THE HISTORICAL JESUS
AND THE FINAL JUDGMENT SAYINGS IN Q

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Abstract

by

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This dissertation explores the twelve final judgment sayings found in Q in light of
the historical Jesus. The study will begin with a survey of scholarly opinions regarding
the historical Jesus and the final judgment, followed by a discussion of the methodology
to be employed. The next section, an analysis of the characteristics of the final judgment
in late second temple Judaism, will seek to establish the cultural and conceptual contexts
of Q’s final judgment sayings. Finally, the bulk of the study will be devoted to an
exploration of the twelve sayings and their parallels, including careful exegesis of each
saying in its original gospel context, a reconstruction and consideration of the Q form of
each saying, and an application of criteria of authenticity.

The results of the study are three-fold: 1) It establishes the authenticity of ten of
the twelve final judgment sayings in Q, thereby demonstrating that eschatology in general
and the final judgment in particular were important components of the historical Jesus’
message. 2) It identifies the characteristics of the final judgment propounded by the
historical Jesus and compares them to the characteristics of the final judgment texts of the
late second temple period. 3) It demands that the potential historicity of all of Q’s source
material be taken seriously, including those elements often assigned to a secondary
redactional layer, Q².
DEDICATION

For my wife Julie and my daughter Eliana who remind me of God’s goodness.
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PREFACE

The theme of judgment would not rank very high on a list of favorite New Testament themes. It is, then, not altogether surprising that New Testament scholars have largely neglected careful examination of the final judgment. This has particularly proven to be the case in historical Jesus studies, where Jesus’ preaching about the final judgment is often marginalized, reinterpreted, or deemed inauthentic. Nevertheless, it remains true that a rather significant number of gospel sayings deal specifically with the theme of final judgment. It is my hope that this study will encourage future reconstructions of the historical Jesus to take seriously the prominence and authenticity of this theme and its implications.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thankfulness to all those who contributed to this project. Pride of place belongs to my dissertation director, David E. Aune. Working with him has been a pleasure. His wonderful insights and keen observations are matched by his kind and generous heart. I could not have asked for a better advisor. I would also like to thank the members of my committee, Professors John Meier, James VanderKam, and Brian Daley, for their faithful labor. It was Professor Meier’s own work that initially propelled me into graduate studies. The erudition and scholarship of his historical Jesus study continue to impress me. I owe a debt to Professor VanderKam for introducing me to the wonderful world of second temple Judaism. In addition, I have been blessed with wonderful colleagues at The University of Notre
Dame. The fellowship and exuberance of Brant Pitre, Dan Machiela, Steve Schweitzer, Paul Kim, Matt Gordley, Jonathan Lawrence, and Leslie Baynes have left their mark on this study. Finally, there is no way that this project could have been completed without the love and support I have received from my wife, Julie. She is indeed a God-sent partner.
INTRODUCTION

Sayings about a “final” or “eschatological” judgment seem to permeate the gospel material. Yet surprisingly, a review of scholarship reveals few attempts to determine whether this material actually originated with the historical Jesus. This study will explore the authenticity of one important segment of final judgment sayings: those found in the hypothetical document Q and their parallels in the Jesus tradition. The decision to limit the field of study to passages that are found in Q was made for six reasons.

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2 That is not to say that judgments are not rendered. Opinions on the authenticity of Jesus’ sayings of final judgments are much easier to find than arguments for them. In only two cases is the topic addressed from a historical Jesus perspective in its own right, Marius Reiser, Jesus and Judgment: The Eschatological Proclamation in its Jewish Context (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997) trans. Linda Maloney from Die Gerichtspredigt Jesu: Eine Untersuchung zur eschatologischen Verkündigung Jesu und ihrem frühjüdischen Hintergrund (Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen, Neue Folge, Band 23, Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlag, 1990); J Arthur Baird, The Justice of God in the Teaching of Jesus (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963). The deficiencies of these works will be addressed in the next section.
1) Practically, with such a large number of final judgment sayings, decisions must be made about which sayings should be treated in detail. Often in historical Jesus studies, passages are pre-selected for treatment, singled out because they offer the best chance of being judged authentic. While this is a fruitful approach, the drawback is that one group of passages becomes the topic of widespread historical reflection and judgment while other whole subsets of passages remain unexplored. By focusing solely on the final judgment sayings found in Q, this study will be able to offer a detailed analysis and judgment of all the pertinent passages in the document.

2) The final judgment pervades Q. It is clearly present in twelve separate passages, but the scope of the tradition could be conceived even more broadly than that. Of all the early sources available for the study of Jesus, Q offers the greatest number of sayings related to the final judgment.

3) It is widely agreed that Q represents one of the earliest witnesses to the sayings of the historical Jesus. Even those scholars who have divided up the Q material into different strata deem the version(s) used by Matthew and Luke quite early. Hence, by virtue of its early date, the authenticity or inauthenticity of Q’s final judgment passages

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3 Not included in these 12 final judgment sayings are: 1) Two passages ascribed to the Baptist: Q 3:7-9; Q 3:16b-17. 2) Nine passages which speak of judgment in more general terms, all of which potentially have the final judgment in mind: Q 6:20-23, Q 6:37-38; Q 11:49-51; Q 12:58-59; Q 13:30; Q 13:34-35; Q 14:11; 14:34-35; Q 17:34-35. 3) Two passages dealing with the sudden appearance of the Son of Man (presumably to judge) Q 12:39-40; Q 17:23-24. 4) While Q 22:29-30 probably presumes a final judgment, it only speaks directly of eschatological reward. 5) Three other passages which are often assigned to Q are not included (Matt 7:22-23 // Luke 13:26-27; Matt 22:1-10 // Luke 14:16-24; Matt 25:14-30 // Luke 19:11-27). It is the judgment of this study that the Matthean and Lukan versions of these passages do not point to a common literary source. See Appendix.

has a direct and profound affect on the historicity of all the final judgment sayings in the Jesus tradition.

4) Many of the Q sayings are multiply attested, having parallels in other sources for the historical Jesus. Five of the sayings treated in this study have direct parallels in the Gospel of Mark. One of the sayings has a parallel in the *Gospel of Thomas*. And there is one saying with a parallel in the Gospel of John. Hence, in restricting the study to Q’s final judgment sayings, the witness of other important traditions will still play a vital role in determining the authenticity of the final judgment traditions.

5) Recent scholarship on Q has tended to avoid issues of historicity. Rather, there has been an intense focus on two different issues: the compositional history of Q and the Q community. Though both of these endeavors have possible implications for the question of the historicity of the sayings, they have by and large been carried out on a purely literary basis, attempting to ascertain the shape and growth of Q on the one hand, and the nature of the community which assembled and transmitted Q on the other. As John Kloppenborg has pointed out,

An attentive reading of the several comprehensive studies on Q by myself (*Formation of Q*), Sato (*Q und Prophetie*), Jacobson (*The First Gospel*), Vaage (*Galilean Upstarts*), and Tuckett (*Studies on Q*)—not to mention the many shorter or more narrowly-focused studies—should confirm this point: in these volumes there is practically *nothing* said about the historical Jesus. They attend to the reconstruction of various aspects of Q and the Jesus movement; they are neither overtly nor covertly about Jesus.

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6 Q 12:10 // Gos. Thom. 44.

7 Q 17:33 // John 12:25.

8 John Kloppenborg, “The Sayings Gospel Q and the Quest of the Historical Jesus,” *HTR* 89 (1996): 323-24. Emphasis original. He has recently reiterated this point in a recent volume dedicated to Q and the historical Jesus. “Indeed *none* of the more than twenty comprehensive studies of Q since the 1960’s...
The focus of this study on an important subset of historical Jesus sayings in Q, therefore, has the potential to contribute to an understanding of the **historicity** of the Q sayings, a topic long relegated to the margins of Q studies.


⁹ The few studies which do look at Q in the light of historical Jesus studies, but which have little bearing on the historicity of the final judgment sayings include, Daniel Kosch, “Q und Jesus,” *BZ* NF 36 (1992): 30-58; Kloppenborg, “The Sayings Gospel,” 307-44; Richard Horsley, “Q and Jesus: Assumptions, Approaches, and Analyses” in *Early Christianity, Q, and Jesus* (Semeia 55; ed. J. S. Kloppenborg, and L. E. Vaage; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 175-209. Of the articles contained in *The Sayings Source Q and the Historical Jesus*, only Dieter Zeller’s article addresses the potential historicity of more than one final judgment saying.
reconstructions of the historical Jesus. These scholars have developed their arguments directly from the literary work being done on the composition of Q and the history of the Q community. They have largely concluded that the final judgment sayings in Q are creations of the early church and cannot be traced back to Jesus. The presence of historical skepticism specifically concerning the authenticity of Q’s final judgment sayings warrants giving them a thorough reexamination using the methods of historical Jesus research.

The goals of the study are twofold: First, the authenticity of Jesus’ sayings concerning the final judgment in Q will be evaluated in order to establish the scope and reliability of the tradition. Second, any sayings deemed authentic will be analyzed alongside one another in the hope of reconstructing the historical Jesus’ view of the final judgment.

The potential payoff of such a study is broad-reaching. On the one hand, it will shed important light on the nature of Jesus’ message and mission, his perception of himself and his followers, as well as his theology and his soteriology. In short, it will provide us with significant insight into the historical Jesus. On the other hand, it will contribute to our understanding of an important theme in Q. Probing this group of sayings using the criteria of authenticity will produce a much-needed systematic and methodologically appropriate treatment of the final judgment sayings from a historical perspective.

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10 See Status Questionis.
**Status Quaestionis**

It should come as no surprise to those with even a modicum of interest in historical Jesus scholarship that there is no consensus on the authenticity of the final judgment sayings in Q. Some studies do not treat them at all.\(^{11}\) The scholars who do treat them fall roughly into four categories: those who reject them all as creations of the early church, those who accept only a small sampling of sayings as authentic, those who find ways to reinterpret them, and those who (often indiscriminately) accept them as an authentic part of the tradition.

1. **Almost Exclusively Creations of the Early Church**

A number of scholars have argued that nearly all of the Jesus’ final judgment sayings in Q are creations of the early church. Those few that are retained are interpreted in a non-eschatological manner.

We begin with *The Five Gospels*, the Jesus Seminar’s complete evaluation of the words of Jesus.\(^{12}\) Not only is this work presented as a sort of scholarly consensus, but its arguments are indicative of many of those who dispute the authenticity of the final judgment sayings in Q. Q’s final judgment sayings receive very poor marks in *The Five Gospels*. Of the twelve final judgment passages, the great majority are written in black,

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reflecting the judgment that they were almost certainly creations of the early church. No sayings receive the highest mark, “red,” and only one saying merits a “pink.” Thus, in the estimation of the Jesus seminar, only one of the final judgment sayings in the Q tradition (Luke 17:33) is to be included “with reservations (or modifications) in the database.” However, discussion of Luke 17:33 makes it clear that it is not read eschatologically. For all intents and purposes, then, there are no authentic final or eschatological judgment sayings in Q. The reasons for this judgment are summed up well in the discussion of the inauthenticity of Q 11:31-32.

The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and see something greater than Solomon is here! The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and see, something greater than Jonah is here! (Luke 11:31-32)

This group of sayings, like 11:29-30 before it, belongs to what scholars have identified as a secondary layer of Q that proclaims judgment against “an evil generation” (11:29). As we have just noted, the “evil generation” was probably the one that did not respond to the preaching of the Q people. “At judgment time” would not have been one of Jesus’ themes, since he did not share the common apocalyptic view that the end of history was near, nor did he threaten judgment. He seems to have been a more irenic spirit. These sayings stand in sharp contrast to that spirit.

Here we encounter the four most common objections to the historicity of Q’s final judgment sayings. First, the stratification of Q is invoked in order to demonstrate that the

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14 Ibid, 36.

15 Ibid, 367.

16 Ibid, 332.
judgment material was a later addition to Q, and hence an early church creation. This procedure assumes a direct correlation between the various compositional layers of Q and the historical veracity of those various layers: later layers must be early church creations. In fact, assigning a given saying in Q to an earlier or later layer has no bearing upon the authenticity of that saying. Kloppenborg, whose stratification of Q into three layers is both the most well known and used, cautions against such an identification.

To say that the wisdom components were formative for Q and that the prophetic judgment oracles and apothegms describing Jesus’ conflict with “this generation” are secondary is not to imply anything about the ultimate tradition-historical provenance of any of these sayings. It is indeed possible, indeed probable, that some of the materials from the secondary compositional phase are dominical or at least very old, and that some of the formative elements are, from the standpoint of authenticity or tradition history, relatively young. Tradition history is not convertible with literary history, and it is the latter which we are treating here.17

What one needs to bear in mind is that redaction can take place in at least five different ways. 1) A redactor can select and position authentic material. 2) A redactor can select and position non-authentic material. 3) A redactor can modify authentic material. 4) A redactor can modify non-authentic material. 5) A redactor can create new material. Options 1 and 3, no matter when they take place in the composition of a document, incorporate authentic material into its final form. This is particularly true in the case of Q, a document whose final form (as we have access to it in Matthew and Luke) is still considered very early.18 Hence, even if all of the judgment material does indeed belong to a second redactional stage, Q², that does not render it inauthentic.


A second objection to the authenticity of the final judgment sayings in Q involves reconstructions of the Q community. Since the work of Lührmann it has been postulated that much of the material dealing with judgment in Q was added by the Q community in response to a failed Jewish mission. This hypothesis relies heavily on form criticism, particularly reconstructions of the early Christian Sitz im Leben of the Q material. It is argued that only a community under duress, frustrated in their missionary endeavors, would have employed such harsh and uncompromising critiques of their opponents. There are, however, two potential problems with reaching historical judgments primarily on the basis of this hypothesis. On the one hand, there is more than one way to explain the presence of judgment sayings in Q. It is possible that the judgment material was included simply because it was thought to have originated from Jesus. This possibility must be given due weight. Otherwise, form criticism becomes the sole proprietor of historical judgments, and every single element in the Jesus tradition is reduced to a reflection of the Sitz im Leben of the early church. On the other hand, even if the judgment sayings were added to Q because they did serve the purposes of a frustrated church, this does not necessarily mean that they were creations of the early church. It is well within the realm of possibility that they drew on traditional material that adequately suited their needs.

A third argument against the authenticity of the judgment sayings is that they could not have come from Jesus because he was not “apocalyptic.” This is an issue that is

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19 Lührmann, Redaktion, 1969.
hotly contested in historical Jesus studies today, particularly among American scholars.\(^\text{20}\) This debate is often hampered by the use of the genre-based term “apocalyptic.” In this study, I will consistently use the broader term “eschatological” in order to acknowledge the myriad ways in which one can speak of the last days.

To my mind, any such global hypothesis must arise from a testing of individual units of evidence. Since sayings about the final judgment represent one of the key bodies of evidence in determining whether Jesus’ teaching was specifically eschatological or not, they particularly deserve an unbiased treatment. After all, our most reliable means of determining the extent to which Jesus may or may not have been eschatological involves analysis of individual passages. Therefore, to simply argue that individual judgment sayings are not authentic on the grounds that Jesus was not eschatological seals the verdict before the jury has deliberated. Once all the eschatologically oriented passages have been ruled out, Jesus is surely not going to look eschatological. However, there are enough examples of eschatological sayings in Q, Mark, M, L, John, and Gos. Thom. to justify treating it as a category worthy of consideration. If the final judgment passages by and large prove inauthentic on other grounds, then there is \textit{truly} cause to think that Jesus was not eschatological. If, however, these passages yield a body of authentic material, the case for an eschatological Jesus will be strengthened. Without an impartial testing of the final judgment sayings, either hypothesis has limited reach.

A fourth argument, that Jesus had an “irenic spirit” which was incompatible with preaching judgment, questions whether the final judgment sayings could have been

\(^{20}\) For the most recent incarnation, see the recently published debate between Dale C. Allison, Marcus J. Borg, John Dominic Crossan, and Stephen Patterson: Robert J. Miller (ed.) \textit{The Apocalyptic Jesus: A Debate} (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge Press, 2001).
spoken by the same man who exhorted his followers to love their enemies and to pray for those who persecute them. However, we shall see that these two perspectives are not necessarily incompatible. Furthermore, we must be careful not to draw conclusions based on preconceived notions of Jesus’ character and temperament.

What is missing in each of these arguments is a sober application of the criteria of historicity. The first two arguments are reliant on literary rather than historical tools. While they each have potentially important implications for the historicity of the sayings, they lack, in and of themselves, the ability to determine authenticity. The last two arguments boil down to presuppositions, neither of which has the power to prove what it presumes. On the other hand, these arguments do underscore the need for a systematic analysis of the final judgment sayings in Q using the criteria of authenticity.

These four lines of argument are pursued in one measure or another by many scholars who argue for the inauthenticity of Q’s final judgment sayings.

Burton Mack relies on the first two arguments in his assertion that Q’s wisdom sayings, which he identifies as Q¹, are indicative of the historical Jesus. They present Jesus in the mold of a cynic teacher.²¹ The judgment sayings found in Q² are creations of the early church as it struggled with rejection and ridicule from its Jewish contemporaries.²² As Mack puts it, “Mythmaking in the Jesus movement at the Q² stage


²² Mack, The Lost Gospel, 131-147.
was an act of creative borrowing and the clever rearrangement of fascinating figures from several other vibrant mythologies of the time."²³

Stephen J. Patterson also derives historical conclusions from the stratification of Q and a specific reconstruction of the Q community.

The Q apocalypse (Luke 17:22-37; Matt 24:23-28, 37-42), as well as the sayings of judgment aimed against “this generation” scattered throughout the document, affixed like barnacles to this earlier stratum of wisdom speeches, belong to a later edition of Q. They represent a moment of frustration in the history of the Q community itself, when it realized that the wisdom of Jesus was not having as great an impact as it had originally been hoped.²⁴

Consequently, he all but ignores Q’s final judgment sayings in his reconstruction of the historical Jesus.²⁵

Gerd Lüdemann, assumes that the final judgment sayings in Q originated within the community, and were generated in response to a failed mission and a desire to make some sense out of Jesus’ death.²⁶

Ron Cameron seeks to open up the historical implications of Kloppenborg’s literary study. He is critical of Kloppenborg’s distinction between literary history and tradition history in evaluating the potential authenticity of Q². “What is needed is a disciplined approach to Christian literature as the products of many moments of mythmaking, an analysis in which all texts and traditions are critically reimagined, placed

²³ Ibid, 149.


at the intersection of complex literary and social histories, and subjected to a detailed redescription.”

Marcus Borg bases his rejection of the judgment sayings on an overarching argument for a non-eschatological Jesus. The key factor in this hypothesis is a proposed tradition history involving the later development of the coming Son of Man sayings.

Furthermore, as we already noted, language about a “coming Son of man” who would function as advocate or judge at the last judgment is not intelligible in the pre-Easter setting of the ministry. But it is intelligible in the post-Easter setting of the early church, by which time the church spoke of the second coming of Jesus using the language and imagery of Daniel 7. The one who had been victimized and judged had now been vindicated and would return for judgment.

John Dominic Crossan likewise rejects the majority of Q’s final judgment sayings as inauthentic. Crossan’s method relies primarily on the criterion of multiple attestation. Sayings which are only singly attested naturally fall by the wayside. Of those Q final judgment sayings which are multiply attested, many are deemed inauthentic because they include reference to a coming Son of Man, which Crossan takes to be a later development. His chief evidence for this development is as follows: “But what is extraordinary is that I could not find a single case within those six complexes in which

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29 It is worth noting that while Crossan does employ Kloppenborg’s stratification of Q, he still places all of the Q material (Q¹, Q², and Q³) in his own “First Stratum” (documents composed between 30 and 60 CE). The judgment sayings are not eliminated as inauthentic because of their later incorporation into Q.
two independent sources both contained the Son of Man designation for Jesus.”

30 Any remaining multiply attested sayings are interpreted non-eschatologically.

Finally, numerous scholars have argued that many of Q’s final judgment sayings were originally proclamations of early Christian prophets that were later applied to the historical Jesus. Ernst Käsemann and M. Eugene Boring in particular provide sustained reflection and exposition on this hypothesis.

2. A Very Limited Number Are Authentic

Another group of scholars has deduced that only a small sampling of Q’s final judgment sayings are authentic. At first blush, it would seem that E. P. Sanders affirms the general authenticity of the final judgment tradition, concluding, “The kingdom will come as an otherworldly, unexpected event in which the righteous will be separated from the wicked.”

32 He even comments on the lack of attention the topic has received in critical reconstructions of Jesus.


32 E. P. Sanders, Jesus and Judaism (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 142. He concludes his section with the comment that “It would be rash to deny to Jesus this complex of ideas (a cataclysmic end in which a heavenly figure sends angels to separate the just from the unjust)” (146).
The general tendency of recent scholarship has been to give it little weight in depictions of Jesus. This can be done by simply not mentioning it, or by denying its authenticity, or (most frequently) by subsuming it under the general category of ‘future expectation’, which is then defined in less lurid colors. It is not my intention to give it prominence (as will shortly be explained), but I fear that it has receded in importance not so much because it has been proven to have played a small role in Jesus’ message as because of scholarly preference for less dramatic material.33

In spite of Sanders’ apology, he then proceeds to look closely at only those complexes which support the notion that Jesus spoke of a coming Son of Man. Furthermore, elsewhere in Jesus and Judaism, Sanders makes it quite clear that he places restrictions on the range of potentially authentic final judgment sayings. He rejects those sayings which are directed against either groups within Israel or Israel itself as later Christian inventions in light of Jewish rejection of the gospel.34 He also asserts that “there is no explicit teaching material about a judgment which would weed out the unworthy from Israel,”35 a comment which necessarily limits the scope of authentic final judgment sayings and enables him to affirm categorically that “selection will be of individuals.”36 Sanders further muddies the waters when he speculates that it is quite possible that the “two parables of selection constitute the only public teaching or proclamation about judgment which goes back to Jesus.”37

33 Ibid, 143.

34 Ibid, 114, 222. For example, woes against the Galilean cities, this generation and the Ninevites, and all other sayings using the formula ‘this generation’ are all deemed inauthentic.

35 Ibid, 116. This is, of course, true only if one has already eliminated a good number of final judgment sayings as inauthentic.

36 Ibid, 115.

37 Ibid, 115. The reference is to the parable of the tares and the dragnet found in Matthew. He offers no explanation of why such a limited selection should be made or why these two parables should be considered authentic. Obviously, this would leave no authentic passages within the Q tradition.
Jacques Schlosser, in his work on the kingdom of God, also demonstrates reserve about the authenticity of the tradition. He confines a strictly positive judgment to two sayings, only one of which is in Q. “Deux d’entre eux, au moins, pourraient bien remonter à Jésus, à savoir le logion affirmant qu’il vaut mieux entrer borgne dans le Royaume que d’être jeté avec les deux yeux dans géhenne (Mc 9,47 par.) et le dit de Q (Lc 12,5 par. Mt 10,28) qui appelle à craindre Dieu parce qu’il a le pouvoir de jeter dans la géhenne.”

He finds these two sayings authentic because of their Semitic coloration, their radical ethic, and because they urge moral action on the basis of threatened divine judgment. Similarly arbitrary criteria are also found in some of the older historical Jesus works.

Dieter Zeller discusses the authenticity of a number of Q’s final judgment sayings in his article, “Jesus, Q und die Zukunft Israels.” Although he is willing to concede that certain sayings (or parts of sayings) might reflect the voice of the historical Jesus, they primarily reflect the situation of the early church.

Wenn wir das Fazit aus dem Bisherigen ziehen, dann muß ich eine Verlegenheit einräumen. Die Meisten Gerichtsworte gegen Israel, aber auch die Verheißung Q 22,28.30b, schienen uns am ehesten als worte

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urchristlicher Propheten verständlich, obwohl sie teilweise (Q 13,34f.) aus
der perspektive des irdischen Jesus formuliert sind. Von den Worten, die
sich aus ihrem sekundären Sitz im Leben herauslösen lassen, kann man
diejenigen am ehesten für Jesus beanspruchen, die eine partikulare
Adresse haben. Die Weherufe gegen die galiläischen Städte Q 10,13-15
müßte er am ende seiner dortigen Wirksamkeit gesprochen haben.
Geringere Chancen, auf Jesus zurückzugehen, hat die im indirekten stil
gehaltene pauschale Verurteilung dieser ungläubigen Generation Q
11,31f., schon weil die darin implizierte Christologie zwar ohne Titel
auskommt, aber doch sehr deutlich die Rollen Jesu als Weiheitslehrer und
Umkehrprediger profiliert.\(^4\)

3. Interpreting the Final Judgment Sayings Non-eschatologically

A third group of scholars, following G. B. Caird\(^4\), interprets Q’s final judgment
sayings non-eschatologically. N. T. Wright treats the final judgment sayings in Q as
authentic, but he neither argues for their authenticity nor thinks they are really about a
final judgment. In keeping with his treatment of other apocalyptic material in the gospels,
Wright argues that the images are not intended to be taken literally. Rather, they are
symbolic ways of talking about historical realities.\(^4\)

There is virtually no evidence that Jews were expecting the end of the
space-time universe. There is abundant evidence that they, like Jeremiah
and others before them, knew a good metaphor when they saw one, and
used cosmic imagery to bring out the full theological significance of
cataclysmic socio-political events.\(^4\)

\(^{41}\) Ibid, 368.


333. Unfortunately, Wright mischaracterizes the vast majority of his opponents, who, in agreement with
Jewish second temple texts, do not think of an eschatological final judgment as an “end of the space-time
universe.” Rather, an eschatological final judgment signals the end of the old age with its sin, destruction,
and unfaithfulness, and the beginning of a new age characterized by reward of the faithful, the end of sin
and disobedience, and renewed closeness to God.
In the case of Jesus’ final judgment sayings, therefore, Wright argues that their point of reference is, in fact, not an eschatological final judgment, but rather a historical judgment of incredible significance.\textsuperscript{45} Jesus’ predictions of final judgment were really predictions of the temple’s destruction in A.D. 70 and the national judgment it entailed.\textsuperscript{46} Several other scholars also pursue this general line in reference to Q’s final judgment sayings, including Marcus Borg, and Richard Horsley.\textsuperscript{47}

4. Substantially Authentic

Another group of scholars proceed to treat Q’s sayings of final judgment as substantially authentic without addressing the topic in its own right. While one or two sayings might be explored in depth, more often than not, these sayings emerge in the context of two other conversations: in support of the hypothesis that Jesus fits into the mold of an eschatological prophet, or in an attempt to understand how Jesus conceived of the kingdom of God. Among those who proceed along these lines are: Bart Ehrman, Ben Witherington III, John P. Meier, Ben Meyer, Ed Condra, Gerd Theissen, Annette Merz, and Marcus Borg, Conflict, Holiness, and Politics in the Teaching of Jesus (Harrisburg, PN: Trinity Press, 1984, 1998), 221-31. Though Borg does make room for the authenticity of some final judgment sayings as eschatological, he insists that they remain on the margins of Jesus’ real message of socio-political judgment. Richard A. Horsley, Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987), 176-77, 195-99.

\textsuperscript{45} “This means that the warnings which utilize such language are not to be siphoned off as dealing only with some far-off future ‘final judgment’ in the sense of the end of the end of the space time universe.” Idem, Jesus and the Victory of God, 325.

\textsuperscript{46} For an excellent critique of Wright’s position see Dale Allison, “Jesus and the Victory of Apocalyptic,” in Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright’s Jesus and the Victory of God (ed. Carey C. Newman; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 126-41.

Scot McKnight, and Werner Kümmel. The constant in each of these studies is that discussion of the final judgment sayings inevitably serves another, larger purpose.

Other scholars have treated the topic in its own right and yet done little to argue for the authenticity of the tradition. For instance, Stephen Travis, in his book, *Christ and the Judgment of God*, prefaces his treatment with the following remark, “The survey will make some attempt to distinguish between different levels of tradition in the gospels, but it will not argue in detail for or against the authenticity of particular sayings of Jesus. Such questions are of fundamental importance, but to tackle them properly would make the discussion unacceptably long and complex.” T. W. Manson treats all of the pertinent sayings in *The Sayings of Jesus*, but he rarely argues for the authenticity or inauthenticity

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of the various passages.\textsuperscript{50} William Strawson assumes the authenticity of the few traditions he treats (all parables), only providing arguments for Matthew’s parable of the Sheep and the Goats.\textsuperscript{51} Joachim Gnilka reserves a section of his historical Jesus book, \textit{Jesus of Nazareth}, for sayings of Jesus involving judgment.\textsuperscript{52} However, with the exception of his treatment of \textsc{Q} 10:13-15,\textsuperscript{53} he provides only one significant argument for their authenticity: asserting that the immediacy of the coming judgment is characteristic of Jesus and can therefore be used to discern a saying’s authenticity.\textsuperscript{54} Unfortunately, this supposition relies solely on a tradition history that must be authenticated in its own right. Supporting evidence is simply not given. Finally, James D. G. Dunn includes a section on judgment in his reconstruction of the Historical Jesus.\textsuperscript{55} However, he by and large remains content to let the breadth of the tradition speak for its authenticity. Though he does address a number of arguments against the authenticity of specific sayings, positive argumentation is often lacking.

The list of historical Jesus works that have sought to authenticate a range of final judgment sayings is short. In a brief section of his book, \textit{Jesus of Nazareth, Millenarian Prophet}, Dale Allison argues the case for the authenticity of numerous final judgment


\textsuperscript{53} Ibid, 194.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid, 152, 156, 158.

sayings in two ways. First, he makes note of the abundance of sayings in the tradition that discuss the final judgment, rightly inferring that such broad representation heightens the possibility that the tradition goes back to Jesus.\(^5\) Second, he emphasizes one particular form that he argues can be traced back to Jesus because it includes a number of his characteristic rhetorical devices. These include: antithetical parallelism, the divine passive, aphoristic formulation, and unexpected or paradoxical content. He isolates three sayings which follow this form, two of which occur in Q. 1) “For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted” (Q 14:11). 2) “Those who try to make their lives secure will lose it, but those who lose their life will keep it” (Q 17:33 // Mark 8:35). 3) “Many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first” (Mark 10:31 // Gos. Thom. 4).\(^5\)

There are several limitations apparent in Allison’s treatment. Beyond pointing out the breadth of the tradition and treating the aforementioned three sayings, Allison makes no attempt to authenticate individual sayings. His goal is rather to affirm that the historical Jesus did speak of a final judgment. In regards to the three sayings involving “eschatological reversal,” there are additional difficulties. First, rhetorical strategies can play, at best, a secondary role in authentication. There is no way to demonstrate that particular forms go back to Jesus. The various examples of a given form could all be the creation of a Christian community, or they could have been multiplied as variations on a pattern that Jesus did establish. Either way, rhetoric does not help us to determine which


\(^5\) Ibid, 131-136.
sayings are authentic. Furthermore, it is not altogether clear that two of these sayings (Q 14:11; Mark 10:31 // Gos. Thom. 4) refer to a final judgment. Each of these sayings could refer to God’s dealings with man before the eschaton.58

Regarding Q’s final judgment sayings specifically, Allison expresses some reservation about the authenticity of the tradition. He too thinks that much of the material better reflects the situation of the early church than that of Jesus.

If Q¹ tells us much or more about Jesus than about anyone else, this is less clear with Q². Here indeed there are sayings—many sayings—which we should assign to Jesus, for example, the sayings about divorce, stumbling and forgiveness. There is nonetheless a significant shift in setting. Q² exhibits what Joachim Jeremias, in his work on the parables, famously catalogued as signs of secondary expansion in an ecclesiastical context. Although genuine parables may lie beneath them, 12:35-40 and 12:42-48 are now, for instance, allegories of the Christian experience. The master of Q 12:35-38 is the coming Son of man. The servants and stewards of the parables are Christian believers. The delay of the master (Q 12:45) is the delay of the parousia. Again, the warnings of Q 13:23-30, which probably originated as polemic, are now hortatory; and the condemnation of adultery in Q 16:18 has become a community regulation. So the new Sitz im Leben of Q², that of a settled Christian community, led to a reworking of the Jesus tradition and gave it new sense. Here then we feel the presence of the church almost as much as the presence of Jesus.59

As hard as it is to believe, there have only been two monograph-sized works on the theme of judgment in the teaching of the historical Jesus: Marius Reiser’s book, Jesus and Judgment, and J. Arthur Baird’s book, The Justice of God in the Teaching of Jesus. Reiser tackles a broad scope of final judgment sayings (including eight Q passages) under the twin categories, “The Judgment of Israel,” and “The Judgment of Individuals.”

58 For example, Bultmann treats these under the heading of “Jesus as the teacher of wisdom,” not under “minatory sayings,” and concludes that these sayings, “demand a new disposition of mind.” Bultmann, History of the Synoptic Tradition, 105.

59 Allison, Jesus Tradition, 61-62.

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Reiser’s work has much to commend it. He pays due attention to the second temple context of Jesus’ final judgment sayings and provides an excellent overview of the topic in general. However, this work has some serious deficiencies as a historical Jesus study. The first, and most important issue is a methodological one. In the introduction to his Jesus section, Reiser states,

I start from the assumption that it is not the assertion of authenticity, but its denial that requires proof, and that a saying or parable, in the oldest form that can be reconstructed, may be regarded as authentic, at least in its content, if that content fits within the rest of Jesus’ preaching and nothing speaks against its authenticity.  

Such a statement is methodologically problematic in historical Jesus inquiries. On the one hand, there are always potential arguments for inauthenticity, meaning that practically, there are no cases where one can simply argue that, “nothing speaks against its authenticity.” On the other hand, by its very nature, historical inquiry demands that the “burden of proof” lies on whoever is attempting to make the argument. Whether one is asserting a passage’s authenticity or inauthenticity, the onus is on that person to demonstrate the point.

The reality is that starting a historical study of Jesus and judgment with such a premise already eliminates all dialogue partners who do not agree with the initial presupposition that the sources are reliable. It is far more advantageous for scholarly progress to proceed with a set of ground rules that can be agreed upon as reasonably

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60 Marius Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 204.

logical by the largest number of people. It is the intention of this study to argue from a set of criteria that operate independently of a judgment about the overall reliability of the tradition.

Reiser does make a concession to the use of criteria, granting that, “Research has contributed a great deal to the understanding of the unique character of Jesus’ preaching. Therefore I will carefully gather and present the indications of authenticity in each case.”\(^{62}\) However, reasons are not given to support every passage.\(^{63}\) When reasons are provided, because actual criteria have never been spelled out, rather dubious reasoning often poses as evidence of authenticity. For example, his conclusion about the authenticity of the logion about the Queen of the South and the Ninevites (Matt 12:41-42 // Luke 11:31-32), the very first saying he addresses, reads as follows:

> In all probability, there is scarcely a word in the Jesus tradition that we can more confidently regard as authentic, even to its easily constructed wording. It is not only that nothing speaks against it, but that everything favors it: the Semitic diction and phraseology; the “rabbinic” argumentation; the strict form of symmetrically constructed double saying that has scarcely any parallels outside the Jesus tradition; the opposition between Jesus and “this generation,” that is the whole nation; the indirect, “open” Christology, reflecting the claim and self-understanding of the earthly Jesus; the importance of the present as the hour of decision concerning eschatological destiny, which is characteristic of Jesus’ preaching.\(^{64}\)

While at first glance this may seem an impressive list, a closer look reveals that every point is founded on a preconception. For example, there is no reason why a Christian

\(^{62}\) Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, 205.


\(^{64}\) Ibid, 220.
prophet could not have used “Semitic diction and phraseology,” or “rabbinic argumentation.” Similarly, someone besides Jesus could have been responsible for the “symmetrically constructed double” form of the saying (which he admits does have parallels outside the Jesus tradition). Reiser has neither previously established the probable authenticity of the “this generation” sayings, nor demonstrated that Jesus spoke them against the “whole nation.” To argue that the “open” Christology of the saying reflects the “claim and self-understanding of the earthly Jesus” necessitates our access to Jesus’ “self-understanding.” That the quest for the historical Jesus has produced so many answers to this question should give us pause. Nor is it sufficient to argue that Jesus stressed the present hour of decision. Some early Christian communities laid equal stress on the present hour of decision (i.e. Revelation’s letters to the seven churches). To what extent, then, has Reiser begun his study with a saying that we can “confidently regard as authentic?”

The second major deficiency of Reiser’s study lies in its selection of passages to treat. First, Reiser excludes all of the Son of Man sayings in order to demonstrate that the theme of judgment in the sayings of Jesus can be affirmed outside of this hotly contested

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65 Here Reiser is drawing on the work of scholars such as Jeremias, Black, Vermes, and Fitzmyer. This criterion argues that a saying that retains clear traces of an Aramaic original is more likely to be authentic. However, there is little debate that many Christian primarily used Aramaic, making it impossible to rule out an origin in one of these early communities. Furthermore, Aramaic continued to be used in parts of the Christian church (notably Syrian) up until the fifth century.

66 The basis of this presumption is the fact that certain rhetorical strategies appear with regularity in the Jesus tradition. These are taken to be indicative of the manner in which Jesus spoke, and thus buttress any claim to authenticity. Dale Allison (Jesus of Nazareth, 49-50) lists such strategies as: parables, antithetical parallelism, rhetorical questions, prefatory “amen,” The divine passive, hyperbole, aphoristic formulation, and the unexpected or seemingly paradoxical. There is, however, nothing to demonstrate that an early Christian prophet or community did not mimic the style of other dominical sayings.
By refusing to treat Son of Man sayings, Reiser eliminates almost every text in the tradition that benefits from the criterion of multiple attestation. Hence, he is already eliminating many of those sayings that are most likely authentic. In so doing, he runs the risk of skewing his depiction of Jesus’ views concerning final judgment. Second, he offers no reasons for choosing the material he does select. One is left to wonder if these are the only authentic traditions or if they are in fact indicative of the authenticity of all the final judgment sayings in the Jesus tradition.

J. Arthur Baird’s book, *The Justice of God in the Teachings of Jesus*, is even more problematic. To begin with, Baird’s treatment labors under the weight of the forty years since its publication. It simply cannot reflect the numerous advances in the field, from more sophisticated methodological presuppositions, to knowledge about Jesus’ second temple context, to four decades of textual reconstructions and exegesis.

Secondly, though it purports to be both a historical and theological treatment, its structure and argumentation reveal a use of sources that is more like systematic theology than historical inquiry. Texts are by and large not explored in their own right, but rather are marshaled as support for larger synchronic arguments. Even the layout of the book reflects this “synthetic” approach, with chapters entitled: the “Theology of Judgment,” the “Cosmology of Judgment,” the “Anthropology of Judgment,” the “Teleology of Judgment,” and the “Christology of Judgment.”

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Ironically, the book begins with a set of promising reflections on the criteria one might use in exploring the historical Jesus. However, the only criteria which he applies with any regularity is his “constructive approach: internal continuity.” Essentially this is an argument for overarching coherence. The authenticity of individual passages relies on this overarching argument at nearly every turn. Unfortunately, because individual passages have not been demonstrated to be authentic, the overall argument for coherence remains at the level of hypothesis. Ultimately, *The Justice of God* falls short as a historical Jesus study because it does not spend sufficient time sifting through the building blocks used in its foundation. In its haste to erect a pleasing edifice it has forgotten that a building stands or falls on its foundation: the treatment of the texts themselves.

Perhaps the best attempt to authenticate Jesus’ final judgment sayings can be found in Jürgen Becker’s book, *Jesus of Nazareth.* Not only does Becker devote an entire section of his reconstruction to the theme of judgment, but he also lists reasons for the authenticity of those passages he treats. The weaknesses of the treatment lie in its scope. 1) Because Becker’s judgment section intends to deal with the theme as a whole, not all of the passages discussed pertain to the final judgment. Hence, ultimately, only six or seven potential final judgment passages are treated. Of these, only three are found in Q. 2) Reasons for authenticity are listed, but are not argued for at any length. Nor are counter-arguments considered in any capacity.

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69 Ibid, 30-32.

This survey of secondary literature makes it clear that scholarship would benefit substantially from a sustained passage by passage treatment of the authenticity of the final judgment sayings within Q.

Methodology

Preliminary definitions:

Before proceeding with our study it is essential to define “final judgment.” Since the historical Jesus is the subject of our inquiry, this definition must be derived from the literature of late second temple Judaism. The “final judgment” is a principal feature, arguably the principle feature, of nearly every eschatological scenario from the late second temple period. It consistently represents the climax of what we might call the “old age” and makes the “new age” possible. In the final judgment, the wickedness, terror, and trials of the old age are done away with once and for all. The righteous are vindicated and the wicked are punished. This final judgment entails a concrete separation of the righteous and the wicked in a manner that ushers in a state of peace and joy for all those who have been “saved” from the previous age.

This separation of the righteous and the wicked is the key feature of every final judgment scenario. In the literature of the late second temple period this separation is enacted in one of two ways. 1) Salvation and punishment are meted out within the normal confines of history. This nevertheless represents an eschatological shift insofar as the

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nature of history is irrevocably changed, and a blessed new age begins. 2) The righteous and the wicked are relocated to their respective eschatological destinations (renewed earth, recreated earth, Heaven, Gehenna, Sheol, etc.). Occasionally, the righteous and the wicked are separated using both of these means. In this case, earthly salvation and punishment are not the final word, but rather function as a precursor to one’s final eschatological destiny.

Some scenarios contain an additional feature, a description of the *process of determining* which groups or individuals are righteous and which are wicked. Typically this process is depicted using judicial imagery. Though the decisions inevitably belong to God, they are often made (or pronounced) in the context of a divine “trial.” For those scenarios that incorporate it, this “trial” is an important part of the final judgment. It is, however, important to note that numerous texts from the late second temple period depict a final judgment without employing any such imagery.

The texts of the late second temple period use the motif of final judgment in a strictly historical context (i.e. the history of the world itself is fundamentally changed). Occasionally the image of judgment will be applied to what is commonly known as a *special judgment*, one that is undergone immediately after death, and could, ostensibly, represent an individual’s “last” judgment. However, the late second temple sources that depict a special judgment also point to a subsequent final judgment (Book of Parables, Book of Watchers, Epistle of Enoch, and Wisdom). Hence, the special judgment functions as a prelude to the final judgment. Practically, it anticipates the time of accounting, applying reward and punishment prior to the final judgment. In such scenarios, the emphasis of the subsequent final judgment typically falls on the *public*
disclosure of one’s divine judgment, good or ill. This study will make note of special judgment occurrences, but is properly concerned with the final judgment itself—the eschatological judgment that will be enacted within the course of history.

Sources:

A number of preliminary decisions must be made regarding source material before any attempt is undertaken to authenticate sayings of the historical Jesus. What are the dates of the Jewish texts that might provide us insight into Jesus’ time and context? What documents have the potential to yield authentic Jesus traditions? What are the relationships between these various documents?

Sources Employed in Discerning Jesus’ Jewish Context:

The background section of this study will survey pertinent Jewish material in the late second temple period, from roughly 200 B.C. through A.D. 70. The range of material has been chosen for a number of reasons. First, the trends in Judaism prior to and concurrent with Jesus’ ministry certainly had a formative influence on him. On the one hand, they would have contributed to his own ideas and perceptions. On the other hand, they provide the interpretive grid of his audience. If Jesus wanted to be understood, he must have talked in ways that would have been comprehensible. 200 B.C. provides a useful boundary on one side because it marks the beginning of the earliest Jewish apocalypses, which play a particularly important role in a study of final judgment.

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72 Both the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Sibylline oracles have been excluded from consideration because of the difficulty involved in discerning the precise limits of Christian editing.
Second, the formative ideas of Jesus’ Judaism did not vanish when he died. Hence, documents from the period after Jesus’ death also have the potential to reflect many of the ideas of the earlier period. Because of this continuity of trajectory, this study will seriously consider what materials up until A.D. 70 have to tell us about the time during Jesus’ ministry. Needless to say, there also needs to be an outer limit in discerning which material can provide us with an accurate representation of Jesus’ Jewish environment. The boundary of A.D. 70 was chosen because it marks the end of the second temple period. There is little doubt that the destruction of the second temple caused a fundamental shift both conceptually and practically within ancient Judaism. Texts written after 70 inevitably reflect these shifts, and consequently give us less clear insight into the Judaism of Jesus’ time.

Sources for the Study of the Historical Jesus:

This study assumes the validity of the two-source theory as a working hypothesis. Matthew and Luke independently used a copy of Mark as well as portions of the document “Q.” In this study, the extent of Q will be limited to those traditions in Matthew and Luke that demonstrate literary dependence on a source other than Mark.

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74 Whether the copy of Mark was nearly identical to our reconstructed text or was a different version, one which potentially explains a number of the minor disagreements, will have no bearing on the results of this study.

This study also accepts the position that the Gospel of John was written without using the synoptic gospels as a direct source.\textsuperscript{76}

Determining the exact relationship of the \textit{Gospel of Thomas} to the synoptic gospels is a bit more problematic. Various arguments have been advanced for Thomas’ dependence on the synoptics, and alternatively, for Thomas’ independence of the synoptics.\textsuperscript{77} Often, however, these two groups end up talking past one another because they fail to make an explicit distinction between oral and literary dependence.\textsuperscript{78} We will restrict our judgments to issues of literary dependence on the grounds that it is impossible to prove or disprove oral dependence. On a purely literary level, then, the arguments for the relative independence of the \textit{Gospel of Thomas} on the synoptics are much like those for the Gospel of John. 1) There is virtually no argument to be made on the basis of a similar order. 2) There is very little word for word correspondence. 3) There are only episodic reproductions of material that can clearly be identified as Markan, Matthean, or Lukan redaction. But the situation is complicated by the fact that the \textit{Gospel of Thomas} is


relatively late and there are some passages in the *Gospel of Thomas* that appear to reproduce synoptic redaction. This tension brings us to another common scholarly assumption: thinking that the literary dependence or independence of the *Gospel of Thomas* on the Synoptics is an all or nothing proposition.

Ultimately, the *Gospel of Thomas* must be treated as neither wholly independent nor wholly dependent on the Synoptic Gospels for the following reasons: 1) There is no way to determine how a document with as flexible a structure as the *Gospel of Thomas* came into being. It could have added sayings to its amorphous structure at any point and from any source. Some sayings might have originated in the synoptic accounts while others, added earlier or later, might be independent of them. 2) There is no way to determine the extent of scribal assimilation in the *Gospel of Thomas*. Most scholars agree that the synoptic gospels were widely disseminated by the time Thomas was compiled. There is always the possibility that an independent Thomas saying was changed by a scribe to look like a more familiar synoptic saying. 3) Even when dependence can be demonstrated for one logion, there is no way to know if the *Gospel of Thomas* is using the same source for another saying with a synoptic parallel. This is particularly true since the presence of doublets in the *Gospel of Thomas* (Logia 3, 113; 55, 101; 87, 112) make it extremely likely that the compiler did use more than one literary source. Therefore, the only prudent way to proceed, is to analyze each logion in the *Gospel of Thomas* on its own merits, discerning if it reveals clear traces of synoptic redaction.79 Thus, this study

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will treat applicable Logia in the *Gospel of Thomas* as potentially independent traditions.\(^{80}\)

**Redaction:**

In order to determine the authenticity of any historical Jesus saying one must first derive a most primitive form of the saying. Needless to say, this form is unlikely to represent Jesus’ *ipsissima verba*. Rather, our search for the most primitive form intends to take us closer to the historical Jesus’ *ipsissima vox*, the kind of thing that Jesus said.\(^{81}\)

Because we are looking for the general shape of the tradition in question, this study will confine itself to identifying only those redactional features that appear to be relatively clear additions or alterations. The following represent a loose set of criteria for determining redactional elements.

First and foremost, *concrete evidence* of redaction provides a basis for speculating about an earlier form. Practically, this means that most of our redactional assertions will be confined to Matthew and Luke, either in their use of Mark or in reconstructing the original text of Q. On those occasions when Mark and Q contain independent versions of a saying, redactional arguments may be used to help produce the most primitive version of the saying. However, this procedure will be much more tentative, since in neither case do we have access to earlier source material, making it far more difficult to identify

\(^{80}\) All other pertinent agrapha will also be treated in the course of the study, with their various potentials as independent witnesses to a Jesus tradition weighed in the process.

redactional tendencies. We will have no need to speculate about possible Markan redaction of a passage that lacks an independent attestation, because Mark only enters into the current study in texts where there is a Q parallel.

This leaves us with Q. By and large, I regard attempts to analyze the redactional program of Q on the basis of internal style, content, and wording without the presence of a contrary independent form to be an extremely speculative enterprise. To begin with, Q itself is a reconstructed document, dependent on a whole set of source critical and redactional arguments. There is disagreement among scholars as to the extent, order, and wording of the document. We have only theories, some better, some worse. In addition, the speculative nature of the enterprise can be seen in analysis of the methods used for redacting Q. For example, Dieter Zeller has outlined the following means of identifying redaction in Q.82

1) Evidence of “interpretive expansion” and “secondary commentary” can be assigned to the redactor of Q. The problem is there is no way to demonstrate that it was not originally part of the saying. The shortest version of a saying is not necessarily the most primitive version. 2) Analysis of the juxtaposition of units within Q gives us access to the intent of the redactor. This focuses on why and how originally separate traditions were joined. He points to catchwords, shared themes, and grammatical linkages as evidence of such joining. Along these same lines, he argues that the hand of Q’s redactor can be seen when blocks of sayings tend to form an “argument.” He is certainly right to assume that the content and shape of Q were ultimately the result of a redactor. Often, we

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are lucky enough to have access to a saying’s immediate context in Q, which enables us to grasp the redactor’s intent. Unfortunately, however, there is simply no way to determine the shape of any particular tradition prior to its incorporation in Q. This is particularly problematic because Q is primarily a collection of sayings, both aphorisms and parables, which could have easily circulated in isolation or in groups. After all, the presence of catchwords, shared themes, and grammatical linkages all underscore the natural connections between different sayings. Hence, while we may presume that Q’s final redactor “agreed” with any “argument” which emerged from the juxtaposition of sayings, this does not mean that the redactor was responsible for the argument. 3) Zeller further argues that repetitive elements are to be deemed redactional creations based on the assumption that the repetition implies that the author wanted it known, and therefore probably created it. However, repetition alone does not indicate a redactional creation. Zeller’s argument only holds true if the element can be shown to be unique to Q.\(^3\) Repeated elements that are also attested throughout the Jesus tradition are far less likely to be indicative of a redactor’s hand.\(^4\) Matthew and Luke’s reproduction of the same sayings from both Q and Mark offers concrete evidence against the supposition that repetition is a sign of creation. In fact, it may be that sayings represented more than once in Q have a greater claim to authenticity, possibly deriving from independent sources themselves. 4) Finally, Zeller argues that it is possible to isolate a “major framing

\(^{3}\) For example, without Luke we would have no way of knowing which uses of “weeping and gnashing of teeth” in Matthew were redactional. It would appear that Matthew originally found the term in Q 13:28, found it attractive, and freely applied it elsewhere in his gospel.

\(^{4}\) Lührmann’s (Redaktion, 32-48) emphasis on the redactional nature of the phrase “this generation” is a good example. He fails to consider that the phrase occurs five times in Q, four times in Mark, one time in M, and one time in L.
redaction.” One can then determine which logia do not explicitly share any of its features. These logia are then determined to have existed prior to the final redactor. This is a major focus of attempts to stratify Q.\textsuperscript{85} There is certainly some truth to this final procedure. However, its redactional implications are less than clear. First, it gives us information only about the theology of the final redactor. It neither offers us any information about the previous history of the material used, nor the various incarnations in which the document may previously have existed. Second, the incorporation of logia that do not explicitly support the final redactor’s “agenda,” suggests that the final redactor deemed them quite amenable. In the same vein, the plurality of interests, emphases, and agendas of Matthew, Mark and Luke warn against painting a two-dimensional portrait of Q’s final redactor. Third, a determination of what material in Q is most congruent with the perspective of the final redactor does not indicate whether this material has been created or adopted from the tradition.

At every turn we find that the redaction of a Q saying without parallel in the Jesus tradition is susceptible to pitfalls. Consequently, we will be extremely cautious in advancing arguments for Q redaction. Only on rare occasions can a redactional element be isolated with any assurance.

In order to adjudicate between two different versions of a saying, three criteria will be employed. 1) Redactions can be identified when there are two different versions of a saying and one can be explained on the basis of the source’s theology or agenda. 2) Redactions can be identified when there are two different versions of a saying and one employs vocabulary that is clearly characteristic of a particular source. This would entail

\textsuperscript{85} For instance, Kloppenborg, Formation, 89-101; Allison, Jesus Tradition, 36-40.
that the word or phrase is either lacking in the other sources of the Jesus tradition, or that the proportional use of the word or phrase greatly exceeds its use in the other sources. 3) Coupled with the existence of a contrary version, an author’s clear stylistic preferences may offer sufficient evidence of redaction.

Method of Authentication:

Authentication of the various sayings treated in this study will proceed in the following manner. First, each version of a given saying will be exegeted in its present literary context in order to grasp how it was understood and used by the evangelist. Second, source, form, and redaction criticism will be employed in order to determine the most primitive version of the saying. Here our focus will be on ascertaining the original sense of the saying, rather than the original words of the saying. Lastly, the criteria of authenticity will be applied in order to determine the degree of probability that a given saying originated with Jesus. It is important to emphasize that these criteria enable us to determine what was more or less likely to have been true of the historical Jesus. As in any historical enterprise, absolute certainty about the ancient past is beyond our reach. We are

dealing with probabilities. The probability that a given saying originated with the historical Jesus will rise when the conditions of one of the criteria are met. The probability will rise proportionally when the conditions for two or more criteria are met, demonstrating a convergence of different lines of evidence.

*Criteria of Authenticity:*

1) *The Criterion of Multiple Attestation:*

The criterion of multiple attestation applies on three levels. 1) When an actual saying of Jesus is reproduced in two or more independent sources. (Mark, Q, Paul, John, M, L, and *Gos. Thom.*). 2) When a saying of Jesus is reproduced in two or more different forms (parable, miracle, controversy, prophecy, aphorism, etc.). 3) When a distinctive theme or motif is multiply attested in independent sources. The probability that the saying originated with the historical Jesus rises with increased attestation from any of these categories. As with all of the criteria, multiple attestation does not guarantee an origin with the historical Jesus. As Meier has noted, “In an individual case it is not a priori impossible that a saying invented early on by a Christian community or prophet met the needs of the church so perfectly that it rapidly entered into a number of different strands of tradition.” Multiple attestation is nonetheless a powerful aid. On the one hand, it demonstrates that the saying or theme was not a redactional creation of the source in which it is found. On the other hand, it provides proof that the saying or theme derives

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from the very earliest stages of the tradition, enhancing the probability that it is, in fact, dominical and has its roots in separate lines of tradition.

2) The Criterion of Dissimilarity:

Typically the criterion of dissimilarity is used by historical Jesus scholars as shorthand for the criterion of double dissimilarity, meaning that a saying of Jesus which is dissimilar from both the Judaism of his time and the early church which followed him is likely authentic. This study will employ a different standard of dissimilarity, dissimilarity with the early church alone. The early church is the only group with a vested interest in the content of Jesus’ sayings. They are the ones responsible for the retention and transmission of the sayings. Therefore, one need only demonstrate that a saying does not correspond to the characteristic emphases of the early church in order to apply the criteria of dissimilarity. But how are we to identify the characteristic emphases of the early church? The only means we have is to rely on the documents that have been preserved by those who considered themselves followers of Jesus: the rest of the New Testament, the Apostolic Fathers, and some early New Testament Apocrypha.

