly evokes. Viewing Mary within this context leads us to conclude that, as the mother of the king, she could be seen as queen mother. Along these lines, Cazelles has pointed out that while the angel's words speak of Jesus as the messiah-king, they also provide a basis for Mary's royal maternity:

One could not more explicitly announce the birth of the messiah who was waited for and announced by the prophets. However, by speaking directly to the mother of the messiah, the angel implicitly evoked the woman who was the mother of the king,

47 Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, 310.

48 S. De Fiores, "Regina: Approfondimento Teologico Attualizzato," in S. De Fiores and S. Meo, eds., *Nuovo Dizionario di Mariologia* (Milan: Edizioni San Paolo, 1996), 1080–1081; A. Serra, "Regina," 1073–1074; J. Ibáñez and F. Mendoza, *La Madre del Redentor* (Madrid: Ediciones Palabra, 1988), 290; S. Ackerman, "The Queen Mother and the Cult of the Ancient Near East," in K. King, ed., *Women and Goddess Traditions* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 196; G. Del Moral, "Santa María, La Guebiráh Messiánica," *Communio* (Spanish Edition) 13 (1980): 82–108; Timothy Gray, "God's Word and Mary's Royal Office," 384; H. Cazelles, "La Mère du Roi-Messie," 55–56; A. Valentini, "Lc 1, 39–45: Primi Inizi di Venerazione delle Madre del Signore," *Marianum* 58 (1996): 348.

49 Ackerman, "The Queen Mother and the Cult of the Ancient Near East," 196.

linked to her son. It is thus that these words contain a theology of the queenship of Mary.⁵⁰

The Visitation (Luke 1:39–45)

Luke's account of Mary's visit to Elizabeth offers further support for viewing Mary in light of the Old Testament queen mother traditions. Elizabeth's greeting to Mary using the title "the mother of my Lord" (Luke 1:43) is charged with great royal significance that points to Mary as the mother of the king, the queen mother.

This is the first time Jesus is called "Lord" in Luke-Acts. While *kurios* (LXX translation of the Hebrew *adonai*) was used often in the Old Testament as a circumlocution for avoiding the Tetragrammaton (*Yahweh*), it also referred to the Davidic king (2 Sam. 24:21; 1 Kings 1:13–47) and the royal messiah (Ps. 110:1). As the narrative of Luke-Acts progresses, the title "Lord" eventually comes to refer to Jesus' total authority and places him on par with *Yahweh* (Acts 2 and 10).⁵¹ However, at this point in the narrative (Luke 1:43), its use is not as clear. Bock explains that its use by Elizabeth is "a prophetic foreshadowing" of Jesus' full identity to be revealed later in the narrative.⁵² But in this first use of the title "Lord," "it could be seen to signify simply the Lordship of the Messiah (Luke 20:41–44)."⁵³

Precision and clarity might be found in Elizabeth's words to Mary, "And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43). These words echo 2 Samuel 24:21 where the phrase "my Lord" is used as a royal title honoring King David. Araunah greets David, saying: "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" (2 Sam. 24:21). If Luke has this OT background in mind, Elizabeth's words in 1:43 would have regal connotations that further present Jesus as a Davidic king.⁵⁴

50 H. Cazelles, "La Mère du Roi-Messie," 6.

51 Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 69–70.

52 Bock comments: "Luke's readers may well have understood this fuller sense of *κύριος*, but the choice of Luke to postpone the defining of this term is still a significant literary point to note." See Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 300, n. 61.

53 Bock continues: "... but in view of Luke's later development of this term, clearly something more is in mind here, though this deeper intention is *not clear by this text alone*. It only emerges from later Lucan usage." See Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 70. While Strauss agrees that "the significance of *kurios* in Lukan theology as a whole must be considered in interpreting this reference," he also stresses that "it is of even greater importance to follow Luke's narrative development and not read ideas into a passage which Luke has not yet presented or clarified." Thus, Strauss also argues that "Lord" here in 1:43 is primarily to be understood in a royal messianic sense. See M. Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts*, 96.

54 F. Fearghail comments, "If Elizabeth's inspired words in 1,43 echo Ps. 110, 1 or 2 Sam 24, 21, then the title has a royal connotation here." See F. Fearghail, *The Introduction to Luke-Acts: A Study of the Role of Lk 1,1–4,44 in the Composition of Luke's Two-Volume Work* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1991), 134. See also Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts*, 95–96; R. Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, 345.

It could also be significant that the title in 1:43 is not used in an absolute sense, but stands alongside the first person possessive, “my Lord.” This could further signify its royal messianic meaning, since this expression (“Lord” + first person possessive pronoun) was used in the Old Testament to denote the king and the future messiah.⁵⁵ Brown observed, “Both in the Gospel (20:41-44) and in Acts (2:34) Luke uses Ps. 110:1, “the Lord said to *my Lord*,” to show that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God; and Elizabeth is recognizing Mary as the mother of ‘my Lord’ i.e., of the Messiah.”⁵⁶

