

## Part Two

# Analysis and Commentary

Part two is a discussion of the Hebrew Matthew contained in Shem-Tob's *Even Bohan*. It includes a summary of what can be known about the Hebrew/Aramaic Matthean tradition, referred to by Papias and other early Christian writers and alluded to or quoted by early Jewish and anti-Christian authors. It attempts to show that the Hebrew Matthew contained in the *Even Bohan*, or a Matthean tradition similar to it, was known and used by Jewish and Christian writers in the early medieval period. Finally, a literary, textual, and theological profile of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is presented.

# Shem-Tob's Matthew and the Hebrew/ Aramaic-Matthean Tradition

## Papias and Other Early Christian Writers

Papias (ca. 60–130 CE), bishop of Hierapolis, wrote that “Matthew collected the oracles in the Hebrew language, and each interpreted them as best he could” (Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραϊδί διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνετάξατο, ἡρμήνευσεν δ' αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δυνατὸς ἕκαστος).<sup>1</sup>

Since the time of Widmanstadt,<sup>2</sup> it has been commonplace to suppose that by “Hebrew” Papias meant “Aramaic.” This supposition is due *inter alia* to the long-standing belief that Hebrew in the days of Jesus was no longer used as the vernacular in Palestine, but had been replaced by Aramaic. From the end of the

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<sup>1</sup>Eusebius *H.E.* 3.39.16. The text and translation are taken from *The Ecclesiastical History*, 2 vols., ed. and trans. Kirsopp Lake and J. E. L. Oulton, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1926–1932) 1:296–97. Kürzinger's attempt to prove that Papias was speaking only of Matthew's style of writing, not the language in which he wrote, is not totally convincing. See Josef Kürzinger, “Das Papiaszeugnis und die Erstgestalt des Matthäusevangeliums,” *BZ* 4 (1960): 19–38; “Irenäus und sein Zeugnis zur Sprache des Matthäusevangeliums,” *NTS* 10 (1963): 108–15; “Die Aussage des Papias von Hierapolis zur literarischen Form des Markusevangeliums,” *BZ* 21 (1977): 245–64; “Papias von Hierapolis: Zu Titel und Art Seines Werkes,” *BZ* 23 (1979): 172–86; *Papias von Hierapolis und die Evangelien des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1983). Kürzinger's argument, based on the assumption that Papias was using ancient rhetorical terminology, may ascribe more erudition to Papias than he actually had. Eusebius described Papias as a man of “very little intelligence” (Eusebius *H.E.* 3.39.13). It is also possible that Papias was quoting the “Presbyter” in regard to Matthew as he did in regard to Mark. The rhetorical abilities of the Presbyter are totally unknown.

<sup>2</sup>Johann Albert Widmanstadt, *Liber Sacrosancti Evangelii de Jesu Christo Domino & Deo-Nostro . . . characteribus & lingua Syra, Jesu Christo vernacula, Divino ipsius ore consecrata & Joh. Evangelista Hebraica dicta, Scriptorio Prelo diligenter Expressa* (Wien: M. Cymberrmann, 1555). This reference was taken from Jean Carmignac, “Hebrew Translations of the Lord's Prayer: A Historical Survey,” in *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies. Essays in Honor of William Sanford LaSor*, ed. Gary A. Tuttle (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1978) 71n.5.

nineteenth century through the twentieth, an Aramaic background to the Gospel tradition has been investigated and supported, notably by Wellhausen, Dalman, Burney, Torrey, Montgomery, Burrows, Taylor, Black, Zimmermann, Fitzmyer, and others.<sup>3</sup>

Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, many of which are Hebrew compositions, and the discovery of other Hebrew documents from the Judean Desert, it is now confirmed that Hebrew was used as a written medium in first century Palestine. Hebrew, and even Greek,<sup>4</sup> were also spoken in first century Palestine. Whether Hebrew was spoken with the same widespread proficiency as Aramaic is debated.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Julius Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1905; 2d ed. used here, 1911). Gustaf Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*, trans. D. M. Kay (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902; I have had access to a 1909 ed.). C. F. Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1922); see also Burney, *The Poetry of Our Lord* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925). C. C. Torrey, "The Translations Made from the Original Aramaic Gospels," in *Studies in the History of Religions Presented to Crawford Howell Toy*, ed. D. G. Lyon and G. F. Moore (New York: Macmillan, 1912) 269-317; *The Composition and Date of the Acts* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1916); "Fact and Fancy in the Theories Concerning Acts," *AJT* 23 (1919): 61-86, 189-212; "The Aramaic Origin of the Gospel of John," *HTR* 16 (1923): 305-44; *The Four Gospels: A New Translation* (New York: Harper, 1933); *Our Translated Gospels: Some of the Evidence* (New York: Harper, 1936); "The Aramaic of the Gospels," *JBL* 61 (1942): 71-85; *Documents of the Primitive Church* (New York: Harper, 1941). James Montgomery, *The Origin of the Gospel according to St. John* (Philadelphia: Winston, 1923); "Torrey's Aramaic Gospels," *JBL* 53 (1934): 79-99. Millar Burrows, "The Original Language of the Gospel of John," *JBL* 49 (1930): 95-139; "Principles for Testing the Translation Hypothesis in the Gospels," *JBL* 53 (1934): 13-30. W. R. Taylor, "Aramaic Gospels—Source and Form Criticism," *ExpTim* 49 (1934-38): 55-59. Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 3d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967). Frank Zimmermann, *The Aramaic Origin of the Four Gospels* (New York: Ktav, 1979). Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1974); *A Wandering Aramean. Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1979); Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Daniel J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978).

<sup>4</sup>J. M. Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek?* (Leiden: Brill, 1968); George Howard and J. C. Shelton, "The Bar-Kokhba Letters and Palestinian Greek," *IEJ* 23 (1973): 101-2. With regard to the Greek background to the Gospels, Morton Smith remarked: "Therefore the movement was not from Aramaic to Greek, but both languages were represented in both the primitive and the secondary stages of the religious developments." See Morton Smith, "Aramaic Studies and the Study of the New Testament," *JBL* 26 (1958): 309.

<sup>5</sup>For a discussion see Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.," in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays*, 29-56. J. A. Lund, "The Language of Jesus," *Mishkan* 17-18 (1992-93): 139-55. Randall Buth, "Language Use in

These discoveries have resulted in an increase in the investigation into the Hebrew background to the gospel tradition. Those who have been engaged in the research include Birkeland, Grintz, Emerton, Carmignac, Lapide, Chomsky, Buth, Lund, and others.<sup>6</sup> In light of these investigations, it now may be concluded, with some finality, that there is no a priori reason to assume that Papias meant Aramaic by his reference to "Hebrew."

Whether Papias's "oracles" is a reference to the canonical Matthew or to some other document has been vigorously debated. Kümmel surveyed the issue and concluded that Papias meant the canonical Matthew. He also argued that Papias had never actually seen Matthew in a Semitic language and in fact was wrong about the whole matter. "We must concede," he wrote, "that the report that Mt was written by Matthew 'in the Hebrew language' is utterly false, however it may have arisen."<sup>7</sup>

Whatever the case, the early church writings, after the time of Papias, are replete with references to a Semitic (either Hebrew or Aramaic) Matthew. The following are examples:

Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1

Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundations of the Church.<sup>8</sup>

Origen quoted by Eusebius, *H.E.* 6.25.4

As having learnt by tradition concerning the four Gospels, which alone are unquestionable in the Church of God under heaven, that first was

the First Century. Spoken Hebrew in a Trilingual Society in the Time of Jesus," *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 5 (1992): 298-312.

<sup>6</sup>Harris Birkeland, *The Language of Jesus* (Oslo: I. Kommissjon Hos Jacob Dybwad, 1954). J. M. Grintz, "Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple," *JBL* 79 (1960) 32-47. J. A. Emerton, "Did Jesus Speak Hebrew?" *JTS* 12 (1961): 189-202; "The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew in the First Century A.D. and the Language of Jesus," *JTS* 24 (1973): 1-23. Jean Carmignac, "Studies in the Hebrew Background of the Synoptic Gospels," *ASTI* 7 (1970): 64-93. Pinchas Lapide, "Insights from Qumran into the Language of Jesus," *RevQ* 32 (1975): 483-501. W. Chomsky, "What Was the Jewish Vernacular During the Second Commonwealth?" *JQR* 42 (1951-52): 193-212. Buth, "Language Use in the First Century." Lund, "The Language of Jesus." See further James Barr, "Which Language Did Jesus Speak?—Some Remarks of a Semitist," *BJRL* 53 (1970): 9-29.

<sup>7</sup>W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, rev. ed., trans. Howard Clark Kee (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975) 49, 120-21.

<sup>8</sup>Translation taken from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (repr.: Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1985) 1:414.

written that according to Matthew, who was once a tax collector but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, who published it for those who from Judaism came to believe, composed as it was in the Hebrew language.<sup>9</sup>

Eusebius, H.E. 3.24.6

Matthew had first preached to Hebrews, and when he was on the point of going to others he transmitted in writing in his native language the Gospel according to himself, and thus supplied by writing the lack of his own presence to those from whom he was sent.<sup>10</sup>

Other writers refer either to Matthew or to an apocryphal gospel in Hebrew or Aramaic, which they identify or confuse with Matthew. Epiphanius (ca. 315–403 CE), bishop of Salamis, refers to a gospel used by the Ebionites (*Panarion* 30.13.1–30.22.4). Elsewhere he writes that the Ebionites use the Gospel of Matthew and call it “According to the Hebrews,” an appropriate name, he argues, because Matthew issued his gospel in Hebrew with Hebrew letters (Ἑβραϊστικὰ καὶ Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν, *Panarion* 30.3.7). He also refers to the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew, reporting that it is preserved in Hebrew letters (*Panarion* 29.9.4) and is “incomplete, corrupt, and mutilated” (*Panarion* 30.13.2).

Epiphanius cites directly from the Ebionite gospel seven times (*Panarion* 30.13.2–3, 30.13.4–5, 30.13.6, 30.13.7–8, 30.14.5, 30.16.5, 30.22.4). Recent studies show that these quotations are not from Matthew, but from a harmonized account of the canonical gospels, based on the Greek text of these gospels.<sup>11</sup> Why Epiphanius believed that Matthew was the author of this gospel or that it was originally issued in Hebrew is unclear.

Jerome makes reference to a Hebrew Matthew and to a Gospel according to the Hebrews, but is unclear whether these are to be considered one and the same document. In *Epist.* 20.5 he writes: “Finally, Matthew, who wrote the Gospel in the Hebrew language, put it in the following way: Osianna barrama, which means ossana in excelsis.” The reference is to Matt 21:9 and the language appears to be Hebrew. In *Epist.* 120.8, he writes: “But in the gospel which is written in Hebrew letters we read that not the curtain of the temple but the upper threshold of the temple, being of marvelous size, fell down.” The reference is to Matt 27:51. In *in Matth.* 12.13, he writes: “In the Gospel which the Nazoraeans and the Ebionites use which we translated recently from Hebrew to Greek and

<sup>9</sup>Translation from LCL edition, 2:75.

<sup>10</sup>Translation from the LCL edition, 1:251.

<sup>11</sup>See Daniel A. Bertrand, “L’Évangile des ébionites: une harmonie évangélique antérieure au Diatessaron,” *NTS* 26 (1980): 584–63; George Howard, “The Gospel of the Ebionites,” *ANRW* part 2. 25.5: 4034–53.

which is called the authentic text of Matthew by a good many, it is written that the man with the withered hand is a mason, praying for help with words of this kind: ‘I was a mason earning my living with my hands, I pray you, Jesus, to restore my health lest I must beg shamefully for my food.’” The canonical Matthew has no parallel to this. In *adv. Pelag.* 3.2, he writes: “In the Gospel according to the Hebrews which was written in the Chaldaic and Syriac language but with Hebrew letters, and is used up to the present day by the Nazoraeans, I mean that according to the Apostles, or, as many maintain, according to Matthew.” The quotation that follows has no parallel in the canonical Matthew. His reference here appears to be to an Aramaic document.

There are many similar references in early church literature, but for the most part, they are confusing. The early writers attest to an original Matthew written in a Semitic language, but they are unclear concerning the language, whether it is Hebrew or Aramaic. They are also unclear about the relationship of this gospel with our canonical Matthew, or its relationship with the Gospel according to the Hebrews, the Gospel of the Nazoraeans, the Gospel of the Ebionites, and the Gospel of the Apostles.<sup>12</sup> In fact, since only an infinitesimal amount of this

<sup>12</sup>For a discussion of these documents, see Edgar Hennecke, *The New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959) 1:118–65. In addition to the bibliography already cited above, see A. S. Barnes, “The Gospel according to the Hebrews,” *JTS* 6 (1905): 356–71; M.-É. Boismard, “Évangile des ébionites et problème synoptique (Mc. I, 2–6 ET Par.),” *RB* 73 (1966): 321–52; Oscar Cullmann, “Ebionitenevangelium,” *RGG*, 2:298; Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, trans. J. A. Baker (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1964) 55–64; Martin Dibelius, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur* (Berlin/Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1926); E. Fabbri, “El bautismo de Jesús en el Evangelio de los Hebreos y en de los Ebionitas,” *RevistT* 6 (1956): 36–55; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The Qumran Scrolls, The Ebionites, and Their Literature,” *TS* 16 (1955): 335–72 (repr. in Fitzmyer’s *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* [Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1974] 435–80); Rudolf Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium. Ein Beitrag zur geschichte und Kritik des hebräischen Matthäus* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1888); Adolf Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literature bis Eusebius*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1958) 205–209; Harris Hirschberg, “Simon Bariona and the Ebionites,” *JBL* 61 (1942) 171–91; M. R. James, ed., *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924) 8–10; A. F. J. Klijn, “The Question of the Rich Young Man in a Jewish-Christian Gospel,” *NovT* 8 (1966): 149–55; M. J. Lagrange, “L’Évangile selon les Hébreux,” *RB* 31 (1922): 161–81, 321–49; Adolf Hilgenfeld, *Evangeliorum secundum Hebraeos*, etc (Lipsiae: T. O. Weigel, 1866, 1884); Allan Menzies, “Gospel according to the Hebrews,” in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1904) 5:338–43; W. G. Most, “Gospel of the Ebionites,” in *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion*, ed. P. K. Meagher et al. (Washington DC: Corpus Publications, 1979) A-E:215; J. Munck, “Jewish Christianity in Post Apostolic Times,” *NTS* 6

gospel is quoted in direct form, very little can be made of it.

A comparison of the quotations from this (these) gospel(s) with the text of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew reveals little or no relationship between them.

### Du Tillet, Münster, and Allusions to and Quotations from Matthew in Early Jewish and Anti-Christian Writings

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is the earliest complete Hebrew text of the Gospel known. Though preserved in the fourteenth-century treatise *Even Bohan*, the evidence suggests that the Matthean text predates the fourteenth century. Jewish and anti-Christian writings prior to the fourteenth century often quote excerpts from Matthew in Hebrew, often in a Shem-Tob type Matthean form. Four of the most important of these writings are: (1) the Book of Nestor (dating perhaps between the sixth and ninth centuries);<sup>13</sup> (2) the *Milhamot HaShem* by Jacob ben Reuben (1170);<sup>14</sup> (3) *Sepher Joseph Hamekane* by Rabbi Joseph ben Nathan Official (thirteenth century);<sup>15</sup> and (4) the *Nizzahon Vetus* (latter part of the thirteenth

(1959–1960): 103–16; Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Utrecht-Antwerp: Spectrum, 1964) 1:113–14; A. Schmidtko, *Neue Fragmente zu den judenchristlichen Evangelien*, TU 37 (Leipzig, 1911); "Zum Hebräerevangelium," *ZNW* 35 (1936): 24–44; H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1949); *Jewish Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969); G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen*, TU 70 (1958) D:117–36; J. L. Teicher, "The Dead Sea Scrolls—Documents of the Jewish-Christian Sect of Ebionites," *JJS* 2 (1951): 67–99; H. Waitz, "Das Evangelium des Zwölf Apostel," *ZNW* 14 (1913): 48ff.; "Neue Untersuchungen über die sogenannten juden-christlichen Evangelien," *ZNW* 36 (1937): 60–81; L. St. Alban Wells, "Gospels (Apocrypha)," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings (New York: Scribner's, 1928) 5:347–48; B. F. Westcott, *An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1895) 471–73; Theodor von Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons* (Erlangen: A. Deichert, 1888–1892).

<sup>13</sup>This is according to Pinchas E. Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church*, trans. E. F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1984) 23. The text is printed in J. D. Eisenstein, *איצור וכוחים* (Israel, 1969) 310–15. The editor dates it in the ninth century (p. 310).

<sup>14</sup>Judah Rosenthal, *יעקב בן ראובן: מלחמה השם* (Israel, 1963) viii. See also Judah Rosenthal, *הרעם של הבשרה עליפי מדי ליעקב בן ראובן*, *Tarbiz* 32 (1962):48–66.

<sup>15</sup>Judah Rosenthal, *ספר יוסף המקנה* (Jerusalem, 1970) 17. Ms. Or. #53 of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Rome includes material closely related to the Paris manuscript of Sepher Joseph Hamekane and is cited here. See E. E. Urback, "Études sur la littérature polémique au moyen-âge," *REJ* C (1935): 49–77. Judah Rosenthal published the material on the gospels in Ms. Or. Rome # 53 in *בקררה יהודיה של הברית החדשה מן המאה ה"ב* in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography, History, and Literature in Honor of I. Edward Kiev*, ed.

century).<sup>16</sup>

Examples of unique textual links between the quotations from Matthew in these writings and Shem-Tob's text will be given below. But first, something needs to be said about the relationship between Shem-Tob's text and the Hebrew versions of Matthew published by Sebastian Münster and Jean du Tillet.

Münster's version appeared in 1537 under the title *תורה המשיח* (*The Torah of the Messiah*).<sup>17</sup> Published in a folio volume, it was dedicated to King Henry VIII of England. In the letter of dedication, Münster reported that he had received the Hebrew Matthew from the Jews in defective form with many lacunae and had, from necessity, restored what was lacking in the manuscript. His work today is of limited value because he failed to mark the passages he had restored.

Du Tillet's version of Matthew in Hebrew appeared in print in 1555. Accompanied by the Latin translation of Jean Mercier, it was published in Paris by the firm of Martin Le Jeune. The letter of dedication to the cardinal of Lorraine, Charles de Guise, explains that the basis for the text is a manuscript that du Tillet found among the Jews in Italy in 1553. The manuscript now resides in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris catalogued under Hebrew Mss. No. 132.<sup>18</sup>

As early as 1690, Richard Simon mistakenly identified Shem-Tob's Matthew with the versions of Münster and du Tillet.<sup>19</sup> This confusion has persisted since the time of Simon. In 1879, Adolf Herbst issued a new printing of du Tillet's text, accompanied by an introduction and variants from Münster's text in a volume entitled, *Des Schemtob ben Schaphrut hebraeische Übersetzung des Evangeliums Matthaei nach den Drucken des S. Münster und J. du Tillet-Mercier*.<sup>20</sup> The title reveals the author's belief that the texts of Münster and du Tillet are reproductions of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Herbst also argued that

Charles Berlin (New York: KTAV, 1971) 123–39.

<sup>16</sup>David Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1979) 33.

<sup>17</sup>Sebastian Münster, *Evangelium secundum Matthaeum in lingua Hebraica, cum versione latina atque succinctis annotationibus* (Basiliae, 1537).

<sup>18</sup>For more information on this version, including my assessment of it, see George Howard, "The Textual Nature of an Old Hebrew Version of Matthew," *JBL* 105 (1986): 49–63. For an English translation see Hugh J. Schonfield, *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1927). The text of this manuscript was republished several years ago by the Hebrew/Aramaic New Testament Research Institute in Hurst, Texas, under the title, *Bisorot Matti. The Good News according to Matthew from an Old Hebrew Manuscript*.

<sup>19</sup>Richard Simon, *Histoire Critique des Versions du Nouveau Testament* (Rotterdam: R. Leers, 1690) 231.

<sup>20</sup>Göttingen: Dieterichsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1879.

the source for the Hebrew version was the Latin Vulgate.<sup>21</sup> His conclusions were not drawn from his own research into the textual nature of the Hebrew, but from earlier scholars whom he cited at length. He excused himself from making an extensive study into the variants because of his lack of materials and opportunity for doing so.<sup>22</sup>

As late as 1967, Herbst's confusion of these texts was followed by Matthew Black who wrote in regard to du Tillet's version: "The author of the Hebrew Matthew was probably a certain Shem-Tob ben Shaprut, a famous Jewish polemical writer who flourished in Spain in the fourteenth century."<sup>23</sup>

The present edition of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew clearly shows that Shem-Tob's text is distinct from Münster and du Tillet. The independent nature of Shem-Tob's text was already proven in 1929 by Alexander Marx in his comparison of these texts in a few passages.<sup>24</sup> An extensive comparison of the texts will now support his previous conclusion. It will also reveal that despite their vast differences in vocabulary and style, some unique or almost unique readings are shared by Shem-Tob, du Tillet, and occasionally Münster. The following is a sampling of these readings:<sup>25</sup>

## Matthew 2:12

Greek	void
Shem-Tob	מהמלאך by the angel
du Tillet	המלאך the angel
Protev. Jacobi	ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγγέλου by the angel
Geo <sup>B</sup>	ab angelo

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>22</sup>"Die Quelle der Übersetzung ist, wie schon einige theologische Einleitungen bemerkt haben, die Vulgata. Es ist mir nicht möglich, mich auf eine genauere Durchforschung der Varianten einzulassen, welche die von mir edierte Übersetzung darbietet. Einmal nicht, weil mir die nöthigen Hilfsmittel oder doch die Musse und Gelegenheit sie aufzusuchen und zu benutzen fehlt, sodann nicht, weil eine erschöpfende Behandlung des Gegenstandes zu umfänglich werden würde. Ich beschränke mich daher auf einige wenige Bemerkungen, welche irgend welche Ansprüche nicht machen." Ibid., 16.

<sup>23</sup>Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967) 295. Cf. Robert L. Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark* (Jerusalem: Dugith Publishers, n.d.) 67, who identified S. Münster's edition as a version of "Ibn Shaprut's translation."

<sup>24</sup>Marx, "The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America," 270-73. Cf. Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church*, 55: "And yet with even the most superficial comparison of the two works the radical differences between their vocabulary, style, and diction would have demonstrated the impossibility of a common origin."

<sup>25</sup>For Münster, I have relied on the apparatus in Herbst's edition of du Tillet.