89 This suggestion was first posed by Ben F. Meyer, The Aims of Jesus, 81-87. A number of scholars have begun moving in this direction, including: Tom Holmén, “Doubts About Double Dissimilarity: Restructuring the Main Criterion of Jesus-of-History Research.” in Authenticating the Words of Jesus. Edited by Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans. (New Testament Tools and Studies 28. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 47-80; and Dale C. Allison, Jesus of Nazareth, 52-53. N. T. Wright, Gerd Thiessen, and Dagmar Winter have posited criteria that also seek to make allowance for continuity with Judaism in their renditions of the criterion of dissimilarity. See Wright’s criterion of double similarity/dissimilarity, N. T. Wright, Jesus and the Victory of God, 131-33; and Theissen’s “contextual correspondence,” Kontextentsprechung under the category “contextual plausibility” Kontextplausibilität in Gerd Theissen, “Historical Scepticism and the Criteria of Jesus Research or My Attempt to Leap Across Lessing’s Yawning Gulf,” Scottish Journal of Theology 49 (1996): 147-76 and Gerd Theissen and Dagmar Winter, Die Kriterienfrage in der Jesusforschung. See especially the critique of dissimilarity (which functions primarily as a critique of double dissimilarity) on pages 19-171.
Fortunately, these documents contain a wide array of perspectives.\textsuperscript{90} Double dissimilarity can tell us what was unique about Jesus, but it stands as an unnecessary burden when it comes to authentication. The negative results of this burden are twofold. 1) It needlessly distances Jesus from his Jewish context. 2) It needlessly reduces what can be affirmed about the historical Jesus.

This study will not use the criterion of dissimilarity to reach negative conclusions (i.e. a criterion of similarity with the early church). To do so would be to operate under the false assumption that authentic sayings of Jesus are incapable of overlapping with the agenda and interests of the early church. If this were carried to its logical conclusion, the historical Jesus would simply become the opposite of the early church. The very fact that the movement embraced Jesus as its central figure tells that there were some areas of agreement, however minimal, which encouraged the initial identification. Since it is impossible to determine what these areas are using the criterion of dissimilarity, we must prescind from using it to draw negative conclusions.

There are obvious limitations to the criterion of dissimilarity.\textsuperscript{91} 1) Most problematic is that our evidence from the early church is limited in both quantity and form. 2) It is reductionistic to ascribe a single set of ideas to any large movement. Even on issues that were widely agreed upon within the early church there were bound to be some people who declined in various degrees from that view. It is, therefore, possible that a particular saying was created by such an individual or small group.

\textsuperscript{90} It should be noted that this material is also our only way of identifying the degree to which those who claimed to be followers of Jesus \textit{and} remained more distinctively Jewish might have imported words, sayings, and themes from the matrix of second temple Judaism into the Jesus tradition.

\textsuperscript{91} See especially Morna Hooker, “On Using the Wrong Tool,” \textit{Theology} 75 (1972): 570-81
Again, we are reminded that the tools at our disposal are only capable of pointing us toward the relative probability of authenticity. Historical reconstructions are essentially dependent on mounting probabilities. The most reliable conclusions can be drawn where multiple lines of probability converge.

3) The Criterion of Embarrassment:

The criterion of embarrassment is a heightened form of the criterion of dissimilarity. It applies to sayings of Jesus that were passed on in the tradition in spite of the fact that they were embarrassing to the early church. Presumably, the saying was well enough known that those appropriating the tradition felt compelled to retain, alter or reframe it rather than omit it entirely. Since there is no reason for the early church to have created such a saying, and ample reason for them to have disregarded it, the probability of its authenticity is raised.

Detecting embarrassment is always a difficult procedure, requiring a good deal more nuance than some of the other criteria. Four factors in particular complicate our application of the criterion. 1) A saying that is embarrassing to one person or group might not be embarrassing to another. 2) Embarrassment is a matter of degree. A saying that seems less than ideal to one person or group might seem thoroughly unacceptable to another. 3) While one person might feel a great need to eliminate potential embarrassments, another may be equally determined to faithfully present tension or

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92 We have examples of this in Matthew and Luke’s redaction of Mark. For instance, while between the two of them they reproduce the great majority of Mark, neither narrates the story of the double healing in Mark 8:22-26.
ambiguity. Yet another might take a middle course, taking more limited steps to alleviate the embarrassment in a way that leaves clear traces of the original saying. Different interpretations of a saying might render it embarrassing to one person or group and not to another.

Though each of these factors makes it more difficult to determine whether (and to what degree) the criterion of embarrassment applies, they do provide the historian with a distinct advantage as well. If every redactor found the same things embarrassing and was committed to eliminating them in their entirety, then there would be no trace of them in the Jesus tradition. We have access to sayings that are potentially embarrassing to the early church as a consequence of at least one of the four reasons above.

4) The Criterion of Coherence:

The criterion of coherence seeks to authenticate material by demonstrating its coherence within a larger framework of authentic traditions. Though it is ultimately dependent on the results of the other criteria, this criterion is particularly useful in its ability to draw upon disparate authentic strands of the Jesus tradition. As such, it performs a useful function in shifting our focus from the trees to the forest, locating Q’s final judgment sayings within a matrix of other authentic material. The criterion of coherence derives its force from demonstrating the inherent plausibility that a tradition is authentic given its relationship to a larger body of authentic material.

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93 See, for example, the slurs against Jesus that he is a glutton and a drunkard in Q 7:34.

94 An example of this would be Mark 2:18-20 par. See Meier, Marginal Jew, 2.439-50.
As we have seen, each and every one of these criteria has weaknesses and deficiencies. Unfortunately, they are the best tools at our disposal. Our chances of determining the authenticity of a given saying will rise in proportion to the number of criteria it fulfills, and the degree to which it fulfills them.

After a judgment has been reached about the most primitive form and authenticity of a given saying, its implications for the historical Jesus’ view of final judgment will be considered.

The Whole & The Parts:

The nature of historical Jesus scholarship makes it impossible to avoid the intrinsic connection between the whole and the parts. On the one hand, one’s conception of the historical Jesus naturally represents the sum of those passages that are deemed historical. On the other hand, no passage exists in a vacuum. Each must be considered in light of the rest of the tradition. Context is no less vital to questions of historicity than it is to exegesis. This is particularly evident regarding the criterion of coherence. Different historical Jesus studies have approached their reconstructions from different sides of this circle. Some have sought to adopt an overarching hypothesis and test it for its explanatory power--the more of the Jesus tradition it adequately explains, the stronger the

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hypothesis.96 Others have focused first and foremost on the authentication of individual passages and themes in the Jesus tradition, letting the parts give shape to the whole.97 This study will approach the authenticity of Q’s final judgment sayings in the latter manner. Practically, this means that while the criterion of coherence will draw on individual passages and themes, an overarching hypothesis will not be used as a criterion in the process of authentication.

The Scope of Q’s Final Judgment Sayings

Q contains twelve sayings that clearly refer to or presuppose a final judgment. The tradition could easily have been conceived of even more broadly. The following is a list of Q passages that will not be treated.

There are a number of Q sayings that most likely have the final judgment as a backdrop, including: “Beatitudes for the Poor, Hungry and Mourning,” Q 6:20-23; “Do Not Judge,” Q 6:37-38; “Wisdom’s Judgment,” Q 11:49-51; “Settling Out of Court,” Q 12:58-59; “Reversal of the First and Last,” Q 13:30; “Judgment over Jerusalem,” Q 13:34-35; “Exaltation of the Humble,” Q 14:11; “Insipid Salt,” 14:34-35; and “One Taken, One Left,” Q 17:34-35. However, they have not been treated in this study because, in each of these cases, one can reasonably interpret the saying without reference to the final judgment. Two other texts speak only in terms of the coming of the Son of

96 See, for example, Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*.

97 See, for example, Meier, *Marginal Jew*. 

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Man, “Son of Man Comes Like a Robber,” Q 12:39-40; “Son of Man Comes like Lightning,” Q 17:23-24, a theme which, though almost certainly connected with the final judgment, does not specifically involve the final judgment. “You will sit on Twelve Thrones,” Q 22:29-30 presumes a final judgment, but as it stands, it only speaks of the future reward awaiting the disciples.⁹⁸

Three passages which deal explicitly with the final judgment, “I Do Not Know You,” Matt 7:22-23 // Luke 13:26-27; “The Parable of the Banquet,” Matt 22:1-10 // Luke 14:16-24; “The Parable of the Entrusted Money,” Matt 25:14-30 // Luke 19:11-27, are often assigned by scholars to Q. There is no denying that the Matthean and Lukan versions of these sayings share an organic connection. In spite of their myriad differences, it is likely that they share a common ancestor. However, the question is whether they can be traced back to Q. If we are to take the idea of independent attestation seriously, the possibility must be entertained that two independent renditions of the same saying might be found within the gospel material that are not derived from the same literary source. The similarities between these sayings need not point to an identifiable literary source such as Mark or Q. Rather, the similarities might be indicative of a common oral or earlier literary ancestor that lies well beyond our reach. The saying in Matt 7:22-23 // Luke 13:26-27, and the parables of Matt 22:1-10 // Luke 14:16-24 and Matt 25:14-30 // Luke 19:11-27 are ideal examples of such a phenomenon. Though they share several key concepts—concepts that make it difficult to imagine that they are simply two similar utterances—they are so different in content, grammar, and vocabulary that the differences are best explained by appealing to the use of two different sources.

⁹⁸ In context, the verb קֵרַטָה certainly echoes the more expansive Hebrew קֵרַט and refers to
This is particularly true because, in the case of this saying and these two parables, satisfactory redactional explanations which cohere with Matthean or Lukan theology cannot be provided to adequately account for the numerous differences. For an in depth argument that these three passages do not derive from Q, see the appendix.

In this chapter we have established the potential fruitfulness of a fresh examination of Q’s final judgment sayings in relation to the historical Jesus. We have mapped out the nature of the sources at our disposal and established a method by which we may proceed. In addition, we have delimited the scope of final judgment sayings in Q. Before moving into analysis of Q’s twelve final judgment texts, however, we must first familiarize ourselves with various second temple views on the final judgment. These will provide the necessary context within which to explore Q’s final judgment sayings. To this endeavor we turn in chapter two.

THE FINAL JUDGMENT IN LATE SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM

The various late second temple sources do not yield a single coherent or consistent scenario of final judgment. In fact, seemingly incompatible elements and images can be found side by side even within a given text.\(^1\) However, when we take a step back, we will also notice certain lines of congruence among the various depictions. In order to clearly display these differences and similarities, we will consider the manner in which various depictions of the final judgment in the late second temple period answer seven major questions: 1) How is the final judgment depicted? 2) Who is the judge? 3) Who is judged? 4) What criteria are used in the final judgment? 5) Where is the final judgment enacted? 6) When will the final judgment take place? 7) What are the results of the final judgment? This layout has the advantage of addressing the salient features of the final judgment in the various sources in a manner that facilitates easy comparison and contrast for the reader.

The texts will be grouped according to the genre of the overall work. They are divided into six categories: Apocalypses, Poetic Works, Community Rules, Rewritten Scripture, Wisdom Literature, and Histories.\(^2\) This layout has two advantages. On the one hand, it clearly demonstrates that speculation about the last judgment was not confined to

\(^1\) See, for example, the treatment of the Epistle of Enoch.

\(^2\) Genre designations are a modified version those found in James C. VanderKam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000). Many texts, of course, have traits that involve more than one of these genres. In the interest of categorization we have focused on their most salient feature.
apocalypses. In spite of its inherently eschatological nature, the motif is found in a number of different genres. On the other hand, this layout encourages the reader to take seriously differences that exist between texts that are all too often read as a single corpus, such as the collection of books that form 1 Enoch, and the texts from Qumran.

Each treatment includes a short bibliography. These works consist of both general overviews and specific monographs that elucidate the text in question. Together they are intended to provide the interested reader further avenues of exploration regarding a specific text’s view of final judgment. In addition, each section will begin with a selection of important quotes pertaining to the final judgment that are drawn from the text in question. These quotes are not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, they provide the reader with a sampling of the most relevant verses, while preserving a portion of their original context.
Apocalypses

Apocalypse of Weeks: *1 Enoch* 93:1-10, 91:11-17*

The Apocalypse of Weeks is found in two sections of the book of *1 Enoch*, 93:1-10 and 91:11-17. This Apocalypse is generally thought to have been an independent source and is probably one of the earliest sections of the Enoch corpus. In all likelihood, it originated in the period directly preceding the Maccabean revolt. In the Apocalypse of Weeks, Enoch presents all of history from creation to the last days as a series of ten “weeks.” The seventh week marks the transition from history to prophecy.

93:8 After this there will arise a *sixth* week
and all who live in it will become blind,

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and the hearts of all will stray from wisdom;
and in it a man will ascend.
And at its conclusion, the temple of the kingdom will be burned with fire;
and in it the whole race of the chosen root will be dispersed.

9 After this, in the *seventh* week, there will arise a perverse generation,
and many will be its deeds,
and all its deeds will be perverse.

10 And at its conclusion, the chosen will be chosen,
as witnesses of righteousness from the eternal plant of righteousness,
to whom will be given sevenfold wisdom and knowledge.

91:11 And they will uproot the foundations of violence,
and the structure of deceit in it,
to execute judgment.

12 After this there will arise an *eighth* week of righteousness,
in which a sword is given to all the righteous,
to execute righteous judgment on all the wicked,
and they will be delivered into their hands.

13 And at its conclusion, they will acquire possessions in righteousness;
and the temple of the kingdom of the Great One will be built in the
greatness of its glory for all the generations of eternity.

14 After this there will arise a *ninth* week,
in which righteous law will be revealed to all the sons of the whole earth;
and all the deeds of wickedness will vanish from the whole earth and
descend to the eternal pit,
and all humankind will look to the path of eternal righteousness.

15 After this, in the *tenth* week, the seventh part, will be the eternal judgment;
and it will be executed on the watchers of the eternal heaven,
and a fixed time of the great judgment will be rendered in the midst of the
holy ones.

16 And the first heaven will pass away in it,
and a new heaven will appear;
and all the powers of the heavens will shine forever with sevenfold
(brightness).

17 After this there will be many weeks without number forever,
in which they will do piety and righteousness,
and from then on sin will never again be mentioned.

*I En. 93:8-10; 91:11-17*

How is the final judgment depicted? The final judgment of the Apocalypse of
Weeks plays out over the course of four “weeks,” numbered 7-10. Each of these weeks

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6 Translation: Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*. 51
represents a period of history, ultimately yielding a four-stage final judgment. The scope of the judgment increases with each week, until its climax in the tenth week.

Who is the judge? The identity of those in charge of executing the judgment shifts over the course of the four weeks. In the seventh week the judgment is carried out by a “chosen” remnant who function as “witnesses of righteousness” (93:10; 91:11). In the eighth week, a sword is given to the “righteous” and the wicked are delivered into their hands (91:12). The ninth and tenth week employ a passive construction, leaving the precise identity of the judge open to interpretation.

Who is judged? In the descriptions of weeks seven and eight, the final judgment of the Apocalypse of Weeks concerns an eschatological divide within Israel itself. On one side is the apostate generation that emerges out of the rubble of the sixth week, in which their hearts “forget wisdom” (93:8). On the other side are the “sons of righteousness,” the “chosen of eternity” (93:2). They are chosen by God at the height of his people’s apostasy in the seventh week (93:10). In the ninth week, however, the final judgment is extended to “all the sons of the whole earth” (91:14). Finally, the tenth week brings the “eternal judgment,” judgment upon the “watchers of the eternal heaven” (91:15). There is no indication that the dead are included in the final judgment.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? Those who suffer judgment both inside and outside of Israel are simply called the “wicked” (91:12, 14). As for the

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7 Contra Nickelsburg, who identifies only three judgments (Nickelsburg, I Enoch, 440). That the author wanted to maintain a distinction between the two judgments performed specifically by the chosen (one by witness, one by the sword), is reinforced by his division of them into two separate weeks.

8 The extent of the apostasy parallels the pre-exilic condition of Israel, in which only a remnant remained faithful, of whom Elijah was the chief representative. The final line in the description of the sixth week emphasizes the identification with a reference to Elijah, “and in it a man will ascend” (93:8).
pervasive generation, they are those who have “become blind” and “strayed from wisdom” (93:8) with the result that “all its deeds will be perverse” (93:9). In contrast, the saved are defined by their status as a remnant. They shall be “chosen” from “the eternal plant of righteousness” and shall receive “sevenfold wisdom and knowledge” (93:10).9

Where is the final judgment enacted? The final judgment begins in the land of Israel, is extended to the whole earth, and finally is consummated in the heavens.

When will the final judgment take place? The final judgment will begin at the conclusion of the seventh week, when a “pervasive generation” arises and the “chosen are chosen” (93:9-10).10

What are the results of the final judgment? The final judgment will bring destruction upon all the wicked (91:11, 14). For the elect, “there will be many weeks without number forever, in which they will do piety and righteousness, and from then on sin will never again be mentioned” (91:17).11

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9 On the self-conception of the “remnant” in the Apocalypse of Weeks, see Nickelsburg, I Enoch 1, 447-48; Fujita, “The Metaphor of Plant in Jewish Literature of the Intertestamental Period,” 30-45; Bauckham, (“Apocalypses,” 145) notes, “There can be no doubt that these elect are the group with whom the real author identifies and whom he regards as the righteous remnant of Israel in his own time.”

10 There is no need to be slavishly literalistic in assigning an equal amount of time to each week (Nickelsburg I Enoch, 440). Charles is right to note that the weeks are divided on the basis of some great event (Charles, The Book of Enoch, 228-29).

11 It is possible that this existence is in the “new heaven” (91:16) as argued by Matthew Black, “The New Creation in 1 Enoch,” 13-21. However, it seems more likely that a renewed earth is envisioned, one which is alluded to in 91:14. See Dexinger, Zehwachsenapokalypse, 143.
The book of Daniel was written in the late second temple period during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes (167-163 B.C.). The book of Daniel incorporates two depictions of the final judgment (7:9-27 and 12:1-3). Since the redactor of Daniel placed them alongside one another and they both deal with the judgment of the oppressive Antiochus Epiphanes, it is likely that the two scenarios were intended to be read in light of one another, each contributing to a single overarching conception of the final judgment.

9 As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient of Days took his throne…
10 A thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. Dan 7:9-10

26 Then the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and totally destroyed.
27 The kingship and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven

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shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them. Dan 7:26-27

1 At that time Michael will arise, the great prince who stands over your people. There will be a time of distress such as had not been from the beginning of the nation to that time. At that time your people will be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. 2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. Dan 12:1-3

How is the final judgment depicted? Daniel employs forensic imagery to depict the first stage of the final judgment. The judge sits upon a “throne” (7:9), the “court” is in attendance (7:10, 26), and the “books” are opened (7:10; 12:1). Precisely how the final judgment is subsequently executed is left undefined, but God’s direct intervention is clear. “As I looked, this horn [Antiochus] made war with the holy ones and was prevailing over them, until the Ancient One came; then judgment was given for the holy ones of the Most High, and the time arrived when the holy ones gained possession of the kingdom” (7:21-22). Ultimately, some are resurrected to “everlasting life,” while others are resurrected to “shame and everlasting contempt” (12:2).

Who is the judge? In chapter 7 the judge is clearly the Ancient of Days, who sits upon a throne of judgment. However, verse 9 speaks of thrones in the plural (יְהוָה). It is unclear whether these additional thrones are for the heavenly host or the coming “one like a son of man.” In any case, authority to judge is also conferred upon the “one like a son

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14 Translations: NRSV.
15 See discussion in Collins, Daniel, 300-01.
of man” (7:14), “the people of the holy ones of the most high” (7:27), and in chapter 12, Israel’s angel Michael (12:1).

Who is judged? The initial separation pits Israel against the Gentiles, symbolized by their kings. However, the final judgment is not simply national. In chapter 12 the final judgment expands, introducing a division within Israel and a division among the dead. Only those whose names are “found written in the book” (12:1) will be saved.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The division of humanity at the last judgment is ultimately based upon a dichotomy between the “wise” and the “wicked.” Though the Gentile oppressors are obviously included in the wicked, the category is not confined to them. This is made clear in chapter 12. “Many shall be purified, cleansed, and refined, but the wicked shall continue to act wickedly. None of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand” (12:10). These wicked are the ones who are “seduced with intrigue” and “violate the covenant” (11:32). They stand in

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16 For an excellent discussion of the distinction between the “one like the son of man,” the “holy ones of the most high,” and the “people of the holy ones of the most high” see Collins, Daniel, 304-10; 313-16.

17 Michael’s role has been variously interpreted as that of a judicial advocate of Israel or the executor of judgment. See Collins, Daniel, 390; and Nickelsburg, Resurrection, 12.

18 In light of chapter 11, Collins (Daniel, 391) is correct to point out that, “A significant qualification is introduced in Daniel, however; not all the people will be delivered, only those written in the book.”

19 It would seem that the wise and those who follow them are those who understand and adhere to the book of Daniel itself. Daniel is told to, “keep the words secret and the book sealed until the time of the end” (Dan 12:4). When the end comes and the book is opened, “none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand” (Dan 12:10). This makes it clear that one’s trust in and understanding of the message of Daniel itself have the potential of separating the wise from the wicked. The faithful in Israel will understand that they live in the last days and look to the victory of their God, while the wicked will continue in their wicked deeds, oblivious of the coming judgment. The wicked in Israel will then share in the condemnation that awaits the oppressive nations, because they abandoned their God.
contrast to the wise, who function as a righteous remnant and who will instruct the people in the last days (11:33).  

Where is the final judgment enacted? The final judgment is clearly executed on the earth. Both the destruction of oppressors and the consequent resurrection make this plain. However, it is less clear whether the “trial” is set in heaven or on earth. The fact that “thrones were set in place” may indicate that the heavenly tribunal has come to earth in order to render judgment.

When will the final judgment take place? The final judgment will take place after a period of intense suffering and trial. “And I heard him swear by the one who lives forever that it would be for a time, two times and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things would be accomplished” (12:7 cf. 7:25; 8:25; 11:32-35).

What are the results of the final judgment? The “wise” will be exalted. “They will shine like the brightness of the sky” (12:3). “Their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all domains shall serve and obey them” (7:27). In contrast, the dominion of Israel’s enemies will be “consumed and totally destroyed” (7:26) and the wicked shall be resurrected to “shame and everlasting contempt” (12:2).

20 On the idea of a “remnant” within Daniel, see Huebsch, The Understanding and Significance of the Remnant,” 157-68; Reiser, Jesus and Judgment, 39-40; Kuhn, Enderwartung und gegenwärtiges Heil, 92. Collins (Daniel, 385) notes that “The expressions and משרים are adapted as technical terms in the Qumran Community Rule for the master and rank and file of the sect.
The Animal Apocalypse: 1 Enoch 85-90

The Animal Apocalypse uses animals as part of an extended metaphor that details the history and future of Israel. It was probably written either directly before or after the Maccabean revolt. A description of the final judgment begins in 1 En. 90:20 and continues through 1 En. 90:38. Pivotal moments are found in the following verses.

And I saw until a throne was constructed in the pleasant land and the Lord of the Sheep sat upon it, and he took the sealed books and opened those books before the Lord of the sheep. 1 En. 90:20

24 And judgment was exacted first on the stars, and they were judged and found to be sinners. And they went to the place of judgment, and they threw them in the abyss; and it was full of fire, and it was burning and was full of pillars of fire. 25 And those seventy shepherds were judged and found to be sinners, and they were thrown into that fiery abyss...26 And they brought those blinded sheep, and they were all judged and found to be sinners. And they were thrown into that fiery abyss, and they burned. 1 En. 90:24-26

And I saw all the sheep that remained. And all the animals upon the earth and all the birds of heaven were falling down and worshipping those sheep and making petition to them and obeying them in everything. 1 En. 90:30

And all those sheep were white, and their wool was thick and pure. And all that had been destroyed and dispersed by all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven were gathered in that house. 1 En. 90:33

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21 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1, 345-408; Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 75-80; VanderKam; Introduction to Early Judaism, 105-107; Collins, Apocalyptic Imagination, 67-70; Reiser, Jesus and Judgment, 60-61; VanderKam, Enoch: A Man for All Generations, 17-24; Patrick A. Tiller, A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch (SBLEJL 4; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993); Black, Book of Enoch, 254-80; VanderKam, Enoch and the Growth of a Tradition, 160-70; Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah, 90-94; Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 351; Milik, Books of Enoch, 41-47; Charles, Book of Enoch, 179-217.


23 Translations: Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1.
How is the final judgment depicted? The final judgment in the Animal Apocalypse unfolds in two stages. It begins with God’s intervention on behalf of Israel, the sheep, in a time of fierce oppression. Israel’s enemies are laid to waste by Israel’s “sword,” beginning a rout of the nations (90:18-19). Then God assumes a direct role in the final judgment, and the imagery takes on an entirely judicial flavor. A “throne is constructed in the pleasant land” (90:20); the “sealed books” (90:20) are opened; the “first seven white men” (90:21) function as bailiffs; those to be judged are brought before the throne (90:21); there is a court scribe who functions as a witness (90:22 cf. 89:59-90:17); in each case, there is a judgment, followed by a verdict, followed by a sentence (90:24, 25, 26).

Who is the judge? The judge is the “Lord of the sheep,” God himself. At first he carries out his judgment through the sheep (90:18-19), but before long he assumes the throne of judgment.

Who is judged? For a time, the nations, represented by the beasts and the birds, are given over into the hands of the faithful in Israel. When God himself comes to judge, three groups suffer punishment. First to be judged are the “stars,” the rebellious angels known as the watchers (90:24). Second to be judged are the “seventy shepherds to whom God delivered the sheep” (90:25). These shepherds are angelic representatives of the Gentile nations (89:59-64). Last to be judged are the “blinded sheep,” Israelites who

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24 That all of Israel is not in view is clear from the emergence of “white sheep” (90:6) and the continued problem of blindness. See Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 76-77.
strayed from God and his covenantal commandments (90:26 cf. 89:32, 54). The judgment of the dead is also implied since the righteous dead are resurrected (90:33).

**What criteria are used in the final judgment?** All those who suffer the wrath of God in the final judgment are categorized as “sinners” (90:24, 25, 26), but the nature of their sins vary from group to group. The “stars,” are guilty of rebellion against God and corrupting creation (86:1-6). The “seventy shepherds” are guilty of killing more sheep than God commanded (90:22). The “blinded sheep” are guilty of apostasy, straying from their God and his commandments (89:32-33, 51-54). Those sheep that remain are “all good and had returned to that house” (90:33).

**Where is the final judgment enacted?** Both stages of the final judgment take place on earth. The Gentile nations flee before the sword of Israel on the earth and God’s throne of judgment is constructed in “a pleasant land” (90:20).

**When will the final judgment take place?** The final judgment takes place when the Gentile oppression of Israel reaches a climax. The destruction of innocent sheep moves God to act on behalf of his people (90:17-18).

**What are the results of the final judgment?** The fallen angels, the angelic representatives of the nations, and the apostate Israelites are all cast into the “fiery abyss” (90:24-27). The nations themselves are punished for a period at the hands of Israel, which receives a “sword” (90:19) from God, but this sword is put away in the latter stage of the final judgment (90:34). The gentiles that remain worship the sheep and obey them in everything. Ultimately, as all of creation is restored, the gentiles become one with the

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people of God, restoring the initial order of things (90:38 cf. 89:9-12). The good sheep dwell in an eschatological temple and have dominion over the nations (90:28-29, 30). They are joined by those sheep who died at the hands of the gentiles, thus depicting a resurrection of the righteous (90:33). Sin is done away with once and for all. “The eyes of all were opened, and they saw good things; and there was none among them that did not see” (90:35). Finally, with the advent of an eschatological figure, the whole of humanity returns to its former state of righteousness. History has come full circle and there is a new beginning (90:37-38).

The Book of Parables: *I Enoch* 37-71

Though some still argue a later date for the Book of Parables, we will follow the emerging consensus that it was written prior to 70 C.E. Though references to the final judgment in the Book of Parables are ubiquitous, it is impossible to construct a single overarching final judgment scenario. Two of the myriad scenarios are reproduced below.

10 But the Lord of Spirits himself will press them [the kings and mighty], so that they will hasten to depart from his presence; and their faces will be filled with shame, and the darkness will grow deeper on their faces.

11 And he will deliver them to the angels for punishment, so that they may extract retribution from them for the iniquity that they did to his children and his chosen ones.

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27 See the discussion in Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 177-78.
1 En. 62:10-11

27 And he [son of man] sat on the throne of his glory,
   and the whole judgment was given to the son of man,
   and he will make sinners perish from the face of the earth.
28 And those who led the world astray will be bound in chains,
   and in the assembly place of their destruction they will be confined;
   and all their works shall vanish from the face of the earth,
29 And from then on there will be nothing corruptible;
   for the son of man has appeared. 1 En. 69:27-29

How is the final judgment depicted? The Book of Parables employs a host of different images in its depiction of the final judgment. It describes an eschatological battle (56:5) and a visitation of the divine in the person of the Son of Man, who brings destruction upon the wicked (46:4-8), but life to the righteous (48:4-7). In addition, there are numerous depictions of a trial (45:3-6; 47:3-4; 61:8; 62-63; 69:27-29). These include the following motifs: weighing deeds in a balance (41:1; 61:8); testing works (45:3); opening books (47:3); a throne of judgment (47:3; 61:8); and a court (47:3). A special judgment is also implied. The souls of the righteous dead continue to intercede for the sons of men (39:4-5; 49:3). Sinners are kept for the day of affliction and tribulation neither in heaven nor on earth (45:2), but in some other undisclosed location.

Who is the judge? The Book of Parables occasionally refers to the Ancient of Days as the judge (47:3-4), but by and large the judge is the “chosen one” (45:3; 51:3; 56:4; 61:8; 62:2), also called the Son of Man (46:4; 49:4; 62:5, 7, 9; 63:11; 69:27), God’s agent of salvation and condemnation. The final judgment is variously carried out by the Son of Man, the righteous (38:5; 47:9), and the angels who will wage war and punish the wicked (54:6; 56:5; 62:11).

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Who is judged? The scope of the final judgment is universal. It seems to include all of creation: the living and the dead (51:1), the wicked and the righteous (60:25; 61:8), the nations and Israel (46:4; 53:6-7; 62:1-2), men and angels (54:1-6).

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The wicked are judged for their sins (38:1; 46:7; 47:8; 56:8). Chief among the offences of the wicked is the charge that they have “denied the Lord of Spirits” (38:2; 41:8; 45:1, 2; 46:7; 48:10) and “his anointed one” (48:10). They have failed to “exalt or praise” either the Son of Man or the Lord of Spirits (46:5-6). There will be one final opportunity for repentance (50:1-5), but unrighteousness will not stand in the presence of the Lord of Spirits. Those who are saved are the “righteous and chosen” (38:2, 3, 4; 39:6, 7; 58:1), those set aside to receive mercy on the day of judgment.

Where is the final judgment enacted? Though the resurrection of the righteous and wicked dead implies that the judgment is executed on earth, the setting of at least some of the several trial accounts is in heaven (47:3-4; 61:8).

When will the final judgment take place? There is no clear timeline for the final judgment besides the enigmatic “when his hidden things are revealed to the righteous, the sinners will be judged” (38:3). This revelation of the hidden things could refer to the Book of Parables itself.

What are the results of the final judgment? Destruction awaits the wicked (38:5-6; 45:6). “Darkness will be their dwelling and worms will be their couch” (46:6). Wicked men and wicked spirits cast into valleys of torture and destruction (53:1-54:6). The righteous can expect eternal life (58:3) in a transformed heaven and earth (45:4). This new creation is reserved for the chosen ones.
The Testament of Moses

It is widely agreed that the present form of the Testament of Moses should be traced back to the beginning of the first century A.D. The Testament of Moses purports to be the last words of Moses as they were delivered to Joshua. In it, Moses prophesies about Israel’s future. The climax of the prophecy is the discussion of the final judgment in chapter 10.

1. Then his kingdom will appear throughout his whole creation.
   Then the devil will have an end.
   Yea sorrow will be led away with him.

2. Then will be filled the hands of the messenger, who is in the highest place appointed.
   Yea, he will at once avenge them of their enemies.

3. For the Heavenly One will arise from his kingly throne.
   Yea, he will go forth from his holy habitation with indignation and wrath on behalf of his sons. Test. Mos. 10:1-3

7. For God Most High will surge forth, the Eternal One alone.
   In full view will he come to work vengeance on the nations.
   Yea, all their idols will he destroy.

8. Then will you be happy, O Israel!

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And you will mount up above the necks and wings of an eagle.\
Yea, all things will be fulfilled.

And God will raise you to the heights.
Yea, he will fix you firmly in the heaven of the stars,
in the place of their habitations.

And you will behold from on high.
Yea, you will see your enemies on the earth. Test. Mos. 10:7-10

How is the final judgment depicted? The final judgment is depicted as a mighty
theophany, in which “his kingdom will appear throughout his whole creation” (10:1).

Who is the judge? Test. Mos. 10:2 speaks of “filling the hands of the messenger,
who is in the highest place appointed,” so that he may “avenge them of their enemies.” It
is impossible to know the precise identity of this figure. In verses 3 and 7, however, it is
clearly God himself who does battle on behalf of his people.

Who is judged? The final judgment falls entirely upon Israel’s enemies, the
idolatrous nations who have oppressed Israel (10:7-8). There is no mention of
resurrection.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The judgment proceeds entirely
along national lines, pitting Israel against the nations (10:7-8).

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31 The wording of this passage is somewhat ambiguous, making it possible that the symbolic eagle
is being used negatively. For a positive interpretation of the eagle see, Tromp, Assumption of Moses, 236.
For a negative interpretation see, John J. Collins, “Composition and Redaction of the Testament of Moses,”
HTR 69 (1976):179-86.

32 Translations: J. Priest, “Testament of Moses,” in OTP.

33 Possibilities include Michael and Taxo. See Tromp, Assumption of Moses, 229-31.

34 As Resier (Jesus and Judgment, 88) correctly deduces, “The Testament of Moses is thus an
eample of a purely national, historical eschatology in which the purpose of judgment is the destruction of
the enemy nations and the exaltation of Israel to the heavens.”
Where is the final judgment enacted? The final judgment transpires on earth, which is utterly changed by the manifestation of God (10:4-6).

When will the final judgment take place? The advent of the final judgment is linked directly to the martyrdom of Taxo and his sons at the conclusion of chapter 9. “For if we do this, and do die, our blood will be avenged before the Lord” (9:7).

What are the results of the final judgment? After the wrath of the Lord is poured out on the nations, they will be left on earth (10:10) as Israel is raised to the “heights” and fixed “firmly in the heaven of the stars” (10:9).

Poetic Works

Psalms of Solomon

The Psalms of Solomon consists of eighteen Psalms on various subjects that are attributed to Solomon. There is widespread agreement that they were composed in the years directly following Pompey’s conquest of Jerusalem in 63 B.C. In terms of the


final judgment, there are significant differences between the first sixteen Psalms and the final two. Following are key quotes from the two Psalms which best represent these divergent scenarios, Ps. Sol. 15 and 17.

10 And the inheritance of sinners is destruction and darkness, and their lawless actions shall pursue them below in Hades.

11 Their inheritance shall not be found for their children, for lawless actions shall devastate the homes of sinners.

12 And sinners shall perish forever in the day of the Lord’s judgment, when God oversees the earth at his judgment.

13 But those who fear the Lord shall find mercy in it and shall live by their God’s mercy; but sinners shall perish for all time. Ps. Sol. 15:10-13

30 And he will have the gentile nations serving under his yoke, and he will glorify the Lord in (a place) prominent (above) the whole earth. And he will purge Jerusalem (and make it) holy as it was even from the beginning,

31 (for) nations to come from the ends of the earth to see his glory, to bring as gifts her children who had been driven out, and to see the glory of the Lord with which God has glorified her.

32 And he will be a righteous king over them, taught by God. There will be no unrighteousness among them in his days, for all shall be holy, and their king shall be Lord Messiah. Ps. Sol. 17:30-32

How is the final judgment depicted? The first sixteen Psalms refer to the final judgment as a time when God will come and recompense the righteous and the wicked for their deeds. The last two Psalms, however, focus on the advent of a Messiah, who will mete out judgment, vindicate the righteous, and restore holiness to Israel.

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37 Translations: R. B. Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” in OTP.
Who is the judge? In the first group of Psalms, God directly overseas the final judgment on earth (15:4-5, 12). In Psalms 17 and 18, the Messiah is the agent of judgment.

Who is judged? The first grouping speaks of a division between the righteous and the wicked (15:10). It would seem that this division pertains to those within Israel as well as the nations (4:1; 8:13). Psalm 17 describes a division between the “assemblies of the devout” (17:16) a remnant that was forced into exile, and the rest of Israel. When the Messiah comes, this remnant will be joined by a purified and restored Israel (17:26), so that condemnation ultimately falls primarily upon the nations who have opposed God’s covenant people (17:3, 24-25, 28). There is no mention of the fate of the dead at the final judgment, though a special judgment which consigns the wicked to Hades prior to the final judgment may be in view (15:10).

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The Psalms are in agreement that deeds are the primary criterion of final judgment (9:5; 15:8, 10; 17:27). Mercy will be shown to those whose lives are lived in pursuit of righteousness (15:12-13). In Psalm 17 these people are first and foremost the members of the exiled “assemblies of the devout,” but they will be joined by a purified Israel.

Where is the final judgment enacted? The final judgment is enacted on the earth and emphasizes the centrality of Jerusalem.

When will the final judgment take place? Psalm 17 speaks of the timing of the final judgment simply as a “time known to you” (17:21), while Psalm 18 seems to

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38 See Falk, “Psalms of Solomon,” 35-51; Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 93-98.
envisage a time in the more distant future, “Blessed are those born in those days, to see the good things of the Lord which he will do for the coming generation” (18:6).

What are the results of the final judgment? The first grouping of Psalms speak of the eternal destruction of the sinners (2:31; 3:11; 13:11), who are consigned to Hades and darkness (14:9; 15:10). Those who fear the Lord can expect eternal life (3:12; 13:11). They will receive mercy on that day (14:9; 15:13). Psalms 17 and 18 speak of the new age in terms of the reign of the Messiah. Jerusalem will be purged (17:30) and there shall be no unrighteousness in Israel (17:32). The Messiah will rule over Israel and the nations as God’s righteous king (17:29).

Hodayot

Hodayot is a collection of hymns found among the Dead Sea Scrolls all of which were written in the first person singular. The Teacher of Righteousness, who played such a pivotal role in the community’s development and theology, probably authored many of

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these hymns. Though allusions to the final judgment are scattered throughout the hymns, in none of them is it the center of focus. Among the key passages that deal with the final judgment are the following:

34 For God will thunder with the roar of his strength, and his holy residence echoes with the truth of his glory, and the host of the heavens adds to their noise, [and] the eternal foundations melt and shake, and the battle of heavenly heroes roams unceasingly over the earth, until the determined eternal unparalleled destruction. 1QH 11:34-36

For, at the judgment you pronounce guilty all those who harass me, separating the just from the wicked through me. 1QH 15:12

How is the final judgment depicted? In some Psalms, the final judgment is depicted as a battle in which the sons of truth destroy the sons of wickedness (14:29-30). Elsewhere, the final judgment is enacted by the host of heaven (11:34-36). Trial imagery is often employed in the context of judgment (18:34-35; 20:13), but never in a specifically eschatological context.

Who is the judge? The heavenly host (11:34-36) and the sons of truth (14:29-30) carry out the final judgment.

Who is judged? Hodayot is principally concerned with the judgment of the wicked within Israel, those who oppose the Teacher of Righteousness, and the sons of truth. There is no mention of a judgment of the dead.


43 For a full discussion of the titles assigned to those inside the community and those outside the community see S. Holm-Nielson, Hodayot, 290-93.
What criteria are used in the final judgment? The saved are defined by their allegiance to the Teacher of Righteousness and their membership in his congregation (10:8-10; 12:7-8, 23-25, 27; 15:20-22). “For, at the judgment you pronounce guilty all those who harass me, separating the just from the wicked through me” (15:12). Those who follow the Teacher of Righteousness are equated with those who keep the covenant (12:23-24). They form a remnant (14:8) and have special knowledge that sets them apart (4:21-22; 6:2-3; 25). This knowledge is mediated to the community through the Teacher of Righteousness, underscoring his importance to the congregation (10:13-14, 17-18; 12:27; 13:25; 20:11-13). The wicked, on the other hand, live in opposition to the Teacher, his community, and the revelation that he has received. They are described as “mediators of deceit,” and “the congregation of the seekers of flattering things” (10:31-32). They are “hypocrites” (12:13), who have sought to “change your Law, which you engraved in my heart, for flattering teachings for your people” (12:10).

Where is the final judgment enacted? There is nothing to suggest that the final judgment extends beyond the earth.

When will the final judgment take place? The initial stages of the final judgment are already unfolding in the mistreatment of the Teacher of Righteousness and his community. Their vindication in the final judgment lies in the near future.

What are the results of the final judgment? The wicked will be utterly destroyed (12:26-27). “At the judgment you will annihilate all the men of deception” (12:20). Those who belong to the community of the Teacher of righteousness, faithfully following his

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44 Garnet (Salvation and Atonement at Qumran, 116) correctly notes the direct connection between allegiance to the Teacher and obedience to the law. “In the thinking of the community there could be no
interpretation of the Torah, will receive mercy from God (15:29-31; 17:14-15). They will be made “Princes in the lo[t of your holy ones]” (14:14). The same spring that brings the righteous eternal light, will be a “fire that singes all the men of guilt until destruction” (14:18-19). There is also suggestion of a continued life for the righteous “in communion with the congregation of the sons of heaven” (11:19-23).

Community Rules

Rule of the Community

In Rule of the Community, we have the best access to the life and views of the Qumranite community. Rule of the Community functions as a rule (דרור) for establishing community expectations and regulations. In Rule of the Community the impending final judgment is evoked in order to underscore the importance of the community and its regulations. Some of the most important references to the final judgment include the following:

effective obedience to the Law unless there was belief in the Teacher of Righteousness and his inspired interpretations of it.”

7 Accursed are you, without mercy, according to the darkness of your deeds, and sentenced to the gloom of everlasting fire. May God not be merciful when you entreat him. 1QS 2:7-8

25 And anyone who declines to enter [the covenant of God] in order to walk in the stubbornness of his heart shall not [enter the Community] of his truth, since 3:1 his soul loathes the disciplines of the knowledge of just judgments. He has not the strength to convert his life and he shall not be counted with the upright. 1QS 2:25-3:1

11 And the visitation of all those who walk in [the spirit of deceit] will be for an abundance of afflictions at the hands of the angels of destruction, for eternal damnation by the scorching wrath of the God of revenges, for permanent terror and shame without end with the humiliation of destruction by the fire of the dark regions. And all the evils of their generations (they shall spend) in bitter weeping and harsh evils in the abysses of darkness until 14 their destruction, without there being a survivor for them. 1QS 4:11-14

10 He [the initiate] should swear by the covenant to be segregated from all the men of injustice who walk along the path of wickedness. For they are not included in his covenant since they have neither sought nor examined his decrees in order to know the hidden matters in which they err by their own fault and because they treated revealed matters with disrespect; this is why wrath will rise up for judgment in order to effect revenge by the curses of the covenant, in order to administer fierce punishments for everlasting annihilation without there being any remnant. 1QS 5:10-13

How is the final judgment depicted? Rule of the Community occasionally employs trial imagery. For example, it speaks of the “sentence” God imposes on the lot of Belial (2:7), and the community functions as “true witnesses for the judgment” (8:5-6). There is, however, no actual description of a divine trial. Rather the emphasis falls on the execution of the final judgment, which is described as a divine “visitation” (4:11).

Who is the judge? Those who execute the final judgment are variously described as “all those carrying out acts of vengeance” and “those who accomplish retributions” (2:6-7); the community (8:6-7); the “angels of destruction” (4:12); and God himself (4:12-14).

Who is judged? Though the Gentiles are certainly destined for destruction due to their idolatry and wickedness, *Rule of the Community* is far more concerned with a division within Israel—a division between the wicked and faithless in Israel on whom the covenant curses will fall (5:12) on the one hand, and the members of the community on the other. There is nothing to suggest that the judgment extends to the dead.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The primary criterion for salvation is membership in the community. Its members belong to a special covenant (1:16-18; 5:7-8) and are cleansed by the “holy spirit of the community” (3:7-8). As those who have chosen to “freely volunteer to convert” they are instructed to “keep themselves apart from the men of injustice” (5:1-2). This community is the “tested rampart, the precious cornerstone” (8:5-8). Membership in the community is attributed to both election (3:20-21; 4:22), and choice (1:7; 3:8; 5:6, 13-14, 22), but the one who does not belong to the community “has not the strength to convert his life and he shall not be counted with the upright” (3:1). Those who have converted and become members of the community are expected to maintain strict faithfulness to the Torah (1:15-18; 3:9-11). They are the righteous remnant, and consequently will be saved at the final judgment.47 In addition they have access to special knowledge that is imparted by the community (1:3; 2:3; 4:6; 5:9-10; 9:18-19; 11:15-16). Obedience to this special knowledge is one of the chief

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features that sets them apart from the rest of errant Israel. The community also receives
God’s grace and mercy (11:9-15), the very things denied to those who have spurned the
community (2:7-8). The “sons of deceit” (3:21), “men of the lot of Belial” (2:4-5), are
guilty of every type of sin (4:9-11), including treatment of “revealed matters with
disrespect” (5:12).

*Where is the final judgment enacted?* There is nothing to suggest that the final
cjudgment extends beyond the earth.

*When will the final judgment take place?* There is no timeline for the final
cjudgment. Rather, it is its inevitability that is underscored.

*What are the results of the final judgment?* The fate of the wicked entails eternal
damnation, terror, shame, weeping, and harsh evils in the “abysses of darkness” (4:12-
14). Those who are saved will undergo refining (4:20-22) so that they might be free of
sin. In addition, they will receive “healing, plentiful peace in a long life, fruitful offspring
with all everlasting blessings, eternal enjoyment with endless life, and a crown of glory
with majestic raiment in eternal light” (4:6-8).

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48 It should be noted that the community behind *Rule of the Community* may have anticipated
winning over much of wayward Israel before the end. There clearly remains a hope that many in Israel will
come to their senses and join the community. See Bockmuehl, “*Rule of the Community* and Salvation at
Qumran,” 381-414.
Damascus Document⁴⁹

The Damascus Document, much like the Rule of the Community, represents a community rule. Though it is present in Qumran, the Damascus Document appears to have been intended for Essenes who live throughout the land of Israel.⁵⁰ Among the most important references pertaining to the final judgment is the following:

2 And now, listen to me, all who enter the covenant, and I will open your ears to the paths of 3 the wicked. God loves knowledge; he has established wisdom and counsel before him; 4 prudence and knowledge are at his service; patience is his and abundance of pardon, 5 to atone for those who repent from sin; however, strength and power and a great anger with flames of fire 6 by the hand of all angels of destruction against those turning aside from the path and abominating the precept, without there being for them either a remnant 7 or survivor. For God did not choose them at the beginning of the world, and before they were established he knew 8 their deeds, and abominated the generations on account of blood and hid his face from the land, 9 from (Israel), until their extinction…11 he raised up men of renown for himself, to leave a remnant for the land and in order to fill 12 the face of the world with their offspring. CD 2:2-9, 11-12⁵¹

How is the final judgment depicted? The final judgment is depicted as a mighty theophany, a visitation from God (8:3) in which the enemies of the community are destroyed.


⁵⁰ VanderKam, Dead Sea Scrolls Today, 55-57; Hempel, The Damascus Texts, 54-70.

Who is the judge? The judgment is meted out by a number of different figures, including: Angels of destruction (2:5-6), a Messiah (7:20-21), and God himself (1:2). Even Belial serves as a tool for punishing the wicked (8:2).

Who is judged? Judgment clearly encompasses the Gentile nations, but the Damascus Document is chiefly concerned with a division within Israel. There is no mention of resurrection or a judgment on the dead.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? Only those who belong to the community of the “converts of Israel” (4:2; 6:5; 8:16), “who turned aside from the path of the people” (8:16) are assured of salvation. They are those who entered the new covenant (2:2; 6:19; 8:1; 15:5-10; 19:16, 33-34), and who live in allegiance to the Teacher of Righteousness (1:11; 20:28, 32) and his divinely revealed interpretation of the Torah (1:10-11; 2:14-16). Those destined for punishment are a “congregation of traitors” (1:12). “These are the ones who stray from the path” (1:13). They “sought easy interpretations, chose illusions, scrutinized loopholes…violated the covenant, broke the precept, banded together against the life of the just man, their soul abominated all those who walk in perfection” (1:18-21). They are caught in the three nets of fornication, wealth, and defilement of the temple (4:17-18). Even greater antipathy is reserved for those who, after converting to the community, apostasize (8:1-2; 19:13-14).

Where is the final judgment enacted? There is nothing to suggest that the final judgment extends beyond the earth.

When will the final judgment take place? At one point the Damascus Document makes it clear that the current generation is the “last generation” and will experience the final judgment (1:11-13).
What are the results of the final judgment? The wicked Israelites will suffer under the “curses of the covenant” (1:17). They will experience God’s retribution (7:9; 19:6), including destruction “without there being for them either a remnant or survivor” (2:6-7). For those who belong to God’s remnant, embodied in the community, and remain obedient to the community’s specific interpretation of the Torah “God will atone for them, and they shall see his salvation” (20:34). They will live for a thousand generations (7:4-6; 19:2).

**War Scroll**

The War Scroll is a “rule” for the community in the last days. It details proper liturgical and military protocol during the final great battle between God and his enemies. The entirety of the War Scroll relates to the final judgment. Below are two passages that particularly provide insight into the War Scroll’s conception of the final judgment.

5 [And th]is is a time of salvation for the nation of God and a period of rule for all the men of his lot, and of everlasting destruction for all the lot of Belial… 6 the rule of the Kittim will come to an end, wickedness having been defeated, with no remnant remaining, and there will be no escape 7 for [any of the sons] of darkness. IQM 1:5-7

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9 And who (is) like your nation, Israel, whom you chose for yourself from among all the nations of the earth, 10 a nation of holy ones of the covenant, learned in the law, wise in knowledge, [...] hearers of the glorious voice, seers of 11 the holy angels, with opened ears, hearing profound things?

1QM 10:9-11

How is the final judgment depicted? The final judgment is depicted as an epic war between good and evil. Two different war scenarios appear to be woven together. The first describes a forty year battle between Israel and her enemies. The second scenario involves a series of victories and defeats for Israel and its angelic supporters that climax in the intervention of God himself in the final seventh battle (1:14-15).

Who is the judge? God himself carries out the judgment (1:14-15, 10:1-2) along with the holy angels (7:6; 12:4), and the nation of Israel, each of whom plays a part in the war.

Who is judged? The focus of judgment is the Gentile nations (2:10-14). Included in their ranks are former members of Israel, termed “violators of the covenant” (1:1-2) who are helping the nations. Any division within Israel has already taken place by the time of the great war (3:13; 10:9-10). In addition to the Gentile nations, Belial and his “angels of destruction” (13:12) will also be judged.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The righteous and the wicked stand on opposite sides of the eschatological battle. On one side are the covenant people of Israel, minus those “violators of the covenant” who have joined forces with the Gentiles. On the other side are the Gentile nations.

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Where is the final judgment enacted? The forces of Israel will issue forth from Jerusalem (7:3-4). From there they will take the battle to their enemies.

When will the final judgment take place? The War Scroll includes no time line for the advent of the final judgment.

What are the results of the final judgment? “And [the sons of jus]tice shall shine to all the edges of the earth, they shall go on shining… for peace and blessing, glory and joy, and length of days for all the sons of light” (1:8-9). On the other hand, there will be “Everlasting destruction for all the lot of Belial” (1:5). “The rule of the Kittim will come to an end, wickedness having been defeated, with no remnant remaining, and there will be no escape for [any of the sons] of darkness” (1:6-7). For Belial, the “prince of the dominion of evil” there will be humiliation and abasement (17:5-6).

Rewritten Scripture

The Book of the Watchers: 1 Enoch 1-36

The Book of Watchers is perhaps the oldest portion of 1 Enoch. It is almost assuredly a compilation of originally distinct units, but the original extent, date and

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provenance of these units remains open to debate. Its current form is pre-Maccabean.

The motif of final judgment runs throughout the Book of the Watchers, but of particular significance for our study is the theophany found in chapters 1-5. Here we find a full blown depiction of the final judgment. Following are significant selections from these first five chapters:

3 The great Holy One will come forth from his dwelling and the eternal God will tread from thence upon Mount Sinai. En. 1:3-4

4 He will appear with his army, he will appear with his mighty host from the heaven of heavens. En. 1:3-4

7 The earth will be wholly rent asunder, and everything on the earth will perish, and there will be judgment on all. En. 1:7-9

8 With the righteous he will make peace, and over the chosen there will be protection, and upon them there will be mercy… En. 1:7-9

9 Behold, he comes with the myriads of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all, and to destroy all the wicked, and to convict all flesh for all the wicked deeds that they have done, and the proud and hard words that wicked sinners spoke against him. En. 1:7-9

6 But all the chosen will rejoice; and for them there will be forgiveness of sins and all mercy and peace and clemency… But for all you sinners there will be no salvation, but upon all of you a curse will abide. En. 5:6-8

7 For the chosen there will be light and joy and peace; and they will inherit the earth. But for you wicked there will be a curse.

8 Then wisdom will be given to the chosen, and they will all live, and they will sin no more through godlessness or pride. En. 5:6-8

57 See Collins, Apocalyptic Imagination, 47.

58 Translations: Nickelsurg, I Enoch 1.
How is the final judgment depicted? The final judgment is depicted as a mighty theophany, in which God himself descends to earth and brings his judgment to bear upon all of creation. In chapter 22, the Book of the Watchers also portrays a special judgment, one that transpires at the death of every individual. But this special judgment continues to look forward to the execution of the final judgment that will take place at the end of the age. The different “hollow places” where the spirits are stored “were made until the day on which they will be judged, and until the time of the day of the end of the great judgment, which will be exacted from them” (22:4).

Who is the judge? The judge is God himself, who “will come forth from his dwelling” (1:3) with his heavenly host to exercise judgment.

Who is judged? The Book of the Watchers speaks of a final judgment of universal scope, including nations (1:1, 7, 9), and fallen angels (10:14; 16:1; 19:1), but the division that is emphasized involves the righteous and the wicked within Israel. Chapter 22 indicates that the judgment will encompass the dead as well as the living, but precisely how this will transpire remains unclear.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The final judgment brings an end to the wicked. They are condemned on the basis of their deeds and words as those who have forsaken their God and his Torah. “But you have not stood firm nor acted according to his commandments, but you have turned aside, you have spoken proud and hard words with your unclean mouth against his majesty” (5:4; cf. 1:9; 27:2). Those who survive the

59 For the background of this imagery, see VanderKam, “The Theophany of 1 Enoch 1:3b-7, 9,” 129-50.

60 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1, 302, 306.
final judgment are called both the “righteous” (1:1, 8; 5:6) and the “chosen” (1:1, 3, 8; 5:6, 7, 8). They are “protected” (1:8) by God, and receive “forgiveness of sins and all mercy and peace and clemency” (5:6). They too have fallen short of God’s covenant, but the overall pattern of their lives and deeds separate them from the wicked.

Where is the final judgment enacted? The final judgment will extend from the earth where Israel and the nations will be judged, to the pits where fallen angels await their final judgment, to the habitations of the dead, who will be roused in order to be assigned their final lots.

When will the final judgment take place? The prophecy delivered through Enoch is simply for a distant generation (1:2). There is no description of events leading up to the final judgment.

