

Matthean Intertexture in *Infancy James* 14

Natalie Henderson

Emory College, Atlanta, Georgia 30322, USA¹

Infancy James 14 depicts a scene where Joseph is struggling to decide what to do with the pregnant Mary. Similar to the scene in Matthew 1:18-25, *Infancy James* is a recitation and recontextualization of the Matthean account.² This is evident not only in the shared language and structure of the passages but also in their similar treatments of Mary. Despite his use of Matthew as a source, the author of *Infancy James* does not copy the text verbatim. On the contrary, at times the author makes radical and awkward departures from Matthew in order to remain consistent with the rest of *Infancy James*. Although the bulk of his story comes from Matthew, the author of *Infancy James* has different focuses from his canonical source. While Matthew is preoccupied with tying the scene to prophecy, the inner texture of *Infancy James* is structured to emphasize both Joseph's decision-making process and the need to answer a central question: What will Joseph do with Mary?

Aspects of Inner Texture in *Infancy James* 14

The emphases of *Inf Jas.* 14 are evident in the passage's inner texture. The centrality of the issue of what Joseph will do with Mary, in particular, becomes apparent when we examine the passage's opening-middle-closing texture.³ Here, "repetition [and] progression...work together to create the opening, middle, and closing of [this] unit of text."⁴ Specifically, *Inf Jas.* 14 is characterized both by a repeated concern over what

¹ Submitted on October 28, 2004, in Religion 350: Jesus and the Gospels, taught by Vernon K. Robbins. This version of the paper has been edited by Vernon K. Robbins.

² For recitation and recontextualization, see Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Text: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996) 41-50; *idem*, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (London/New York: Routledge, 1996) 102-107, 121-24.

³ Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 19-20; *idem*, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse*, 50-53.

⁴ Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 19.

Joseph will do with Mary and a progression of the sensory-aesthetic zones⁵ that he engages when deciding the issue, as we see in Figure 1:

Figure 1: Sensory-Aesthetic Texture in Opening-Middle-Closing Texture in Infancy James 14

| Location in Passage | Joseph's response | Sensory-Aesthetic Zone |
|---------------------|---|------------------------|
| Opening (14:1) | pondered what he was going to do with her | emotion-fused thought |
| Middle (14:4) | (in speech) So what should I do with her? | self-expressive speech |
| Closing (14:8) | And so he began to protect the girl. | purposeful action |

In the first verse of this chapter, Joseph “ponder[s] what he [is] going to do with [Mary].”⁶ The verb “ponder” is from the “zone of emotion-fused thought.”⁷ This is arguably the least active of the three sensory-aesthetic zones, and, not surprisingly, no decision or action regarding Mary is made by Joseph at this point in the passage. In the middle of the passage, we see Joseph attack the issue in a slightly more active manner by asking himself, “So what should I do with her?” (14:4). This time, he is speaking rather than thinking, and he has progressed to the “zone of self-expressive speech.”⁸ By having Joseph repeat his original problem aloud and in the form of a question, the author builds suspense for the reader. We as readers know that Mary is innocent, yet we do not yet know “what [Joseph is] going to do with her” (14:1). Despite various suggested outcomes, the question is only definitively answered in 14:8, the passage’s closing verse. Unlike in the opening and middle sections of the passage, there is no explicit reiteration of Joseph’s dilemma here. Instead, the problem is implied and the solution, “he began to protect the girl,” is stated (14:8). At this point in the passage, the author finally provides both an answer to the question of what Joseph will do with Mary and depicts Joseph acting from the “zone of purposeful action.”⁹ The progression from the least active to the most active sensory-aesthetic zone is complete, and the implication is that only after Joseph has thought about his problem and correctly stated it can he actively enact a solution.

⁵ For progressive texture and sensory-aesthetic zones, see Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 9-14, 29-36; *idem*, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse*, 46-50, 69-70.

⁶ All quotations of *Infancy James* are from Robert J. Miller (ed.), *The Complete Gospels: Annotated Scholars Version* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 1992) 383-96.

⁷ Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 30-31.

⁸ Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 31.

⁹ Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 31.