## Matthew 2:22

Greek	εἰς τὰ μέρη τῆς Γαλιλαίας into the region of Galilee
Shem-Tob	אל ארץ הגלגל unto the <i>land</i> of Gilgal
du Tillet	אל ארץ הגליל unto the <i>land</i> of Galilee
Münster	אל ארץ גליל unto the <i>land</i> of Galilee

## Matthew 3:11

Greek	αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρὶ he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire
Shem-Tob	והוא ישביל אהכם באש רוח הקדוש he will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit
du Tillet	והוא ישביל אהכם באש רוח הקדוש he will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit

## Matthew 6:16

Greek	ἀπέχουσιν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν they have received their reward
Shem-Tob	כבר קבלו שכרם they have <i>already</i> received their reward
du Tillet	כבר קבלו שכרם they have <i>already</i> received their reward

## Matthew 8:21

Greek	ἄτερος δὲ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ another of his disciples
Shem-Tob	ואחד מחלמידי one of his disciples
Münster/ du Tillet/Joseph/ Ms Or Rome #53	ואחד מחלמידי one of his disciples

## Matthew 9:2

Greek	θάρασει τέκνον courage child
Shem-Tob	קוחו בני courage my son
du Tillet/Münster	בני בטח בני trust my son

## Matthew 10:2-3

Greek	James and John . . . Philip and Bartholomew
Shem-Tob	Philip and Bartholomew . . . James and John
du Tillet/Münster	Philip and Bartholomew . . . James and John

## Matthew 10:5

Greek	καὶ εἰς πόλιν Σαμαρειτῶν μὴ εἰσέλθητε and do not enter into the city of the Samaritans
Shem-Tob	ובערי השמרונים אל תבואו and do not enter into the <i>cities</i> of the Samaritans

du Tillet/Münster ואל ערי השמרונים לא תבואו  
and do not enter into the *cities* of the Samaritans

Matthew 14:21

Greek οἱ δὲ ἐσθλοντες ἦσαν ἄνδρες ὡσεὶ πεντακισ-  
χίλιοι those who ate were about 5,000 men

Shem-Tob ויהי מספר האוכלים חמשת אלפים אנשים  
the *number* of those who ate was 5,000 men

du Tillet/Münster ומספר האוכלים היה חמשת אלפי איש  
the *number* of those who ate was 5,000 men

Such agreements can hardly be the result of coincidence. This list, which could be expanded to include many other readings, establishes a genetic textual link between Shem-Tob, du Tillet, and occasionally Münster. The situation suggests that du Tillet and Münster rest on the earlier literary Hebrew tradition reflected by Shem-Tob. But they have undergone extensive modification and revision away from the older base in two ways: (1) stylistic modification, and (2) substantive modification. Stylistic modification consists primarily of improvements in grammar and the substitution of synonymous words and phrases. Substantive modification consists primarily of revision that brings the Hebrew into closer harmony with the Greek and Latin texts.

These changes are best seen when they are placed in a chronological sequence, beginning with the Hebrew quotations from Matthew in early Jewish and anti-Christian writings, followed by Shem-Tob, then by du Tillet. When the texts are so aligned, a gradual evolution in the Hebrew tradition as a whole becomes clear, including both stylistic and substantive changes. Logic suggests that each successive stage in the sequence should produce a text that is stylistically smoother and closer to the Greek and Latin. Though generally true, the stages do not always arrange themselves quite so neatly. The following is a sampling of passages where these modifications can be seen.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Some clarification is needed at this point. Not every Hebrew quotation of Matthew found in medieval Jewish writings shows a relationship to the Shem-Tob Matthean tradition. In many instances, the quotations appear to be ad hoc translations of the Greek or Latin texts freshly prepared for the occasion. It is in fact the tendency to translate directly from the Greek or Latin that eventually contaminated the Shem-Tob Matthean tradition when it too was subjected to the influence of the canonical text through the process of revision.

### Textual Evolution in the Hebrew Tradition

Matthew 3:5

Greek (= Vg)	καὶ πᾶσα ἡ περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου and all the region of the Jordan
Joseph	וממלכות על הירדן and the kingdom by the Jordan
Ms Or	וכל הממלכות עד הירדן
Rome #53 <sup>27</sup>	and all the kingdom unto the Jordan
Nizzahon	וכל המלכות עד הירדן
Vetus #160	and all the kingdom unto the Jordan
Shem-Tob	ומכל המלכות סביבות הירדן and from all the kingdom around the Jordan
du Tillet	וכל מחוז הירדן and all the region of the Jordan

The textual link running throughout the Hebrew tradition (except for du Tillet) is the reading of "kingdom," הממלכות/ממלכות, in Joseph/Ms Or Rome # 53 and המלכות in Nizzahon Vetus/Shem-Tob. Modification toward the Greek and Latin appears in the reading of וכל or ומכל in Ms Or Rome #53, Nizzahon Vetus, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet, in agreement with πᾶσα. Shem-Tob further reads סביבות in agreement with περίχωρος. Du Tillet, abandoning the unique מלכות/ממלכות and reading the medieval מחוז (= περίχωρος), converges with the Greek and Latin.

Matthew 4:1

Greek (=Vg)	τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημον ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος πειρασθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil
Nestor ben Reuben	ישו היה בורח מן השטן אז נודג אל המדבר ברוח שטן להתנסות then he was led into the wilderness by the spirit of Satan to be tempted
Nizzahon Vetus #162	שהובא ישו במדבר וניסדו השטן Jesus was led into the wilderness that Satan might tempt him
Shem-Tob	אז לוקח ישו ברוח הקדוש למדבר להתנסות מהשטן then Jesus was taken by the Holy Spirit to the wilderness to be tempted by Satan

<sup>27</sup>See n. 17, above.

du Tillet אז הובא ישו במדבר יהודה על ידי רוח למען ינסה מהשטן  
then Jesus was led into the wilderness of Judah  
by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan

An element of continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the reading of "Satan" rather than "devil." This agrees with the parallel in Mark 1:13. Another possible element of continuity is the peculiar reading of בורח ("fleeing") in Nestor and the visually similar ברוח ("by the Spirit") in ben Reuben and Shem-Tob. The difference is a metathesis of letters. The change brings Shem-Tob into harmony with the Greek ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος.

Revision toward the Greek and Latin is further in evidence: אז in ben Reuben, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet corresponds to τότε. Each Hebrew text, except Nestor, has a correspondent for ἀνήχθη: גידג, לוקח, and הובא. With the exception of Nestor, the Hebrew tradition corresponds to πειρασθῆναι and εἰς τὴν ἔρημον by reading a form of נסה ("to tempt") and מדבר ("wilderness"). Revision occurs gradually. After Nestor, ben Reuben is farthest from the Greek and Latin, lacking "Jesus," and reading "by the spirit of Satan." Nizzahon Vetus is next in distance, lacking "by the Spirit" and reading the active form of "tempted." Shem-Tob and du Tillet are close to the Greek and Latin, although Shem-Tob reads "Holy" against the Greek, and du Tillet reads "Judah" against the Greek. Du Tillet is slightly closer to the canonical version by reading wilderness/Spirit in the same order as the Greek and Latin.

#### Matthew 5:17-18a

Greek (=Vg) μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφῆτας οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι. ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν  
Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For, truly, I say to you

b. Shabb. 116 אבא לא למיפחה מן אורייהא דמשה אחיה  
ולא לאוספו על אורייהא דמשה אחיה  
I am not come to take away from the Law of Moses  
and I am not come to add to the Law of Moses

Nestor אזני לא באחי לסתור ולא להחסיר דבר מתורת משה  
והנביאים כי אם באחי להשלים בדברי אמת  
I have not come to cancel or to subtract a word from the  
Law of Moses and the prophets but I have come to fulfil  
the words of truth

Ms Or אל חחשבו שבאחי לעקור התורה והנביאים לא באחי  
Rome #53 כ"א לקיים אמת. אני אומר לכם  
Do not think that I have come to abolish the law  
and the prophets;  
I have not come except to fulfil truth. I say to you  
Nizzahon לא באחי לחסור על תורה משה  
Vetus #157 I have not come to diminish the Law of Moses  
Nizzahon לא באחי לבטל תורה משה ודברי הנביאים אלא להשלים  
Vetus #71 I have not come to abolish the Law of Moses or the words  
of the prophets but to fulfil them  
Nizzahon שלא בא לעקור תורה משה ולא דברי הנביאים  
Vetus #221 I have not come to remove the Law of Moses  
or the words of the prophets  
Shem-Tob אל חחשבו שבאחי להפך תורה אלא להשלים באמת אני אומר לכם  
Do not think that I have come to annul the law but to fulfil  
it. Truly I say to you  
Shem-Tob (com- אין בכל אלו המאמרים להוסיף דבר על  
ment after 6:1) דברי תורה ולא להסר  
in all these words not to add a word to the words of the law  
nor to subtract any  
du Tillet אל חחשבו שבאחי לבטל את התורה או את הנביאים  
לא באחי לבטל אלא למלא אמן אני אומר לכם  
Do not think that I have come to abolish the law  
or the prophets;  
I have not come to abolish but to fulfil. Truly I say to you

The Aramaic statement in b. Shabb. 116<sup>b</sup> is among the few New Testament parallels found in the Babylonian Gemara.<sup>28</sup> It appears within an anecdote about a judge, perhaps a Jewish Christian, who quotes the gospel in his decisions. It is doubtful that the quotation is actually from Matt 5:17, since it is said to come at the end of the book. Herford suggested that the saying might come from a logia source in which various sayings of Jesus were collected.<sup>29</sup>

The saying is close enough to Matt 5:17 to suggest some connection to it. There are three major elements of continuity between the Aramaic and the Hebrew tradition. The first is the name Moses, which appears in the Gemara reading, Nestor, and Nizzahon Vetus, but lacking in Ms Or Rome #53, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet.

<sup>28</sup>For a discussion of these, see R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (Clifton NJ: Reference Book, 1966).

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 151.



The second is the Gemara reading of למיפוחו, “to take away,” and the readings of להחסיר in Nestor, לחסור in Nizzahon Vetus #157, and להסר in Shem-Tob’s comment, each having the same meaning.

The third is the similarity between the Gemara reading and the allusion to it in Shem-Tob’s comment after 6:1. The comment reads that Jesus’ intention was “not to add a word to the words of the law nor to subtract any.” This differs from Shem-Tob’s earlier text, and may reflect his original reading. It was common for scribes to revise citations of the biblical text in ancient documents without revising subsequent comments that repeat the quotation or allude to it.<sup>30</sup> Shem-Tob may originally have written this passage in its Gemara form (though with some variation to it; cf. the different order of words). If this is the case, the earlier reading in his biblical narrative represents a scribal alteration designed to bring the Hebrew into harmony with the Greek and Latin.

Further modification toward the Greek and Latin, evidenced by all the documents except the Gemara reading and Shem-Tob’s comment after 6:1, include: (1) “abolish” (לחסור, לעקור, לבטל, להפיר, להפיר) in agreement with καταλύσας, (2) “prophets” (mss A and D only in Shem-Tob) in agreement with προφήτας, (3) “fulfil” (למלא, להשלים, לקיים, להשלים) in agreement with πληρῶσαι. A final revisionary element is אמח in Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53, באמח in Shem-Tob’s revised text, and אמנן in du Tillet—all in some way corresponding to ἀμήν in 5:18.

Of the texts cited, du Tillet is closest to the Greek and Latin, representing the end of the revisionary process.

A significant difference exists between the Greek and Latin, on the one hand, and the Gemara and Shem-Tob’s comment, on the other. The canonical version contains a negative and a positive statement. Jesus came (1) *not to abolish* (2) *but to fulfil*. The Gemara and Shem-Tob’s comment contain a double negative. Jesus came (1) *neither to subtract* (2) *nor to add*. With the exception of Shem-Tob’s comment, the Hebrew tradition reflects an accommodation to the Greek and Latin, though Nestor’s “subtract” still makes contact with the Gemara reading.

<sup>30</sup>Examples may be found in mss UF and sometimes L of Philo. See Peter Katz, *Philo’s Bible. The Aberrant Text of Bible Quotations in Some Pilonic Writings and Its Place in the Textual History of the Greek Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950). George Howard, “The ‘Aberrant’ Text of Philo’s Quotations Reconsidered,” *HUCA* 44 (1973): 197-209.

## Matthew 5:39

Greek (not = Vg)	ἀλλ’ ὅστις σε ῥαπίζει εἰς τὴν δεξιάν σιαγόνα σου, στρέψον αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην But whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also
Nestor	אם יכך אדם בצד ימין דהר לו את שמאלך להכות בו If a man should strike you on the right side, permit him to strike your left
ben Reuben	אם יכך אדם על לחיך נשה לו האחרת If a man should strike you on your cheek, turn to him the other
Nizzahon Vetus #232	אם יכך יהודי בלחי נשה לו לחי האחרת If a Jew should strike you on the cheek, turn to him the other cheek
Shem-Tob	אבל המכה בלחיך הימין הכן לו השמאל But whoever strikes your right cheek, provide for him the left
du Tillet	אלא אם יהיה שיכך על הלחי הימנית חסה אליו האחרת But if there shall be one who strikes you on the right cheek turn to him the other

Continuity in the Hebrew tradition is seen in the readings: אם “if” (Nestor, ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, du Tillet), אדם “man” (Nestor, ben Reuben), and שמאל “left” (Nestor, Shem-Tob).

Elements of revision toward the canonical version are: לחי (“cheek”—ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, Shem-Tob, du Tillet) in agreement with σιαγόνα, נשה (“turn”—ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, du Tillet) in agreement with στρέψον, האחרת (“the other”—ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, du Tillet) in agreement with τὴν ἄλλην, אבל המכה (“but whoever [strikes]”—Shem-Tob) in agreement with ἀλλ’ ὅστις, and אלא (“but”—du Tillet) in agreement with ἀλλ’.

## Matthew 8:4

Greek (=Vg)	ὃ προσέταξεν Μωϋσῆς εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς which Moses commanded for a witness to them
Nestor	כאשר ציה ה' את משה as the LORD commanded Moses
Joseph	כאשר ציה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law
Ms Or Rome #53	כאשר צוה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law
Nizzahon Vetus #166	כאשר צוה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law

Shem-Tob	כאשר צוה משה בתורחכם as Moses commanded in your law
du Tillet	כאשר צוה משה להם לעדות as Moses commanded them for a witness

Continuity in the Hebrew tradition consists of: (1) כאשר “as” against ὅ “which” in the Greek; (2) “in his/your law (except for Nestor and du Tillet) instead of “for a witness to them.” Du Tillet’s להם לעדות is clearly a revision toward the Greek and Latin.

## Matthew 12:30, 32

Greek (=Vg)	<sup>30</sup> καὶ ὁ μὴ συνάγων μετ’ ἐμοῦ σκοπίζει . . . <sup>32</sup> καὶ ὅς ἐὰν εἴπη λόγον κατὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ <sup>30</sup> And he who does not gather with me scatters . . . <sup>32</sup> And whoever says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven
Nestor	... אשר קלל את האב והבן ורוח הקדש . . . המקלל את הבן והתחרס האב יכפר לו Who has cursed the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit . . . he who curses the Son and repents, the Father will make atonement for him
ben Reuben	<sup>30</sup> ומי שאינו מאסף עמי הוא מפזר <sup>32</sup> ומי שילעיג מהבן יכופר עליו <sup>30</sup> Whoever does not gather with me scatters <sup>32</sup> And whoever mocks the Son will be forgiven for it
Joseph (ט)	החוטא באב ובבן יש לו מחילה He who sins against the Father and the Son has forgiveness
Joseph (מא)	החוטא באב יחכפר לו וכן החוטא בבן He who sins against the Father will be forgiven; so also he who sins against the Son
Ms Or Rome #53	מי שחטא נגד האב יש לו כפרה אם ישוב בחשובה . . . מי שחטא נגד הבן יש לו מחילה Whoever sins against the Father has forgiveness if he repents. . . Whoever sins against the Son has forgiveness
Shem-Tob	<sup>30</sup> (מי) שלא יחבר עמי יכפור (בי) <sup>32</sup> ויכל האומר דבר נגד בן האדם ימחל לו <sup>30</sup> Whoever does not join with me denies me <sup>32</sup> And everyone who says a word against the Son of Man it will be forgiven him

Shem-Tob (comment after 12:37)	הנה האב והבן ימחלו לו אבל הרוח לא ימחל לו Behold the Father and the Son will forgive him but the Spirit will not forgive him
du Tillet	<sup>30</sup> ומי שלא יאסף עמי הוא יפזר <sup>32</sup> ויכל איש שיאמר דבר על בן אדם יסלח לו <sup>30</sup> And whoever does not gather with me scatters <sup>32</sup> And every man who says a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him
Gospel of Thomas 44	Whoever blasphemes against the Father will be forgiven, and whoever blasphemes against the Son will be forgiven. <sup>31</sup>

Verse 30 is lacking in Nestor, Joseph, and Ms Or Rome #53. Their reading of “Father” in verse 32, reflected by Shem-Tob’s comment, shows a continuity running throughout this part of the Hebrew tradition. The reading reflected by Shem-Tob’s comment is to be preferred to that in his text for the reason given above.<sup>32</sup> The antiquity of “Father” is suggested by its occurrence in the Coptic Gospel of Thomas.

Another element of continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the unique reading in Shem-Tob of יכפור “denies” and כפר “to make atonement/to forgive” in Nestor, ben Reuben, Joseph (מא) and Ms Or Rome #53. A word connection, or pun, based on the root כפר, may have formed the Hebrew tradition. A possible reconstruction of this tradition is:

He who does not join me denies (יכפור) me  
He who blasphemes the Father and the Son will be forgiven (יכופר).

A final element of continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the concept of “repentance” mentioned in Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53.

Revision toward the Greek and Latin is found in (1) the absence of “repentance” in all documents other than Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53, (2) the absence of “Father” in ben Reuben, Shem-Tob’s text, and du Tillet, and (3) the reading פזר (scatters) in ben Reuben and du Tillet. Again du Tillet is closest to the Greek and Latin.

<sup>31</sup>Translation by Thomas O. Lambdin in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, ed. James M. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) 123.

<sup>32</sup>See on Matt 5:17-18a above and n. 30.

## Matthew 13:57

Greek (=Vg)	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πα- τρίδι καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ A prophet is not without honor except in his homeland and in his own house
Mark 6:4	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πα- τρίδι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς συγγενεῦσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ A prophet is not without honor except in his own homeland and among his own kin and in his own house
Luke 4:24	οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ No prophet is acceptable in his own homeland
Nestor	דנביא אינו מחקלל כי אם במדינתו No prophet is cursed except in his own city/land
Nizzahon	אין נביא בלא כבוד אלא בעירו ובביתו
Vetus #167	No prophet is without honor except in his own city and in his own house
Nizzahon	לא יהיה נביא מבוזה ולא יחרף כי אם
Vetus #207	במדינתו ובקום שמכיריו אחרו A prophet is neither held in contempt nor abused save in his own city/land and in a place where he is recognized
Shem-Tob	אין נביא שאין לו כבוד כ"א בארצו ועירו וביתו No prophet is without honor except in his own land and in his own city and in his own house
du Tillet	אין נביא בלא כבוד אלא במקום מולדתו ובביתו No prophet is without honor except in the place of his homeland and in his own house
Thomas 31	No prophet is accepted in his own village; no physician heals those who know him

The synoptic gospels reflect a variegated tradition in regard to the locality of a prophet's dishonor: (1) Luke reads: "homeland"; (2) Matthew: "homeland and house"; (3) Mark: "homeland, kin, and house." There is some ambiguity in the word *πατρίς*, since it can mean either "homeland" or "hometown." Usually, however, the reference is broader than "town" and is best understood as "homeland." A similar ambiguity exists in Nestor's *במדינתו*, which can mean "in his land" or "in his city." This reading is preserved in Nizzahon Vetus #207 which, however, is only a rough paraphrase of our passage. Elsewhere the Nizzahon Vetus (#167) reads *בעירו*, clearly meaning "in his city." Shem-Tob reads *בארצו ועירו*, "in his land and in his city," a doublet, perhaps based on the ambiguity of *במדינתו*. Du Tillet returns to the concept of "homeland," reading

מולדתו. Thus, a connection runs throughout the Hebrew tradition, oscillating between "homeland," "city," and combinations of them.

One may argue that the earliest form of the tradition was the ambiguous *πατρίς* (homeland/hometown) or *מדינה* (land/city) which eventually gave rise to the doublet *בארצו ועירו* in Shem-Tob. This may not be the case, however, in view of the parallel in the Gospel of Thomas 31 which reads, "No prophet is accepted in his own village; no physician heals those who know him." The reading of "accepted" in Thomas clearly corresponds to Luke. We cannot know the original (Greek or Syriac) that stands in the background of Thomas in order to judge the specificity of the word "village." The next saying in Thomas, 32, however, reads: "Jesus said: A city (*πόλις*) that is built on a high mountain (and) fortified cannot fall nor can it remain hidden." A catchword connection appears to exist between the two sayings in Thomas based on the idea "village/city." This catchword connection, then, suggests that a very early form of the logion read "city" rather than "homeland."

The above examples show that a Shem-Tob type Matthean text goes back at least to the ninth century (Nestor) and, in one instance, to the fifth (Gemara), being reflected sporadically by early Jewish and antichristian writings.

They also show that Shem-Tob's Hebrew text belongs to a stage in the process of textual evolution that began in early times and culminated in du Tillet in the sixteenth century, or possibly later if our survey should include subsequent Hebrew texts of Matthew. Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, therefore, should not be viewed as a creation of the fourteenth century. It preserves an already existing Hebrew tradition that had been in the process of evolution for an unknown period of time.

## The Evidence from Shem-Tob's Comments

Shem-Tob's comments, scattered throughout the Hebrew text, confirm that this text is not a creation of the fourteenth century. The comments preserve telltale remarks implying that Shem-Tob had before him a preexisting Hebrew Matthew.

1. The comment following Matt 5:31-42 reads: "It appears here that he makes a new saying. But it is not [new], because the Torah not Terah (*הזרה לא*) [permits one] to leave a woman. But (only) because he has found in her a shameful thing."

Shem-Tob's off-the-cuff remark, *Torah not Terah*, implies that the Hebrew manuscript before him contained a misspelling for Torah, employing Yodh instead of Waw. The similarity of Yodh and Waw often led to such scribal mistakes. Shem-Tob no doubt had seen such errors before and, on occasion,

committed them himself. This time, however, he certainly was not the cause of the error. Otherwise, he would have been in the position of creating the problem and then criticizing the Christian world for the mistake. The manuscript before him was clearly the work of an earlier scribe.

2. The comment after Matt 2:1-12 reads: “[This is] a mistake because it is not thus in our books. Nor is it in Jerome’s version.” The text in question is the unique reading, “You Bethlehem Judah, Ephrathah (ואתה בית לחם יהודה אפרתה).” It varies from the Greek (καὶ σὺ Βηθλέεμ γῆ Ἰούδα), the Latin Vulgate (*Et tu Bethlehem terra Iuda*), and all other Christian witnesses. It also disagrees with the Masoretic Text of Micah 5:1: “You Bethlehem, Ephrathah (ואתה בית לחם אפרתה).”