What are the results of the final judgment? There will be no salvation for the sinners. They will be “cursed” (5:5), and their lot will be the accursed valley of Hinnom, where they will be punished in the presence of the righteous (26:2-3). “For the chosen there will be light and joy and peace; and they will inherit the earth” (5:7). Furthermore, they will receive a special dispensation of wisdom by which they will “sin no more through godlessness or pride” (5:8). Though the chosen will enjoy the fruit of the tree of life (25:5), this idyllic state will include long, but not eternal life (5:9; 25:6).
Jubilees

Jubilees is a rewritten version of Genesis and Exodus up until the revelation on Mount Sinai. It both interprets and expands upon its sources. Jubilees is typically dated in the period shortly after the Maccabean revolt. Discussion of the final judgment is most pronounced in the two apocalyptic portions of the book: 1:7-29 and all of chapter 23. Significant quotes from these two sections are reproduced below.

For they all did evil and every mouth speaks of sin and all of their deeds are polluted and abominable. And all their ways are contamination and pollution and corruption. Jub. 23:17

26 And in those days, children will begin to search the law, and to search the commandments and to return to the way of righteousness.
27 And the days will begin to increase and grow longer among those sons of men, generation by generation…
29 And all of their days they will be complete and live in peace and rejoicing and there will be no Satan and no evil (one) who will destroy, because all of their days will be days of blessing and healing.
30 And then the LORD will heal his servants, and they will rise up and see great peace. And they will drive out their enemies, and the righteous ones will see and give praise…
31 And their bones will rest in the earth and their spirits will increase in joy, and they will know that the LORD is an executor of judgment;

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but he will show mercy to hundreds and thousands, to all who love him. *Jub. 23:26-27, 29-31*

But after this they will return to me in all uprightness and with all of their heart and soul. And I shall cut off the foreskin of their heart and the foreskin of the heart of their descendents. And I shall create for them a holy spirit, and I shall purify them so that they will not turn away from following me from that day forever. *Jub. 1:23*

*How is the final judgment depicted?* The final judgment of chapter 23 unfolds in an unusual manner. The life-span of each passing generation diminishes, cut short by the increasing sin of humanity. This downward spiral climaxes in the emergence of an “evil generation” (23:14). This generation is contrasted with its “children” (23:16, 26, 28), who “reproach their parents and elders on account of sin” (23:16). The “day of great judgment” (23:11) pits these two generations against one another as the great turning point in history. The evil generation is judged while the “children” establish a new pattern of righteousness, one that results in lengthening of years.

*Who is the judge?* God is clearly depicted as the judge in the book of Jubilees (1:26, 28; 23:31), but the nations are the tool of his judgment (23:22-24).

*Who is judged?* The final judgment focuses on a division between Israel’s last “evil generation” (23:15) and those in Israel who “return to the way of righteousness” (23:26). The judgment of Israel’s enemies is clearly secondary to the judgment of Israel, and will be carried out directly by the faithful of Israel (23:30). There is no hint of resurrection—the judgment will only incorporate those living during the crucial time.

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63 Translations: O. S. Wintemute, “Jubilees,” in *OTP.*
There is, however, a vague suggestion of a disembodied afterlife in *Jub*. 23:31. “And their bones will rest in the earth, and their spirits will increase in joy…”

**What criteria are used in the final judgment?** The “evil generation” will suffer judgment based on their lack of faithfulness to the Torah. They are described as forsaking the covenant with its commandments, ordinances, and law (23:16). “Pollution and fornication and contamination and abomination are their deeds” (23:14). In addition, there is an emphasis on the effect of this wickedness on the cult. “…they will pronounce the great name but not in truth or righteousness. And they will pollute the holy of holies with their pollution and with the corruption of their contamination” (23:21). On the contrary, those who are saved remain obedient to the covenant.

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65 There is disagreement concerning how much of Israel the author of Jubilee thinks will turn back to God. Testuz emphasizes the sectarian nature of *Jubilees* (Testuz, *Les idées religieuses*, 74, 174), and argues that only a small remnant, those who cling to *Jubilees*’ sectarian standards, will be saved. Sanders states that, “It seems to be rather the case that the author thought that all Israel would be saved, save those who break the commandment to circumcise, do not keep the Sabbath, do not keep the Passover, intermarry or permit intermarriage with Gentiles, eat blood, have intercourse with their father’s wife (or with their daughter-in-law or mother-in-law) and devise evil against their brothers. Other passages make it clear that idolatry also involves removing oneself from Israel and consequently from the blessings of the covenant (22.22f.). Thus, there is a concept of a true Israel, but it is not so limited as Testuz maintains” Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 373.

66 The saved are primarily designated “children,” but is this intended to connote actual chronological age? It is far more likely that the children belong to a different generation in the sense of a different *type* of generation. They emerge in contrast to the evil generation and are set apart because the “children will begin to search the law” (23:26). But why call them children? Within the symbolic world of the apocalypse, premature old age is a sign of the death and destruction that result from sin. Each subsequent generation declines in age, suffering the effects of its faithlessness. In the end, “the heads of children will be white with gray hairs, and an infant three weeks old will look aged” (23:25). Those few who remain true to God, then, are described in such a way as to emphasize the preservation of their years: they are “children.” The promised state of long life that is initiated by the “children” is described as follows: “There will be no old men and none who is full of days. Because all of them will be infants and children” (23:28). Contra VanderKam (*The Book of Jubilees*, 57-58), who states, “This is an ironic twist in that the fathers/elders are the ones who live only 70-80 years, and ones even younger than they (‘the children’) are to reprove them for their wickedness and ‘their abandoning the covenant’ (v. 16; cf. v. 19). In other words, this is an inner-Jewish generational conflict.”
Where is the final judgment enacted? There is nothing to suggest that the final judgment extends beyond the earth.

When will the final judgment take place? The final judgment will take place when the sins of Israel reach their full measure and the last evil generation emerges.

What are the results of the final judgment? Those in Israel who have forsaken their God will be given up by him to “the sword and judgment and to captivity and pillage and destruction” (23:22). Those who turn back to the ways of God will see the days of their lives increase in peace and rejoicing. There will be no Satan (23:29) and God will circumcise the foreskin of their heart “so that they will not turn away from following me from that day forever” (1:23).

Pesher to Habakkuk⁶⁷

Pesher to Habakkuk consists of an interpretation of the text of Habakkuk that is intended to shed light on the present and future of the Qumranite community.

4 God is not to destroy his nation at the hands of the peoples, but in the hand of his chosen ones God will place the judgment over all the peoples;

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and by their reproof all the evildoers of his people will be pronounced guilty…1QpHab 5:4-5

How is the final judgment depicted? There is some indication of a divine trial, in which the community functions as witnesses. “By their reproof, all the evildoers of his people will be pronounced guilty” (5:4-5). The judgment of the Man of Lies also is described in forensic terms, “And in their midst he [God] will proclaim him guilty and will punish him with sulphurous fire” (10:5). The separation of the righteous and the wicked is depicted as a mighty cleansing of the earth enacted by God himself, “However, on the day of judgment God will destroy all the worshippers of idols, and the wicked from the earth” (13:2-4).

Who is the judge? God places the judgment over all the peoples, including the wayward of Israel, “in the hand of the chosen ones” (5:4-5). Whether this means the righteous participate in judging the wicked or in executing that judgment is unclear. Though the violence of the Kittim functions as a tool of immediate judgment (3:9-13), God himself will carry out the final judgment (13:2-4).

Who is judged? The Gentiles will surely be destroyed, but the focus of the Pesher to Habakkuk is an eschatological division within Israel itself. There is no mention of the fate of the dead.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? Those who are saved are set apart from the rest of Israel because of their identification with and loyalty to the Teacher of Righteousness. “Its interpretation concerns all observing the law in the house of Judah,

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whom God will free from the house of judgment on account of their toil and of their loyalty to the Teacher of Righteousness” (8:1-3). He alone possesses the true interpretation of the Torah and knowledge of the end times (7:4-5). Those who resist him are resisting God’s chosen agent. They understand neither the Torah nor the mysteries of God. Consequently, they live in disobedience to the law and in rebellion of God. Those who oppose the Teacher of Righteousness are exemplified by the Man of the Lie, the priest who has usurped the role of the Teacher of Righteousness. “He did not circumcise the foreskin of his heart and has walked on paths of excessiveness to slake his thirst” (11:13-14). All those who follow him are traitors to the covenant (2:1-8).

Where is the final judgment enacted? There is nothing to suggest that the final judgment extends beyond the earth.

When will the final judgment take place? The community following the Teacher of Righteousness clearly thought they were living in the last generation (7:2), but only the Teacher of Righteousness knew precisely how the end times would unfold (7:7:4-5). The community is instructed that “though it [the end] might tarry, wait for it; it definitely has to come and will not delay” (7-9-10). The community need only remain faithful in these final times of affliction and they will emerge victorious (7:10-17).

What are the results of the final judgment? The “Wicked Priest” will suffer judgment at the hands of his enemies (9:10-11) and by God himself, “he will punish him with sulphurous fire” (10:4). Presumably his followers will share a similar fate. The followers of the Teacher of Righteousness, on the other hand, will be saved from calamity and will join God in the judgment (5:4-5).
Wisdom Literature

The Epistle of Enoch: *1 Enoch* 92-105

The Epistle of Enoch is one of the earliest portions of the Enoch corpus, probably originating in the same period as the Apocalypse of Weeks. It consists of Enoch’s exhortations to those living in the final days. As might be expected, these exhortations often include ruminations on the final judgment.

1 Woe to you who commit erring acts
   and who for false deeds receive glory and honor;
   you will perish, you will have no salvation for good.

Woe to you who alter the true words
   and pervert the eternal the covenant
   and consider themselves to be without sin;
   they will be swallowed up in the earth.

2 Then be prepared, O righteous, and present your petitions as a reminder;
   offer them as a testimony before the angels,
   that they may bring in the sins of the unrighteous before the Most High as a reminder. *1 En.* 99:1-2

10 And then blessed will be all who listen to the words of the wise,
   and learn to do the commandments of the Most High;
   and walk in the paths of his righteousness, and do not err with the erring;
   for they will be saved. *1 En.* 99:10

4 The angels will descend, going down into the hidden places on that day;
   and those who aided iniquity will be gathered into one place.
   And the Most High will be aroused on that day to execute great judgment on all.

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5 He will set a guard of the holy angels over all the righteous and holy; and they will be kept as the apple of the eye, until evil and sin come to an end. **1En. 100:4-5**

12 And again I know a second mystery, that to the righteous and pious and wise my books will be given for the joy of righteousness and much wisdom

13 Indeed, to them my books will be given, and they will believe in them, and in them all the righteous will rejoice and be glad, to learn from them all the paths of truth. **1 En. 104:12-13**

*How is the final judgment depicted?* The Epistle of Enoch stitches together a number of different, sometimes conflicting images in its presentation of the final judgment, frustrating attempts to construct a single scenario of the coming day. Furthermore, the Epistle contains numerous references to a special judgment, particularly in chapters 102-104. However, the relationship between the special judgment and the final judgment is quite ambiguous. It would appear that the final judgment functions as a climax to the ongoing special judgment. While there are descriptions of earthly punishment and salvation at the final judgment, there is neither a resurrection nor a continued role for the creation (103:3-4, 8). Ultimately, the final judgment seems to function as an extension of the special judgment, insofar as the eternal fate of individuals is a heavenly matter involving individual “spirits” (98:3, 10; 104:4-6). Throughout the Epistle, there is a great deal of emphasis placed on remembering the deeds of the wicked. They are continually recorded as a witness against the wicked, to be brought before God when the time is right (97:6; 98:8; 104:7). Similarly, the righteous are instructed to lift up testimony concerning the wicked to God as a reminder (97:5; 99:3).

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71 Translations: Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1.*
Who is the judge? The judge is God himself. The judgment is variously carried out by God (99:16; 100:4; 102:1), or the righteous (95:3; 98:1, 12). On occasion, the angelic host (100:4) and creation (100:10-13) participate as well.

Who is judged? While there is no reason to doubt that the final judgment in the Epistle of Enoch encompasses the Gentiles,\(^2\) it would seem that a division within Israel is primarily in view. For instance, the wicked are described as those who “alter the true words and pervert the eternal covenant and consider themselves to be without sin” (99:1). Similarly, one of the woes explicitly condemns those who “reject the foundation and eternal inheritance of their fathers” (99:14). While the final judgment clearly extends to both the living and the dead (104:5), it involves no substantive change for those who have already died.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The wicked are excoriated for a variety of sins. They are violent and wealthy (94:6-11; 96:4-8; 97:7-10), doers of “lawless deeds” (97:6), lacking in “knowledge or understanding” (98:3). They refuse to listen to the “wise” (98:9), are guilty of “perverting the eternal covenant” (99:2), and “lead many astray with their lies” (98:15). The righteous are particularly defined by their wisdom, which enables them to walk according to the commandments in ways of righteousness (99:10; 100:6).\(^3\) This special dispensation of wisdom is tied directly to the books of Enoch (104:12-13).

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\(^2\) See especially the critique of idolatry in 98:7-9.

\(^3\) On the significance of this wisdom and knowledge, Nickelsburg hits the target dead on. “In the context of the Epistle, this means a particular understanding of the divine law, other esoteric information about the cosmos, and the eschatological message of the coming judgment... All of this wisdom and knowledge is essential for salvation” Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 448.
Where is the final judgment enacted? The final judgment takes place on earth and in the heavens. It involves the earthly punishment and destruction of bodies as well as the destinies of souls.

When will the final judgment take place? Judgment begins immediately after death, but the final judgment will bring this ongoing judgment to a climax. The letter begins by addressing itself to the “last generations” (92:1) who are instructed not to “be troubled because of the times” (92:2).

What are the results of the final judgment? The fate of the wicked is described in different terms. They will be “destroyed” (94:10; 97:1; 99:16); they will be “slain in Sheol” (99:11); they will be “cursed forever” (102:3). Their punishment is also depicted as eternal, “Know that down to Sheol they will lead your souls; and there they will be in great distress, and in darkness and in a snare and in a flaming fire… for all the generations of eternity” (102:7-8). The righteous are told that they will “shine like the lights of heaven and the portals of heaven will be opened for you” (104:2). They will be “companions of the host of heaven” (104:6).
Wisdom of Solomon

The Wisdom of Solomon derives from the first century B.C. Material pertaining to the final judgment is found almost exclusively in the first five chapters. The most important passages are reproduced in full below.

8 Therefore those who utter unrighteous things will not escape notice, and justice, when it punishes, will not pass them by. 9 For inquiry will be made into the counsels of the ungodly, and a report of their words will come to the Lord, to convict them of their lawless deeds… Wis 1:8-9

7 In the time of their visitation they [the righteous] will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. 8 They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever. 9 Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect. 10 But the ungodly will be punished as their reasoning deserves, those who disregarded the righteous and rebelled against the Lord… Wis 3:7-10

20 They [the unrighteous] will come with dread when their sins are reckoned up, and their lawless deeds will convict them to their face. 5:1 Then the righteous will stand with great confidence in the presence of those who have oppressed them… Wis 4:20-5:1

How is the final judgment depicted? The final judgment in the Wisdom of Solomon emphasizes the eschatological vindication of the righteous by God. The backdrop is the apparent prosperity of the wicked, who not only abuse the righteous, but


75 Larcher, Le livre de la Sagesse, 1.114-18; 138-39; 141-61.
mock them for their eschatological hope. Chapter 3 first explains a special judgment, indicating that immediately after death the “souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seem to have died…” (3:1-2). However, a day of final judgment still awaits (3:7, 18; 5:1) a day when the continuing “hope” (3:4) of the righteous dead will be brought to fulfillment. On this day the righteous dead will be resurrected (3:7-8; 4:16; 5:1, 4) and will confront those among the ungodly who are alive face to face (4:16; 5:1). The Wisdom of Solomon blends trial imagery and warfare imagery in its depiction of the final judgment. Trial imagery is evident in the following places: “For inquiry will be made into the counsels of the ungodly, and a report of their words will come to the Lord, to convict them of the lawless deeds…” (1:9). “For children born of unlawful unions are witnesses of evil against their parents when God examines them” (4:6) In similar fashion, “The righteous who have died will condemn the ungodly who are living” (4:16). On the other hand, the final judgment is also depicted as a cataclysmic battle between God and his enemies. “The Lord will take zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies…” (5:17).

Who is the judge? The wicked will be judged by God himself, but the righteous play a role in their condemnation (4:16). The punishment will be carried out by God, the righteous, and creation itself (5:17-23).

Who is judged? The separation involves the righteous, those who have been “elected” (3:9, 4:15), and the wicked. The Wisdom of Solomon does not make it clear

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76 Translation: NRSV.

77 See Wright, The Resurrection of the Son of God, 162-75.
whether it has in view Jews as well as Gentiles. The judgment extends to the dead. There is a resurrection in store for the righteous, but there is no corresponding resurrection for the wicked.\textsuperscript{78}

\textit{What criteria are used in the final judgment?} Of the righteous elect the Wisdom of Solomon says, “those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones and he watches over his elect” (3:9). Wisdom is the special dispensation of the righteous, and “love of her is the keeping of her laws; and giving heed to her laws is assurance of immortality” (6:18). The wicked are described as blasphemous (1:6), deceitful (1:4), and lawless people (1:9), intent on oppressing the righteous (2:12-20). They foolishly think that death has the final word on their lives.

\textit{Where is the final judgment enacted?} There is a special judgment that transpires in the heavens, rescuing the righteous, but the final judgment will be enacted on the earth, and will involve all of creation (5:21-23).

\textit{When will the final judgment take place?} Though the fate of the righteous is secure already at the moment of death (3:1), the final judgment itself lies at some indeterminate point in the future.

\textit{What are the results of the final judgment?} The righteous elect will “govern nations and rule over peoples” (3:8). They will “live forever” and receive a “glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord” (5:15-16). The unrighteous, on the other hand will vanish like smoke in the wind (5:9-14). They have no hope, no future.

\textsuperscript{78} “The righteous who have died will condemn the ungodly who are living” (4:16). “Because the hope of the ungodly is like thistledown carried by the wind… But the righteous live forever…” (5:14-15).
Histories

2 Maccabees

2 Maccabees was probably written around 100 B.C. Chapter 7, which details the martyrdom of a mother and her seven sons during the Antiochene persecution, includes one passage that undoubtedly refers to the final judgment.

When he was near death he said, “One cannot but choose to die at the hands of mortals and to cherish the hope God gives of being raised again by him. But for you there will be no resurrection to life!” 2 Macc 7:14

How is the final judgment depicted? The final judgment is only alluded to indirectly through a distinction of fates at the resurrection (7:14).

Who is the judge? The judge is God himself. He is the one upon whom the righteous trust for resurrection.

Who is judged? The allusion to the final judgment found in 7:14 is limited to a contrast between the seven martyred brothers and their mother on the one side and “the


80 Goldstein, II Maccabees, 71-83.

81 Translation: NRSV.
king” on the other. There is no way of knowing the extent of the final judgment, but it clearly includes the dead.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The martyrs confess their belief that they will be vindicated at the final judgment by virtue of being resurrected. They are confident in their resurrection precisely because they have freely given up their earthly lives so that they might remain faithful to God. This sentiment is repeated again and again. “And when he was at his last breath, he said, “You accursed wretch, you dismiss us from this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting life, because we have died for his laws” (7:9; cf. 7:11, 23, 29). Their faithfulness—to the point of death—will earn them eschatological favor. On the other hand, the king, who is described as an “unholy wretch, most defiled of all mortals” (7:34), will not escape God’s judgment. It would seem that much of this judgment will be meted out in the course of history (7:37), but one of the brothers describes the judgment in specifically eschatological terms. For the wicked king, there will be no resurrection to life in the final days (7:14).

Where is the final judgment enacted? There is no mention of where the final judgment will be enacted, though resurrection is clearly conceived of rather concretely (7:10-11), implying a continued existence on earth.

When will the final judgment take place? There is no indication as to when the final judgment will take place.

What are the results of the final judgment? Some will be raised to new life and some will not.
Conclusions:  
The Final Judgment in Late Second Temple Judaism

*How is the final judgment depicted?* A number of motifs are combined in different ways in order to produce the various final judgment scenarios found in the late second temple period. God’s intervention in the course of history is a feature of every final judgment scenario. In many cases God (or his divinely appointed agent) comes upon the earth and carries out the final judgment. This motif can be found in: Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables (Son of Man), Testament of Moses, Psalms of Solomon (God or Messiah), Damascus Document, Book of Watchers, and Pesher to Habakkuk. In other cases, such as Apocalypse of Weeks, Daniel, Hodayot, Rule of the Community, War Scroll, Jubilees, Epistle of Enoch, and 2 Maccabees, although God’s direct intervention is the central feature of the final judgment scenario, it remains unclear whether God comes upon the earth to bring judgment, or whether he simply intervenes from heaven.

His judgment is enacted in one of two ways. 1) God unleashes his wrath upon the wicked while preserving the righteous. Foreign nations, angels, creation, and the righteous of God may all be used as tools of his wrath. In one variation of this motif, God initiates an eschatological war against the forces of darkness. Such a war can be found in: Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, Hodayot, War Scroll, and Wisdom. The army of God may include the righteous, the angels, the messiah, and God himself, while their foes may include the wicked, fallen angels, and Satan. 2) He separates the righteous and the wicked by sending them to their various eschatological destinations (ie: renewed earth,
new earth, or heavens for the righteous; valley of Gehenna, Sheol, Hades, for the wicked). On occasion, a final judgment scenario will include both of these judgments.

A number of final judgment scenarios allude to a divine trial that takes place on earth or in heaven, in which sentence is passed on the wicked. These include: Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, *Pesher to Habakkuk*, and Wisdom. Some scenarios, Book of Parables, Book of Watchers, Epistle of Enoch, and Wisdom, also make allowance for a special judgment.

*Who is the judge?* In some texts, God seems to share his right of judgment with other figures. For example, in the Book of Parables, the Son of Man renders judgment from his throne, separating the righteous from the wicked (45:3-6; 61:8; 62-63; 69:27-29). In *Hodayot* the Teacher of Righteousness claims that the Lord will separate the just from the wicked through himself (*Hodayot* 15:12). In the Wisdom of Solomon (4:16), and *Pesher to Habakkuk* (5:4-5) the righteous seem to play a role in determining the fate of the wicked.

Though God is inevitably involved in the just rulings of the final judgment, and is either directly or indirectly involved in executing his determinations, the judgments are often carried out by a number of other agents as well. These include: 1) The righteous: Apocalypse of Weeks, Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, *Hodayot, Rule of the Community, War Scroll, Jubilees, Pesher to Habakkuk*, Epistle of Enoch, and Wisdom. 2) God’s angelic host: Book of Parables, *Hodayot, Rule of the Community, Damascus Document, War Scroll*, Book of Watchers, and the Epistle of Enoch. 3) An angelic representative: Daniel, *Testament of Moses*. 4) The Son of Man: Daniel and Book of
Parables. 5) The nations: Rule of the Community and Jubilees. 6) Creation: Epistle of Enoch and Wisdom.

Who is judged? Every final judgment scenario from the late second temple period envisages judgment on the Gentile nations. They suffer the consequences of their idol worship, sinful living, and oppression of Israel. In two texts, Testament of Moses and War Scroll, the separation of the righteous and the wicked proceeds strictly along national lines. Israel is equated with the righteous and the nations with the wicked. Hence, the final judgment brings wrath upon the Gentile nations, but salvation for the nation of Israel.

What is surprising, however, is that most of the final judgment scenarios include a division within Israel, in which God will separate the wicked Israelites from the righteous Israelites. A division within Israel can be found in: Apocalypse of Weeks, Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, Psalms of Solomon, Hodayot, Rule of the Community, Damascus Document, Book of Watchers, Jubilees, Pesher to Habakkuk, Epistle of Enoch, and Wisdom. War Scroll also foresees a division within Israel, but it takes place before the final eschatological conflict. In many of these texts, including Apocalypse of Weeks, Hodayot, Rule of the Community, Damascus Document, Book of Watchers, Jubilees, Pesher to Habakkuk, and Epistle of Enoch, the judgment of Israel seems to be the primary emphasis of the final judgment scenario.

Much of the Enochic material explicitly extends the final judgment to include all the Spirits who rebelled against God. Such a motif can be found in: Apocalypse of Weeks, Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, and Book of Watchers. Others, such as
Testament of Moses, War Scroll, and Jubilees, speak of the demise of Satan and his minions.

In a number of the final judgment scenarios from the late second temple period, Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, Book of Watchers, Epistle of Enoch, Wisdom, and 2 Maccabees, the final judgment includes the dead as well as the living. Some of these texts explicitly refer to a resurrection that coincides with the final judgment. In Animal Apocalypse, Wisdom, and 2 Maccabees the resurrection of the dead is a gift extended only to the righteous. In Daniel and Book of Parables, all of the dead, both the righteous and the wicked, are resurrected, each to their own eschatological destiny. In Book of Watchers and Epistle of Enoch, the final judgment functions as an extension of the special judgment. It serves as a final public disclosure of the identity and fate of the righteous and the wicked.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? The final judgment will bring salvation to the righteous and retribution to the wicked, but how are the righteous and the wicked distinguished from one another?

Testament of Moses and War Scroll simply equate the righteous with Israel and the wicked with the nations. This basic division is operative in most of the final judgment scenarios from the late second temple period, though not all of them spell it out.\textsuperscript{82} The Gentile nations must be judged for their sinful living, worship of other Gods, and oppression of Israel. However, as we have seen, almost all of the final judgment

\textsuperscript{82} For example, many of the scrolls have very little to say about the judgment of the Gentiles. However, War Scroll’s depiction of the last judgment as a war waged principally against the Gentiles implies that this theme is simply assumed by the rest of the documents.
scenarios under consideration also display a pronounced concern with separating the righteous from the wicked within Israel. What criteria are used in such a separation?

The most obvious criterion is the pattern of one’s life— one’s words and deeds measured against God’s covenantal commandments. Every single final judgment scenario bears witness to this criterion of judgment. The wicked are variously condemned as violators of the covenant, trespassers of the commandments, idolators, and blasphemers. Their wickedness is tantamount to apostasy. They have stepped beyond the bounds of God’s covenantal mercy, and forsaken their place among God’s people. At the final judgment they will receive the penalty for their unfaithfulness. The righteous Israelite’s pattern of life, on the other hand, conforms to God’s covenantal commandments, including obedience to Torah, and enduring persecution in the name of God.83

Complicating the situation, however, is the fact that the final judgment scenarios of the late second temple period reveal various applications of this criterion depending on their answer to two critical questions. 1) Whose interpretation of the Torah establishes the standard of righteousness? 2) Given that the pattern of one’s life is in view, how much, and what kind of sin places one outside the bounds of God’s covenantal mercy?

There is no uniform answer to these questions. Some texts, such as the majority of the Psalms of Solomon, and Wisdom, seem content to operate with generalized standards, perhaps assuming a widely agreed upon definition of covenant faithfulness.

What is truly remarkable, however, is the premise shared by a majority of the late second temple texts which speak of final judgment, including: Apocalypse of Weeks,

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83 It is important to acknowledge that perfect adherence to God’s covenantal commandments is not a requirement for salvation in any of the texts.
Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Psalm of Solomon 17, *Hodayot, Rule of the Community, Damascus Document*, Book of Watchers, *Jubilees, Pesher to Habakkuk*, and Epistle of Enoch. First of all, they agree on the dismal state of Israel in the time preceding the final judgment. Specifically, they agree that, as a nation, Israel will be mired in apostasy and lawbreaking. She will have made herself like the nations, forsaking her identity as God’s covenant people. These texts are also in agreement that, in response to this apostasy, God will raise up a community of faithful Israelites. This group is described differently in different texts, but in each case it functions as a remnant for Israel, embodying the continuation of God’s promise to be with his people and functioning as a light to the rest of Israel.84

In the Apocalypse of Weeks the members of the remnant are “chosen” from the “eternal plant of righteousness” and shall receive “sevenfold wisdom and knowledge” (93:10). In Daniel they are the “wise,” who will “lead many to righteousness” (12:3). In the Animal Apocalypse they are the lambs, born to the white sheep, who “began to open their eyes and to see and to cry out to the sheep” (90:6). In Psalm of Solomon 17 they are the members of the exiled “assemblies of the devout” (17:16). In the Book of Watchers they are the “righteous chosen” (1:1). In *Jubilees* the members of the remnant are called the “children,” who “begin to search the law and to search the commandments and to return to the way of righteousness” (23:26). In the Qumran documents, *Hodayot, Rule of the Community, Damascus Document, Pesher to Habakkuk*, the remnant consists of those

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who are members in the “community of the renewed covenant” and who display allegiance to the teacher of righteousness, their instructor in the ways of God.

It should come as no surprise that, in so many cases, the possession of wisdom and knowledge is explicitly mentioned as one of the defining characteristics of the remnant. Whether it comes from a long awaited return to the wisdom of the scriptures (Jubilees), special revelatory books (Daniel and the Enochic Literature), or God’s anointed teacher (Qumran), this wisdom assures the remnant that they are operating according to God’s desires. It also enables them to determine how much and what kind of sin places one beyond the bounds of God’s covenantal mercy. Hence the “wisdom” of the remnant renders them uniquely capable of recognizing and condemning Israel’s rampant sin and apostasy, all the while walking the true path of righteousness. This is why, in each of these texts, the remnant represents the true Israel and continues to shine as a light to the rest of the nation, offering those within Israel a final means of repentance before the rapidly approaching final judgment.

Though in each of these texts the righteous remnant is contrasted with the rest of the wicked nation, it is by no means clear how much of national Israel will end up being saved. On the one hand, while some of the groups that considered themselves the righteous remnant may have been relatively small, others may have been quite large. There is simply no way of knowing. On the other hand, each of these texts seems to leave the door open for repentant Israelites to join the righteous remnant before the final judgment. In fact, many of the communities that perceived themselves to be the righteous

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85 Nickelsburg’s (I Enoch 1, 50) comments on the Enochic corpus applies equally well to most of the texts in question. “By using the epistemological term ‘wisdom’ and emphasizing its receipt and
remnant seem to anticipate that most of the nation will be convicted and follow their lead. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in each of the texts, the criterion of judgment remains the same. In order to be saved, Israelites must repent and convert to the remnant’s point of view. Hence, the restoration of Israel would ultimately serve as a vindication of the righteous remnant.

Where is the final judgment enacted? The final judgment of every late second temple period scenario is carried out on the earth, though in some instances it extends beyond the earth. Some texts, such as Apocalypse of Weeks, *Psalms of Solomon*, and *War Scroll* lay special emphasis on the land of Israel as the place from which the final judgment proceeds. The final judgment is explicitly extended to the heavens in three texts: Apocalypse of Weeks, Book of Watchers, and Epistle of Enoch. Here wicked spirits experience a judgment akin to wicked people.

Though the final judgment is inevitably executed on the earth, the location of the divine trial included in some scenarios is less straightforward. For example, in the Animal Apocalypse, the trial takes place on earth in the land of Israel. We saw that this was probably the case with the trial in Daniel as well. The Book of Parables, however,

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86 Daniel, seems to envision a large scale repentance and acceptance by the masses of the teaching of the “wise” (11:33). In Jubilees, mercy will be extended to “hundreds and thousands, to all who love him” (23:31) *War Scroll* depicts the purified Israel as a sizable army, and Psalm of Solomon 17 predicts the restoration of Israel as a nation with the advent of the Messiah.

87 See Elliott (*Survivors of Israel*, 637). “It would appear, therefore, that the restoration—in the particular way it was conceived by these groups—was to constitute this ultimate experience of vindication within history. This is an entirely plausible view of the function of this belief, given the overriding concern of this literature to *define*, *legitimize*, and *vindicate* the righteous. The faithful remnant of the present, having perceived an unprecedented degree of apostasy in the nation, and having voiced its protest against the present state of things in Israel, firmly believed that its message of protest and teachings about true
clearly depicts trials that are transpiring in heaven, where the Son of Man sits on his throne.

*When will the final judgment take place?* The final judgment scenarios that we have considered rarely project exact dates for the final judgment. That is not to say, however that they have nothing to say about the timing of the final judgment. Many of them speak of events or circumstances that serve as precursors to the final judgment. These include: the increased apostasy of Israel (Apocalypse of Weeks, *Hodayot*, Damascus Document, Jubilees), the establishment of the remnant (Apocalypse of Weeks, Book of Parables), and the onset of tribulation (Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Testament of Moses, Hodayot). Most scholars agree that these experiences reflect the perspective and situation of the various communities or individuals responsible for the creation of the text in question. If this is indeed the case, the implication is that they thought the final judgment was coming soon. The last days had already begun and would soon be brought to completion.

*What are the results of the final judgment?* The fate of the wicked is described in a number of different ways. One common image is “destruction,” which occurs prominently in Apocalypse of Weeks, Hodayot, Damascus Document, War Scroll, and Jubilees. However, it is rarely clear whether real destruction, i.e. annihilation, is in view. This is certainly the case in the book of Wisdom, but in other cases, like the Epistle of

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Enoch, it is used alongside elaborate descriptions of eternal punishment. Hence, in many instances “destruction” may simply be employed to indicate punishment. Many texts depict the punishment of the wicked explicitly in terms of shame and torture, including: Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, Psalms of Solomon, Rule of the Community, Book of Watchers, Pesher to Habakkuk, Epistle of Enoch. With images of fire, and darkness, and worms, they paint a ghastly portrait of retribution.

The fate of the righteous involves peace and joy along with long or eternal life, sometimes including the righteous dead. This life almost invariably looks to a continued earthly existence for the saved. The one apparent exception is the Testament of Moses, which envisions the righteous being set in the sky like the stars. Several additional motifs also appear with some regularity. The righteous are exalted. In specific, they often attain the kind of glory accorded to the angels as in Daniel, Hodayot, and Epistle of Enoch. Many of the texts, Apocalypse of Weeks, Animal Apocalypse, Psalms of Solomon, Rule of the Community, Book of Watchers, and Jubilees, describe the sinless state of the saved, who are made holy and no longer need the mercy of God. Another common motif involves the submission of Gentile nations to Israel. Israel’s dominion over the nations is spelled out in Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Psalms of Solomon, and Wisdom.

89 Many of the scrolls make it explicit that the end times have already begun (Damascus Document, Rule of the Congregation, 4QMMT).
Q 6:47-49

“EVERYONE WHO HEARS MY WORDS AND ACTS ON THEM...”


Matthew 7:24-27

Πᾶς οὖν ὁ δοῦλος
ἀκούει μου τοὺς λόγους τούτους
καὶ ποιεῖ αὐτούς.

ὁμοιωθήσεται ἃνδρὶ фρονίμῳ,
ὁστὶς ὥς οὐδ' ὥς οἶκιαν τὴν οἰκίαν

ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν·
καὶ κατέβη ἡ βροχή
cαὶ ἠλθὼν οἱ ποταμοὶ
cαὶ ἔπνευσαν οἱ ἄνεμοι
cαὶ προσέπεσαν
tῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐκείνῃ.

Luke 6:47-49

Πᾶς ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρός με
καὶ ἀκούων μου τῶν λόγων
καὶ ποιῶν αὐτούς,
ὑποδείξω ὡς τίνι ἐστίν ὁμοίος·
ὁμοίος ἐστίν ἄνθρωπο
οἰκοδομοῦντι οἰκίαν
ὁς ἐκατεχεὶν καὶ ἐβάλετων
καὶ ἐθήκεν θεμέλιον
ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν·
πλημμύρης δὲ γενομένης

προσέρηξεν ὁ ποταμὸς
tῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐκείνῃ.

1 ὁμοιοσ διατοῦν is found in C L W. However, the enormous weight of attestation falls on ὁμοιωθήσεται. It may be that the active form in Luke influenced some copyists. See Metzger TCGNT, 17; Rated [B].
Matthew 7:24-27
Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock; and the rain fell and the rivers came and the wind blew and fell against that house and it did not fall for it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them is like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, the river struck against that house and it was not able to shake it because it was well built. But, he who hears and does not act is like a man who built his house on the ground without a foundation;

Luke 6:47-49
Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and acts on them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a person building a house who dug and deepened and laid a foundation on the rock;
and the rivers came, the river
and the wind blew, struck against it,
and beat against that house, and immediately it collapsed,
and it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.
and its fall was great.

Context and Meaning in Matthew:

The parable of the two builders is strategically placed at the very end of Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount. It is the second portion of a two-part exhortation to would-be disciples. The first section begins with the words, “Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matt 7:21). This is followed by a parable in which Jesus turns away a number of wonder-working would-be followers at the final judgment with the words: “I never knew you; depart from me, you who act against the law” (Matt 7:23). Matthew’s “therefore” (7:24) links the parable of the two builders to the preceding material, further stressing the fault of those whom Jesus turned away. Both parables emphasize the eschatological consequences of lack of obedience to Jesus’ words.

The parable discusses the fate of two men, whose respective lives are represented by the buildings they each erect. The destiny of these buildings (lives) will be revealed with the coming of a mighty storm. That this storm and consequent flood represent the final judgment is clear for a number of reasons. 1) ὁμοιοθήσεται is in the future tense, indicating that a future judgment is in view. 2) Flood was a common image of eschatological judgment. The most obvious allusion is to the flood of Genesis 6-7 in which God destroyed all of humanity save the small remnant of Noah and his family. In spite of God’s promise never again to “destroy the earth” by flood (Gen 9:11), the flood
remained a stock image of God’s wrath and judgment poured out upon a disobedient and sinful people in the Old Testament (Isa 28:2; 29:6; 30:30; Eze 13:11, 13; 38:22). A number of second temple works attest to its continued use in the context of eschatological judgment (2 Bar. 7-12; Sib. Or. 3.689-92; 5.377-80; 1QH 3:14). It was an image intended to evoke memories of God’s last great judgment. 3) The Jesus tradition also likens the coming judgment to the great flood of Noah’s time in Q 17:27 (Matt 24:38-9). 4) The parable has no purpose if there is not the expectation of a time of real reckoning awaiting on the horizon which will make plain the substance of one’s foundation. 5) The stakes of the judgment are painted in absolute terms. For one man there will be survival, for the other, complete destruction.3

The difference between the two men lies entirely in the choice of where each one lays his foundation. One man builds his house on rock,4 thereby surviving the torrential storm of judgment. The other man builds his house upon the sand, a decision that leads to utter destruction. The act of building upon rock is likened to “hearing these words of mine and acting on them” (Matt 7:24). There are two elements involved in building upon the rock. First, the primacy of Jesus’ words is implicitly stressed. To build on any other

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4 Wright (Jesus, 292, 334) has argued that the house built on the rock is intended to allude to the temple, and that “Jesus, like some other Jewish sectarians, was inviting his hearers to join him in the establishment of the true temple.” However, if Jesus’ audience did pick up such an allusion, would they not think that obeying Jesus’ words was a means of supporting rather than denouncing the temple?
foundation will lead to the destruction of the house. Second, listening to Jesus’ words alone is not enough. In order to build one’s house on the rock and survive the coming storm, one must also act upon Jesus’ words, demonstrating commitment and obedience. One who acts on Jesus’ words has nothing to fear from the coming judgment.

With the introduction of the foolish man, it quickly becomes clear that both men have access to Jesus’ words. The foolish man who lays his foundation on the sand is one who “hears these words of mine and does not act on them” (Matt 7:26). Both builders are described identically as having “heard” Jesus’ words. Given the clear similarities in content with the previous saying in Matthew— one which clearly points to the failure of disciples— it is likely that these “auditors” are to be understood as disciples as well. The point of the parable, therefore, lies principally in the contrast between the two men’s responses to Jesus’ words. One man acts in obedience to Jesus’ words while the other does not. One man survives the storm while the other man’s fall is great.

The parable serves as a perfect climax to the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew’s largest collection of the sayings of Jesus. It both assumes the ultimate significance of Jesus’ words and exhorts the listener to respond to them. It stresses the absolute importance of this response by invoking a scene of coming judgment, a mighty storm that

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5 Given this context, it is highly improbable that there is an allusion to the proclamation that Peter is the rock on which the church will be built (Matt. 16:18). Betz’s (Sermon, 563-65) speculation on this point seems unwarranted.

6 “Not everyone who says to me ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my father in heaven” (Matt 7:21). Luke 6:46 provides a similar preface to the parable in his gospel. In Matthew, those who are cast out of fellowship clearly see themselves as disciples. Not only do they plead with him as “Lord,” but they claim to have done mighty deeds “in his name.”

7 Betz (Sermon, 557) is probably correct in identifying the parable as a contrast between faithful and unfaithful disciples. See also, Betz, “Eine Episode im jüngsten Gericht (Mt 7,21-23),” ZTK 78 (1981): 1-30; and M. Knowles, “Everyone Who Hears,” 289-91.
will test the lives of everyone, the wise as well as the foolish. All those who have heard and obeyed the words of Jesus will survive the judgment, but those who fail to act on Jesus’ words will be utterly destroyed.

There are a number of resonances between this passage and the parable of the ten bridesmaids in Matt 25:1-13. Besides the shared theme of eschatological division, the two parables both contrast the wise (ἀνήρ φρόνιμος // παρθένος φρόνιμος) with the foolish (ἀνήρ μωρός // παρθένος μωρός). Additionally, in both parables, the two group’s eschatological futures are a direct consequence of their obedience or disobedience to the task set before them. Matthew may have intended these two treatments to be read in light of one another.

The parable also contains echoes of several Old Testament passages. It is a particularly common image in the book of proverbs. “When the tempest passes, the wicked are no more, but the righteous are established forever” (Prov 10:25). “The wicked are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous will stand” (Prov 12:7). “The house of the wicked is destroyed, but the tent of the upright flourishes” (Prov 14:11). Similar imagery also appears in Ezekiel 13:13-14, “In my wrath I will make a stormy wind break out, and in my anger there shall be a deluge of rain, and hailstones in wrath to destroy it. I will break down the wall that you have smeared with whitewash, and bring it to the ground, so that its foundation will be laid bare; when it falls you shall perish within it…”

The most intriguing Old Testament parallel comes from Isaiah 28:1-22 in which the fate of Israel’s rulers, priests, and prophets (Isa 28:1, 7, 14) is contrasted with the “remnant of his people” (Isa 28:5). The coming judgment is described in terms of a
storm. “See, the Lord has one who is mighty and strong; like a storm of hail, a destroying tempest, like a storm of mighty, overflowing waters; with his hands he will hurl them down to the earth” (Isa 28:2). Those who “trust” in God’s “precious cornerstone, a sure foundation” need not panic (Isa 28:16). On the other hand, those who have made “lies” their “refuge” and “falsehood” their “shelter” will be destroyed (Isa 28:15). The heart of the passage reads as follows:

Therefore, hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers who rule this people in Jerusalem. Because you have said, “We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have made an agreement; when the overwhelming scourge passes through it will not come to us; for we have made lies our refuge, and in falsehood we have taken shelter”, Therefore thus says the Lord God, See, I am laying in Zion a foundation stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: one who trusts will not panic. And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet; hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter. Then your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand; when the overwhelming scourge passes through you will be beaten down by it. Isa 28:14-18

There are a number of noteworthy similarities between this passage and the parable of the two builders. 1) Both depict the coming judgment in terms of a storm. 2) Both contrast a sure foundation of rock with shelters that are not built to survive the storm. 3) Both portray a division within Israel based on one’s response to God’s message. 4) In both cases, those who fall in the judgment seem unaware that their trust is misplaced. It is possible that Isaiah 28:1-22 is, in fact, being alluded to in the parable of the two builders. One implication of such an allusion is that Jesus’ words become identified with Isaiah’s enigmatic “foundation stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation” (Isa 28:16). They are his words that the “remnant” (Isa 28:5) will have to heed and obey.
The images found in the parable of the two builders also remained popular in Judaism after Jesus. A parable much like that of Jesus can be found in *Abot R. Nat.* 24:1, which reads,

Elisha ben Abuyah says: One in whom there are good works, who has studied much Torah, to what may he be likened? To a person who builds first with stones and afterward with brick; even when much water comes and collects by their side, it does not dislodge them. But one in whom there are no good works, though he studied Torah, to what may he be likened? To a person who builds first with bricks and afterwards with stones: even when a little water gathers, it overthrows them immediately. He used to say: One in whom there are good works, who has studied Torah, to what may he be likened? To lime poured over stones: even when any number of rains fall on it, it cannot push it out of place. One in whom there are no good works, though he studied much Torah, is like lime poured over bricks: even when it rains a little on it, it softens immediately and is washed away.⁸

**Context and Meaning in Luke:**

In Luke, the parable of the two builders also serves as the climax of a block of Jesus’ teaching, in this case the Sermon on the Plain. Unlike Matthew, however, it is not joined with another parable of similar meaning, but stands alone. Nevertheless, the basic message of both Matthew and Luke’s version is the same: one must respond in obedience to the words of Jesus in order to survive the coming judgment.

There are, however, a number of differences between the versions, three of which affect the meaning of the parable as told by Luke. 1) The second man fails, not by building his house on sand, but rather because he has built the house “without a foundation” (ἔρημος ἡμέραις ἡμέραις). 2) Luke emphasizes the quality and quantity of the work involved in building the good house. That man “dug, and deepened, and laid a foundation

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on rock” (ὅς ἐσκαψεν καὶ ἐβάλθη εἰς ἑμέλλον ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν). 3) The Lukan version claims that the good house stands during the storm not because it was built on rock, but rather “because it was well built” (διὰ τὸ καλῶς οἰκοδομήσθαι αὐτήν). All three differences serve the same purpose. They shift the emphasis from the type of ground one builds on to the quality of the labor itself. In Luke’s version of the parable this serves to heighten the emphasis on action as the key difference between the two men.

_Text, Context, and Meaning in Q:_

There is some debate as to whether this parable derives from Q, and if so, whether Matthew and Luke used the same version. Several proposals have been advanced: 1) Matthew and Luke both used Q but one of them also had it in his special tradition.9 2) They represent two different oral versions of the parable.10 3) Matthew and Luke were using different versions of Q.11 However, in agreement with the majority of scholars, we have concluded that the differences can be adequately explained on the level of redaction.12 The similarity between many of the nouns and verbs and the similar context of both versions13 further support this conclusion.

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9 E. Schweizer, _Matthew_, 190.


11 Betz, _Sermon_, 559-60; Luz, _Matthew_ 1-7, 451; Polag, _Fragmenta_, 38.

12 Arland Hultgren, _The parables of Jesus: A Commentary_ (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 132; Strecker, _Sermon_, 169; Manson, _Sayings_, 177; Davies and Allison, _Matthew_, 1.719.

13 It is highly likely that the parable ended a series of sayings in Q that looked substantially like the sermon on the plain. See Kloppenborg, _Formation_, 171-189.
While the exact wording of the Q version remains beyond our grasp, there are a number of elements which can safely be eliminated as redactional. Among Matthew’s likely changes are the following: 1) οὖν was added in order to link this parable to the preceding one in 7:21-23. 14 2) τούτους was added in verses 24 and 26 in order to bring the preceding words of the Sermon into view. 15 3) ὀμοιωθήσεται in verses 24 and 26 is likely Matthean, (Matt 8, Mark 1, Luke 3), presumably intended to emphasize that final judgment is in view. 16 4) The descriptions of the men as ἄνδρὶ φρονίμῳ and ἄνδρὶ μωρῷ are probably explanatory additions (φρόνιμος Matt 7, Mark 0, Luke 2; μωρός Matt 6, Mark 0, Luke 0), which serve the further purpose of linking the parable to that found in Matt 25:1-13. 17

Among Luke’s changes are the following: 1) δς ἐσκαψεν καὶ ἐβάθυνεν καὶ ἔθηκεν θεμέλιον is almost certainly a piece of Lukan redaction. 18 It distorts the simple contrast developed within the parable as it stands in Matthew. There, the parable assumes that the houses are built the same, with the only difference being what the house is built

14 Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition, 96-7; Davies and Allison (Matthew, 1.720) make the additional claim that οὖν is more indicative of Matthew (Matt. 57; Mark 5; Luke 31). See also: Schulz, Spruchquelle, 312; Luz, Matthew, 1.451; Polag, Fragmenta, 38.

15 Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition, 96-7; Davies and Allison, (Matthew, 1.720) note that τούτους appears alongside λόγους five of the six times it occurs in Matthew. See also: Schulz, Spruchquelle, 312; Luz, Matthew, 1.451; Nolland, Luke, 1.309; Polag, Fragmenta, 38.


18 Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition, 98-99; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1.721; Polag, Fragmenta, 38; Schulz, Spruchquelle, 313. Abou-Chaar (“Two Builders,” 48), claims that the Lukan version should be favored because the building technique “sounds more realistic.” Parables are stories intended to prove a point. Neither author’s intention was the promotion of sound building practices.
upon. In Matthew, the analogy is dependent on assigned values for its meaning, with the choice of foundation material representing hearing and acting, or hearing and not acting.\textsuperscript{19} It is much easier to imagine the contrast of foundation materials (with its dependence on assigned values) being changed into a contrast between the quality of two buildings—which is a more direct analogy to acting on the words of Jesus, than vice versa. It would seem that this is one of several changes made by Luke in the hopes of accentuating the need for action. Moreover, the wording is typical of Luke (σκάπτω Matt 0, Luke 3, Mark 0 and θεμέλιος Matt 0, Luke 3, Mark 0). The simple version found in Matthew is almost certainly more original. Other Lukan redactions carried out under the same premise include: καὶ οὐκ ἰσχύειν σαλεύσαι αὐτήν διὰ τὸ καλὸς οἰκοδομῆσαι αὐτήν (Luke 6:48); and ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν χωρίς θεμελίου (Luke 6:49).\textsuperscript{20}

2) It is likely that Luke altered the description of the storm. Matthew presents a situation that would have made a great deal of sense in Palestine. He describes the fall of torrential rain that quickly swells on the wadis into destructive rivers. Accompanied by heavy winds these elements are more than capable of leveling houses. If the conditions were to persist the threat would be enormous. Luke, on the other hand situates the parable on the

\textsuperscript{19} Davies and Allison (Matthew, 1.721) are incorrect in adducing, “The rock is not hearing and doing but the teaching of Jesus as delineated in the great sermon; and to build on that rock, that is, to do the will of the Father in heaven, shows a person to be prudent.” The parable is not about the reception or rejection of Jesus’ words, but on the necessity of obedience to them. The point of the parable lies entirely on doing or not doing the words of Jesus. It is not a warning to those who have purposefully chosen to build on another foundation. Rather it addresses those who have acknowledged the importance of Jesus words but fail to live in obedience to them.

\textsuperscript{20} Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition, 98-101; Polag, Fragmenta, 38; Schulz, Spruchquelle, 313; implied by Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1.723.
banks of a large river that can destroy a house when it floods its banks (πλημμύρης ἔδε γενομένης προσέρηξεν ὁ ποταμός τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐκείνῃ). The best way to account for the difference is to conclude that Luke has altered his source in order to provide his (presumably Hellenistic) audience with a recognizable situation.22

Therefore, the original Q version of the parable probably read something like this:

Everyone [coming to me] who hears my words and acts on them—[I will show you what he is like]—he is like a person who built his house on the rock; and the rain fell, and the rivers came, and the wind blew, and fell against that house, and it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock. And everyone hearing my words and not acting on them is like a person who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell and the rivers came and the wind blew and beat against the house; and it fell and its fall was great.

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21 Found only here in the New Testament, πλημμύρα is used to indicate a flood resulting from the overflowing of a river. See Philo, Op. 58; Leg. All. 1.34; Plutarch, Caesar, 38.3; Romulus 3.6.

In terms of context, it appears that the parable of the two builders was also used to close a selection of sayings in Q. These sayings are bracketed on the one side by the temptation narrative and on the other by the story of the Centurion. All of the Q material between is incorporated into either the Sermon on the Mount or the Sermon on the Plain. Therefore, it would appear that, from a very early stage, the parable was used to drive home the eschatological importance of obedience to Jesus’ words.

*Most Primitive Version of the Saying:*

There is no tangible evidence to indicate that the most primitive version of the saying was different from the reconstructed Q text. The parable displays clear logic and structure. Furthermore, there is only one independent attestation of the parable, leaving no means to compare it to other versions. It is, of course, certainly possible that developments occurred, but if they did they remain beyond our grasp.

*Arguments For the Authenticity of the Saying:*

The criteria of authenticity show their limitations in regards to our first saying. The parable is not multiply attested. There are no distinctive features that are particularly

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23 One minor change has been posited by James P. Wilson, “In Matthew vii.25 is προσέπεσον a Primitive Error Displacing προσέκοψαν?,” *ExpTim* 57 (1945-46):138. However, his argument is based entirely on conjecture. By his own admission the possibility “may seem incredible.”

24 This is quite possibly the reason that its potential authenticity is left by and large untreated in most historical Jesus studies. Among the few who render an unqualified judgment of authenticity are: A. Jülicher, *Gleichnisreden*, 2.267-68; Kamal Abou-Chaar, “The Two Builders: A Study of the Parable in Luke 6:47-49,” *ThRev* 5 (1982): 44-57; and Gnilka, *Jesus*, 152. Luz (*Matthew*, 1.451) stresses the possibility of its authenticity, while Bultmann (*History*, 173) is willing to entertain the possibility.
prevalent within the Jesus tradition and might be indicative of authenticity. The parable is in no way dissimilar from the literature of the early church.

The criterion of coherence is the only major criterion that potentially supports the authenticity of the parable. If it is established that warnings of an impending final judgment is a staple of the teaching of the historical Jesus, then the likelihood that Q 6:47-49 is authentic increases. Some of the features of this judgment would also cohere well with other potentially authentic sayings. For instance, the flood of Genesis 6-7 is employed in Q 17:26-27 to much the same effect. The parable stresses the absolute importance of Jesus and his words as a criterion of final judgment, a theme that recurs frequently in our passages. These are motifs that we will have to keep an eye on as we move through the study. However, this type of argument for coherence can only be made after a substantial number of final judgment passages have been demonstrated to be authentic on other grounds. This is particularly true given the aims of the current study, which seeks to determine the historical veracity of the final judgment sayings in Q without assuming that the number of final judgment attestations alone is enough to secure assent.

Thus, the only arguments for authenticity that apply to the parable of the two builders are those of style and form. It is widely agreed among scholars that Jesus taught in parables. But this fact does not help us to establish the authenticity of any particular
parable in the Jesus tradition. Commonalities have also been sought in order to establish authenticity. For instance, Q 6:47-49 share one feature with a number of other parables: a contrast between two figures (Q 12:35-45; Matt 18:23-24; 21:28-31; Luke 7:41-42; 16:19-31; 18:9-14). Others adduced an early origin from the use of antithetical parallelism. Ultimately, however, without the aid of more reliable criteria, these arguments amount to little more than observations. They do not significantly increase the probability that the parable of the two builders originated with the historical Jesus.

Arguments Against the Authenticity of the Saying:

Arguments against the authenticity of Q 6:47-49 are no more convincing than arguments in favor of its authenticity. One might attempt to use the criterion of double dissimilarity to argue against the authenticity of the parable. After all, the imagery certainly is at home in the world of Judaism. It shares themes, images, and language with Old Testament books as well as later rabbinic works, but this shared background does not point to inauthenticity. Rather, we should expect the authentic sayings of Jesus to employ thoroughly Jewish themes, images, and language. Applying a standard of

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27 Historical Jesus scholarship has made this mistake before. “The parables are perhaps the most characteristic element in the teaching of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Gospels. They have upon them, taken as a whole, the stamp of a highly individualized mind, in spite of the re-handling they have inevitably suffered in the course of transmission. Their appeal to the imagination fixed them in the memory, and gave them a secure place in the tradition. Certainly there is no part of the Gospel record which has for the reader a clearer ring of authenticity” (Dodd, Parables, 1).

28 Manson (Sayings, 61) sees in these two characters “a common feature of the teaching of Jesus.”


30 Funk, Five Gospels, 159 implies as much, but see Betz, Sermon, 560; and Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 423 n.215.
absolute uniqueness (if such a thing even exists) is not an adequate way of measuring whether Jesus did or did not say something.