While the progression of the sensory-aesthetic zones of Joseph's body in the opening-middle-closing texture of *Inf Jas.* 14 centers the focus of this passage on the question of what Joseph is going to do with Mary, the argumentative texture¹⁰ of the passage provides some insight into how he makes that decision. Throughout the chapter, both Joseph and the heavenly messenger suggest possible courses of action for Joseph and then "give reasons" why these courses may or may not be the best ones possible. By first explaining the consequences of his "what if" scenarios in 14:2-3, Joseph makes his decision in 14:4 to "divorce [Mary] quietly" seem both logical and just. We as readers are led to question this just decision, however, by the immediate occurrence of the word "but" (14:5). Through the angel's speech that follows, we learn that Joseph's planned course of action is not the optimal answer to the question of what to do with Mary. Here, too, argumentative texture plays a role in making the ultimate conclusion – Joseph's protection of Mary – seem logical. The angel tells Joseph not to fear Mary, "because the child in her is the holy spirit's doing" (14:5). Similarly, the angel tells Joseph to name Mary's child "Jesus – [implied **because**] the name means 'he will save his people from their sins'" (14:6). By following every command to Joseph with either a stated or an implied "because," the angel provides Joseph (and the reader) with reasons for his commands that make them appear logical. In the final verse, the narrator, too, employs this tactic, telling us "And so [Joseph] began to protect the girl" (14:8). Here, as before, the effect of including phrases such as "because" or "and so" is to convince the reader that the characters are making logical and natural decisions.

Another way that the author of *Infancy James* uses inner texture to highlight the decision-making process in chapter 14 is by including a progression of the characters' actions. As we see in Figure 2, Joseph first uses verbs from the zone of purposeful action tentatively, describing theoretical or future actions. As the passage progresses, these verbs begin to refer less to plausible, future actions and more to realized, present ones:

¹⁰ Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 21-29; Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse*, 77-89.

| <i>Figure 2: Progression of the Zone of Purposeful Action in Infancy James 14</i> | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Actor | Action | Theoretical/Actual | Future/Present |
| Joseph | was going to do (14:1) | theoretical | future |
| Joseph | (If) try to cover (14:2) | theoretical | future |
| Joseph | [wi]ll end up going against (14:2) | theoretical | future |
| Joseph | (If) disclose (14:3) | theoretical | future |
| Joseph | [wi]ll end up handing (14:3) | theoretical | future |
| Joseph | will divorce (14:4) | actual, not realized | future |
| messenger | appeared (14:5) | actual | present |
| Mary (messenger speaking) | will have (14:6) | actual | future |
| Joseph (messenger speaking) | will name (14:6) | actual | future |
| Jesus (messenger speaking) | will save (14:6) | actual | future |
| Joseph | got up (14:7) | actual | present |
| Joseph | praised (14:7) | actual | present |
| Joseph | began to protect (14:8) | actual | present |

This table illustrates the progression from Joseph's talking vaguely about what he may decide to do with Mary in the future to his implementation of specific actions in the present. While it is true that the first mention of action that a character definitely plans to take occurs where Joseph resolves to divorce Mary in 14:4, he never actually follows through with this action. The real shift, then, from hypothetical to realized action occurs with the appearance of the heavenly messenger in 14:5. Although the messenger is still speaking of actions that will occur at some vague point in the future, he does, at least, tell us what Mary, Joseph, and Jesus will definitely do (14:6). This is a significant departure from the various hypothetical actions Joseph considers taking in 14:1-3. After the messenger's shift from the theoretical to the factual, Joseph continues the progression of action by shifting from the future to the present. As soon as the heavenly messenger leaves him, Joseph "g[ets] up, ...praise[s] the God of Israel,...[and] beg[ins] to protect the girl" (14:8). This progression mirrors the progression of actions one takes when making a serious decision. First, plausible actions and their likely outcomes are considered. Second, the optimal course of action is selected. Finally, that action is implemented. By including each of these steps in *Inf Jas.* 14, the author is inviting the reader into Joseph's inner dialogue, which builds suspense in the story as we see Joseph consider various courses of action before choosing to become involved in the birth of Jesus.