The comment implies that Shem-Tob did not create this text by translating from the Latin Vulgate, and that he had before him an already existing Hebrew Matthew containing this unique reading. Otherwise, he would have placed himself in the position of creating the reading simply to criticize its incorrectness.

3. The comment after Matt 11:15 reads: “Jesus testified here concerning him [John] that none had arisen among all those born of women like him. If this is the case, he [John] was greater than Jesus, because he also was born of a woman.” The comment reflects the unique Hebrew reading of Matt 11:11, which lacks the qualifying remark concerning John the Baptist: “Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” The Hebrew differs from the Greek, Latin, and all other Matthean witnesses.<sup>33</sup> Shem-Tob’s comment implies that he was using an already existing Hebrew text, which lacked the qualifying words. If he had been translating the Vulgate or the Greek, he would have included them and his comment would have been superfluous.

4. The comment after Matt 21:1-9 (a quotation from Zech 9:9) criticizes the text for its use of אָתוֹן, “ass,” rather than חֲמֹר, “ass,” found in the Masoretic Text. If Shem-Tob were responsible for the wording of the Hebrew Matthew, he could have used חֲמֹר. It corresponds to the Greek ὄνον as well as אָתוֹן. The implication again is that he did not create this Hebrew Matthew, but used an already existing copy of Matthew, employing the word אָתוֹן. Otherwise, Shem-Tob would have placed himself in the position of rendering the text by a word he did not like or think appropriate and then criticizing it for not agreeing with the Masoretic Text.

5. The comment after Matt 1:18-25 (a quotation from Isa 7:14) criticizes the Hebrew tenses in 1:23. The verse reads: “Behold the young woman *is conceiving* (הרה) and *will bear* (תלד) a son.” Shem-Tob comments: “It is not in Scripture, ‘she is conceiving and will bear a son,’ expressing the future tense, but, ‘she is conceiving and is bearing (יולדת) a son,’ expressing the present tense.” The

<sup>33</sup>The short form of the text appears in mss 5, 475\*, and 1080\* of the Lukan version of Q (Luke 7:28) and in the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* 1.60.1-3. See below.

imperfect תלד, instead of the Masoretic participle יולדת caused Shem-Tob the problem.

The verbs, (ἐν γαστρὶ) ἔξει “will conceive” and τέξεται “will bear”, are both future forms. If, Shem-Tob had been the translator and had rendered the first Greek future with a present participle (הרה), there is no reason why he could not have rendered the second future with a present participle (יולדת). The fact that he criticizes the tenses, strongly suggests that the translation is not his.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the above discussion.

(1) Shem-Tob’s Hebrew Matthew is not the same as the Hebrew Matthean texts in Münster and du Tillet. There are textual links between these writings which suggest that the latter two evolved from a text base similar to Shem-Tob.

(2) Shem-Tob did not prepare a Hebrew translation of Matthew, rendering the Latin Vulgate or any known copy of the Greek text, for his *Even Bohan*. When compared to the Hebrew and Aramaic quotations of and allusions to Matthew from earlier Jewish and anti-Christian writings, it appears that Shem-Tob’s text preserves an earlier Hebrew literary tradition. Shem-Tob’s comments, scattered throughout his Matthean text, also suggest that he made use of an already existing Hebrew Matthew. The following profile of Shem-Tob’s Matthew will confirm this judgment.

# Shem Tob's Hebrew Matthew: A Literary, Textual, and Theological Profile

In this section,<sup>1</sup> I will present a literary, textual, and theological profile of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. The discussion will include: (1) linguistic characteristics of the Hebrew text, (2) revisions and modifications of the Hebrew text, (3) literary characteristics of the Hebrew text, (4) textual nature of Shem-Tob's Matthew, (5) theological tendencies in Shem-Tob's Matthew, (6) different meanings in Shem-Tob's Matthew, (7) the Divine Name in Shem-Tob's Matthew, and (8) other interesting readings.

## Linguistic Characteristics of the Hebrew Text

It is difficult to assess the language of the text of Matthew in Shem-Tob since it is a Christian writing preserved in a Jewish polemical treatise. The question is, would a Jewish polemist of the fourteenth century translate a Christian

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<sup>1</sup>The article by Pinchas E. Lapide ("Der 'Prüfstein' aus Spanien," *Sefarad* 34 [1974]: 227-72) should be consulted. It is a detailed analysis of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Of particular importance is the discussion (246-49) of "Romanismen" that reflect late revisions. Lapide believes the Hebrew Matthew is a translation of the Latin Vulgate, perhaps partly because he used the Neofiti ms which shows considerable assimilation to the Vulgate in places where other mss do not. (See e.g. 2:1 Vg Magi, Neofiti מאגס Brit Lib ms BCDEFGH void [all reading simply בחזים בכוכבים]; 3:9 Vg filios Abrahæ, Neofiti בנים לאברהם, Brit Lib ms ABCDEFG; 4:21 Vg Zebedæus, Neofiti זבדיאש D, זבדיאש BC, זבדיא EF, זבדיא BC; 6:28 Vg lilia agri, Neofiti ליריו, Brit Lib ms גילין BC, גילין DG; 15:2 Vg traditionem seniorum, Neofiti דראשונים, Brit Lib ms חקנה AH, דראשונה AH; 16:18 Vg tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo, Neofiti אבנה אבן ואני, אבנה אבן ועל זאח האבן אבנה, Brit Lib ms CDEFG; 24:47 Vg super omnia bona sua, Neofiti על שבו, D, שעל שפיו.) Lapide himself notes many differences between Shem-Tob and the Vulgate. The article fails to note Shem-Tob's relationship to the Old Syriac and the Diatessaron against the Latin tradition, his relationship to the Old Latin against the Vulgate (see below), and his relationship to the Coptic Gospel of Thomas and other early textual forms. It fails to note most of the puns, word connections, and alliterations characteristic of Shem-Tob's Matthew. It has no discussion of the abbreviation/circumlocution for the divine name. In spite of these difficulties, Lapide's study can be read with profit.

document from Greek or Latin and render it into standard biblical Hebrew (BH) with a mixture of Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) and even late medieval vocabulary? If it were a matter of an original Jewish composition in the late Middle Ages, one would expect BH or even archaic BH to play a dominant role, as is the case with most texts written during this time.<sup>2</sup>

But, Shem-Tob's Matthew is a Christian text in Hebrew, appearing in a Jewish polemical treatise designed specifically to point out its errors and the general fallacies of Christianity. Yet the linguistic nature of the gospel text is basically BH with a healthy mixture of MH and later rabbinic vocabulary and idiom.

This situation is analogous to the Masada fragments of Ben Sira<sup>3</sup> when compared to the late fragments of the same document from the Cairo Geniza.<sup>4</sup> Kutscher explains that the original Ben Sira was written primarily in BH without escaping, however, the influence of MH, an occasional parallel to the Dead Sea Scrolls, and contemporary Aramaic. The medieval fragments from the Cairo Geniza, in addition to this, show numerous changes due to the corrections of medieval scribes designed to bring the text into a more contemporary form in regard to spelling, vocabulary, and other linguistic phenomena.<sup>5</sup>

The Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob is similar. It has already been demonstrated that readings from this text predate the fourteenth century, in some instances going back to early times. Assuming that the basic text of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is old, we have what one might expect, a writing composed primarily in BH with a mixture of MH elements, but which has undergone scribal modification designed to bring it more into harmony with later linguistic forms. In addition, the text reflects considerable revision designed to make it conform more closely to the standard Greek and Latin texts of the Gospel during the Middle Ages.

Shem-Tob's Matthew, as printed above, does not preserve the original in a pure form. It reflects contamination by Jewish scribes during the Middle Ages. Considerable parts of the original, however, appear to remain, including its unpolished style, ungrammatical constructions, and Aramaized forms. Some of these elements will be demonstrated in the following discussion.

<sup>2</sup>See E. Y. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Leiden: Brill, 1982) 88.

<sup>3</sup>See Y. Yadin, *The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1965).

<sup>4</sup>These were published in Israel Lévi, *The Hebrew Text of the Book of Ecclesiasticus* (Leiden: Brill, 1904). See also A. A. di Lella, *The Hebrew Text of Sirach* (The Hague, 1966).

<sup>5</sup>Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 87-93. See also the cautious remarks of Isaac Rabinowitz, "The Qumran Hebrew Original of Ben Sira's Concluding Acrostic on Wisdom," *HUCA* 42 (1971): 173-74.

### The Verb

In regard to the verb, Shem-Tob's text employs a mixture of BH and MH forms. A pronounced difference in BH and MH is the virtual disappearance of the consecutive tenses in MH.<sup>6</sup> In Shem-Tob, the consecutive tense system predominates, with a sprinkling of MH forms. The following is a sampling of both forms in Shem-Tob.

#### 1. Consecutive Tense

- 1:24 ויקץ יוסף . . . ויפש  
 2:4 ויקברץ כל גדיליו ויבקש  
 3:15 יען יש ויאמר  
 4:18 וילך יש . . . וירא  
 8:16 ויהי לעת הערב ויבאו  
 14:12 ויבאו תלמידי יוחנן וישאו  
 19:5 יעזוב איש . . . ודבק באשתו  
 20:24 וישמעו העשרה ויחר בעיניהם

#### 2. Non-Consecutive Tense

- 1:21 וחלד בן חקרא שמו ישוע  
 14:35 שלחו בכל אותו המלכות והביאו לו  
 15:36 ולקח השבעה ככרות וישברם ונתנם  
 15:39 נכנס ישו בספינה ובא לארץ  
 24:7 ויקום גוי על גוי . . . ויהיו מהומות רבות  
 25:17 הלך קנה ומכר והרויח חמשה אחרים

Another difference between BH and MH is that BH uses the infinitive with the prepositions ב and כ where MH uses the finite verb with כש. The latter corresponds to כאשר in BH.<sup>7</sup> All forms appear in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew: (1) infinitive plus preposition: 1:20 ובחשבו, 6:6 בדתפללך, 14:30 ובראותו, 15:29 בעומדו, 17:14 בבוא; (2) כש— 14:14 וכשיצאו, 14:19 וכשישבו; (3) כאשר 2:10 ויהי כאשר ראו, 6:2 וכאשר ראוהו תלמידיו, 14:26 כאשר חעשו צדקה.

The infinitive absolute is not used in MH<sup>8</sup>. It may occur in Shem-Tob at 22:24, though the form here is possibly an imperative.

The infinitive construct plus לא, used for prohibition, appears at 23:23: לא תלשכו אותם. It occurs in late BH and the Dead Sea Scrolls, but rarely in standard

<sup>6</sup>M. H. Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927, 1958) 72. Cf. E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (IQIsa<sup>a</sup>)* (Leiden: Brill, 1974) 41-42.

<sup>7</sup>Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 165.

<sup>8</sup>Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 41.

BH. Kutscher says it "is all the more interesting since it crops up in the languages spoken in Jerusalem at the time, as we see from Aramaic and Greek inscriptions of Jerusalem (and also in Punic, that is, late Canaanite of North Africa)."<sup>9</sup>

Shem-Tob's text frequently uses the periphrastic construction of הִיָּה + the participle to express continuous or habitual action. This form occurs occasionally in BH<sup>10</sup>. Qimron calls it a Mishnaic and Aramaic construction and reports that it occurs about fifty times in the DSS, primarily in the Temple Scroll.<sup>11</sup> The following is a sampling of the construction in Shem-Tob:

Perfect of הִיָּה + the participle:

3:10 הָיוּ חוֹשְׁבִים

7:28 הָיָה מְדַבֵּר

13:34 הָיָה דוֹבֵר

22:11 הָיָה מְלוֹבֵשׁ

27:30 הָיוּ לֹקְחִים

Imperfect of הִיָּה + the participle:

6:10 יִהְיֶה עֹשֶׂי

12:37 תִּהְיֶה נֹשֵׂפֵט

18:18 מִוֹתֵר יִהְיֶה

24:34 יִהְיוּ עֹשִׂים

Infinitive of הִיָּה + the participle:

14:19 וּבְהִיָּוֹתוֹ מְבִישׁ

23:8 לְהִיָּוֹתוֹ נִקְרָאִים

Pronouns

For the first person singular אֲנִי is dominant in MH while both אֲנִי and אֲנִכִּי are found in BH.<sup>12</sup> The form אֲנִי is dominant in Shem-Tob with אֲנִכִּי occurring in 18:20. MH always uses the plural אֲנִי, while BH uses אֲנִי (except for the k'tib at Jer 42:6.)<sup>13</sup> The short form is used most in Shem-Tob, אֲנִי appearing only occasionally (see 6:12). Of the two forms, דָּם and דְּמָה, the latter is found only in

<sup>9</sup>Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 99.

<sup>10</sup>E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley, eds., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957) 116r; Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. by T. Muraoka (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1991) 410-12. See also Mark F. Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition. The Language of the Book of Ezekiel*, JSOTSup 90 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 108-10.

<sup>11</sup>Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986) 400.01. See also Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 324-28.

<sup>12</sup>Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 39.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 39-40.

biblical quotations in MH.<sup>14</sup> Both occur in Shem-Tob: (1) דְּמָה: 2:13, 5:8, 11:7; (2) דָּם: 13:13, 38, 39, 23:23.

The plural demonstrative pronoun אֵלֶּה, standard for BH, becomes אֵלֵּי in MH. Both forms occur in Shem-Tob: (1) אֵלֶּה: 10:2, 5, 15:20, 24:8; (2) אֵלֵּי: 7:24, 28, 23:23.

The possessive is regularly expressed in MH by the combination of שׁ and the preposition ל. In older texts, שׁ is attached to the noun it governs. Later it exists as a separate particle.<sup>15</sup> Though rare, שׁ occurs in Shem-Tob at 10:20, 12:39, 26:17, and 27:15. (Cf. שׁלֵשׁ 12:27, שׁלֵךְ 25:25, שׁלֵי 25:27, and שׁלֵקֶץ 27:63.)

Vocabulary

The vocabulary in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew<sup>16</sup> comes from various historical levels of the language including BH, MH, and later rabbinic Hebrew.

- (1) Typical words occurring in BH and Shem-Tob but not in MH
- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| אֲוֵלִי  | 11:23, 27:64  |
| אֲוֵ     | 9:1, 6, 14, 37, 10:1, 11:20, 12:13, 14, 22, 44, 45, 13:36, 43 |
| רֶקַע    | 9:6, 10:28, 11:30   |
| אֲמִנָּם | 25:21, 26:56  |
| אֲכַן    | 8:17, 10:22   |
| בְּעֵד   | 2:8, 5:11, 6:2, 6, 10:18, 11:10                               |
| לְמַעַן  | 5:45  |
| פֶּן     | 6:1, 8:4, 25, 9:16, 30, 13:15, 29                             |
| אֲשֶׁר   | 8:27, 9:36, 10:4, 11:4, 12:18                                 |
| כִּי     | 9:2, 13, 11:18, 26, 12:41                                     |
| גַּם     | 8:29  |
- (2) Typical words occurring in MH and Shem-Tob but not in BH
- |           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| מִיד      | 21:41        |
| כְּחִיב   | 22:44        |
| מוֹכֵן    | 22:8, 25:33  |
| רֵבֵן     | 23:7         |
| זְרוּב    | 18:24        |
| מְקָר     | 12:10, 19:3  |
| מַעוֹשׁ   | 14:31, 17:20 |
| כְּרִיחָה | 19:7         |
| זֶן       | 13:25        |

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 40.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 43-44.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, 46-57.

חרדל	13:31
ממון	13:44
נים	17:3
בשביל	17:13

## (3) Typical words occurring only in later rabbinic writings and Shem-Tob

מאסר	4:12
חמידיה	6:11
טבעי	15:17, 16:9-12
הנהגה	(=behavior) 16:9-12
שתי וערב	(=cross) 16:24
עולמיה	18:18, 25:41
שום דבר	21:3, 24:17, 27:12
סוף דבר	21:37
תנפן	22:18
רשום	( = impression) 22:20

## Other Constructions

In some instances, Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew contains constructions that do not correspond to the usual grammar of the language.

One example is the participle followed by its subject. Occasionally, the writer expresses "I say" by אומר אני, 12:36, 17:12, 18:10, 19:9, 26:21, 29. Similar constructions are: עושה יוחנן "John is doing" 14:2, וכיוצא רוח "when the spirit goes out" 12:43, אוכלים הכלבים "the dogs eat" 15:27, אומרים אלו "these are saying" 21:16, שקוצר אני "I reap" 25:26.

Sometimes, a predicate adjective is used as though it were a demonstrative. Thus: הדרור הזה = "this generation" 12:41, 24:34. One would expect זה הדרור. Similar expressions are: וזה המשפט "and this judge" 5:25, וזה החדה "this riddle" 15:15, שזה השקרן "this liar" 27:63.

## Revision and Modification of the Hebrew Text

Instances of revision occur in Shem-Tob's text. A comparison of the manuscript tradition shows that many revisions were designed to bring the Hebrew into harmony with the Greek and Latin texts of the Middle Ages. Thus: 12:39 [ינה] + א = Greek and Vg; 21:12 [וימצא] A = Greek and Vg; 24:6 [אפשר] G = Greek and Vg; 24:43 [יודע] A = Greek; 27:40 [אשר] BEF = Greek and Vg.

Other modifications were apparently made to improve the style of the Hebrew. Variant readings less polished in style, especially when differing from the Greek and Latin, should, therefore, be considered the oldest form of the text.

Variant readings more polished in style and in agreement with the Greek and Latin should be considered later revisions.

Other modifications include interpolated explanations of names and places, usually following the word [ב]לעו "in another language," transliterated into Hebrew characters from Greek, Latin, or some other language. The following is a listing of occurrences.

2:11	מירא	9:9	מאשיא
3:7	פארזיא	11:21	סיראו דיסיר או סדומה/בורחואים
4:10	שאסאנאס	12:4	פאן סאגרה
4:13	מאריסמה	12:42	ריונה די אישפריאה
4:21	זבאדאו חאבאדה	13:25	ברייאנה
4:23	מאונגיליין	16:13	פיליבוס/סוריאה
5:31	ליבי"ל ריפודיין	16:16	קריסטו/פייטרוס
6:2	איפוקראטיס	17:1	נאימי
6:28	גיליון	23:5	פיבליאוס
6:30	פינן	24:14	אונגילי
8:6	פיראלשיזה	26:13	אונגיל
8:28	נארגיזאני	27:33	קאלווארי
9:2	פאראלטיקו		

The distribution of these transliterations suggests that the interpolator's interest in his task waned substantially after sixteen chapters. Only five occur after that point. The secondary nature of these readings is proven by the disruption they make in the syntax. The text at 24:14, for example, reads: בשורה לעו אונגילי . . . זאה (literally = "in gospel, that is evangeli, this"). The construction ("in this gospel") is interrupted by לעו and a transliteration of the Greek or Latin for the word "gospel."

Further modification of the Hebrew consists of the substitution of words that were more suitable to the scribe. These modifications sometimes bring the text into closer harmony with the Greek or Latin and sometimes improve the style. Occasionally, they do neither.

The unrevised form of the text can sometimes be determined from Shem-Tob's comments. The comments occasionally repeat a verse or phrase from the biblical narrative in a different form. When this happens, the form of the verse or phrase in the comment is to be preferred to the form in the biblical narrative. As reported above, it was common for medieval scribes to revise a biblical text without revising, in a corresponding way, subsequent comments on the text (see above, pages 168 and 172).

Accordingly, the original of 12:32 read "Father," 16:16 lacked "Messiah," 21:5 read ארון (instead of חומר in mss AEF G), and 26:41 read לבוראו.



## Literary Characteristics of the Hebrew Text

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is characterized by literary devices such as puns, word connections, and alliteration. These are numerous—the text is saturated with them, far beyond what appears in the Greek—and belong to the very structure of the Hebrew Text. Although their origin is a mystery, it does not seem probable that Shem-Tob created them in the fourteenth century. Being a polemist, intent on damaging the Christian message, he would hardly have attempted to beautify and enhance the text of Matthew at the same time he refuted it. The text's literary niceties appear to come from the hand of a believer, not a hostile polemist.

### Puns

The sayings of Jesus in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew are often based on puns, or wordplays. Matt 7:6 reads: "do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you." "Swine" *hazir* (חזיר) and "turn" *yahzor* (יחזר) are similar in Hebrew, both in sound and appearance, and form a wordplay in the text.

Other examples are:

1. Matt 10:36 "The enemy will be loved ones." "The enemy" *haoyvim* (האויבים) and "loved ones" *ahuvim* (אהובים) are similar in sound and appearance.

2. Matt 18:27 "The master had pity on him and forgave him everything." The wordplay is "pity" *hamal* (חמל) and "forgave" *mahal* (מחל).

3. Matt 21:19 "He saw a fig tree near the road and drew near to it but found nothing on it except leaves. He said to it: May fruit never come forth from you." Two wordplays are involved: (1) מצא (*matsa*) "found" and יצא (*yetsa*) "come forth" (2) העלים (*ha'alim*) "leaves" and לעולם (*olam*) "for ever." A diagram of the puns is:

מצא בה רק העלים  
יצא ממך פרי לעולם

4. Matt 23:27-28 "For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." The pun involves the root קבר (*qever*) "tomb" and קרב (*qerev*) "within."

5. The most famous pun in the Greek Matthew occurs at 16:18: "You are Peter (Πέτρος) and on this rock (πέτρα) I will build my church."<sup>17</sup>

A different pun occurs in the Hebrew Text. It reads: "You are a stone, *even* (אבן), and upon you I will build, *evneh* (אבנה), my house of prayer." A similar wordplay occurs in Matt 21:42, a quotation of messianic flavor from Ps 118:22: "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner."<sup>18</sup>

### Word Connections

Shem-Tob's text is replete with word connections. These are connections made by the repetition of words or similar words, that give structure to individual sayings and pericopes or that tie separate sayings and pericopes together.

An example is the calling of James and John followed by the pericope on the early preaching of Jesus in Galilee. James and John are said to be the sons of Zebedee. Nothing beyond the mention of *Zebedee* plays a role in the Greek text.

In the Hebrew, this name becomes part of a word connection that ties this pericope to the following pericope. Matt 4:21 reads: "He turned from there and saw two other brothers, James and John, brothers who were sons of Zebedee [זבדיאל]." The name is a combination of זבדי, "gifts," and אל, "God," meaning perhaps "gifts of God." The next pericope reads: "Then Jesus went around the land of Galilee teaching their assemblies and preaching to them the good gift [זבד] . . . of the kingdom of heaven" (vs 23). The repetition of זבד *gift* clearly ties the two sections together.

Another example is the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, Matt 18:23-35. The section is characterized by a repetition of the word "repay," שלם. At the end of the pericope, the Hebrew uses the word שלם again with the meaning of "perfect." It thus ties the whole section together by the catchword connection, שלם . . . שלם. The text reads:

<sup>23</sup>At that time Jesus said to his disciples: the kingdom of heavens is like a certain king who sat to make a reckoning with his servants and ministers.

<sup>24</sup>As he began to reckon, one came who owed about ten thousand pieces of gold.