An argument for coherence could work against the authenticity of the parable if a number of other final judgment sayings in Q were demonstrated to be early church creations. However, such a conclusion cannot be made in advance of the completion of this study.\textsuperscript{31}

\textit{Conclusions and Implications:}

Neither the authenticity nor the inauthenticity of the parable of the two builders can be established on any solid grounds. It would seem that the only avenue left for determining the potential authenticity of Q 6:47-49 (and any other sayings which fall into this category) involves the criterion of coherence. Depending on the findings of the other individual final judgment sayings in Q, the criterion of coherence could point to either the authenticity or inauthenticity of the saying. If the final judgment sayings are by and large established as authentic on other grounds, the criterion of coherence would suggest that the parable of the two builders was likely an authentic part of the tradition. If, on the other hand, they are demonstrated to be substantially inauthentic, then the criterion of coherence would suggest that the parable of the two builders was part of a larger bundle of sayings created by the early church in order to present a certain point of view as authoritative teaching of Jesus. Hence, judgments about the potential authenticity of Q 6:47-49 (and like sayings) must wait in the wings until the completion of the study.

\textsuperscript{31} Funk (\textit{Five Gospels}, 159) argues that, “The context again is final judgment, which is not characteristic of Jesus.” Lüdemann (\textit{Jesus}, 154) places his own spin on this, “The historical yield is nil, as these sayings of Jesus are tied to the post-Easter notion of Jesus as Judge of the world.”
If the authenticity of the parable of the two builders should gain a measure of support from the criterion of coherence, what does it contribute to our understanding of the final judgment in the teaching of Jesus?

Though the parable offers no help in terms of an expected time for the final judgment, it does suggest that the final judgment will happen unexpectedly. It will be like a savage storm that blows in, giving little advanced warning of its arrival or magnitude. Nevertheless, we should be wary of assigning too much meaning to imagery used in the midst of a parable.

Those who pass through the final judgment unscathed are the ones who listened to Jesus’ words and acted on them, implying a two-fold criteria for salvation. The first criterion is presumed, one must acknowledge the centrality of Jesus’ words in one’s life. But the point of the parable is to drive home the second criterion, the necessity of obedience to those words. In the parable, those destined to fall at the final judgment are marked out by specifically by their disobedience. It does not address those who have denied the *importance* of Jesus’ words. Rather, the parable seems to address insiders, and its contrast lies solely on the level of obedience. The real problem with the foolish builder is that he did not *act* on the words. The parable is a warning to those who think they will be safe when the storm comes, but will find that they have built on sand instead of rock. Those who listen to the words of Jesus but fail to live in obedience to them will fall at the final judgment.
Q 10:10-12

“IF THEY DO NOT RECEIVE YOU...”


Matthew 10:14-15
καὶ ὃς ἄν
μὴ δέχηται υἱὸν λόγους ὑμῶν,
ἐξερχόμενοι ἔξω
tῆς οἰκίας ἡ τῆς πόλεως ἐκείνης
ἐκτινάξατε τὸν κοινορτὸν
tῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν.

Luke 10:10-12
εἰς ἣν δὲ ἄν πόλιν εἰσέλθητε1 καὶ
μὴ δέχονται υἱὸν λόγους,
ἐξελθόντες εἰς
tὰς πλατείας αὐτῆς
eἰπατε·
kαὶ τὸν κοινορτὸν
tὸν κολληθέντα ἦμιν
ἐκ τῆς πόλεως υἱὸν εἰς
tοὺς ποδας ἀπομασσόμεθα ἦμιν·

1 εἰσέλθητε is εἰσέρχομαι in A W Θ Ψ 0181, probably reflecting the verb form of Luke 10:8.

2 τῆς οἰκίας ἡ is omitted in D.

3 ἦ κόμης is added in Ν (0281) f 892.
Matthew 10:14-15
And whoever does not receive you or listen to your words as you go out from that house or city shake off the dust from your feet (Matt 10:7)

Truly, I say to you It will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that city.

Mark 6:11
And whatever place does not receive you

Luke 10:10-12
But if you go into a city and they do not receive you going into its streets say:

from your feet, we wipe off against you on our feet, even the dust clinging to us from your city

for Sodom on that day

it will be more tolerable than for that city.

Mark 6:11
And as many as do not receive you do not receive you

Luke 9:5
And as many as do not receive you

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or listen to you
as you go out from there
shake off
the dust
under your feet
as a testimony against them.

as you go out from that city
the dust
from your feet
shake off
as a testimony against them.

Context and Meaning in Matthew 10:14-15:

Matt 10:14-15 concludes the first section of the mission charge found in Matt 10:5-42. Verses 5-15 consist of specific instructions spoken by Jesus to the twelve concerning how the mission is to proceed. These are followed by verses 16-42, which describe the persecution Jesus expects the disciples to experience. Among the instructions provided in the mission discourse are: 1) The twelve are to confine their mission to the “house of Israel.” They are not to go among the Gentiles or Samaritans (Matt 10:5-6). 2) They are to “proclaim the good news, the kingdom of heaven has come near” (Matt 10:7). 3) They are to “Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons” (Matt 10:8). 4) They are to be wholly dependent on the generosity of their audience. They are instructed to charge nothing for their services nor are they to take even the barest of traveling necessities (Matt 10:9-10). In fact, it would appear that the generosity and hospitality of the audience is intended to function as the chief indicator of a favorable response to the mission of the disciples. The disciples are instructed to extend their peace to such a “worthy” house (Matt 10:13).

Verses 10:14-15 finish off the mission instructions by detailing the protocol for dealing with those who reject the mission of the disciples. In Matthew, accountability extends to the level of the individual, “whoever” (δεῦτε ὑμεῖς) rejects the disciples will be held responsible. Those who reject the disciples are identified as those who “will not receive
(δεξιται) you or listen to your words” (Matt 10:14). δεχόμαι appears to have a dual meaning. On the one hand it seems to take on the deeper meaning: “to indicate approval or conviction by accepting.” This is consonant with the other ten uses of the word in Matthew. On the other hand, the context makes it clear that δεχόμαι carries another meaning as well: “to be receptive of someone, esp. of hospitality.” Thus, both the disciples and their message should be received. This is reinforced by “listen to your words” (τοὺς λόγους ὑμῶν). The words are the message the disciples bring, but the words are also embodied in the presence and actions of the disciples. They are the disciples’ words. Therefore, a warm reception must be extended to both the disciples and their message.

Upon leaving the non-receptive house or city, the disciples are instructed to “shake off (ἐκπνεύζατε) the dust (τὸν κοινωρτὸν) from your feet” (Matt 10:14). Two minor debates have swirled around the interpretation of this command.

First, some scholars have proposed that it is actually the garments that must be shaken off, cleared of the dust that has been kicked up by the feet. They turn to Neh 5:13, and Acts 18:6 as precedents. In both passages garments are shaken out as a witness of judgment against offenders. A third passage, Acts 13:51, offers a closer parallel to Matt 10:14: “But they shook the dust from their feet against them.” This verse is not free

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5 BDAG 221; See also H. Grundmann, TDNT 2.53-54; Louw, Nida, Smith et. al., Lexicon 365, 372, 446, 453-4, 558, 572.

6 Ibid.


8 See Gundry, Matthew, 190, Jeremias, Theology, 238.
from the same potential ambiguity, but it does demonstrate that 10:14 is not the only possible example of dust being shaken off the feet. Since the grammatical construction of Matt 10:14 most naturally refers to the shaking of dust off the feet, and Luke’s version, which has wipe (ἀπομασσόμεθα) in place of shake off, unambiguously reflects this interpretation, it is safe to assume that the dust is shaken off the feet themselves.9 In either case, the intention behind the action remains the same, symbolizing disavowal of responsibility for those under judgment.

Second, there has been some debate about precisely how the symbolic gesture functions. Some scholars have argued that an allusion is being made to a Jewish practice of shaking the dust off of one’s feet upon leaving a gentile territory.10 Hence, the disciples would be signifying that the town is no more part of the people of God than the Gentiles. Meier has accurately noted the problems with such an interpretation. “Firm proof of such an attitude and/or practice comes only from later rabbinic literature; cf. m. Tohar. 4:5; m. Ohol. 2:3 (but it should be noted that neither of these two passages speaks explicitly of Jews returning from pagan lands and shaking off the dust from their feet).”11 Once again, however, the ultimate meaning of the gesture is transparent whether one accepts the allusion or not: future judgment is proclaimed against those who reject the disciples and their message.

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10 Manson, Sayings, 76; Guelich, Mark, 1.322; Grundmann, Markus, 169; Pesch, Markusevangelium, 1.329; Hooker, Mark, 157.

11 Meier, Marginal Jew, 3.188 n. 101.
Verse 15 goes on to explain the terrible consequences in store for those who have rejected the disciples and their message. “It will be more tolerable (ἀνεκτότερον) for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment (ἡμέρα κρίσεως) than for that city” (Matt 10:15). The contrast is between punishments meted out at the final judgment. It is certain that the final judgment is in view here. Sodom and Gomorrah were utterly destroyed in Genesis 19, never to be rebuilt. Yet, our verse speaks about the judgment that awaits Sodom and Gomorrah in the future, when their deeds will be measured against those of the town in question. The message is clear: even the resurrected from Sodom and Gomorrah will fare better at the final judgment than those who reject the disciples and their message.

Two Hebrew Bible passages form the context of this pronouncement. The first is the story of Sodom itself. Beginning in Genesis 18 and stretching through chapter 19, the story of Sodom is the story of well deserved judgment. The fairness of God’s judgment is made clear in Genesis 18, as God promises Abraham that he will not destroy the city if even ten righteous men are found. Then, in chapter 19, two angels, representatives of God himself, visit Sodom. They receive hospitality from Lot and his family, but the men of Sodom demand that they be handed over so that they might have sexual relations with them. This evil response to their moment of visitation seals their fate, and God rains down sulfur and fire from heaven. The parallels to our passage are

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12 Wright (*Jesus*, 329) seems to ignore this entirely in his claim that, “This was not a prediction of a non-spatio-temporal ‘last judgment.’” Caird (“Shake off the Dust,” 42) also thinks that the saying refers to a judgment “in the course of history.”


14 Matthew refers to the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah described in Gen 19:24, but most of the narrative of Genesis 18 and 19 concerns Sodom alone.
unmistakable. The disciples are God’s envoys, proclaiming the nearness of the kingdom (Matt 10:7). As such they and their message must be welcomed. Just like the angels, they bring a decisive moment of decision upon the house or city. To reject them is to reject God. In both cases the extension or refusal of hospitality to God’s messengers becomes a poignant symbol of welcoming or refusing God. The comparison is then used to further effect by drawing a contrast between the fate of Sodom and the fate of those who reject the disciples. The initial judgment of Sodom was temporal, but there is another judgment coming, the final judgment. At that judgment even Sodom and Gomorrah, bywords for wickedness in the Hebrew Bible, will fare better than those who reject the disciples and their message. This drives home the incomparable importance of the kingdom message and its messengers.

Another passage, Ezek 16:46-58, also illuminates our verses. In this passage, a sinful Israel is compared unfavorably to her “elder sister” Samaria, and her “younger sister,” Sodom (Ezek 16:46). “Bear your disgrace, you also, for you have brought about for your sisters a more favorable judgment; because of your sins in which you acted more abominably than they, they are more in the right than you” (Ezek 16:52). There is a precedent in the Hebrew Bible for using Sodom as a foil with which to expose the gravity of Israel’s sin. Those who reject the disciples and their message are likewise chief among sinners.

15 Kloppenborg (Kloppenborg, *Excavating*, 120) is right to note that the choice of Sodom is useful even on the temporal level. “Sodom provided a spectacular and geographically proximate—and therefore concrete—instance of the finality and terror of judgment in a way that other occasions of judgment recorded in the Tanak did not.”

16 See, for example: Deut 29:23; Isa 1:9, 3:9, 13:19; Jer 23:14.

In Luke our passage is also found in the midst of a mission charge. Unlike Matthew, however, Luke 10:1-16 represents the second commissioning of missionaries found in Luke. Instead of the twelve, seventy individuals are sent out with substantially the same instructions. Verses 10-12 do not form the climax of the instructions in Luke. Rather, Jesus proceeds to pronounce woes upon several Galilean cities that, ostensibly, have already rejected the kingdom message. Jesus ends his instructions in verse 16 by emphasizing that the disciples are not only his representatives but also God’s. “He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects the one who sent me.”

The greatest difference in the context of Matthew and Luke’s version lies in the degree to which Luke’s version highlights the parallels between Genesis 18 and 19 and the mission of the disciples. 1) Immediately prior to the mission instructions of chapter 10, Jesus warns a would-be disciple that “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62). It is highly likely that this is a reference to the tragic mistake of Lot’s wife, who longingly looked back at her former life while fleeing Sodom and was turned into a pillar of salt. The disciple is exhorted to leave all connection to the past and singlemindedly pursue the life of discipleship. 2) The seventy are sent out into the town “two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to come” (Luke 10:1). In Genesis 18, the Lord and two angels intend to visit Sodom (Gen 18:2, 16). Instead, the angels are sent on ahead while the Lord speaks with Abraham. “So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the Lord” (Gen 18:22). The seventy are sent out two
by two, mirroring the two angels of God sent to evaluate Sodom. Jesus will come with his own authority to each town and place where he sent his disciples (Luke 10:1). Does this imply that Jesus will come with power for judgment when he arrives, just as God brought judgment upon Sodom? 3) Lastly, Jesus emphasizes that his messengers are equal to the messengers of God (Luke 10:16). They have the same divine authority as the angels who visited Sodom.

Verses 10-12 themselves differ from Matthew in a number of ways which alter the exegesis of the passage. 1) In Luke, rejection is envisioned from cities alone, not houses. 2) The feet are wiped, not shaken off. 3) The action is to be done in an explicitly public manner, accompanied by the appropriate spoken interpretation: “Say, ‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off against you; nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near’” (Luke 10:11). 4) Luke adds that the feet are to be wiped off “against you” (ὑμῖν).17 5) Luke has only Sodom while Matthew has Sodom and Gomorrah.

Context and Meaning in Mark 6:11:

Mark 6:11 is the last line in missionary instructions given to the twelve. In Mark 6:7, as in Luke 10:1, the disciples are sent out two by two. They are instructed to depend

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17 Some scholars (Caird, “Shake off the Dust,” 41; Grundmann, Markus, 169; Lane, Mark, 209) have argued that grammatically, this could be either a dative of advantage, to be translated “for you,” or disadvantage, “against you.” Presumably the difference is between a warning and a prophetic judgment. One wonders if both are, in fact, datives of disadvantage. Nevertheless, given the denunciation of verse 15 and the finality of the woes in 10:13-15, the latter translation seems more reasonable. The action itself is rather transparent as a symbolic act of judgment. It is a proclamation that the disciples and their message have nothing to do with those who turned them away. There will be no return mission to the unrepentant. They have forfeited their last chance. The use of μαρτύριον with the dative also bolsters this
on hospitality wherever they go. In 6:11 they receive instructions on how to deal with “any place” (ὁς ἄν τόπος) that “will not receive you” (μὴ δέξηται ὑμᾶς) or “refuses to hear you” (μηδὲ ἀκούσωσιν ὑμῶν). They are instructed to: “Shake off the dust under your feet as a witness against them (ἐκτινάξατε τὸν χοῦν τὸν ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς). There is no parallel to Matt 10:15, 11:24; Luke 10:12.

One question remains. If the action of removing dust functions as a testimony against those who reject the disciples and their message, what kind of judgment is in view? Is it an eschatological judgment, as is clearly the case in Q, or a temporal judgment? Though there is not decisive evidence either way in Mark, three factors lean toward a final judgment. 1) It is clear from other passages in Mark that the final judgment is a category that he regularly employs. 18 2) The witness terminology naturally evokes a courtroom setting, which is a regular feature of the final judgment in second temple literature. 19 3) It is difficult to imagine that Mark expected a form of temporal judgment that would distinguish between those “places” 20 which welcomed the disciples and those that rejected them. In the Hebrew Bible, YHWH had used foreign armies to judge his

interpretation, since it is normally used to indicate “incriminating evidence against a defendant.” (Strathmann, *TDNT* 4.502-4. Guelich, *Mark*, 77).


19 “…thrones were set in place, and an Ancient of Days took his throne…The court sat in judgment and the books were opened” (Dan 7:9-10); “Then I kept seeing till a throne was erected in a pleasant land; and he sat upon it for the Lord of the sheep; and he took all the sealed books and opened those very books in the presence of the Lord of the sheep…Then his judgment took place. First among the stars, they received their judgment and were found guilty…” (1 En 90:20-26). “In those days, I saw him—the Antecedent of Time, while he was sitting upon the throne of his glory, and the books of the living ones were open before him” (1 En 47 3-4).
people on numerous occasions, but such judgment always occurred collectively. The righteous remnant experienced the same consequences as the rest of the sinful nation. Such a collective judgment would render incoherent a sign of judgment directed specifically at those “places” which do “not welcome you or refuse to listen to you” (Mark 6:11). The obvious implication is that those places where the disciples and their message are received will not receive the same fate. Supernatural judgment other than the final judgment is, of course, a possibility, but there is no other indicator in Mark that this kind of judgment was expected. In contrast, there is a fair amount of evidence that Mark expected a final judgment. Considering these three points, we must tentatively conclude that Mark has the final judgment in mind in verse 6:11.

Context and Meaning in Luke 9:5:

Luke retains the same context and meaning as Mark, reproducing his text with only a few modifications. 1) He changes δαντα to perhaps in order to make the demand for acceptance inclusive of individuals as well as places. 2) He changes Mark’s general to. The feet are not to be shaken off at the doorstep of every rejecting house. Rather it is an act to be performed upon leaving a particular town. While Luke 10:10-12 leave little doubt that the whole town is under

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20 Mark’s only indicator of what “places” he has in mind comes in verse 10, where he speaks of entering a “house.”

21 See, for example, Judg 6:1; 2 Kgs 17:5-7; 24:2-4.

22 A biblical example of such a judgment would be the earth swallowing Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their families, Num 16:30-33.

23 Those in agreement that Mark 6:11 is pointing to the final judgment include: Marcus, Mark, 1.390; Guelich, Mark, 1.323; Pesch, Markusevangelium, 1.329; Gnilk, Markus, 1.240.
judgment, Luke 9:5 is much more ambiguous. On the one hand, Luke has just changed the focus on place at the beginning of Mark 6:11, to people in the beginning of Luke 9:5. On the other hand, the testimony is delivered against “them” (αὐτοῦς), presumably the people, rather than “it,” the city. 3) Luke switches to the Q word for dust (κονιορτὸν). 4) He changes Mark’s ἐκτινάξατε to ἀποτυάσσετε, presumably for stylistic reasons. 5) Lastly, he adds ἐπ’ to αὐτοῦς in order to make explicit the nature of the testimony.

Text, Context, and Meaning in Q 10:10-12:

The Matthean version represents a blending of Q and Mark, and contains the only clear redactional modifications.24 The following represent likely Matthean redactions for 10:14-15: 1) καὶ δὲς ἂν is a Matthean redaction, adopting the beginning of the Markan version.25 2) μηδὲ ἂκουοσι οὖς λόγους ὑμῶν is a Matthean addition. He has borrowed μηδὲ ἂκουοσι συγ ὑμῶν from Mark and added τοὺς λόγους himself, a concept he is particularly fond of inserting.26 3) It is likely that Matthew added “the

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24 Nolland (Luke, 2.554) states that the opposite is true. “Here the Matthian form, though it has been somewhat influenced by the Markan source, is nevertheless likely to be closer to the original, since Luke has created the structuring device of paralleled sections, partly by repeating material; it is likely that he is also responsible for the casting of the materials into direct speech; and it will be he who has made it clear that a public act is intended.” His opinion is shared by Bultmann, History, 342; and Hoffmann, Studien, 269-70. However, they do not give sufficient weight to the fact that where Matthew and Luke diverge Matthew follows Mark. Nor does he seem to consider obvious Matthean redactional traits. The majority of scholars share the view that Matthew is responsible for the majority of the redactions in Q 10:10-11. As Schulz (Spruchquelle, 407) states, “Die direkte Rede in V 11 ist ursprüchlicher als die bloße Anweisung bei Mk/Mt, und der Wortlaut ist nicht als Lk verdächtig.”


26 For other likely Matthean insertions of λόγος, see, 7:26, 28; 19:1; 26:1. Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition of Q, 176-77; Polag, Fragmenta, 46; Schulz, Spruchquelle, 407; Laufen, Doppelüberlieferungen, 226; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.177; Uro, Sheep, 83; Ridgway, “Let Your Peace,” 262; Luz, Matthew, 2.71 n. 9; Marshall, Luke, 423.
house” (τῆς ὁικίας), which is missing in Luke, to strengthen the connection between the hospitality of a household discussed in v. 13 and a city’s welcome or rejection. 5) He has taken Mark’s ἐκτινάξατε over Q’s ἀπομασσόμεθα, perhaps preferring the Septuagintal vocabulary of Neh 5:13. 6) ἀμήν is a typical Matthean addition (Matt 30, Mark 13, Luke 6) 7) Matthew has added καὶ Γομόρρα for in order to bring it in line with the standard biblical epitaph. 8) Matthew has made the meaning of Q’s “that day” (ἡ ἡμέρα ἀκεινη) more explicit by turning it into the “day of judgment” (ἡμέρα κρίσεως). There is no reason for Luke to have made the meaning less explicit, and Matthew alone employs the phrase (Matt 3, Mark 0, Luke 0).

Therefore, the Q text can be reconstructed as follows:

εἰς ἡν δὲ ἂν πόλιν εἰσέλθητε καὶ μὴ δέχονται ὑμᾶς, (ἐξελθόντες εἰς) τὰς πλατείας αὐτῆς εἰπατε καὶ τὸν κοινοτόν τῶν κολληθέντα ἡμῖν] εκ τῆς πόλεος ὑμῶν εἰς τοὺς πόδας ἀπομασσόμεθα ὑμῖν [πλὴν τούτο γινώσκετε ὅτι ἷγηγὶκεν ἧ

27 Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition of Q, 176-77; Polag, Fragmenta, 46; Schulz, Spruchquelle, 407; Laufen, Doppelüberlieferungen, 226; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 178; Uro, Sheep, 83; Ridgway (“Let Your Peace,” 262) offers an extended reflection on the reasons Matthew may have made such an addition, including the desire to broaden the applicability of the command to receive.

28 Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition of Q, 178-79; Polag, Fragmenta, 46; Laufen, Doppelüberlieferungen, 226; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.178; Uro, Sheep, 83.

29 Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition of Q, 180-81; Polag, Fragmenta, 46; Schulz, Spruchquelle, 407 n. 31; Laufen, Doppelüberlieferungen, 226; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.179; Uro, Sheep, 83-84; Ridgway (“Let Your Peace,” 266) notes that it often appears in Matthew in the context of judgment (Matt 18:3; 19:23, 28; 23:26; 25:40); Luz, Matthew, 2.71 n. 10.

30 Gen 18:20; 19:24, 28; Deut 29:22; 32:32; Isa 1:9; 13:19; Jer 23:14; 49:18; 50:40; Amos 4:11. The phrase also appears in Jub. 16:5; 17:3; 20:6; 4 Ezra 2:19; 7:12; Rom 9:29; 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 7. See Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition of Q, 176-77; Polag, Fragmenta, 46; Schulz, Spruchquelle, 407 n. 31; Laufen, Doppelüberlieferungen, 226; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.179; Uro, Sheep, 84; Ridgway, “Let Your Peace,” 266-67; Luz, Matthew, 2.71 n. 10; Manson, Sayings, 76.

31 Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, Critical Edition of Q, 180-81; Polag, Fragmenta, 46; Schulz, Spruchquelle, 407 n. 31; Laufen, Doppelüberlieferungen, 226; Jeremias, Lukasevangelium, 139, 186; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.179; Uro, Sheep, 83-84; Ridgway, “Let Your Peace,” 267; Luz, Matthew, 2.71 n. 10; Nolland, Luke, 2.555; Manson, Sayings, 76.

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a. (ἐξερχόμενοι ἐξω)
b. (ἀνεκτότερον ἐσται [γῆ] Σοδόμων τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνη)

If you go into a city and they do not welcome you, go into its streets and say: “Even the dust [clinging to] our feet from your city we wipe off against you. [Nevertheless, know this: the kingdom of God has drawn near.”] It will be more tolerable for [the land of] Sodom on that day than for that city.

Reconstructing the original context of verses 10:10-12 in Q presents a bit of a challenge. We know that 10:12 was originally part of Q because it is found in the same place in both Matthew and Luke at the end of the mission instructions. But what followed 10:12? In Luke, verse 10:12 is followed by a set of two woes on Galilean cities, verses 10:13-15. Verse 16 then ends the mission instructions with a pronouncement by Jesus of his absolute identification with the disciples. The theme then shifts to rejoicing over the positive results of the mission. Most of this material is contained in Q. It is most likely that Luke has changed the order of the material in Q by reversing the placement of 10:13-15 and 10:16. There are five reasons for this conclusion. 1) As it stands in Luke, 10:13-15 interrupts the natural connection between verse 16 and verses 8-12. 2) While the mission instructions are addressed to the disciples, the woes are pronounced directly over cities, making for an awkward shift in audience. 3) It seems rather odd to have such a condemnation delivered before the disciples have even begun their missionary endeavor.

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32 The exception being the narrative about the return of the seventy.

33 Uro, Sheep, 84-85 argues that the Lukan order is original—but he fails to incorporate the evidence presented here. Other scholars, (Catchpole, Quest, 172; Zeller, “Redaktionsprozesse”, 404; Kloppenborg, Formation, 195) though recognizing the secondary placement, push the redaction one stage further back and claim that the redactor of Q put 10:13-15 into the mission charge. This seems unlikely given the order of the Q material present in Matthew. For additional defense of this position see, Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.236; Marshall, Luke, 424, Manson, Sayings, 76-77.
4) Both Luke 10:16 // Matt 10:40 end the mission instructions, making it highly likely that it served such a function in Q. 5) If Luke 10:13-15 and 10:16 are reversed, the order then lines up with the order of Q passages in Matthew, where it proceeds from the mission instructions (10:5-15), to the identification of Jesus with his disciples (10:40), to the woes on unresponsive cities (11:20-24), to thanksgiving for those who do respond (11:25-27).

There are also good reasons why Luke might have made such a shift. 1) There is obvious parallelism between 10:12 and 10:14. 2) In addition, there is an obvious catchword connection between 10:12 and 10:14: ἀνεκτότερον ἐσται. 3) If Q 10:13-15 originally included Matt 11:23b-24 (a parallel of Matt 10:15 missing from Luke, but attached to Matthew’s version of Q 10:13-15), Luke, being ever cognizant of style, would have had the additional incentive of eliminating the redundancy he found in Q. In Matthew, on the other hand, such a repetition is not awkward because he has inserted so much material between the two occurrences.

Most Primitive Version of the Saying:

In comparing Q 10:10-11 and Mark 6:11, there is no reliable way to determine which exact form of the saying is more primitive, the third person account of Mark or the direct speech recorded in Q. Nevertheless, we can identify the substance of the primitive form of the saying. Both passages speak of removing (Q: ἀπομασσόμεθα; Mark: ἐκτίναξατε) the dust (Q: κονιορτῶν; Mark: χοῦν) from the feet (Q: εἰς τοὺς πόδας; Mark: τῶν ποδῶν) against (Q: ὑμῖν; Mark: αὐτοῖς) those who do not welcome you (Q: μὴ δέχονται ὑμᾶς; Mark: μὴ δέξηται ὑμᾶς). The fact that both Q and Mark say
substantially the same thing while employing such different vocabulary and structure makes it quite clear that they are independent attestations.

In addition, it would seem that the original form of the saying was directed toward “cities,” as it remains in Q. Mark changed “city” to “place” in the beginning of 6:11 and “from [your] city” to “from there” midway through 6:11. In both instances Mark’s version is attempting to establish a connection between the rejection experienced by a particular house and the rejection experienced by a city. It is still apparent, however, that “place” is standing in for “city,” as a consideration of the previous verse in Mark reveals: “And he said to them, ‘Where you enter a house (ὁικία), stay there until you leave from there (ἐκείνη).’” Obviously, the “there” which they end up leaving is the given city. It makes no sense for the disciples to be instructed to stay in the house until they leave the house! Matthew, in combining Mark and Q reinforces the overlap Mark intends to emphasize between the response of a household and the response of a city. Judgment is deserved on the small level and the large level. “And whoever does not welcome you or listen to your words as you go out from that house or city shake the dust off from your feet” (Matt 10:14).^{34}

What, then, is to be done with Q 10:12? Was it a genuine saying that circulated independently? This option is doubtful. The verse makes no sense except as a concluding judgment on a city’s rejection of Jesus’ message. It presupposes previous discussion about “that city’s” (πόλει ἐκείνη) culpability.

^{34} For additional discussion see Caird, “Shake off the Dust,” 41
Was it Q redaction? There are two ways such a redaction could have taken place. First, Q 10:12 could simply be a creation of the Q redactor. Second, we must remember that a parallel of the verse exists in Matt 11:23b-24 (without parallel in Luke). If Matt 11:23b-24 was originally part of Q, then Q 10:12 could have been a reduplication of this verse. Either option is, of course, possible, but two considerations must be taken into account. First, as Catchpole notes, “Without v. 12 the mission charge achieves only a weak climax... with 12, on the other hand, a natural continuation of vv. 10, 11a is achieved, and those consequences are spelt out bluntly.” More significantly, the reference to Sodom appears entirely at home within the context of both Q and Mark’s mission instructions. We have already seen the importance of Sodom in our discussion of Matthew and Luke. It is woven into the very fabric of the mission instructions in Q. What is surprising, is the fact that Mark 6:7-11 provides an equally natural context without ever mentioning Sodom. On the one hand, Mark also emphasizes hospitality toward the messengers of the kingdom as one of the primary ways of welcoming the message of God. In addition to this, Mark records that the disciples were sent out two by two—again mirroring Sodom’s angelic visitors. Oddly enough, this is missing from Q’s


36 Catchpole, *Quest*, 175. Catchpole’s verdict is that, “the saying is not Q-redaction nor even secondary, but an original part of the instructions on conduct in towns. This would not only explain how the woes of the Q 10:13-15 came to be placed in the mission charge. It would go further and establish a common setting for the pre-Q instructions on conduct in towns, the pre-Q woes, and the compositional activity of the Q editor” 174. See also D. Catchpole, “The Mission Charge in Q.” *Semeia* 55 (1991): 147-174. We do not think that Q 10:13-15 was part of the mission charge, but rather was placed right after the mission charge in Q. Such a placement still reaps all of the aforementioned explanatory benefits.

37 This renders it highly unlikely that the redactor of Q duplicated the saying as it occurs after the woes on Galilean cities in Matt 11:24 and placed it at the conclusion of the mission charge. The most natural context for the saying is Q 10:10-12.
version of the mission instructions, but so naturally fit the sense of the passage that Luke not only reproduced it in his copy of Mark 6:7-11, but he also adopted it in creating the introduction to his second mission charge, the commissioning of the seventy. Hence, if the saying about Sodom was indeed Q redaction, it is quite amazing that Mark’s text not only provides a natural context for the saying, but even includes an allusion to the Sodom story that is missing in the Q text.

Was it, then, originally part of the primitive saying? We can tentatively conclude that Q 10:12 was not Q redaction. Rather, it was part of the most primitive form of the saying. Whether this verse was absent in the line of tradition used by Mark, or he simply chose to adopt a more abbreviated form (making the condemnation clear with his own addition of εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς) is open to speculation.

*Arguments For Authenticity:*

The authenticity of Q 10:10-11 and Mark 6:11 appears quite likely. First and foremost, form and vocabulary make it quite clear that they are independently attested in both Mark and Q. 38

In addition, the saying benefits from the criterion of coherence. On the one hand, it’s setting in the mission instructions points to its authenticity. There is little debate that Jesus sought to cull some sort of following from the people of Israel, spreading among them his ideas, message, and vision for Israel’s future. It is quite logical to presume that

38 See the extended treatment in Laufen, *Doppelüberlieferungen*, 201-301.
he would have passed on similar responsibilities to his followers.\(^3^9\) In that vein, the mission instructions are widely considered an authentic summary of the content of Jesus’ commissioning activity.\(^4^0\) Thus, the inclusion of Q 10:10-11 // Mark 6:11 by most scholars in the original core of the mission discourse affirms its authenticity.\(^4^1\)

Q 10:10-11 // Mark 6:11 displays one further mark of coherence with the historical Jesus. Rather than simply requiring the disciples to condemn those who reject them and their message, Jesus commands them to perform a prophetic action—to shake the dust off their feet as a sign of God’s impending judgment on those who have spurned Jesus and his agents. Instructing his disciples to perform such a prophetic action is consonant with what we know of the historical Jesus. Ever since Sanders’ work *Jesus and Judaism*, Jesus’ actions in the Temple (Mark 11:15-19 and parallels), have been widely interpreted as a prophetic denunciation of the Temple, a sign that it would be destroyed.\(^3^2\) Furthermore, Sanders has gone to considerable lengths in order to authenticate Jesus’ temple action.\(^4^3\) If the historical Jesus himself chose to use a prophetic action in order to

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39 The fact that one *has* followers implies the desire to *spread* one’s views. See especially Martin Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers* (SNTW; New York: Crossroad, 1981), 74. Reconstructions as disparate as Meier’s *Marginal Jew* and Crossan’s *Historical Jesus* agree on this point. The “mission” may have been a more or less standard phenomenon for those who wished to participate more actively in the Jesus movement” (Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 334). “The physical, literal following of this itinerant prophet-preacher-teacher flowed naturally into sharing his itinerant mission to Israel” (Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 3.157).

40 Among those who agree that it goes back to the historical Jesus are: Hahn, *Mission*, 46; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 3.156, 190 n. 106; Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 332-33; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2.177; Catchpole, *Quest*, 188. Evidence for the authenticity of the mission instructions is also bolstered by a potentially independent attestation in Gos. Thom 14.


42 This action is to be understood along the lines of those performed by Old Testament prophets (i.e. Jer 19:10).

43 For the complete argument, see Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 61-76.
warn of a coming judgment against the temple, it follows that he would have instructed his disciples to employ similar measures.

Q 10:12 lacks this double independent attestation, and is consequently not always considered part of the original mission discourse.\textsuperscript{44} However, we have seen that there are good reasons to think that it was not Q redaction, but rather part of the tradition received by Q. As such, it marginally benefits from the multiple independent attestation of Q 10:10-11 and Mark 6:11, and may well have been part of Jesus’ mission discourse.

It is debatable whether Q 10:12 is multiply attested within Q itself. Order makes it clear that Q 10:12 was part of Q, but was Matt 11:23b-24 originally part of Q as well?\textsuperscript{45} A number of considerations suggest that it was. 1) The striking symmetry and parallelism suggest that this was a very natural place for Matt 11:23b-24. 2) We have already seen that having nearly identical sayings within close proximity might have been the impetus for Luke’s switching 10:13-15 and 10:16 and eliminating Matt 11:23b-24 from Q.\textsuperscript{46} 3) Without Matt 23b, there is a verdict proclaimed against Capernaum without an explicit reason for the condemnation. 4) It is quite possible that the woes against the Galilean cities originally found themselves placed after the mission discourse in Q precisely because they both had this saying in common.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{44} See, however, Catchpole, \textit{Quest}, 188.


\textsuperscript{46} Traditionally the main obstacle toward inclusion in Q has been the lack of any reason for Luke to have eliminated it. See Schulz, \textit{Q}, 361; Hoffmann, \textit{Studien}, 285; Reiser, \textit{Jesus}, 222-23. It would appear that this obstacle no longer stands in the way.

\textsuperscript{47} As a “sayings gospel” it is reasonable to assume that Q would often have relied on catchwords or thematic connections in the positioning of given sayings.
If Q 10:12 did appear twice in Q, it increases the likelihood that Jesus, on at least one occasion, warned that rejecting his message would result in a final judgment worse than Sodom’s. From a thematic standpoint, it is also worth noting that Sodom is used to evoke the judgment of the last days in Luke 17:29.

Arguments against Authenticity:

A number of scholars have argued against the authenticity of all of Q 10:10-12, including Q 10:10-11 // Mark 6:11 on the grounds that they are the work of a Christian prophet, who spoke the words of the risen Jesus to the community of believers. These words were later transposed into the earthly life of Jesus. This “Christian prophet” hypothesis has been adopted by a host of scholars (Bultmann, Käsemann, Boring, Lüdemann, Schulz, and the Jesus Seminar\(^48\)) and applied to numerous facets of the Jesus tradition.\(^49\) It has special relevance for our study, because Q’s final judgment sayings are often among those isolated as possible candidates. While such a hypothesis is, in theory, possible, actual attempts to demonstrate the prophetic Christian origin of a given saying reveal crippling limitations. Of the aforementioned scholars, Boring alone has sought to systematically isolate a set of criteria by which one might determine which sayings attributed to Jesus are in fact the creations of Christian prophets. However, the arguments consistently rely on conjecture and presupposition. Aune, Hill, and Dunn have each


\(^{49}\) For a list of sayings which have been attributed to Christian Prophets, see David Aune, “Christian Prophets and the Sayings of Jesus: An Index to Synoptic Pericopae Ostensibly Influenced by Early Christian Prophets,” in *SBL 1975 Seminar Papers* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975), 2.131-41.
provided careful analysis of both the hypothesis and its application to the sayings of Jesus. Collectively they have demonstrated that there are no reliable means by which one might attribute a saying of Jesus to an early Christian prophet. Nevertheless, the hypothesis continues to persist as a means of demonstrating the inauthenticity of numerous sayings in the Jesus tradition. Because of its prevalence, we will treat any specific attempt to demonstrate the Christian prophetic origin of a particular final judgment saying in Q.

In the case of Q 10:10-12, Bultmann, Lüdemann, and Boring all argue for its creation by a Christian prophet. The former two both point to Matt 28:19 as an indicator of Q 10:10-12’s prophetic origin. However, even if we were to grant that Matt 28:19 were the creation of an early Christian prophet, these two passages share nothing in common beyond an exhortation to mission. While we noted that the mission of Q 10:10-12 was almost certainly directed toward Jews alone, (a point made explicit in Matthew’s context) the commission of Matthew 28 specifically broadens the mission to include all nations, a move much more consonant with the early church. While those who accept the


51 Bultmann (*History*, 145) claims of Mark that, “As a Hellenistic evangelist he well knew that these instructions no longer applied to the mission in the oikumene, and so made them a charge for the mission of the Twelve during the ministry of Jesus, and Matthew and Luke followed him.” Boring (*Sayings*, 145-46) argues for inauthenticity on precisely the opposite grounds, “The sayings so correspond to the situation of the early church’s mission that this section must be judged basically a post-Easter product…” The overtly Jewish context of the mission renders Bultmann’s scenario the more plausible. Boring provides no evidence that the early Christian mission was patterned after the instructions provided in Q 10:1-12.

52 Lüdemann, *Jesus*, 167; Bultmann, *History*, 145.

53 As opposed to an authentic saying of the risen Lord, or a redactional creation.
gospel in the mission discourse receive “peace,” in Matthew 28 baptism is enjoined as an outward sign of group identification, a sign which quickly took on the utmost significance in much early Christian theology and practice (Acts 2:41; Rom 6:3-4; 1 Cor 1:13-17). Lastly, while Q 10:10-12 points to reception of the disciples and their message of the kingdom as the criterion of acceptance or rejection, Matt 28:19 points squarely to the significance of the “Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit” a formulation whose significance for the early church should go without saying. Hence, even if one were to use Matt 28:19 as a model of Christian prophecy, as Lüdemann and Bultmann do, one would also have to acknowledge that the nature of the differences between the two passages suggests that Q 10:10-12 was not the creation of a Christian prophet.

Concerning Q 10:10-12 Boring argues, “Thus, not only in the symbolic act, but the judgmental message embodied in it is of prophetic character”54 However, he provides no evidence to suggest why this “prophetic character” is more indicative of a Christian prophet than the historical Jesus.

The authenticity of Q 10:10-12 has been doubted on other grounds as well. The Five Gospels argues that, “Matthew represents this allusion as an eschatological threat directed against those towns that rejected the gospel. That idea is alien to Jesus, although not to the early disciples, who may have reverted to John the Baptist’s apocalyptic message and threat of judgment, or they may simply have been influenced by apocalyptic ideas that were everywhere in the air.”55 This line of argumentation depends on several unsubstantiated presuppositions. Prior to a thorough evaluation of the authenticity of

54 Boring, Sayings, 146.

55 Funk, Five Gospels, 169.
passages concerning final judgment, (one of the goals of the present study) it is methodologically inappropriate to state that the idea of eschatological judgment is “alien to Jesus.”\(^5\)\(^6\) Furthermore, the scenario used to explain the ascription of such ideas to Jesus in the tradition strains logic. If Jesus’ predecessor, John the Baptist, spoke of eschatological judgment, and Jesus’ followers spoke of eschatological judgment, would it not make sense that Jesus, the middle link in the chain, also spoke of eschatological judgment? In addition, given that various sayings attributed to Jesus do speak of eschatological judgment, why are the disciples more likely to have been influenced by the “apocalyptic ideas that were everywhere in the air” than Jesus himself?

While the authenticity of Q 10:10-11 \(//\) Mark 6:11 is probable, the most compelling argument against Q 10:12 is its corresponding lack of multiple independent attestation. We have seen that there are good reasons to believe that Q 10:12 was part of the most primitive version of the saying, but its authenticity must still be considered more tenuous than that of Q 10:10-11. Though we deem it less likely, it is quite possible that Q 10:12 was a redactional expansion that emerged at some point in the developing tradition.

**Conclusions and Implications:**

Q 10:10-11 \(//\) Mark 6:11 can be considered authentic with a fair degree of assurance, while the balance of evidence suggests that Q 10:12 should tentatively be considered authentic as well.

\(^5\) Boring (Sayings, 145-46) offers similar arguments for the passage’s creation by a Christian prophet. The reasoning ends up being circular.
Several scholars have gleaned a sense of urgency from these verses that implies a belief that the coming judgment is imminent. For instance, Manson concludes that, “The instructions given in this section are clearly colored by the belief that the final crisis is imminent. This is why the missionaries are not to waste time.” However, this sense of urgency is nowhere communicated in Q’s mission instructions. No timeline is given for the coming judgment. There is no warning for the disciples not to spend too much time in one place. It is likely that scholars are reading the urgency of Matt 10:23 (“…you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes”) back into Q’s mission discourse.

Judgment is based on one’s reception (δέχεσθαι) of the disciples and their message about the coming of the kingdom. Those who embrace both message and messengers will receive peace. Those who spurn the message and turn out the messengers will be condemned at the final judgment.

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57 Manson, Sayings, 76. See also Gnilka, Jesus, 166.
Q 10:13-15

“WOE TO YOU CHORAZIN; WOE TO YOU BETHSAIDA…”


Matthew 11:20-24

Τότε ἦρξατο ὁ νεκτείζειν τὰς πόλεις ἐν αἷς ἐγένοντο αἰ πλείσται δυνάμεις αὐτῶν, ὅτι οὐ μετενόησαν· οὐαὶ σοι, Χοραζίν, οὐαὶ σοι, Βηθσαϊδῇ. ὅτι εἰ ἐν Τύρῳ καὶ Σιδώνι ἐγένοντο αἰ δυνάμεις αἰ γενόμεναι ἐν ύμιν, πάλαι ἐν ἐν σάκκῳ καὶ σποδῷ μετενόησαν. πλὴν λέγω υμῖν, Τύρῳ καὶ Σιδώνι ἄνεκτότερον ἔσται ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως ἡ ύμῖν. καὶ σὺ, Καφαρναοῦμ, μὴ ἔως οὐρανοῦ ψωθήσῃ; ³


Ouíά σοι, Χοραζίν, ouai σοι, Βηθσαϊδᾳ: ὅτι εἰ ἐν Τύρῳ καὶ Σιδώνι εγενήθησαν αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ γενόμεναι ἐν ύμιν, πάλαι ἐν ἐν σάκκῳ καὶ σποδῷ καθήμενοι μετενόησαν. πλήν ἢ ύμῖν, καὶ σὺ, Καφαρναοῦμ, μὴ ἔως οὐρανοῦ ψωθήσῃ; ³

¹ A few manuscripts (X, C 33) add καθήμενοι here in imitation of the Lukan version.

² P⁵⁵ and D omit ἐν τῇ κρίσει but it is found in the best manuscripts.
Matthew 11:20-24
Then he began to reproach the cities
In which most of his deeds of power
had been done because they did not repent.
Woe to you, Chorazin;
woe to you, Bethsaida,
for if the miracles being done in you
had been done
in Tyre and Sidon
they would have repented long ago
in sackcloth and ashes.
But,
I say to you,
it will be more tolerable
for Tyre and Sidon
on the day of judgment than for you.
And you, Capernaum,
will you be exalted to heaven?
You will be brought down to Hades.
For if the miracles done in you
had been done in Sodom
it would have remained until today.
But, I say to you,
it will be more tolerable
for the land of Sodom
on the day of judgment than for you.


Woe to you, Chorazin;
woe to you, Bethsaida,
for if the miracles being done in you
had been done
in Tyre and Sidon
they would have repented long ago
sitting
in sackcloth and ashes.
But,
it will be more tolerable
for Tyre and Sidon
in the judgment than for you.
And you, Capernaum,
will you be exalted to heaven?
You will be brought down to Hades.
Context and Meaning in Matthew 11:20-24

Matthew 11:20-24 is set in the middle of a group of passages dealing with acceptance or rejection of Jesus. Verses 16-19 speak of the obstinacy of “this generation,” which rejected both John and Jesus. This culminates in the woes of 20-24. Verses 25-30 then turn to offer words of praise and encouragement to those who have accepted Jesus.

Verse 20 introduces the coming woes with the words, “Then he began to reproach the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done, because they did not repent.” Verse 21 begins the first of two condemnations, which are laid out in parallel structure in Matthew. It contrasts two Galilean towns, Chorazin and Bethsaida, with the regions of Tyre and Sidon. But, to which “Tyre and Sidon” is the woe alluding? Is it the Tyre and Sidon of first century Palestine, both of which had a Jewish community. Or, is it the wicked Gentile cities of Tyre and Sidon, which were regularly singled out in Old Testament prophetic indictments?

Both the wording and context of the woe point to the latter identification. 1) Use of the phrase “Tyre and Sidon” in the context of impending judgment would lead any Jew to think of denunciations of those two locales in the prophets. Ezekiel 26-28 was particularly formative in establishing the two cities as archetypes of sin and judgment, but it was not the only section of scripture to do so. The same identification can be found in Jer 25:22; 27:3; 47:4; Joel 3:4; Zech 9:1-4; 1 Macc 5:15; Jud 2:28. 2) In Ezekiel 28, the

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king of Tyre is castigated for his sin in words that echo the condemnation of the king of Babylon in Isaiah 14:13-15. This passage is alluded to in Matt 11:23a and consequently strengthens not only the connection between the two woes, but also the probability that Tyre and Sidon are to be understood in terms of their Old Testament typology as well. 3)

Both Matthew and Luke employ an “unreal” conditional (Matthew: εἰ + ἐγένομαι + ἄν in the apodosis; Luke: εἰ + ἐγένηθησον + ἄν in the apodosis) in their description of Tyre and Sidon’s repentance. The statement is clearly meant to be hypothetical. In both gospels, however, Jesus is depicted as ministering to inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon (Mark 3:8 // Luke 6:17; Mark 7:24, 31 // Matt 15:21). This further suggests that Tyre and Sidon are to be understood typologically in the context of their Old Testament background. 4)

In verses 23b and 24 Matthew contrasts Capernaum with Sodom in a manner analogous to the contrast of the previous woe, thus making it clear that Tyre and Sidon are to be understood along the same lines as Sodom, another archetype of sin. 5) Most revealing of all is the language used. “It will be worse for you than for Tyre and Sidon.” The implication is clear: everyone agrees that things will be bad for Tyre and Sidon at the final judgment.

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7 “Because your heart is proud and you have said I am a God, I sit on the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas” (Ezek 28:2). // “But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit on the mount of assembly on the heights of Zaphon; I will ascend to the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’” (Isa 14:13-14) // “And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven?” (Matt 11:23a).

“They shall thrust you down into the pit and you shall die a violent death in the heart of the seas” (Ezek 28:8). // “But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit” (Isa 14:15); // “No, you shall be brought down to Hades.” (Matt 11:23a).
At issue in verse 21 are “mighty works” (δυνάμεις) which have been performed in Chorazin and Bethsaida, mighty works intended to instigate repentance. Repentance, however, was not forthcoming, and Jesus pronounces judgment upon them: it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for these cities. The indictment could hardly be stronger. The use of two Gentile cities which epitomize sin as a point of contrast makes it clear that Chorazin and Bethsaida have committed even worse transgressions by refusing to take heed of Jesus’ mighty works.

The second condemnation is pronounced against another Galilean city, Capernaum. Jesus rhetorically asks if Capernaum will be “exalted to heaven.” The answer is emphatic. “You shall be brought down to Hades” (Matt 11:23). This is an adaptation of a quote from Isaiah 14:13-15, where the king of Babylon (another archetype of sin and rebellion) is condemned. “But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit on the mount of assembly on the heights of Zaphon; I will ascend to the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit.”

The allusion to Isa 14:13-15 points to the remarkable contrast between the status that the king of Babylon thought he enjoyed and the actual fate that awaited him, judgment meted out by God. That the city of Capernaum will share a fate similar to the wicked king of Babylon drives home the seriousness of their refusal to take heed of the miracles. But, how is the rhetorical question “will you be lifted up to heaven?” to be understood? In Isaiah 14 the king of Babylon is condemned for exalting himself. The same images are employed elsewhere in the Old Testament to similar effect. Jer 51:53 speaks of the judgment awaiting proud Babylon with the following words, “Though
Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify her strong height, from me destroyers would come upon her, says the Lord.” Obadiah 4 condemns a confident Edom. “Though you soar aloft like the eagle, though your nest is set in among the stars, from there I will bring you down.” Is Capernaum, like these Gentiles, being castigated for her misplaced confidence and pride? But, what special status did Capernaum enjoy? In what way did it think it would be “lifted up to heaven?” The only logical answer is that Capernaum was confident in its inclusion in the people of Israel and its consequent vindication in the last days. By alluding to Isa 14:13-15, Jesus is, in effect, saying not to trust in the covenental privileges of Israel. They can lead to a false sense of security and status. Such identification means nothing unless it is accompanied by repentance. Again, the comparison of Capernaum’s assurance with the misplaced pride of Gentiles adds to the polemical nature of the saying.

At this point the structural parallel to the woe of verses 13-14 resumes. Capernaum is compared to the city of Sodom, which, like Tyre and Sidon, would have displayed the appropriate response had it witnessed the mighty works. Consequently, Capernaum will fare worse than Sodom at the final judgment.

**Context and Meaning in Luke 10:13-15:**

In Luke, the two woes are part of the mission instructions to the seventy and follow immediately after the previously treated passage, Luke 10:10-12. In their Lukan context, 10:13-15 should be understood as a direct continuation of 10:10-12. Together

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8 The intent, then, would mirror the statement of the Baptist, “Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham” (Matt 3:8-9 // Luke 3:8).
they speak of the consequences of rejecting Jesus’ followers. There are three exegetical differences between the woes found in Matthew and those found in Luke. First, Luke provides a more elaborate image of the penitent Tyre and Sidon, describing them as “sitting” (καθήμενοι) in sackcloth and ashes. Second, Luke has simply “in the judgment” (ἐν τῇ κρίσει) instead of Matthew’s “in the day of judgment” (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως). Nevertheless, given the use of the definite article, the future tenses of ἀνεκτότερον ἔσται, ὑψωθήση, and καταβήσῃ, and the contrast with the future fate of Tyre and Sidon’s dead inhabitants (and Sodom’s as well given the proximity of 10:12), it is difficult to imagine that Luke’s shorter version is pointing to something other than the final judgment. Third, Luke’s version lacks the contrast of Capernaum with Sodom (Matt 11:23b-24) at the end of the woes that establishes a parallel structure. Nevertheless, the image remains near at hand, occupying a position before the woes. Otherwise, the meaning of the two versions is the same.

Text, Context, and Meaning in Q 10:13-15:

The high degree of correlation between Luke 10:13-15 and Matt 11:21-23a make reconstructing the original Q text a relatively straightforward process. There is, however, one main question that presents itself in reconstructing the Q text. Are Matt 11:23b-24 a Matthean addition to Q, or are they a Lukan subtraction from Q? Many scholars argue that Matt 11:23b-24 represents a Matthean duplication of Q 10:12 (Matt 10:15), placed here in order to enhance the parallelism between the initial woes and the condemnation of
Capernaum. However, as we saw in our discussion of the authenticity of Q 10:12, there are good reasons to believe that Matt 11:23b-24 might well have originally been a part of Q.\(^9\) To sum up: 1) The parallelism between the two woes provides a most natural setting for the saying about Sodom. 2) If it was present in Q, the close proximity of the two sayings provides a perfect stylistic reason for Luke to have conflated them.\(^11\) 3) Without Matt 11:23b-24 a verdict is declared over Capernaum, but no reason is given for the judgment. The basis of the condemnation is explained in 23b, “For if the miracles done in you had been done in Sodom, it would remain today.” Therefore, we may tentatively conclude that Matt 11:23b-24 was part of Q.

Two redactional additions can be isolated, both coming from Matthew’s hand. 1) Verse 11:20 is most likely a Matthean redactional creation intended to introduce the coming woes.\(^12\) Not only is it missing in Luke, but it also employs characteristic Matthean vocabulary: τότε ἡρξαστο (Matt 4, Mark 0, Luke 0), and πλεῖστος, which is a Matthean redaction in 21:8. In addition, it simply sums up the content of the

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condemnations. 2) Matthew has likely changed Q’s τῇ κρίσει to ἡμέρα κρίσεως.\textsuperscript{13}

This is a standard formulation for Matthew, appearing in 10:15 and 11:24, both of which parallel this verse. Luke on the other hand, variously uses ἡμέρα ἐκένη and τῇ κρίσει. This renders it possible that the ἡμέρα κρίσεως in verse 24 was also changed by Matthew.

Therefore, the reconstructed text of Q reads as follows:

οὐαί σοι, Χοραζιν, οὐαί σοι, βηθσαϊδά: ὅτι εἰ ἐν Τῦρῳ καὶ Σιδὼνι (ἐγένοντο) αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ γενόμεναι ἐν ὑμῖν, πάλαι ἂν ἐν σάκκῳ καὶ σποδῷ [καθήμενοι] μετενόησαν. πλὴν, [λέγω ύμίν] Τῦρῳ καὶ Σιδὼνι ἄνεκτότερον ἦσται ἐν τῇ κρίσει ἡ ὑμῖν. καὶ σὺ, Καφαρναοῦμ, μὴ ἐως οὐρανοῦ ὑψωθήσῃ; ἐως (του) ᾗδου καταβήσῃ.

\textit{And tentatively,}

ὅτι εἰ ἐν Σοδόμωι ἐγενήθησαν αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ γενόμεναι ἐν σοί. ἐμείνεν ἂν μέχρι τῆς σήμερον. πλὴν γῇ Σοδόμωι ἄνεκτότερον ἦσται ἐν τῇ (ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως)\textsuperscript{b} ἡ σοί.

a. ἐγενήθησαν
b. κρίσει

Woe to you Chorazin! Woe to you Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago [sitting] in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable in the judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades.

\textit{And tentatively,}

For if the miracles done in you had been done in Sodom it would remain today. But it will be more tolerable (in the judgment)\textsuperscript{a} for the land of Sodom than for you.

a. on the day of judgment

The Context of the saying in Q was discussed in the treatment of Q 10:10-12.\textsuperscript{14}


\textsuperscript{14} See pages 139-40.
Most Primitive Version of the Saying:

Without an independent text to compare with, redactional assertions would be little better than speculation. Therefore, the most primitive version of the saying will be considered roughly synonymous with Q 10:13-15.