Matthean Intertexture in *Infancy James 14*

Although the *Infancy Gospel of James* is a non-canonical text, it was not composed in a vacuum. On the contrary, there is clear evidence that the author of this gospel was familiar with both Luke and Matthew and used these gospels as sources. As mentioned previously, *Inf Jas.* 14, in particular, appears to have been strongly influenced by Matthew 1:18-25.¹¹ In order to fully understand this passage, then, we must move beyond the inner texture of the passage and examine its intertexture.

That Matthew 1:18-25 served as a source not only for the plot and structure of *Inf Jas.* 14 but also for much of the text's language seems obvious when we juxtapose the two texts, as in Figure 3:

| <i>Figure 3: Matthean Intertexture in Infancy James 14</i> | |
|--|---|
| <i>Infancy James 14:1-8</i> | Matthew 1:18-25 |
| <p>¹And Joseph became very frightened and no longer spoke with her as he pondered what he was going to do with her. ²And Joseph said to himself, "If I try to cover up her sin, I'll end up going against the law of the Lord. ³And if I disclose her condition to the people of Israel, I'm afraid that the child inside her might be heaven-sent and I'll end up handing innocent blood over to a death sentence. ⁴So what should I do with her? <I know,> I'll divorce her quietly."</p> <p>⁵But when night came a <u>messenger of the Lord</u> suddenly appeared to him in a dream and said: "Don't be afraid of this girl, because the child in her is the holy spirit's doing. ⁶She will have a son and you will name him Jesus- the name means 'he will save his people from their sins.'" ⁷And Joseph got up from his sleep and praised the God of Israel, who had given him this favor. ⁸And so he began to protect the girl.</p> | <p>¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.</p> <p>²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an <u>angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,</u> 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.</p> |

¹¹ All quotations of Matthew are from the *New Revised Version of the Bible* (Online: <http://www.devotions.net/bible/00bible.htm>, accessed Sept. 27, 2004).

As this table illustrates, *Inf Jas.* 14 is a recontextualization of Matt 1:18-25 in both narration and attributed speech.¹² Recontextualization through narration in *Infancy James* is most obvious when we compare the structure of the two passages. In each, Joseph resolves to divorce Mary because she is pregnant, is visited in a dream by a heavenly being who tells him not to abandon her because her child is from the Holy Spirit, and awakes from sleep to act on the angel's orders. Similarly, recontextualization through attributed speech in *Infancy James* is most apparent in the words of the messenger/angel that appears to Joseph. In both passages, the messenger/angel first reassures Joseph, telling him "Do not be afraid" (*Inf Jas.* 14:5; Matt 1:20). After these initial words of comfort, the angel delivers the rest of his message. As we see in the table, that message (contained in *Inf Jas.* 14:6 and Matt 1:21) is nearly identical in each of the passages.

As significant as these recontextualizations of the narration and attributed speech in Matt 1:18-25 are in our attempt to understand the relationship between Matthew and *Inf Jas.* 14, language and plot structure are not the only characteristics shared by the two passages. The author of *Inf Jas.* 14 also utilizes many Matthean themes and characterizations when forming his narrative. One such theme is the use of dreams and sleeping as a means for divine revelation. In *Inf Jas.* 14, Joseph's messenger appears to him at "night...in a dream" (*Inf Jas.* 14:5). The fact that Joseph was sleeping during his visitation from the messenger is further emphasized in 14:7, where we are told that "Joseph got up from his sleep" after the messenger's departure. It is true that this is closely aligned with Joseph's story as told in Matthew (cf. Mt. 1:20, 24). Perhaps more significantly, however, this mode of presentation is consistent with the larger Matthean theme of revelation through dreams. In Matt 2:12, for example, the wise men are warned in a dream not to return to Herod. Later in that same chapter, an angel appears to a dreaming Joseph to tell him to take his family and flee to Egypt (Matt 2:19). Three verses later, it is again through a dream that Joseph decides to take the family north to Galilee (Matt 2:22). Towards the end of this gospel, Pilate's wife tells him to set Jesus free because she has "suffered a great deal because of a dream about [Jesus]" (Matt 27:19). We see, then, that Matthew emphasizes communication between God's

¹² Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 48.

messengers and human beings through dreams. This is a theme that *Infancy James*, taking its cue from Matthew, echoes with its treatment of the messenger’s revelation to Joseph in chapter 14.