<sup>17</sup>Because of the wordplay, August Dell argued that this saying originally circulated in Greek and originated not with Jesus but in the Greek-speaking segment of the church. See August Dell, "Matthäus 16, 17-19," *ZNW* 15 (1914): 1-49; "Zur Erklärung von Matthäus 16:17-19," *ZNW* 17 (1916): 27-32. See also Klijn's objections in A. F. J. Klijn, "die Wörter 'Stein' und 'Felsen' in der syrischen Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments," *ZNW* 50 (1959): 99-105.

<sup>18</sup>For more on *stone/build* see n. 108, below.

- <sup>25</sup>But he had nothing to give and his master commanded to sell him and his children and all that was his *to repay* [לשלם] the value.
- <sup>26</sup>The servant fell before his master and implored him to have pity on him and to be patient with him because he would *repay* [שלם] everything.
- <sup>27</sup>Then his master had pity on him and forgave him everything.
- <sup>28</sup>But that servant went out and found one of his comrades who owed him a hundred pieces of money and he grasped him and struck him saying. . .
- <sup>29</sup>Trust me and be patient with me and I will *repay* [אשלם] everything.
- <sup>30</sup>But he was not willing to listen to him; so they brought him to the prison until he *repaid* [שלם] him everything.
- <sup>31</sup>The servants of the king saw that which he did and were very angry and went and told their master.
- <sup>32</sup>Then his master called him and said to him: Cursed servant, did I not forgive you all your (debt) when you placated me?
- <sup>33</sup>So why did you not forgive your servant when he supplicated you as I forgave you?
- <sup>34</sup>His master was angry with him and commanded to afflict him until he should *repay* [ישלם] him all the debt.
- <sup>35</sup>Thus will my Father who is in heaven do to you if you do not forgive each man his brother with a *perfect* [שלם] heart.

Another example is Matt 10:35-39. The omission of vs 38 in the Hebrew is interesting, since its absence bestows on the text a literary quality it does not otherwise have.

- <sup>35</sup>I have come to separate mankind, the son from his father and the daughter from her mother.
- <sup>36</sup>The *enemy* [האויבים] is to be *loved* ones [אהובים].
- <sup>37</sup>He who *loves* [האהוב] his father and his mother more than me, I am not suitable for him.
- <sup>38</sup>[void]
- <sup>39</sup>He who *loves* [האהוב] his life will lose it, he who loses (it) for my sake will find it.

These verses come from two separate pericopes: (1) Divisions within Households, 10:34-36, and (2) Conditions of Discipleship, 10:37-39. A pun appears in the Hebrew text of 10:34-36, giving the section literary structure. Verse 36 reads: The *enemy* is to be *loved* ones. "Enemy" and "loved ones" are similar in sound and appearance, being האויבים *ha'oyvim* and אהובים *ahuvim*, respectively.

From this pun, the word "love" (אהוב) emerges as a catchword that makes contact with the next pericope, in which it reappears as a major element.

The absence of vs 38 is important for this catchword context, since its occurrence in the Greek text disrupts the connection. It reads: "And he who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." The Greek form of vs 39 is also disruptive of the catchword context, reading: "He who *finds* his life will lose it." Both of these disruptions are absent in the Hebrew text, allowing the pun/catchword *love* to dominate the entire section.

The Hebrew is clearly more artistic than the Greek, even though its literary structure is based upon a shorter text (the absence of vss 37b-38). The short text (lacking vss 37b-38) is supported, however, by P<sup>19</sup> (=P. Oxy. 1170) a fourth- or fifth-century manuscript in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Vs 37b is also missing in B\* D 983 and a few others.

The Hebrew wording of vs 39, "He who *loves* his life," is supported by the parallel in John 12:25 which reads: "He who loves [δ φιλάω] his life."

The Hebrew, therefore, preserves an alternate form of these verses in which the catchword *love* dominates.

The following is a list of similar connections that occur in the Hebrew text of Shem-Tob's Matthew. *In no instance is there a corresponding word connection in the Greek or Latin.* The Hebrew word/root involved in the word connection is placed at the end of each example.

- 5:9-10 <sup>9</sup>Blessed are those who *pursue* [רודפי] peace for they shall be called the sons of God.  
<sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are *persecuted* [הנרדפים] for righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
 [רדף = to pursue/to persecute]
- 5:14-15 <sup>14</sup>A city built upon a hill cannot be hidden [לחוסתר].  
<sup>15</sup>They do not light a lamp to place it in a hidden [נסתר] place.  
 [סתר = to hide]
- 8:28,31 <sup>28</sup>There *met him* [ויפגעו בו] two demon-possessed men.  
<sup>31</sup>Then the demons *entreated him* [ויפגעו בו]  
 [פגע = to meet/to entreat]
- 12:13,15 <sup>13</sup>Then he said to the man: *stretch out* [נמדך] your hand and he *stretched out* [ויסך] his hand and it returned as the other.  
<sup>15</sup>It came to pass after this Jesus knew and *turned aside* [ויסך] from there.  
 [נמדך = to stretch out/to turn aside]
- 14:35,36 <sup>35</sup>They brought to him all those who were *sick* [החולים] with various kinds of diseases.  
<sup>36</sup>*They implored* [והלו] him  
 [להל = to be sick/to implore]
- 15:34-37 <sup>34</sup>They answered: *seven* [שבעה] and a few fish.  
<sup>35</sup>So Jesus commanded the people to sit upon the grass.

<sup>36</sup>Then he took the *seven* [השבעה] loaves and broke them and gave them to his disciples and they gave to the people.

<sup>37</sup>All of them ate and were *satisfied* [וישבעו] and from that which was remaining they filled *seven* [השבעה] seahs.  
[שבעה = seven; שבע = to be satisfied]

19:9,13

<sup>9</sup>He who takes her who has been *divorced* [הגרושה] commits adultery.

<sup>13</sup>Then they brought children to him that he might lay his hand on them and pray for them, but his disciples were *driving* [מגרשים] them away.

[גרש = to divorce/to drive away]

21:37-38,46

<sup>37</sup>Finally, he sent them his son saying: perhaps they will *honor* [יראו] my son.

<sup>38</sup>The workers *saw* [ויראו] his son and said to one another; this is the heir. Come, let us kill him and we will inherit his estate.

<sup>46</sup>Then they sought to kill him but they *feared* [ויראו] the crowds to whom he was a prophet.

[ירא = to honor/fear; ראה = to see]

26:28,34-36

<sup>28</sup>This is my blood of the new covenant which will be poured out for many for the *atonement* [לכפרת] of sins.

<sup>34</sup>Jesus said: truly I say to you, this night before the cock-crow you will *deny* [תכפור] me three times.

<sup>35</sup>Peter said to him: if it is possible for me to die with you, I will not *deny* [אכפור] you. . . .

<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus came with them to the *village* [לכפר] of Geshemonim and said: sit now until I go there and pray.

[כפרה = atonement; כפר = to deny/village]

Mention should be made in this context of an occasional midrashic reading in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. I refer specifically to catchword connections between a quotation from the Hebrew Bible and an accompanying discussion, where the catchword involves a change in the biblical text, e.g., the metathesis or substitution of one or more letters or a change in vocalization. These readings

are similar to the *peshar* quotations in the Qumran documents<sup>19</sup> and the *ʿal tiqre* readings in later Rabbinic writings.<sup>20</sup> I append here two examples.

(1) Matt 11:8, 10

Vs 8 Behold those who wear noble garments are in the houses of *kings* [המלכים]. . . .

Vs 10 This is he about whom it is written: behold I am sending *my messenger* [מלאכי].

The logion, evoked by the query of John's disciples, includes the word connection based on the similarity of המלכים "kings" and מלאכי "my messenger." The quotation of vs 10 is from Mal 3:1.

(2) Matt 18:16

If by every oath he does not listen to you add *still* [עוד] one or two, in order that your words might be before two or three witnesses [עדים], because by two or three *witnesses* [עדים] a word will be established.

The context pertains to the reproof of a brother. The biblical allusion: "by two or three witnesses a word will be established," comes from Deut 19:15 (not exact to the Masortic Text). The connection between the biblical allusion and its application in the Matthean text is based upon the similarity of עוד (still) and עד (witness; pl. עדים), the difference being only one of vocalization.

<sup>19</sup>See Maurya P. Horgan, *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books*, CBQMS 8 (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1979) 244-47; J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament," *NTS* 7 (1960-61): 297-333; F. F. Bruce, *Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts* (London: Tyndale Press, 1959); M. P. Miller, "Targum, Midrash and the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," *JSJ* 2 (1971): 29-83; D. M. Smith, Jr., "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring*, J. M. Efrid, ed. (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1972) 3-65.

Horgan outlines the techniques used in the *peshar* quotations: "the use of synonyms for words in the lemma; use of the same roots as in the lemma, appearing in the same or different grammatical forms; play on words in the lemma; changing the order of letters or words in the lemma; use of a different textual tradition; and referring back to an earlier lemma or anticipating a following lemma. *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>20</sup>See אל תקרי in *Encyclopedia Talmudica*, ed. Meyer Berlin and Shlomo J. Zevin (Jerusalem: Talmudic Encyclopedia Institute, 1974) 2:258-60; I. L. Seeligmann, "Voraussetzungen der Midraschexegese," in *Congress Volume Copenhagen*, SVTP 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1953) 160; S. Talmon, "Aspects of the Textual Transmission of the Bible in the Light of Qumran Manuscripts," *Textus* 4 (1964) 125-32.

## Alliteration

In the following passages, alliteration of various kind occurs. The relevant words in Hebrew will be placed in parentheses and transliterated.

- 4:12 It came to pass in those days Jesus heard that John *had been delivered up* [במסר, *nimsar*] into prison [במאסר, *b<sup>o</sup>ma<sup>o</sup>asar*].
- 4:21 He turned from there and saw two *other brothers* [אחים אחרים, *ahim aherim*].
- 5:23 If you should *offer your gift* [תקריב קרבנדך, *taqriv qarbankha*] at the altar and remember that you have a quarrel with *your companion* [חברך, *h<sup>o</sup>verkha*].<sup>21</sup>
- 9:8 The crowds *saw* [ויראו, *vayir<sup>u</sup>*] and *feared* [ויראו, *vayir<sup>u</sup>*].<sup>22</sup>
- 11:6 Blessed is the one who [ואשרי אשר, *v<sup>o</sup>ašre<sup>o</sup>ašer*].
- 11:29 Take my *yoke upon you* [עולי עליכם, *uli alekhem*] and learn of me and know that *I am meek* [עני אני, *ani<sup>o</sup>ni*].
- 12:15 Many *sick* [חולים, *holim*] followed him and he healed *all of them* [כולם, *kulam*].
- 14:32 When they went up into a boat *the wind settled down* [נח הרוח, *nah haruah*].
- 18:9 If your eye causes you to *stumble* [תכשילך, *takšilekha*] . . . *cast* [תשליכה, *tašlikheha*] it from you.

Textual Nature of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew<sup>23</sup>

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is the most unusual text of the First Gospel extant. It contains a plethora of readings which are not to be found in any of the Christian codices of the Greek Gospel. Its unusual nature may be explained by the fact that it underwent a different process of transmission than the Greek, since it was preserved by Jews, independent from the Christian community.

A textual profile of Shem-Tob's Matthew reveals that it sporadically agrees with early witnesses, both Christian and non-Christian. Sometimes it agrees with readings and documents that vanished in antiquity only to reappear in recent

<sup>21</sup>See also 8:4. Cf. Jean Carmignac, "Studies in the Hebrew Background of the Synoptic Gospels," *ASTI* 7 (1970): 72.

<sup>22</sup>Carmignac anticipated this wordplay. *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>See George Howard, "The Textual Nature of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *JBL* 108 (1989): 239-57.

times. The profile thus suggests that a Shem-Tob type text of Matthew was known in the early Christian centuries.<sup>24</sup>

I. Shem-Tob and Codex Sinaiticus<sup>25</sup>

I have isolated five readings in Shem-Tob's Matthew that are found elsewhere only in Codex Sinaiticus (= Codex 01). An additional four are found in Codex Sinaiticus plus one or more of the Egyptian versions and a few minor witnesses. I list them here, using NA<sup>27</sup> as a basis for the collation.

*Codex 01 and Heb Matt*

- 7:27 καὶ ἔπνευσαν οἱ ἀνεμοὶ] omit 01\* Heb Matt
- 13:44 ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ] omit 01\* Heb Matt
- 21:17 ἔξω τῆς πόλεως] omit 01\* Heb Matt<sup>26</sup>
- 23:4 φορτία] + μεγαλα 01; + גדולה Heb Matt

<sup>24</sup>The following editions and apparatuses have been used in the profile: Constantinus Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, vol. 1, 8th ed. (Leipzig: Giesecke & Devrient, 1869); Kurt Aland, *Synopsis Quatuor Evangeliorum*, 9th ed. (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibleanstalt, 1976); Albert Huck and Heinrich Greeven, *Synopsis of the First Three Gospels*, 13th ed. (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1981); S. C. E. Legg, *Novum Testamentum Graece: Evangelium Secundum Marcum*, and *Evangelium Secundum Matthaem* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1935, 1940); *The New Testament in Greek. The Gospel according to St. Luke*, ed. by the American and British Committees of the International Greek New Testament Project (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984-1987). For the Old Syriac I have used F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* (Cambridge: University Press, 1904) and Agnes Smith Lewis, *The Old Syriac Gospels or Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* (London, 1910). For Tatianic readings, I have used, in addition to the critical apparatuses listed above, Louis Leloir, *Saint Ephrem: Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant: Texte Syriaque (Manuscript Chester Beatty 709)* (Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1963); *Saint Ephrem, Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant, Version Arménienne*, CSCO 137, *Scriptores Armeniaci I* (Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1953); Latin trans. 145, *Scriptores Armeniaci 2* (Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1964); Ignatius Ortiz de Urbina, *Vetus Evangelium Syrorum, et exinde excerptum Diatessaron Tatiani*, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia series VI* (Madrid, 1967). For the Old Latin I have used Adolf Jülicher, *Itala: Das Neue Testament in Altlateinischer Überlieferung*, rev. by Walter Matzkow and Kurt Aland (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter): vol. 1, *Matthäus-Evangelium* (1972); vol. 2, *Marcus-Evangelium* (1970); vol. 3, *Lucas-Evangelium* (1976).

<sup>25</sup>See George Howard, "A Note on Codex Sinaiticus and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *NovT* 34 (1992): 46-47.

<sup>26</sup>Legg mistakenly notes ms 28 as omitting these words. Ms 28 is an eleventh-century gospel manuscript which breaks off at Matt 16:10 and does not pick up again until 26:70.

24:35 ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσεται, οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρέλθωσιν] omit 01\*; omit οἱ . . . παρέλθωσιν Heb Matt

*Codex 01, Egyptian Versions, and Heb Matt*

1:30 καὶ μὴ ὄλον τὸ σῶμά σου] ἡ ὄλον το σωμα σου 01\* mae Lucif; תפוג לכה Heb Matt  
 6:16 ὅταν] καὶ ὅταν 01\* bo<sup>ms</sup>Geo; תשאכא Heb Matt  
 9:10 ἐλθόντες] omit 01\* 243 I50 sa<sup>ms</sup>mae bo<sup>ms</sup> Heb Matt<sup>27</sup>  
 9:24 καὶ κατεγέλων αὐτοῦ] + εἰδοτες οτι απεθανεν 01\* 61 sa<sup>ms</sup>; + פתח פיהו ויאמר הלא אני ראיתי שהיה פתוח Heb Matt<sup>28</sup>

The agreement between Codex Sinaiticus and Shem-Tob's text is significant. Codex Sinaiticus was discovered in the middle of the nineteenth century by Constantine von Tischendorf at the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. Originally dating to the fourth century, a group of correctors, working perhaps at Caesarea, revised the text in the sixth or seventh century. The history of the manuscript after that time is unknown. The type of text it represents, Alexandrian with a strain of "Western" type readings, fell out of general use during the Middle Ages and was replaced by the Byzantine text. Codex Sinaiticus somehow came to St. Catherine's monastery during the medieval period and remained virtually unknown to all but the monastery's monks until the nineteenth century.<sup>29</sup>

The disparity in time and geography between Shem-Tob and Codex Sinaiticus strongly suggests that the polemist had no direct knowledge of or contact with this biblical manuscript. The roots for their agreement, therefore, must go back to the early centuries of the Christian era.

## II. Shem-Tob and the Short Ending of Matthew<sup>30</sup>

In 1901, F. C. Conybeare observed that a short form of Matt 28:19-20 is cited in some writings of Eusebius.<sup>31</sup> He conjectured that the short form came from codices that Eusebius found in Caesarea. The short form reads as follows: "Go, make disciples of all the nations in my name, teaching them to keep all

<sup>27</sup>243 is a fourteenth-century manuscript.

<sup>28</sup>61 is a sixteenth-century manuscript.

<sup>29</sup>See Helen and Kirsopp Lake, *Codex Sinaiticus Petropolitanus*, 2 vols. (Oxford: University Press, 1911, 1922). H. J. M. Milne and T. C. Skeat, *Scribes and Correctors of the Codex Sinaiticus* (London: British Museum, 1938).

<sup>30</sup>See George Howard, "A Note on the Short Ending of Matthew," *HTR* 81 (1988): 117-20.

<sup>31</sup>F. C. Conybeare, "The Eusebian Form of the Text Matth. 28, 19," *ZNW* 2 (1901): 275-88.

things which I have commanded you" (πορευθέντες μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου, διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν πάντα τὰ ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν).

Conybeare suggested that this short ending, lacking the trinitarian baptismal formula, was reflected, though not explicitly cited, by two earlier writers, namely, Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 39 and 53) and Hermas (*Simil.* 9.17.4).

In 1965, Hans Kosmala<sup>32</sup> argued in favor of the originality of the short form of the ending of Matthew, suggesting that Matthew's susceptibility to liturgical modification allowed the trinitarian baptismal formula to be added to the text. By the time this formula was added, no other baptismal formula, such as "in the name of Jesus," was any longer in use.<sup>33</sup>

In 1966, Shlomo Pines published a report on a chapter of Muslim anti-Christian polemics, belonging to a lengthy work entitled "The Establishment of Proofs for the Prophethood of Our Master Mohammed."<sup>34</sup> It was written by the tenth-century Mutazilite author, 'Abd al-Jabbār, whom Pines believed had adapted an earlier Jewish-Christian writing, dating perhaps from the fifth, sixth, or seventh century, for his treatise. Among other things, Pines noted the similarity between a logion in his text accredited to Jesus and the ending of Matthew.<sup>35</sup>

Later, David Flusser argued that the new text offers early Jewish-Christian documentary evidence for the short Eusebian ending to the First Gospel.<sup>36</sup>

Others have argued that Pines's text neither reflects a Jewish-Christian source, nor provides clear evidence for the short Eusebian ending to Matthew.<sup>37</sup> The only clear citation of the ending of Matthew in this text includes the trinitarian baptismal formula.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Hans Kosmala, "The Conclusion of Matthew," *ASTI* 4 (1965): 132-47.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>34</sup>Shlomo Pines, *The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity according to a New Source*, Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities 2/13 (Jerusalem: Central Press, 1966).

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 25n.92.

<sup>36</sup>David Flusser, "The Conclusion of Matthew in a New Jewish-Christian Source," *ASTI* 5 (1967): 110-20.

<sup>37</sup>S. M. Stern, "New Light on Judaeo-Christianity," *Encounter* 28 (1967): 53-57; idem, "Quotations from Apocryphal Gospels in 'Abd al-Jabbār," *JTS* n.s. 18 (1967): 34-57; idem, "'Abd al-Jabbār's Account of How Christ's Religion was Falsified by the Adoption of Roman Customs," *JTS* n.s. 19 (1968): 128-85. See also Johann Maier, *Jesus von Nazareth in der talmudisches Überlieferung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1978) 47n.73. For a more balance view see Ernst Bammel, "Excerpts from a New Gospel?" *NovT* 10 (1968): 1-9. Bammel argued that 'Abd al-Jabbār made use of Tol'doth Yeshu tradition that was influenced by canonical and extracanonical stories.

<sup>38</sup>Pines, *Jewish Christians*, 6.

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is a source for an even shorter ending to Matthew than the Eusebian form. Matt 28:19-20 in the Hebrew text reads:

- (19) Go  
 (20) and teach them to carry out all the things which I have commanded you forever  
 (19) לכו אחם  
 (20) ולמדו אותם לקיים כל הדברים אשר ציוחי אחכם עד עולם

This reading lacks the trinitarian baptismal formula, in agreement with the short Eusebian form, and, also lacks reference to "the Gentiles," which is found in the majority Greek text.

Although the writings of Eusebius were preserved throughout the Middle Ages, this father's witness to the short form of the ending of Matthew was not influential. No one seems to have noticed it until the beginning of the twentieth century. If the short ending of the Gospel in Shem-Tob's Matthew is related to the short ending in Eusebius, no direct link between them is probable. Their relationship points to a time considerably earlier than the fourteenth century, possibly as early as the fourth century.

### III. Shem-Tob, the Old Syriac, and the Old Latin

There are numerous agreements between Shem-Tob, the Old Syriac, and the Old Latin. Sometimes these texts are accompanied by other witnesses, usually considered as belonging to the "Western" tradition.

#### *Shem-Tob and the Old Syriac*

The following is a sampling of instances where Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew agrees with the Old Syriac, either Sy<sup>s</sup> and/or Sy<sup>c</sup> (occasionally accompanied by the Peshitta, Sy<sup>p</sup>) against all other Matthean witnesses.

- 2:19 + "king" Sy<sup>s,c,p</sup> Heb Matt  
 3:11 + "behold" Sy<sup>c</sup> Heb Matt  
 4:18 + "shore" Sy<sup>s</sup> Heb Matt  
 5:12 "who were before you" omit: Sy<sup>s</sup> Heb Matt  
 8:9 "I have authority" Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Heb Matt  
 10:6 "strayed" Sy<sup>s,p</sup> Heb Matt  
 12:5 "on the sabbath" omit: Sy<sup>s,p</sup> Heb Matt  
 12:31 "sons of men" Sy<sup>s,c,p</sup> Heb Matt  
 14:26 "demon" Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Heb Matt  
 15:2 "ordinances" Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Heb Matt  
 15:3 "ordinances" Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Heb Matt  
 16:17 "and having answered" omit: sy<sup>c</sup> Heb Matt  
 22:35 "scribe" Sy<sup>c</sup> Heb Matt  
 26:10 "good and wonderful deed" Sy<sup>s</sup> Heb Matt

#### *Shem-Tob and the Old Latin*

The following is a sampling of readings where Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew agrees with the Old Latin (=OL), occasionally accompanied by the Vulgate (=Vg) or Codex Bezae against all other Matthean witnesses.