Arguments for Authenticity:

The woes against Galilean towns are only found in Q and consequently do not enjoy independent multiple attestation.

The criterion of dissimilarity applies to the Galilean woes in two ways. First, there is absolutely no record of a Christian mission to these three Galilean towns in the letters of Paul, the later writings of the New Testament, or the Apostolic Fathers.\(^{15}\) This is the solitary mention of Chorazin in the gospels as well. Hence, we may dismiss the notion that the woes were created in light of other gospel material.\(^{16}\) Why pointedly condemn a town that is not even mentioned elsewhere in the tradition?

Second, the woe’s perspective on Tyre and Sidon is dissimilar from that of the early church. As we saw in the exegetical treatment of Matt 11:21-24 // Luke 10:13-15, the logic of the woe is dependent on the biblical reputation of Tyre and Sidon. Like Sodom and Gomorrah, these two towns were often used typologically as examples of

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\(^{15}\) This leads Becker (Jesus, 64) to argue that, “It is easier to assume that, since Jesus had condemned these places so harshly, there was no post-Easter mission in them, than to argue the opposite position, viz., that the saying was attributed to Jesus, because missionaries had no success in the villages.”

Gentile sin. The sting of the woe’s judgment derives its force from a negative comparison with two sinful Gentile cities.

Both of these factors, “sinful” and “Gentile,” increased the rhetorical effectiveness of the contrast. On the one hand, the sin of Tyre and Sidon was well established. To fare worse at the judgment would be a serious indictment indeed. On the other hand, a good deal of the shame intended by the woe comes from the fact that Jewish towns are being unfavorably compared to Gentile towns. The unfavorable contrast with Gentiles gives further bite to the condemnation, begging the question, “What kind of sin could cause God to render a worse judgment to his own people than to Gentiles?” We saw in the exegetical treatment of Matt 11:21-24 that the allusion to Isa 14:13-15 serves to strengthen this portion of the comparison.

Elsewhere in the gospel of Luke, the city of Sidon is also used as a Gentile example explicitly set in contrast with Israel. “But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was severe famine all over the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except a widow at Zarephath in Sidon” (Luke 4:25-6). The whole synagogue is filled with rage at the comparison between Israel and the Gentiles. There is, however, a critical difference between Luke 4:25-6 and Q 10:13-15. Most commentators agree that Luke 4:25-27 is Lukan redaction intended to introduce the larger theme of Israelite rejection and Gentile acceptance of the gospel.¹⁷ Not only is the passage preceded by Jesus’

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rejection in his hometown (Luke 4:23-24), but the two examples rely on the positive response of Gentiles, the widow and Naaman. The contrast is built around these two different reactions to Jesus, “foreshadowing” Israelite rejection and Gentile acceptance of the gospel. This is exactly what we might expect from the early church, which had a vested interest in explaining the spread of the gospel to Gentiles.

We must emphasize that, in the Galilean woes, however, Tyre and Sidon are used as negative examples. The woes do not compare the favorable response of Tyre and Sidon to the unfavorable response of the Galilean towns! Rather, they state that it will be worse for you than for Tyre and Sidon. This is of significance precisely because the Galilean woes assume that their audience shares a negative view of Gentiles—that they will be appropriately shocked that the fate of Gentiles at the judgment might be better than that of God’s covenant people.

The early church, however, clearly did not have such a view. In fact, it had a vested interest in demonstrating the appropriateness of the incorporation of Gentiles into the people of God. Even Matthew ends his gospel by throwing open the doors to the evangelization of Gentiles (Matt 28:19-20). Hence, the perspective of the Galilean woes seems to show signs of dissimilarity with the perspective of the early church. It is difficult to imagine the early Church inventing a polemic against Jewish towns whose rhetorical force is derived in large measure from the assumption that Jews have a preferential status before God.

There is, however, evidence to suggest that this perspective might be indicative of the historical Jesus. A number of passages suggest that Jesus might have restricted his own ministry to the people of Israel. These include: Matt 10:5 “Go nowhere among the
Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of Israel’;
Matt 10:23 “You will not have gone through all the towns of Israel…”; Mark 7:27 “…Let
the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to dogs.”
All three of these sayings are almost certainly authentic, chiefly because they are
potentially embarrassing to the early church. In each, Jesus specifically marginalizes
gentiles, those whom the church would seek to convert.

The criterion of coherence speaks to the authenticity of the woes on Galilean
towns in three ways, with the first two also gaining strength from a degree of
dissimilarity with the early church.

1) The Galilean towns are condemned for not “repenting” (μετενόησαν) and
repentance was almost certainly one of the themes of Jesus’ preaching. This conclusion,
long assumed by historical Jesus scholars, was challenged by Sanders in his book Jesus
and Judaism. Sanders points out that there are relatively few passages in which Jesus
explicitly enjoins a general audience to repent. Only three sayings employ μετάνοια in
such a context: (a) The Chorazin Woe, Q 10:13-15 (b) The Comparison with the Queen
of the South and Nineveh, Q 11:29-32 (c) Unless You Repent You Will All Likewise
Perish, Luke 13:1-5. After dismissing the authenticity of these three sayings, Sanders
concludes that, “There is not a single piece of information about Jesus that indicates that
he was what Matthew and Mark, at the outset of their Gospels depict him as being: one
who called for general repentance in view of the coming kingdom.”

18 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 106-113.
19 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 110.
However, Sander’s argument falls short on a number of grounds. First, his arguments for the inauthenticity of the three sayings in question are weak. His arguments pertaining to the first two sayings will be treated in detail in this study since they are both Q texts that speak of the final judgment. As for the Lukan passage, Sanders defers to Bultmann’s assertion that Luke 13:1-5 is dependent on Josephus’ Ant. 18:87, but this is highly improbable.20

Second, by restricting evidence of a “call to general repentance” to occurrences of the word μετάνοια, Sanders fails to take seriously other means of preaching repentance.21 Particularly worthy of consideration is the theme of judgment found throughout the Jesus tradition. As the Old Testament prophets demonstrate, the preaching of judgment often functions as an implicit call to repentance. In Jeremiah, for example, God articulates the purpose of his pronouncement of judgment in the following terms: “It may be that they will listen, all of them, and will turn away from their evil way, that I may change my mind about the disaster that I intend to bring on them because of their evil doings” (Jer 26:3). Two sayings in the Jesus tradition similarly express openness to repentance in the midst of a general judgment proclamation.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her nestlings under her wings, but you were not willing! Look, your house is forsaken!... I tell you, you will not see me until [the time comes when] you say: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Q 13:34-3522


This generation is an evil generation; it demands a sign, but a sign will not be given to it—except the sign of Jonah! For as Jonah became to the Ninevites a sign, so also will the son of humanity be to this generation. 

Q 11:29-30

Even when the possibility of repentance is not directly alluded to, it is reasonable to assume that threats of judgment were intended to facilitate repentance. For example, it is unlikely that the woes found in Luke 6:24-25; Q 11:39, 41-44; Q 11:46b, 47-48, 52; Gos. Thom. 102 are all simply vindictive in their purpose. Rather, these woes should be interpreted as warnings of coming judgment intended to instigate repentance.

Third, Sanders’ strict separation of sayings that contain a call for individual repentance from those with more general exhortations to repent is problematic. Individuals are often encouraged to repent of conditions that are not unique to them. For example, the demands made upon the rich young man in Mark 10:17-31 and parallels would apply to anyone whose identity was invested in wealth. Similarly, in Jesus’ parables of repentance, specifically the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:17) and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:13), it would seem apparent that the message extended to whole segments of Israel.

Fourth, and most significantly, both John the Baptist and the early church preached repentance. The most logical way to explain this congruence between Jesus’ mentor and Jesus’ successors is that Jesus, the connecting link, also preached repentance. Given the other evidence at our disposal, it seems eminently reasonable to conclude that

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24 See also Chilton, “Repentance of E. P. Sanders,” 2-3.
repentance was indeed a common theme in Jesus’ preaching. Q 10:13-15 coheres with this theme.

What should stand out in the case of Q 10:13-15 is that the basis of the condemnation is solely a failure to “repent.” Any corresponding need to respond favorably to Jesus’ person and message is left unspoken. This simple demand for repentance stands in contrast with the typical use of the term in the preaching of the early church, in which repentance is repeatedly connected with acceptance of Jesus. In the perspective of the early church, turning away from sin was only efficacious if it meant specifically turning toward Jesus. For example, the book of Acts, whose numerous uses of “repentance” are found in a kerygmatic context similar to that of Q 10:13-15, has only one instance in which Jesus’ person or message is not explicitly tied to a call for repentance: Acts 8:22. In this case, repentance of a specific sin is in view. Other occurrences are as follows: “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven…” (Acts 2:38). “God exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). “Paul said, ‘John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus”’ (Acts 19:4). “…as I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus” (Acts 20:21).  

Mark 1:15, whose anachronistic use of “gospel” points to its redactional nature, likewise demonstrates a desire to stress the connection between repentance and acceptance of Jesus. “The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news.” The response sought in the repentance of Q

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10:13-15, on the other hand, appears entirely focused on turning away from sin, specifically pointing to the appropriate marks of spiritual grief: sackcloth and ashes.

2) The towns are condemned for not repenting in light of the “miracles” (δυνάμεις) performed within them. The condemnation of Galilean towns for not responding to miracles also coheres with what we know of the historical Jesus. That Jesus was known as a miracle worker is attested in every strand of the Jesus tradition. These miracles were very likely a crucial part of his ministry, proclamation, and claim to fame. In two passages that are widely considered authentic, Jesus specifically urges his listeners to respond in light of his miracles. “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me” (Matt 11:4-6 // Luke 7:22-23). “But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you” (Luke 11:20 // Matt 12:28). The early church, on the other hand, did not seek a response based solely on deeds of power, but rather in light of the gospel message itself. Therefore, while the critical role assigned to miracles coheres well with the historical Jesus, it bears marks of dissimilarity from the typical perspective of the early church.

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27 The primary argument for the authenticity of this passage is the potential embarrassment of John the Baptist’s skepticism. Cf. Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2.131-37.

3) There is a good deal of evidence that Jesus did have an active ministry in Bethsaida and Capernaum, one in which he is remembered to have done miracles. Besides our verses, Bethsaida is mentioned in Mark 6:45, 8:22 (healing of a blind man); Luke 9:10 (healing of those “who needed to be cured”); John 1:44, 12:21. Capernaum is mentioned in Matt 4:13, 8:15 (healing of the centurion’s servant // Luke 4:31 // John 4:46), 17:24; Mark 1:21 (exorcism of a man in the synagogue // Luke 4:31), 2:1 (healing of the paralytic), 9:33; Luke 4:23 (report of mighty deeds done in Capernaum), 4:31 (exorcism // Mark 1:21), 7:1 (centurion’s servant // Matt 8:5 // John 4:46); John 2:12, 4:46 (centurion’s servant // Matt 8:5 // Luke 4:31), 6:17, 6:24 (feeding of the 5,000), 6:39 (feeding of the 5,000). The number of attestations make it almost certain that Jesus not only traveled in these cities, but also was known to have performed miracles there. The woes on Galilean towns fit quite naturally into this framework.

Arguments against Authenticity:

Arguments against the authenticity of the Galilean woes are based on the premise that the sayings are the product of an early Christian prophet or community and reflect the failure of the Christian gospel to take root in these Galilean towns.³⁰

This conclusion is buttressed in a number of different ways. In The Five Gospels it is argued that, “Jesus would not have condemned towns that did not accept him. He

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²⁹ As Dunn (Spirit, 71) notes, “The judgment on Chorazin and Bethsaida is determined solely by their response to the ‘mighty works’ done in their midst. This feature is without real parallel in the Jewish (Palestinian) mission of the early church...”

³⁰ Funk, Five Gospels, 320; Bultmann, History, 112; Boring, Continuing Voice, 209; Sanders, Jesus, 375 n. 60, 110; Haenchen, Weg, 226; L. Oberlinner, Todeserwartung, 90-93; Käsemann, “Beginnings,” 98.
would not have told Capernaum to go to Hell after instructing his disciples to love their enemies.” This argument raises a genuine tension, one which Dale Allison has recently summed up in the following terms, “Can it be that a mind which was profoundly enamored of the love of God and which counseled charity toward enemies concurrently accepted and even promoted the dismal idea of a divinely-imposed, unending agony?” However, three considerations must be taken into account before we proceed to render all of the judgment material in the Jesus tradition inauthentic. 1) Interpretation of the admonition to “love your enemies,” is entirely dependent on one’s worldview. For example, if Jesus did, in fact, believe that acceptance of his message was necessary for salvation, then it would be categorically “unloving” not to provide the severest warnings to those who had turned away. A good example of this is found in the book of Jonah. Jonah is commanded by God to, “Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me.” He is to preach judgment upon the city. However, sending Jonah with this message is an act of love because it opens up the way for the repentance of the Ninevites. Jonah recognizes this from the beginning, which is why he shirks the Lord’s command to preach judgment among his enemies.

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31 Funk, Five Gospels, 320.
When the Ninevites do, in fact, repent, Jonah is disconsolate. “Is this not what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing” (Jon 4:2-4). We would be wise not to caricature love of one’s enemies, in such a way that eliminates conflict, warning, and judgment from the realm of possibility.  

2) We must also bear in mind the fact that Jesus was crucified. Clearly Jesus generated some real enemies during his ministry. Had Jesus been meek and mild, doing his best never to offend people, it is unlikely that he would have ended up hanging on a cross.  

3) Although we may be bothered by the tension between the command to love one’s enemies and proclamations of judgment, the early church was not. As Allison astutely notes,

We would do well to remember that the Christian tradition is full of people who have waxed eloquently about God’s love one minute and then threatened people with divine vengeance the next. Paul knew of matchless grace, and he penned 1 Corinthians 13, but he also spoke about the “coming wrath” (1 Thess 1:10 cf. 2:16; 5:9). The redactor of the sermon on the mount, with its glorious chapter 5, speaks of weeping and gnashing of teeth fully six times; and Luke, who preserves the sermon on the plain, also passes down the tale of the rich man and Lazarus, with its flames of agony.

In fact, God’s description of his own identity in Exodus reminds us that the tension was by no means a creation of the Christian faith. It was a foundational feature of Jesus’ Judaism.


33 Nolland (Luke 1.297) offers a more agreeable definition. “The directive of Jesus stands in the sharpest contrast to the most common view of enmity in the ancient world: ‘I considered it established that one should do harm to one’s enemies and be of service to one’s friends’ (Lysias, Pro Milite 20).”

34 Allison, “Jesus and Gehenna,” 16.
The LORD, the LORD, a god merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means clearing the guilty, but visiting the iniquity of the parents on the children and the children’s children, to the third and fourth generation. Exodus 34:6-7

Bultmann argued that the Galilean woes were the creation of a Christian community on two grounds. 1) “The sayings look back on Jesus’ activity as something already completed.”35 Certainly the sayings do imply that Jesus had reached a critical junction in his Galilean ministry.36 What is unclear is why this Sitz im Leben in the life of Jesus casts doubt on the sayings’ authenticity.

2) “Moreover, it would be difficult for Jesus to imagine that Capernaum could be exalted to heaven by his activity (Wellhausen).”37 The saying simply does not say that Capernaum will be exalted due to Jesus’ activity. As Davies and Allison note, the point rests on “over-interpretation.”38

Boring musters several additional arguments worth noting. 1) The woes are inauthentic because they, “regard miracle as a sufficient basis for faith.”39 As we saw above, such a point of view has a great deal more in common with Jesus, than the early church! 2) “Furthermore, they [the woes] refer to two cities which play no role in the life

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35 Bultmann, History, 112.

36 Though even this implication is perhaps not as straightforward as it may seem. Davies and Allison (Matthew, 2.270) note, “Certainly Matthew would not have concurred. He puts 11:20-4 in the middle of the Galilean period.”

37 Bultmann, History, 112.

38 Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.270.

39 Boring, Continuing Voice, 209.
of Jesus as we otherwise know it.”

40 We assume that Boring is referring to Tyre and Sidon.41 We noted in the exegetical section that Tyre and Sidon were used in the woe as negative historical examples borrowed from the Old Testament. We should no more expect these cities to have played a role in Jesus’ life than we should demand proof of his journeys to Sodom!

These objections are followed by a string of supporting proofs.

The sayings correspond to the profile of prophetic speech both formally and materially. The antithetic parallelism and pronouncement of woe are properly regarded as prophetic forms; the “I say to you” of Matthew, if original, is also prophetic. The oracle announces in advance the verdict of the judge of the last day, which functions as an implicit call to repentance, in the manner of the Christian prophets. The emphatic positive valuation of miracles, the allusive use of Old Testament words to express the message of the present (Isa 14:13), and the eschatological reversal of roles, in which an oracle directed against the king of Babylon is now directed against Israel are all characteristics of Christian prophecy.

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These arguments are equally unconvincing. 1) The claim that “prophetic speech” is indicative of an origin in Christian prophetic circles is only viable if Jesus was known not to have spoken in this manner. In fact, the evidence seems to indicate the opposite, that Jesus was perceived to be a prophetic figure (see especially Mark 6:15; 8:11-12, 28; 11:27-33; 14:65 and pars.) Surely such a reputation must reflect both the manner and content of his speech. Furthermore, it would seem quite remarkable that his later adherents spoke on his behalf (in fact, in his very voice) in this manner, if he was never...
known to have done so himself. 2) To argue that the woes are an early church creation because they call people to repentance implies that Jesus did not call people to repentance. However, we have seen that there is considerable evidence that repentance was a key component in Jesus’ preaching. 3) There is absolutely no reason to consider a “positive valuation of miracles” as particularly indicative of the early church. Both Jesus and his contemporaries would have evaluated miracles positively, and we have seen that miracles (outside of the resurrection) were not a central feature in the early church’s gospel proclamation. 4) As for the “allusive use of the Old Testament,” this can by no means be grounds for denying a saying to the historical Jesus. It would be the height of absurdity to suppose that Jesus, the leader of a Jewish religious movement, never alluded to the Old Testament. 5) Lastly, it should be noted that many scholars take eschatological reversals to be one of the hallmarks of Jesus’ authentic sayings. Even Bultmann said “here, if anywhere, we can find what is characteristic of the preaching of Jesus.”

One final argument against the authenticity of the Galilean woes is registered by Sanders, who sees in the woes “anti-Jewish polemic” indicative of a Christian origin. In fact, it is difficult to find any anti-Jewish polemic in the Galilean woes. We have already

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44 See pages 163-66.

45 Boring is joined in this argument by Oberlinner, *Todeserwartung*, 91.


47 Sanders, *Jesus*, 375 n. 60, 110. Sanders takes his lead from Bultmann (Bultmann, *History*, 113), who, in agreement with Fridrichsen (*The Problem of Miracle in Primitive Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1972; orig. 1925), 49) argues that the woes are the product of “Christian polemic.” While Bultmann detects this polemic in the structure of the saying, Sanders argues that it is defined by its anti-Jewishness.
seen that the logic of the woes requires a negative evaluation of *Gentiles*. In the same vein, the status of the *Jews* as God’s *chosen people* is assumed. It is the combination of these two assumptions that provides the rhetorical force of the woes. In addition, the woes make it clear that Jesus prioritized the Jews in his ministry. His miracles were done in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. Furthermore, the Galilean woes, unlike the potentially more far-reaching condemnations of “this generation,” are a condemnation of three Galilean towns. They are by no means a condemnation of all of Israel.

**Conclusions and Implications:**

The arguments tilt strongly in favor of the authenticity of the Galilean woes, tentatively including Matt 11:23b-24.

The Galilean woes do possibly have some implications for the location of the final judgment. If taken entirely at face value, the imagery of the saying suggests that the final judgment is enacted on the earth. In the condemnation of Capernaum Jesus first asks rhetorically if they will be *lifted up* (ὑψωθήση) to heaven. He then states that they will be *brought down* (καταβήση) to Hades. These phrases could be literal descriptions of the eschatological destinies of the righteous and wicked. For instance, the *Testament of Moses* 10:8-10 reads,

> Then you will be happy, O Israel! And you will mount up above the necks on the wings of an eagle. Yea, all things will be fulfilled. And God will raise you to the heights. Yea, he will fix you firmly in the heaven of the stars, in the place of their habitations. And you will behold from on high. Yea, you will see your enemies on the earth.

On the other hand, too much should not be made of the imagery of ascent and descent. After all, to be “lifted up” or “brought down” are common images of glorification and
degradation. We saw that both were employed non-eschatologically in terms of judgment on pagan rulers and people. Similarly, while words like “heaven” (οὐρανός) and “hell”\(^{48}\) (ᾁδόν) do have spatial connotations, they are probably intended to communicate little more than opposite eschatological destinies.

The judgment is spoken of using the passive voice. Does this tell us anything about the identity of the judge? Passives occurring in the context of divine judgment have long been called “divine passives,” the implication being that God is the unspoken agent.\(^{49}\) Though this is certainly true in the broad sense, the divine passive is quite possibly employed in eschatological contexts precisely to avoid having to name an agent. The issue is not whether it is God himself, the Son of Man, an angelic representative, or the righteous who perform the deed in question, but rather that the deed is performed. Reiser’s analysis is right on the mark.

These statements are not at all concerned with the agent, who of course is always ultimately God. What is decisive is that all this will happen; how and through whom it will come about, the prophet of the end times is happy to leave open. The passive, which relieves the prophet of the need to name the agent, is especially useful in such cases.\(^{50}\)

We would be well advised, therefore, not to draw any specific conclusions as to the agent of judgment from the use of divine passives in Q’s final judgment sayings.

Though the people in view are primarily the citizens of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, the final judgment spoken of in the woes extends far beyond them. Even Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom will undergo another judgment. The implication is that there will

\(^{48}\) Although ᾁδόν, “Hades,” can mean either “hell” or simply sheol, the abode of the dead, the context renders “hell” the appropriate translation.

\(^{49}\) The phrase was initially coined by Jeremias, Theology, 9.

\(^{50}\) Reiser, Jesus, 272.
be an accounting of all people at the final judgment: Jew and Gentile, past and present. It also seems that, in addition to one major separation (ὁ ὄροσ τοῦ vs. ὤδε), there are degrees of punishment (and reward?) in view. Repentance in light of Jesus’ δυνάμει is emphasized as the key to salvation. It will be less tolerable for the Galilean cities than Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom because they, unlike the sinful pagan cities, had the benefit of Jesus’ δυνάμει and still did not repent.
Q 11:31-32

“THE QUEEN OF THE SOUTH WILL RISE…”


Matthew 12:42:

υότον ἐγερθῆσεται

ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ

τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης

καὶ κατακρινεὶ αὐτήν,

ὅτι ἤλθεν εἰκ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς

ἀκούσαι τὴν σοφίαν Σολομῶνος,

καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Σολομῶνος ὠδέ.

Luke 11:31:

βασίλισσα νότον ἐγερθῆσεται

ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ

τῶν ἀνδρῶν

τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης

καὶ κατακρινεὶ αὐτοῦ,

ὅτι ἤλθεν εἰκ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς

ἀκούσαι τὴν σοφίαν Σολομῶνος,

καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Σολομῶνος ὠδέ.

Matthew 12:41:

Ἀνδρές Νινεύται ἀναστήσονται

ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ

τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης

καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτήν,

ὅτι μετενόησαν

εἰς τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ,

καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Ἰωνᾶ ὠδέ.

Luke 11:32:

Ἀνδρές Νινεύται ἀναστήσονται

ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ

τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης

καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτήν

ὅτι μετενόησαν

εἰς τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ,

καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Ἰωνᾶ ὠδέ.

1 p45 and D are missing ἐν τῇ κρίσει.
Matthew 12:42:  
The queen of the South will rise  
at the judgment with  
this generation  
and condemn it,  
for she came from the ends of the earth  
to hear the wisdom of Solomon,  
and behold,  
something greater than Solomon is here.

Luke 11:31:  
The queen of the South will rise  
at the judgment with  
the men of  
this generation  
and condemn it,  
for she came from the ends of the earth  
to hear the wisdom of Solomon,  
and behold,  
something greater than Solomon is here.

Matthew 12:41:  
The men of Nineveh will arise  
at the judgment with  
this generation  
and condemn it;  
for they repented  
at the preaching of Jonah,  
and behold,  
something greater than Jonah is here.

Luke 11:32:  
The men of Nineveh will arise  
at the judgment with  
this generation  
and condemn it;  
for they repented  
at the preaching of Jonah,  
and behold,  
something greater than Jonah is here.

Context and Meaning in Matthew 12:41-42:

The section containing Matt 12:41-42 begins in verse 38. Some of the scribes and Pharisees come to Jesus and ask him for a sign. He answers that no sign will be given to this “evil and adulterous generation” except the sign of Jonah. Verse 40 interprets the sign of Jonah through Jesus’ death and (implied) resurrection. “Just as Jonah was three days and nights in the belly of the sea monster, so for three days and three nights the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth.” Verses 41-42 are connected to the preceding verses through shared references to Jonah and this generation. Verses 41-42 are followed by verses 43-45 which describe the return of an unclean spirit. This passage wraps up the section with a final condemnation of “this evil generation” (Matt 12:45).
Verses 41-42 parallel one another in structure and in content. They each contrast the unresponsiveness of “this generation,” with the responsiveness displayed by famous Gentiles from the Old Testament. In verse 41, the contrast involves the people of Nineveh, who repented at the preaching of Jonah, and the lack of repentance demonstrated by “this generation.”

Both Matt 12:41-42 and Luke 11:31-32 use the phrase “this generation.” This phrase, found in some of Q’s subsequent final judgment sayings as well, must be explored in some depth. In not one of these instances is it simply shorthand for a chronological generation. Rather, it must be understood in light of its usage in the Hebrew Bible. Condemnations using the phrase “this generation” are intended to evoke two other biblical generations that were singled out for judgment: the generation of the flood, and the wilderness generation. The arguments for this identification have been carefully spelled out by Lövestam, and deserve to be reproduced in some detail.

1) The post-positive placement of οὗτη reflects the semitic structure, and the accompanying adjectives are almost all found in Deuteronomic descriptions of the wilderness generation. For example: “yet his degenerate children have dealt falsely

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2 The phrasing of the two verses is Semitic and does not reflect the language of the LXX. See Reiser, Jesus, 208-9.

3 “Then the Lord said to Noah, ‘Go into the ark, you and your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation’” (Genesis 7:1).

4 “Not one of these—not one of this evil generation—shall see the good land that I swore to give your ancestors...” (Deut 1:35). “For forty years I loathed that generation and said, ‘They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they do not regard my ways’” (Psalm 95:10). See also Deut 32:5, 20.

with him, a perverse (ὑπερβολως-σκολια) and crooked (διεστραμμένη) generation (γενεα-γενεα)’’ (Deut 32:5); “for they are a perverse generation (γενεα-εξεστραμμένη), children in whom there is no faithfulness (σιν σιν-σιν πίστις)” (Deut 32:20); “Not one of these—not one of this evil generation (δεσμός δεσμόν—not in LXX)—shall see the good land that I swore to give your ancestors…” (Deut 1:35). The similarities with the use of the phrase in the New Testament are striking: Mark 9:19, γενεα απεστος Matt 17:17 // Luke 9:41 γενεα απεστος και διεστραμμένη; Matt 12:39 // Luke 11:29 and Matt 16:4, γενεα πονηρα και μοιχαλις; Mark 8:38, γενεα ταυτη τη μοιχαλιδι και αμαρτολω; Acts 2:40, γενεας της σκολιας ταυτης.

2) “This generation” is specifically mentioned in connection with the generation of the flood (Luke 17:25-26; Matt 24:34-39).

3) Taking the adjectives and the context into account, the “this generation” sayings in the New Testament all have a negative, even polemical thrust to them that is consonant with the condemnations of the generation of the flood and the wilderness generation. This is reflected in the use of the phrase in both New and Old Testaments in the service of proclamations of judgment.

4) In the New Testament, the phrase is almost always used in reference to those who have spurned the person, message, or miracles of Jesus.6 This coincides perfectly with the wilderness generation, which remained obstinate toward God in spite of the

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ministry and miracles done in their midst. As Lövestam puts it, “Time after time they ‘tempted’ him. They demanded a sign, they asked that he should show in a striking fashion that he was with his people as their savior and helper. At last God’s judgment fell on them.”

Hence, in Q’s final judgment sayings, “this generation” defines the character rather than chronology of Jesus’ opponents. When used in the midst of a proclamation of judgment, the phrase operates as a technical term, connoting the faithlessness and wickedness equivalent to that of the generation of the flood and the wilderness generation. This makes sense of the fact that the Jesus of Q clearly did not believe that “this generation” included all of his contemporaries. All those who turned to him and responded favorably to his message were not part of “this generation”—not because they were younger or older, but because they did not share the spiritual disposition of the generation of the flood and the wilderness generation. Rather, some of those who chronologically belonged to this generation would escape from its judgment unscathed, just like Noah, and Joshua and Caleb before them.

This is the sense in which Matthew has used “this generation” in verses 12:41-42. What is more difficult to ascertain is how far Matthew intends the label “this generation” to extend. In theory, it is likely that Matthew would agree that it stands for any and all who refuse to respond to the activity of God in the person, message, and ministry of Jesus, whether Jew or Gentile. But, given the context, it is highly likely that it is

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7 Miracles such as the ten plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, the destruction of the Egyptian army, the pillar of cloud and fire, the water which poured out of the rock, and the gifts of Mannah quail all seemed to have no impact on the wilderness generation. When confronted with the prospect of fighting the various tribes in order to claim the promised land, they doubted their God once again.

8 Lövestam, “The Ἔσχατον Ἀλήθεία Eschatology,” 408.
exclusively Jews who are the target of Jesus’ condemnation. First, the link between Matt 12:41-42 and the demand for a sign specifically evokes the wilderness generation whose sin was all the more egregious because they were God’s covenant people who had experienced his deliverance. Second, the contrast is specifically made with Gentiles who responded to God. This is undoubtedly intended to emphasize the failure of Israelites. Third, Matthew has elsewhere recorded that Jesus restricted his own ministry to the Jews (Matt 10:6, 23; 15:24). In our passage, this generation is almost certainly directed exclusively against Jesus’ Jewish contemporaries.

Verse 41 paints a picture of a legal scene at the final judgment. “The people of Nineveh will rise up (ἀναστήσονται) at the judgment (κρίσει) with this generation and condemn (κατακρίνει) it.” That the judgment in view is the final judgment is clear from the presence of the Ninevites who repented during the time of Jonah.\(^9\) ἀναστήσονται (and its parallel in verse 42, ἐγερθεῖσαται) has two meanings in the present context.\(^10\) It is, first of all, the standard way to refer to the resurrection of the dead that so often precedes the final judgment in apocalyptic scenarios. In this case, however, the Ninevites are not only raised from the dead, they are also raised up as witnesses who will testify

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\(^9\) Wright (Jesus, 252-3), cites Q 10:13-15 and Q 11:31-32 as examples of a “devastating judgment in the form of a national disaster.” (See also Perrin, Rediscovering, 195). One wonders if Wright’s “metaphorical” interpretation is being stretched past its breaking point. It is hard to imagine how Jesus might have talked more explicitly of a final judgment than he has done in these two passages. At what point must the literal sense of the saying have priority? See: Meier, Marginal Jew, 2.440, Reiser, Jesus, 220-2; Gnilka, Jesus, 192; Becker, Jesus, 66; Marshall, Luke, 486. As Davies and Allison (Matthew, 2.357-59) argue, “But the verb is in the future tense, and ἐν τῇ κρίσει and γενέσθαι τούτῳ both have eschatological content. In addition, the scene painted presupposes a universal judgment, for it involves the Ninevites and the Israel of Jesus’ time as well as the Queen of the South (cf. Kümmel, Promise, 44, 89).” In the third volume of his “Christian Origins and the Question of God,” Wright himself seems to think resurrection and final judgment are in view (N. T. Wright, The Resurrection of the Son of God (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 432-34).

\(^10\) There is no reason to reject one in favor of the other, as do Davies and Allison, Matthew, 357-8; Marshall, Luke, 486; Jeremias, TDNT III, 408 n. 15. Both definitions fit seamlessly within the context.
against this generation. They will condemn (κατακρίνει) this generation. They are called to testify about the guilt of this generation for two reasons. First, they did not ignore the hour of their visitation. When Jonah preached repentance in Nineveh, they responded accordingly. Second, as Gentiles, less would be expected of the Ninevites. They were, after all, not God’s covenant partners. Nevertheless, even they responded to the call of God, making the guilt of this generation of Israelites apparent for all to see. But, it gets worse. This generation did not reject the word of God delivered by Jonah. It rejected something even greater: the word of God delivered by Jesus.

Verse 42 parallels verse 41. “The queen of the South will rise up (ἐγερθησεται) at the judgment (κρίσει) with this generation and condemn (κατακρίνει) it.” The queen of the South refers to the queen of Sheba (1 Kgs 10:1-13 // 1 Chr 9:1-12), who searched out Solomon in order to test his wisdom. That both names were used of the same queen is demonstrated twice in T. Sol. 19:3 and 21:1. Though her questions were difficult (1 Kgs 10:1), she rightly recognized the wisdom in Solomon’s replies and God’s blessing upon his kingship. She is called on to testify against this generation because she, a Gentile, discerned the wisdom of God in Solomon. This generation, which had access to an even greater wisdom in Jesus, failed to recognize it as the wisdom of God.

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11 See Reiser, Jesus, 211-12.

12 It may be that there was a Jewish tradition of contrasting the response of the Ninevites with that of Israel. A similar comparison is made in Mek. on Exodus 12:1. Jonah says, “for since the Gentiles are more inclined to repent, I might be causing Israel to be condemned.”
Context and Meaning in Luke 11:31-32:

Luke 11:31-32 is the end of a unit that begins in 11:29. Much like Matthew, the unit begins with the proclamation that no sign will be given to this “evil generation” except the sign of Jonah. Luke then provides a different interpretation of this sign than Matthew, “For just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be to this generation” (Luke 11:30). He then concludes the section with verses 31-32. The two verses, though sharing the same overall wording as Matthew, are in reverse order in Luke, beginning with the saying about the queen of the South and ending with the Ninevites. The meaning of the two verses in Luke is identical to that found in Matthew.

Text, Context, and Meaning in Q 11:31-32:

There are only two differences in wording between Matthew and Luke’s versions of the saying, neither of which yields to redactional probing. Luke includes a τῶν ἄνδρων in verse 31 that is missing from Matthew. It is quite possible that the Lukan version is more original and that τῶν ἄνδρων was eliminated by Matthew in order to enhance the parallelism between the two lines, one of his stylistic preferences. On the other hand, Luke’s disdain for parallelism and his proclivity for adding ἄνδρες are both well chronicled. Hence, no firm decision can be made. Similarly, a decision between Matthew’s αὐτήν and Luke’s αὐτοῦς in Q 11:31 is best left open.

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13 Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.359.
More important is the question, in what order did the verses occur in Q? It is more probable that Matthew has altered the original order of the verses, shifting the saying about Jonah to the front in order to emphasize the link between the sign of Jonah in 12:39-40 and the one greater than Jonah in verse 41.\(^\text{15}\) The immediate context of both Matthew and Luke seem to have been borrowed from Q, where the sayings were part of a polemic against this generation, which included the request for a sign, the sign of Jonah, and our twin judgment sayings (Q 11:29-32).

Thus, the text of Q 11:31-32 reads as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greek Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>βασίλισσα νότου ἐγερθήσεται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῶν ἄνδρων τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρίνει (αὐτής,) ὃτι ἠλθεν ἐκ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς ἄκουσα τὴν σοφίαν Σολομόνος, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Σολομόνος ὄδε.</td>
<td>The queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ἄνδρες Νινεύτης ἀναστήσονται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτήν, ὃτι μετενόησαν εἰς τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλείον Ἰωνᾶ ὄδε.</td>
<td>The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Most Primitive Version of the Saying:**

Though we are hesitant to make any redactional alterations to the Q text without an independent version of the saying, there is good reason to assume that the Q redactor was responsible for the joining of Q 11:29-30\(^\text{16}\) with 31-32.\(^\text{17}\) Q 11:31-32 has no intrinsic connection to the preceding material, and while Q 11:29 has a partial Markan parallel (Mark 8:11-12), Q 11:31-32 does not. Furthermore, Q 11:31-32 neither explains nor expands upon the sign of Jonah. In all likelihood, verses 31-32 were added to verse 29-30 by the Q redactor on the basis of the subject matter. Both share the phrase “this generation” and speak of Jonah. Matt 12:40 represents a further attempt by the evangelist to interpret the enigmatic “sign of Jonah.”\(^\text{18}\) Thus, in all likelihood Q 11:31-32 originally circulated as an independent tradition, and can be treated accordingly.

**Arguments for Authenticity:**

Q 11:31-32 is not attested in any other independent source. As to multiple attestation of themes, the phrase “this generation” must be carefully considered. Did it originate with Jesus or the early church? γενεα appears in a statement of judgment five times in Q (7:31; 11:29, 31, 32, 51), four times in Mark (8:12 (2×), 8:38, 9:19), once in...

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\(^\text{16}\) There has been much debate about the connection between Q 11:29 and 30. See, for example, Edwards, *Sign of Jonah*, and Vögtle, “Spruch.” Though this discussion has little bearing on our study, the summation of Kloppenborg (*Formation* 129-30) seems most compelling.


Matthew alone (Matt 12:45), and twice in Luke alone (Luke 11:50, 17:25). In each of these cases, it is accompanied either by “this” (γενεαὶ τὰύτης) or a condemning adjective of the type used in Deuteronomy of the wilderness generation.

Even if the three occurrences of the term in M and L are all redactional creations, the phrase is still independently attested nine times between Mark and Q. The likelihood that all nine of these occurrences are redactional creations is remote indeed. The number of attestations in the Jesus tradition is particularly significant when compared with the three times “this generation” is used in the context of judgment in all of the other documents from the early church. 1) “And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation’ (Acts 2:40). 2) “Do all things without murmuring and arguing, so that you may be blameless and innocent, children without blemish in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world” (Philippians 2:14-15). 3) “Therefore I was angry with that generation and I said, ‘They always go astray in their hearts, and have not known my ways” (Hebrews 3:10, quoting Psalm 95:10). Of these, the latter two are exhortations given to current disciples rather than warnings delivered to the members of “this generation.” It is never used polemically in the context of judgment by the Apostolic Fathers.

Thus, proportionally, the polemical use of “this generation” has a considerably greater attestation in the sayings assigned to Jesus in Mark, Q, M, and L than in all of the other documents from the early church. In fact, the audience and purpose of the three

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19 Lührmann’s (Redaktion, 32-48) influential discussion on the significant redactional implications of γενεαὶ τὰύτης for Q should be read in light of this range of attestations. The evidence shows that the phrase was probably not a Q redactional creation.
early church attestations reflect the pattern in the sayings of Jesus in only one place, Acts 2:40. Here, as in the Jesus tradition, the saying is directed toward “this generation” and serves as a warning of their impending judgment (and implicitly, a call to respond appropriately). Thus, it is highly unlikely that all of the “this generation” sayings were created by the early church. In order for the phrase to have found its way into four independent sources twelve times, one would expect it to have been a staple of early church polemic. Yet, the evidence makes it clear that it was not a primary thrust of the early church—in fact, the trajectory indicates that it was, if anything, fading out of use.

One other observation about the use of this generation in the Jesus tradition is worth being noted. In addition to the passages listed above, Mark 13:30 (Matt 24:34, Luke 21:32), which arguably speaks of a “time-limit” for the last day, very likely carries the negative connotations of “this generation” as well. This would mean that, in the gospels, γενεά is never placed on the lips of Jesus outside of the context of judgment. The same cannot be said of the evangelists themselves, or the other writings of the New Testament, or the Apostolic Fathers. One wonders if condemnations and warnings

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20 As Lövestam (Jesus and This Generation, 91) rightly notes, “Regarding the early Christian missionary activity as it is depicted in Acts and the New Testament letters, Peter’s conversion terminology is unique.”

21 The fact that the phrase did not occur in other early church literature in proportions that approximate the attestations in the gospels makes it clear that even those occurrences in the sayings of Jesus that are redactional found their way into the Jesus tradition precisely because they were at home there.

22 In some places one is genuinely surprised not to find the phrase. For example, see Paul’s warnings to the Corinthians not to repeat the mistakes of the wilderness generation in 1 Corinthians 10:1-13. γενεά is completely absent.

23 Matthew and Luke both use γενεά in their introductions in a strictly chronological sense (Matt 1:17 (4X); Luke 1:48, 50 (2X); Acts 8:33; 13:36; 14:16; 15:21

24 Eph 3:5, 21; Col 1:26.
about the present γενεᾶ were such a regular part of Jesus’ teaching and preaching that, for the sake of clarity, he used the term only in this way. In doing so, he could use the phrase this generation and its adjectival equivalents virtually as a technical term, reinforcing with every use the need to repent in the face of certain judgment.

Q 11:31-32 is dissimilar from the early church in one critical respect. Verses 31 and 32 both use the construction πλείον... ὤδε. πλείον is in the neuter, making it clear that Jesus is not the intended referent. If the saying had been created by the early church, it is hard to imagine them not exploiting the natural christological implications of the saying. This is especially true since in each case the πλείον is being compared to a famous biblical person, Solomon and Jonah respectively. As it stands, it is unclear exactly what πλείον stands for. It could either be Jesus’ message of the kingdom of God, or his miraculous deeds. In either case, the saying is much more at home in the preaching of the historical Jesus than that of the early church. It is nearly universally agreed that Jesus’ message about the kingdom of God (however understood) was a central feature of his ministry. Likewise, as we saw in Q 10:13-15, Jesus was widely

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25 H Sim. 9:15:14; 1 Clem. 5:1; 7:5; 11:2; 16:8; 19:1; 50:3; 60:1; 61:3; Mar. 21:1 (2X).

26 For additional consideration, the queen of the South and the men of Nineveh are not common features of the early church. The queen of the South appears nowhere else in the New Testament or Apostolic Fathers, and the men of Nineveh appear only in 1 Clem. 7:7.

27 This is considered the principle sign of authenticity by several scholars who render an authentic verdict. See: Boring, Sayings, 153; Meier, Marginal Jew, 3.440; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.357.

28 Fuller (Mission, 34-5), focusing on the κηρύγμα of Jonah, saw Jesus’ preaching of the kingdom of God here.

29 Catchpole (Quest, 242), puts the emphasis on the mighty deeds of Jesus. “The neuter form πλείον suggests that the specialness of the contemporary situation is not understood christologically, nor in the present (but not new) preaching of judgment and call for repentance, but rather in the accompanying δούναμεν ὃς which anticipate the dawning new era.”

30 See Meier, Marginal Jew, 2.237, 273 n. 4.
regarded as a miracle worker. In addition, there is every indication that he expected these miracles to elicit a response.\(^{31}\) The early church, in contrast, emphasized response to the person of Christ, rather than to his specific words or deeds, as the center of the gospel proclamation and the yardstick by which one was measured.\(^{32}\)

The criterion of coherence also comes into play. Q 11:31-32 is quite similar to Q 10:13-15. 1) Both are condemnations of Israelites who have failed to respond to the demands of God. 2) Both refer to the consequences in terms of a final judgment. 3) Both employ Gentiles in order to emphasize the failure of Israelites. 4) Both speak of a needed repentance. 5) Both may refer to Jesus’ miracles as evidence of God’s presence, and the basis on which the demand is made. Hence, the previously established authenticity of Q 10:13-15, coupled with the similarities between the two sayings, heightens the probability that Q 11:31-32 is also authentic.\(^{33}\)

Other arguments put forward in favor of the saying’s authenticity include elements of style, content, and structure. For example, Perrin deduces that Q 11:31-32 is “certainly dominical” on the grounds that,

The double saying has no earlier history in the tradition; the point at issue is the question of repentance in face of a challenge, certainly a major concern of the message of the historical Jesus; the reference to the queen of the South and the men of Nineveh are vividly apposite and absolutely in accord with Jesus’ use of unlikely good examples in his comparisons (the


\(^{32}\) For example, see Acts 2:36-41; 3:17-26; Rom 1:3-5, 10:9-10; 1 Cor 15:3-7; Gal 3:16; Eph 2:11-22; 1 Pet 2:4-8; Rev 1:12-18.

\(^{33}\) Becker (Jesus, 65), who sees Q 10:13-15 as authentic, says that, “the two sayings are so nearly identical that they must have had a similar origin.” See also Davies and Allison, Matthew, 357. Obviously, this argument only works if one agrees with the authenticity of Q 10:13-15. Bultmann’s reservations about the authenticity of Q 10:13-15 lead him to conclude that both sayings are inauthentic. Similarly, Lüdemann’s (Jesus, 339) sole argument for inauthenticity is the similarity between Q 10:13-15 and Q 11:31-32.
Good Samaritan); and the element of warning in the saying coheres with a major aspect of the message of the parables.\(^{34}\)

Likewise, Reiser provides the following analysis of the saying’s language:

The diction and phraseology of this double saying are entirely Semitic. This is evident in the syntax: note the absence of the definite article before \(\beta\alpha\sigmaιλισσα\ νοτον\ ανδ\ άνδρες\ Νινευιται\); the twofold \(κα\& ιδον\) followed by a nominal phrase; the expression \(η\ ρενα\ αυτη\); the hyperbole of \(εκ\ των\ περατων\ της\ γης\); and the designation “Queen of the South.” It is also striking that the Greek version of the double saying, despite its biblical material, is quite independent of the LXX, for there the “men of Nineveh” are called \(οι\ άνδρες\ Νινευη\) (with the definite article!\(^{3}\); Jonah 3:5), while in the double saying they are \(άνδρες\ Νινευιται\). The adjective \(Νινευιη\) occurs in the LXX only in some manuscripts of Tobit 1:19, especially A. In the LXX the “repentance” of the Ninevites is described as \(απεστρεψα\) (3:8, 10), but in the double saying it appears as \(μετανοησα\)… These findings speak against the double saying’s having been created after Jesus.\(^{35}\)

None of these arguments is particularly conclusive. They either rely on previously established conclusions\(^{36}\) or elements of style\(^{37}\) that could be attributable to the early Christian community. Though the casting of unlikely characters in the role of heroes in Q 11:31-32 is a trait shared by a number of Jesus traditions, this stylistic commonality, as well as the apparent Semitic origin of the saying only marginally support authenticity.

\(^{34}\) Perrin, Rediscovering, 195. One or more of these points are echoed in Becker, Jesus, 66; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 357; Reiser, Jesus, 220.

\(^{35}\) Reiser, Jesus, 208-9 (italics added).

\(^{36}\) For instance, the notion that repentance was a major feature in the message of the historical Jesus has been a feature of some debate within historical Jesus research. See the questions posed by Sanders, (Jesus, 106-13).

\(^{37}\) Semitic language and structure are not sure signs of authenticity. The saying could have been composed by a Christian prophet in Aramaic. (Nor should one assume that a saying which lacks discernible Semitic language or structure indicates that it is inauthentic. There is no way of knowing what changes in language and structure are indicative of the translator and/or the redactor.)
Arguments against Authenticity:

Unlike Q 10:13-15, this generation is contrasted with the positive response of Gentiles. This definitely matches up with the early church. On the one hand the early mission to the Gentiles required a more positive evaluation. On the other hand, there is evidence that the expansion of the Gentile mission coincided with increasing Jewish rejection and hostility toward the gospel.\(^{38}\) It is possible that Q 11:31-32 reflects these developments and was created by a Christian community. The favorable response of famous Gentiles in Israel’s history would, then, be a way of alluding to the positive response of current Gentiles to the gospel. The subtext is clear: the Gentiles were destined to receive what the Jews themselves rejected. For example, Sanders rejects the authenticity of Q 11:31-32,\(^{39}\) and indeed, every one of the “this generation” sayings, on the grounds that they represent early Christian “anti-Jewish polemic”\(^{40}\) which reflects an early failure of the Christian mission among Jews.\(^{41}\) In discarding all of the “this generation” sayings, Sanders is able to conclude, “What recedes is the theme that Israel as a nation needs the sort of punishment which leads to the survival of a faithful remnant.”\(^{42}\)

\(^{38}\) See Romans 9-11, John.

\(^{39}\) He is in agreement with Bultmann (\textit{History}, 113), who sees in Q 11:31-32 “no need to take it as a community formulation” except for its structural parallels to 10:13-15, which he deems inauthentic, and “the impression that both passages have been constructed according to a ‘scheme of early Christian polemic’ (Fridrichsen).”

\(^{40}\) Sanders, \textit{Jesus and Judaism}, 374 n. 60.

\(^{41}\) Sanders, \textit{Jesus and Judaism}, 114.

\(^{42}\) Ibid, 113.
Three factors make this argument highly unlikely. First is the manner in which the Gentiles are used as examples. As with the Galilean woes, the Gentiles are used as a way of shaming the Israelites. Rhetorically, a “qal wahomer” argument is being used. The argument runs along these lines: “Even these Gentiles who were outside of the covenant responded to God—why haven’t you, his people?” The emphasis of the passage lies entirely on the lack of an appropriate response by “this generation,” not on the positive response of the Gentiles. As Becker remarks concerning the saying, “It has no interest in the fate of the queen or the Ninevites.”

Second, we have already seen that, while the term this generation appears frequently on the lips of Jesus in the gospels in a pejorative sense, it has only three similar attestations in all of the other literature of the early church. This sparse usage in the early church makes it is highly unlikely that this particular polemical language was retrojected en mass into the Jesus tradition.

Third, Sanders’ argument is predicated on the presupposition that it would have been incongruent for Jesus the Jew to make a sweeping condemnation of Israel. On what grounds is such a condemnation to be ruled out? The history of Israel is full of prophets who proclaimed God’s displeasure with Israel and warned of its coming judgment. More often than not these judgments were conceived of as corporate. As Wright asks,

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43 Reiser (Jesus, 218-19) is correct in identifying the rhetorical strategy as a “qal wahomer deduction (a minori ad maius)… It will be condemned, and its condemnation will come as a result of the witness of the Gentiles, which only deepens the shame.”

44 Becker, Jesus, 66.

45 Contrary to Sanders (Jesus, 113) who claims that, “in post-biblical Israel there is not the same emphasis on sifting or winnowing of Israel which one sees in some of the biblical prophets,” there is a mountain of evidence that many within second temple Judaism thought precisely in these terms. See background chapter.
“Was Jeremiah anti-Jewish? Was Amos? Was John the Baptist?” There is, then, no reason why Jesus could not have espoused such a dim view of Israel’s current generation?

Käsemann offers two further arguments against the authenticity of Q 11:31-32. 1) He is skeptical that a saying so artistically rendered could have been created in the midst of a spontaneous outburst of feeling. “The artificial construction of the two sayings, with their complete parallelism, is clear to see.” We must, however, bear in mind that we are not searching for the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus, but rather the *ipsissima vox*. Surely there might have been a degree of artistic reworking, but this does not render the saying inauthentic. Nor should we presume to know what level of creativity can or cannot be ascribed to the historical Jesus. Only a man of some talents could have generated devoted disciples.

2) Käsemann also sees “apocalyptic interpretation” in Q 11:31-32. The allusion to the Old Testament “brings about a confrontation between the two generations characterized by the presence of the message of salvation…End and beginning correspond and, seen from the perspective of the End, the Beginning is mirrored in the

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46 Wright, *Jesus*, 253. (One might just as easily enquire: “Were the Qumranite’s anti-Jewish? Was Josephus? Were the writers of 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch?”)

47 The same reasoning renders one of Becker’s (*Jesus*, 65-66) arguments for *authenticity* suspect. “That the theme of Israel and the nations is used so harshly against Israel speaks once again for the probability that the material comes from Jesus.” This too relies on an apriori assumption—in this case that Jesus did pronounce a sweeping condemnation of Israel.

48 Käsemann, “Beginnings,” 95 (esp. n. 11).

49 As Boring (*Sayings*, 153) notes in response to Käsemann, “The church may have taken the form from Jesus, however, or impressed a post-Easter form on the original pronouncements of Jesus; so, owing to the christological reticence of the sayings, it is better to regard them as authentic.”
Old Testament history.” However, this only provides evidence of inauthenticity if we start with the assumption that Jesus was in no way “apocalyptic.”

*The Five Gospel’s* offers the following assessment, “The vindictive tone of these sayings is uncharacteristic of Jesus.” We are on shaky ground indeed if we make the case for authenticity or inauthenticity on what “tone” is “uncharacteristic” of Jesus. It is difficult enough to assert such a thing about a friend or acquaintance, let alone a historical personage, 2,000 years removed from our probing.

**Conclusions and Implications:**

The use of “this generation,” the emphasis on the *works and deeds* rather than the *person* of Jesus in a manner which displays remarkable “christological restraint,” and coherence with the Galilean woes all point to the authenticity of Q 11:31-32. The strongest counterargument involves the positive response of Gentiles. However, the Gentiles are in no way the focus of the saying, but rather, in the service of the “qal wahomer” argument, are used to shame Israelites. When the evidence is weighed, it appears that Q 11:31-32 is probably an authentic saying of the historical Jesus.

The two sayings in Q 11:31-32 clearly depict the final judgment in terms of a trial scene. Bringing forth witnesses was a common feature of many second temple final judgment scenarios (Animal Apocalypse 90:22 cf. 89:59-90:17; 1QS 8:5-6; 1QpHab 5:4-5; Epistle of Enoch 97:5; 99:3; Wisdom of Solomon 1:9, 4:6, 4:16). The twin descriptions of the Queen of the South and the Ninevites *rising with* this generation to condemn it are

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50 Ibid, 96.

51 Funk, *Five Gospels*, 188.
also consonant with first century trial imagery. *T. Sanh.* 6.2-3 lists rules concerning standing during a trial, “A judgment is spoken only while standing, and testimony is given only while standing” (*t. Sanh.* 6:2). In addition, “The judges are seated and the contending parties stand before them” (*t. Sanh.* 6:3). That this was the practice in Jesus’ day is confirmed by the depiction of his own trial, “Some stood up and gave false testimony against him” (Mark 14:57). “Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus…” (Mark 14:60). These practices cohere well with Q 11:31-32, which depicts the Queen of the South and the Ninevites standing in the role of hostile witnesses, condemning this generation. Such witnesses had long been a feature of the Jewish legal system. The people of this generation are likewise depicted as rising in order to receive their verdict.

Q 11:31-32 offers no real insight into the time of the final judgment. It is not necessary to understand it as happening within the lifetime of “this generation.” The queen of the South and the Ninevites will rise up *with* this generation at the judgment. This will clearly entail resurrection for the queen of the South and the Ninevites, but it could mean that this generation will be raised from the dead for their trial as well. On the other hand, it is possible that the double meaning involved with ἔγρηγοςεταὶ and ἀναστήσονται apply only to the queen and the Ninevites—this generation will simply rise to receive their verdict.

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52. These practices may have stretched far back into the history of Israel. See Ps 109:6-7; Isa 54:17; Mic 6:1.

53. “A single witness shall not suffice to convict a person of any crime or wrongdoing in connection with any offense that may be committed. Only on the evidence of two or three witnesses shall a charge be sustained” (Deut 19:15-16).
There is likewise no hint of where the final judgment will take place. A courtroom scene is envisioned, but there is no way of knowing if the trial transpires on the earth or in the heavens. Nor is there any clue as to who the judge will be.

In the case of Q 11:31-32, those threatened with judgment are all of Jesus’ Jewish contemporaries who fail to respond to his message and/or miracles. Like the generation of the flood their judgment will come as a surprise. Like the wilderness generation, they will collectively pay the price for their hard-heartedness toward God.

That is not to say that all Jewish members of Jesus' chronological generation fell under judgment. In our previous discussion of the Old Testament background of “this generation,” we saw that the term referred to the generation of the flood and the wilderness generation, but excluded those who had responded appropriately to God. Likewise, in Jesus’ context, those who took heed of his words and deeds had come out from this generation and would not suffer its fate at the last judgment. Contrary to Sanders’ claim, they effectively functioned as a remnant within Israel.