The other Matthean characteristic that is particularly evident in *Inf Jas.* 14 is the depiction of Joseph, rather than Mary, as the central player in Jesus’ birth story. The angel/messenger appears to Joseph, and Joseph is the one charged with naming Jesus. In each passage, the reader is made to sense that Joseph’s decision about what to do with Mary ultimately will determine the outcome of the birth story. In fact, when we examine the treatment of Mary in each of these passages, her passivity is striking. Her role is basically confined to the physical birth of Jesus, and both Matt 1:18-25 and *Inf Jas.* 14 emphasize the restricted nature of this role through their respective treatments of her:

| <i>Figure 4: Mary as a Passive Character</i> | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Infancy James 14</i> | Matthew 1 |
| with her (14:1) | Mary had been engaged (1:18) |
| with her (14:2) | she was found (1:18) |
| her condition (14:3) | Her husband (1:19) |
| inside her (14:3) | expose her to (1:19) |
| with her (14:4) | dismiss her (1:19) |
| divorce her (14:4) | take Mary (1:20) |
| of this girl (14:5) | in her (1:20) |
| in her (14:5) | She will bear a son (1:21) |
| She will have a son (14:6) | took her (1:24) |
| the girl (14:8) | with her (1:25) |
| | she had borne a son (1:25) |

One of the most striking things this table reveals is that Mary’s name is completely absent from *Inf Jas.* 14. Mary is referred to by name twice in Matt 1:18-25, but she is never referred to as more than “she,” “her,” or “this/the girl” in *Inf Jas.* 14. This omission downplays her role and relegates her to the position of supporting, rather than central, character. Additionally, the references to Mary in each of these passages contribute to her characterization as passive. As we see in the table, Mary is portrayed in these two stories not as someone who acts but rather as someone who is acted upon. When her name comes up, it is overwhelmingly as an object – object of a preposition, direct object, or indirect object. She is rarely the subject of a sentence, and, even when

she is, she is usually still taking a passive role. In Matt 1:18, for example, it is written that “Mary had been engaged to Joseph.” Although Mary is the subject of this sentence, the verb is passive, suggesting that someone besides Mary (her parents, perhaps) did the engaging for her. The one glaring exception to Mary’s passivity in these passages, and, interestingly, it occurs in both of them, is the angel’s statement that “she will have/bear a son” (*Inf Jas.* 14:6, Matt 1:21, 25). It is only in the action of physically giving birth to Jesus that Mary takes an active role in these two narratives.

Interestingly, the extreme passivity of Mary is not typical of *Infancy James* as a whole. In both chapters 13 and 15, for example, Mary is not only named but also speaks in her own defense. These chapters form bookends around chapter 14, and in each of them Mary has a fairly active role. In chapter 13, Joseph asks Mary, “How could you have done this? Have you forgotten the Lord your God? Why have you brought shame on yourself, you who were raised in the Holy of Holies...?” (*Inf Jas.* 13:6-7). Mary responds actively and assertively, saying to Joseph, “I’m innocent. I haven’t had sex with any man” (*Inf Jas.* 13:8). In nearly identical language, the high priest asks Mary in chapter 15, “why have you done this?...Why have you humiliated yourself? Have you forgotten the Lord your God, you who were raised in the Holy of Holies...?” (*Inf Jas.* 15:10-11). Here, again, Mary responds by actively maintaining her innocence, telling the priest, “I stand innocent before [God]. Believe me, I’ve not had sex with any man” (*Inf Jas.* 15:13). It is interesting to note that the high priest asks for Mary to testify for herself before he asks Joseph to do the same in chapter 15. We see, then, that the Mary of chapters 13 and 15 is active and central to the plot. This suggests that the passivity of Mary in chapter 14 can perhaps best be understood as evidence that the author has used Matthew as a source and has adopted Matthew’s emphasis on Joseph.