- 1:12 "and after the Babylonian Exile" omit k Heb Matt  
 8:30 "not far" a b c f ff<sup>1</sup> g<sup>1</sup> h l Vg; "near by" Heb Matt  
 9:11 "sit" k Heb Matt  
 9:35 "towers" OL Vg Heb Matt  
 10:39 "love" ff<sup>1</sup> Heb Matt  
 15:36 "people" a aur b c ff<sup>2</sup> g<sup>1</sup> q Vg Heb Matt  
 16:4 "and adulterous" omit: OL D Heb Matt  
 16:21 "and scribes" omit: a r<sup>2</sup> Heb Matt  
 16:25 "for eternal life" g<sup>2</sup>; "for the life of the world to come" Heb Matt  
 17:21 + "demon" [[a]] b c n Heb Matt  
 18:9 "of fire" omit: d D 1675 Heb Matt  
 25:28 "five" d D Heb Matt

#### *Shem-Tob, the Old Syriac, and the Old Latin*

In addition to the above, Shem-Tob sometimes agrees with a combination of witnesses to the Old Syriac and the Old Latin, sometimes accompanied by Codex Bezae and an assortment of other witnesses. The following is a sampling:

- 4:22 "nets" 126 Sy<sup>c</sup> OL<sup>ms</sup> Vg Cop<sup>sa</sup> Heb Matt  
 5:47 omit whole verse Sy<sup>s</sup> k Heb Matt  
 8:2 "certain (leper)" Sy<sup>c,p</sup> OL<sup>ms</sup> Vg<sup>(4ms)</sup> Hil Heb Matt  
 9:22 "Jesus" omit κ\* D 1555 OL<sup>ms</sup> Sy<sup>s</sup> Heb Matt  
 11:2 "Jesus" D d min Sy<sup>c</sup> Aeth Heb Matt  
 18:2 "one" D d e Sy<sup>s,c</sup> Arm Heb Matt  
 21:33 "in it" Sy<sup>s,c,p</sup> c h Cop<sup>bo</sup>; "in its midst" Vg<sup>(1ms)</sup> Heb Matt

Shem-Tob may have had contact with some Old Latin manuscripts. He certainly had access to the Latin Vulgate, which sometimes reads with the Old Latin. But it is highly unlikely that he had access to the Old Syriac.

There are only two extant copies of the Old Syriac gospels, both containing lacunae. Sy<sup>c</sup>, the Curetonian Syriac, was discovered by William Cureton and edited by him in 1858.<sup>39</sup> Cureton reports that it was obtained, along with other documents, in 1842 by Archdeacon Tattam, from the Syrian monastery of St.

<sup>39</sup>William Cureton, *Remains of a Very Antient Recension of the Four Gospels in Syriac, Hitherto Unknown in Europe* (London: John Murray, 1858). The definitive edition of the text with introduction and notes is F. Crawford Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: University Press, 1904).



5. John 4:46 (pars Matt 8:6; Luke 7:2) ὁ υἱός "son" = Shem-Tob בני
6. John 6:10 (pars Matt 14:21; Mark 6:44; Luke 9:14) τὸν ἀριθμὸν "the number" = Shem-Tob מספר
7. John 6:13 (pars Matt 14:20; Mark 6:43; Luke 9:17) ἐγένισαν "filled" (verb) = Shem-Tob ימלא
8. John 6:42 (pars Matt 13:55-56; Mark 6:3) οἶδαμεν "know" = Shem-Tob ידע
9. John 12:25 (pars Matt 10:39; 16:2; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33) ὁ φιλῶν τῆν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ "he who loves his life" = Shem-Tob (10:39) האהב את נפשו
10. John 12:25 ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον "in this world for eternal life" → Shem-Tob (16:25) ב"היי העה"ב . . . לחיי העה"ב "in this world . . . for the life of the world to come"
11. John 13:16 (pars Matt 10:24; Luke 6:40) μείζων "greater" = Shem-Tob גדול
12. John 13:28 (pars Matt 26:23; Mark 14:20; Luke 22:21) τοῦτο δὲ οὐδεὶς ἔγνων "no one knew this" → Shem-Tob לא הכירו "they did not recognize him"
13. John 18:10 (pars Matt 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50) ἀπέκοψεν "cut off" = Shem-Tob יכרוח
14. John 18:11 (par Matt 26:52) θήκη "sheath" = Shem-Tob נהגה
15. John 18:16, 25 (pars Matt 26:69; Mark 14:66; Luke 22:56) εἰστήκει / ἔστω "stood/standing" = Shem-Tob עמד
16. John 18:39 (pars Matt 27:15; Mark 15:6; Luke 23:17) ἔστιν δὲ συνήθεια ἡμῶν "we have a custom" → Shem-Tob היה מנהגם "it was their custom"
17. John 18:39 πάσχα "Passover" = Shem-Tob פסח
18. John 19:19 (pars Matt 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38) Ναζωραῖος "Nazarene" = Shem-Tob נאורה

Three possibilities for the origin of these readings are: (1) Shem-Tob selected them from the Gospel of John in the fourteenth century and inserted them into his Hebrew Matthew. (2) The author of the Gospel of John borrowed them from a Shem-Tob type Matthean text and inserted them into his gospel. (3) Both the Gospel of John and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew are dependent on a common source which contained them.

I find (1) to be very unlikely. There is no apparent reason for a fourteenth-century Jewish polemist to lift eighteen readings from the Gospel of John and insert them into the text of Matthew. So far as I can tell, he would have derived no polemical value from them. They do not enhance his arguments against Christianity, nor do they present the First Gospel in a more unfavorable light.

Number (3) is possible. The Gospel of John and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew could be dependent on a common source. But, since this source is no longer extant, if it ever existed, there is no possibility to prove it.

This brings us to (2). In my judgment, the readings above, where Shem-Tob's Matthew agrees with the Gospel of John, suggest that the author of the Fourth Gospel knew a Shem-Tob type text of Matthew and used this text when he wrote his gospel.

In a later section, I will argue that the Fourth Evangelist polemized against John the Baptist precisely as he is depicted in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. The author of the Fourth Gospel seems both to have used a Shem-Tob type Matthean text and to have disagreed with it.<sup>47</sup>

#### *Shem-Tob, Mark, and Luke*

There are many more readings in Shem-Tob's Matthew that agree with Mark and Luke than with John. This is partly because Matthew parallels Mark and Luke more often than John. Since there are so many overlaps between the Hebrew Matthew and the Greek texts of these two synoptics, it is impractical to list them without some focus.

First, it should be noted that Shem-Tob's harmonistic readings with Mark and Luke are not evenly distributed. He agrees with Luke much more often than with Mark in the triple tradition. Second, and perhaps even more significant, he agrees with the Q sections of Luke more than two times as often as he does with the non-Q sections. A list of agreements with Q is appended below.

<sup>47</sup>A critical issue in N.T. studies is the relationship between John and the Synoptic Gospels. Until World War II, John was generally believed to have a literary dependence on the Synoptics. See B. W. Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate* (New York: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1910) 366-68. Bacon argued that John quoted Mark and was influenced by Luke, but basically ignored Matthew. See also B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1924): 395-417. Streeter argued for John's dependence on Mark and Luke, but not Matthew. The dependence theory is still held today. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978) 24 and passim. Barrett argues that the Fourth Evangelist was dependent certainly on Mark, probably on Luke, and possible on Matthew. In the years that followed, the view of John's dependence on the Synoptics eroded. In 1968, A. M. Hunter announced that John's independence from the Synoptics could almost be said to represent critical orthodoxy. See A. M. Hunter, *According to John* (London: SCM Press, 1968) 24. See also C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963); E. R. Goodenough, "John a Primitive Gospel," *JBL* 64 (1945): 145-82; E. Haenchen, "Johanneische Problem," *ZTK* 56 (1959): 19-54. For further discussion, see Howard, "A Note on Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew and the Gospel of John."



His agreements with the Q sections of Luke go beyond simple readings. In one section, the Sermon on the Mount, the Hebrew Matthew shows a structural relationship with the Lucan version of Q. The Greek text of Matt 5-7 is laid out as one long sermon, beginning with the beatitudes and ending with the parable of the house built on a rock. There are no breaks in the text or indications that the verses in these chapters ever circulated in isolation from each other. There is no indication that the sermon was composed from a multiplicity of sources. By contrast, many of these sayings are scattered throughout the various chapters of the Third Gospel and are listed by scholars as belonging to Q.

The situation is different in the Hebrew Matthew. The Sermon on the Mount in the Hebrew text is basically the same as the Greek Matthew, but the verses are frequently interrupted by such words as "Jesus said to his disciples" or "He said to them." There are sixteen of these interruptions in the Hebrew text, leaving the impression that small unites were pieced together to form the Sermon. As it stands, the Hebrew Sermon is choppy and stylistically rough, as though an editor failed to remove the introductory words of his sources. The Greek is much more polished, lacking the disruptive introductory words. It thus gives the impression of being one long sermon.

When the sayings in Luke are placed alongside their parallels in the Hebrew text of Matt 5-7, a pattern emerges. Every time the Hebrew is interrupted by the words "Jesus said to his disciples" or "He said to them," Luke, without exception, jumps to a different place in his Gospel, or has a void. To demonstrate this point, I place here an outline of Matthew's version of the sermon with the introductory formulas supplied from the Hebrew text. Alongside each section I place Luke's parallel or write the word "void" to indicate that Luke has no parallel at this point.

*Matthew 5-7*

*Introductory Formulas Supplied from Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew*

Matthew	Luke
5:2-12	6:20, void, 6:21, void, 6:22-23
5:13-16 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	14:34-35, 11:33
5:17-19 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	void
5:20-24 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	void
5:25-26 "Then Jesus said to his disciples"	12:57-59
5:27-30 "Again he said to them"	void
5:31-42 "Again Jesus said to his disciples"	void, 16:18, void, 6:29-30

5:43-6:1 "Again Jesus said to his disciples"	6:27-28, 32-36, void
6:2-4 "Again Jesus said to them"	void
6:5-15 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	11:2-4
6:16-18 "Again he said to them"	void
6:19-23 "Again he said to them"	12:33-34, 11:34-35
6:24-7:5 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	16:13, 12:22-31, 6:37-42
7:6-12 "Again he said to them"	void, 11:9-13, 6:31
7:13-14 "At that time Jesus said to his disciples"	13:23-24
7:15-23 "Again he said to them"	6:43-44, 6:46, 13:27
7:24-29 "Again he said to them"	6:47-49, 4:32

One can see that the only possible exception to the rule stated above is the sequence of the Lucan parallels to Matt 5:31-6:1. Luke parallels Matt 5:42 with 6:29-30. He begins the next section with 6:27. Even here, however, the sequence is broken. In every other instance where the Hebrew Matthew has an introductory formula, the Lucan parallel corresponds to the rule.

This demonstration may suggest that a common source (or sources) stands (stand) behind this collection of sayings in Matthew and Luke and that the two evangelists chose different arrangements for the material. If so, the superfluous introductory formulas appearing in the Hebrew text are telltale remnants of the source(s).

I append here a list of twenty-seven unique readings from Matt 3-12 (differing from all other existing witnesses to the Matthean text) where Shem-Tob's text agrees with one or more witnesses to the Lucan version of Q.

*Hebrew Matthew 3-12 = Luke Q*

3:9	Greek Matt "for"; Heb Matt "truly" = Luke Q 3:8 Lvt(e) "truly truly"
4:7	Greek Matt "it is written"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 4:12 Sy
4:8	Greek Matt "again"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 4:5
5:7	whole vs omit Heb Matt = Luke
5:15	Greek Matt "under a bushel"; Heb Matt "in a hidden place" → Luke Q 11:33 "in a hidden place"
5:39	Greek Matt "turn"; Heb Matt "provide/offer" = Luke Q 6:29
5:46	Greek Matt "do the same"; Heb Matt "love those who love them" = Luke Q 6:32

- 6:9 Greek Matt "who art in heaven"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:2 P<sup>75</sup> ⚭BL 1 22 372 443\* 700 1192\* 1210 1342 1582 Lvt (aur gat g<sup>1</sup>) Lvg Ss Marcion Ar Or
- 6:13 Greek Matt "evil"; Heb Matt "all evil" = Luke Q 11:4 Et
- 6:31 Greek Matt "what shall we wear"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 12:29
- 7:12 Greek Matt "thus/so"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 6:31
- 7:12 Greek Matt "also you"; omit Heb Matt = Luke 6:31 P<sup>45(vid)</sup> B 579 700 1241 Lvt (aur ff<sup>2</sup> 1 r<sup>1</sup>) Clem
- 8:21 Greek Matt "Lord"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 9:59 B\*DV 1009 2766 Lvt(d) Sy<sup>a</sup>
- 8:21 Greek Matt "first"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 9:59 W 69 1187 1352 Sj (1 ms)
- 10:19 + "that you are in need" Heb Matt → Luke 12:12 "That which is necessary"
- 11:11 Greek Matt "But he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 7:28 5 475\* 1080 Clem Rec 1.60.1-2
- 11:16 + "Again Jesus said" Heb Matt → Luke Q 7:31 Byz txt
- 11:18 + "concerning" Heb Matt = Luke Q 7:33 Et
- 11:22 Greek Matt "in the day of judgment"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 10:14 P<sup>45</sup> D 472 1009 1241 Lvt (ed1) Gg (I)
- 11:25 Greek Matt "answered"; Heb Matt "raised himself up (in the Holy [-ABDE] Spirit)" ABDEG = Luke Q 10:21
- 11:27 + "alone" Heb Matt = Luke Q 10:22 Dtp Marcion
- 11:27 Greek Matt "to reveal"; Heb Matt "to reveal him" = Luke Q 10:22 Lvt (gat)
- 11:27 Greek Matt "wishes"; omit Heb Matt (EF) = Luke Q 10:22 Ath Clem Cyr Marcion Iren
- 12:22 Greek Matt "so that the dumb spoke"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:14 Lvt (a<sup>2</sup> b)
- 12:23 Greek Matt "all"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:14 (= par Mt 9:33)
- 12:39 Greek Matt "the prophet"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:29 P<sup>45</sup> P<sup>75</sup> ⚭ B D L ⚭ 700 892 1241 2542 Lvt Lvg Sj Cs Ar(mss) Gg (II) (= par Mt 16:4 mss)
- 12:45 Greek Matt "goes"; omit Heb Matt = Luke Q 11:26 2322 Cyr

The Gospel of Luke was certainly available to Shem-Tob in the fourteenth century. The concept of Q, a modern day hypothetical source used in the composition of Matthew and Luke, however, was wholly unknown in the fourteenth century. Supposition about Q's existence goes back only to the middle of the nineteenth century when German researchers sought to unravel the complexities

of the synoptic problem and developed the Two Document Hypothesis.<sup>48</sup> Q was thought to be one of two sources, Mark being the other, which Matthew and Luke used in their writing.<sup>49</sup>

If a relationship between Shem-Tob and Q can be maintained, as suggested by the above discussion, it would be significant. Since recognition of this source emerged five hundred years after Shem-Tob, any relationship between these two would necessarily go back much earlier than the fourteenth century, perhaps even to the formative years of the synoptic tradition.

#### V. Shem-Tob and the Coptic Gospel of Thomas

In a 1960 study, Tjitze Baarda demonstrated a connection between the Gospel of Thomas and the Syro-Latin tradition, including the Diatessaron of Tatian.<sup>50</sup> He listed numerous agreements of Thomas with Codex Bezae, Marcion, the Old Latin manuscripts of the Gospels (especially a, b, and e), and the Old Syriac tradition. He located more than seventy agreements between Thomas and Sy<sup>s</sup> and scarcely fewer than this between Thomas and sy<sup>c</sup> and Sy<sup>p</sup>. He also isolated 130 instances where Thomas has a variant in agreement with one or more recensions of the Diatessaron. A conclusion which Baarda drew from his tabulation is: "All indications are that the Gospel of Thomas must be closely connected to a certain type of Western text in Syria."<sup>51</sup>

In a final column, called "Varia," Baarda listed an occasional agreement between Thomas and other textual traditions including five agreements with Mt<sup>(41)</sup>, which he called a "well-known Hebrew text of Matthew."<sup>52</sup> Baarda's Mt<sup>(41)</sup>

<sup>48</sup>See, for instance, H. J. Holtzmann, *Die synoptischen Evangelien. Ihr Ursprung und ihr geschichtlicher Charakter* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1863). For recent reconstructions of Q, see Frans Neiryck, *Q-Synopsis. The Double Tradition Passages in Greek* (Leuven: University Press, 1988); John S. Kloppenborg, *Q Parallels* (Sonoma CA: Polebridge Press, 1988).

<sup>49</sup>A vast literature on the synoptic problem exists. See B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (London: Macmillan, 1924); Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Priority of Mark and the 'Q' Source in Luke," in *Jesus and Man's Hope*, ed. David G. Buttrick, Perspective Books (Pittsburg: Pittsburg Theological Seminary, 1970-71) 131-70; William R. Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem: A Critical Analysis* (repr.: Dillsboro NC: Western North Carolina Press, 1976; =1964).

<sup>50</sup>Tjitze Baarda, "Thomas en Tatianus," in R. Schippers and T. Baarda, *Het Evangelie van Thomas* (Kampen: Kok, 1960) 135-55. I have made use of the English version published in T. Baarda, *Early Transmission of Words of Jesus: Thomas, Tatian and the Text of the New Testament*, ed. J. Helderman and S. J. Noorda (Amsterdam: VU Boekhandel, 1983) 37-49.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 39

is in fact the Hebrew Matthew published in 1555 by du Tillet.<sup>53</sup> I demonstrated above that du Tillet's Hebrew Matthew represents an extensive revision of the Shem-Tob type text, including both stylistic and substantive modification. The latter changes were especially designed to bring the Hebrew into agreement with the canonical Greek and Latin texts.

If Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is inserted into Baarda's chart, as a replacement for the text of du Tillet, the agreements between Thomas and the Hebrew Matthew rise significantly. Instead of five agreements, Thomas now agrees with the Hebrew 22 times. This is considerably higher than Thomas's agreements with Codex Bezae (15 times) and Marcion (17 times), as noted by Baarda, and close to half as many agreements Thomas has with the Old Latin (48 times). The following is a list of Shem-Tob's agreements with Thomas. The order of the list is Baarda's.

- 19:30 "and the last first" omit: Thomas 4 Shem-Tob
- 13:47 "fisherman/fishermen" Thomas 8 Shem-Tob
- 13:48 "chose" Thomas 8 Shem-Tob
- 7:3 "see"<sup>2</sup> Thomas 26 Shem-Tob
- 5:14 "being built on" Thomas 32 Shem-Tob
- 5:15 "in a hidden place" Thomas 33 Shem-Tob
- 5:15 "he puts/they put" Thomas 33 Shem-Tob
- 23:13 "wish" Thomas 39 Shem-Tob
- 12:32 "the Father" Thomas 44 Shem-Tob (comment only following 12:37)
- 12:35 "which is in his heart" Thomas 45 Shem-Tob
- 6:24 "honor" Thomas 47 Shem-Tob
- 9:17 "lest" Thomas 47 Shem-Tob
- 9:16 (explicit contrast between "old" and "new") Thomas 47 Shem-Tob
- 17:20 "from here" omit: Thomas 48 Shem-Tob
- 17:20 "to there" omit: Thomas 48 Shem-Tob
- 13:24 "is like" Thomas 57 Shem-Tob
- 13:29 "to them" Thomas 57 Shem-Tob
- 9:38 "therefore" omit: Thomas 73 Shem-Tob
- 6:20 "devour" Thomas 76 Shem-Tob
- 8:20 "of the air" omit: Thomas 86 Shem-Tob
- 8:20 "have"<sup>2</sup> Thomas 86 Shem-Tob
- 8:20 "his (head)" Thomas 86 Shem-Tob

<sup>53</sup>For my assessment of this Hebrew text see Howard, "The Textual Nature of an Old Hebrew Version of Matthew."

The Gospel of Thomas survives today in its entirety in the Coptic translation of a lost Greek, which was probably written in the second century, or even the latter part of the first. The original collection of the sayings may have been written in Greek, Aramaic, or Syriac. It was discovered as part of Codex II of the Coptic Gnostic Library from Nag Hammadi, Egypt, which was buried in the fourth century and uncovered in 1945. Three fragments of the Greek were published in 1897 and 1904 among the Oxyrhynchus papyri, dating to the third century.<sup>54</sup>

Shem-Tob's relationship with Thomas is similar to his relationship with Codex Sinaiticus, the Old Syriac, and Q. Each of these works was lost in antiquity only to be discovered in modern times. It is highly unlikely that Shem-Tob had direct contact with the Gospel of Thomas. The agreements of his Matthew with Thomas, therefore, must be traced to the early centuries of the Christian era.

#### VI. Shem-Tob and the Pseudo-Clementine Writings<sup>55</sup>

The Pseudo-Clementine writings (*Recognitions* and *Homilies*<sup>56</sup>), when quoting or referring to Matthew, occasionally agree with Shem-Tob's Hebrew text against the canonical Greek. The following is a sampling of these readings. (Collations are based on NA<sup>27</sup>.)

#### Matthew

- 8:26] + "immediately" (τάχιστα) Hom 19. 14. 3 = ומיד Heb Matt
- 11:11b "Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" omit  
Rec 1. 60. 1-2 = Shem-Tob (cf. mss 5, 475\* 1080\* of Luke 7.28)
- 13:21, 22 "stumbles/becomes fruitless" (σκανδαλιζεται/ἄκαρπος γίνεταί)]  
"The wicked demon steals away the words of salvation, and snatches them away from his memory" (*malus daemon salutis verba furatur et de memoria rapit*) Rec 1. 26. 1-2 → "Satan causes him to forget . . . Satan causes him to forget the word of God that he should make no fruit" (השטן משכח . . . השטן משכח דבר האל ולא יעשה פרי) Heb Matt

<sup>54</sup>For a brief overview of the Gospel of Thomas see Ron Cameron, "Thomas, Gospel of," in *ABD* 6:535-40.

<sup>55</sup>See George Howard, "The Pseudo-Clementine Writings and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *NTS* 40 (1994): 622-28.

<sup>56</sup>A third, minor work is the *Epitomes*. All English translations of the *Recognitions* and *Homilies* are taken from Thomas Smith's in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (repr.: Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951). The Greek and the Latin are taken from Bernhard Rehm, *Die Pseudoklementinem. I Homilien, II Rekognitionen*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1969, 1965).

- 16:16 "You are the Christ the Son of the living God" (σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος) ] omit "Christ" Hom 17. 18. 2 = Heb Matt (comment after 16:20)<sup>57</sup>
- 23:26 "First cleanse the inside of the cup," (καθάρισον πρῶτον τὸ ἐντὸς τοῦ ποτηρίου) ] omit "cup" Rec 6. 11. 3-4 = Heb Matt.

