The Language Environment of First Century Judaea

Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels

VOLUME TWO

Edited by

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Hebrew-Only Exegesis: A Philological Approach to Jesus' Use of the Hebrew Bible

*R. Steven Notley and Jeffrey P. García**

The purpose of this study is to examine the interpretive techniques demonstrated in five Synoptic pericopae and the manner in which they reflect the first-century C.E. linguistic milieu. In part, the impetus for such a study is because the Synoptic Gospels are a distinct source for Jewish methods of exegesis in late antiquity.[1] Scholarly focus of late has been on comparisons between Qumranic exegesis and the interpretive style preserved in the Gospels,[2] though more recent trends indicate that attention is now turning to Rabbinic exegesis and the Gospels.[3] While the literature of Israel's Sages was initially codified

* For Salustiana "Caridad" Arroyo (1916–2012), whose daily handwritten lists of biblical verses were my first introductions to biblical texts. Para mi abuela, con amor profundo.

1 See J. W. Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1953); S. Ruzer, *Mapping the New Testament: Early Christian Writings as a Witness for Early Jewish Biblical Exegesis* (Jewish and Christian Perspective Series 13; Leiden: Brill, 2007). Ruzer notes regarding the New Testament more broadly: "If the Second Temple Jewish genesis of nascent Christianity—meaning also its polemical stance vis-à-vis other Jewish groups—is taken seriously, it should be expected that its preoccupation with exegesis would reflect, either approvingly or polemically, both exegetical traditions current in rival circles and those of broader circulation. The New Testament 'conversation with Scripture' may thus be seen as bearing witness, at least in some instances, to those broader tendencies." Also E. E. Ellis, "Biblical Interpretation in the New Testament Church," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. M. J. Mulder; CRINT 2.1; Philadelphia: Fortress, 2004), 653–90.

2 See, for instance, Stephen Hultgren, "4Q521 and Luke's *Magnificat* and *Benedictus*," 119–32, and Lutz Doering, "Marriage and Creation in Mark 10 and CD 4–5," 133–64, in *Echoes from the Caves: Qumran and the New Testament* (ed. F. García-Martínez; STJD 85; Leiden: Brill, 2009); L. H. Schiffman, "Biblical Exegesis in the Passion narratives and the Dead Sea Scrolls," 117–30 in *Biblical Interpretation in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. I. Kalimi and P. Haas; New York: T&T Clark International, 2006). See also H. W. Basser, *The Mind Behind the Gospels: A Commentary to Matthew 1–14* (Brighton, Mass.: Academic Studies Press, 2009).

3 Most recently, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (ed. R. Bieringer et al.; JSJSup 136; Leiden: Brill, 2010), esp. sections "Halakhah" and "Midrash." See also R. S. Notley, "Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method in the Nazareth Synagogue," in *Early Christian Literature and Intertextuality*. Vol. 2, *Exegetical Studies* (ed. C. A. Evans and H. D. Zacharias; London: T&T Clark International, 2009), 46–59.

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early in the third century C.E., numerous studies have shown that, when engaged critically, exegetical techniques that existed prior to the destruction of the Temple (70 C.E.) are discernible.[4] To the second of our two proposals, viz., the manner in which these interpretive techniques reflect the first-century C.E. linguistic milieu, scant attention has been given to the opportunity such methods afford us in ascertaining contemporaneous language usage.

Before continuing, some consideration is warranted concerning the linguistic landscape of first-century Judea and the manner by which exegetical tendencies reflect it. First, the textual evidence retrieved from the caves of Qumran attests more broadly to a tri-lingual landscape: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.[5] In fact, all of the documents that have been attributed to the Qumran community were penned in Hebrew, especially those documents that were central to the Yahad's communal, theological, and eschatological thought (e.g. 1QS, 1QS^{a-b}, CD, 1QM, 1QH^{a-f}). Moreover, while debates regarding the nature of Qumran Hebrew continue, one thing is clear: the language of the Hebrew scrolls reflects both literary[6] (in some cases ideological[7]) and spoken elements.[8] Along with the colloquial Hebrew attested in the Bar-Kokhba documents, it is

4 Cf. D. Instone-Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 C.E.* (TSAJ 30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992). Instone-Brewer has also attempted to elucidate the traditions of the rabbis that were extant before the destruction of the Temple in *Traditions of the Rabbis in the Era of the New Testament*. Vol. 1, *Prayer and Agriculture*; Vol. 2a, *Feasts and Sabbaths–Passover and Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004–11). See also A. Baumgarten, "Rabbinic Literature as a Source for the History of Second Temple Sectarianism," *DSD* 2 (1995): 14–57.

5 Shmuel Safrai, "Spoken and Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus" in *Jesus' Last Week* (ed. R. Steven Notley, Marc Turnage and Brian Becker; Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels 1; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 225–44; repr. *Jerusalem Perspective* 30, 31 (1991), see also http://www.jerusalemperspective.com/2551; C. Rabin, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century," in *The Jewish People in the First Century* (ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern; 2 vols.; CRINT; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1976), 2:1007–39. See also R. Buth, "Language Use in the First Century: Spoken Hebrew in a Trilingual Society in the Time of Jesus," *JOTT* 5/4 (1992): 298–312.

6 G. Rendsburg, "Qumran Hebrew (with a Trial Cut [1QS])," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at 60: Scholarly Contributions of New York University Faculty and Alumni* (ed. L. H. Schiffman and S. Tzoref; STJD 89; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 217–46.

7 W. M. Schniedewind, "Linguistic Ideology in Qumran Hebrew," in *Diggers at the Well: Proceedings for a Third International Symposium in the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira* (ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 245–55; idem, "Qumran Hebrew as an Antilanguage," *JBL* 118, no. 2 (1999): 235–52.

8 T. Muraoka, "Hebrew," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1: 340–45 (344).

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now accepted that in the New Testament era Hebrew was still utilized for oral communication.[9]

Second, it is routinely assumed, but rarely explicitly stated, that the ancients most often utilized the Hebrew Bible for matters of interpretation. The terseness of biblical narratives and linguistic nuances of the Hebrew language inspired the exegetical traditions which appear in various translations (e.g. the LXX, Targumim), as well as the Dead Sea re-workings of the Pentateuch[10]—in addition to the wealth of exegetical materials that appear elsewhere in Second Temple period texts.[11]

The five Synoptic narratives that will be examined here—"Jesus' Preaching in the Nazareth Synagogue" (Luke 4:18–19), "Jesus' Witness Concerning John" (Luke 7:27; Matt 11:10), "And You Shall Love . . ." (Luke 10:25–37), "The Cleansing of the Temple" (Luke 19:45–46; Mark 11:11–17; Matt 21:12–13), "Jesus and Caiaphas" (Luke 22:66–71)—preserve rabbinic exegetical techniques that appear for the

9 Cf. Safrai, "Spoken and Literary Languages"; Buth, "Language Use"; Joshua M. Grintz, "Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple," *JBL* 79 (1960): 32–47. Yonathan Breuer, "Aramaic in Late Antiquity," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 4, *The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period* (ed. S. Katz; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 457–58, notes, "Scholars had been of the opinion that, after the return of the Babylonian exiles, Hebrew no longer served as a spoken language. On this account Hebrew retained its status as a holy tongue and was used in prayer and in Torah study, and for this reason the Mishnah and contemporary Tannaitic literature was composed in Hebrew, but in everyday life Aramaic alone was spoken. *Today this view is no longer accepted, the scholarly consensus now being that Hebrew speech survived in all walks of life at least until the end of the tannaitic period* (*the beginning of the third century CE*)" (authors' emphasis).

10 E. Tov and S. W. Crawford, *Qumran Cave 4, VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part I* (ed. H. Attridge et al.; DJD 13; Oxford: Clarendon, 1994); S. W. Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 39–59; M. Bernstein, "Pentateuchal Interpretation at Qumran," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (ed. P. W. Flint and J. C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1989–99): 1: 128–59.

11 It should be noted, however, that in terms of the New Testament (for Josephus, see Instone-Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions*, 184) the majority of scholars have argued that the LXX was the authors' primary source. While it is expected that authors in the Diaspora utilized the Greek version of the Scriptures, there is little reason to presume that within the confines of the land of Israel matters were the same. For all intents and purposes, it appears that Second Temple exegetical traditions developed out a reading of the Hebrew text. Furthermore, as several articles in the present volume indicate, it appears that the Evangelists' sources originated from an environment of both spoken and literary Hebrew.