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54 There are two primary reasons for seeing “this generation” as polemic levied specifically at Jesus’ Jewish contemporaries: 1) Given the scope of Jesus’ ministry, his audience was almost certainly entirely Jewish. 2) The rhetorical structure of the saying suggests that Gentiles are being used to shame Israelites. Most scholars agree that the Jews are specifically the target of this polemic. See, Gnilka, Jesus, 193; Becker, Jesus, 66; Meier, Marginal Jew, 3.440-41; Lührmann, Redaktion, 32-42 (contra Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.260).

55 Sanders, Jesus, 113.
Q 12:4-5

“DO NOT FEAR...”


Matthew 10:28
καὶ μὴ φοβεῖσθε
ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποκτεννόντων τὸ σῶμα,
τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν
μὴ δυναμένον ἀποκτεῖναι:

Luke 12:4-5
Λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν τοῖς φίλοις μου,
μὴ φοβηθῆτε
ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποκτεινόντων τὸ σῶμα
καὶ μετὰ ταύτα μὴ ἔχοντον
περισσότερόν τι ποιήσαι.

φοβεῖσθε3 δὲ μᾶλλον τὸν δυνάμενον
καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα
ἀπολέσαι ἐν γεέννῃ.

φοβηθῆτε τὸν μετὰ τὸ ἀποκτεῖναι
ἔχοντα ἔξουσίαν
ἐμβαλεῖν εἰς τὴν γέενναν.

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1 B D N W ᾽Θ f⁴ have φοβηθῆτε in place of φοβεῖσθε. Most likely the change to an aorist imperative was undertaken to smooth the transition from verse 26.

2 P⁴⁵ and 700 have πτοηθῆτε meaning “be terrified.” This intensification is to be attributed to a redactors hand.

3 D L ᾽Θ f¹³ TR have φοβηθῆτε in place of φοβεῖσθε. See note 1.

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Matthew 10:28
And
do not fear those who kill the body,
but are not able to kill the soul

But rather, fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.

Luke 12:4-5
I say to you my friends,
do not fear those who kill the body
and after that can do nothing more.
But I will show you whom to fear:
fear the one who after he has killed,
has the authority to throw into Gehenna.
Yes, I tell you, fear this one.

2 Clement 5:4
μὴ φοβεῖσθε
toὺς ἀποκτέννοντας υἱόµας
καὶ μηδὲν υἱὸν δυναµένους ποιεῖν.
ἀλλὰ φοβεῖσθε τὸν
μετὰ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν υἱόµας
ἐχοντα ἐξουσίαν
ψυχῆς καὶ σώµατος
tοῦ βαλεῖν εἰς γένναν πυρὸς.

Context and Meaning in Matthew 10:28:
Matthew 10:28 is part of Matthew’s expanded mission charge in which he details the suffering, persecution, and reward which lie ahead of the disciples (Matt 10:16-42). The more immediate context, Matt 10:26-32, revolves around the concept of fear. Matt 10:26 introduces the principle of eschatological disclosure with the words, “So have no fear of them….” Verse 28 is followed by words of encouragement about the disciples’ value to God and is summed up in verse 31, “So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.” In between lies verse 28, which spells out the principle clearly: do
not be afraid of men, fear only God. This principle is reiterated and expanded in verse 32, where confession of Jesus in the face of persecution is spelled out as the measure of faithfulness.

Matthew begins with an implicit distinction between “body” (σῶμα) and “soul” (ψυχή). The logic of the saying clearly relies on a dualistic anthropology, one that assumes that the soul remains when the body is killed. The saying also implies that prior to the final judgment the soul will be reunited with the body, since at the final judgment God has the power to “destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.”

4 Some scholars have argued that Satan is the one who has the power to destroy in Gehenna (Gundmann, Das Evangelium nach Matthäus ThHKT 1; Berlin: Evangelische Verlangsanstalt, 1968, 297; Wright, Jesus, 454-55). However, nowhere else in the literature of the church are believers told to “fear” the devil. They are told to “resist” him (Jas 4:17; 1 Pet 5:9). On the other hand, the idea of “fearing” God, taken from the Old Testament (Prov 1:7), remains a working synonym for one who is faithful (Luke 18:2, 4; Acts 9:31; Phil 2:12; 1 Pet 1:17). In addition, it is doubtful whether a second temple monotheistic Jew would have believed that Satan rather than God ultimately had power over one’s soul. As the book of James says, “There is one lawgiver and judge who is able to save and destroy” (Jas 1:12); a sentiment echoed by the book of Hebrews, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb 10:31).

5 The idea that the human person included both a tangible element and an intangible one is prevalent throughout second temple Judaism. Various words are used to describe these two elements, including “flesh” and “body” on the one side and “soul,” “spirit,” and “heart” on the other. Examples of this dualism include: Sir 23:17; Jdt 10:13; 2 Macc 6:30; 7:37; 14:38; 15:30; Tob 3:6; Wis 1:4; 3:1-4; 15:8; 1 Enoch 9:3, 10; 22:5-7; 67:8-9; 71:11; 102:4; T. Dan 3:1-6; T. Naph. 2.2-4; J.W. 2.8.6; 2.8.10; 2.8.11; IQS 3:8-9; 1QH 8:31-32; 9:15-16. It is not entirely clear whether these attitudes were imported from Hellenism (Schweitzer, TDNT 9.645-46) or represent a natural development within Judaism (Robert Gundry, Soma in Biblical Theology, SNTSMS 29, Cambridge, 1976). Beyond Q 12:4-5, this dualism is present in a number of other passages in the Jesus tradition. These include: Mark 14:38 // Matt 26:41; Mark 7:6 // Matt 15:8; Mark 7:19 // Matt 15:17; Mark 7:20-23 // Matt 15:18-19; Matt 12:34 // Luke 6:45; Matt 23:25-8 // Luke 11:39-40; Matt 8:7-13 // Luke 23:42; Luke 23:46; Luke 16:19-31; Luke 24:37-39.

6 As Allison (Intertextual Jesus, 84) notes, “In Mt 10:28 the destruction of a body in hell seemingly assumes that an individual has been raised from the dead, condemned at the judgment, and then cast bodily into the place of punishment.” The view that the soul would be rejoined with the body before the final judgment was common in the second temple period. See N. T. Wright, The Resurrection of the Son of God (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003) 85-206 and Russell, Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic, 357-85.

7 There is little doubt that one’s eschatological destiny is an integral part of this saying and the final judgment is by definition the time at which final destinies are meted out.
The context of the exhortation is clearly persecution to the point of martyrdom. The saying makes no sense without the prospect of violence to one’s body. The ultimate cost of persecution, the loss of one’s bodily life, is then weighed against the potential cost at the final judgment, which is described as the loss of one’s entire life, body and soul. One need fear God alone because only he has power to destroy in Gehenna. If, in the midst of persecution, one chooses to break faith with God in order to preserve one’s bodily life, then both body and soul will be forfeit at the final judgment.

The saying exhorts the listener to “fear him who is able to destroy (ἀπολέσαι) both body and soul in Gehenna (γης ἐννημ).” Gehenna refers to the “valley of Hinnom” (עֲרָבְתֵי חָינָם) that ran north-south on the western side of Jerusalem and east-west on the southern side. Throughout the gospels it is associated with the place of punishment for the damned. It was the site of one of Israel’s worst abominations, the sacrifice of children to other gods. In addition, it had become a dumping ground for the rubbish of Jerusalem and consequently was continually ablaze. For both of these reasons, it served as a particularly evocative image of God’s wrath and punishment.

But, what does it mean to “destroy” (ἀπολέσαι) both soul and body in such a place? It would be a mistake to interpret ἁπολλυμι too literally. In the New Testament, ἁπολλυμι can mean destruction, ruin or loss. This same range of meanings was found...
in our second temple section, where destruction and eternal punishment were found side by side. The same is true in Matthew itself. On other occasions, Matthew presents the final judgment’s punishments in the language of torment (Matt 7:19; 8:12; 13:42; 22:13; 24:50) rather than destruction. In addition, Matthew speaks of the punishment as eternal (Matt 25:41, 46).

The sentiment of Matt 10:28 has parallels in both Jewish and Greek literature, though none speak of the reunification of the soul and body. 4 Macc. 13:14-15 reads, “Let us not fear him who thinks he is killing us, for great is the struggle of the soul and the danger of eternal torment lying before those who transgress the commandment of God.” T. Job 20:3 reads, “Then the Lord gave me over to his (the Devil’s) hands to be used as he wished with respect to the body; but he did not give him authority over my soul.” Asc. Isa. 5:10 reads, “For there is nothing further you can take except the skin of my body.” Sextus, Sent. 363b reads, “As a lion has power over the body of a sage, so too does a tyrant, but only over the body.”

_Context and Meaning in Luke 12:4-5:_

The context, and meaning of Luke 12:4-5 both differ from Matt 10:28. The saying is one of a collection spanning from 12:1-12 that is delivered specifically to the disciples

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Apostolic Fathers. For example, two of the Apostolic Fathers refer to the destruction of the soul in ways that are clearly symbolic. “For it is the way of eternal death and punishment, in which lie things that destroy (ἀπολλύνω) men’s souls:…” (Barn. 20:1). Not only is the destruction a description of a process rather than event, but punishment can only be eternal if the destruction is taken metaphorically. “And the ones who are rough are those who have denied and not returned to their Lord, but have become barren and desertlike; because they do not associate with God’s servants but remain alone, they destroy (ἀπολλύομαι) their own souls” (Herm. Sim. 9.26.3). That destruction is intended metaphorically here is clear from the description of the “rough ones” as barren, desertlike and alone, all of which imply continued existence.
(12:1). They are preceded by a sustained denunciation of Pharisees and experts in the law (11:37-54). Following 12:1-12, the audience broadens to encompass the crowd with the telling of the parable of the rich fool (12:13-21). The sayings themselves are six in number and concern staying steadfast in the face of persecution. The first four are in the same order as in Matthew: eschatological disclosure, fear of God, the value of disciples, and confession of the Son of Man. The last two pertain to the significance of the Holy Spirit.

Exegetically, there are a number of significant differences between Luke 12:4-5 and Matt 10:28. 1) In Luke the intended audience is clear. “I tell you my friends…” (12:4). 2) Anthropologically, the saying is vaguer than its Matthean counterpart. There is no explicit dichotomy between “body” and “soul.” In fact, there is no mention of “soul” at all. Rather, the exhortation is simply not to fear “those who kill the body and after that can do nothing more.” 3) God is to be feared because “after he has killed (ἀποκτείναι), he has authority (ἐξουσίαν) to cast into Gehenna.” Luke uses “authority” (ἐξουσίαν) to indicate that this is one of God’s rightful prerogatives. Matthew, on the other hand, focuses on God’s power (δυνάμενον) to do what man cannot. 4) In Luke, the unfaithful are not destroyed (ἀπολέσαι) in Gehenna, but rather are cast (ἐμβαλλεῖν) into Gehenna, where they will presumably suffer torments.

Two elements of the Lukan saying remain ambiguous. First, it is not entirely clear what is being cast into Gehenna. Is it the soul or the resurrected body? Second, is one cast into Gehenna immediately after the body is killed (a special judgment) or after a universal reckoning (the final judgment)?
Chiam Milikowsky has argued that Luke foresaw a resurrection only for the righteous, and that those whom God would cast into Gehenna would experience punishment in their souls immediately after death. There is some evidence that Luke envisioned only a resurrection of the righteous. “And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous” (Luke 14:14). “…but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection” (Luke 20:35-36). However, there is nothing in Luke 12:4-5 itself to suggest that the soul alone is in view. In fact, there is no mention of the “soul” at all.

Milikowsky’s corollary, that Luke conceived of only a special judgment for the wicked, is much less defensible. In order to make his case, Milikowsky turns to three principal passages. First, he points out that Luke omits Mark’s very corporeal contrast between entering “life” maimed and being thrown into Gehenna with an undamaged body (Mark 9:43-48 // Matt 5:29-30). Second, Luke alone contains the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, which clearly points to post-mortem punishment (Luke 16:19-31). Third, in Luke alone Jesus says “Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). While the last two statements do suggest some form of special judgment, they clearly allude to a judgment of the wicked and the righteous. Both punishments and rewards are being experienced prior to the final judgment—prior to any resurrection.

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the righteous are in “paradise” and yet clearly still await the fulfillment of God’s eschatological purposes, why might the same not be true of the wicked? In Luke 16 the righteous and the wicked are separated by a chasm, but are still clearly in the same place. It appears that Luke, in keeping with many other second temple texts, conceived of Hades as a place where rewards and punishments were already experienced in advance of the final judgment. However, as these second temple scenarios and Luke’s own future resurrection both demonstrate, such a conception was not incompatible with a future final judgment. We should, therefore, take seriously the difference in Luke’s terminology, understanding the distinction between Hades, which holds all of the dead in anticipation of the final judgment, and Gehenna, the final destination of the wicked (whether simply of their souls or of their resurrected bodies). Hence, while it is possible that Luke conceived only of a special judgment for the wicked, such a position is by no means obvious. Unfortunately, Luke 12:4-5 simply does not provide us with the key to these Lukan riddles.

Relationship to the Synoptics, Context, and Meaning of 2 Clement 5:4

In Donfried’s detailed analysis of 2 Clement he concludes, “With reasonable certainty it can be asserted that in seven out of nine quotations from the gospel tradition, 2 Clement is dependent on a source other than the synoptic Gospels.” Therefore, the first question that must be considered is whether 2 Clem. 5:4 is dependent upon Matthew 10:28 or Luke 12:4-5.

There are only a few *verbatim* parallels in wording. 2 Clement’s two occurrences of φοβείσθε match Matthew 10:28, while μετὰ τὸ ἐχοντα ἔξουσίαν. and γεένναν have direct parallels with Luke 12:4-5. Similar wording can also be found in a number of places. Similarities with Matthew include: 1) 2 Clement’s ἀποκτέννοντας parallels Matthew’s ἀποκτέννω. 2) δυναμεῖς occurs twice in Matthew’s version and once in 2 Clement (δυναμένους). 3) The final pairing of ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος parallels Matthew’s ψυχήν καὶ σῶμα. Similarities with Luke include: 1) 2 Clement’s ποιεῖν parallels Luke’s ποιησαί. 2) βάλειν εἰς parallels Luke’s ἐμβάλλειν εἰς. Significantly, these parallels exist in roughly equal measure with both versions. The real question, then, is whether 2 Clem. 5:4 represents a conflation of Matthew 10:28 and Luke 12:4-5 or whether it is an independent attestation of the saying in question. Two factors point in favor of the latter alternative.

First, there are times when 2 Clem. 5:4 agrees with neither Matt 10:28 nor Luke 12:4-5. This is particularly relevant in the first phrase, where there exists a good deal of congruence between Matthew and Luke. 2 Clem. 5:4’s wording is unparalleled (τοὺς ἀποκτέννοντας υμᾶς καὶ μηδὲν υμῖν). Missing is the entire construction found in both Matthew and Luke ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποκτεννόντων (ἀποκτεινόντων) ἐκ τὸ σῶμα.

Equally relevant is the haphazard nature of the verbal agreements. If we were to assume that all similar words are indicative of dependence, the agreements would be mapped in the following manner:
It is hard to imagine that the author of 2 Clement would have so deliberately formed a hybrid of this nature, assiduously alternating back and forth between his Matthean source and Lukan source, while changing the wording where they are principally in agreement. It would seem much more likely that the verbal agreements between 2 Clem. 5:4 and its two potential sources should be attributed to common subject matter. Hence, 2 Clem. 5:4 represents an independent attestation of our saying.¹⁴

As might be expected, 2 Clem. 5:4 is found in the midst of a discussion about potential persecution and martyrdom. Its immediate context is a dialogue between Peter and Jesus over the correct interpretation of the saying “You will be like lambs among wolves” (2 Clem. 5:2). Jesus assures Peter that the lambs need not fear the wolves after death—their power to inflict harm is restricted to the body (2 Clem. 5:4). Verse 5 stresses the positive side of the equation, reminding believers that life in the flesh is “insignificant and transitory, but the promise of Christ is great and marvelous: rest in the coming kingdom and eternal life!”

The saying in Q 12:4-5 is reproduced in two later Christian sources as well, Justin’s 1 Apology and Ps. Clem. Hom. XVII. What is surprising is that in each of these cases the saying shares elements not only with Matthew and Luke (both of whom they

¹³ Bold = Matthean dependence; italics = Lukan dependence; normal = no literary dependence; underlined = dependence on shared Matthean and Lukan material.

¹⁴ A similar conclusion is reached by Donfried, The Setting of Second Clement, 68-71.
are clearly dependent on in other sections of their books) but 2 Clement as well.\textsuperscript{15} It would seem that these later documents were influenced by all three versions of the saying.

\textit{Text, Context and Meaning in Q 12:4-5:}

Matt 10:28 and Luke 12:4-5 are quite different in respect to wording. Their wording is in substantial agreement at only one point. “Do not fear those who kill the body.” μὴ φοβεῖσθε (φοβηθεῖτε)\textsuperscript{1k} ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποκτεννόντων (ἀποκτεινόντων)\textsuperscript{1k} τὸ σῶμα. Nevertheless, it is clear that the passage in question does come from Q. Not only are both versions built around the same idea, but in each case it is also the second of four sayings that occur in precisely the same order in both Matthew and Luke.

An analysis of vocabulary and style suggests that the Matthean form of the saying more faithfully represents Q. Linguistically, a number of constructions hint at Lukan redaction: 1) φιλοι (Matt: 1, Mark: 0, Luke: 15, Acts: 3);\textsuperscript{16} 2) μετὰ τὰ στάτα (Both 5:27 and 10:1 are concrete examples of Lukan additions of this phrase in Markan material);\textsuperscript{17} 2) ἔχω with the infinitive ();\textsuperscript{18} 3) μετὰ τὸ with the infinitive (Matt: 0, Mark: 2, Luke: 2, 

\textsuperscript{15} See the helpful synopsis in A. J. Bellinzoni, \textit{The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr} (NovTestSup 17; Leiden: Brill, 1967, 108-111. For a critique of his argument that 2 Clem. and Justin relied on the same harmony of Matthew and Luke, see Donfried, \textit{The Setting of Second Clement}, 68-71.


Acts: 6);\(^{19}\) 4) ὑποδείκνυμι (Matt: 1, Mark: 0, Luke 3, Acts 2).\(^{20}\) In addition, ἐμβάλεῖν is a New Testament hapax.\(^{21}\) The cumulative weight of this evidence makes it probable that Luke’s version of the saying represents a free rewriting of the Q saying.\(^{22}\) It is difficult to say exactly what prompted Luke’s reworking of the Q saying. Perhaps, as Milikowsky has suggested, Luke’s reticence to depict a resurrection for the wicked provided the impetus for his reworking of the Q saying. Dautzenberg, Dupont, and Schewitzer each argue that Luke wanted to remove Q’s language of “killing” (ἀποκτείνω) and “destroying” (ἀπολλυμι) the soul, both of which, if taken literally, were incompatible with his anthropology.\(^{23}\)

Lacking are any comparable Matthean signs of redaction. We may assume, therefore, that Matthew substantially reproduces the saying as it occurred in Q. However, in regards to one stylistic difference, it is difficult to discern whether Matthew or Luke’s version is more accurate. Luke’s saying concludes with the exhortation, “Yes I tell you,

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fear him!” This phraseology is present elsewhere in Q (7:26; 10:21; 11:51) and may have been original.

Thus, the text of Q 12:4-5 can be reconstructed as follows:

μὴ φοβεῖσθε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποκτεννόντων τὸ σῶμα, τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν μὴ δυναμένων ἀποκτεῖναι φοβεῖσθε δὲ μᾶλλον τὸν δυνάμενον καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα ἀπολέσαι ἐν γεέννῃ [ναι λέγω υμίν. τοὺτον φοβήθητε].

Do not fear those who can kill the body but do not have the power to kill the soul. But rather, fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna [yes I tell you, fear him].

The immediate context of Q 12:4-5 in the document Q is clear enough. As in Matthew and Luke, the saying is preceded by a pronouncement of eschatological disclosure and is followed by a reminder of the disciples’ value to God and an exhortation to remain faithful to Jesus (Son of Man) in the face of persecution. The last saying, Q 12:8-9, matches the tenor and meaning of Q 12:4-5. This may have been the impetus for their being placed in close proximity in Q. Nevertheless, there is no more than a thematic connection between these four sayings. They are each perfectly comprehensible when viewed as independent of one another. It is quite likely that they circulated as independent pieces of tradition before their assimilation into Q.

The meaning of the Q passage is the same as that found in the exegetical section on Matthew.

**Most Primitive Version of the Saying:**

Not only is the wording of Q 12:4-5 quite distinct from 2 Clem. 5:4, but neither saying betrays obvious signs of redaction. The one exception is “Yes I tell you, fear him”
which, as we have seen, was typical of Q’s style, being found in three other sayings. If it was in fact part of Q, it may have been a Q redactional addition. Beyond this, we will restrict ourselves to pointing out the general agreement of subject matter between the two.

Do not fear (Q: μὴ φοβεῖσθε; 2 Clem.: μὴ φοβεῖσθε) those who can only kill you (Q τῶν ἀποκτεννόντων τὸ σῶμα, τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν μὴ δυναμένων ἀποκτεῖναι; 2 Clem.: τοὺς ἀποκτέννοντας ὑμᾶς καὶ μηδὲν ὑμῖν δυναμένους ποιεῖν), Fear (Q: φοβεῖσθε; 2 Clem.: φοβεῖσθε) the one who can (Q: τὸν δυνάμενον; 2 Clem.: ἔχοντα ἐξουσίαν) destroy/cast (Q: ἀπολέσαι; 2 Clem.: βαλέιν) soul and body (Q: ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα; 2 Clem.: ψυχῆς καὶ σῶματος) into Gehenna (Q: ἐν γηέννῃ; 2 Clem.: εἰς γέενναν).

Both versions of the saying clearly exhort one to embrace potential martyrdom in light of God’s authority at the final judgment. Only God is to be feared, because only he can determine one’s eschatological destiny.

Arguments for Authenticity:

As we have seen, Q 12:4-5 has another independent attestation in 2 Clem. 5:4. In addition, one of its principle parts is both multiply attested in the synoptic gospels and is only sparsely present in the other literature of the early church. Gehenna occurs eleven times in the gospels (Matt 7, Mark 3, Luke 1). Seven of these are independent and are spread across three sources (Mark 3, Q 1, M 3). Gehenna only appears twice more in the literature of the early church. We have seen that one of these occurrences, 2 Clem. 5:4, contains a saying taken from the Jesus tradition. Hence, James 3:6 represents the only
independent attestation of Gehenna outside of the Jesus tradition. Eight attestations spread across four independent sources compared to one attestation in all of the rest of the literature of the early church render it quite unlikely that the term was imported into the Jesus tradition. More likely, it is indicative of the speech of the historical Jesus.

The context of Q 12:4-5 and 2 Clem. 5:4 might well demonstrate a measure of dissimilarity with the early church. In their respective contexts, both sayings are linked with words of comfort for disciples who face danger and persecution. In Q, the following two sayings stress God’s care and provision for the disciple.24 “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs on your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows” (Matt 29-31). The final saying in the Q cluster then proclaims the importance of maintaining allegiance to Jesus in both positive (confessing) and negative terms (denying). Each of these sayings contrasts with the tenor of Q 12:4-5. Completely absent is the expected assurance that reward awaits the disciples if they give up their life for Jesus. Rather, Q 12:4-5 reads as a threat. A far worse fate than death lies in store for anyone who buckles under persecution. Many have sought to explain this seeming incongruence by identifying the one with power to throw into Gehenna with Satan rather

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24 Allison has argued extensively that this collection of Q sayings is concerned with providing comfort for the disciple in the midst of suffering (Dale Allison, “Matthew 10:26-31 and the Problem of Evil,” SVTQ 32. (1988): 293-308; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.202-11). His argument from the structure of the section coupled with the content of the sayings renders his overall conclusion convincing. However, the threatening tone of Q 12:4-5 makes it only an awkward fit. Allison concludes that, “Hope engenders freedom, above all freedom from fear” (“Matthew 10:26-31,” 303). This is quite obviously not applicable to Q 12:4-5, which seeks to instill a greater (or more appropriate) fear.
than God. Though we have argued that this is an incorrect interpretation, the harshness of the saying in its present context remains.

The context of 2 Clem. 5:4 even more explicitly seeks to transform the threat of our saying into an encouragement for disciples in fear. Peter inquires of Jesus, “What if the wolves tear the lambs to pieces?” (2 Clem. 5:3). Jesus answers, “Let the lambs have no fear of the wolves after their death” (2 Clem. 5:3), and then proceeds with our saying. 2 Clement’s own interpretation of the saying, however, is most instructive. He emphasizes the reward that awaits the faithful martyr—precisely what is missing in the saying itself. “Moreover you know, brothers, that our stay in this world of the flesh is insignificant and transitory, but the promise of Christ is great and marvelous: rest in the kingdom and eternal life!” (2 Clem. 5:5) 2 Clement has shifted the focus from the fires of Gehenna to the glories of the coming kingdom. The threat has become a promise.

The fact that the present context of our saying in both Q and 2 Clement shift its emphasis in the same manner suggests that this saying was not a creation of the early church.

Q 12:4-5 also benefits from a certain measure of coherence. In particular, it bears a striking resemblance to Q 12:8-9 // Mark 8:38 and Q 17:33 // Mark 8:35 // John 12:25 both of which are multiply attested and have good reason to be viewed as authentic.

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25 See note 4.

26 Coherence with the theme of judgment in general is the primary indicator of authenticity for J. Schlosser “Le logion de Mt 10,28 par. Lc 12,4-5” in The Four Gospels, v. 1 (ed. F. Van Segbroeck et al.; Leuven: University Press, 1992), 631. “Enfin, parce que notre logion est, comme tel autre utilisant les memes categories, à reférer au jugement, il est en harmonie avec un thème qui, M. Reiser l’a montré récemment, occupe une place importante dans la predication du Jésus de l’histoire.” While this argument certainly has merits, the aim of this study is to weigh the merits of the final judgment traditions as a whole. Arguments, therefore, will be restricted to individual units within the tradition.
Arguments Against Authenticity:

Scholarly arguments for the inauthenticity of Q 12:4-5 are few and far between.27 Those who do dismiss it as an authentic saying often do so without any substantive reasons. Bultmann adduces its inauthenticity with a single line, “It is easier to describe a number of warnings included among the Logia as characteristically prophetic, e.g. Matt 8:22; Lk. 9:62; Matt 10:28, 5:39f.; 7:13f.”28 He fails to elaborate on why it is “easier.”

One argument against the potential authenticity of Q 12:4-5, however, deserves careful consideration. Persecution was a fact of life for the early church. Much of the early church’s literature addresses the issue of persecution either directly or indirectly.29 Hence, there is ample reason for the early church to have created sayings of Jesus in order to encourage and exhort believers in the face of persecution.30 This is particularly true in the case of our saying, which not only warns of suffering, but speaks directly of martyrdom. While this does not mean that such material must have been so created, it does mean that the possibility merits close scrutiny.31 Did Jesus himself predict

27 In general this reflects the lack of treatment this saying has received in historical Jesus studies.

28 Bultmann, History, 119.


30 Lüdemann (Jesus, 169) argues for the saying’s inauthenticity on these grounds, “All the sayings are inauthentic as they derive from a later situation of the community stamped by persecution.” The sentiment is also echoed in the Five Gospels, 173.

31 Boring rightly calls attention to Rev 2:10, a word spoken on behalf of the risen Jesus, in order to demonstrate the similarity between Q 12:4-5 and the needs of the early church. “Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you might be tested, and for ten days you will have affliction. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev 2:10). However, Boring (Sayings, 168) ultimately concludes that these similarities are not evidence of early Christian prophetic creation. “Rather than sayings of the risen Jesus being placed in the mouth of the
impending persecution for his disciples or is this theme attributable solely to the concerns of the early church?

This question can only be answered by looking at the breadth of the theme, coupled with the number of these sayings which are multiply attested in the Jesus tradition. Sayings of Jesus which presuppose the persecution of the disciples include the following:


**Q 6:22-23** (Matt 5:11-12); **11:4** (Matt 6:13), **49** (Matt 23:34); **12:8-9** (Matt 10:32 33); **14:27** (Matt 10:38); **17:33** (Matt 10:39)—six sayings.

**M 5:10, 44, 10:16b, 23**—four sayings.

**L 6:28; 22:31**—two sayings.

**John 12:25; 15:18-19, 20-21, 16:2, 33; 17:14-15** (some of these sayings apply to Jesus as well)—six sayings.

**Gos. Thom. 21; 55; 68; 69**—four sayings.

Sayings of Jesus which point to his own suffering and death include the following:


historical Jesus by the Q community, it appears that the tendency was the other way: traditional, even pre-Easter sayings of Jesus are claimed for the risen Lord.”

Q 13:34. (Q 14:27 (Matt 10:38) applies to both Jesus and the disciples)—two sayings


Gos. Thom. 65; (55 refers to both Jesus and the disciples)—two sayings.

There is no denying that the theme is widely represented in every one of the sources of the Jesus tradition. It is clearly not indicative of one particular source’s theological or practical prerogatives. Though many occurrences may be redactional, it is hard to imagine that an entirely foreign theme made such pervasive inroads into every stratum of the Jesus tradition. In addition to the breadth of the theme’s presence, a number of the passages are multiply attested in the Jesus tradition. Two of these passages benefit from double independent attestation: Mark 8:38 (Luke 9:26, Matt 16:27) // Q 12:8-9 (Matt 10:32-33) and Q 6:22-23 (Matt 5:11-12) // Gos. Thom. 68, 69. Two more sayings have triple independent attestation: Mark 8:34 (Matt 16:24, Luke 9:23) // Q 14:27 (Matt 10:38) // Gos. Thom. 55 and Mark 8:35 (Matt 16:25, Luke 9:24) // Q 17:33 (Matt 10:39) // John 12:25.

One other factor must also be considered. The fact that Jesus himself died a violent death lends credibility to the possibility that he foresaw persecution for his disciples. He obviously was no stranger to hostility. In addition, John the Baptist, whose ministry was integrally connected to Jesus’ own, had suffered a similar fate. He too lost his life in the course of his ministry.32

32 Mark 6:14-29; Matt 14:1-12; Luke 9:7-9; Josephus Ant. 18.5.2 § 116-19.
The enormous quantity of sayings which have to do with persecution, suffering and death, combined with their presence in every independent historical Jesus source, the multiple attestation of four individual sayings, and the violent death of both Jesus and John the Baptist all make it quite probable that Jesus did foresee persecution for his followers. Nor is it a stretch to imagine that he thought such suffering might result in martyrdom.33

Conclusions and Implications:

Multiple independent attestation, the presence of “Gehenna,” dissimilarity with the early church, as well as coherence with Q 12:8-9 // Mark 8:38 and Q 17:33 // Mark 8:35 // John 12:25 all speak to the sayings authenticity. Given the lack of convincing counterarguments, Q 12:4-5 is most probably authentic.

Q 12:4-5 speaks directly to the problem of maintaining faithfulness to God in the face of persecution and martyrdom. The implication is that those who denounce their faith in order to save their earthly bodies will be destroyed in Gehenna, body and soul, while those who remain steadfast in the face of persecution will reap reward.

33 See Allison, *End of the Ages*, 116-17
Q 12:8-9
“EVERYONE WHO CONFESSES...”

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Matt 10:32-33

Πάς οὖν ὁ ὁμολογήσει
evé émoposθēn tōn ἀνθρώπων, ὁμολογήσω
kágw
éν αὐτῶ émprosθēn τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς.1
óstis δ' ἂν ἀρνήσηται με
émprosθēn
tōn ἀνθρώπων, ἀρνῆσομαι
kágw αὐτῶν émprosθēn
toῦ πατρός μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς.2

Therefore

Luke 12:8-9

Λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν, πάς

d' ἂν ὁμολογήσῃ
evé émoposθēn tōn ἀνθρώπων,
cαὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁμολογήσει
evé αὐτῶ émprosθēn
tōn ἄγγέλων τοῦ θεοῦ.
d' ἂν ἀρνησάμενός με
évōπιον
tōn ἀνθρώπων
áparnησάμεται
évōπιον
tōn ἄγγέλων τοῦ θεοῦ.

Therefore

Matt 10:32-33

I say to you,

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1 Τοίς is included between én and οὐρανοῖς in B C K f13, but is omitted in P19 S D L W Θ f4 TR.

2 See note one. The same texts include or omit τοίς except for C, which omits the article in this second occurrence.
everyone
who confesses me
before men
I also will confess

him before
my father in heaven;

but whoever denies me
before men
I also will deny him

before
my father in heaven.

Mark 8:38
δὸς γὰρ ἐάν ἐπαισχυνθή με
cαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους
ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ
τῇ μοιχαλίδι καὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ, καὶ

ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἁνθρώπου
ἐπαισχυνθήσεται
αὐτόν,
ὅταν ἐλθῇ ἐν τῇ δόξῃ
τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ

μετὰ τῶν ἄγγελῶν τῶν ἁγίων.

Luke 9:26
δὸς γὰρ ἐάν ἐπαισχυνθή με
cαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους,

tοῦτον
ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἁνθρώπου
ἐπαισχυνθήσεται,
ὅταν ἐλθῇ ἐν τῇ δόξῃ
αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς
καὶ τῶν ἁγίων ἄγγελων.

Mark 8:38
For whoever is ashamed of me
and my words
in this adulterous and sinful generation,
of him the Son of Man
will also be ashamed
when he comes in the glory
of his father
with the holy angels.

Luke 9:26
For whoever is ashamed of me
and my words
of this one the Son of Man
will be ashamed
when he comes in his glory
and the glory of his father
and of the holy angels.

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3 λόγους is absent from P45454 W.

4 λόγους is absent from D.
Matt 16:27
For the Son of Man is to come in the glory of his father with his angels and then he will repay each according to his works.

Rev 3:5
[If you conquer, you will be clothed in white robes, and I will not blot your name out of the book of life;] I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.

2 Clem. 3:2
Τὸν ὀμολογήσαντά με ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὀμολογήσω αὐτόν ἐνώπιον τοῦ πατρὸς μου.

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1 Ν and f have τά έργα αὐτοῦ, but this seems to be an attempt to harmonize the text with psalm 61:13 in the LXX.
2 Clem. 3:2
The one who confesses me
before men,
I will confess
before my Father.

Context and Meaning in Matt 10:32-33:

Matt 10:32-33 is part of Mathew’s extended mission discourse, in which he
details both the persecutions and rewards that await the followers of Jesus. Matt 10:32-33
recapitulates 10:28’s exhortation to stand firm in the face of persecution. The wording
and context of the passage make it plain that Jesus’ followers are on trial. ὑμολογεῖον and
ἀρνεῖμαι are both evocative of a witness’ response in a trial scene, and ἐμπροσθεν makes it clear that the confession or denial takes place publicly.⁶ In addition, Matt 10:17-
20, with its descriptions of being dragged before governors and kings in order to give
testimony, makes it likely that literal trials are in view.

The saying itself is divided into two parts, each of which correspond to one
another (a₁b₁ // a₂b₂). In the first strophe, the one who confesses Jesus before men will be
confessed by Jesus before God. Thus, two parallel trials are depicted with corresponding
results. Confession of Jesus before men at one’s earthly trial may result in the forfeiture
of one’s earthly life, but it will also result in a positive verdict at the final judgment, when
Jesus confesses one’s allegiance before God. The second strophe depicts the other
possible outcome. If, during the trial before men, one denies Jesus in order to preserve
one’s earthly life, then one will be condemned at the final judgment, with Jesus denying
association with the unfaithful follower before God.

⁶ Matt 25:32 and 27:11 both use ἐμπροσθεν in the context of standing before a judge.
Context and Meaning in Luke 12:8-9:

Luke 12:8-9 is the fourth in a series of six sayings regarding persecution, the first four of which are presented in the same order as they are in Matthew. (See the Context section of Luke 12:4-5.) The fifth saying, however, has a direct bearing on the interpretation of Q 12:8-9. “And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven” (Luke 12:10). In its present context Luke clearly intends this fifth saying to interpret the fourth. In the overall context of Luke-Acts this would likely mean that the confession and denial spoken of in 12:8-9 apply to the period after the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. This facet of the Lukan context and meaning will be further explored in the arguments for authenticity. Much like Matt 10:17-20, Luke 12:11-12 demonstrates that Luke has in mind literal trials before “synagogues, and the rulers and the authorities.”

The meaning of Luke 12:8-9 is much the same as that of Matt 10:32-33, but there are several key differences. In the apodosis of Luke’s first strophe, he has “Son of Man” (υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) in place of Matthew’s “and I’ (κἀγὼ). In addition, the confession of the Son of Man will be before “the angels of God,” (τῶν ἄγγελῶν τοῦ θεοῦ) rather than “my father who is in heaven” (τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς). Luke’s second apodosis retains the angels of God but there is no explicit subject for the denial at the final judgment. It is simply put in the passive (ὑπαρνηθῇσεται). As we have seen, the addition of Luke 12:10 also significantly modifies the meaning of the saying in Luke.

It is quite likely that both Matthew and Luke’s versions allude to Daniel 7. Given the importance of Daniel 7 as one of the few OT scriptures to explicitly deal with final
judgment, one would naturally expect Jewish ears to be attuned to possible resonances whenever the motif occurred. In fact, such resonances are not difficult to find. 1) The Son of Man is explicitly mentioned in both Luke 12:8-9 and Daniel 7:13. 2) Matt 10:32-33 depicts Jesus as giving testimony “before (ἐμπροσθεν) my Father (πατρός) who is in heaven (οὐρανοῖς).” Luke’s Jesus stands “before (ἐμπροσθεν) the angels of God (τῶν ἄγγελων τοῦ θεοῦ).” ἐμπροσθεν corresponds to Daniel 7:13’s ἀνδριάς. 3) God occupies the place of judge, though variously depicted in all three texts. Matthew speaks of the “Father in heaven,” and Daniel of the “Ancient of Days” (Dan 7:9, 13), while Luke’s “angels of God” mirrors the Danielic description of the heavenly host, “A thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him” (Dan 7:10). 4) All three passages indicate that absolute authority has been given to approve or condemn. “To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him” (Dan 7:14). Hence, it is quite likely that Daniel 7 provides an important backdrop for both Matthew 10:32-33 and Luke 12:8-9.

Context and Meaning in Mark 8:38:

Mark 8:38 is one of a handful of sayings brought together at a critical junction in the Gospel of Mark. After Peter’s declaration of Jesus’ Messiahship in 8:29, Jesus begins to teach his disciples that the Son of Man must suffer, be rejected and killed, and rise

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7 Davies and Allison (Matthew, 2.214) are quite right in their assessment of Daniel 7’s importance via Q 12:8-9. “Dan 7 is the Tanach’s most detailed, most colorful, and most powerful picture of the great assize, and presumably any allusion to the heavenly court and the last judgment might have sent Jewish hearers, steeped as they were in the Bible, back to the locus classicus.”
again after three days. He is promptly taken aside and rebuked by Peter, who cannot fathom that this could be the fate of the Messiah. The saying in 10:38 is part of Jesus’ response to Peter and the disciples (Mark 8:34-38), in which he tells them in no uncertain terms that they too will have to suffer persecution if they want to remain faithful to him.

Mark 8:38 speaks of the negative consequences of being “ashamed” (ἐπαίσχυνθη) of Jesus and his words. When he comes, the Son of Man will be ashamed (ἐπαίσχυνθησεται) of the one who is ashamed of him. The protasis matches the apodosis. The one who is ashamed of Jesus and his words is likewise grouped with the adulterous and sinful generation that stands under judgment (see treatment of “this generation” in Q 11:29-32).

Mark 8:38 conjures up a far less defined picture than does Q 12:8-9. The language of shame (ἐπαίσχυνμαι) is not evocative of an actual trial. Nevertheless, the point is probably much the same. The disciples are warned not to be ashamed of their association with Jesus when facing external pressures. The Markan context, which includes verse 35’s warning about saving one’s temporal life and losing one’s eternal life, makes it clear that, as is the case in Q 12:9, the threat is to one’s very life.⁸ In 8:35 the disciple is encouraged to lose his life “for my sake and the gospel’s.” This clearly parallels verse 38, where the disciple is cautioned about the consequences of being ashamed of “me and my words.”

Those who stay true to Jesus and refuse to accept the shame heaped upon them by the world will be vindicated when the Son of Man “comes in the glory of his Father with

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⁸ Contra Gundry, Mark, 438, who argues that Mark 8:38 is addressed to non-disciples.
the holy angels.” This glory dramatically redefines the rejection and persecution of the world— all those attempts to “shame” the disciple— with one fell swoop.

Two additional exegetical points are worth noting. 1) The Son of Man is implicitly defined as the Son of God in this passage. He will come with the glory of his Father. 2) It would seem that Mark 8:38, like Q 12:8-9, intended to allude to the last judgment of Daniel 7, with its eschatological “coming” Son of Man who will wield absolute dominion.⁹

_CONTEXT AND MEANING IN LUKE 9:26:_

The context of Luke 9:26 is exactly the same as that of Mark, the entire block of material having been reproduced with only superficial changes. Luke makes two exegetically meaningful alterations to Mark 8:38. First, he drops “in this adulterous and sinful generation” (ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ ταυτῇ τῇ μοιχαλίδι καὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ). Second, he changes the position of δόξῃ and removes Mark’s μετά, so that “glory” might be credited to the Son of Man and the holy angels as well as the Father. In spite of these two alterations, the substance of the saying remains by and large the same.

_CONTEXT AND MEANING IN MATTHEW 16:27:_

The context of Matthew 16:27 makes it clear that it is loosely based on Mark 8:38. It appears at the appropriate point in a sequence in which Matthew is reproducing

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⁹ The coming of the Son of Man with the angels to judge men seems to suggest a descent from Heaven (See also 2 Thes 1:7). In Daniel, though we know the Son of Man is coming to the Ancient of Days, it is unclear which direction is implied. In Dan 7:9 the vision begins with the announcement that, “thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his throne.” Have these thrones been set up on earth specifically for the final judgment or are they set up in heaven?
Mark (Matt 16:21-17:8 // Mark 8:31-9:8). Only in 16:27 does Matthew meaningfully veer from the text of Mark. There is no mention of being ashamed of Jesus in 16:27. Rather, the warning is universalized, “he will repay every man for what he has done.” The remaining imagery is clearly borrowed from Mark. “For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father…”

*Relationship to the Gospels, Context, and Meaning of 2 Clement 3:2 and Revelation 3:5:*

Q 12:8, the positive portion of the saying, also has two early parallels in the literature of the early church: 2 Clem. 3:2 and Rev 3:5. These two sayings are closer to each other than to Luke 12:8 or Matt 10:32, and probably go back to a common independent oral or literary tradition distinct from Q 12:8.¹⁰

2 Clem. 3:2
Τὸν ὄμολογήσαντά με ἐνόπιον τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὄμολογήσω αὐτὸν ἐνόπιον τοῦ θετρός μου.
The one who confesses me before men, I will confess before my Father.

Rev 3:5
ὡς ὄνομα αὑτοῦ ἐνόπιον τοῦ θετρός μου καὶ ἐνόπιον τῶν ἄγγελων αὐτοῦ.
I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.

Matt 10:32
Πάς οὖν ὁσιός ὄμολογήσει ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὄμολογήσω καὶ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐμπροσθεν τοῦ θετρός μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς
Therefore, everyone who confesses me before men, I also will confess him before my Father in heaven.

Luke 12:8

I say to you, everyone who confesses me before men, the Son of Man will confess him before the angels of God.

2 Clement and Revelation both have ἐνώπιον rather than Matthew and Luke’s ἐμπροσθεν. They also both use the accusative in place of the ἐν + dative that is used by both Matthew and Luke. They share τοῦ πατρός μου with Matthew but neither reproduces his ἐν σύρανοις. Revelation’s τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ is not found in 2 Clem., but neither is it borrowed from Matthew or Luke. Both Revelation and Luke include a reference to angels, but they do so in different ways: Rev = ἐνώπιον τῶν ἄγγελων αὐτοῦ; Luke = ἐμπροσθεν τῶν ἄγγελων τοῦ θεοῦ. Other differences include 2 Clement’s τὸν ὀμολογήσαντά με which stands in contrast to Matthew’s πᾶς οὖν διὸς ὀμολογήσει ἐν ἐμοὶ and Luke’s πᾶς δὲ ἄν ὀμολογήσῃ ἐν ἐμοί. In conclusion, it seems most likely that 2 Clem. 3:2 and Rev 3:5 represent a different form of a saying that circulated independently of Matt 10:32 and Luke 12:8.

In its present context, 2 Clem. 3:2 clearly intends to reproduce a saying of the historical Jesus. It is introduced in the following manner, “Indeed, he himself says…” Rev 3:5, on the other hand, is depicted as the words of the risen Jesus to the church at Sardis. It is, nevertheless, widely agreed that Revelation has incorporated an allusion to a saying that was already circulating.11 In both cases, the saying functions to encourage steadfast allegiance to Jesus.

Among the redactional features that can be attributed to Matthew are the following: 1) Matthew likely added \( \text{oxy} \) (Matt 57, Mark 5, Luke 31). He introduces it into Markan material fourteen times and he uses it seventeen times in Q material where Luke does not.\(^{12}\) 2) Another redactional change involves the object of the heavenly confession or denial at the last judgment. Here, Matthew has twice changed “the angels of God” to “my Father in heaven.”\(^{13}\) Matthew commonly inserts the phrase “my Father” (\( \text{πατρός μου} \)) into the words of Jesus (Matt 16, Mark 0, Luke 4). The dative of heaven (\( \text{oυράνιος} \)) is rather distinctive of his hand as well (Matt 7, Mark 0, Luke 1). In addition, Matthew may have found the impetus for these changes in the Markan version.

3) Finally, and much more significantly for interpreting the saying, Matthew seems to have replaced Q’s \( \text{ο λύος τού ἄνθρωπου} \) with \( \text{κάγω} \).\(^{14}\) A number of potential

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factors point in this direction. A) As it stands in Luke, the saying, though parallel in so many other features, suggests a distinction between Jesus and the Son of Man. It is hard to imagine such a distinction emerging in the early church, where Jesus’ resurrection would have encouraged continuity between the two figures. B) Matthew wanted to enhance the parallelism between the two parts of the saying through his alteration, a propensity that is well documented. C) Matthew seems to have changed a reference to the Son of Man to “I” on two other occasions, in Q 6:22 (Matt 5:11) and in Mark 8:31 (Matt 16:21).

The counterargument is that Luke has been influenced by the Markan parallel and consequently imported a reference to the Son of Man. It is, however, worth noting, that while “Son of Man” appears in Mark’s negative exhortation, (paralleled by the second of the two strophes in Q) it appears only in the positive portion of Luke’s saying (the first of the two strophes in Q). Hence, the balance of evidence tips firmly in the direction of


Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1.94-95


including the Son of Man reference in Q. If Luke’s version is to be preferred, then his
verbal form of ἀρνέομαι in the latter half of verse 9 must also be original.

Among Luke’s alterations to Q 12:8-9 are the following: 1) It is likely that Luke’s
“I say to you” (λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν) was not originally part of Q. Luke appears to have added
a version of λέγω ὑμῖν to 12:4, 12:5a, and 12:5b. As de Jonge has convincingly argued,
“Luke seems to use the λέγω ὑμῖν formula to impose a structure upon 12:2-10.”
Consequently, the introductory formula binds the two passages together. This is a rather
natural move given the content of the two verses. 2) Luke almost certainly changed
ἐμπροσθεν to ἐνώπιον in the second half of the saying. ἐνώπιον is a Lukan favorite
(Matt 0, Mark 0, Luke 22, Acts 13).

The text of Q, therefore, reads as follows:

Πᾶς ὁς ἂν ὁμολογήσῃ ἐν ἐμοί ἐμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ ὁ υἱός τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁμολογήσει ἐν αὐτῷ ἐμπροσθεν τῶν ἄγγελων τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ δὲ ἀρνησάμενος μὲ ἐμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀρνήσεται ἐμπροσθεν τῶν ἄγγελων τοῦ θεοῦ.

a. ὁστις ὁμολογήσει
b. ὁ υἱος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀρνήσεται

Everyone who confesses me before men, the Son of Man will also confess
before the angels of God; but whoever denies me before men (will be
denied) before the angels of God.

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a. the Son of Man will deny

Reconstructing the context (and consequently meaning) of the saying in Q presents us with an interesting problem. While the agreement between Matthew and Luke make it clear that Q 12:2-9 are all in the same sequence in Q, does the unit end in verse 9 or does it also include Q 12:10-12? This question will be taken up in the arguments for authenticity.

**Most Primitive Version of the Saying:**

It is relatively clear that we are dealing with two independent attestations in Q 12:9 and Mark 8:38. Matthew and Luke reproduce the Q text in the same sequence of sayings in their respective gospels and each also retains a version of the saying in its Markan context. Furthermore, the Markan version includes only half of the saying and employs different vocabulary than Q’s version. What is more difficult to determine is whether the differences between the saying in Mark and Q are the result of redaction, or whether such differences resulted from the transmission of two similar statements that were delivered at different times.

On the one hand, the Markan version displays potential indicators of redaction. Mark’s fondness for dualities has long been noted, and may play a role in the formation

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20 Two studies have attempted to argue that the Markan text was dependent on Q at this point. J. Lambrecht, “Q-Influence on Mark 8:34-9:1.” Logia. Les paroles de Jésus—The sayings of Jesus. Mémorial Joseph Coppens (ed. J Delobel, BEThL 59; Louvain: University Press, 1982), 277-304; H. T. Fleddermann, Mark and Q: A Study of the Overlap Texts (BETL 122; Leuven: University Press, 1995), 145-151. de Jonge (“The Sayings on Confessing,” 115-17) has meticulously demonstrated that this option is untenable.

21 It should be noted that, in either case, the two versions satisfy the criterion of multiple attestation, bearing independent testimony to the portions of the saying that are held in common.
of 8:38. These dualities include: 1) με and τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους, 2) μισθαλίδι and ἀμαρτώλοι, 3) πατρὸς and τῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν ἁγίων. In addition, Mark may have altered the end of the saying so that it might cohere with other depictions of Jesus “coming” as the Son of Man in power to judge (Mark 13:26; 14:62).

However, it is not hard to imagine that such a principle might have been expressed on numerous occasions, two of which were transmitted by our sources. Certainly the degree of difference between the two versions makes such a possibility quite credible. One also wonders why Mark would have left out the first half of the saying had he received it in his tradition. Moreover, the use of different verbs (denying vs. ashamed of) for the key concept defies redactional explanation.

Because of the difficulty in adjudicating between these two possibilities, we will simply note what the two versions share. Using the same jus talionis formula, both warn that compromising one’s allegiance to Jesus (Q: ἀρνησόμενος με; Mark: ἐπαισχυνθή με) will result in renunciation by the Son of Man (Q: ἀπαρνηθῆσεται or ὁ νῦς τοῦ ἄνθρωπον ἀρνηθῆσεται; Mark: ὁ νῦς τοῦ ἄνθρωπον ἐπαισχυνθῆσεται).

We have already seen that Rev 3:5 and 2 Clem. 2:3 appear dependent on a common source which is independent of Q 12:8. They have certainly been redacted in their own right, but as in the case of the Markan parallel, there is no way of knowing if we are dealing with different versions of a single saying or reminiscence of similar

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22 Neirynck, *Duality*.

23 Either the future passive is used by Q, implying through the parallel with Son of Man in the previous verse that this same figure will deny the offender, or the future passive has been used by Luke to replace a reference to the Son of Man in Q.

24 For example, Rev 3:5 has clearly changed the beginning exhortation to fit its new context.
sayings. Therefore, we will once again restrict ourselves to pointing out their similarities. The three of them share a *jus talionis* form and promise that allegiance to Jesus (Q: ὁς ἄν ὀμολογήσῃ Rev: ὁ νικῶν; 2 Clem: ὀμολογήσαντά με) will result in confession by Jesus or the Son of Man (Q: ὁ νῦς τοῦ ἁνθρώπου ὀμολογήσει; Rev: ὀμολογήσω; 2 Clem: ὀμολογήσω).

Without the context provided by Matthew and Luke, it is less clear whether this saying originally pertained to literal trials. Certainly this is a possibility, but it could also have originally referred to any acceptance or rejection of Jesus and his ministry.

*Arguments for Authenticity:*

As we have seen, Q 12:8 (Q, Rev, 2 Clem.) and 12:9 (Q, Mark) both benefit from multiple independent attestation. They either represent separate streams of tradition that all recollect one particular saying, or they recall two different sayings of similar content.

The criterion of dissimilarity has also historically played a prominent role in arguments for the authenticity of Q 12:8-9. It has long been noted that this passage implies a distinction between Jesus and the Son of Man. While every other feature of the saying’s protasis and apodosis are in perfect parallel, “Son of Man” replaces the

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anticipated “I” in the apodosis of Q 12:8 and Mark 8:38. Q 12:9 continues to maintain the
distinction by employing the passive rather than a subject. Such a distinction is dissimilar
from the early church, which clearly identified Jesus and the Danielic Son of Man (cf.
Rev. 1:13).

The criterion of embarrassment offers us another avenue with which to establish
the authenticity of Q 12:9. Q 12:9 poses a potential problem from the vantage point of the early church. At the climax of Jesus’ ministry, as he was brought to trial and executed, his closest disciples all deserted him. This failure of nerve displayed by the disciples in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John could not have been an early church creation. Such a fact was certainly embarrassing to the early church, which looked to many of these same men as its leaders and mentors in the faith.

Q 12:9 had the capacity not only to heighten this embarrassment, but also to call into question the legitimacy of Jesus’ disciples as true followers of Jesus. After all, the saying states that anyone who “denies” Jesus will receive a like response from the Son of Man at the last judgment. The need for uncompromising allegiance to Jesus could not have been depicted in any starker terms.

However, the tradition bears abundant witness to the fact that the disciples, the pillars of the early church, clearly failed this criterion. They had all fled at the prospect of danger. The tale of Peter’s threefold denial stood for each one’s failure of resolve in the face of persecution. In fact, one might argue that Peter showed more determination than his comrades, pursuing Jesus from a distance, only to fail in his own private trial. Even the terms used in the narration of Peter’s denial convict him by the very words of Q 12:9
Nor were the difficulties posed by the saying confined to the betrayal of the earliest disciples. We will see that there is evidence that the early Christian communities which had preserved this tradition quickly found themselves struggling with the problem of whether to reinstate converts who had forsaken their allegiance to Jesus in the face of persecution but, having repented of their cowardice, desired to rejoin the community of believers. Q 12:9 makes no explicit allowance for such cases. Its message is painfully simple: if you reject Jesus in your time of trial, you will be rejected by the Son of Man at the final judgment. This presented the church with an awkward dilemma. On the one hand, to welcome back those who had failed the test would undercut the test itself. On the other hand, the church had already established a precedent by excusing the first disciples’ failure to uphold the criterion. Needless to say, the criterion of salvation as laid out in Q 12:9, with its stark demand and brutal consequence for failure, presented the early church with quite a quandary.