Some agreements between the Pseudo-Clementines and Shem-Tob's Matthean text are shared by a few other witnesses. Two of the most important are the following:

- 5.14 "A city set on a hill" (πόλις . . . ἐπάνω ὄρους κειμένη) ] "A city built on a hill" (ᾠκοδομημένην) Hom 3. 67. 1 = בנייה Heb Matt (cf. Matt 5.14 Sy<sup>a-cp</sup> Geo Hil; Pap. Oxy. 1 nr. 7 πόλις οἰκοδομημένη ἐπ' ἄκρον ὄρους ἰψηλοῦς [= Thomas 32]; Dta 8. 41)
- 10.5 "Unto the city of the Samaritans" (εἰς πόλιν Σαμαριτῶν) ] "cities" *civitates* Rec 1.57.3 = ובטריי Shem-Tob (cf. Matt 10:5 [a] b aur f h l, vg).

The Pseudo-Clementines were possibly available to Shem-Tob in the fourteenth century, but it is doubtful that he would have had any interest in these esoteric books. In a later section, I will take them up again and argue that the author of the Pseudo-Clementines knew a Shem-Tob type Matthean text and that he reacted negatively to it by polemizing against its exalted image of John the Baptist.

#### VII. Shem-Tob and the Tol'doth Yeshu<sup>58</sup>

A textual relationship exists between Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew and the Jewish medieval writing known as the Tol'doth Yeshu.<sup>59</sup>

The Tol'doth Yeshu is a medieval Jewish antigospel which exists in various forms. According to some, it dates ca. 500 CE.<sup>60</sup> According to others, it dates to

<sup>57</sup>For a discussion of Shem-Tob's comment see 217-18, below.

<sup>58</sup>See George Howard, "A Primitive Hebrew Gospel of Matthew and the Tol'doth Yeshu," *NTS* 34 (1988): 60-70.

<sup>59</sup>Various texts of the Tol'doth Yeshu are published in Samuel Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu nach jüdischen Quellen* (Berlin: Calvary, 1902). The text is also conveniently published in the anthology: J. D. Eisenstein, *Ozar Wikuhim* (Israel, 1969) 226-35. A recent discussion of the Tol'doth Yeshu, the publication of yet another version, a bibliography, and an updating of the issues is to be found in Günter Schlichting, *Ein jüdisches Leben Jesu* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1982).

<sup>60</sup>Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, 246.

the tenth century.<sup>61</sup> It draws upon traditions that are reflected in the Talmud and Origen's *Contra Celsum*.<sup>62</sup>

In brief, the Tol'doth Yeshu states that Jesus was born illegitimate, performed miracles blasphemously by pronouncing the Divine Name, and was executed by the Jews. His body was stolen from the tomb by Yehuda the gardener, an act which led to the claim that he had arisen from the dead.

The following are some linguistic and textual affinities between the Tol'doth Yeshu and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew.

1. According to the Tol'doth Yeshu, Jesus' original name was Yehoshua (יהושע). Later, when he became a heretic, his name was changed to Yeshu (ישו). The explanation given for this change is that ישו stands for ישו חכרו, meaning: "may his name and memory be blotted out."<sup>63</sup> Whatever can be made of this story, the spelling ישו for the name of Jesus became common in medieval Jewish polemics and can be found even in the Talmud (cf. b.Sanh. 43<sup>a</sup>).

A similar linguistic phenomenon occurs in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. In the birth narrative at 1:21 and 25, the text refers to Jesus as Yeshua (ישוע), an alternate form of Yehoshua. Elsewhere, the text refers to him as Yeshu (ישו). Though never clearly stated, the implication is that Jesus' name was changed.

That the two documents would converge accidentally in this way is hardly conceivable. Their agreement in the different spellings of Jesus' name strongly suggests a literary and textual contact.

2. The Tol'doth Yeshu reports that Jesus was executed by hanging,<sup>64</sup> an assertion previously made in the Talmud (b.Sanh. 43<sup>a</sup>): "And it is tradition: on the eve of Pesah they hung [תלמידו] Jesus [הנזארי]."<sup>65</sup>

<sup>61</sup>Joseph Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, trans. Herbert Danby (New York: Macmillan, 1946) 53. For other proposals (from the first to the tenth centuries) see Schlichting, *Ein jüdisches Leben Jesu*, 2. Schonfield distinguished between the Tol'doth and an Ur-Tol'doth, suggesting that the latter goes back to about the end of the fourth century. See Hugh J. Schonfield, *According to the Hebrews* (London: Duckworth, 1937) 227.

<sup>62</sup>Ernst Bammel suggests that the substructure of the Tol'doth Yeshu has something in common with the oral tradition behind the canonical Gospels. See Ernst Bammel, "Christian Origins in Jewish Tradition," *NTS* 13 (1966-67): 317-35. See also Ernst Bammel, "Ex Illa Itaque Die Consilium Fecerunt . . .", in Ernst Bammel, ed., *The Trial of Jesus*, SBT 2nd ser. 13 (Naperville IL: Alec R. Allenson, 1970) 11-40.

<sup>63</sup>See Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, 68.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 80.

<sup>65</sup>The Tol'doth sometimes describes Jesus' execution as by stoning (סלק) and then hanging (הלך), making his death precede the hanging according to ancient Jewish custom. See *ibid.*, 45, 120, 128. Other references in the Tol'doth speak of his death by "strangulation" (תק) and occasionally by צלב, which can mean either "to hang" or "to crucify." *Ibid.*, 80, 141, 147.

The Hebrew Matthew also depicts Jesus' death as by hanging, תלה, in 27:23, 26, 31; 28:5, though occasionally the word צליבה is also used (26:2, 27:32, 27:35). תלה is the same word used in reference to the death of Judas Iscariot, who is said to have taken a rope (חבל) and hanged (תלה) himself (27:5). The use of תלה in both instances may suggest that a *lex talionis* was meant by the author. Judas, the betrayer, died like Jesus the betrayed.

3. The Tol'doth Yeshu and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew have several important vocabulary agreements. The Tol'doth Yeshu is a parody of the canonical Gospels and the traditional Christian understanding of the life of Jesus. Without denying the miraculous and meritorious feats ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels, it turns the events and stories around in order to present Jesus in a bad light. The Tol'doth Yeshu, for example, affirms the miracles of Jesus, but says that he did them illegitimately by pronouncing the Divine Name. It presents the resurrection scene as a mistaken belief, arguing that Yehuda the gardener stole the body of Jesus, leaving the tomb empty. Many of the stories in the Gospels are thus changed in arrangement and character.

Within this context, the Tol'doth Yeshu often makes direct contact with the Hebrew Matthew in its choice of vocabulary. A case can be made, in fact, that the author of the Tol'doth Yeshu used a Shem-Tob type Matthew to construct his parody.

(a) The Tol'doth Yeshu, corresponding to common rabbinic usage, employs חכמים, "sages,"<sup>66</sup> where the Greek Gospels use γραμματεῖς, "scribes." The Greek γραμματεῖς would have been better represented by the word ספרים, if the author had wished to satirize the Greek gospels. His use of חכמים may suggest that he employed a Shem-Tob type Hebrew text which also regularly uses חכמים instead of ספרים (23:2, *passim*).

(b) In the Tol'doth Yeshu, פרשים "horsemen" refers to those who were sent to arrest Jesus.<sup>67</sup> Although the canonical Greek speaks of *soldiers* arresting and inflicting punishment on Jesus, it never refers to the soldiers as "horsemen." Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, however, uses the exact term, פרשים, in Matt 27:27, where it reads: "The horsemen [פרש] of the court took Jesus under guard."

(c) The Tol'doth Yeshu frequently calls the disciples of Jesus "violent men" (פריצים);<sup>68</sup> the canonical Gospels never use this term for the disciples. The Greek

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 39, 66, 71, *passim*.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 42, 72, 119; esp. Eisenstein, *Ozar Wiluhim*, 228: והמלכה שלחה פרשים לחופשו.

<sup>68</sup>Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, 42, 80, 82, *passim*. Krauss notes this point himself on 257n.14. For a discussion of the term used in reference to Jesus' disciples see William Horbury, "Christ as Brigand in Ancient Anti-Christian Polemic," in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day*, ed. Ernst Bammel and C. F. D. Moule (Cambridge: Cambridge University

equivalent, βίασται, occurs only at Matt 11:12 and refers to violent men who have been taking the kingdom of heaven by force. These, of course, are not the disciples of Jesus.

Shem-Tob's Hebrew text uses the term "violent men" for those who are acquaintances of Jesus, sometimes portraying them in a favorable light. At 21:32 it reads: "John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him. But the violent men [הפריצים] and harlots believed him." At 9:10 it reads: "Many violent [פריצים] and evil men were at the table and behold they were dining with Jesus and his disciples." Finally, at 11:19 it reads: "But the Son of Man has come eating and drinking and one says concerning him: he is a glutton, a drunkard, and a friend to violent men [פריצים] and sinners."

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew reports that Jesus associated with, commended, and was a friend to the פריצים of his day, thus making another linguistic contact with the Tol'doth Yeshu.

(d) The Tol'doth Yeshu and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew both employ the word עמד (to stand) for the resurrection of Jesus. The Tol'doth Yeshu, of course, argues against the actual resurrection of Jesus, but in doing so it makes verbal reference to it. Usually the Tol'doth Yeshu speaks of Jesus having "gone up into heaven" (עלה בשמים)<sup>69</sup>, or having "gone to Heaven" (הלך לשמים).<sup>70</sup> In one instance, however, it clearly refers to Jesus as "standing up" (עמד) from the grave.<sup>71</sup>

"Standing up" is not the usual Christian image for the resurrection of Jesus. The word is possibly used with the meaning of "resurrection" in Ezek 37:10, where the valley of dry bones is said to come to life. A similar reference is Dan 12:13.<sup>72</sup>

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew also employs עמד for the resurrection of Jesus, 27:63-64; 28:6-8. In addition, it repeatedly uses עמד in the trial and passion scenes, to build a crescendo toward the climatic event of the resurrection of Jesus. The word עמד thus becomes a wordplay in the narrative. Observe the following differences between the canonical Greek and the Hebrew in this section of the text.

*Matt 26:69*. "Peter was *standing* [עומד] at the entrance of the courtyard and there came near to him a maid who said to him: were you not *standing* [עומד] with Jesus the Galilean?" The Greek reads "sat" (ἐκάθητο) in the first

Press, 1984) 183-95; esp. 191 and 194. See in the same volume the article by E. Bammel, "Jesus as a Political Agent in a Version of the Josippon," 197-209.

<sup>69</sup>Krauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, 46, 120; עלה השמים 129.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 80.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>72</sup>Cf. CD IV. 3-4 which speaks of the Sons of Zadok who "will stand [העמדים] at the end of days."

occurrence where the Hebrew reads "standing" and has nothing corresponding to the second occurrence.

*Matt 26:71.* "When he passed through the gate another maid saw him and said to those who were standing [עומדים] there: this man was standing [עומד] with Jesus in Nazareth." The Greek has nothing corresponding to either instance of "standing."

*Matt 26:73.* "After a little while those who were *standing* [העומדים] in the courtyard drew near to Peter and said to him: you are from this prophet's group." The Greek reads: "those who were *standing*" (οἱ ἑστῶτες).

*Matt 27:11.* "Jesus was *standing* [עומד] before Pilate." The Greek reads "stood" (ἑστᾶθη).

*Matt 27:47.* "One of those *standing* [מהעומדים] there said: this one is calling for Elijah." The Greek reads "standing" (ἑστῆκαὶ ὄταυ).

*Matt 27:54.* "The centurion and those *standing* [העומדים] with him watching Jesus saw the earthquake and the things which were done." The Greek has nothing corresponding to "standing."

*Matt 27:55.* "There were there many women *standing* [עומדות] at a distance." The Greek reads "watching" (θεωροῦσαι) instead of "standing."

*Matt 27:63.* "They said to him: Sir, we remember that this liar said while still alive that at the end of three days he would *stand up* [עומד]." The Greek reads "arise" (ἐγείρομαι).

*Matt 27:64.* "Afterwards they might say to the people that he *stood up* [עומד] from death." The Greek reads "arose" (ἠγέρθη).

*Matt 28:2.* "Then the earth shook because the angel of the Lord descended from heaven to the tomb, overturned the stone and *stood still* [עמד]." The Greek reads "sat" (ἐκάθητο) instead of "stood still."

*Matt 28:4.* "From fear of him the guards were dismayed and *stood* [עמד] like dead men." The Greek reads "became" (ἐγενήθησαν) instead of "stood."

*Matt 28:6.* "Come, therefore, and see the place where the Lord *stood up* [עמד]." The Greek reads "lay" (ἔκειτο) instead of "stood up."

*Matt 28:7.* "Then go immediately and tell his disciples that the Lord has already *stood up* [עמד]." The Greek reads "arisen" (ἠγέρθη).

*Matt 28:8.* "But with great joy because the Lord had *stood up* [עמד] alive." The Greek has nothing corresponding to "stood up."

A comparison of the Greek and Hebrew texts results in the following statistics: (1) The Hebrew uses עמד five times in reference to the resurrection of Jesus (27:63, 64; 28:6, 7, 8). In three of the instances, the Greek reads some form of the verb ἐγείρω "to arise" (27:63, 64; 28:7); In the remaining instances (28:6, 8) the Greek reads a word with a different meaning or has nothing corresponding at all. (2) In the trial, passion and resurrection scenes, the Hebrew employs the word עמד an additional eleven times (26:29 twice, 71 twice, 73; 27:11, 47, 54, 55; 28:2, 4) in reference to various forms of "standing." In

these passages, the Greek reads ἵσταναι "standing" three times (26:73; 27:11, 47). (3) The Hebrew consistently uses the word עמד for *standing* and *resurrection*; the Greek employs ἵσταναι for *standing*, and ἐγείρω for *resurrection*.

The wordplay, so clearly operative in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, is totally lacking in the Greek.

To conclude, the unusual nature of the word עמד, meaning "resurrection," suggests another literary connection between Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew and the Tol'doth Yeshu.

#### VIII. Shem-Tob and the *Protevangelium of James*

Two passages in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew agree with the *Protevangelium of James* (second or third century).<sup>73</sup> In Matt 1:19, the Hebrew text reads: "Joseph was a righteous man and did not wish to dwell with her [Mary] or to expose her by bringing her to shame or binding her over to *death* [למות]. He rather wished to conceal her." The canonical Greek reads: "And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wishing to expose her, desired to put her away secretly." The canonical tradition contains no reference to binding Mary over to "death."

The concept of *death* occurs in *Protev. James 14:1*, where the text reads that Joseph was afraid of delivering up "innocent blood unto a judgment of *death*" (αἷμα ἀθῶον εἰς κρίμα θανάτου).

A second passage is Matt 2:12. The Hebrew reads: "Then they were commanded in a dream by the *angel* [מהמלאך] who spoke to them not to return to Herod; so they returned to their land by another route." The canonical Greek lacks the reference to *angel*. *Protev. James 21:4*, on the other hand, reads: "And being warned by the angel [ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγγέλου] not to enter into Judea, they withdrew to their own country by another route."<sup>74</sup>

I conclude this section with the observation that the textual affinities of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew strongly suggest that his text predates the fourteenth century. It is replete with readings reflected in diverse ancient traditions, some of which were lost in antiquity. These include Codex Sinaiticus, manuscripts used by Eusebius in Caesarea, the Old Syriac and the Old Latin versions, the Lucan version of Q, the Gospel of John, the Coptic Gospel of Thomas, the Pseudo-Clementine writings, the Tol'doth Yeshu, and the *Protevangelium of James*.

<sup>73</sup>See Edgar Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959) 1:370-88.

<sup>74</sup>A similar statement is found in *Pseudo-Matthew 16:2* (an eighth- or ninth-century apocryphal gospel), where the text reads: "And when they were going to return to Herod the King, they were warned in their sleep by an angel (ab angelo) not to return to Herod . . . and they returned to their own land by another route."

Shem-Tob certainly had access to the Latin Vulgate (which sometimes agrees with the Old Latin version), the Gospels of Luke and John, and the Tol'doth Yeshu. He may have had access to one or more Old Latin manuscripts, the Pseudo-Clementine writings, and the *Protevangelium of James*, though what interest he would have had in such writings is unclear. But, it is unlikely—virtually impossible (?)—that he had access to Codex Sinaiticus, manuscripts used by Eusebius in Caesarea, the Old Syriac version, the Gospel of Thomas, or Q as a separate document.

Even if Shem-Tob had had access to all of these documents, there does not seem to be any reason why he would have created an eclectic text made up of readings from each of these writings. It is much more reasonable to assume that Shem-Tob inherited his Hebrew Matthew from earlier generations of Jewish tradents and that the unique and archaic readings in his text go back to the early centuries of the Christian era.

### Theological Motifs in Shem-Tob's Matthew

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew contains theological motifs not found in the Greek or Latin. None of these motifs enhances the polemic against Christianity. Some portray Christianity more, not less, attractive to the Jewish mind, reflecting a lesser disparity between Judaism and Christianity than the Greek or Latin. Examples include the text's views concerning the Law and the Gentiles.

Some of the motifs are heretical when judged by the standard of traditional Christianity. These include the text's views regarding the Gentiles (saved only in the messianic era), the Christ/Messiah (never equated with Jesus), and John the Baptist (portrayed in an exalted position). A brief overview of the salient theological motifs follows.

1. *The Law*. In Matt 5:17-48, Jesus reveals his attitude toward the Law. The text reports his words as follows:

Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt 5:17-19 RSV)

Following this logion, the text records six antitheses (5:21-48). Each antithesis (except perhaps the last) includes a quotation from the law, followed

by Jesus' comment on the quotation. The form of the antitheses is basically the same in each case: "You have heard that it was said . . . but I say to you. . . ."

In the Greek text, Jesus sometimes radicalizes and internalizes the law without revoking the law. This is the case in the first pair of antitheses, on killing and adultery. In the second pair, on divorce and swearing, Jesus actually appears to revoke the letter of the law.<sup>75</sup>

In Shem-Tob's Matthew, this is not the case. According to the Hebrew, Jesus radicalizes and internalizes the law both in regard to killing and adultery and in regard to divorce and swearing. In neither of these pairs does he revoke the law. Consider the following contrasts.

#### Divorce Matt 5:31-32

[Greek]

It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce." But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress. (RSV)

[Hebrew]

Again Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard what was said to those of long ago that everyone who leaves his wife and divorces her is to give her a bill of divorce. . . . And I say to you that everyone who leaves his wife *is to give her a bill of divorce*. But concerning adultery. . . ."

#### Swearing Matt 5:33-37

[Greek]

Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn." But I say to you, do not swear *at all*, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God. (RSV)

[Hebrew]

Again you have heard what was said to those of long ago: you shall not swear *by my name* falsely, but you shall return to the Lord your oath. But I say to you not to swear *in vain by anything*, either by heaven because it is the throne of God. . . .

The difference between the Greek and the Hebrew is striking. In the Greek, Jesus appears to revoke the law: In the Hebrew, he internalizes and radicalizes the law, but does not revoke it. According to the Greek, all divorce, except for unchastity, involves adultery. According to the Hebrew, adultery may be involved, but everyone who leaves his wife *is to give her a bill of divorce*,

<sup>75</sup>Some dispute that Jesus ever revoked the letter of the Law. For a recent discussion, see Geza Vermes, *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) 21-37. Without entering into this debate, I wish only to show that the Hebrew text of Shem-Tob, in the relevant passages, is less anti-Law than the Greek text.

according to the law. Again, in the Greek, Jesus forbids all swearing. In the Hebrew, he forbids only *vain* swearing.

2. *The Gentiles*. Shem-Tob's Matthew does not envision the inclusion of the Gentiles in the present age. Matt 10:5-6 reads: "To the lands of the Gentiles do not go and into the cities of the Samaritans do not enter. Go to the sheep who have strayed from the house of Israel."

Matt 15:26 (the pericope on the Syrophenician woman) reads: "It is not good that a man should take the bread from his children and give it to the dogs." By 'children' Jesus means the Jews, by 'dogs', the Gentiles. The woman acknowledges his view (it was in fact a common Jewish view), then turns it to her own advantage: "Often the dogs eat the pieces of bread that fall from the table of their masters." Impressed with her acquiescence to the Jewish view, Jesus grants the woman's request and heals her daughter.

Both passages occur in the canonical Greek, but their harshness<sup>76</sup> is softened by the Great Commission at the end of the Gospel. The canonical text of Matt 28:19 reads: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." This ending, opening the doors to the Gentiles, sets up a salvation-history schema for the canonical Matthew, in which Jesus' restricted earthly ministry is expanded in the postresurrection period to include the Gentiles. John Meier explains the schema: "The same Jesus who, during his earthly ministry, forbids the Twelve a mission among the Gentiles and Samaritans is also the Jesus who, as the exalted Son of Man, commands the Eleven to make disciples of *panta ta Ethne*."<sup>77</sup>

In Shem-Tob's Matthew, this interpretation is impossible. As reported above, the Hebrew gospel ends without opening the doors to the Gentiles. Shem-Tob's text reads: "Go and teach them to carry out all the things which I have commanded you forever." This is said only in reference to the Jews. Nothing is said about teaching the Gentile nations or baptizing them. Israel's superiority over the Gentiles, with no hope in the present world offered to the Gentiles, is maintained to the very end of the Hebrew gospel.

This motif occurs repeatedly throughout Shem-Tob's text. Observe the following comparisons between the Greek and Hebrew texts:

<sup>76</sup>Beare remarks in regard to 15:26: "The harshness of the saying of Jesus . . . still puzzles the Christian reader, who finds it impossible to imagine Jesus addressing a distraught mother in such terms. . . . Dare we see in all this a reflection of the reluctance with which the primitive Church embarked upon the Gentile mission?" Francis W. Beare, *The Earliest Records of Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962) 132-33.

<sup>77</sup>John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel: A Redactional Study of Matt 5:17-48* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1976) 27.

Matt 9:13. The Greek text reads: "For I came not to call [καλέσαι] the righteous, but sinners" (RSV). The word *call*, suggesting an initial summons to sinners, is vitiated by the Hebrew, which reads: "I have not come to restore [להשיב] the righteous but the wicked." *Restore* suggests that Jesus' mission was to the wayward who were already among God's people.

Matt 13:38. The Greek text reads: "The field is the world [ὁ κόσμος]" (RSV). The statement is found in the explanation of the Parable of the Weeds of the Field. It implies that Jesus' teaching has a universal aspect. The field which Jesus sows is the entire world. The Hebrew text, reads: "The field is *this* world [העולם הזה]." This is spoken in contrast to the following "the world to come [העדה הבאה]" in vs 39. The idiom: *this world/the world to come*, has special meaning in Jewish parlance, referring to present time and the Messianic future (see 12:32). No universal implication is attached to the wording of the Hebrew text.

Matt 24:14-16. The Greek text reads: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come. So when you see the desolating sacrilege spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (RSV). The saying suggests that the gospel will be preached to the whole world, including the Gentiles, before the desolating sacrilege is seen standing in the holy place. The Hebrew text reads:

And this gospel . . . will be preached in all the earth for a witness concerning me to [against?] all the nations and then the end will come. This is the Anti-Christ and this is the abomination which desolates which was spoken of by Daniel as standing in the holy place. Let the one who reads understand. Then those who are in Juda let them flee to the mountains.