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first time in written record.[12] The earliest iteration of these exegetical methods (i.e. *middoth*) is first attributed to Hillel (a Jewish sage who flourished in the first century B.C.E.) and appears for the first time in the Tosefta (*t. Sanh* 7.11)[13]—a supplement to the Mishnah which has been shown to be an amalgam of pre-mishnaic, mishnaic and later Rabbinic traditions. Yet, already in the Gospel of Matthew there is evidence of at least one of them, קל וחומר (*a minori ad maius*[14]): εἰ δὲ τὸν χόρτον τοῦ ἀγροῦ σήμερον ὄντα καὶ αὔριον εἰς κλίβανον βαλλόμενον ὁ θεὸς οὕτως ἀμφιέννυσιν, οὐ πολλῷ μᾶλλον ὑμᾶς, ὀλιγόπιστοι; ("But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will he not much more* clothe you, O ones of little faith?," Matt 6:30).[15] In the passage, the comparison of God's care for the grass in light of its impermanence with the more important concern for humanity reflects the transition from *minori* (קל) to *maius* (חומר).

Certain *middoth*, especially those that are found in pre-70 C.E. texts, were conveyed orally and likely intended to be utilized in teaching contexts (e.g. *bet midrash*). The employment of these exegetical techniques reflects the manner in which a sage might readily interpret Scripture in the process of teaching or in regular conversation. Coupled with the acknowledgment of spoken Hebrew in the first century, we suggest that these exemplify a fluid development of interpretive techniques (*middoth*) that were derived out of a speaking environment rather than a literary/scribal one. Therefore, the fact that the Synoptic Gospels preserve stories with contemporaneous methods of exegesis and that most of these accounts portray a setting where Jesus is teaching, it indicates not only the language of exegesis (i.e. Hebrew) but also the primary language of discourse. With that in mind, we turn our attention now to an examination of the selected Gospel narratives.

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12 Cf. S. Safrai, "The Naming of John the Baptist," *Jerusalem Perspective* 20 (May 1989): 1–2, see also http://www.jerusalemperspective.com/2342.

13 שבע מידות דרש הלל לפני זקני בתירה (1) קל וחומר (2) וגזרה שוה (3) ובנין אב וכתוב אחד (4) ובנין אב ושני כתובים (5) וכלל ופרט (6) וכלל וכיוצא בו ממקום (7) אחר דבר הלמד See also H. L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (trans. M. Bockmuehl; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 19–23.

14 An argument from a minor to major premise. If the minor premise stands, then the major, more complicated and weightier premise logically follows.

15 Gale argues that this *middah* is utilized in Matt 12:1–8 in A. M. Gale, *Redefining Ancient Borders: The Jewish Scribal Framework of Matthew's Gospel* (London: T&T Clark International, 2005), 133–38.

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1 Jesus' Preaching at the Synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:18–19)[16]

Apart from preserving an illustration of Jesus' exegetical technique, Luke 4:18–19 also presents the oldest report of the Jewish custom to read a portion of the Prophets (*haftarah*) after the reading of the Torah (see also Acts 13:15). Outside the New Testament, the earliest reference to such a practice appears in the Mishnah, codified at the beginning of the third century C.E.:

> *m. Meg*. 4.2:
>
> בְּיוֹם טוֹב חֲמִשָּׁה בְּיוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים שִׁשָּׁה בַּשַּׁבָּת שִׁבְעָה אֵין פּוֹחֲתִים מֵהֶן אֲבַל מוֹסִיפִים עֲלֵיהֶם וּמַפְטִירִים בַּנָּבִיא
>
> On a festival day [the Torah is read] by five [readers], on the Day of Atonement by six, and on the Sabbath by seven. They may not subtract from them but they may add to them, and *they close with a reading from the Prophets.* (authors' emphasis).

Luke does not record Jesus reading from the Torah. Yet, according to Safrai, the Evangelist's description that "he stood to read" (καὶ ἀνέστη ἀναγνῶναι)[17] indicates Jesus also read from the Torah; one does not stand to read from the prophets.[18] Furthermore, the Lukan depiction bears a striking similarity

16 We consider here only Luke's account since the parallels in Mark (6:1–6:6) and Matt (13:53–58) do not preserve Jesus' use of Scripture. Portions of what follows appear in R. S. Notley, "Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method in the Nazareth Synagogue" in *Early Christianity and Intertextuality*, Vol. 2, *Exegetical Studies* (ed. C. A. Evans and H. D. Zacharias; LNTS 392; London: Continuum, 2009), 46–59.

17 This description has no parallel in Matt or Mark. Mark states, "And when the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue . . ." (καὶ γενομένου σαββάτου ἤρξατο διδάσκειν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ . . .). Matthew expands upon on the Markan account, "Then he came to his homeland and began to teach them in their synagogue" (καὶ ἐλθὼν εἰς τὴν πατρίδα αὐτοῦ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτῶν). This is yet another instance where Luke, in distinction from the other Gospels, preserves language from his source(s) that inform(s) us of a decidedly Jewish custom.

18 S. Safrai, "Synagogue and Sabbath," *Jerusalem Perspective* 23 (November–December, 1989), 8–10, see also http://www.jerusalemperspective.com/2424. Safrai also recognized that Luke's report about Jesus reading alone is in accord with other ancient witnesses (e.g. *m. Sot.* 7.7–8; *m. Yoma* 7.1; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.209; Philo, *Prob*. 81–82). The pre-70 practice allowed for one reader of Torah, not seven readers as became the common custom shortly after the destruction of the Temple. See S. Safrai, "Synagogue," in Safrai and Stern, eds., *The Jewish People in the First Century*, Vol. 2, 929–30 D. Bivin, "One Torah Reader, Not Seven!,"

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to the high priest's reading from the Torah described in *m.Yoma* 7.1: וְכֹהֵן גָּדוֹל עוֹמֵד וּמְקַבֵּל וְקוֹרֵא עוֹמֵד ("And the high priest rises and receives [the Torah] and reads [it] standing"). The Lukan omission of Jesus' reading from the Torah may be because the Evangelist assumed that it was not necessary to detail what was already understood, viz., that Jesus stood to read from the Torah first, and only then read from the book of Isaiah (i.e. *the haftarah*).[19]

Beyond the biblical passages themselves there are indications that the Lukan narrative has drawn from sources that were shaped within a Hebrew language environment.[20] For example, after reading from the Torah, Jesus is reportedly given "the book of the prophet Isaiah" (βιβλίον τοῦ προφήτου Ἡσαΐου, Luke 4:17).[21] This phrase is a simple and often overlooked indication that the Lukan narrative reflects Post-biblical Hebrew idioms. The Greek βιβλίον, or its Hebrew equivalent סֵפֶר, is never used as a descriptive term for the prophetic work in either the Hebrew Bible or Greek Jewish literature from the Second Commonwealth. The few examples that we do have where Isaiah is referred to as a סֵפֶר (i.e. book) come from Qumran and on each occasion the phrase is the Hebrew: ספר ישעיה הנביא (cf., 4QFlorilegium [4Q174] fi, 2i:15; 4QMiscellaneous Rules [4Q265] f1:3; 4Q285 7:1; see also 4Q176 fi, 2:4).

Luke's report of Jesus' citation from Isa 61:1–2 clearly does not follow the Hebrew Bible. The common scholarly assumption that Luke has drawn his biblical passages from the LXX obscures the exegetical ingenuity inherent in the account. Further, the report's preservation of non-Septuagintal Hebraisms belies the simplistic explanation that the variants upon the Masoretic tradition resulted from the Evangelist's dependence on the LXX. Instead, it suggests

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Jerusalem Perspective 52 (July–September, 1997): 16–17, see also http://www.jerusalemperspective.com/2787.