The literature of the early church bears abundant testimony to the struggle over this problem, presenting a myriad of ways to diffuse the tension that it raised. The text of Luke reveals his desire to exempt the disciples from the consequences spelled out in Q 12:9. The placement of Luke 12:10-12 directly after the warning against denying Jesus in 12:9, a move which clearly modifies the meaning of 12:9, must have been redactionally motivated. The juxtaposition of 12:9 and 12:10 is both awkward and confusing. In fact, 12:10 seems to flatly contradict 12:9. The implication is that two originally separate
sayings have been brought together by a redactor. Furthermore, we have evidence from an independent attestation of Q 12:10 in Mark 3:28-29 that the charge of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit circulated independently of 12:8-9. Structurally, it would also seem that 12:8-12 were intended to be read in light of one another. The introductory phrase “I say to you” (δέ ήμίν) which begins verse 8 binds the five sayings together as a unit. All the signs point to Luke 12:8-12 being the composite creation of a redactor, intended to be read as a single unit. As a unit, therefore, 12:8-12 reads as follows:

And I tell you, everyone who confesses me before men, the Son of Man will confess before the angels of God; but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God. And every one who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. And when they bring you before the synagogues and rulers and authorities, do not be anxious how or what you are to answer or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.

What is much more difficult to ascertain, is whether these verses were placed side by side by the redactor of Q or Luke. Matthew is of little help to us in determining the original order of the Q passages. He has worked verses 11 and 12 into his own composite mission discourse because they contained the themes of coming persecution. Q 12:10 is placed alongside its Markan parallel in Matt 12:31-32. This too would appear to be a clear redactional move on the part of Matthew. However, this does not necessarily mean

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26 Boring (“How may we identify oracles of Christian Prophets,” 511) argues the case for the redaction of Luke 12:8-12 in the following manner, “The saying is an independent logion which rests uncomfortably in all its present contexts. Its appearance in Luke 12:10 cannot be its original setting, for the Lucan form declares that a word spoken against the Son of Man can be forgiven, which contradicts the immediately preceding logion. It was apparently attracted to this Lucan context by the catchwords ήδη τού άνθρωπου and πάρος άντις. Even if Luke preserves the setting of the saying in Q, this was still a secondary context.” I will argue that it was more than “catchwords” which led the redactor of Luke or Q to position these sayings in such an “uncomfortable setting.”
that Luke has preserved the original order of Q. Two options remain. These five verses could have been joined by the redactor of Q in which case Luke has simply taken up the order of Q. Or they may bear witness to Lukan redaction, rendering Q’s original placement of these sayings lost to us. Given the difficulty of deciding between these two options, we will explore the implications of both possibilities.27

Let us first consider the meaning of 12:8-12 if Luke were responsible for bringing them together. 12:10 immediately qualifies 12:9 through the proclamation that every one who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven. It is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit that is unforgivable. But, how is one to interpret the distinction between the Son of Man and the Holy Spirit? After all, in the context of Luke, the Holy Spirit is present in the person and ministry of Jesus, the Son of Man.28

In the context of Luke-Acts, such a distinction can only point to the ministry of the disciples after Jesus’ death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit was poured out upon them at Pentecost, sent by the Father in order to carry on the ministry of the recently departed Son of Man. “And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said ‘you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit’” (Acts 1:4-5). The disciples will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). Hence, in Luke-Acts the distinction between words spoken

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27 There is, as might be suspected, no scholarly consensus on this point. Those who think that 12:10-12 followed 12:8-9 in Q include: Tuckett, Q, 249; Nolland, Luke, 675-76; Sato, Prophetie, 136; and Kloppenborg, Formation, 213-14. Those who think that the original context of Q 12:10-12 is lost include: C. C. Caragounis, “Kingdom of God, Son of Man, and Jesus’ Self Understanding,” TynBul 40 (1989): 3-23; Fitzmyer, Luke, 962-63; Green, Luke, 162-63.

against the Son of Man and blasphemy of the Holy Spirit must be a distinction between two time periods in salvation history. When Jesus walked the earth as the Son of Man he expected rejection, betrayal, denial and shame. However, after rising, ascending to heaven, and sending the Holy Spirit, such a response is no longer forgivable. Not only has the Son of Man been vindicated by heaven as a testimony to all the earth, but the Holy Spirit gives power to face persecution and suffering for the sake of Jesus-- power that the disciples were heretofore lacking.

That this is the correct interpretation of the distinction between Son of Man and Holy Spirit in Luke 12:10 is confirmed in 12:11-12. These two verses predict the disciples’ successful testimony before synagogues, rulers, and authorities through the power of the Holy Spirit. Far from blaspheming the Spirit, in the post-Pentecost period the disciples will rely on the Holy Spirit in their hour of need. This prediction is borne out in the rest of Acts, as the disciples, empowered by the Holy Spirit, stand fast in the face of persecution, bearing witness to Jesus before synagogues, rulers, and authorities (Acts 4:8; 5:29-32; Acts 7).

Hence, through the juxtaposition of 12:8-9 and 12:10-12, Luke has significantly altered the meaning of 12:9. On the one hand, he has made provision for the failure of the disciples before Pentecost. They are guilty of denying the Son of Man, but not of blaspheming against the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, Luke succeeds in maintaining the

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overall thrust of 12:9. After the Holy Spirit is sent, denying Jesus is the same as denying the Spirit that continues the work of the risen Lord. Such a denial is unforgivable and will result in Jesus’ denial at the final judgment.

But, how are the sayings to be interpreted if they were originally joined by the redactor of Q? Q 12:10’s dichotomy between Son of Man and Holy Spirit remains rather enigmatic. Nevertheless, the intent of the redactor in joining 12:8-9 to 12:10-12 would probably have been much the same as that of Luke: to push back the application of 12:9 to the post-Easter ministry of the disciples. Q 12:11 and 12 not only point to a time in the future after the Holy Spirit has been poured out, but they also envisage a positive performance from the disciples when put on trial.

Whether it was Luke or Q that was responsible for the arrangement of 12:8-12, the juxtaposition of 12:8-9 and 12:10-12 appears to be an attempt to mitigate the embarrassment caused by those who had failed to live up to the standard laid out in 12:9. If the redactor was Q, the implications are clearly drawn out in Luke, leaving us with two cases of embarrassment.

Another passage, which is unique to Luke’s gospel, further demonstrates Luke’s discomfort with the disciples’ denial of Jesus. Following Jesus’ prediction of Peter’s denial, he says, “Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your own faith might not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:31-32). This passage recasts the disciples’ impending denial in a number of ways. 1) Jesus not only predicts the disciples’ denial, but also, significantly, their restoration to fellowship. In essence, their failure to hold fast in the face of persecution becomes part of a larger plan. 2) The extraordinary
circumstances of the disciples’ denial are indicated in Jesus’ assertion that “Satan has demanded to sift you all like wheat.” 3) There is a subtle distinction made between Peter’s “denial” of Jesus and his “faith” in Jesus. He may deny Jesus three times, but Jesus assures him that his faith will not fail. This faith will bring him to an inevitable “turning back.” 4) If anyone has the ability to make exceptions to the rule, it is the one who makes the rule. Because these words issue from the mouth of Jesus, they contain sufficient authority to qualify a previous saying such as Q 12:9. Hence, it appears quite likely that Luke 22:31-32 was added by Luke in order to provide an interpretive grid for the disciples’ subsequent denial of Jesus. Such a grid was necessary precisely because of the troubling implications of Q 12:9 and like passages.

Another early Christian text to struggle with the implications of Q 12:9 for unfaithful Christians is 2 Tim 2:11-13, “The saying is sure: If we have died with him, we shall also live with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.” The first three statements of the saying all reflect the pattern of Q 12:8-9. One’s response to Jesus in this life will reap a commensurate response from Jesus when he comes to judge and reward. The last of these three statements contains an explicit allusion to Q 12:9, matching denial (ἀρνέομαι) of Jesus with denial by Jesus. So far the saying clearly affirms the sentiment of Q 12:9. However, the pattern is then broken by the final statement. Here the saying spells out an exception to the previous pattern. If one is unfaithful (ἀπιστεύω) to Jesus, he will nevertheless remain faithful. The reason for this shift is significant: “he cannot deny (ἀρνησόμαι) himself.” It is clear that the
A statement about unfaithfulness is intended to modify the statement about denial, for the averted consequence is spelled out in terms of denial rather than unfaithfulness.

The logic of the saying relies on the fact that there is a clear difference between “unfaithfulness” to Jesus and “denial” of Jesus. Yet the substance of this difference is anything but obvious. Both connote a breach of loyalty toward Jesus. If there is a difference, it is a subtle one, and seems to rely on a distinction between disloyalty due to the weakness of the disciple and an “official” (perhaps even premeditated) denunciation of Jesus. Jesus will remain faithful to those who are disloyal in a moment of weakness, but he will condemn those who deny him outright. The distinction is murky at best, clearly retaining an uneasy tension between the two eventualities.

However, the saying might have been aiming for precisely this murkiness. An unclear line between unfaithfulness and denial leaves the church room to be flexible in dealing with those who have proven disloyal to Jesus. On the one hand, the meaning of Q 12:9 has been retained. On the other hand, provision has been made for those whose disloyalty was the result of frailty. This not only leaves room for the restoration of the disloyal disciples, but also carves out space for the church to welcome back those whose fear drove them to apostasy. Most important for our present study is the realization that 2 Tim 2:11-13 qualifies the strict demand of Q 12:9, presumably because it had proven problematic.

Another attempt to mitigate the problems raised by Q 12:9 can be found in chapter 6 of the Shepherd of Hermas.

30 BDAG 103; 132-33.

Blessed are those of you who patiently endure the coming great tribulation and will not deny (ἀρνησόνται) their life. For the Lord has sworn by his Son that those who have denied (ἀρνησαμένους) their Lord have been rejected from their life, that is, those who now are about to deny (ἀρνεῖσθαι) him in the coming days. But to those who formerly denied (ἀρνησαμέμενος) him mercy has been granted because of his great mercy.

The first half of the passage recapitulates Q 12:9. Those who deny the Lord forfeit their (eternal) lives. The second half of the passage, however, places an important qualification on the pronouncement. Those who formerly (πρότερον) denied the Lord are all granted mercy. Only those who persist in their denial in the “coming days” (ἐρχομένας ἡμέρας) will be “rejected from their life.” Hence, though the substance of Q 12:9 is affirmed, its applicability is restricted to a time in the future, when the mercy of the Lord is no longer available. The result is that the denials of the early disciples and every other follower up until the time of Hermas’ vision are bracketed off. They are all covered by the mercy of God. Q 12:9 becomes, therefore, a piece of prophecy delivered by Jesus in reference to a particular time period, the “coming great tribulation.”

Interestingly enough, the other two early Christian texts that explicitly echo Q 12:8-9 only reproduce the first half of the saying. Rev 3:5 reads, “He who conquers shall be clad thus in white garments, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; I will confess (ὅμωλογήσω) his name before my Father and before his angels.” The negative side of the formulation is only implied. Moreover, the one whose name is “blotted out of the book of life” is not the one who denies the Lord, but rather the one who does not conquer. The context of the angel’s message to Sardis suggests that “conquering” refers to those who obey the exhortation to “wake up, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death…remember what you received and heard; obey it, and repent” (Rev 3:2-3). The focus, therefore, shifts from a judgment based on what one has done to the hope of
what one can still do. Thus, in Rev 3:5, the judgment of Q 12:9 has become a final warning. Once again we see that the saying allows the early church flexibility in dealing with unfaithful believers.

2 Clem. 3:1-4 also alters the meaning of Q 12:8-9,

What else is knowledge with respect to him if it is not refusing to deny (ἀφείσθαι) him through whom we have come to know him. Indeed, he himself says, 'Whoever confesses (ὁμολογήσαντά) me before men, I will confess (ὁμολογήσω) before my Father. But how do we confess (ὁμολογήσω) him? By doing what he says and not disobeying his commandments, and honoring him not only with our lips but 'with our whole heart and our whole mind.'

Not only does 2 Clement not contain Q 12:9’s negative pronouncement concerning denial, it also redefines confession, and by implication denial. Bleeding the two terms of their original forensic context, he defines confession of Jesus as life lived in true obedience. To deny Jesus, therefore, is to live life in disobedience, lacking Godly actions (2 Clem. 4:1-5). The alterations made by 2 Clement do not seem to have been provoked by difficulty with the original saying so much as the desire to extend its applicability. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the passage, by broadening the definition of confession and denial, suggests that the standard by which each will be judged will be the overall pattern of one’s life rather than one’s confession or denial in the midst of a specific persecution.

We have seen that a significant number of references to Q 12:9 in the literature of the early church have variously attempted to modify the meaning of the denial saying. Each of these displays unease with the categorical denial at the last judgment predicted

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32 That the problems persisted can be seen in Turtullian’s de Fuga in Persecutione and Cyprian’s Epistle 30 and Epistle Against Novatian.
for all those guilty of disloyalty to Jesus. Is God not a God of grace—of second chances? Did he not extend such a second chance to his own disciples in spite of their desertion in his final days? Is there room to reinstate those who, in a moment of weakness denied their Lord? These were the questions the early church struggled with, questions which they each found different ways to answer. Evidence of the breadth and variety of this struggle go a long way in demonstrating the authenticity of Q 12:9.

Finally, the criterion of coherence lends some additional support to the authenticity of Q 12:9 // Mark 8:38. Two other sayings in the Jesus tradition also point to the eschatological importance of maintaining allegiance to Jesus in the face of suffering, persecution—even death: Q 12:4-5 and Q 17:33 (Matt 10:39) // Mark 8:35 // John 12:25. Both of these sayings receive a full treatment in this study, with the conclusion that each originated with the historical Jesus.

Arguments Against Authenticity:

Three principal arguments have been advanced against the authenticity of Q 12:8-9, each of which will be explored below.

Son of Man:

Q 12:8-9 is the first of our sayings to employ the phrase “Son of Man.” This phrase has long been a battleground in debates over authenticity. On one end of the spectrum scholars have argued that this phrase was particularly indicative of the historical Jesus. On the other end, scholars have argued that the Son of Man sayings represent the most pervasive incursion of the early church into the Jesus tradition. Nor should one be

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33 See the survey in Burkett, *Son of Man Debate*, 43-56.
surprised to find positions staked out at various points between these two poles. We will discuss two primary challenges to the authenticity of Q 12:8-9 based on the occurrence of the phrase Son of Man.

The first hypothesis argues that the Son of Man sayings are entirely the work of the early church. Philipp Vielhauer has noted that the Son of Man sayings and the kingdom of God sayings are found in separate strands of material. He argues that, since the kingdom of God sayings are indubitably authentic, a pervasive separation between these two strands must point to the inauthenticity of the Son of Man sayings. He hypothesizes that they were created en masse by the early church, and were patterned after Daniel 7.

This hypothesis sets up a false dichotomy between two features of the Jesus tradition which both are widely attested in the Jesus tradition. The number and scope of Son of Man sayings themselves should be enough to abandon this hypothesis.

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35 It should be noted that this degree of skepticism should render the authenticity of “kingdom of God” suspect as well.


Q 6:22; 7:34 (Matt 11:19); 9:58 (Matt 8:20); 11:30 (Matt 12:40); 12:815, 10 (Matt 12:32), 40 (Matt 24:44); 17:24 (Matt 24:27), 26 (Matt 24:37), 17:30 (Matt 24:39); 22:28-30 (Matt 19:28)—ten times.


Gos. Thom. 86—one time.
The second hypothesis begins by postulating two different uses of the term Son of Man in the Jesus tradition. With its modern roots stretching back to Vermes, Casey, and Lindars, this hypothesis has gained a good deal of support in the last few decades and has become a key point in rejecting any semblance of an apocalyptic Jesus.\(^{37}\) In one group of sayings, Son of Man is simply another way of referring to oneself or a typical member of the community. Based on the Hebrew בָּנָי or the Aramaic בָּנָשׁ, there is a strong precedence of such usage in the Old Testament and other second temple works.\(^{38}\) The other group of Son of Man sayings contain either an explicit or implicit reference to the apocalyptic “coming” Son of Man in Daniel 7. This usage is also not unknown in early Judaism. Both the Similitudes of 1 Enoch (37-71),\(^ {39}\) dated in the first century by a majority of scholars, and 4 Ezra,\(^ {40}\) composed around the end of the first century, but clearly lacking Christian influence, bear witness to an expanded usage of the Danielic Son of Man.\(^ {41}\) We have already seen the many ways in which Q 12:8-9 alludes to the Danielic vision. It should come as no surprise, then, to find our saying placed in the second group.

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\(^{38}\) Although it is most commonly used to denote an entire community, it is also used of individuals. See: Num 23:19; Job 25:6; 35:8; Ps 80:18; 146:3; Isa 51:12; 56:2; Jer 49:18, 33; 50:40; 51:43; 91X in Ezekiel; Dan 8:17; 1 En. 60:10; 1QS 11:20; IQH 12[4]:30.

\(^{39}\) 1 En. 46:1-3.

\(^{40}\) 4 Ezra 13:1-3.

\(^{41}\) The dating of the Similitudes has played an important role in determining whether the expectation of a coming Son of Man modeled after the figure in Daniel 7 was prevalent in early Judaism. For a summation of scholarly opinion see Burkett, Son of Man Debate, 68-81.
It is then argued that, while the historical Jesus did speak of himself as the Son of Man, he used it exclusively in the first sense, as a synonym for “man” or “myself.” The early church preserved some of these original sayings in the Jesus tradition, but they also created a new set of sayings that developed Jesus’ self referential Son of Man into a title based on the figure in Daniel 7. In doing so, they sought to infuse the entirety of the Son of Man tradition with an apocalyptic undercurrent, proclaiming Jesus as a heavenly redeemer.

This hypothesis runs aground on a number of different points. 1) First, it must be noted that the number of Son of Man sayings that seem to allude to Daniel 7 in one way or another are quite plentiful. These sayings include elements such as: clouds, coming, presentation before God and or his heavenly host, final judgment, and the possession of special status and authority conferred by God. In fact, there are only a few sayings that do not explicitly incorporate one or more of these elements. Crossan lists nine sayings that do not fit the Danielic mold. He designates these “earthly Son of Man sayings.”

They include: Q 7:34; 9:58; 12:10; Mark 2:10; 2:28; 10:45; Matt 16:13; Luke 6:22-23; 19:10. Subtracting these 9 and logion 86 in the Gos. Thom. from the 52 aforementioned attestations, leaves 42 independent attestations of the Son of Man which seem to rely on

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42 Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 455.

43 Some of these are more debatable than others. For Example: 1) Luke 6:22-23 assumes that the Son of Man is someone for whom it is worth being persecuted. A Danielic background meshes perfectly with the corresponding promise of heavenly reward. 2) Luke 19:10 speaks of the Son of Man’s mission to seek and save the lost. There is certainly a sense of heavenly authority: “Today salvation has come to this house” (Luke 19:9). 3) The saying of Mark 10:45 only makes sense given an apriori assumption that the Son of Man actually *should* be served. The saying aims to startle by advocating a radical role reversal. The Son of Man’s right to be served suggests a Danielic allusion. 4) Mark 2:10 speaks of the authority of the Son of Man to forgive sins—an authority that makes good sense in light of an allusion to Daniel 7.

44 Gos. Thom. 86, a parallel of Q 9:58, does not allude to Daniel.
the imagery and context of Daniel 7. These 42 attestations are spread across five different sources: Mark, Q, M, L, John. That the creative reach of the early church spread so far, so quickly, and so consistently is most unlikely.

2) The second, and by far the most significant objection has to do with the fact that the title Son of Man does not appear to have played a prominent role in the early church’s various depictions of Jesus. The phrase Son of Man appears 82 times in the Jesus tradition, including 52 independent attestations. In the rest of the New Testament the phrase occurs a total of 4 times: Acts 7:56; Heb 2:6; Rev 1:13; 14:14. Hebrews 2:6 is a quotation of Ps 8:4-6 which does not refer to the heavenly redeemer figure of Daniel, but rather to humanity. Each of the two Revelation passages is clearly building on the imagery of Daniel 7. Oddly enough, however, they both employ the exact wording of Daniel: one “like a Son of Man” (**ὁ γεννημένος ἦν ως ἄνθρωπος**), from the Aramaic in Daniel 7: one “like a Son of Man” (**יוסף בנו**). This stands in marked contrast to the abbreviated form that is exclusively found in the Jesus tradition: simply “Son of Man (**ὁ γεννημένος του ἄνθρωπου**). Therefore, the speech of Stephen in Acts 7:56 records the solitary use of the term in the whole rest of the New Testament that is consonant with its use in the Jesus tradition. Just as remarkable is the near absence of Son of Man as a title in the entirety of the Apostolic Fathers. It occurs a total of two times, and one of these occurrences is almost certainly non-titular, and employs it as a point of contrast with Jesus, the Son of God. “Observe again that it is Jesus, not a son of man (**οὐχὶ γεννημένος ἄνθρωπος**) but the Son of God (**γεννημένος τοῦ θεοῦ**), and revealed in the flesh by a symbol” (**Barn.** 12:10). Therefore, the lone reference to Jesus as the Son of Man occurs in Ign. **Eph.** 20:2.
“...Jesus Christ, who physically was a descendent of David, who is Son of Man (τὸ ὢν ὄντος ἄνθρωπον) and Son of God (ὑὸν θεοῦ)...."

What should be abundantly clear is that while the early church had its preferred titles for Jesus, including Son of God, Christ, and Lord—titles that certainly could have found their way back into the tradition, Son of Man was by no means one of them. It confounds logic to suppose that the same early church that ardently worked from the very beginning to generate and pass on a set of Son of Man traditions with Danielic allusions would have failed to exploit the phrase in their own writings.

It is also worth noting that the early Christian occurrences outside the Jesus tradition reflect the same range of meanings found within the Jesus tradition. Son of Man is used both as a generic reference to humanity and as an allusion to Daniel 7.

3) Another striking feature of the usage of Son of Man in the Jesus tradition is the fact that the phrase is found solely on the lips of Jesus. If the early church was so determined to establish Son of Man as an official title referring to Daniel 7 that they created a whole host of new sayings and altered existing ones, one would expect the title to appear on the lips of one of Jesus’ followers. Jesus is confessed as the Son of God, the son of David, Lord, and Christ by different persons in the tradition-- why not Son of Man? If the early church had indeed worked so hard to establish this title, it would not have taken a back seat to every other image of Jesus’ authority. This would seem to be further evidence that, though Son of Man was Jesus’ favorite self-designation, it had a less significant place in the proclamation of the early church.

4) Another potential stumbling block for this hypothesis is that not all of the Danielic Son of Man sayings present an entirely unified picture. Q 12:8-9 is a prime
example of such a discrepancy. We have already noted that this passage implies a
distinction between Jesus and the Son of Man, a distinction that appears incongruent
given the perspective of the early church.\textsuperscript{45} If the early church had created all of the
Danielic Son of Man sayings, why would they have fostered ambiguity in the
construction of sayings like Q 12:8-9 and Mark 8:38?\textsuperscript{46}

5) Finally, the apparent strength of this developmental hypothesis is its attempt to
account for the different ways in which Son of Man is used in the Jesus tradition.
However, it is by no means the only way of explaining such differences.\textsuperscript{47} While

\textsuperscript{45} It should be noted that many scholars take this as evidence of a very different developmental
scheme (Tödt, \textit{Son of Man}, 55-60; Bultmann, \textit{History}, 112; Yarbo Collins, \textquotedblleft Daniel 7 and the Historical
Jesus,	extquotedblright 187-93; Bornkamm, \textit{Jesus}, 176-77, 229-31; Hahn, \textit{Hoheitstitel} 24-26, 32-42, 457-58). In this
hypothesis, the Danielic Son of Man traditions take precedence, particularly those like Q 12:8-9 which
seem to distinguish between Jesus and the Son of Man. Later traditions, which plainly equate Jesus and the
Son of Man were created or altered in a manner that reflects the understanding of the early church, namely
that Jesus and the Son of Man are the same person, a conclusion reached after the resurrection of Jesus.

\textsuperscript{46} Other texts which point to a possible separation of Jesus and the Son of Man include Mark
14:62 and Matt 19:28

\textsuperscript{47} These differences may be more apparent than real. For example, there is no intrinsic reason why
Jesus could not have used the phrase Son of Man of himself \textit{exclusively} in the Danielic sense. In those
sayings in which Jesus is purported to have used the phrase simply as an idiom, referring to himself, he
could have also had the Danielic Son of Man in mind. Lack of an explicit allusion to Daniel does not
automatically rule out a Danielic background. Proponents of a strict separation between \textquotedblleft heavenly\textquotedblright Son of
Man sayings and \textquotedblleft earthly\textquotedblright Son of Man sayings create incompatibility through their very terminology.
There is nothing in the text of Daniel 7 itself that makes the Son of Man incapable of \textquotedblleft earthly\textquotedblright actions.
Daniel 7 describes only one particular moment in time, a moment when the Son of Man comes before God
to receive dominion. If Jesus did think of himself as the Danielic Son of Man awaiting his vindication, it
would be up to him to give shape to the role prior to this critical moment. It would be foolish of us to
predetermine what he may have considered possible or appropriate for the Son of Man prior to his
vindication. For example, Q 9:58 is often taken as a classic example of what Crossan (\textit{Historical Jesus},
255-56; 455) calls an \textquotedblleft earthly Son of Man saying.\textquotedblright \textquotedblleft Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests;
but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.\textquotedblright Simply because Daniel 7 is not integral to understanding
the saying does not mean that Daniel 7 is incompatible with the saying. There is simply no way of knowing
whether this was Jesus\' understanding of his vocation as the Danielic Son of Man. Scholars who have
advocated this position include: Morna Hooker, \textit{The Son of Man in Mark: A Study of the Background of the
Term \textquotedblleft Son of Man\textquotedblright and its Use in St Mark's Gospel}, (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967), 27-30,
192; Richard Longenecker \textquoteleft Son of Man\textquoteright as a Self-Designation of Jesus,\textit{ JETS} 12 (1969): 151-58; Graham
Stanton, \textit{Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching}, (SNTSMS 27; Cambridge: University Press,
1974), 160-61; Christopher Tuckett, \textquoteleft The Present Son of Man,\textquoteright \textit{JSNT} 14, (1982): 58-81. Nor is there any
reason to believe that the historical Jesus could not have used the phrase in more than one way. Perhaps he
even exploited the double meaning, constructing a parable out of his chosen self-designation.
discerning precisely how the historical Jesus did use the term Son of Man lies beyond the scope of this study, what is clear, is that it is most improbable that every reference to the Son of Man which alludes to Daniel 7 was a creation of the early church. There is simply too much evidence that points in precisely the opposite direction.

*Sätze heiligen Rechts:*

In two seminal essays, Ernst Käsemann dealt with a specific form found in a number of final judgment sayings—a form which he labeled “sentences of holy law.”

These essays have continued to exert a strong influence on discussions about the potential authenticity of Q 12:8-9. In this form he noted that, “The same verb describes in the chiasmus of the protasis and apodosis both human guilt and divine judgment, in order to characterize by this method both the precise correspondence of the two in content and their indissoluble and harsh logical connection.” He pointed out three places in the New

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49 For example, see the work of Perrin, (Norman Perrin, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus* (New Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 186) who defers to Käsemann on the issue, “That such a tradition as Käsemann describes goes back to the early Church is clear enough, and that these sayings are at home in it is shown both by their form, the two part sentence with the same verb in each referring to present action and eschatological judgment respectively, and by the fact that a Christian prophet makes use of one of them in Rev 3:5b.” He then goes on to claim that, “Thus far the discussion is convincing and the participants are in agreement” (186). Perrin later concludes that a modified version of the saying in Luke 12:8 could be authentic (190-91). Crossan (*The Historical Jesus*, 247-48) also uses Käsemann’s hypothesis in his treatment of Q 12:8-9.

50 Käsemann, “Sentences of Holy Law,” 67. However, Käsemann subsequently broadened his categories to include nearly all statements of recompense, which he claimed represented a natural development from the original form of the sentences of holy law. “Talion is now expressed no longer by the correspondence of the verb but directly through the curse. As 1 Cor 14:38 opened our eyes to such a possibility, so it also made the sense of a variant of this kind evident” (Ibid 70). Hence, the initial form of “sentences of holy law” effectively grew to include any statement which delineated promises of blessing or
Testament where such a pattern could be found. The first, and one might argue the paradigmatic example, was Q 12:8-9 // Mark 8:38. He also included 1 Cor 3:17, “If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him”; and 1 Cor 14:38, “Anyone who does not recognize this is not to be recognized.” On the basis of their shared form, Käsemann then proceeded to construct a tradition history of these passages. He postulated that this form originated in prophetic proclamations of the early church such as that found in Rev 22:18, “If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life.” Of Rev 22:18 Käsemann declared, “Here we see that it is prophetic proclamation which is the original Sitz im Leben for sentences of this kind.”51 The possibility that Q 12:8-9 // Mark 8:38 could have gone back to the historical Jesus is dismissed in the following fashion,

It is already apparent from modifications that the saying cannot go back in its present form, either Marcan or Matthean, to Jesus himself; proof of this is to be found both in the content, where the confession of Christ is estimated to be the standard of judgment on the Last Day, and also from the form of the sentence. Prophecy proclaims blessing and curse on those members of the community who confess and those who deny by establishing within it the eschatological jus talionis.52

Käsemann argued that these prophetic statements played a key role in the early church, which, in its infancy, was bereft of other forms of structure and accountability. These curse at the final judgment. This development is particularly evident in his subsequent essay (Ernst Käsemann, “The Beginnings of Christian Theology,” 82-107), in which he treats a wide assortment of final judgment passages under the rubric sentences of holy law. Hence, this entire motif implicitly fell under Käsemann’s same tradition history. If the initial form of sentences of holy law were the disciplinary tools of Christian prophets, it made sense that other threats of divine recompense would have had a similar point of origin.

51 Ibid, 76.

52 Ibid, 77.
sentences of holy law were the divine threats which, in the absence of Torah, kept the faithful in line. Käsemann argues that they came from a very *primitive* stage of Christianity.

It belongs to a stage of development which by the time our gospels were composed lies already far behind; to be more specific, it belongs to the community of the time immediately after Easter, with its apocalyptic expectation of an imminent end and its prophet leaders. Only at this point in history was it possible to do without the formation of a law of church organization in the sense of administrative, disciplinary, and canon law in order that rewards and punishments might be left solely to the universal judge himself; only at this point did the church see in Jesus the returning Son of Man; only at this point did a battle rage round the continuing validity of the Mosaic law in all its parts.53

As a viable alternative to authenticity, Käsemann’s reconstruction of the developmental history of Q 12:8-9 // Mark 8:38 has some serious limitations.54 For starters, Käsemann’s initial arguments for the inauthenticity of Q 12:8-9 // Mark 8:38 do not stand up to scrutiny. His arguments (reproduced in the quotes above) are threefold:

1) He detects the presence of redaction in both the Markan and Matthean form. However, he never demonstrates why this redaction points to inauthenticity. Stranger still, he makes no mention of the two occurrences of the passage in Luke—thereby implying that there is no Q parallel for the saying, which is not the case.

2) He finds further “proof” in the fact that the “confession of Christ is estimated to be the standard of judgment on the Last Day.” This operates on an a priori assumption that Jesus could not have spoken of allegiance to himself as a standard of final judgment. There is, however, no concrete reason why this could not have been the case.

53 Ibid, 78.

3) Käsemann asserts that the form of the saying as a sentence of holy law proves it is the creation of a Christian prophet. Here he is simply recapitulating the tradition history he himself created in order to argue for the validity of the same tradition history. He attempts to prove his point by reiterating his premise. The premise that early Christian prophets were responsible for the form of sentences of holy law must be weighed in its own right.

The tradition history which Käsemann develops to explain the origin of the form of sentences of holy law found in Q 12:8-9 // Mark 8:38 also has some significant failings:

1) There is no justification for his insistence that Rev 22:18 is the key to unlocking the three passages that display the form of sentences of holy law. Rev 22:18 does not follow such a pattern itself. In the absence of any other argument linking these texts, the connection seems rather arbitrary.

2) Käsemann himself asserts that prophetic passages like Rev 22:18 and the sentences of holy law are patterned after Old Testament prophecy, “This stylistic form in which prophecy found it possible to express this message was offered by the Old Testament, i.e., by those sayings in which the fulfillment of some condition on earth was to be followed in the eschatological future by promise or threat, blessing or curse.”

There is also evidence that the form was used by Jews in the second temple period. For

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55 Ironically, in later broadening the category of sentences of holy law, Käsemann further discredits any argument he might have made from common form—because we no longer have a common form at all. Rather, we simply have a thematically linked group of sayings all of which involve divine recompense.

example, Test. Levi 4:6 reads, “Because those who bless him shall be blessed, and those who curse him shall be destroyed.” If the form derived from the Old Testament prophets and was used by Jews of the second temple period, it is of course reasonable to assume that both the early church and Jesus might have employed the form.

3) Even if we put aside the Old Testament precedent, and were determined to isolate a specifically Christian origin for the form, Q 12:8-9 // Mark 8:38 would seem to be a more likely candidate than Rev 22:18.

4) The argument that the form is particularly indicative of early Christian prophets also must account for the occurrence of the *jus talionis* in a good deal of Jewish sapiential exhortation.

Persecution:

A third objection voiced against the authenticity of Q 12:9 // Mark 8:38 is that they clearly envision a time of trial and persecution, both of which point to the context of the early church. It is argued that such sayings would have served important roles in exhorting and warning Jesus’ followers, and hence should be seen as early church creations. For example, Boring writes that, “The disciples’ situation of having to decide whether to confess or deny Jesus, in such a way that the verdict they would hear in the Last Judgment depended on their decision, is a situation that simply did not arise prior to

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57 The antiquity of the Testament of Levi is confirmed by Aramaic Levi found at Qurman, and this quote bears no traces of a Christian interpolation.


59 This has been ably demonstrated by Klaus Berger (“Die sogennanten ‘Sätze heiligen Rechts,” 10-40).
the early church’s conflicts with Judaism in Palestine.” However, we have already noted that there is no guarantee that the saying originally had literal trials in mind as it was first employed by the historical Jesus. Furthermore, we have seen (Q 12:4-5) that sayings which presuppose persecution and suffering are not only abundantly attested in every strand of the Jesus tradition, but are also congruent with the violent death of both Jesus and John the Baptist. Moreover, the fact is, that the exact situation Boring speaks of did arise in the course of Jesus’ ministry. If Jesus’ disciples had remained true during Jesus’ arrest, trial and crucifixion, they may very well have found themselves hanging beside him upon their own crosses.

Conclusions and Implications:

Each of the criteria of authenticity validates the dominical origin of Q 12:8-9. Each of the two halves of the logion are multiply attested in separate independent sources: Q 12:8 // Mark 8:38; Q 12:9 // Rev 3:5 and 2 Clem 3:2. The saying’s apparent differentiation between Jesus and the Son of Man is dissimilar from the early church, and there is evidence that the early church struggled with the saying’s potentially embarrassing implications. Finally, the saying demonstrates coherence with two other sayings from the tradition, one of which we have already deemed authentic (Q 12:4-5), and another (to anticipate our conclusions) we will soon discover also bears the marks of

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61 Boring, *Sayings*, 165.

62 Pesch (“Über die Autorität Jesu: Eine Rückfrage anhand des Bekenner- und Verleugnerspruchs Lk 12,8f par.,” in *Die Kirche des Anfangs: Für Heinz Schürmann*, ed. R. Schnackenburg, J. Ernst, and J. Wanke; Freiburg: Herder, 1978), 47) reaches the opposite conclusion from Boring about the appropriateness of the sayings original *sitz im leben* on these grounds.
authenticity (Q 17:33 // Mark 8:35 // John 12:25). Given the lack of convincing evidence to the contrary, it would appear that Q 12:8-9 represents an authentic saying of the historical Jesus.

The implication of this saying for our understanding of the historical Jesus’ view of the final judgment is quite remarkable. Jesus depicts allegiance to himself as the primary criterion by which one receives a verdict at the final judgment. Those who maintain allegiance to him will be rewarded with salvation. Those who deny Jesus, spurning association with him, will suffer condemnation.\footnote{As Davies and Allison (Matthew, 2.215) state, “The text also tells us much about Jesus’ soteriology. For it makes Jesus and his proclamation the deciding factors in the coming judgment. Rejection of Jesus by those who hear him entails exclusion from the kingdom; acceptance of him brings salvation. Jesus is thus not just a revealer, but the focus of God’s eschatological saving action and the criterion of judgment.”}
Q 12:10

“WHOEVER SPEAKS A WORD AGAINST…”


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Matt 12:32
καὶ ὁς ἐὰν εἰπη
lόγον κατά
tοῦ νοῦ τοῦ ἄνθρωπον,¹
ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ
δὲ ὁν εἰπη κατά
τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἀγίου,
oὐκ ἀφεθήσεται

Luke 12:10
καὶ πᾶς ὁς ἐρεῖ
lόγον εἰς
tὸν νοῦν τοῦ ἄνθρωπον,
ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ
tῷ δὲ εἰς
τὸ ἀγιὸν πνεῦμα
βλασφημήσαντι
οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται.

¹ B’ has ὁ at before ἀφεθήσεται. The addition is probably a scribal error.
Matt 12:32
And whoever speaks
a word against
the Son of Man will be forgiven
but whoever speaks against
the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven
[either in this age or in the age to come]

Mark 3:28-29

'Αμην
λέγω ύμίν ὃτι πάντα ἄφεθῃσται τοῖς νεόις τῶν ἄνθρωπον τὰ ἁμαρτήματα καὶ οἱ βλασφημῖαι ὅσα ἐὰν βλασφημήσωσιν δὲς δὲν βλασφημήσῃ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, οὐκ ἔχει ἄφεσιν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα,

Luke 12:10
And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven but whoever against the Holy Spirit blasphemes will not be forgiven [either in this age or in the age to come]

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2 B and f1 add ύμίν before τοῖς ἄνθρωποις, but this is almost certainly a scribal error.

3 C D L W Θ f13 TR all add τοῖς ἄνθρωποις in order to enhance the parallelism with the first line.
Mark 3:28-29
Truly
I say to you that everything will be forgiven the sons of men sins and blasphemies whatever they may blaspheme; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit does not have forgiveness forever, but is guilty of an eternal sin.

Matt 12:31
Because of this I say to you every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people but

blasphemes (against) the Spirit blasphemy will not be forgiven.

neither in this age nor in the coming one.

Gos. Thom. 44
πέεξε τέχνη
πετάξε οὐά ληνεσθέ
σενάκω ἐβολήναφ
λάγιο πετάξε οὐά εποικε
σενάκω ἐβολήναφ
πετάξε οὐά άε
ἀπίπα ἐτούλαβ
σενάκω άν ἐβολήναφ
ούτε πικᾶ
ούτε 2Ν ΤΠΕ

Jesus said:
he who speaks against the Father will be forgiven; and he who speaks against the Son will be forgiven; but he who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven either on earth or in heaven.

4 A number of manuscripts replace the awkward ἄμαρτήματος with κρίσεως (A C f) or ἄμαρτίας (C’ vid D W f).
Didache 11:7

Also, every prophet speaking in the Spirit do not test or evaluate, for every sin will be forgiven, but this sin will not be forgiven.

Context and Meaning in Matt 12:31-32:

Matthew’s twin sayings about blasphemying the Holy Spirit must be read in light of the Pharisees’ accusation that Jesus’ exorcisms should be attributed to the power of Beelzebul (Matt 12:22-24). After refuting this charge with the parables of the divided house and the strong man, Jesus goes on the offensive. In verses 31-33 Matthew lays out a pair of parallel sayings, both of which share the same basic structure: something will be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. These twin sayings are directly linked with the preceding conflict through the words “because of this” (Δι’ αὐτοῦ τοῦτο).

Though βλασφημία was understood in a variety of ways in the first century, it almost exclusively dealt with offences committed against God or his representative, whether person, place, or thing. This basic definition is surely operative in verse 31, which states that, “every sin (ἁμαρτία) and blasphemy (βλασφημία) will be forgiven

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5 The Greek term blasphemy (βλασφημία) is used by the LXX to translate a number of Hebrew roots, perhaps explaining its flexible meaning. These roots include: רע (curse), שָׂרָה (despise), לֶהֶר (revile), לֶכַט (reproach). For examples of blasphemy’s various nuances in Old Testament and second temple literature see: Exod 22:28; Num 15:30-31; 16:30; Lev 24:10-23; Deut 31:20; 2 Sam 12:14; 1 Kgs 21:13; 2 Kgs 19; Neh 9:18; Job 2:9-10; Pss 10:3, 13; 74:10, 18; Isa 1:4; 5:24; 8:21; Ezek 20:27; 35:12; Philo, Mos. 2.203-204; Fug. 84; 1QS 4; CD 5. For further discussion see, Bock, Blasphemy and Exultation in Judaism, 30 –112; E. P. Sanders, Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies (London: SCM, 1990), 57-67.

6 Examples include God’s agent or spokesperson, God’s temple or holy site, and God’s law.
people.” “sins” presumably represents offences committed against people, while “blasphemy” points to offences against God and his agents.7

The point is that God is willing to forgive any offence. As Davies and Allison rightly argue, “That ‘all sins and blasphemies will be forgiven men’ is to be taken literally and considered a revolutionary utterance is exceedingly doubtful. The statement, which looks forward to the last judgment, is simply a way of declaring God’s readiness to forgive.”8 There is, however, one exception to God’s willingness to forgive. “Blasphemy (βλασφεμία) against the Spirit (πνεύματος) will not be forgiven.”

What is this blasphemy against the Spirit? The context of Matthew gives us several hints. First, it should be noted that as recently as Matt 12:28, Jesus made mention of the Spirit, “But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.” Matt 12:28 has three important implications for understanding 12:31-32. 1) The Spirit is the Spirit of God. 2) The Spirit is manifested in the ministry of Jesus—specifically in his miraculous works. 3) The work of the Spirit is intended to function as evidence of the nearness of the kingdom of God. It is a visible sign of his emerging reign.

The second clue to the interpretation of “blasphemy of the Spirit” provided by the context of Matthew is found in the parallel structure of verses 31 and 32 which invites one to interpret them in light of one another. Verse 32 has “speak against” (εἴπῃ κατ’ α’) in place of verse 31’s blasphemy. In all likelihood this indicates the precise kind of blasphemy Matthew had in mind in verse 31.

7 Contra Hagner, (Matthew, 347) who argues that both refer to offences “against human beings.” See Guelich, Mark, 178-79; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2:345.
Therefore, in the context of Matthew, Jesus’ warning not to blaspheme the Spirit
is a caution not to speak against the tangible work of God’s Spirit as it ministers in and
through the person of Jesus to inaugurate the kingdom. For the Pharisees, who were
guilty of witnessing the Spirit’s work in Jesus and then ascribing it to Beelzebul, it was
more than a warning. It was a judgment. Those who interpret the saving work of God’s
Spirit as the work of the enemy will never be forgiven. They will stand outside the reach
of God’s grace at the final judgment.

The second saying, verse 32, states that, “whoever speaks a word against the Son
of Man will be forgiven…” It is almost certain that Matthew intends Son of Man to be
understood in the titular sense as the Danielic Son of Man, since he has used it this way
in every preceding instance (8:20; 9:6; 10:23; 12:8). As such, it corresponds well with the
statement in verse 31 that all blasphemies will be forgiven people. The Danielic Son of
Man is God’s divinely appointed representative, and yet one who speaks a word against
him may still be forgiven at the final judgment. What is unforgivable is to “speak against
the Holy Spirit.”

Verses 31 and 32 both create an interesting juxtaposition. On the one hand, both
seem to agree that one can speak against God or his agent and still be forgiven. On the
other hand, they categorically agree that one cannot be forgiven for speaking against the
Holy Spirit. The trouble lies in distinguishing a word spoken against the Spirit from a
word spoken against God or his agent. After all, the Spirit is the Spirit of God, and the
same Spirit that empowers his representative, the Son of Man (cf. verse 28). How can one

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8 Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.345.
offend God and not offend the Spirit? How can one offend the Son of Man and not offend the Spirit by which he works?

Matthew seems to use this juxtaposition in order to highlight the specific manifestation of the Spirit in Jesus’ miraculous works, works intended to demonstrate the nearness of the kingdom of God. Rejection of the Spirit in such a moment reflects a fatal hardness of heart, a willful choice not to accept the saving work of the Spirit initiated by God and enacted through Jesus. The implication is that there are other times and places where the presence of God and the true identity of the Son of Man are veiled to the extent that one’s blasphemy is forgivable. Given the context, it is unlikely that Matthew is pointing to a division of epoch’s (as is the case in Luke) between Jesus’ earthly ministry as Son of Man and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It seems quite clear that the sayings are intended to address the immediate situation of the Pharisees’ blasphemy of the Spirit which is already at work in Jesus.⁹

Verse 32 ends by making explicit what has heretofore only been implied by the two sayings: the one guilty of blasphemying the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, “either in this age or in the age to come.” Their sentence at the last judgment is already sealed.

Context and Meaning in Luke 12:10:

Luke has only the second of Matthew’s two sayings. The wording of Luke 12:10 differs from its parallel in Matt 12:32 in two potentially meaningful ways. First, instead of “speaking against” in both portions of the saying, Luke has “blasphemy” in the second

⁹ Davies and Allison (Matthew, 2.347) also note the following reasons, “There is no distinction in tenses (past for the pre-Easter time, present for the post-Easter time), and for the evangelist ‘Son of Man’ is
half. However, the logic of the contrast suggests that there is only one point of difference, the object of one’s slander, and blasphemy should therefore be understood as equivalent to “speaking against.” Luke is also missing Matthew’s concluding statement, “either in this age or in the age to come,” but declaring that one will not be forgiven for blasphemying the Holy Spirit certainly implies as much.

The context of the saying in Luke is quite different from the Markan and Matthean context and contributes substantially to a shift in meaning. This context has been discussed in depth in the treatment of Q 12:8-9. In summary, Luke 12:10 must clearly be read as part of a unit running from 12:8-12. Since 12:8-9 and 12:11-12 both clearly presuppose a trial setting, we may assume that speaking a word against/blasphemy should be understood in light of this backdrop. 12:10 makes allowance for speaking a word against Jesus as the Son of Man prior to his exaltation, thus qualifying 12:9. However, as 12:11-12 suggest, a time is coming when the Holy Spirit will be poured out on believers. This division into two epochs is consistent with the dramatic events depicted in Luke’s account of the giving of the Spirit at Pentecost. Hence, in the context of Luke-Acts, blasphemy against the Spirit points to the epoch of the Spirit, the time after Pentecost when rejection of Jesus is equated with blasphemy of the Spirit who is present on his behalf. Jesus is no longer present as the veiled Son of Man. On the contrary, he is present in the powerful work of the Spirit.  

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not simply a designation of the earthly Jesus. Moreover, where else does Matthew let off so lightly those who opposed Jesus during the pre-Easter epoch?”

Context and Meaning in Mark 3:28-29:

Both the wording and context of Mark 3:28-29 parallel Matthew 12:31 + the ending of Matthew 12:32. Though there are a number of stylistic differences, there are no substantial exegetical differences. In Mark, as in Matthew, the interpretation of the saying is dependent on the immediate context: the Beelzebul accusation and Jesus’ parables of the divided house and the strong man. Mark 3:28-29 serves as an indictment of the “Scribes” of verse 22. This connection with the preceding material is reinforced by the explanatory verse 30, “for they were saying, ‘He has an unclean spirit.” Hence, in Mark blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is simply the attribution of God’s saving work to the evil one. There can be no forgiveness for such a blasphemy.

Relationship to the Synoptic Gospels and Meaning of Gos. Thom. 44:

In considering a logion from the Gospel of Thomas, the first priority is to determine whether or not the saying displays literary dependence on the synoptic gospels. We saw in the methodology section that such a determination must be made on a case by case basis. There are only two reliable ways to determine a literary relationship between two texts. Dependence must be demonstrated by duplication of either sequence or wording. One should note that redaction is not necessarily evidence of dependence. A source may redact an independent tradition just as easily as a dependent one. Unless the redaction can be shown to have its cause in another source, it does not help to establish dependence.

Logion 44, like virtually all of the Gospel of Thomas bears no marks of Synoptic order. Hence, our determination of literary dependence or independence must rely
entirely on the wording of logion 44 and its parallels in Matt 12:32 and Luke 12:10. It appears that there is not enough similarity between the parallels to warrant a verdict of dependence. The sayings employ different wording at nearly every turn. *Gos. Thom.*’s “the one who speaks” (πετάει) reflects neither Matthew’s “whoever speaks” (δὲς ἀν εἰπῃ) nor Luke’s “everyone who speaks” (πᾶς δὲ ἐρεί). *Gos. Thom.* lacks the distinctive “word” (λόγον) which occurs in the apodosis of both Matt 12:32 and Luke 12:10. The *Gos. Thom.* includes an extra line about speaking against the Father (πετάει οὐὰς λαβάκω ἐβολα ΝΑ), and has simply “against the Son” (οὐὰς ἐπιθρεῖ) rather than the Son of Man, which occurs in both Matthew and Luke. Logion 44 concludes with “either on earth or in heaven (οὔτε ΠΚΑΣ οὔτε ἌΝ ΤΠΕ), whose wording is different than that of Matthew’s “either in this age or in the coming one” (οὔτε ἐν τοῦτῳ τῷ αἰῶνι οὔτε ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι). Therefore, aside from the shared language of forgiveness which is found in *Gos. Thom.*, Matthew, and Luke, the only line with wording parallel to one of the synoptics is, “but the one who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven” (πετάει οὐὰς ΔΕ ΜΠΗΣ ΕΤΟΥΛΑΒ ΚΕΝΑΚΩ ΔΝ ΕΒΟΛ ΝΑ). This echoes Matthew’s version “but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven” (δὲς ἀν εἰπῃ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου, οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ). Hence, though it is certainly possible that *Gos. Thom.* 44 used Matthew, the evidence is far from clear that it did so. Given the lack of compelling evidence for literary dependence, we will tentatively conclude that logion 44 preserves an independent line of tradition.

This is not to say that *Gos. Thom.* 44 does not show clear signs of redaction—indeed it does on two counts. 1) The shift from “Son of Man” to “the Son” is
a transition that is probably indicative of the early church’s preference for “Son” or “Son of God” over “Son of Man” as a title for Jesus. 2) Similarly, the addition of granting forgiveness for speaking against the “Father” as well as the Son follows the developing trend within the early church to speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together.

**Relationship to the Gospels, context, and meaning of Didache 11:7:**

Unlike Q 12:10, Mark 3:28-29, and Gos. Thom. 44, Did. 11:7 is not styled as a saying of Jesus. Nor does its wording or structure line up particularly well with the other occurrences. Nevertheless, its many points of overlap with our saying make it extremely likely that some organic connection did exist. The precise nature of this connection is now impossible to determine with any certainty. 1) Did. 11:7 might be an interpretation of the literary text of either Mark or Matt, both of which contain all of the elements which are found in Did. 11:7. 2) Did. 11:7 might reflect the author’s recollection and corresponding application of the Markan or Matthean version of the saying. 3) Finally, Did. 11:7 might be based on an independent reminiscence of a saying of the historical Jesus. The lack of Markan or Matthean order or exact verbal parallels render it impossible to establish literary dependence.

In any case, Did. 11:7 shows clear traces of development. Its context and substance both reveal that it has evolved to meet the needs of the early church. Verse 11:7 is located in the midst of a series of instructions about how to treat the apostles and prophets of the early church (11:3-13:7). 11:7 threatens disastrous consequences for

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11 The contrast of “every sin will be forgiven” and “but this sin will not be forgiven” coupled with the identification of the unforgivable sin with the “Spirit” clearly point to an organic connection.
anyone who tests or evaluates a prophet speaking in the Spirit. This sin will not be forgiven. Hence, it would appear that Did. 11:7 interprets speaking against the Holy Spirit as speaking against the Christian prophet, who is empowered by the Spirit. This specific application of the saying surely originated in the post-Easter period, and reflects the needs and concerns of the early church rather than the historical Jesus.

Text, Context, and Meaning of Q 12:10:

Matthean redactions to Q 12:10 include Matthew’s ending, οὐτε ἐν τούτῳ τῷ αἰῶνι οὐτε ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι. It is an adaptation of the end of Mark 8:28 and has been shifted here as a conclusion to his two-fold warning about speaking against the Holy Spirit.

Likely Lukan redactions include: 1) πᾶς is regularly inserted by Luke. Holst identifies 39 instances where it seems likely that Luke has added πᾶς for intensification. 2) In addition, Luke’s βλασφημήσαντι has probably been borrowed from Mark 3:28, and reflects his penchant for disrupting parallelism.

Hence, the wording of Q 12:10 probably went something like this:

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καὶ δὲ (ἕαν εἰπή) λόγον (εἰς τὸν οἰὼν) τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ. δὲ ἀν εἰπή εἰς τὸ ἁγιόν πνεῦμα σόκ ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ.

a. ἐρεῖ
b. κατὰ τοῦ οἰὼν

And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

The potential context and meaning of Q 12:10 were both discussed in the treatment of Q 12:8-9. Either the context of the saying in Q is identical to that of Luke’s, or we no longer have access to its original order. While Matthew clearly moved the Q saying in order to join it with the Markan version, Luke’s placement also displays clear redactional motives, motives that could be the product of his own hand or that of the Q redactor’s. Hence there is no way to determine whether the sequence is due to Q or Luke. Either way the most probable interpretation of the meaning of Q 12:10 is very similar to the one discussed in Luke 12:8-12, with a shift in epochs providing the interpretive key to the contrast between the Son of Man and the Holy Spirit.

*Most Primitive Version of the Saying:*

We have seen that while both the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *Didache* might very well have relied on independent traditions, their current form and wording display a number of redactional modifications. They are, consequently, of little help in reconstructing the most primitive form of the saying. Hence, we are left with two sources, Q and Mark, in our search for the most primitive version.
In spite of their obvious similarities, both the precise wording and structure of Q 12:10 and Mark 2:28-29 are quite different. Do they, then, record two separate yet similar sayings or are their differences the result of alterations made to the same saying? It is unlikely that Q 12:10 and Mark 3:28-29 are derived from different sayings of the historical Jesus. The pivotal difference in their first phrase, “sons of men” in Mark vs. “Son of Man” in Q is probably attributable to translation variants. In the process of translating an ambiguous Aramaic phrase into Greek, two distinctly different meanings emerged. Lindars has offered the following reconstruction of an Aramaic version that might have produced two readings as different as Q and Mark’s:

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15 The Markan text follows an ABBA pattern, while the Q text follows an ABAB pattern. Exact verbal correspondences are underlined.

Mark 3:28-29

A1 Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πάντα ἀφεθήσεται τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων

B1 τα ἀμαρτήματα καὶ αἱ βλασφημίαι ὡς ἐὰν βλασφημήσωσιν

B2 δὲ δὲν ἀφεθήσεται εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄγιον.

A2 οὐκ ἔχει ἀφεσιν εἰς τὸν αἰώνα, ἀλλὰ ἔνοχος ἔστιν αἰώνιον ἀμαρτήματος.

Q 12:10

A1 καὶ δὲ ἐὰν εἶπῃ λόγον εἰς τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου,

B1 ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ

A2 δὲ δὲν ἐξεὶ πείτε ὑμεῖς τὸ ἄγιον πνεῦμα

B2 οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ.

16 Scholars have argued for a range of alternatives. Those who perceive redaction in the Markan version include: Tödt, Son of Man, 314-18; Schulz, Sprachquelle, 247; Gundry, Mark, 175. Those who argue for redaction on the part of Q include: Bultmann, History, 131; Lövestam, Blasphemia, 68, n. 46; Schweizer, Mark, 84. Those who ascribe the difference to translation variants include: Lindars, Jesus Son of Man, 35-37; Colpe, TDNT 8.442-43; Higgins, Son of Man, 116-17; Hare, Son of Man, 264-67; R. Schippers, “The Son of Man in Matt 12:32 = Luke 12:10 Compared with Mark 3:28,” 231-35; Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 743; Marcus, Mark, 1.275; Guelich, Mark, 178; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.345-46. Many of these propose slightly different Aramaic reconstructions.