Despite *Inf Jas.* 14’s extensive use of Matt 1:18-25, the passage is not strictly reliant upon Matthean material. This leads to an interesting interplay between the two passages and, in places, to remarkable deviations in *Infancy James* from the Matthean text. At times, the author of *Infancy James* chooses to be inconsistent with himself in order to stay true to the text of Matthew; at others, he opts to depart from the Matthean text to maintain the internal consistency of *Infancy James* (refer back to Figure 3). The

most striking example of the former occurs in *Inf Jas.* 14:4, where we are told that Joseph resolves to “divorce [Mary] quietly.” This is particularly odd given that, in *Infancy James*, Joseph and Mary are neither married nor engaged! Instead, Joseph is merely appointed by the high priest as Mary’s guardian (most likely because the author is particularly focused upon maintaining Mary’s purity and chasteness). Despite their non-engagement in the gospel, the author of *Infancy James* chooses to include the divorce statement and forego internal consistency in order to remain in accord with Matt 1:19, which states that Joseph “planned to dismiss [Mary] quietly.” In contrast, the author of *Infancy James* opts to forego intertextual harmony for inner-textual accord in both 14:5 and 14:8. In 14:5, *Infancy James* changes Matthew’s “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife” (Matt 1:20) to “Don’t be afraid of this girl.” Similarly, the end of the episode in *Inf Jas.* 14:8, “and so he began to protect the girl,” stands in marked contrast to the conclusion of Matt 1:24, “he took her as his wife....” In both cases, the author of *Infancy James* reconfigures Matthew to omit any mention of Joseph and Mary getting married. While the author can justify including references to Joseph’s divorcing Mary in 14:4 because divorce does not imply sex, the inclusion of Matt 1:20 and 1:24 without editing would destroy *Infancy James*’ portrayal of Mary as perpetually chaste. In this case, then, the author departs from his Matthean source in order to maintain a platonic, patron-client relationship between Joseph and Mary.

These two deviations from Matthew are not the only places where *Inf Jas.* 14 departs from its Matthean source. If we refer back to Figure 3, we will note other significant differences between the two passages. For example, the author of *Infancy James* completely omits Matthew’s appeal to authority and recitation of Isaiah’s prophecy in 1:22-23, indicating that this author is not as preoccupied as Matthew with tying Jesus’ story to the Hebrew prophets. What is emphasized in *Infancy James* is Joseph’s internal dialogue and decision-making process. The author of *Infancy James* expands Matt 1:19, “her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly,” and turns it into a narrative

amplification¹³ that lasts for 4 verses (*Inf Jas.* 14:1-4). Matthew tells us that Joseph is righteous; *Infancy James* shows us his righteousness by writing in detail how he debates the correct action to take with Mary. Matthew tells us that Joseph plans to divorce Mary; *Infancy James* shows us how he arrives at this conclusion.

Lukan Intertexture in the Context of Matthean Intertexture

One of the most interesting departures from Matthew occurs in *Inf Jas.* 14:8, where it is written that Joseph, “got up from his sleep and praised the God of Israel, who had given him this favor.” In contrast, Matt 1:24 reads: “when Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.” Only in *Infancy James* is there a description of Joseph praising God and thanking God for giving him a favor. It begs the question: “What favor has Joseph received from God?” None of the traditional favor language is here. The messenger does not tell Joseph that his prayers have been answered, as with Joachim and Anna in *Inf Jas.* 4. Nor is he told that he has found favor with the Lord, as Mary is in *Inf Jas.* 11. Yet, we are told in *Inf Jas.* 14 that Joseph awakes from his dream praising God. Interestingly, the language of praising God is much more reminiscent of Luke’s account of the birth story than Matthew’s. In Luke, Mary praises God in the Magnificat (1:46-55). Later, Zechariah praises God for the birth of John the Baptist (1:67-79). God is praised again by the angels in Luke 2:14 and by the shepherds in 2:20. In Matthew, by contrast, there is no mention of praising God associated with Jesus’ birth. Perhaps, then, *Inf Jas.* 14:8 indicates that there is a bit of the Lukan tradition lingering even in this very Matthean context.