19 Notley, "Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method," 47.

20 Ibid., 49.

21 Evidence from the Cairo Genizah suggests that the *haftarah* readings during the Second Temple period were not set and that readings within the triennial cycle may have differed from community to community. Often the connection between the Torah reading and the prophetic portion was due to common themes or wording, cf. Michael Fishbane, *Haftarot: the traditional Hebrew text with the new JPS translation* (JPS Bible Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society), xxiv. Furthermore, it is likely that the reading of the prophetic portion was at the discretion of the reader (cf., Notley, "Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method," 50). As the Mishnah states: מְדַלְּגִים בַּנָּבִיא וְאֵין מְדַלְּגִים בַּתּוֹרָה ("They skip [from place to place] in the prophetic [readings] but do not skip in the Torah [readings]," *m. Meg.* 4:4). In Luke it seems that Jesus is the one who chooses where to read in Isaiah. If so, it likely possessed a thematic or verbal connection to the Torah portion that he just read.

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that Luke had access to source(s) other than our canonical Mark and Matthew, and that these were "marked with stark Hebraisms."[22]

Jesus' deviation from Isa 61:1–2 is threefold: (1) the omission of Isa 61:2b, "to bind the broken-hearted" (לַחֲבֹשׁ לִנְשְׁבְּרֵי־לֵב); (2) the omission of Isa 61:2b, "And the day of vengeance of our God" (וְיוֹם נָקָם לֵאלֹהֵינוּ); (3) the insertion of Isa 58:6, "and let the oppressed go free" (וְשַׁלַּח רְצוּצִים חָפְשִׁים). It is Jesus' insertion of Isa 58:6 which particularly concerns us here, because it sheds light on his exegetical method.

Fitzmyer assumed that the addition of Isa 58:6 was a consequence of the appearance of ἄφεσις (i.e. release) in the LXX's version of both Isaianic passages.[23] While Fitzmyer has rightly recognized that the combination of these two passages is based on verbal analogies, his assumption regarding the use of the Greek Bible is less sure. The Greek term, ἄφεσις, appears frequently in the Septuagint (50 times). A comparison of the Hebrew and Greek texts reveals that ἄφεσις translates eleven different Hebrew words.[24] Indeed, in our passages it translates two entirely different Hebrew words (Isa 58.6: חָפְשִׁים; Isa 61.1: דְּרוֹר).

It is important to remember that we have no record of any sage from the land of Israel in the period whose exegesis is based on any version of the Bible other than the Hebrew Scriptures. Nevertheless, it comes as little surprise that scant attention has been given to a rare Hebrew verbal link between the two Isaianic passages. There are only two places in the entirety of the Hebrew Bible where the phrase רָצוֹן לַיהוָה (i.e. the Lord's favor) occurs, Isa 61:2 and 58:5, precisely the contexts from which Jesus drew his reading in our pericope. So, the Lukan narrative provides an example of Jesus' adept use of *gezerah shavah*, a

22 Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke: introduction, translation, and note* (AB 28–28a; 2 vols.; New York: Doubleday Publishers, 1981–1985), 1:531. Luke makes no mention of the use of Targum, *contra* Fitzmyer's assumption that Jews did not readily comprehend Hebrew and therefore needed an Aramaic translation to understand the Scriptures. The evidence from Qumran suggests that during the Second Temple period Targums were in limited use (e.g. 11QtgJob; 4Q156, Targum to Lev 16) and we have no record of their use in the land of Israel until the Usha Period (140 C.E.). The change likely resulted from developments following the Bar Kokhba revolt (132–135 C.E.). Many Jews previously living in Judea emigrated to the Diaspora, while there was an influx of Jews from Babylonia. The population shift brought with it a new need for the Targumim. See A. F. Rainey, R. S. Notley, *The Sacred Bridge: Carta's Atlas of the Biblical World* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2006), 398; R. Buth, "Aramaic Targumim: Qumran," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (ed. C. A. Evans and S. E. Porter; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 91–93.

23 Fitzmyer, 533.

24 Notley, "Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method," 52. For example, see Exod 18:2: ἄφεσιν αὐτῆς for שִׁלּוּחֶיהָ; and Exod 23:11: ἄφεσιν ποιήσεις for תִּשְׁמְטֶנָּה.

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hermeneutical approach first associated with Hillel the Elder and described to be one of his seven exegetical rules (cf. *t. Sanh.* 7.11; *ʾAbot R. Nat. A* 37).[25] It is a midrashic verbal analogy of sorts, by which two unrelated verses are combined because of a similar word or phrase[26]—although it seems that the early form of the technique may have required exact verbal analogy, such as we witness with Jesus in Nazareth.[27]

The rare appearance of this Hebrew phrase, coupled with the fact that the verbal link disappears in the Aramaic Targumim and LXX of Isaiah,[28] indicates that Jesus is here pictured dependent on a Hebrew version of these texts. Consequently, if Jesus did employ a Hebrew text, it suggests not only his knowledge and use of Hebrew, but that also of his listeners in the synagogue who readily understood the significance of his creative reading and were immediately provoked by his "words of grace" (τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος).[29] In a longer treatment of this passage, Notley has argued that if we rightly understand the method by which Jesus joins these texts, it must affect our understanding of what he is saying through his exegesis.[30] It was not Jesus *per se* or a messianic claim that was rejected in Nazareth. Instead, it was the message he delivered through his ingenuity that challenged his hearers' assumptions regarding the nature of the hoped-for redemption. In this regard, the disappointment of those in the synagogue at Nazareth was not dissimilar to that of John the Baptist while imprisoned by Herod Antipas (see Matt 11:3). In any event, for the purposes of our present study what is important is our recognition that the episode is dependent upon Jesus' creative exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures.

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25 While it is unlikely that Hillel invented these seven rules, they were in use during his time (early first century C.E.). As Strack has noted, the introduction "of the rules into Pharisaic exegesis" is commonly associated with *y. Pes.* 6.33a. H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (trans. and ed. M. Bockmuehl; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 17.

26 See A. Yadin, *Scripture as Logos: Rabbi Ishmael and the Origins of Midrash* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 82–83; and Instone-Brewer's discussion of *gezerah shavah* I and II in *Techniques and Assumptions*, 17–18.

27 Notley, "Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method," 52.

28

Isa	58:5	61:2
LXX	δεκτήν	ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν
Ps. Yon	דרעיינא	שְׁנַת רַעְוָא

29 See J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (London: SCM, 1971), 206–7.

30 See Notley, "Jesus' Hermeneutical Method in the Nazareth Synagogue, 57–59."

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2 Jesus' Witness Concerning John (Matthew 11:10; Luke 7:27)[31]

Jesus' statement regarding John the Baptist as reported in Luke 7:27, and its Synoptic parallel in Matt 11:10, reflects the contemporary hope for an eschatological prophet who would precede the advent of the Messiah: "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,[32] who shall prepare thy way before thee." Scholarship has acknowledged wording from the Hebrew Bible in the content of the testimony,[33] but few have recognized the creative exegesis inherent in Jesus' witness.

His testimony is taken in part from Mal 3:1:

> Mal 3:1:
>
> הִנְנִי שֹׁלֵחַ מַלְאָכִי וּפִנָּה־דֶרֶךְ לְפָנָי
>
> **Behold**, **I am sending** my **messenger** and he will clear **the way before** me . . .

Yet, similar language is heard earlier:

> Exod 23:20:
>
> הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי שֹׁלֵחַ מַלְאָךְ לְפָנֶיךָ לִשְׁמָרְךָ בַּדָּרֶךְ
>
> **Behold**, **I am sending** a **messenger before** you to preserve you on **the way** . . .

31 Portions herein appear in a study on the enigmatic statement in Matt 11:12, R. S. Notley, "The Kingdom Forcefully Advances," in *The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity: Studies in Language and Tradition* (ed. C. A. Evans; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 279–311.

32 "Thy face" = "before."

33 Cf. W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, *Matthew* (AB 26; New York: Doubleday, 1971), 136; R. H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 207–8; J. P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 2 (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1994), 140–41; J. A. T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus: An Essay in Detection," *NTS* 4 (1957–58): 253–81; R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament* (Vancouver, B.C.; Regent College Publishing, 2000), 242–43; E. M. Boring, "Luke," in *The New Interpreter's Bible* (ed. Leander E. Keck; Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 8:268.