The Hebrew text is difficult. It appears to mean that preaching the gospel to the Gentiles before the end-time is the Anti-Christ and the abomination which desolates. No stronger statement against the salvation of the Gentiles in the present age occurs in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew.

Although the Hebrew Matthew projects no salvation for the Gentiles in the present era, it clearly envisions a *future salvation* for the righteous among the nations. In good Jewish fashion, this salvation is thought to come at the end of the present era. Matt 25:31-34, reads:

When the Son of Man comes in his revelation with his angels then he will sit upon the throne of his glory. All the nations [הגוים] will be gathered before him and he will separate them as the shepherd separates the sheep and the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then he will say to those on his right enter blessed of



my father and inherit for yourselves the kingdom of heaven prepared for you from the creation of the world until now. . . .

The same motif occurs in Matt 12:41-42:

The men of Nineveh will rise up in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it because they turned in repentance at the words of Jonah and I am greater than Jonah. The Queen of Sheba . . . will rise up in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon and behold I am greater than Solomon.

The Gentiles are given a reward in the Kingdom of Heaven, but only *at the end of the present age*. The Gentiles, who rise up against the wicked, do so only *in the judgment*.

The Hebrew gospel corresponds in theology with the Hebrew Bible and later Jewish literature, where it is clearly stated that a great host of Gentiles will join Israel in the golden age to come. Thus: foreigners will join the Lord as ministers, loving his name and keeping his Sabbaths and covenant (Isaiah 56:6-7). Gentiles will come to Zion to learn the law of the Lord (Isa 2:2-4, Micah 4:1-4). Israel's salvation will be a light to the nations, reaching to the ends of the earth (Isa 49:6; cf. Zech 2:11, 8:20-23; Tobit 14:6-7; 1 Enoch 91:14d). God will have mercy on all the nations who stand before him in fear (Ps Sol 17:34 [38]). God will give special care to those nations who have not exploited Israel or trampled Israel underfoot (2 Baruch 72:2-6). The Gentiles will bring their wealth into Jerusalem and bow down to serve Israel (Isa 60:4-7; 1QM 12. 13-14; 19:5-6; Tobit 13:13 [11]; Ps Sol 17.31[34]). God will accept them into his kingdom and grant them a place in the Messianic banquet (Isa 25:6).

3. *The Christ*. With the possible exception of 16:16 (to be discussed below), the author of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew never identifies Jesus with the Christ. This is to be contrasted with the Greek text, where the Christ identification is clearly made.

The word *Christ* occurs 18 times in the Greek text of Matthew: 1:1, 16, 17, 18; 2:4; 11:2; 16:16, 20, 21 (B ⌘); 22:42; 23:10; 24:5, 23, 24; 26:63, 68; 27:17, 22. In five instances, the Hebrew has no correspondent to the word *Christ* at all. Compare the following.

Greek	Hebrew
1:1 The book of the genealogy of <i>Jesus Christ</i>	These are the generations of <i>Jesus</i>
1:17 the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations	the Babylonian exile unto <i>Jesus</i> were fourteen generations

1:18 Now the birth of <i>Jesus Christ</i> took place in this way	The birth of <i>Jesus</i> was in this way
11:2 Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the <i>Christ</i>	John, when he was in captivity, heard of the work of <i>Jesus</i>
16:21 From then began <i>Jesus Christ</i> <sup>78</sup> to show his disciples	Henceforth <i>Jesus</i> began to reveal to his disciples

These passages are particularly important, since only here does the author of the Greek text make a clear identification of Jesus with the Christ. In all other instances, the identification is either unclear or made by someone other than the author. Matt 16:16 is a special case and will be discussed below. Since the Hebrew text lacks the word "Christ/Messiah" in these passages, its author never identifies Jesus with the Christ/Messiah.

In 2:4; 22:42; 23:10; 24:23, 24 the title, Christ/Messiah, is used in abstract terms with no clear identification. In 26:63, the high priest asks Jesus if he is the Christ/Messiah. The high priest does not believe that Jesus is the Christ/Messiah and Jesus himself answers with the enigmatic, "You have said so." In 26:68, Jesus is mockingly called Christ/Messiah by a mob. In 1:16; 27:17, 22 the phrase "Jesus who is *called* Christ/Messiah" occurs. But the word *called* throws doubt on whether Jesus is really the Christ. The same phrase occurs in Josephus (*Ant* 20. 200), whom Origen concluded did not accept Jesus as the Christ (*Contra Celsum* 1. 47; *Comm. in Matt* 10. 17).<sup>79</sup> In 24:5, deceivers are envisioned as arising and speaking in Jesus' name, saying "I am the Christ/Messiah." It is unclear whether their deceit lies in their personal claim to be the Christ/Messiah, or their claim that Jesus is the Christ/Messiah. In either case, no credible identification is made that Jesus is the Christ/Messiah.

In 16:20 the Greek reads: "Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ" (RSV). The Hebrew reads: "Then he commanded his disciples not to say that he is the Messiah." The Greek is an injunction to secrecy—not to reveal Jesus' Messiahship; the Hebrew appears to be an injunction against claiming that Jesus is the Messiah.

This leaves only 16:16 where the Hebrew contains a clear statement from Peter and accepted by Jesus that Jesus is the Messiah. The text reads: "Simon, called Petros, answered and said: You are the Messiah, that is, Kristo, the Son of the living God, who has come into this world."

<sup>78</sup>Only mss B and a read *Christ*.

<sup>79</sup>Jos *Ant* 18.63 reads: "He was the Christ." But most scholars believe this is a Christian interpolation. See Joseph Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York: Macmillan, 1964) 56; Louis H. Feldman, "Flavius Josephus Revisited: the Man, His Writings and His Significance," in *ANRW* 21/2 (1984): 821-35.

If this text is allowed to remain as it now stands, it would be difficult to escape the conclusion that the author agrees with the identification of Jesus as the Christ/Messiah. But, it should be noted that the Hebrew text has been tampered with. The phrase "that is, Kristo" [לעו קְרִיסְטוֹ], is clearly an addition (see p. 183 above) designed to bring the Hebrew into agreement with the Greek and Latin, which read ὁ χριστός/*Christus* respectively.

There is also evidence that the word "Messiah" [משיח] is an addition. In a subsequent comment,<sup>80</sup> Shem-Tob alludes to this verse in a form lacking the word "Messiah." His comment reads: "Why is it surprising that Peter should say that he is 'the Son of God'?" [ואיך תמה מפייטרוס שאמר בן אלקים הוא]. If this represents Shem-Tob's original reading, his present text is again characterized by a modification designed to bring it into harmony with the Greek and Latin canonical texts.

The reading: "You are the Son of God," was known elsewhere in Jewish Christian circles, occurring, in a slightly expanded form, in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies (17.18.2; ch. 16.15.2): σὺ εἶ υἱὸς τοῦ ζῶντος θεοῦ, "You are the Son of the living God." Compare John 6:69, where the Old Latin b reads *tu es Filius Dei*, "You are the Son of God," and the Old Syriac Sy<sup>c</sup> reads "You are the Son of God."

Although not totally certain, I tentatively conclude that the author of the Hebrew text never equates Jesus with the Christ/Messiah.

4. *John the Baptist*.<sup>81</sup> If Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew fails to identify Jesus with the Christ/Messiah, it is not because his text reduces the importance of Jesus. His text continues to identify Jesus with the Son of God. Jesus simply plays a more celestial, less human role in the Hebrew Matthew.

<sup>80</sup>See 168n.30, above.

<sup>81</sup>A great deal has been written on John the Baptist in modern times. An excellent treatment is Walter Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition*, SNTSMS 7 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968). For some assessment and perspective on modern scholarship see John Reumann, "The Quest for the Historical Baptist," in *Understanding the Sacred Text. Essays in honor of Morton S. Enslin on the Hebrew Bible and Christian Beginnings*, ed. John Reumann (Valley Forge PA: Judson Press, 1972) 181-99. Other important, recent treatments are Charles H. H. Scobie, *John the Baptist* (London: SCM, 1964); Roland Schütz, *Johannes der Täufer*, ATANT 50 (Zurich/Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1967); Jürgen Becker, *Johannes der Täufer und Jesus von Nazareth* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1972); Josef Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation—Geschichte—Wirkungsgeschichte*, BZNW 53 (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1989); Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptist and Prophet: A Socio-Historical Study*, JSNTSup 62 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991); Knut Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes: Eine Studie zu den religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprüngen des Christentums*, Paderborner Theologische Studien 19 (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1991).

John the Baptist in the Hebrew text also plays a more exalted role than in the canonical gospels. Although never identified with the Christ/Messiah, the Baptist acquires messianic traits. The following passages should be considered.

Matt 11:11. "Truly, I say to you, among all those born of women none has risen greater than John the Baptizer." The familiar phrase that follows in the Greek text, "yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he," is absent in the Hebrew, leaving John's premier greatness unmodified.<sup>82</sup>

Matt 11:13. "For all the prophets and the law spoke concerning [לע] John." This is to be contrasted with the Greek which reads: "For all the prophets and the law prophesied *until* [ἕως] John."

Matt 17:11. "Indeed Elijah will come and will *save* [יְיָשִׁיעַ] all the world." This is to be contrasted with the Greek which reads: "Elijah does come, and he is to *restore* [ἀποκαταστήσει] all things."

Matt 21:32. "Because John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him. But violent men and harlots believed him and you saw it and did not turn in repentance. Also afterward you did not repent to believe him." The Greek reads in basic agreement with the Hebrew, but addresses the words to the chief priests and the elders of the people (vs 23). The Hebrew addresses them to Jesus' own disciples (vs 28) and the following comment, absent in the Greek, appears at the conclusion: "He who has ears to hear let him hear in disgrace."

In summary, this series of readings asserts that none is greater than John, the prophets and the law spoke concerning John, John (Elijah) is to save all the world, and Jesus' own disciples are disgraced for not having believed John. In traditional Christianity such a description is usually applied to Jesus. Its application to John the Baptist in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, elevates the Baptist to a salvific role.

An interesting scenario emerges when the Gospel of John and the Pseudo-Clementine writings are compared with Shem-Tob's Matthew. The polemic against John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel and the Pseudo-Clementines appears to be directed against the image of the Baptist portrayed in Shem-Tob's text.

<sup>82</sup>There is further evidence that this type of text circulated in the ancient world. In the Lucan parallel (Luke 7:28), mss 5, 475\*, and 1080\* omit the qualification to the Baptist's greatness, in agreement with Shem-Tob's reading. This same reading is also inferred by the Pseudo-Clementine Writings. In Rec 1. 60. 1-3, it is reported that one of the disciples of John argued from the words of Jesus that John, not Jesus, is the Christ. The Clementine text reads as follows: "Jesus himself declared that John was greater than all men and all prophets. 'If, then' said he, 'he be greater than all, he must be held to be greater than Moses, and than Jesus himself. But if he be the greatest of all, then must he be the Christ.'" Clearly this argument is based on a Shem-Tob type text.

*John the Baptist:**The Fourth Gospel and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew*

It is well known that the Fourth Gospel includes disparaging remarks about John the Baptist. The Baptist is said to be a witness to the light, but is not himself the light (John 1:7-8). The Baptist says of Jesus: "He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me" (John 1:15, 30). Of himself he says: "I am not the Christ" (John 1:20; 3:28). When asked if he is Elijah or the prophet, he answers, "No" (John 1:21-22). Again of Jesus he says: "Among you stands one whom you do not know, even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie" (John 1:26-27). He says: "He [Christ] must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Finally, it is reported that "John did no sign" (John 10:41), while Jesus did many (John 20:30).

Such disparaging statements have led scholars to speculate that the author of the Fourth Gospel was polemizing against the followers of John the Baptist, who exalted their master above Jesus. At the end of the last century, Baldensperger argued for this position.<sup>83</sup>

Bultmann held a similar view. He argued that the prologue to John was originally a hymn of the Baptist community, which the Evangelist, a former member of this community, had changed to refer to Jesus.<sup>84</sup>

Others accept the polemic against John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel, but argue that it is not a major concern in John,<sup>85</sup> or that the evidence for a rival Baptist community, against which the author of John could polemicize, is too scanty to be conclusive.

Brown, for instance, lists the following evidence for a Baptist community: (1) Acts 18:25, Apollos is said to have known only the baptism of John; (2) Acts 19:1-7, reference is made to twelve Ephesian disciples who had received John's baptism; and (3) the third-century (perhaps based on second-century sources) Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* I.54, 60 (PG 1, cols 1237f and 1240) where it is said that the disciples of John declared their master to be the Messiah. Brown concludes that this evidence is too meager to argue that a rival Baptist group in the first century claimed that John was the Messiah.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>83</sup>Wilhelm Baldensperger, *Der Prolog des vierten Evangeliums, sein polemischapologischer Zweck* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1898).

<sup>84</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John. A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971) 17-18.

<sup>85</sup>R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John* (New York: Seabury, 1980) 1:167-69.

<sup>86</sup>Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, AB 29 (New York: Doubleday, 1966) 1, lxviii.

One might add the evidence of the Synoptic Gospels. They report that some of the contemporaries of John and Jesus confused their identities (Mark 6:14; 8:28); others wondered whether John might be the Christ (Luke 3:15). Also considerable attention has been given to the first chapter of Luke, some scholars arguing that John receives an exalted position in his birth account, and that this account is based on ancient Baptist sources.<sup>87</sup>

Nevertheless, there has been no clear-cut evidence for a Baptist community in the first century, which elevated John the Baptist to messianic status, and with whom the Gospel of John was in conflict.

John A. T. Robinson wrote: "The sole direct evidence that there was such a group at any time is in fact confined to two passages in the *Clementine Recognitions* (I.54 and 60), which are notoriously unreliable as history and cannot at best take us back beyond the second and third centuries AD."<sup>88</sup> Earlier Robinson wrote: "That there were elements of John's following which did not find their way into the Church is indeed very probable; that these elements constituted a rival group to Christianity in the first century, with a competing Christology, is, I believe, without any foundation whatever."<sup>89</sup>

When I first examined Shem-Tob's text of Matthew, I was immediately struck by its treatment of John the Baptist. As demonstrated above, it depicts the Baptist in the exalted terms the Fourth Gospel polemizes against. If the Fourth Gospel was directed against the followers of John the Baptist, one could hardly conceive of a more appropriate document to represent this community than a Shem-Tob type Matthew.

*John the Baptist:**The Pseudo-Clementines and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew*

The Pseudo-Clementine writings contain a polemic against John the Baptist similar to the polemic in the Gospel of John.<sup>90</sup>

These writings have been instrumental in forming the modern understanding of the Ebionites, a Jewish Christian group mentioned by Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* 1.26.2; 3.21.1), Origen (*De princ.* 4.22; *Hom. in Gen.* 3.5; *Contra Cels.* 2.1), Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.27), Epiphanius (*Pan.* 30.1; 30.17), and others. Incorporating sources and layers of tradition, they have been subjected to critical literary

<sup>87</sup>D. Völter, "Die Apokalypse des Zacharias im Evangelium des Lucas," *Theologische Tijdschrift* 30 (1896) 244-69; M. Goguel, *Au seuil de l'évangile: Jean Baptiste* (Paris: Payot, 1927) 74.

<sup>88</sup>John A. T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (London: SCM Press, 1985) 172.

<sup>89</sup>John A. T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus: An Essay in Detection," *NTS* 3-4 (1956-1958): 279n.2.

<sup>90</sup>George Howard, "The Pseudo-Clementine Writings and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *NTS* 40 (1994): 622-28.

analysis in order to get at their earliest strata. Significant advances have been made by Waitz,<sup>91</sup> Schmidt,<sup>92</sup> Cullmann,<sup>93</sup> Rehm,<sup>94</sup> Schoeps,<sup>95</sup> and others.<sup>96</sup> It is now believed that the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies*, the two major works making up the Pseudo-Clementines, go back to an early third century *Grund-schrift* which is itself a compilation of various works,<sup>97</sup> the oldest of which is the *Kerygmata Petrou*, or the *Preaching of Peter*.<sup>98</sup>

The Pseudo-Clementines include the following negative record about John the Baptist.

1. Rec 1. 60. 1-3. An argument is reported from one of the disciples of John that John, not Jesus, is the Christ. "Jesus Himself declared that John was greater than all men and all prophets," the argument goes. "If, then, said he, he be greater than all, he must be held to be greater than Moses, and than Jesus himself. But if he be the greatest of all, then must he be the Christ."<sup>99</sup> The author of

<sup>91</sup>Hans Waitz, *Die Pseudoklementinen, Homilien und Rekognitionen, eine quellen-kritische Untersuchung*, TU 25/4 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1904); "Die Pseudoklementinen und ihre Quellenschriften," *ZNW* 28 (1929): 241-72; "Neues zur Text und Literarkritik der Pseudoklementinen," *ZKG* 52 (1933): 305-18.

<sup>92</sup>Carl Schmidt, *Studien zur den Pseudoklementinen*, TU 46/1 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1929).

<sup>93</sup>Oscar Cullmann, *Le problème littéraire et historique du roman pseudo-clémentin: Etude sur le rapport entre le Gnosticisme et le Judéo-Christianisme* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1930).

<sup>94</sup>Bernhard Rehm, "Zur Entstehung der pseudoclementinischen Schriften," *ZNW* 37 (1938): 77-184.

<sup>95</sup>Hans Joachim Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1949).

<sup>96</sup>For further bibliography see Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Utrecht-Antwerp: Spectrum, 1966) 1:62-63.

<sup>97</sup>For a discussion of the sources making up the *Grund-schrift* see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Qumran Scrolls, the Ebionites and Their Literature," *TS* 16 (1955): 335-72; also published in Fitzmyer, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Missoula MT: Scholars' Press, 1974) 435-80, esp. 450. Georg Strecker, "The Kerygmata Petrou," in Edgar Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965) 2:102-27; "On the Problem of Jewish Christianity," in Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971) 241-85.

<sup>98</sup>A discussion of the use of the *Preaching of Peter* in ancient times may be found in Joseph N. Reagan, *The Preaching of Peter: The Beginnings of Christian Apologetic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1923).

<sup>99</sup>*et ecce unus ex discipulis Iohannis adfirmabat, Christum Iohannem fuisse, et non Iesum; in tantum, inquit, ut et ipse Iesus omnibus hominibus et prophetis maiorem esse pronuntiaverit Iohannem. si ergo, inquit, maior est omnibus, sine dubio et Moyseo et ipso*

the *Recognitions* disagrees with the argument and attempts to prove it false. Jesus is the Christ, not John.

2. Rec 1.63.1. The passage reports that Peter taught "the disciples of John not to allow John to be a stumbling-block to them" (*discipulos Iohannis, ne scandalum paterentur in Iohannem*).

3. Hom 2.17.2. The author argues that among men the inferior comes first, then the superior (Hom 2.16). "Wherefore, also, he who was among those born of woman [=John] came first; then he who was among the sons of men [=Christ], came second" (διὸ καὶ ὁ ἐν γεννητοῖς γυναικῶν πρῶτος ἦλθεν, εἶτα ὁ ἐν υἱοῖς ἀνθρώπων δεύτερος ἐπῆλθεν) (Hom 2.17.2).

4. Hom 2.23.1-4. Simon Magus is considered to be the archenemy of Christianity and the most esteemed disciple among the thirty chiefs of John the Baptist. Shortly after John's death, Simon assumes the leadership of the Baptist group.<sup>100</sup>

These passages clearly demonstrate a polemic against John the Baptist in the Pseudo-Clementines. Since the Pseudo-Clementines occasionally quote from a Shem-Tob type text (see pp. 205-206, above), it is hard to escape the conclusion that the polemic against John the Baptist in these writings originated in the author's reaction to a Shem-Tob type text. It can hardly be doubted that the type of text reflected in Shem-Tob's reading of Matt 11:11 is what gave rise to the argument recorded in Rec 1.60.1-3.

## Different Meanings in Shem-Tob's Matthew

Some passages in the Hebrew Matthew differ in meaning from the canonical Greek. A few instances will be noted below.

1. In the Beelzebul (Hebrew: Baalzebul) controversy, recorded in Matt 12:24-28, the Greek reads:

*Iesu maior habendus est. quod si omnium maior est, ispe est Christus.*

<sup>100</sup>Webb, who has written one of the latest full treatments of John the Baptist, does not discuss John's role in the Pseudo-Clementines. *John the Baptizer and Prophet*. Hollenbach recognizes Josephus as our only extrabiblical source for John. Paul W. Hollenbach, "John the Baptist," *ABD* 3:887. See also Hollenbach's treatment in "Social Aspects of John the Baptizer's Preaching Mission in the Context of Palestinian Judaism," *ANRW* II.19.1,852. Bammel recognizes the significance of John's negative position in the Pseudo-Clementines and gives the subject an interesting airing. Ernst Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," *NTS* 18 (1971-1972): 116-18. For surveys of John in later writings see Carl H. Kraeling, *John the Baptist* (New York/London: Scribner's, 1951) 181-87; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 217-63; 363-84.

<sup>24</sup>But when the Pharisees heard it they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons."<sup>25</sup> Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand; <sup>26</sup>and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? <sup>27</sup>And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judge. <sup>28</sup>But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." (RSV)

The passage is commonly understood to mean: (1) Jesus rejects the Beelzebub charge as inappropriate to his ministry;<sup>101</sup> (2) verse 27 refers to Jewish exorcisms. If Jesus casts out demons by the power of Satan, the same must be true of the Pharisees' own disciples;<sup>102</sup> and (3) if Jesus casts out demons by the Spirit of God, in some sense the kingdom of God has already come.

The meaning is different in the Hebrew text because of two major variations. (1) Verse 27 reads: "If I cast out demons by Baalzebul, why do your sons *not* cast them out?"<sup>103</sup> instead of the Greek: "by whom do your sons cast them out?" (2) Verse 28 reads: "the *end* of [his] kingdom has come," instead of the Greek: "the kingdom of God has come."

The Hebrew text implies that: (1) Jesus accepts exorcisms by the power of Satan as appropriate. Turning Satan against himself is a sure way to bring Satan's kingdom to an end. Jesus asks why the Pharisees' disciples don't join in exorcising demons by the power of Satan. (2) Instead of using Baalzebul's power to defeat Satan, Jesus uses the Spirit of God, and this assures the end of Satan's kingdom. If the power of Baalzebul can bring Satan's kingdom to an end, how much more the Spirit of God.

<sup>101</sup>Cf. H. B. Green, *The Gospel according to Matthew* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975) 127: "If Jesus' exorcisms show him to be in league with the devil, he is using Satan's power against Satan's own agents, and this is a situation that cannot continue."

<sup>102</sup>Cf. David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (London: Oliphants, 1972) 216: "The sons of the Pharisees (i.e., their disciples or pupils) would be the first to condemn the intransigent attitude shown to Jesus because it implied that they were in league with Satan."