Thus, when Elizabeth calls Mary “the mother of my Lord,” these words not only point to Jesus as the messiah, but they also tell us something important about Mary.⁵⁷ While recognizing the messianic lordship of Mary’s child, Elizabeth, at the same time, acknowledges Mary as the mother of her king. Here it should be pointed out that in the New Testament Mary often is referred to as the “mother of Jesus” or “his mother,” but nowhere is she called the “mother of my Lord” except here in 1:43.⁵⁸ Thus, this unique title for Mary seems to draw attention to her position not just as mother of Jesus in a general way, but as mother of Jesus specifically in his role as messianic Lord. In other words, Elizabeth, in greeting Mary as “the mother of my Lord,” refers to her as *mother of the messiah-king*.⁵⁹

This is why some have seen the words “the mother of my Lord” as pointing to Mary as a queen mother figure.⁶⁰ It has been pointed out that in the royal court

55 Nolland notes how “my Lord” was a royal court expression which also reflected messianic use in Ps 110:1. See Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20*, 67, 75. Miguens explains that Luke 20:41 and Mark 12:36ff. provide evidence that in New Testament times, “Yahweh said to *my Lord*” (Ps. 110:1) was interpreted messianically. After noting how the phrase “my Lord” was used in Old Testament times to address the king himself and the messiah, he concludes that “my Lord” is “a respectful and courtly description of the Messiah; it is, in practical terms, a messianic title related to the royal dignity of ‘the son of David’ to whom the ‘throne’ of David is given, who will ‘be king over the house of Jacob,’ and whose ‘kingdom’ will have no end.” See Miguens, *Mary: Servant of the Lord*, 61.

56 Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, 344.

57 “Elisabetta riconosce al tempo stesso l’identità di Maria (la Madre) e di Gesù (il mio Signore).” B. Maggioni, “Esegesi di Lc 1,39–45,” *Theotokos* 5 (1997): 19.

58 Miguens, *Mary: Servant of the Lord*, 61.

59 Strauss notes how the context surrounding the narrative of the visitation supports a messianic interpretation for Elizabeth’s words “mother of my Lord.” Following the description of Jesus as the Davidic messiah in 1:32–33, mother of my Lord in 1:43 “suggests that *kurios* has a ‘messianic’ sense somewhat equivalent to ‘the mother of *my king*.’” Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts*, 96.

60 X. Pikaza, “La Madre de mi Señor (Lc 1,43),” *Ephemerides Mariologicae* 46 (1996): 421–426; G. Perez, “La Visitacion: El Arca Nuevamente en Camino,” *Ephemerides Mariologicae* 43 (1993): 201; B. Ahern, “The Mother of the Messiah,” *Marian Studies* 12 (1961): 27–48 at 46–48; A. Feuillet, *Jesus and His Mother* (Still River, Massachusetts: St. Bede’s, 1984), 13; A. Valentini, “Lc 1, 39–45,” 341–342; M. Miguens, *Mary: Servant of the Lord*, 60–61; G. Kirwin, *The Nature of the Queenship of Mary*, 27–32; D. Bertetto, *Maria La Serva del Signore* (Napoli: Edizioni Dehoniane, 1988), 349–350; M. Cuellar, *María, Madre del Redentor y Madre de la Iglesia* (Barcelona: Editorial Herder, 1990), 108; G. Del Moral, “La Realeza de María segun la Sagrada

language of the ancient near east, the title “Mother of my Lord” would have been used to address the queen-mother of the reigning king (who himself was addressed as “my Lord”; see 2 Sam. 24:21).⁶¹ Thus, within the strong Davidic context of Luke’s infancy narrative, Elizabeth addressing Mary with this royal title provides a basis for viewing her in light of the queen mother tradition of the Old Testament.

Conclusion

The methodological approach used in this article to support Mary as Daughter Zion and as queen mother has focused on an examination of Mary in the context of salvation history and on the narrative presentation of Mary in Luke 1. While reference to “extra-Scriptural agents,” such as the Church Fathers, the liturgy, or magisterial teaching could be made, this article aimed to explore how much Luke 1 could support these typologies in the literal sense. In other words, are interpretations of Mary as Daughter Zion and Queen just the result of later theological reflection of the Church’s councils, theologians, saints, and liturgy? Or can these typological connections developed in the Church’s tradition be seen as grounded, at least in part, in the New Testament writer’s own presentation of Mary? It was demonstrated that the angel’s greeting to Mary in Luke 1:28 presents her in ways that recall the prophecies about lady Zion in the Old Testament. This seems to be a part of Luke’s own portrayal of Mary.

It was also shown that Luke’s accounts of the annunciation to Mary and her visit to Elizabeth invite us to view Mary in light of the Davidic kingdom traditions which those passages evoke. Here we saw how considering Mary against that Davidic kingdom backdrop could at least shed some important Biblical light on why we should see Mary, the mother of the Davidic king, as the queen mother. Considering Mary more along these lines of what we have called “inter-Biblical typology” can help strengthen the case for these and other typological connections involving Mary in the New Testament.

Escritura,” *Ephemerides Mariologicae* 12 (1962): 176; J. Bastero de Eleizalde, “Fundamentos Cristológicos de la Realeza de María,” *Estudios Marianos* 51 (1986): 201–211 at 209; T. Gray, “God’s Word and Mary’s Royal Office,” 384–385; A. Serra, “Regina,” 1074.

61 Ahern, “The Mother of the Messiah,” 28; G. Kirwin, *The Nature of the Queenship of Mary*, 29, n. 72; G. Del Moral, “La Realeza de María según la Sagrada Escritura,” 176; Miguens, *Mary: Servant of the Lord*, 60–62.