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The appearance of the shared words highlighted in the verses is collocated only in these two verses.[34] Accordingly, the Evangelists attest to the fusion of the individual passages into a single citation. For the most part, the saying follows Exod 23:10, but the addition of τὸν ἄγγελόν μου (מַלְאָכִי) is a linguistic indicator that we are here also dealing with wording taken from Mal 3:1. It is true that the SP and LXX of Exod 23:20 preserve a variant, "my messenger" (מַלְאָכִי; τὸν ἄγγελόν μου), rather than the MT's מַלְאָךְ. Yet, it is possible that the Septuagint in fact witnesses to a non-extant Hebrew version. Similar Hebrew variants were discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls, which shed light on the differences between the LXX and MT's versions, particularly those of Jeremiah and Ezekiel.[35] While no such Judean text exists of Exod 23:20, the SP concurs with the LXX's variant. Moreover, there are indications elsewhere that Jesus may have been familiar with non-Masoretic textual traditions (see below).

In the Second Temple period, Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20 were part of a complex of traditions regarding the eschatological prophet, who was expected to appear to announce the messianic age.[36] The anticipation for this figure finds expression in *The Community Rule* (1QS) 9.10–11:[37]

> ומכול עצת התורה לוא יצאו ללכת בכול שרירות לבם. ונשפטו במשפטים הרשונים אשר החלו אנשי היחד לתיסר בם עד בוא נביא ומשיחי אהרון וישראל.
>
> They should not deviate from any of the counsels of the Law to walk in the stubbornness of their heart. They should govern themselves in the former judgments, which the men of the Community began to be instructed in them, until there come the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel.

Biblical support for this figure is preserved in the citation of Deut 18:18–19 found in *4QTestimonia* (4Q175 1.5–8):[38]

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34 It should be noted that הִנְנִי is essentially an inflected form of הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי (Exod 23:20) or הִנֵּה אֲנִי.

35 See E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2d rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress; Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2001), 319–26, 333.

36 See Notley, "The Kingdom," 290–96.

37 See also 1QS 1.1–3.

38 A. P. Jassen has argued that both the 1QS text and 4Q175 are the first texts to present "the concept of the prophet as a precursor to the Messiah(s)," in *Mediating the Divine: Prophecy and Revelation in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Second Temple Judaism* (STJD 68; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 174.

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> נבי אקים לאהסה מקרב אחיהסה כמוכה ונתתי דברי בפיהו וידבר אליהסה את כול אשר אצונו. והיה האיש אשר לוא ישמע אל דברי אשר ידבר הנבי בשמי אנוכי אדרוש מעמו.
>
> I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable.

The role of the eschatological prophet envisioned by the Qumran Congregation and other Second Temple literature is frequently one of a legislator who will mediate divine law.[39] Therefore, it should not surprise us to find expectations for this prophet couched in Deuteronomic language. When facing a dilemma regarding stones from the Temple's altar that were defiled by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Judah the Hasmonean decided that they should not be removed until "there should come a prophet" (μέχρι τοῦ παραγενηθῆναι προφήτην) that would show the people what to do with them (1 Macc 4:42–46)—perhaps an allusion to Deut 34:10.

Later, the author of 1 Maccabees employed similar language to describe the selection of Simon as leader and high priest, "And the Jews and their priests decided that Simon should be their leader and high priest, forever, *until a faithful prophet should arise*" (ἕως τοῦ ἀναστῆναι προφήτην πιστόν, 1 Macc 14:41). Such language borrows images of a faithful (נֶאֱמָן, Num 12:7) and ideal prophet-like-Moses (וְלֹא־קָם נָבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה, Deut 34:10). It seems that a similar description, perhaps of Moses,[40] is gathered from disparate biblical passages in *1QFestival Prayers* (1Q34^{bis} f3 2.8), where the lawgiver is called a "faithful shepherd" (רועה נאמן = Exod 3:1; Num 12:7) and, if the reconstruction is correct, a "humble man" (איש עני = Num 12:3). Thus, the emphasis on the prophet's participation in legal matters, especially in Qumran literature, indicates that the eschatological prophet was envisioned to be a prophet-like-Moses.[41]

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39 Ibid., 175.

40 The reconstruction of מש]ה in col. 2, l. 8 was suggested to Notley by David Flusser in private conversation.

41 The Jewish expectation for a Deuteronomic "prophet-like-Moses" is witnessed elsewhere in the New Testament where we hear about "a prophet rising." At Nain, the people respond to the healing of the widow's son, "*A great prophet has arisen among us*" (ὅτι προφήτης μέγας ἠγέρθη ἐν ἡμῖν, Luke 7:16)! Furthermore, scholarship has recognized that the three answers to Jesus' question "Who do the crowds say that I am?," are in fact three variations on the same answer—"John the Baptist; but others say Elijah; and others, that *one of the old prophets has arisen*" (οἱ δὲ ἀποκριθέντες εἶπαν· Ἰωάννην τὸν βαπτιστήν, ἄλλοι

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The identity of the prophet of the End of Days is not limited to one like Moses. Malachi 3:23 identifies this prophet with Elijah,

הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי שֹׁלֵחַ לָכֶם אֵת אֵלִיָּה הַנָּבִיא לִפְנֵי בּוֹא יוֹם יְהוָה הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא

> Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.

The earliest post-biblical reference to Elijah in this role is heard in the *Wisdom of Ben Sira* 48:10:

ὁ καταγραφεὶς ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς εἰς καιροὺς
κοπάσαι ὀργὴν πρὸ θυμοῦ,
ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίαν πατρὸς πρὸς υἱὸν
καὶ καταστῆσαι φυλὰς Ιακωβ.

> You [Elijah] who are ready at the appointed time, it is written, to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury, to turn the heart of the father to the son and to restore the tribes of Jacob.

The close association of the two figures is clearly expressed in the joint appearance of Moses and Elijah in Mal 4:4–5:[42]

זִכְרוּ תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי אֹתוֹ בְחֹרֵב עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים׃
הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי שֹׁלֵחַ לָכֶם אֵת אֵלִיָּה הַנָּבִיא לִפְנֵי בּוֹא יוֹם יְהוָה הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא

> Remember the law of **Moses** My servant, my statutes and ordinances which I gave him in Horeb. Behold, I am going to send you **Elijah** the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes.

Typically, the Synoptic tradition draws upon the contemporary expectations for Elijah *redivivus*, "If you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come" (Matt 11:4). Yet, the further acclamation, "There has *arisen* no one

δὲ Ἠλίαν, ἄλλοι δὲ ὅτι προφήτης τις τῶν ἀρχαίων ἀνέστη, Luke 9:19, emphasis added)." Jesus speaks of his death in prophetic terms, "I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem" (Luke 13:33; cf. 4:24). Nonetheless, the Gospels never record that Jesus identified himself with the eschatological prophet. He consistently indicates that this role belongs to the Baptist.

42 Compare Luke 9:33 and par.; Rev 11:3–6.

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born of women[43] greater than John" (Matt 11:11; Luke 7:28), bears allusions to the Deuteronomic traditions concerning Moses: "And there has not *arisen* a prophet since, in Israel like Moses" (וְלֹא־קָם נָבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה, Deut 34:10).[44] Furthermore, the Markan description of the Galilean crowds shortly after the Baptist's execution, "they were like sheep without a shepherd" (Mark 6:34; cf. Matt 9:36), is drawn from Num 27:17. In the biblical passage Moses is concerned about who will lead the people after his death, and he asks the Lord to appoint someone so that the people will not be, "like sheep without a shepherd" (כַּצֹּאן אֲשֶׁר אֵין־לָהֶם רֹעֶה). The recent news of John's death in Mark (6:17–29) prior to our saying suggests that some in the crowd were John's followers.[45] The Evangelist's literary characterization of the Baptist reflects the opinion maintained by some regarding him; namely, that he was considered to be a prophet-like-Moses.[46]

The Synoptic tradition, therefore, presents both Jewish opinions regarding the contemporary expectations for the eschatological prophet. Jesus' midrashic testimony concerning John essentially melds Exod 23:30 and Mal 3:1 to fuse the wording and at the same time the opinions identified with those verses to affirm the Baptist's significance. Scholarship has generally overlooked the ingenious method by which Jesus communicates this blended identification, again employing *gezerah shavah*.[47] The language that pairs our passages together is the shared verbal cluster (הִנֵּה [הִנְנִי]; שִׁלַּח; מַלְאָךְ;[48] דֶּרֶךְ; לִפְנֵי). The dominical saying is, thus, not simply a conceptual allusion but a deft exegetical fusion of two passages from the Hebrew Scriptures that intimates the Baptist's prophetic significance. It betrays an accomplished familiarity with the Hebrew Bible[49]—beyond what is generally assumed to be that of the Evangelists themselves—as

43 Moses is referred to as "one born of a woman" in an early Jewish tradition. See L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (7 vols.; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1968), 3:112.