<sup>103</sup>Converse constructions such as this may be related to the targumic device of converse translation. See Michael L. Klein, "Converse Translations: A Targumic Technique," *Biblica* 57 (1976): 515-37. For other examples compare εἰ in Mark 8:12 and παρς, εἰ μὴ in Mark 8:14 and παρς, ὀπισθεν / ἔμπροσθεν at Matt 15:23<sup>ms</sup>, οὐκ (Codex B) at Matt 12:32, and the absence of οὐκ in P<sup>66</sup> at John 9:27. For other examples in Shem-Tob vis-à-vis the Greek see 10:17 and 19:22.

2. The pericope on the Canaanite woman, found in Matt 15:21-28, presents the reader with a problem. Jesus' response to his disciples' plea to send the woman away is inappropriate. The text reads: "And his disciples came and begged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she is crying after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'" (vss 23-24). One expects Jesus to offer some justification for why he does not (or will not) send the woman away. But, the reason he gives is why he *should* send her away, namely he has been sent to the Jews, not the Gentiles. Jesus' answer is thus unresponsive.

This problem does not exist in the Hebrew text. In it the disciples ask: "Why do you abandon this woman who is crying out after us?" Rather than requesting Jesus to send the woman away, the disciples inquire why he does not give her some attention. Jesus' response is now appropriate. "They did not send me except to the lost sheep from the house of Israel." Jesus does not give the woman attention, because he was sent only to the Jewish people.

There are many such passages in Shem-Tob's Matthew where the Hebrew text differs from the Greek. The following is a partial listing of these passages.

- |              |        |   |
|--------------|--------|---|
| <u>19:6</u>  | Greek  | What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.  |
|              | Hebrew | Whatever the creator has joined together man is <i>unable</i> to separate.  |
| <u>19:22</u> | Greek  | When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.   |
|              | Hebrew | It came to pass when the young man heard he went away angry because he did <i>not</i> have much property.   |
| <u>19:29</u> | Greek  | And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or fathers or mothers or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.   |
|              | Hebrew | Everyone who leaves his house (and his brothers), also his sisters, his father, his mother, <i>his wife</i> , and his children for my name will receive (a hundred) like them and will inherit the kingdom of heaven. |
| <u>26:13</u> | Greek  | Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of <i>her</i> .  |
|              | Hebrew | Truly, I say to you, everywhere this gospel . . . is proclaimed in all the world, that which this one has done will be said in reference to <i>my</i> memory.   |
| <u>28:6</u>  | Greek  | Come, see the place where he <i>lay</i> .   |
|              | Hebrew | Come, therefore, and see the place where the lord <i>arose</i> .  |

In some instances, a difference between the canonical text and Shem-Tob can be traced to Hebrew variants. Whether the variants reflect scribal error,

committed during the transmission of the Hebrew text, or to a primitive Hebrew substratum, echoed by the Greek, cannot be determined at this point in time.

In 8:21, the Greek reads: "Another [ἄλλος] of his disciples"; the Hebrew reads: "One [אחד] of his disciples." The Greek corresponds to אחד in Hebrew, differing from Shem-Tob's אחד by one letter. The confusion of א and ד is notorious in ancient Hebrew manuscripts.

In 11:5, the Greek reads: "and the poor have good news preached [εὐαγγελίζονται] to them." The Hebrew reads: "and the poor are acquitted [מתפשרים]." The Greek corresponds to מתפשרים, differing from מתפשרים by only one letter. A list of other examples is given below.

3:11 I baptize you *with water* (ἐν ὕδατι) unto repentance  
I baptize you *in the days of* (בימי) repentance  
Greek: with water = במים

5:4 Blessed are those who *mourn* (οἱ πενθοῦντες)  
Blessed are those who *wait* (החוכים)  
Greek: mourn = הבורכים<sup>104</sup>

7:4 *Allow* (ἄφες) me to cast the mote out  
*Wait* (כתר) for me . . . and I will cast the straw out  
Greek: allow = החר

7:6 Do not give *that which is holy* (τὸ ἅγιον) to the dogs  
Do not give *holy flesh* (בשר קדש) to the dogs  
Greek: that which is holy = אשר קדש

7:11 If you being evil *know* (οἶδατε) to give good gifts  
If you being evil *come* (תבואו) to give good gifts  
Greek: know = תבינו<sup>105</sup>

7:29 For he was teaching them as one having authority  
and not *as* (ὡς) their scribes  
For he was preaching to them with great power,  
not *as the rest* (כשאר) of the sages  
Greek: as = כאשר

8:26 Why are you *fearful* (δειλοί)  
Why do you *look* (תראו)  
Greek: fearful = תיראו

<sup>104</sup>For πενθεῖν = בכא see Gen 23:2.

<sup>105</sup>Shem-Tob mss DE read תביאו.

9:34 By the *prince* (ἄρχοντι) of demons he casts out demons  
By the *name of* (בשם) demons he casts out demons  
Greek: by the prince = בשר

11:8 What did you go out to see?  
A man clothed in *soft* (μαλακοῖς) clothing  
What did you go out to see?  
. . . a man clothed in *noble* (רבים) garments  
Greek: soft = רכים

13:48 When it was full, they drew it up *on the shore*  
(ἐπὶ τὸν αἰγιαλόν)  
When it is full they draw it *out* (ἔχρη)  
Greek: on the shore = לחוף

18:30 But going he *cast* (ἔβαλεν) him into prison  
So he *brought him* (ויוליכוהו—mss ABDEFG) to prison  
Greek: cast him = וישליכוהו

22:23 On that day the Sadducees *came to* (προσῆλθον) him  
On that day the Sadducees *met* (קראו) him  
Greek: came to = קרבו

23:37 Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and *stones* (λιθοβολοῦσα)  
those sent to her  
Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and *removes* (ומסקת) those who are  
sent  
Greek: stones = ומסקת

24:6 See that you are not *alarmed* (θροεῖσθε)  
Beware lest you become *foolish* (תהבלו)  
Greek: alarmed = תבהלו

26:23 He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me *will betray me*  
(με παραδώσει)  
He who dips his hand with me in the dish *will sell me* (ימכרני)  
Greek: will betray me = ימכרני

26:30 *And they sang a hymn* (καὶ ὑμνήσαντες)  
and went out to the Mount of Olives  
*And they returned* (וישבו, mss ABEF)  
and went out to the Mount of Olives  
Greek: and they sang a hymn = וישרו

Do you think that I am not able to *entreat my Father*  
(παρακαλέσαι τὸν πετέρα μου)

26:53 Do you not understand that I am able to *meet my enemies* (לפגוע באיִיבי)  
Greek: to entreat my father = באיִיבי

Come see the place where the Lord *lay* (ἔκειτο)

28:6 Come, therefore, and see the place where the Lord *arose* (עמד)  
Greek: lay = קָמָה<sup>106</sup>

Sometimes Shem-Tob's text provides suggestions for the cause of variation in the synoptic parallels. Again, it is impossible to determine whether true Hebrew variants stand in the background of the synoptic variation. Several examples follow.

Matt 12:50 μου ἀδελφός

Mark 3:35 ἀδελφός μου

Luke 8:21 ἀδελφοί μου

Shem-Tob אחי

Matthew and Mark, reading the singular, "my brother," differ from Luke who reads the plural, "my brothers." Shem-Tob can be either singular or plural depending on its vocalization, whether אחי "my brother" or אחי "my brothers." It suggests the possibility that the synoptic variation was caused by a Hebrew substratum, either written or oral, which received different vocalizations in the Greek tradition.

Matt 23:31 ὅτι υἱοί ἐστε

Luke 11:48 ὑμεῖς δὲ οἰκοδομεῖτε

Shem-Tob שבנים אחרם

According to Black (following Torrey) υἱοί ἐστε ("you are sons") and ὑμεῖς δὲ οἰκοδομεῖτε ("you build") go back to Aramaic אחרון בנין אחרון (understanding בנין and בנין respectively).<sup>107</sup> The variants may also be explained by Shem-Tob's text. If the reading is vocalized אחרם שבנים, the meaning is "you are sons." If it is vocalized אחרם שבנים, the meaning is "you build."<sup>108</sup>

<sup>106</sup>In Jer 24:1 κειμένους renders בנינים.

<sup>107</sup>Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 12-13; C. C. Torrey, *Our Translated Gospels* (New York: Harper, 1936) 104.

<sup>108</sup>The subject pronoun following the participle is common in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. See 12:36, 14:2, 17:12, 18:10, 23. The variation of the roots בן and בנה occurs in Bab. Tal. Berakot 64a, a midrash employing an 'al tiqre reading based on Isa 54:13: "The disciples of the wise increase peace in the world, as it says, "And all your children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children.'" Read not 'your children' (בניך) but 'your builders' (בתיך). The antiquity of the variant is confirmed by the occurrence in MT of Isa 54:13 and בניכי in IQIsa<sup>a</sup>. See further 185, above.

Matt 21:12 ἐξέβαλεν

Mark 11:15 ἐκβάλλειν

Luke 19:45 ἐκβάλλειν

John 2:14-15 εὗρεν . . . ἐξέβαλεν

Shem-Tob מצא

In the pericope on cleansing the temple, the three synoptics read "cast out." Shem-Tob reads "found." The Gospel of John reads "found" and "cast out." The duplicate form in John may be explained as a conflation of similar Hebrew words that stood in a hypothetical oral or written substratum of the gospel tradition. ἐκβάλλειν, "to cast out," corresponds to מצ' in the hiphil binyon<sup>109</sup> and closely resembles Shem Tob's מצא, "found." In diagram form, the variants appear as follows:

מצא	"found"	Shem-Tob, John <sup>a</sup>
מציא	"cast out"	Matt, Mark, Luke, John <sup>b</sup> . <sup>110</sup>

## The Divine Name

Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew employs the Divine Name, symbolized by יה (apparently an abbreviation for יהוה, "the Name"). The Name occurs 19 times in the text. (Fully written יהוה occurs at 28:9 and is included in the nineteen.)

Usually, the Divine Name appears where the Greek reads κύριος, but twice (21:12 mss, 22:31) the Greek reads θεός, and three times the Divine Name has no correspondent in the Greek (22:32; 27:9; 28:9).

The Divine Name occurs in the following situations: (1) In quotations from the Hebrew Bible where the MT contains the Tetragrammaton. (2) In introductions to quotations. For example: 1:22, "All this was to complete what was written by the prophet according to the LORD"; 22:31, "Have you not read concerning the resurrection of the dead that the LORD spoke to you saying." (3) In such phrases as "angel of the LORD" or "house of the LORD": 2:13, "As they were going, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto Joseph saying"; 2:19, "It came to pass when King Herod died the angel of the LORD appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt"; 21:12, "Then Jesus entered the house of the LORD"; 28:2, "Then the earth was shaken because the angel of the LORD descended from heaven to the tomb, overturned the stone, and stood still."

<sup>109</sup>Cf. LXX and MT in 2 Chron 23:14, 29:5, 16. In Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, the hiphil of מצ' frequently occurs where ἐκβάλλειν stands in the Greek. See Matt 7:4, 5, 22, 9:25, and so forth.

<sup>110</sup>For the apocopated hiphil מצא, see Gen 15:5; Deut 4:20.

The appearance of the Divine Name in a Christian document quoted by a Jewish polemist is interesting, to say the least. If this text were a translation of the First Gospel by Shem-Tob himself, we would expect to find *adonai* in the text where the Greek or Latin reads "the Lord." We would never expect to see the ineffable Divine Name used as a translation equivalent of κύριος or *Dominus*. I have no hesitancy in saying that the occurrence of the Divine Name in places where the canonical text lacks any reference to the Lord at all, eliminates Shem-Tob as the author of this text. *No pious Jew of the Middle Ages would have dignified a Christian text by inserting the Divine Name.*

The ineffable Divine Name is the most sacred word in the Jewish language. In medieval times, a debate arose about what to do with a heretical book that contained the Divine Name. T.šabb. 13.5 reads: "The margins and books of the minim do not save." R. José suggested that the Divine Name should be cut out and the rest of the document burned. R. Tarphon and R. Ishmael said that the books in their entirety, including the Divine Name, should be destroyed.<sup>111</sup>

Shem-Tob makes it clear that the Gospel of Matthew is a heretical writing. In the preface to his Matthean text, he writes as follows:

The author, Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut, says: I have chosen to complete this my treatise which I have called Even Bohan by transcribing the books of the gospel in spite of the fact that the books are forbidden for us to read, lest the disciples should come without having sufficient practice and should drink from those waters. Nevertheless, I have chosen to transcribe them for two reasons: The first is to answer the Christians from them and especially proselytes who speak in regard to their faith but do not know the meaning of faith and explain the Scriptures of our holy law in regard to that which is contrary to the truth and contrary to their faith. In this way glory will come to the Jew who debates with them whenever he captures them in their own pit.

The second is to show to the faithful the degree of defect in these books and the errors that occur in them. By this they will know and understand the superiority and virtue of our faith to the other religions. Since the greatness of the virtue of the word is not known except by an examination of that which is contrary to it, I depend on God, blessed be He, that there come from this nothing but good since I have aimed at that which is good.

Shem-Tob recorded the Hebrew Matthew, which he considered heretical, only because he wished to teach his people how to answer questions regarding

<sup>111</sup>See Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, 155-57.

the Jewish religion in face of opposition from the Christian public. Using the Divine Name in this heretical text could only have caused confusion and doubt in the minds of his people. They could only have wondered what they should do with it: preserve it, destroy it? That Shem-Tob created such a problem for his people is beyond belief.

The conclusion that seems inescapable is that Shem-Tob found the Divine Name already in his gospel text, having received it from an earlier generation of Jewish tradents. He *permitted* the Divine Name to remain in the text perhaps because he was unsure himself about what to do with it.

The occurrence of the Divine Name in Shem-Tob's Matthew supports the conclusions I reached in an earlier study of the Tetragrammaton in the New Testament,<sup>112</sup> basing my observations on the use of the Divine Name in the Septuagint and in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Some pre-Christian copies of the Septuagint, for example, contain the Divine Name written into the Greek text. These include: (1) P. Fouad 266 (=Rahlfs 848), 50 BCE; the Tetragrammaton occurs in Aramaic letters;<sup>113</sup> (2) a fragmentary scroll of the Twelve Prophets in Greek from Nahal Hever (= 8 Hev XIIgr), 50 BCE-50 CE; the Tetragrammaton occurs in paleo-Hebrew letters;<sup>114</sup> (3) 4QLXX<sup>Levb</sup> (=Rahlfs 802), first century BCE; the Tetragrammaton occurs in the form of ΙΑΩ.<sup>115</sup> In my previous study, I concluded that the New Testament writers, who had access to such copies of the Septuagint, may have preserved the Tetragrammaton in their biblical quotations from the Septuagint.<sup>116</sup>

Now Shem-Tob's Matthew testifies to the use of the Divine Name in the New Testament. As argued above, it is very unlikely that Shem-Tob inserted the

<sup>112</sup>George Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," *JBL* 96 (1977): 63-83; idem, "The Name of God in the New Testament," *BAR* 4 (1978): 12-14, 56; "Tetragrammaton in the New Testament," in *ABD* 6:392-93.

<sup>113</sup>Françoise Dunand, *Études de Papyrologie* (Cairo, 1971). W. G. Waddell, "The Tetragrammaton in the LXX," *JTS* 45 (1944): 158-61. George Howard, "The Oldest Greek Text of Deuteronomy," *HUCA* 42 (1971): 125-31.

<sup>114</sup>Emanuel Tov, *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (8 Hev XIIgr)*, The Siyal Collection 1, DJD VIII (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). See the earlier work by D. Barthélemy, "Redécouverte d'un chaînon manquant de l'histoire de la Septante," *RB* 60 (1953): 18-29; idem, *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du text des fragments du Dodecaprophéton*, VTSup 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1963).

<sup>115</sup>P. W. Skehan, "The Qumran Manuscripts and Textual Criticism," *Volume du Congrès, Strasbourg 1956*. VTSup 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1957) 148-60.

<sup>116</sup>See further P. W. Skehan, "The Divine Name at Qumran, in the Masada Scroll, and in the Septuagint," *BIOSCS* 13 (1980): 14-44; A. Pietersma, "Kyrios or Tetragram: A Renewed Quest for the Original Septuagint," in *De Septuaginta. Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. A. Pietersma and C. Cox (Toronto: Benben Publications, 1984) 85-101.



Divine Name into his text. No Jewish polemist would have done that. Whatever the date of this text, it must have included the Divine Name from its inception.

One final note regarding the Divine Name: Shem-Tob's Matthew shows a very conservative attitude toward its usage. The author of this text was not a radical Christian, arbitrarily supplying his gospel with the Tetragrammaton. His attitude was one of awe and respect. In fact, his use of the Divine Name corresponds to the conservative practice found in the Septuagint and in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

### Other Interesting Readings in Shem-Tob's Matthew

As a conclusion to this profile, I append here other interesting readings in Shem-Tob's text. These, contrasted with the Greek, give further indication of the differences between the two text forms.

- 3:11 Greek He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire  
Hebrew He will baptize you with the *fire of the Holy Spirit*
- 8:20 Greek And Jesus said to him: Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.  
Hebrew Jesus answered him: The foxes have holes and the birds have nests; but the Son of Man, *the Son of the virgin*, has no place to enter his head.
- 13:23 Hebrew [At the end of the parable of the sower, the following plus reading appears.]  
As for the hundred, this is the one purified of heart and sanctified of body. As for the sixty, this is the one separated from women. As for the thirty, this is the one sanctified in matrimony, in body, and in heart.
- 19:12 Greek For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.  
Hebrew Because there are eunuchs from their birth; *these are those who have not sinned*. There are eunuchs made by man and there are self-made eunuchs *who subdue their desire* for the sake of the kingdom of heaven; *these are those who enter into great prominence*.

- 23:33 Greek You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to Gehenna?  
Hebrew Serpents, seed of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of Gehenna *if you do not turn in repentance?*
- 24:40 Greek Then two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left.  
Hebrew Then if there shall be two ploughing in a field, *one righteous and the other evil*, the one will be taken and the other left.
- 24:41 Hebrew [At the end of this verse the following plus reading appears.]  
This is because the angels at the end of the world will remove the stumbling blocks from the world and will separate the good from the evil.
- 25:13 Greek Watch, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in [Mss] which the Son of Man comes.  
Hebrew Be careful, therefore, because you know neither the day nor the hour when the *bridegroom* will come.
- 26:23 Greek He answered them: He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me.  
Hebrew He answered them: He who dips his hand with me in the dish will *sell me*. *All of them were eating from one dish. Therefore, they did not recognize him; because if they had recognized him, they would have destroyed him.*

### Summary and Conclusion

A Remarkable Hebrew text of the Gospel of Matthew appears in the fourteenth-century Jewish polemical treatise, *Even Bohan*, authored by Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut. Traditionally, this text was thought to be a translation of the Latin Vulgate. It was also equated with the Hebrew versions of Matthew published in the sixteenth century by Münster and du Tillet. In neither case is this true. A comparison of Shem-Tob's Matthew with the Latin Vulgate reveals its independence from the Vulgate. A similar comparison with Münster and du Tillet shows that they are not the same.

From earliest times, the Christian community believed that Matthew was written in Hebrew/Aramaic and translated into Greek. Papias (ca. 60–130 CE) was the first to make reference to a Hebrew Matthew, and later writers, such as Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome allude to it or quote it. A comparison of these allusions and quotations shows that little or no relationship

exists between the Hebrew/Aramaic Matthew preserved by the Christian Church and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew.

Jewish writings of the Middle Ages allude to or quote a Hebrew Matthew of the Shem-Tob type. These writings include the Talmud, the Book of Nestor, the Tol'doth Yeshu, the Milhamot HaShem by Jacob ben Reuben, Sepher Joseph Hamekane by Rabbi Joseph ben Nathan Official, and the Nizzahon Vetus.

A conclusion that can be drawn from these comparisons is that Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew predates the fourteenth century, being preserved primarily by the Jewish community.

Further evidence that Shem-Tob did not create his Matthew is as follows: 1. His text as a whole is unlike the Byzantine Greek text current in his day (or any Greek text known) and unlike the Latin Vulgate. If Shem-Tob had made a fresh translation, he would most certainly have rendered one of these text forms. 2. Shem-Tob's polemical comments, scattered throughout his text, suggest that he did not create it. He criticizes the text's selection of vocabulary and the mistakes it has accrued during transmission. He also bases some of his arguments on the text's unique readings. 3. His Hebrew Matthew has a sporadic relationship with some texts that were lost in antiquity, then rediscovered since the fourteenth century. These include Q, Codex Sinaiticus, the Old Syriac version, and the Coptic Gospel of Thomas. Shem-Tob hardly had access to these sources.

Stylistically, Shem-Tob's text of Matthew is written in Biblical Hebrew with a healthy mixture of Mishnaic Hebrew and later rabbinic vocabulary and idiom. It is unpolished in style and contains a number of later scribal revisions. It is characterized by puns, word connections, and alliteration. These devices are numerous—the text is saturated with them—and belong to the structure of the Hebrew.

In regard to theology, Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is heretical according to the standard of traditional Christianity. It never identifies Jesus with the Messiah. John the Baptist is given an exalted role (even takes on messianic traits), similar to the one polemized against in the Gospel of John and the Pseudo-Clementine Writings. Shem-Tob's text envisions the salvation of the Gentiles only in the Messianic era. It reflects a lesser disparity between Judaism and Christianity than the Greek or Latin canonical texts. Finally, Shem-Tob's text employs the Hebrew Divine Name, symbolized by "יה" (apparently an abbreviation for יהוה, "the Name") where the canonical version simply uses the word "Lord."

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***Hebrew Gospel of Matthew.***

by George Howard.

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Mercer University Press, Macon, Georgia 31210-3960.

Isbn 0-86554-470-0. Catalog and warehouse pick number: MUP/H352.

Text and interior design, composition, and layout by Edd Rowell.

Cover design and layout by Edd Rowell.

Camera-ready pages (in rev. ed., 1987 Hebrew pages only)

composed on a Data General Nova 4 system

employing Penta Systems software

and printed on a Mergenthaler Linotron 202N.

Revised edition pages (excepting Hebrew) composed on a Gateway 2000

via WordPerfect for dos wp/5.1 and for Windows wpwin/5.1/5.2

and printed on a LaserMaster 1000.

Text font: Times (Hebrew text notes) and TimesNewRoman PS 8-9/10, 10/12.

Frank Reuhl Hebrew X2003 (<sup>1</sup>1987); ATECH Hebrew (23 corx, <sup>2</sup>1995).

Display font: TimesNewRoman PS BF 24/26, 14/16, 11/12.

Printed and bound by Braun-Brumfield Inc., Ann Arbor MI 48106.

Printed via offset lithography on 60# Natural Smooth paper.

Cased in with printed cover over boards, printed one PMS color  
(Pantone 199C = 12/4 Rubine red/yellow) and film laminated.

[ May 1995 ]

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