If the detail that Joseph praises God is reminiscent of the Lukan tradition, so, too, is the heavenly visit type scene that appears in *Inf Jas.* 14:1-8. Figure 5 illustrates the similarities between Joseph’s visit from a heavenly being and parallel visits to Mary and Zechariah in *Inf Jas.* 11 and Luke 1, respectively:

¹³ Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 51.

| <i>Figure 5: The Heavenly Messenger Type Scene in Luke and Infancy James</i> | | |
|---|--|--|
| Luke 1:11-18 | <i>Inf Jas. 14:1-7</i> | <i>Inf Jas. 11:2-6</i> |
| <p>¹¹Then there appeared to [Zechariah] an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw him,</p> <p>he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him.</p> <p>¹³But the angel said to him,</p> <p>‘Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. ...</p> <p>¹⁶He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.</p> <p>...¹⁸Zechariah said to the angel, <i>‘How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.’</i></p> | <p>¹And Joseph became very frightened and no longer spoke with her as he pondered what he was going to do with her...⁵But when night came</p> <p>a messenger of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream and said: “Don’t be afraid of this girl, because the child in her is the holy spirit’s doing. ⁶She will have a son and you will name him Jesus- the name means ‘he will save his people from their sins.’”</p> <p>⁷And Joseph got up from his sleep and praised the God of Israel, who had given him this favor.</p> | <p>²Suddenly there was a voice saying to her, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women.”</p> <p>³Mary ... became terrified and went home.</p> <p>⁵A heavenly messenger suddenly stood before her: “Don’t be afraid, Mary. You see, you’ve found favor in the sight of the Lord of all. You will conceive by means of his word.”</p> <p>⁶But as she listened, <i>Mary was doubtful and said, “If I actually conceive by the Lord, the living God, will I also give birth the way women usually do?”</i></p> |

As the table illustrates, each of these passages shares a similar structure and plot. A righteous person is visited by a heavenly being, becomes terrified, and is immediately told not to be afraid. In each of these three passages the angelic being goes on to make a statement telling the righteous person that they or someone close to them will bear/conceive a child. Although at first glance, the similarities between these three passages seem to suggest a Lukan reliance in *Inf Jas.* 14:1-8, closer inspection reveals that *Inf Jas.* 14 deviates from the standard pattern for this scene in some significant ways. First of all, it is only in this passage that the righteous person (here, Joseph) becomes frightened before the appearance of the messenger/angel (*Inf Jas.* 14:1). In both *Inf Jas.* 11 and Luke 1, the fear is brought on by the presence of the heavenly being; here, Joseph’s fear is caused only by Mary’s pregnancy. Secondly, *Inf Jas.* 14 is the only passage among the three where the person to whom the message is being delivered neither doubts nor questions the heavenly messenger (cf. *Inf Jas.* 11:6; Luke 1:18). This is more consistent with the Matthean story in 1:18-25 than in the Lukan account. Finally,

and perhaps most importantly, it is only in *Inf Jas.* 14 that the heavenly messenger appears in a dream. In both *Inf Jas.* 11 and Luke 1, there is no mention of sleep or dreaming; the implication is that both Mary and Zechariah were fully awake when visited by their angels. In contrast, we know that Joseph's vision only came to him at night and in a dream (14:5). As we saw before, this, too, is a Matthean theme. What we see then is that, while the author of *Inf Jas.* 14 was most likely familiar with Luke and loosely followed the type scene present in Luke 1, Matthew's influence is still a dominant one in this chapter. There may be some Lukan tendencies here, but they have been reworked and altered to be more consistent with Matthew's language and themes in 1:18-25.

Conclusion

While the author of the *Inf Jas.* 14 follows the structure and language of Matthew 1:18-25 for the bulk of this chapter, this non-canonical chapter is not merely a direct recitation of the Matthean account of Joseph's visit with the angel. Instead, *Infancy James* recontextualizes Matthew, changing the story's emphases and even weaving in themes from Luke. As a result, we are left with a suspense-filled chapter that both explores Joseph's internal decision-making process and provides an answer to its central question: What is Joseph going to do with the pregnant Mary?