44 Notley, "The Kingdom," 288–89.

45 Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 351.

46 It should also come as no surprise that both Moses and Elijah appear during Jesus' transfiguration (Matt 17:1–8; Mark 9:2–8) to inform him of his "exodus" (Luke 9:28–36).

47 Notley, "Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method," 52.

48 The Samaritan Pentateuch reads מלאכי.

49 It is clear that Jesus' exegesis, when compared to rabbinic exegesis, derives from the Hebrew text. Apart from the abundance of studies that have convincingly argued for Hebrew continuing as a living language during the first century (see above), on every occasion it is assumed that the exegesis of the sages was based on the Hebrew text and not a text in translation. The same would be true of Jesus' exegesis, especially when one considers the detailed knowledge of the Hebrew Bible one would have to attain in order to pair together passages that share such precise language.

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well as an understanding of the sophisticated hermeneutical methods utilized by the Sages of Israel in late antiquity.

3 And You Shall Love . . . (Luke 10:25–37)

This pericope appears in each of the three Synoptic Gospels (Matt 22:34–40; Mark 12:28–34; Luke 10:25–28). Owing to the constraints on the scope of the present study, there are some important tangential questions, ranging from the differences in the Synoptic tradition to manuscript variants,[50] that we—like the priest and Levite—must pass by. Instead, we want to draw attention to two points that are particularly germane. The first concerns the place of our episode within the landscape of emerging Second Temple Judaism, while the second is specific to Luke's account: the citation of the biblical passages within the larger structure of his narrative. These two points are related, and when considered together can bring fruitful results.

The exchange between Jesus and the νομικὸς in Luke 10 serves as a window to developing socio-religious ideas that belonged to what Flusser called "a new sensitivity within Judaism."[51] These advances emerged in the wake of the tragic events of the Antiochan persecutions in the second century B.C.E. Differing from the earlier prophetic charge of God's judgment upon a sinful nation during the Assyrian and Babylonian assaults, the martyrs in the Hasmonean conflict were not accused of being unfaithful. On the contrary, they were executed because they refused to accede to Antiochus' demands that they transgress the divine commandments.

Difficult questions of theodicy were thrust upon the nation. In their hour of peril where was God to defend the righteous when they suffered for righteousness sake? Was he powerless to deliver them? Or was he himself somehow complicit in the injustices of their suffering? The cry of a generation is heard in the words of Taxo:

> See, my sons, behold the second punishment has befallen the people; cruel, impure going beyond all bounds of mercy—even exceeding the

50 W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (International Critical Commentary; 3 vols.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988–1997), 3:242; Fitzmyer, 880; K. J. Thomas, "Liturgical Citations in the Synoptics," *NTS* 22 (1975–76): 205–14.

51 D. Flusser, "A New Sensitivity in Judaism and the Christian Message," *HThR* 61 (1968): 107–27.

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> former one. For which nation or which province or which people, who have all done many crimes against the Lord, have suffered such evils as have covered us? (*T. Moses* 9:2–3)

Of course, the problem of evil is an old and intractable one, and we shall make no attempt at it here. Instead, our narrow interest is the creative approaches that emerged from this troubling time. Antigonus of Socho (175 B.C.E.) questioned the old, simplistic model of reward and punishment reflected in the Old Testament presentation, according to which service assumed just compensation—namely, that God only blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked: "Do not serve your master with thought of reward but serve him with no thought of reward. And let the fear of Heaven be upon you" (*m. 'Abot* 1.3).

The stark reality that the wicked continued to live their lives seemingly unpunished necessitated new solutions. Nickelsburg noted that it is just during this time that we find major developments concerning the notion of resurrection.[52] To wit, if just recompense could not be found in this world, it was certain to be found in the next. Moreover, rather than the easy, superficial conjecture that delay in divine judgment upon the wicked possibly indicated God's impotence or injustice, a deeper, more profound reflection concluded that the momentary escape of the wicked in fact demonstrated a sublime, undeserved divine mercy. The ripples from this new thinking were widespread. The theme of unmerited benevolence is even heard at the center of Jesus' parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matt 20:1–16) in which the landlord answers the complaints by some regarding his largesse, "Do you begrudge me my generosity?" In the new calculus of divine mercy, the last will be first and the first last.

Similar perceptions of divine mercy granted to the undeserving surface in rabbinic Judaism: "Greater is the day of rainfall, than the day of resurrection. For the latter benefits only the pious, whereas the former benefits the righteous and sinners alike" (*b. Ta'anit* 7a). The antiquity of Rabbi Abahu's sentiment is affirmed by Jesus' statement: "For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt 5:45). The relevance of these developments on our pericope is two-fold: first is the elevation of love over fear (of recompense), as the right impetus in the service of God. The charge to love God was exemplified by the biblical command found in Deut 6:5: וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדֶךָ. Equally important, the new emphasis upon divine mercy called for altruistic love on

52 G. W. E. *Nickelsburg, Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972).

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the part of those who bore God's image. Jesus' statement about rainfall and the unmeasured benevolence of the Creator was intended to be a model for the faithful, "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36; cf. Matt 5:48).

Expressions of altruistic love became the highest demonstration of Judaism in the Second Temple period. This second charge was likewise epitomized in a single passage from Lev 19:18: וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֲךָ כָּמוֹךָ אֲנִי יְהוָה. Rabbi Akiba deemed the verse to be "the great precept in the Law" (*y. Ned.* 9.4; *Gen. Rab.* 9.4), an estimation not distant from the question of the νομικὸς in Matt 22:36. James likewise calls it "the royal law" (Jas 2:8), and Paul asserted, "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' " (Gal 5:14; cf. Rom 13:9).

By the New Testament period there were already indications that the comparative pronoun כָּמוֹךָ should be understood to refer to the subject, that is, "You shall love your neighbor *who is like you*," rather than the predicate, "You shall love your neighbor *as you love yourself*":

> רבי חנינא סגן הכהנים אומר דבר שכל העולם כולו תלוי בו נאמר עליו מהר סיני אם שונא חבירך שמעשיו רעים כמעשיך אני ה׳ דיין להפרע מאותו האיש ואם אוהב את חבירך שמעשיו כשרים כמעשיך אני ה׳ נאמן ומרחם עליך[53]
>
> Rabbi Hanina, the Prefect of the Priests (1st c. C.E.), says: An oath from Mount Sinai has been sworn on this saying ("Love your neighbor as yourself") upon which the whole world depends: If you hate your fellow man *whose deeds are evil like yours*, I the Lord am judge to punish that same man and if you love your neighbor whose deeds are proper like you own, I the Lord am faithful and merciful towards you (*'Abot R. Nathan* Ver. B Chap. 26, empasis added).

This interpretation recognized universal human frailty, which necessitates divine mercy for all and precludes harsh judgment, a man against his neighbor: "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37). This intricate triangulation of God, the individual and his neighbor is closely identified with the teaching of Jesus, but in fact it advances upon the conclusions of the preceding generations. Already in Ben Sira (175 B.C.E.) we hear a similar triangulation:

53 Solomon Schechter, *Avoth de-Rabbi Nathan Solomon Schechter Edition with references to parallels in the two versions and to the addenda in the Schechter edition* (New York, Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary if America, 1997), 53.

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ἄφες ἀδίκημα τῷ πλησίον σου,
καὶ τότε δεηθέντος σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου λυθήσονται.
ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ συντηρεῖ ὀργήν,
καὶ παρὰ κυρίου ζητεῖ ἴασιν;
ἐπ᾽ ἄνθρωπον ὅμοιον αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔχει ἔλεος,
καὶ περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτοῦ δεῖται;

Forgive your neighbor the wrong he has done,
and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray.
Does anyone harbor anger against another,
and expect healing from the Lord?
If one has no mercy toward another *like himself*,
can he then seek pardon for his own sins? (Sir 28:2–4)

Likewise, the combination of Deut 6:5 and Lev 19:18 is not original with the New Testament.[54] It is heard in *Jub.* 20:2, 7; 36:4–8; *T. Iss.* 5:2; *T. Dan*. 5:3; Philo, *Spec. Laws* 2.63; *Sib. Or.* 8:480–82. The Jewish portion of the *Didache*, which comprised the treatise of the Two Ways, presents the Double Commandment together with the familiar variant of the Golden Rule: "The Way of Life is this: 'First, thou shalt love the God who made thee,' second, 'thy neighbor as thyself': and whatsoever thou wouldst not have done to thyself, do not thou to another" (*Did.* 1:2).[55]

In our consideration of the high ideals that are conveyed in the Double Commandment we should not overlook the mundane, individual literary components that make up the conceptual complex. The unifying thread for the exegetical combination of our two verses is not merely a conceptual interplay but a verbal analogy. Deuteronomy 6:5 and Lev 19:18 are two of the three occasions in the entirety of the Hebrew Scriptures in which a command begins וְאָהַבְתָּ.[56]

Recognition of the exegetical ingenuity inherent in the combination is important to appreciate fully the literary structure of the remainder of our pericope. We noted that the biblical citations are two of the three occasions in the Hebrew Scriptures in which a command begins וְאָהַבְתָּ. The third appears

54 S. Ruzer, "The Double Love Precept," in Notley, Turnage and Becker, eds., *Jesus' Last Week*, 81–106.

55 H. van de Sandt and D. Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (CRINT 3.5; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 156–58.

56 A fourth occasion occurs in Deut 11:11, but it is a verbatim repetition of the command to love "the Lord your God" heard in Deut 6:5.

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in Lev 19:34 regarding the foreigner: וְאָהַבְתָּ לוֹ כָּמוֹךָ. Is it possible that what we possess in the story of the merciful Samaritan, which was intended to answer the question "Who is my neighbor?," is a narrative midrash upon the remaining biblical command to love? It was intended to communicate to the νομικός that the obligation to love extends beyond one's community to include the stranger, even one whose community was at enmity with his own. It can hardly be a coincidence that the central character of the story belonged to a people who, according to the historical reports, were hostile towards the Jews of Roman Judea.[57]

What might be the objections to such a reading? To our knowledge no other Jewish sage exploited the triple commandment to love. Yet, as Flusser observed, "Jesus went further and broke the last fetters still restricting the ancient Jewish commandment to love one's neighbor."[58] His is the only voice among his contemporaries who challenged his hearers, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt 5:44). It seems apt that such a unique, breathtaking advance should be undergirded with a novel exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures. If so, once again we witness a report preserved by Luke that is both independent of his Synoptic counterparts and structured upon an ingenious exegesis of the Hebrew text that contributes to our understanding of Jesus' full engagement with emerging Jewish thought in his day.

4 The Cleansing of the Temple (Matthew 21:12–13; Mark 11:11–17; Luke 19:45–46)

The so-called "Cleansing of the Temple" pericope records yet another example of Jesus' exegetical genius. Luke's version (19:45–46) is the shortest version, depicting Jesus' entry into the Temple courts and his verbal assault upon the sellers with an elliptical quotation taken from Isaiah and Jeremiah. On the other hand, Matthew and Mark portray Jesus driving out those selling and buying, turning over the tables of the moneychangers, and the chairs of those selling doves. Mark is further distinguished in two important ways: (1) Jesus' attempt to stop other worshippers from entering the Temple courts, "And he did not

57 R. T. Anderson, "Samaritans," in *ABD*, 5:943.

58 Flusser, *Jesus* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2000), 88.

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permit that anyone carry a vessel through the Temple" (11:16), and (2) his more complete Isaianic quotation, adding "for all nations" (πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, 11:17).[59]

A thorough treatment of the Synoptic tradition in this pericope is beyond the scope of the present study, but some items are worthy of note. All four accounts (from Luke to Mark/Matthew[60] to John) exhibit an increasing escalation in tension and violence, which finds its culmination in John's description, "And he made a whip from ropes" (καὶ ποιήσας φραγέλλιον ἐκ σχοινίων, 2:15).[61]

However, the force of Jesus' message lies in his exegesis, not his physical handling of the merchants in the Temple.[62] The quotation from Isaiah, "My house will be a house of prayer" (56:7), and Jeremiah, "a den of robbers" (7:11), sent a forceful rebuke to the Temple authorities, who were responsible for and profited from these activities.[63] As is often the case in rabbinic citations, it is the immediate literary context of the biblical quotes (and not necessarily the words uttered/written) that in fact contain the message. Mark's expanded mention of "for all nations" diverts the reader's attention from the intended purpose of the citation.[64] Jesus' rebuke was not concerned with the nations at all, but with the sinful behavior of those entrusted with the sanctity of the Temple. As such, the words from Isa 56:7 were intended to direct the hearers to the opening exhortation from Isa 56:

59 Matthew and Luke's minor agreement, that is, the terse quotation of Isaiah and Jeremiah, bears striking similarities to the manner in which Scripture is quoted within rabbinic literature.

60 Matthew reflects elements from both Mark and Luke. Matthew's use of the aorist (ἐξέβαλεν), rather than Mark's aorist + infinitive (ἤρξατο ἐκβάλλειν), describes Jesus' action as a completed act (cf. D. Flusser and R. S. Notley, *The Sage from Galilee* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 132 n. 44). On the other hand, Matthew's scriptural quotation parallels Luke and not Mark's fuller quotation.

61 R. S. Notley, "Anti-Jewish Tendencies in the Synoptic Gospels," *Jerusalem Perspective* 51 (April–June 1996): 25–26, see also http://www.jerusalemperspective.com/2773

62 The Greek verb ἐκβάλλειν need not suggest violence. See H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *Greek–English Lexicon with a Revised Supplement* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 501.

63 *Pace* E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 66.

64 See, for example, V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (New York: St. Martin's, 1957), 463–64: "The quotation has an eschatological colouring; cf. συνάξω ἐπ᾽ αὐτὸν συναγωγήν in Isa lvi.8; also Psa. Sol. xvii.30f., where it is said that the expected Son of David will cleanse (καθαρεῖ) Jerusalem and nations will come from the ends of the earth to see his glory."

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> Thus says the Lord: "Keep justice, and do righteousness, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed."

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה שִׁמְרוּ מִשְׁפָּט וַעֲשׂוּ צְדָקָה כִּי־קִרוֹבָה יְשׁוּעָתִי לָבוֹא וְצִדְקָתִי לְהִגָּלוֹת

The first-century idiomatic reading[65] of לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה would have been understood as a call to care for the poor, the widow, the orphan, which is also heard in the context of Jeremiah's warning, "if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow" (Jer 7:6). Isaiah's call to righteous behavior with the promise of salvation stands like an antithetical mirror image to Jeremiah's stark warning of divine judgment, if the prophetic call is not heeded. In particular, Jeremiah's message was directed to the leaders of the Temple, if they continued to abuse their position and profit at the expense of the vulnerable (7:4–7).

Jeremiah's warning hearkened back to the episode at Shiloh (Jer 7:12) and the battle at Aphek reported in 1 Sam 4. As a result of that conflict, the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant (v. 11)—though the problems at Shiloh found their genesis in the sons of Eli the priest, Hophni and Phineas, themselves priests. Both of them are described as "wicked" (*lit.* sons of wickedness) and "ignorant of the Lord" (וּבְנֵי עֵלִי בְּנֵי בְלִיָּעַל לֹא יָדְעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה, 1 Sam 2:12; also see v. 34). With the loss of the Ark from Shiloh and the death of his sons, Eli also perished. The situation was poignantly underscored by the naming of Eli's newborn grandson, Ichabod, "without glory" (אִי־כָבוֹד; [Οὐαὶ βαρχαβωθ, LXX; from אִי בַר־כָּבוֹד]). The name signalled that the glory of God had departed from Israel (1 Sam 4:21). The inter-textual background to Jesus' message was intended to utilize both the religious and moral context of Jer 7, as well as Jeremiah's reference to the punishment upon the priests in the episode at Shiloh.

Frankovic advanced the notion that this is another example of *gezerah shavah*,[66] but the connectives in Jesus' exegesis are not readily apparent:

> Isa. 56:7:
>
> My house will be called a house of prayer.

בֵּיתִי בֵּית־תְּפִלָּה יִקָּרֵא

65 For the post-biblical sense of צְדָקָה, see R. Posner, "Charity," in *Encyclopedia Judaica* (eds. M. Berenbaum and F. Skolnik; 2d ed.; Detroit: Macmillan, 2007), 4:569–70.

66 Joseph Frankovic, "The Intertextual-Rhetorical Background to Luke 19:46," 9–10 (unpublished study).

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Jer 7:11:

This house has become a den of robbers.

הַמְעָרַת פָּרִצִים הָיָה הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה

As he observed, the noun בית may have played a role in Jesus' combination of texts.[67] If later rabbinic exegetical method is allowed, the inflected בֵּיתִי and הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה would have been a close enough parallel to connect the two verses.[68] Furthermore, the antithetical Temple themes in the prophetic passages could have provided the necessary link to connect these two passages.

Yet another closer linguistic correspondence may lie at the heart of Jesus' exegesis. It has long been noted by scholarship that the LXX text of Jeremiah differs at significant points from the Masoretic text known to us today. The prophetic work is one of the biblical books that appears to have two literary strata, that is to say, that the LXX and MT differ so greatly that the LXX is likely utilizing a different base text.[69] The discoveries of 4QJer^{b,d} have confirmed that the differences in the LXX's Jeremiah are, in fact, due to a variant Hebrew base text. While Jer 7:11 is not attested among the scrolls, the LXX, which deviates from the MT in one important place in our passage, seems to indicate that the translator was working with a slightly variant base text:

a den of thieves . . . *this* house . . .	. . . הַמְעָרַת פָּרִצִים . . . הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה . . . (MT)
. . . a den of thieves . . . *my* house	σπήλαιον λῃστῶν ὁ οἶκός μου . . . (LXX)

The rendering ὁ οἶκός μου (i.e. "my house") does not correspond to the MT's הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה (i.e. "this house"). Elsewhere the Greek rendering of הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה is ὁ οἶκος οὗτος (e.g. 1 Kgs 8:27). Nevertheless, given that the variant is not due to the issues of vocalization, orthography, or exegesis, the Hebrew base text used for the LXX's Jeremiah seems to have read בֵּיתִי, which corresponds to ὁ οἶκός μου and complements the wording in Isa 56:7.

67 Ibid., 9.

68 Frankovic (ibid., 9–10) cites the *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael* tractate *Neziqin* as just one example of this later form of *gezerah shavah*. Cf. *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael: Critical Edition on the Basis of Manuscripts and Early Editions with English Translation, Introduction, and Notes* (trans. and ed. J. Z. Lauterbach; 3 vols.; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1935), 3:3–4.

69 Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew*, 313–26.

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Therefore, Jesus' exegetical wit may have been based on the inflected בֵּיתִי that occurs in Isaiah and the Hebrew text behind the LXX of Jeremiah. It betrays a deft handling, perhaps even memorization, of Scripture.[70] While one must acknowledge the possibility that Jesus' quotation of both prophetic passages was initiated by the simple appearance of the term *house*, it is the closer connective בֵּיתִי, which better serves as a verbal linchpin and indicates the language in which the connection was made. Once again, the Gospels indicate that Jesus was at home in the Hebrew Bible and the exegetical method of his contemporaries. Drawing together these two disparate passages with a close verbal tie sent a poignant rebuke to the Temple authorities[71]

The meaning and target of Jesus' scriptural rebuke was not lost (Mark 11:18; Luke 19:47). It is this event that crystallized the lethal opposition by the Temple authorities. According to Luke, this is the first mention of their plot to do away with Jesus. Though some scholars have questioned whether the priests were the objects of Jesus' protest,[72] such a contention is strengthened by a similar rabbinic critique referring to the priests as both "buyers" and "sellers" in *Sifre*:[73]

> אמרו חנויות חנו שלש שנים קודם לארץ ישר׳ שהיו מוציאין פירותיהן מידי לוקח מעשרות שהיו דורשין לומ׳ עשר תעשר ואכלת ולא מוכר תבואת זרעך ולא לוקח
>
> The Sages said: The (produce) stores for the children of Hanan (i.e. Annas) were destroyed three years before the land of Israel, because they failed

70 Frankovic, "The Intertextual-Rhetorical Background to Luke 19:46," 10.

71 Such criticisms are not strange. Second Temple period literature reflects a similar sentiment against the Temple and the abuses of its authorities (e.g. Mal 1:6–14; *1 En.* 89:73–74; *T. Levi* 14:5–8; *Pss. Sol.* 2:1–3; 8:4–10; cf. G. Nickelsburg and M. Stone, *Faith and Piety in Early Judaism: Texts and Documents* [Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991]). It is well known that Qumran sectarians were hostile critics of the priests in Jerusalem. Moreover, the Mishnah records R. Simeon b. Gamaliel's anger against the inflated prices of doves, "Once in Jerusalem a pair of doves cost a golden *denar*. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel said: By this Temple! I will not suffer the night to pass by before they cost but a [silver] *denars*" (מַעֲשֶׂה שֶׁעָמְדוּ קִינִּים בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם בְּדִינַר זָהָב. אָמַ׳ ר׳ שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵ׳ הַמָּעוֹן הַזֶּה לֹא אָלִין הַלַּיְלָה עַד שֶׁיְּהוּא בְּדִינָרִים. *m. Ker.* 1.7). Evans speculates that R. Simeon believed that price of doves had been inflated by 20 times. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan likewise preserved criticisms against the first-century priests, referring to them as "thieves," "robbers of money," and "robbers of wealth." See Craig A. Evans, "Jesus' Action in the Temple," *CBQ* 51 (1993): 237–70; and R. Buth and B. Kvasnica, "Temple Authorities and Tithe-Evasion," in Notley, Turnage and Becker, eds., *Jesus' Last Week*, 53–80 (65–73).

72 Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 66–67.

73 See Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 364. The use of "buyers and sellers" by Matthew (21:12) and Mark (11:15) is based on an earlier hendiadys.

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> to set aside tithes from their produce, for they interpreted *you shall surely tithe . . . and you shall surely eat* (Deut 14:22–3), as excluding the seller (מוכר), and *the produce of your seed* (v. 22) as excluding the buyer (לוקח).[74]

Jesus' challenge was a biblically contextualized critique derived from a skillful merging of texts that was immediately understood by those learned in Scripture, namely the priests, of whom criticisms regarding their secrecy and financial misconduct have been preserved in the Talmud (*b. Pes.* 57a). It likewise indicates that Jesus assumed those present would be readily conversant in the Hebrew Scriptures in order to grasp his exegetical rhetoric. In light of their immediate response and subsequent actions, he was not mistaken.

5 Jesus and Caiaphas (Matthew 26:59–65; Mark 14:55–63; Luke 22:66–71)

Finally, the questioning of Jesus before the Temple leaders is a poignant example of the thrust and parry of scriptural exchange that undergirds this tragic narrative.[75] According to Matthew, the questions by Caiaphas stem from an accusation by two witnesses, "This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days" (Matt 26:61). Their testimony is likely a conflation of two separate statements. The first is drawn from Jesus' warning about Jerusalem's future.[76] The second expresses the Jewish expectations for the Messiah's role in the building of the Temple, which is already heard in Zech 6:12: "Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall grow up in his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord'." Use of the moniker, the Branch, is heard elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible to describe the hoped-for descendant of David, "In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring forth for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land" (Jer. 33:15; cf. 23:5). The Qumran scrolls preserve evidence that this title remained in use to express the hope for a royal Messiah called the Branch of David (e.g. 4Q161 f8 10:17; 4Q174 fi 2i:12; 11Q14 fii:13).

74 L. Finkelstein, *Sifre of Deuteronomy* (New York and Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1993), 165; See also R. Hammer, *Sifre: A Tannaitic Commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 152.

75 See M. Turnage's thorough treatment of this episode in "Jesus and Caiaphas: An Intertextual-Literary Evaluation," in Notley, Turnage and Becker, eds., *Jesus' Last Week*, 139–68.

76 See C. A. Evans, "Predictions of the Destruction of the Herodian Temple in the Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Scrolls, and Related Texts," *JSP* 10 (1992): 94

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Indeed, it was the expectations related to this second scriptural component that gave rise to the central question of the inquiry, "If you are the Christ, tell us" (Luke 22:67). Matthew and Mark present variations on this interrogation. Both follow the question whether Jesus thought himself to be "the Christ" with an appended epithet, Matthew's "the son of God" and Mark's "the son of the Blessed."[77] On the other hand, Matthew and Luke preserve a minor agreement with the identification of Jesus as "the son of God." The meaning of the epithet is to be found in the Lord's promise to the scion of David, "I will be his father and he will be my son" (2 Sam 7:14), and later echoed in the royal enthronement hymn of Ps 2:7: "You are my son; today I have become your father." These verses are repeated in various Christian *testimonia* (John 1:49; Heb 1:5; Rev 21:7).[78] Of added significance, in 4Q174 (the *Florilegium*) 2 Sam 7:14 is interpreted with Isa 11:1 (a verse which we have stated has particular relevance to the interrogation): "[I will be] his father and he shall be my son (2 Sam. 7:14). He is the Branch of David . . ." (4Q174 fi 2i:11).[79]

As we noted, Luke does include the title "son of God," but he structures the exchange differently. Rather than the conflated expressions that appear in his Synoptic counterparts, Luke reports that Jesus is first asked simply, "If you are the Christ, tell us" (Luke 22:67). In his response he advances, "But from now on the son of man shall be seated at the right hand of power"[80] (ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἔσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καθήμενος ἐκ δεξιῶν τῆς δυνάμεως, Luke 22:69). His answer to Caiaphas' question is an allusion to Ps 110:1: "An utterance of the Lord to my lord: Sit at my right hand . . ." (נְאֻם יְהוָה לַאדֹנִי שֵׁב לִימִינִי . . .). Jesus' mention of the "son of man" at the Lord's right hand may also suggest a reference to Ps 80:17 (MT 80:18): "But let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, the son of man whom thou hast made strong for thyself!"[81] His periphrastic reference to God by "Power" (δύναμις = גבורה) is likely drawn from Isa 9:6 (MT 9:5), where an anticipated son is called, "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God" (פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ אֵל גִּבּוֹר). A discovery among the Dead Sea Scrolls assists us now to understand how these lines were read in the first century. We hear in 1QH[a] 11:11 about the

77 For Mark's periphrastic title, see *m. Ber*. 7.3: רַ' יִשְׁמָעֵאל אוֹמֵר בָּרְכוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְבוֹרָךְ

78 See C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Substructure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1957), 28–60.

79 D. Flusser, "Two Notes on the Midrash on 2 Sam. VII," in *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* [hereafter: *JOC*] (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1988), 93–98.

80 The addition of τοῦ Θεοῦ is the Evangelist's attempt to clarify what is meant by τῆς δυνάμεως.

81 P. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša'* (CBQMS 10; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981), 136, n. 21; Flusser, "At the Right Hand of Power," in *JOC*, 304.

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anticipated birth of "a Wonderful Counselor with his Power" (פלא יועץ עם גבו־רתו), clearly an allusion to Isa 9:6 but with wording similar to Luke 22:69 and reading גבורה to be a hypostatic circumlocution for God.[82]

These biblical verses belong to a midrashic complex that describes the appointment of a human figure who will execute divine judgment. Flusser commented, "The one like a man who sits upon the throne of God's glory, the sublime eschatological judge, is the highest conception of the Redeemer ever developed by ancient Judaism."[83] In the context, Jesus' response is perhaps the clearest affirmation of his sublime self-awareness.

Nevertheless, our primary interest here is the use of the Hebrew Scriptures to underpin the rhetorical exchange between Jesus' answer and Caiaphas' second question. The high priest—a Sadducee—had little interest in a conversation about the judge of the End of Days. His concerns were more immediate, or if you will, political (cf. Luke 23:2). What were Jesus' earthly intentions? It appears that Caiaphas was familiar with the redemptive scriptural complex from which Jesus drew his answer. He may have also recognized Jesus' deft hint to Isa 9:6 with the elliptical mention of גִּבּוֹר. In any event, the chief priest's second question borrowed language from another passage which belonged to the same complex.

He pressed, "Are you the Son of God, then?," a biblical allusion to Ps 2:7, which is exegetically related to Ps 110 but possessing a stronger identification to the national hopes for a royal messiah. Flusser has already brought attention to the verbal link between Pss 110 and 2.[84] The term יַלְדֻתֶיךָ in Ps 110:3 is an identical *consonantal* correspondent to Ps 2:7 (יְלִדְתִּיךָ), and these are the only two places in the Hebrew Bible where the consonantal form appears. In addition, the consonantal *yod* would not normally be used for the end of the singular noun, whether with a *shva* or with a pausal form *segol*. The yod points to the first person verb. Later, the Masoretes attempted to demythologize Ps 110,[85] which was used by Christian for their claims about Jesus (e.g. Heb 6:20; 7:17; 1 Clem 36:2–3). Thus, the Masoretic tradition vocalizes the term to read nominally, "your childhood" (יַלְדֻתֶיךָ). However, both the LXX (γεγέννηκά σε) and the Vulgate (*genui te*) indicate that there existed pre-Masoretic circles who read

82 Flusser, "At the Right Hand of Power," in *JOC*, 303–304.

83 Flusser and Notley, *The Sage from Galilee*, 115.

84 D. Flusser, "Melchizedek and the Son of Man," in *JOC*, 192.

85 The human figure in Ps 110:5 (אדני) who sits at the Lord's right hand was clearly intended to be identical with אֲדֹנִי introduced in 110:1, but the Masoretes have vocalized the term to identify him with YHWH (אֲדֹנָי). By so doing they removed the role of a human figure in the execution of divine judgment.

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the term as a verb + suffix, "I have begotten you" (יְלִדְתִּיךָ), with the same sense as Ps 2:7.

The antiquity and Jewish provenance of this reading is attested by a Jewish legend. As is well known, some ancient interpreters identified the human redeemer in Ps 110:1 to be none other than Melchizedek himself, reading Ps 110:4, "You are a priest forever, according to my words, O Melchizedek!"[86] The identification of the human figure in Ps 110:1 to be Melchizedek combined with the reading of יְלִדְתִּיךָ in Ps 110:3 doubtless is the genesis for the Jewish legend concerning the miraculous conception of Melchizedek reported in 2 En 71–72.

So we witness once again that the method and meaning of Jesus' use of Scripture attests to his intimate familiarity with the contours of the Hebrew Bible. He was not alone. Those around him understood him well. These five pericopae have provided fresh light on the interpretive methodology of Jesus and his language of discourse. It is clear that his exegesis was not based on a Greek or Aramaic translation, but upon the Hebrew Bible. While such an assessment might be met with a jaundiced eye by those who claim Jesus knew only Aramaic (or Greek), it is important to repeat that our conclusion accords with what we know of Jesus' contemporaries. We have no record of any first-century Jewish sage—particularly among those who lived and taught in the land of Israel—whose exegesis is founded upon any version of the Bible other than the Hebrew Scriptures.

The exegetical style attested in these passages betrays a sophisticated knowledge of the Scriptures—on par with Israel's Sages. Equally important, their content is not divorced from the emerging world of Jewish thought during the Second Temple period—quite the contrary. The scriptural interpretation preserves evidence concerning both the expectations for a messianic forerunner in the figures of Moses and Elijah, as well as the developing ideas of Jewish humanism that surfaced in consequence of the national crisis in the second century B.C.E. The value of taking into account the original language of the discourse—Hebrew—can hardly be overstated in understanding the sense and purpose of the biblical allusions that undergird these ideas. Indeed, our aim throughout this modest study has been to demonstrate the importance of the Hebrew language and a thorough knowledge of the contours of emerging Jewish thought in order to grasp better both the method and meaning of Jesus' exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures.

86 Reading על־דברתי as MT עַל־דִּבְרָתִי and with a pronominal *yod*: "according to my word." This is certainly the understanding of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who, at 7:3, attributes an eternal priesthood to Melchizedek. Only in Ps 110 is the king of Salem associated with such an honor.

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