17 Lindars, Jesus Son of Man, 36 (including chart).
we-    kol              di          yomar                   millah     le-bar enasha
Q And everyone who says a word against a man
Mark every which one blasphemes thing, to mankind

Q yishtebeq         leh
Mark there will be forgiveness to him.

there will be forgiveness for it.

However, this still leaves us with the task of sorting out the original intention of the phrase. What exactly was forgivable? 1) Was it speaking against the Son of Man in a titular sense? 2) Was it speaking against a son of man in the generic sense? 3) Or, was it everything spoken by a son of man in the generic sense? The second option retains the best explanatory power.\(^{18}\) The wording preserved in Q is substantially accurate, but the true meaning of the phrase is disguised by the larger context of both Matthew and Luke. The contrast involves words spoken against people and words spoken against the Holy Spirit. Essentially, offences against people can be forgiven, but there is no forgiveness for offences against God and his representatives.

Matthew and Luke, however, both interpreted this generic son of man in a titular sense, in keeping with Jesus’ common self-designation. Q may very well have intended it in this sense as well. Hence, the saying changed meaning, promoting a contrast between the Son of Man and the Holy Spirit. While this contrast would have been illogical in the ministry of the historical Jesus, it is comprehensible in the post-Easter period, when one might easily read a distinction in epoch’s into the saying. As Meier notes,

Early Jewish Christians, in their preaching to fellow Jews, probably made the distinction between blasphemy against the Son of Man and blasphemy against the Spirit. The former was understandable in the days when Jesus acted as the lowly, hidden servant, despite his power. The Jews can be

forgiven their former error regarding the mysterious Son of Man. But now that the Son of Man has been raised from the dead and his Holy Spirit has been clearly poured out on all believers, to persist in unbelief is the unforgivable sin against the Spirit.¹⁹

We also saw that Luke, and possibly Q before him, used this reading to his advantage in order to qualify the harsh verdict of 12:8-9.

Mark, on the other hand, while correctly preserving the generic sense of son of man, misinterpreted the meaning of the original saying, deriving from it the rather more remarkable claim that all sins and blasphemies will be forgiven men. Attempts to find a compelling redactional motive fall short.²⁰

Hence, an appropriate Greek translation of the most primitive form of Q 12:10 // Mark 2:28-29 would probably look something like our current Q text, with “Son of Man” understood in the generic form “son of man.”


²⁰ Two potential arguments for Markan redaction include: 1) Mark might have found the idea that one can be forgiven for blaspheming the Son of Man offensive. Such embarrassment would make good sense considering the absolute importance of one’s response to Jesus displayed in each of the gospels. In fact, Mark 8:38 indicates that one’s eschatological destiny is predicated on one’s response to Jesus. There is no doubt that Mark considered Jesus to be the Son of Man. Hence, it makes sense that he might alter such a statement. There are two problems with this line of reasoning. First, Mark’s statement that every “blasphemy” will be forgiven effectively presents the same problem. We have seen that blasphemy is to be understood here as offences toward God or his representative. If Mark could candidly pronounce God’s willingness to forgive all blasphemies, it is hard to imagine that he would have been particularly squeamish about a reference to blasphemy against the Son of Man. Second, none of the other texts at our disposal seem to be bothered by the idea that blasphemy of the Son of Man is forgivable. Not only is the phrase found in Matthew and Luke, but the Gospel of Thomas’ version would prove offensive for substantially the same reasons. 2) Gundry (*Mark*, 175) has suggested that Mark changed Son of Man to sons of men in order to make the saying fit the context of the Beelzebul controversy and the explanatory comment provided by Mark in verse 30. “The possibility of forgiveness for the person ‘who will speak a word against the Son of Man’ (Luke 12:10; cf. Matt 12:32) would contradict the equation of the unforgivable sin with the scribes’ saying that Jesus ‘has an unclean spirit’ (v 30). If that is not speaking against Jesus, what is? To suit the equation and avoid the contradiction, therefore, the possibility of forgiveness for the person who will speak a word against the Son of Man is generalized into the possibility of forgiveness for human beings who speak all sorts of slanders.” However, we have already noted that Mark retains the idea of forgiveness for words spoken against God and his representatives. Such an idea could have been eliminated by forgoing the emphasis on “blasphemy.”
καὶ ὁ (ἐὰν εἴπη)21 λόγον εἰς οὐν τοῦ ἄνθρωπον, ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ; δὲ ἂν εἴπη εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ.

And whoever speaks a word against a son of man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

If we have rightly inferred the most primitive form of Q 12:10 // Mark 3:28-29,

What did it mean to speak against Holy Spirit as opposed to a son of man? The Spirit was the Spirit of God, a manifestation of his power and presence. Throughout the Old Testament and second temple period the normative function of the Spirit was the inspiration of individuals and groups belonging to the people of God (Num 11:26; 1 Sam 10:6; 19:20; Sir 39:6; 48:24; Wis 7:7; 9:17-18; Philo Som. II.252; Jos. 117; Vit. Mos. II.265; Bib. Ant. 9:10; 31:9; Josephus Ant. 10:239; Jub. 40:5; 1 Enoch 71:11; 1QH 12:11-13; 13:18-19; 14:12-13). Therefore, speaking against the Holy Spirit would naturally entail speaking against a specific person’s word or deed that had been accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Arguments for Authenticity:

The most compelling argument for authenticity involves its multiple independent attestations. All of the evidence suggests that Q 12:10 and Mark 3:28-29 derive from independent streams of tradition. We have seen that both Gos. Thom. 44 and Did. 11:7 may represent independent traditions as well, giving us as many as four independent attestations of the saying. It is worth noting that, in spite of their myriad differences, all four share two features in common. They each retain a structure that contrasts something

21 ἐρεῖ
that is forgivable with something that is not, and they all agree that the unforgivable
offence is speaking against the Holy Spirit.

The criterion of embarrassment does not help authenticate Q 12:10 // Mark 3:28-
29. The texts of the early church do not present us with evidence that the early church
struggled with either the saying or its particular features.22 The closest we come to
potential tension comes in the gospel of Matthew. Shortly after the twofold Matthean
version (12:31-32), come verses 36-37 which read as follows: “I tell you, on the day of
judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; for by your
words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” Clearly this does
not square well with the proclamation that “all blasphemies will be forgiven,” including
“speaking against the Son of Man.” How these verses are to be understood in light of one
another simply deepens the difficulty already encountered in ascertaining exactly how
12:31-32 are to be understood in the context of Matthew.

In terms of dissimilarity, it is worth noting that both Gos. Thom. 44 and Did. 11:7
have been adapted to meet the changing needs of their communities. Gos. Thom. 44
emphasizes the work of the Spirit over against the Father and Son, a move that is
probably indicative of the community’s elevation of the Spirit.23 Did. 11:7 adapts the
saying in order to address a perceived problem within the early church, finding ways to

22 Gundry (Mark, 184) argues that embarrassment is applicable, pointing to “the v. 11 which
soften the sayings by subtracting ‘eternally’ after ‘not have forgiveness,’ by changing present guilt or
judgment into future guilt, and (as just implied) by changing eternal sin into the more traditional and
manageable concept of eternal judgment. This offensiveness argues against a later Christian origin,
prophetic or other.” However, neither of these arguments is particularly persuasive. While some
manuscripts do omit “eternally,” and others change “sin” to “judgment,” neither change is indicative of
embarrassment. Manuscripts lacking eternally still retained “but is guilty of an eternal sin” at the end of the
saying, and replacing “sin” with “judgment” does nothing to change the meaning of the verse.

establish the credibility of Christian prophets without compromising their authority when speaking in the Spirit. In addition, Luke, and perhaps Q, altered the meaning of the saying by placing it in a context that almost certainly differed from its original. These lines of development hint at the authenticity of the core saying precisely because they demonstrate that the saying proved useful to many early Christian communities only after its wording, structure, and context had been altered to suit their needs.

Our reconstruction of the most primitive version of the saying found in Q 12:10 also displays a remarkable amount of coherence with Q 12:8-9, which we have already deemed authentic. Q 12:8-9 portrays the results of denying Jesus unequivocally. The Son of Man will deny you before God, sealing your fate at the final judgment. The primitive version of Q 12:10 is likewise adamant about the result of speaking against the Holy Spirit. It too will lead to damnation at the final judgment. The primary difference between the two threats appears to be the identity of the “person” for whom scorn and rejection will entail certain judgment. In reality, however, this distinction is illusory. As we have seen, in the Old Testament and second temple period, speaking against the Spirit would naturally have meant speaking against the words or deeds of one of God’s spirit-imbued representatives. Dunn has convincingly argued that Jesus conceived of his own ministry of forgiveness, healing and deliverance as inspired by the Spirit of God. Particularly instructive are the convergence of allusions to Isaiah 61:1 found in Luke 4:18-19; Q 6:20b-21 (Matt 5:3-6); and Q 7:18-23 (Matt 11:2-6). Given this background, it would seem evident that, if Q 12:10 was indeed a word of Jesus, its warning would be directed

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25 We have previously discussed the authenticity of Q 7:18-23. See, 165.
first and foremost toward those who disregarded the inspired words and work of Jesus himself. Therefore, Q 12:8-9 and the primitive form of Q 12:10 are really two versions of the exact same message: rejection of Jesus will spell doom at the final judgment. The remaining difference seems to be one of audience. While denial of Jesus applies most naturally to those who already affiliate themselves with Jesus, speaking against Jesus’ divinely inspired words or deeds applies most naturally to those who have placed themselves in outright opposition to Jesus. Given this coherence and the authenticity of Q 12:8-9, the probability that 12:10 is also authentic increases.

Arguments Against Authenticity:

A number of arguments have been advanced against the authenticity of Q 12:10 // Mark 2:28-29, each of which sets out to demonstrate that the saying was created by a Christian prophet. Particularly noteworthy is the work of Boring, who considers the saying one of the best examples of Christian prophecy in the synoptics.\(^{26}\) However, in the final analysis, none of these arguments provide particularly compelling evidence of inauthenticity.

1) The first attempt to demonstrate the origin of the saying in Christian prophetic circles is familiar to us from the discussion of Q 12:8-9. Käsemann finds in Q 12:10 // Mark 3:28-29 distorted versions of the form “sentences of holy law,” which he argues are

particularly indicative of early Christian prophecy. In addition to the multiple problems with this hypothesis discussed previously, the form is simply not present in Q 12:10 or Mark 3:28-29. In neither version does the “punishment correspond exactly with the guilt.” Nor does the Q version, which seems closer to the most primitive form, retain the trademark chiasm.

2) It has also been argued that the saying’s emphasis on the Holy Spirit is indicative of a community that accords special honor to the presence, work, and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. A Christian prophetic circle under attack is then postulated as the ideal Sitz im Leben for the creation of such a saying. This argument implies that the notion of inspiration by the Holy Spirit was congenial to Christian prophets but foreign to the historical Jesus. There is no basis on which to argue that Jesus never considered himself inspired by the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, Jesus’ prophetic consciousness has been well documented.

3) The idea of unforgivable offences is not foreign to the literature of the early church. In fact, the four attestations of the saying demonstrate that it was, at the very least, amenable to some parts of the early church. This emerges as a greater possibility when Did. 11:7 is taken into consideration. Here we have an example of the saying being

\[\text{\textsuperscript{27}}\text{Käsemann, “Beginnings” 99.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{28}}\text{See 144-45.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{29}}\text{Käsemann, “Sentences” 69.}\]


\[\text{\textsuperscript{31}}\text{See especially Dunn, Jesus and the Spirit.}\]
used to serve a purpose within the community. Perhaps this receptivity to the saying is indicative of its origin in a Christian community. Such a hypothesis can only be tested through an analysis of analogous early Christian texts. Of those texts which explore the idea of an unforgivable sin, some have no tangible points of connection to our saying, like the notoriously ambiguous reference to mortal sins in 1 John 5:16-17. Others, though they initially suggest interesting parallels to our saying, ultimately underscore the distinctiveness of the saying within the early church. Three such sayings are as follows:

For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of the God and the powers of the age to come, and have fallen away, since on their own they are crucifying again the Son of God and are holding him up to contempt. (Heb 6:4-6)

Among these, therefore, there is no repentance leading to life, because they have also blasphemed against the Lord’s name. For such people, then, there is death. But the sheep you saw that were not skipping, but were feeding in one place, are those who have handed themselves over to acts of luxury and deception, but have not spoken any blasphemy against the Lord. These, therefore, have been corrupted from the truth; for them there is hope of repentance, by which they are able to live. So corruption has some hope of renewal, but death has only eternal destruction. (Herm. Par. 6.2.2-4)

…Apostates and blasphemers against the Lord, and betrayers of God’s servants. For these there is no repentance, but there is death, and this is why they are black, for their kind is lawless. (Herm. Par. 9.19.1)

The Hebrews text refers specifically to the sin of apostasy. The Holy Spirit is mentioned in the text, but only as one of many benefits bestowed by Christ, listed in order to

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32 As Funk (Five Gospels, 52) argues, “These options look back on Jesus from the perspective of the later community, which sought to set limits on the ecstatic leaders without inhibiting intrusions of the spirit.”
demonstrate the scandal of the apostate. The Hermas texts are representative of several in the book that deal with the issue of unforgivable sin. They are particularly intriguing because they often use the term blasphemy to delineate such a sin. In Hermas blasphemy is roughly equated with apostasy. However, throughout the book of Hermas, this blasphemy is *exclusively* used with “Lord” whenever an object is supplied (Vis. 2.2.2 Par. 6.2.2, 4; 8.6.4, 8.2; 9.19.1, 3). Never is an unforgivable offense described as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. All of this demonstrates that the early church did not have a particular preference for describing unforgivable sin in terms of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. In fact, outside of the four texts that reproduce our saying, no other book in the New Testament or Apostolic Fathers ever pairs blasphemy with the Holy Spirit. Hence, while we would not go so far as to describe blasphemy against the Holy Spirit as particularly dissimilar from the early church, it is certainly distinct enough that any argument for inauthenticity made on the basis of its similarity should be rejected.

**Conclusions and Implications:**

The authenticity of the primitive version of Q 12:10 appears probable. Not only does it enjoy multiple independent attestation (Q, Mark, and probably Gos. Thom. 44, Did. 11:7), but it lines up perfectly with the message of the authentic Q 12:8-9. Its history of misinterpretation and misappropriation also provides a marginal case of dissimilarity—the saying proved most useful to the early church once the form and

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33 This is made explicit in Herm. Par. 8.6.4, the pairing of blasphemy and denial in Herm. Par. 8.8.2, and the pairing of blasphemy and apostates in Herm. Par. 9:19:1.
meaning of the saying had been altered. Arguments against the authenticity of Q 12:10 have proved less than compelling.

Q 12:10 stands as another testament to the soteriological importance the historical Jesus attached to his own ministry. Because Jesus was inspired by the Spirit of God, speaking against his words or deeds was equivalent to speaking against God himself. Such direct opposition to the special work of God was unforgivable.
Q 12:42-46

“WHO IS THE FAITHFUL AND WISE SLAVE...”


Matthew 24:45-51

Τής ἀρα ἐστίν ὁ πιστὸς δούλος
καὶ φρόνιμος ὃν κατέστησεν ὁ κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκετείας αὐτοῦ τοῦ δοῦναι αὐτοῖς τὴν τροφὴν ἐν καιρῷ;
μακάριος ὁ δούλος ἐκεῖνος

Luke 12:42-46

καὶ εἶπεν ὁ κύριος 1
τής ἀρα ἐστίν ὁ πιστὸς
οἰκονόμος ὁ φρόνιμος, ὃν καταστήσει ὁ κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς θεραπείας αὐτοῦ τοῦ διδόναι ἐν καιρῷ [τῷ] σιτομέτριον;
μακάριος ὁ δούλος ἐκεῖνος.

1 Αὐτῷ is added by Χ Λ Α Θ Ψ for clarification.
2 W Θ f13 TR add αὐτοῦ for clarification.
3 D f TR ε read θεραπείας, probably with the Lukan version in mind. Χ q read οἰκίας.
Matthew 24:45-51

Who then is the faithful and wise slave,

whom his master will put in charge of his household
to give them their meals on time?

Luke 12:42-46

And the Lord said, who then is the faithful and wise manager,

whom his master has put in charge of his household staff to give them their food allowance on time?

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4 ἐκεῖνος has been omitted by K Γ Θ.

5 Some Manuscripts (C D L Θ W f) add ἐρχεσθαι to the clause for clarification.
Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will find so doing. Amen,

Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will find so doing.

Truly,

I tell you,

he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if that wicked slave says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ and begins to beat his fellow slaves,

and eats and drinks with the drunkards, the housemen and maids

and the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in two and assign him a place with the unfaithful.

and there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Context and Meaning in Matt 24:45-51:

Matthew places the parable of the faithful and wise slave in the midst of his extended eschatological discourse that runs from 24:4-25:46. It comes directly after Matthew’s version of Mark’s Olivet discourse (24:4-44), and is followed by three other parables (the parable of the bridesmaids, 25:1-13; the parable of the talents, 25:14-30; and the parable of the sheep and the goats, 25:31-46), all of which detail the final judgment that will be executed when the Son of Man returns. All four parables find their
introduction in 24:44, “Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour,” as evidenced by their common themes: the expectation of faithfulness during the absence of the Son of Man, the exhortation to constant vigilance, and the unexpected hour of his return. Hence, Matthew’s context makes two features of Matt 24:45-51 abundantly clear. The parable is about the return of Jesus, the Son of Man, and he comes to initiate the final judgment.

With this in mind, exegeting the parable in Matthew is fairly straightforward. It contrasts two opposite potential courses of action of a single slave. If he acts faithfully, the slave will fulfill his responsibilities in the absence of the master, specifically providing food for his fellow slaves. In reward, he will be entrusted with all the master’s possessions. However, noticing the delay of his master and thinking that he may never return, the slave may turn to wickedness. Taking advantage of the situation, this slave abandons his responsibilities, mistreats those who were placed in his charge, and invests his time in eating and drinking with unsavory people. The emphasis of the parable lies on the retribution doled out to this wicked slave when the master does indeed return. “He will cut him in two pieces (διχοτομήσει) and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” This implies a two-fold punishment, one temporal and one eternal.

6 Contra Hagner, (Matthew, 722-24) and Donahue (Parable, 98) who understand Matthew to mean two different slaves. The twin use of ἔκκλιτος speaks against this interpretation. See, Jeremias, Parable, 55; and Hultgren, Parables, 162-63.

It would seem that the parable is addressed to those who already claimed to be followers of Jesus, perhaps more specifically, those in leadership positions. A number of the parable’s features point in this direction. 1) The slave already is a slave of the master and has been placed by him in positions of responsibility. 2) he is in charge of providing food for his fellow servants within the master’s household. 3) Along with the rest of Matthew’s eschatological discourse, its audience within the narrative is clearly the disciples (24:3-4). Hence, within the context of Matthew, the parable serves as an exhortation to the disciples to persevere in their faithfulness to Jesus and the Christian community in spite of his delayed return. The Son of Man is coming. Though no one knows when he will arrive, when he does, he will first set his own house in order, separating the faithful from the wicked slaves.


The context of the parable in Luke is different from that in Matthew. The parable is not connected to his version of Mark’s Olivet discourse. Rather it is part of a large body of teaching directed to the disciples that extends from 12:22-53. The more immediate context is verses 12:35-48, all of which speak of the necessity of consistent faithfulness in light of the unpredictable timing of Jesus’ return. 12:35-38 employ the image of a master’s return from a wedding banquet in order to encourage vigilance on the part of his servants. 12:39-40 shift the metaphor, exhorting the disciples to be watchful, as for a thief coming in the night. Our parable follows these two and is linked directly to

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8 Given the allegorical nature of the parable, one may speculate as the nature of the “food” in question. Hultgren (Parables, 161) suggests that preaching and teaching are principally in view.
them through verse 12:41, “Peter said, ‘Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for everyone?’” It is unclear whether Peter’s question refers to one or both of these previous parables. Either way, Jesus’ third parable seems to be an answer to the question. Its reference to the household manager whom the master puts in charge of his slaves is a transparent reference to his disciples. The section concludes with one last metaphor (Luke 12:47-48) indicating that all of the master’s servants will be held accountable according to the measure that they have received.

The wording of Luke’s version differs in several places that produce a change of meaning. 1) Luke refers to the servant in question as a household manager (οἰκονόμος) rather than simply a slave (δοῦλος), thereby making more explicit the actual role to be performed by the servant. 2) In Luke the scenario is depicted as unfolding at some point in the future, as implied by the initial future tense (καταστήσεται), as opposed to Matthew’s aorist tense (κατέστησεν). 3) Luke uses a more technical term to describe the allotment of food (σιτωμέτριον). 4) In verse 45, Luke does not include Matthew’s “wicked” (κακός) in the opening description of that servant. The actions of the servant are left to speak for themselves. 5) In Luke the servant who proves unreliable is assigned a place with the unfaithful (ἀπίστων). In Matthew that servant is assigned a place with the hypocrites (ὑποκριτῶν). 6) The last significant difference involves the very end of the parable, where Matthew alone has the reference to “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Text, Context, and Meaning of Q 12:42-46:

Matthew and Luke’s versions of the parable display a large degree of verbal correspondence, rendering it quite clear that they both come from Q. Among their
differences, the following are most likely due to Matthean redaction: 1) κακός is a Matthean addition. He seems to have added it in 21:41, and also adds dichotomizing labels where none stood in his source (7:24, 26). In addition, Q lacks any other use of κακός, preferring to use πονηρός. 2) Matthew likely shortened Q’s τοῦς παίδεας καὶ τὰς παιδίσκας to τοῦς συνδούλους αὐτοῦ. Not only is the former phrase unparalleled in Luke/Acts, but Matthew reproduces the latter phrase a number of times (18:28, 29, 31, 33). 3) Matthew changed Q’s ἀπίστως ὁ υποχριτόν (Matt 13, Mark 1, Luke 3). It is likely that the repeated condemnation of the Pharisees and scribes as hypocrites in chapter 23 is being evoked here.

Luke’s redactions include the following: 1) Luke probably added the introductory phrase καὶ ἐπέλαβε ὁ κύριος. 2) Luke has changed Q’s “slave” (δοῦλος) to “household manager” (οἰκονόμος), a word unique to his gospel (Matt 0, Mark 0, Luke 8), probably in order to clarify the slave’s responsibilities. It is, nevertheless, an awkward fit in the story. As Davies and Allison note, “The word seems to make the latter promotion illogical.” Furthermore, while Matthew is consistent in his use of slave (4X), Luke shifts to slave in verses 46, 48, and 50. 3) Luke probably changed Q’s aorist tense to the

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future (καταστήσει) in order to point to the post-Easter period when Jesus was, in fact, taken away.¹⁵ 4) ἀληθῶς is Lukan redaction. On two occasions, he made the same change to Mark, Luke 9:27 // Mark 9:1 and Luke 21:3 // Mark 12:43.¹⁶ 5) The construction τε καί... καί is Lukan (Matt 0, Mark 0, Luke/Acts 5).¹⁷

Therefore, a reconstruction of the text of Q 12:42-46 reads as follows:

Τίς ἀρα ἐστίν ὁ πιστὸς δούλος καὶ φρόνιμος δὲν κατέστησεν ὁ κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς (οἰκετείας) a αὐτοῦ τοῦ (δούνατα) [αὐτοῖς] τὴν τροφὴν ἐν καιρῷ; μακάριος ὁ δούλος ἐκεῖνος ὁ ἐλθὼν ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ εὑρήσει (οὕτως ποιοῦντα) c ὑμεῖς λέγοι μιν ὅτι ἐπὶ πᾶσιν τοὺς ὑπάρχουσιν αὐτοῦ καταστήσει αὐτόν. ἐάν δὲ εἰπή ὁ κακὸς δούλος ἐκεῖνος ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἐρώτησε (μου ὁ κύριος) εἰρήσθηκα, καὶ ἀρέστη τῷ τετελείῳ τοὺς παιδίας καὶ τὰς παιδίσκας, (ἔσθη) δὲ καὶ (πίνῃ μετὰ τῶν μεθύσκων). ή ἤξει ὁ κύριος τοῦ δούλου ἐκείνου ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἢ οὖν προσδοκαὶ καὶ ἐν ὥρᾳ ἢ οὖ γίνοι μεθύσκει, καὶ διχοτομήσει αὐτόν καὶ τὸ μέρος αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀπίστων θήσει.

a. θεραπείας
b. διδόνατι
c. [τὸ] στιμόμετρον
d. ποιοῦντα οὕτως
e. ὁ κύριός μου
f. ἔσθειν
g. πίνειν καὶ μεθύσκεσθαι

Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom his master put in charge of his (household) to give [them] their (meals) on time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find doing so when he comes. Amen, I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if that slave says to himself, ‘My master is delayed [in coming],’ and begins to beat the housemen and maids, and (eats and drinks with drunkards), the master of the slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at and hour he does not know, and he will cut him in two and assign him a place with the unfaithful.

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¹⁶ Robinson, Hoffmann, Kloppenberg, Critical Edition, 370-71; Polag, Fragmenta Q, 64; Schulz, Q, 272; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3.388; Nolland, Luke, 2.703; Jeremias, Sprache des Lukasevangeliums, 221; Fitzmyer, Luke, 990;

¹⁷ Robinson, Hoffmann, Kloppenberg, Critical Edition, 372-73; Polag, Fragmenta Q, 64; Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3.389; Jeremias, Sprache des Lukasevangeliums, 221;

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Most Primitive Version of Q 12:42-46:

One can plausibly argue that a number of the features in Q 12:42-46 are the result of redactional alterations. Weiser and Beyer have argued that the original form lacked the twin descriptions of the slave as “faithful” and “wise” and that, in their absence, the Semitic syntax would allow for a simple conditional statement. However, the argument has little impact on the meaning of the parable.

Debates over two other potential redactional additions have much more at stake. First, it is possible that the slave’s deliberation over his master’s “delay” is an early allegorical addition to the parable, that reflects anxiety in the early church over the delay of the parousia. The logic of the story works just as well if the master is simply absent. The delay is unnecessary. However, without a source to suggest that this element was a later addition, the argument remains no more than conjecture.

Second, it has been suggested that “assign him a place with the unfaithful” might have been added at a later point in order to spell out the parable’s eschatological implications. This possibility is raised on the grounds that the parable contains two incongruous punishments. Nolland remarks that the second punishment “moves right outside the story logic of the parable,” and that, “This final clause is likely to have been added at a time in the transmission history when Jesus’ role in assigning eschatological

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18 Weiser, Knechtgleichnisse, 181-83; Beyer, Semitische Syntax, 287-93.

19 Contra Weiser (Knechtgleichnisse, 181-83) who argues that the delay must have been part of the original parable.

destinies was self-evidently the thrust of the story.”21 Once again, however, without additional evidence, it is difficult to render a solid verdict one way or the other. The two punishments may very well have been intended to communicate the totality of the judgment, both temporal and eschatological. It is worth noting that, if the second punishment were a redactional addition, it would not necessarily alter the original meaning of the parable. We are dealing with an explicitly allegorical parable. The master represents no ordinary master, but rather Jesus returning in judgment. Consequently, it would be natural to assume that the horrific temporal punishment doled out by the master is representative of an eschatological punishment that lies in store for the slave who proves himself unfaithful to God. If so, the redactor’s addition of “assign him a place with the unfaithful” simply represents a move toward making explicit what is only implicit in the allegory of the parable.

What was the original meaning of the parable? It is clearly allegorical, but to whom do the master and the slaves refer in the most primitive version of the parable. We have seen that the answer is quite clear in Matthew and Luke, where the parable clearly depicts Jesus’ parousia.22 The Master is Jesus. The servants are his disciples. When he leaves they will be entrusted with the leadership of the church. When he returns in his glory they will receive recompense according to their faithfulness or lack thereof. But, if this parable did originate with the historical Jesus, is this what he meant by it? For Jesus’ Jewish contemporaries this would have been a strange interpretation indeed. It was God,

21 Ibid, 704. See also Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3.389-390.

22 The arrival of the master at an “unexpected day and an unknown hour” mirrors the coming of the Son of Man in Matt 24:36; 25:13; Luke 17:24, 26, 30. In addition, the “delay” of the master would naturally have been interpreted in light of the parousia and the context of Matthew and Luke both point to this interpretation.
not Jesus, whom they would associate with the “Lord” (Ὁ κύριος). Jesus, after all, was very much present. It was God’s dynamic return as master of the house of Israel that was anticipated. Likewise, it would have been natural to associate the slave put in charge of the household with Israel’s spiritual leaders, those who were entrusted with the care of God’s people. The contrast, then, focuses on two types of leaders. Jesus would have represented the faithful and wise slave and Israel’s formal leaders would have represented the faithless slave. Hence, the parable would have functioned as a polemic against Israel’s leaders and an exhortation to Jesus’ disciples. Precedence for interpreting the departed master as God can be found within the Jesus tradition itself in the parable of the wicked husbandmen (Mark 12:1-12 // Matt 21:33-46 // Luke 20:9-19). There is also ample evidence from rabbinic literature that this scenario was commonly used. *Abot R. Nat.* 14:6; *Mek. Bachodesh* 5:81-92; and *Cant. Rab.* 7:14:1 all speak metaphorically of God as a man who has gone away, entrusting those who remain with appropriate duties.

**Arguments for Authenticity:**

Though the parable proper does not benefit from multiple attestation, there is significant correspondence between this parable and several parables which are found in other sources. In particular, four additional parables bear a striking resemblance to Q 12:42-46: the watchful slaves, Mark 13:34-37; the parable of the talents, M 25:14-30; the

23 Throughout the Old Testament Israel’s leaders were referred to as God’s servants. See Dodd, *Parables*, 126-27.


parable of the pounds, L 19:12-27; and the wicked tenants, Mark 12:1-2 // Matt 21:33-46 //Luke 20:9-19. Hence, including Q 12:42-46, there is one parable from Q, two from Mark, one from M, and one from L—five parables spread across four different sources. These five parables have four features in common. 1. A master is absent. 2. He leaves those under him in charge of his property. 3. He returns in person to assign reward or punishment. 4. Each parable stresses the importance of faithfulness in the absence of the master.

In addition, four pieces of evidence converge to suggest that God was originally intended to be identified as the master in each of these parables. 1) One of these parables, the wicked tenants Mark 12:1-2 // Matt 21:33-46 //Luke 20:9-19, unambiguously represents God as the master in spite of the early church’s preference for understanding the absent master as Jesus. 26 2) As we have seen, this would have been the natural interpretation of such a scenario by second temple Jews. 3) None of the five parables, when removed from their present contexts suggest that the absent master be regarded as Jesus. 27 Even Q 12:42-46’s reference to the master’s “delay” makes perfectly good sense in the context of second temple Judaism as a reference to the delay of God’s coming judgment. 28 4) One of the few things that is almost universally agreed about the teaching of the historical Jesus was that he spoke of the kingdom of God. 29 It was God’s kingdom,

26 This preference can be seen first and foremost in the context within which the parables are placed by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

27 See especially Jeremias, Parables, 48-66.

28 See 1QpHab 7:9-14.

29 Meier, Marginal Jew, 2.272-73 n. 2-3.
not Jesus’. In the same vein, it stands to reason that Jesus would have spoken of God rather than himself as Lord and master of the house.

Also worth noting is the very tangible reward promised to the faithful slaves, “Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions” Q 12:44. This particular promise is paralleled in the rewards issued in the parables of the talents and pounds, both of which fit the pattern established above. “Well done good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master” (Matt 25:21, 23). “Well done, good slave! Because you have been trustworthy in a very small thing, take charge of ten cities” (Luke 19:17).

The existence of such commonalities between five parables found in disparate sources suggests that this general paradigm may have been employed on a number of occasions by the historical Jesus in order to contrast his own ministry with that of Israel’s leaders. God’s faithful servants would be rewarded; his unfaithful servants would be punished.

If we are correct that each of these parables originally referred to God as the absent master, then Q 12:42-46 also benefits from the criterion of dissimilarity. In light of their current contexts in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, it is clear that four of the five parables were reinterpreted to fit the new *Sitz im Leben* of the early church. They were transformed from parables about God into parables about Jesus. This adaptation was a natural development in light of Jesus’ death and resurrection and in anticipation of his second coming, but it significantly altered the parables’ original meanings in the teaching

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30 Hultgren, *Parables*, 162-68; 262-68; 272-80; 282-90. The fifth resisted such reinterpretation because it referred to the master’s “son.”
of the historical Jesus. They were changed in order to line up with the new circumstances confronting the early church.

Arguments Against Authenticity:

The principle argument against the authenticity of Q 12:42-46 is that it was created by the early church in order to address the delay of the parousia. There is evidence that the early church expected the imminent arrival of the kingdom in all its fullness and that they struggled to understand the perceived delay of Jesus’ glorious arrival (Mark 9:1; 13:30, 33-37; Q 12:39-40; M 10:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 2 Peter 3:3-10). As it stands in Matthew and Luke, Q 12:42-46 certainly provides the appropriate incentive to remain faithful in the midst of such circumstances. However, we have seen that this parable and others like it were probably only later adapted in order to fit the new Sitz im Leben of the early church.

Conclusions and Implications:

The multiple independent attestation of the general form and meaning of Q 12:42-46 with four other parables found in a total of four different sources along with their shared dissimilarity suggest that the substance of Q 12:42-46 may be traced back to the historical Jesus. What remains unclear is whether Q 12:42-46 itself is an authentic

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31 Funk, Five Gospels, 253, 341; Lambrecht, Out of the Treasure, 194; Erich Grässer, Das Problem des Parusieverzögerung in den synoptichen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte (2nd ed. BZNW 22; Berlin: Verlag Alfred Töpelmann, 1960), 90-95; Dewey, “Prophetic Pronouncement,” 99-108; Shulz, Q, 268-77;

parable. Hence we will limit our observations to those features that this constellation of parables share in common.

They each indicate that the final judgment will be enacted by God himself, when he returns to set his household in order. They each stress faithfulness to one’s God-given responsibilities as the criterion of judgment. When God does return, the faithful will be rewarded and the unfaithful will be punished.
Q 13: 29,28

“MANY WILL COME FROM EAST AND WEST…”


Matthew 8:11-12

λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ

καὶ ἧξουσιν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν καὶ ἀνακληθῆσον

καὶ ἄνακληθήσονται

μετὰ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακὼβ

ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ

τῶν οὐρανῶν,

οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας

ἐκβληθήσονται

εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον

ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμός

καὶ ὁ βρυγμός τῶν ὀδόντων.

Luke 13:29,28

καὶ ἧξουσιν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν

καὶ ἀπὸ βορρᾶ καὶ νότου

καὶ ἀνακληθήσονται

ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ

tοῦ θεοῦ.

ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμός

καὶ ὁ βρυγμός τῶν ὀδόντων,

ὅταν ὄψησθε Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακὼβ καὶ πάντας τοὺς προφήτας

ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ,

ὑμᾶς δὲ ἐκβαλλομένους ἐξα.”

Matthew 8:11-12

I say to you, many

Luke 13:29, 28

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And from east and west will come they will come from east and west and north and south and sit at table and sit at table and in the kingdom in the kingdom of heaven, in the kingdom of God.

but the sons of the kingdom will be cast into the outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves cast out.

Context and Meaning in Matthew 8:11-12:

The immediate context of Matthew 8:11-12 is quite important for its correct interpretation. Verses 11-12 occupy a prominent position in the healing of the centurion’s servant, which runs from 8:5-13. The passage begins with the request of a centurion for the healing of his servant. He refuses Jesus’ offer to come to his residence, instead confessing that Jesus is capable of healing his servant with a mere word. Jesus is most impressed by the man’s faith and he declares, “Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith” (Matt 8:10). This proclamation is followed immediately by our verses, 11-12. The pericope ends by returning the focus to the centurion, to whom Jesus says, “Go; let it be done for you according to your faith” (Matt 8:13).

What then, do verses 11-12 mean in Matthew in light of this context? Verse 11 depicts the kingdom of heaven and its rewards in terms of an eschatological banquet. This was a common Jewish image of end-time renewal and restoration, showing up in a
variety of Old Testament and second temple sources. The eschatological nature of this banquet is apparent from the inclusion of Israel’s great patriarchs of old, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They symbolize all those who remained faithful to God and have consequently been resurrected to new life. But, who are the “many” coming from east and west to partake in the banquet? The context in Matthew makes it clear that they are Gentiles. In Matthew, the saying takes as its point of departure Jesus’ proclamation that he has not found faith like the centurion’s in Israel. This contrast is maintained in the juxtaposition of the “many” who are coming from east and west with the “sons of the kingdom” (οἱ δὲ νιῶτι τής βασιλείας). Verse 13 then returns to the faith of the centurion. Given all of these factors, we must assume that Matthew understands the “many” to be Gentiles who demonstrate faith in Jesus. Rather than projecting eschatological reward and vindication for his Jewish contemporaries, Jesus warns them that they could see their places at the heavenly banquet occupied by Gentiles, with themselves thrown out of the kingdom. Thus, the saying is first and foremost a polemical indictment against the “sons of the kingdom.” It is intended to shock and shame those who feel secure in their own status as insiders. But, who exactly is included in the phrase “the sons of the kingdom?” Given the larger context of Matthew’s gospel it would be ridiculous to assume that the entire

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1 Isa 25:6-7; 49:10-13; Ezek 39:17-20; 1 En. 62:14; 4 Ezra 9:19; 2 Bar. 29:4; 2 En. 42:5; T. Lev. 18:111QSa II.17-22

2 The implication is spelled out in passages like T. Jud. 25:1, “And after this Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be resurrected to life and I and my brothers will be chiefs....”

3 Allison, whose work on this passage from the standpoint of Q and the historical Jesus is invaluable, stretches too far in claiming that the saying as it stands in its Matthean context refers to Diaspora Jews rather than Gentiles. Davies and Allison, Matthew, 27-28; Allison, Jesus Tradition, 189-91.

4 Beasley-Murray, Kingdom, 173.
Jewish nation is intended. What is clear, however, is that some who think of themselves as consummate insiders—sons of the kingdom—will find themselves cast out of the kingdom. What distinguishes true sons of the kingdom from pretenders? The kingdom’s true sons will not rest secure in Jewish covenantal membership. They will demonstrate faith in Jesus, just as the centurion did.

Two Old Testament texts in particular shed light on the interpretation of Matt 8:11-12: Ps 107:1-9 and Isa 25:6-7. (Emphasis has been added to highlight the parallels)

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, those he redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to an inhabited town; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress; he led them by a straight way, until they reached an inhabited town. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind. For he satisfies the thirsty, and the hungry he fills with good things (Ps 107:1-9).

Psalm 107, though not specifically eschatological, parallels Matt 8:11 in its emphasis on God satisfying the needs of the hungry and thirsty, as well as in its depiction of an ingathering from the lands, “from the east and from the west, from the north and from the sea” (Ps 107:3). Matthew refers to “many who will come from east and west” (ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν θέασθαι). Hence, our verse might well be alluding to the Psalm.

Isa 25:6-7’s depiction of an eschatological banquet, however, provides an even more useful parallel given the context of 8:11 in Matthew. In the MT it reads:

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples (γενεαῖς) a feast of rich food, a feast of well aged wines, of rich food filled with

5 See the arguments of Davies and Allison, Matthew 2.31.
marrow, of well aged wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples (םלוע דמעות), the sheet that is spread over all nations (םלוע דў-designed); he will swallow up death forever (Isa 25:6-7).

In a loose translation, the LXX preserves the same emphasis on the universal scope of the eschatological meal:

For the Lord of hosts will make a feast for all the nations (πάση τῶν ἑθνῶν): on this mount they will drink gladness, they will drink wine. They shall anoint themselves with ointment on this mountain. Impart all these things to the nations (τῶν ἑθνῶν); for this is God’s counsel upon all the nations (πάντων τῶν ἑθνῶν).

The Lord will spread a banquet before all peoples in the new age when death is swallowed up. Three times this is emphasized in the two verses of both the MT and the LXX. The similarities with Matt 8:11 are unmistakable. Unlike Psalm 107, Isa 25:6-7 depicts a full-blown feast presided over by God. Furthermore, this feast is clearly eschatological, tied to God’s victory over death. Most importantly, like Matt 8:11, the feast specifically points to the inclusion of all peoples—even “all the nations” (םלוע דў-designed). However, as alluded to in Matthew, this passage receives a startling twist. Even though the benefits of God’s eschatological triumph extend to all nations, in the supreme irony, many of his own people will find themselves “cast into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Zeller is right to emphasize that this is the central point of the saying. The antithetical parallelism naturally emphasizes the startling final phrase.

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6 Zeller, “Das Logion,” 87-88; see also Reiser, Jesus, 236 and Meier, Marginal Jew, 2.314.
A correct interpretation of Luke 13:28-29 must also account for the sayings immediate context. The verses appear in a sequence that runs from 13:22-30. Verse 22 opens a new section with a description of Jesus teaching on his way to Jerusalem. In verse 23 he is asked, “Lord, will only a few be saved?” Verses 24-30 consist of a sustained response to this question, blending together a number of different sayings which share similar imagery and content. In verse 24, Jesus exhorts his audience to “enter through the narrow door,” no easy feat given that the “many will try to enter and not be able.” This initial image is expanded into a parable in verses 25-27. When the owner of the house shuts the door it will be too late for those on the outside. Entry to the kingdom will be barred—this in spite of the pleading from those without. “We ate and drank with you and you taught in our streets” (Luke 13:26). The appeal to familiarity and fellowship will not suffice. The master knows those who truly belong to him. Our verses, 28-29 once again shift the imagery slightly, but they continue to elucidate the subject at hand. Verse 28 picks up at the end of the parable, describing the condition of those who find themselves “thrown out” of the “kingdom of God” after seeing “Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets.” Verse 29 then depicts the gathering of people from east, west, north and south at the eschatological banquet. Finally, verse 30 brings the section to a close with the proverb, “Some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

The context renders a rather different meaning to the verses than that found in Matthew 8. There is no hint that Jews and Gentiles are being contrasted with one another. There is no centurion, no demonstration of faith, no “sons of the kingdom.” While the
allusion to Psalm 107 is strengthened, the link with Isa 25 diminishes. Instead, the Lukan context invests the saying with twin emphases. On the one hand, there is an exhortation to faithful discipleship. It is not enough to have been familiar with Jesus. Inclusion in the kingdom demands obedience and commitment. On the other hand, the discourse underscores the element of surprise at who winds up in the kingdom of God, dining at table with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets. Many of those who find themselves on the wrong side of the door in 25-27 are frankly surprised. There is weeping and gnashing of teeth when those who expected to be at the banquet are “cast out” of the kingdom in 28. This choice of verb emphasizes that these outsiders were once insiders. Lastly, the proverb sums up the surprising dynamic of kingdom inclusion and exclusion. It would appear that banquet invitations will go out to many of the “last” while many of the “first” will be left off the invitation list altogether.

Text, Context and Meaning in Q 13:28-29:

The first issue that must be resolved in order to determine the text of Q 13:28-29 is whether Matthew or Luke has more faithfully reproduced the original order of the verses. As they stand in their respective contexts the content of Matt 8:11 roughly matches Luke 13:29, while Matt 8:12 roughly matches Luke 13:28. Three arguments suggest the originality of the Matthean order.  

1) Luke 13:22-30 seems to have stitched together several independent sayings into a single unit. These sayings were drawn

7 ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν καὶ ἀπὸ βορρᾶ καὶ νότου (Luke 13:29) // ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν καὶ βορρᾶ καὶ θαλάσσης--LXX (Ps 107:3)

8 Those who think Matthew’s order reproduces Q’s include: Robinson, Hoffmann, Kloppenborg, Critical Edition, 414-17; Schulz, Q, 323; Polag, Fragmenta, 68; Kloppenborg, Formation, 225; Dupont, “Beaucoup viendront,” 156; Zeller, “Das Logion,” 223.
together because they all spoke to the question at hand, “Will only a few be saved?” (Luke 13:23). One of the clearest signs that verses 25-27 and 28-29 were originally independent is the manner in which they shift imagery. Verse 25 depicts a group of people standing outside the door, trying to gain admittance, “you will begin to stand outside the door and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open for us.’” In verse 28, however, those who suffer judgment will “see” (ὁρήσετε) Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the prophets in the kingdom of God before they are “cast out” (ἐκβαλλόμενοι). Hence, the imagery shifts from keeping out those who desire entry to casting out those who are already within. In the case of Luke 13:28-29, therefore, it would appear that Luke reversed the original order of the two verses so that the judgment of verse 29 might build upon the end of the parable in 25-27 which speaks of the rejection of the wicked. 2) If the Lukan order were original, then the saying would have begun with “in that place” (ἐκεῖ). Needless to say, this makes for a rather awkward introduction to an independent saying. It presumes a context that doesn’t exist. 3) The Matthean order makes more sense as an independent saying. It introduces a typical eschatological scenario in verse 11. Verse 12 then introduces a remarkable contrast. The Lukan version, on the other hand, spends all of its ammunition in verse 28, including both points of the contrast in addition to the climax of the saying. This effectively renders verse 29 superfluous.

When it comes to reconstructing the original wording, two Matthean redactions can be determined with some certainty. 1) Matthew commonly alters “kingdom of God”

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9 Schlosser (Regne, 2.613, 650 n. 71) argues that ἐκεῖ should be translated “then.” There is, however, no basis in New Testament Greek for such a reading.
into “kingdom of heaven.”  

Neither Mark nor Luke ever follows suit. 2) εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἔξωτερον is most likely a Matthean addition (Matt 3, Mark 0, Luke 0).  

In the other two cases, Matt 22:13 and 25:30, it is also missing from the Lukan parallels.

Four Lukan redactions can also be safely eliminated. Two of these were necessitated by switching the order of the two parts of the original saying, ὅταν ὄψησθε and the second reference to the kingdom (ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ) were both added in order to make the new configuration comprehensible. In addition, καὶ πάντας τοὺς προφήτας appears to be a Lukan addition intended to round out the faithful gathered at table. This is necessary because those coming from east, west, north and south have not yet been introduced. The phrase πάντας τοὺς προφήτας is also found a number of places in Luke-Acts (Luke 11:50; 24:27; Acts 3:18, 24; 10:43) compared to only one occurrence in Matthew or Mark (Matt 11:13).

One potentially important decision involves Matthew’s rendering of “sons of the kingdom” (οἱ νιῷ τῆς βασιλείας), which in Luke is simply “you” (ὑμᾶς). The

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majority of scholars have argued that the Lukan reading is original.\textsuperscript{14} The phrase “sons of the kingdom” is passed off as Matthean redaction on two grounds. 1) Matthew alone has the phrase in 13:38 in a section that many consider a Matthean creation. 2) Matthew displays a proclivity for multiplying phrases beginning with “son of” (23:15; 17:25-26).\textsuperscript{15} However, there are good reasons to be skeptical about such a judgment.\textsuperscript{16} In Matt 13:38 the phrase explicitly refers to those followers of Jesus who will fare well at the final judgment. This incongruity makes it quite possible that the phrase was an original part of the polemic.\textsuperscript{17} Moreover, since the saying in question is emphasizing exactly who will be in and out of the kingdom of God, one would naturally expect a phrase like “sons of the kingdom” to be reserved for Jesus’ followers.\textsuperscript{18} The faulty exegesis of Fitzmyer serves to highlight this impulse. “The Matthean counterpart of vv. 28-29 envisages evil Christian disciples.”\textsuperscript{19} This is clearly not Matthew’s primary intent.\textsuperscript{20} The Matthean context makes it absolutely clear that he envisages a contrast between Israelites and Gentiles. Hence, in


\textsuperscript{16} This reticence is displayed a number of scholars, including: Zeller, “Das Logion” 224; Dupont, “Beaucoup viendront,” 157; Davies and Allison, \textit{Matthew}, 2.30-31; Reiser, \textit{Jesus}, 233, Kloppenborg, \textit{Formation}, 227 n. 227.

\textsuperscript{17} See Kloppenborg, \textit{Formation}, 227 n. 227.

\textsuperscript{18} We remain skeptical of Meier’s (\textit{Marginal Jew}, 2.373 n. 91) claim that this difference is indicative of “Matthew’s redactional theology.”

\textsuperscript{19} Fitzmyer, \textit{Luke}, 2.1023.

\textsuperscript{20} One could argue that Matthew intended the saying to function \textit{secondarily} as a warning to the “true” sons of the kingdom. (See Günther Bornkamm, \textit{Enderwartung und Kirche im Mattäusevangelium}, (WMANT 1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1968) 13-47.) The urge to apply this secondary level of meaning, however, simply reinforces that the phrase most naturally alludes to followers of Jesus.
our judgment, this difference, along with others that are not easily accounted for should be left undecided. The reconstructed text of Q, then, reads as follows:

[λέγω δὲ ύμών ὅτι] [πολλοὶ] (ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἥξουσιν) [καὶ ἀπὸ βορρᾶ καὶ νότου] καὶ ἀνακληθήσονται μετὰ Ἁβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ. (οἱ δὲ νοῦ τῆς βασιλείας ἡ ἐκβληθήσονται ἐξῶ ἐκεῖ ἑσται ο ἱλασθήμας καὶ ο ἰδρυμα τῶν ὀδόντων.

a. ἥξουσιν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν
b. ύμᾶς δὲ

[I say to you], [many] will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but (the sons of the kingdom) will be thrown out; where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

a. and from north and south
b. you

Reconstructing of the original context of Q 13:28-29 lies beyond our grasp. We have already seen that Luke 13:28-29 was inserted at some point into the larger unit of Luke 13:22-30. The presence of a simpler, more direct form in Matthew makes it extremely doubtful that this redaction was the work of Q. Rather, Luke seems to have manipulated the saying in order to better fit its new context. On the other hand, it is equally likely that Matthew inserted the logion into the story of the healing of the centurion’s son in Matt 8:5-13. If this had been the original Q context, it is difficult to imagine why Luke would not have reproduced it. After all, he does include Q’s story of the centurion’s son elsewhere in his gospel and the contrast between Israel and the Gentiles fits his redactional program far better than Matthew’s. Hence, it would seem that the current contexts of Q 13:28-29 in both Matthew and Luke are the products of

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22 See, for example the contrast spelled out between Gentile and Jew in Luke 4:25-27.
their own redaction, leaving us no access to the original context in Q. There is, consequently, no way to determine exactly what nuances the saying carried in Q.

**Most Primitive Version of the Saying:**

There is every indication that the most primitive form of Q 13:28-29 originally circulated as an independent logion. This is revealed by the ease with which Matthew and Luke have inserted Q 13:28-29 into very different contexts, and the fact that the saying is perfectly comprehensible on its own. However, without another independent attestation, we have no access to a more primitive version of Q 13:28-29.

But what was the saying’s original meaning? At the heart of the saying is a contrast between those who will come from afar to recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and those who will be cast out of the kingdom. Who are these eschatological pilgrims? Are they Gentiles or Diaspora Jews? On the one hand, there is certainly a stream of tradition that depicts Gentiles coming to Israel in the last days (Isa 2:1-4; 25:6-8; 51:4-6; 59:19; Mic 4:1-4; Zech 14:16; Mal 1:11; Tob 13:11; 14:6). Matthew picked up on this tradition in his own application of Q 13:28-29. This has long been the

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23 For a full discussion of attempts to isolate the context of the logion in Q see Eugene Boring, “A Proposed Reconstruction of Q 13:28-29,” in *Society of Biblical Literature 1989 Seminar Papers* (ed. D. J. Hull; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 1-23. Note especially the improbability of the various options listed on 8-9, which oddly does not include the possibility that neither Matthew nor Luke retains the saying’s original context of Q.

24 See Volz, *Eschatologie*, 358; Zeller, “Das Logion,” 225-37. It should be noted, however, that this tradition would not simply have been assumed by Jesus’ Jewish listeners. As Allison (*Jesus Tradition*, 184) notes, “Jesus could not even have taken for granted that his audience would believe in the eschatological salvation of the nations. In Ezekiel, Ecclesiasticus 36, the Qumran War Scroll, 1QSa, Jubilees 20, 4 Ezra 13, and Mek. on Exod 21:30 (R. Ishmael) the nations are destroyed or lost (cf. Zeph 3:8). In 1 Enoch 90:30 only some repent. There was no one Jewish opinion on the ultimate fate of non-Jews.” See also Sanders, *Jesus*, 213-14.
dominant view of scholarship as well. However, there is no evidence in the saying itself that Gentiles are explicitly in view. A more reasonable conclusion would point to the expectation of the return of Diaspora Jews. This expectation was ubiquitous in the literature of the Old Testament and second temple Judaism (Isa 43:5; 49:5-6; 22-26; 56:8; 60:4, 9; 66:20; Jer 13:18; 31:10; Ezek 34:12-16; 36:24-28; 37:21-23; 39:27; Zeph 3:20; Zech 8:7-8; Tob. 13:5; 14:5-6; Sir. 36:11-15; 48:10; Bar. 4:37; 5:5; 2 Macc. 1:27, 29; 1 En. 57:1; 90:33; Jub. 1:15-18; Pss. Sol. 11:1-9; 17:31, 44; 11Q19 59.9-13). More significantly, it was often expressed in language allusive of Q 13:28-29. For example, descriptions of the eschatological ingathering of Diaspora Jews specifically using the language “from east and west (and north and south)” can be found in Isa 43:5; Zech 8:7; Bar 4:37; 5:5; Ps. Sol. 11:2; 1 En 57:1. There is no corresponding use of this language in a description of Gentile pilgrimage. It is not outside the realm of possibility that the eschatological ingathering of the lost tribes might include a pilgrimage of Gentiles, but we would be misguided to see this as the primary thrust of the allusion.

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25 Jeremias, Promise, 55-63; Meier, Marginal Jew, 2.315; Reiser, Jesus, 233; Hagner, Matthew, 2.205-6; Luz, Matthew, 2.13-16; Becker, Jesus, 67-68; Gnilka, Jesus, 195;


28 Cf. Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.27. Allison (Jesus Tradition, 180) makes the case that in the Old testament, east and west referred to the two centers of Diaspora Judaism: Assyria and Egypt respectively. See Isa 27:12-13; Hos 11:11; Zech 10:10.

29 As Wright (Jesus, 308) correctly notes, “What happens to the Gentiles is conditional upon, and conditioned by, what happens to Israel.” Cf. Wright, New Testament, 262-8.
If, then, the many who are coming are principally the Diaspora Jews, against whom is the condemnation directed—those referred to either directly as “you,” or described in the third person as “sons of the kingdom?” Clearly the saying does not simply contrast the eschatological fate of Diaspora Jews and Palestinian Jews. Rather, the Jews of the Diaspora are used as a foil for a certain segment of Palestinian Jews: those in Israel who have encountered Jesus’ ministry firsthand and yet fail to believe. Davies and Allison describe the contrast as follows, “The point of 8.11f. would then lie not in the salvation of the Gentiles as opposed to the damnation of all Jews but in the salvation of the seemingly unfortunate as opposed to the ‘sons of the kingdom’, the wise and privileged who have lived in Eretz Israel and beheld the Messiah, and yet do not believe.” Such a contrast would not be without parallel in the Old Testament. Jer 24:1-10; 29:10-32 and Ezekiel 11 are all extended accounts that negatively contrast Israel’s inhabitants with her exiles. They each forecast woe for those who remained in the land, but blessing for those exiles who will return. For example, Jer 24:2-10 read:

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30 Meier (Marginal Jew, 2.315) rules out a reference to Diaspora Jews in the following manner, “the ‘many’ might be taken as referring not to Gentiles but to Diaspora Jews as opposed to Palestinian Jews (this is what the “you” of the contrast would then seem to mean). While this is not impossible, it results in a curious contrast. For no clear reason, the Diaspora Jews are contrasted most favorably with the Palestinian Jews. The latter group will be cast out of the kingdom—with the contrast apparently making no distinction between those Palestinian Jews who did not accept Jesus and those who did.” This argument has a number of problems. 1) It assumes that the words of judgment are directed toward all Palestinian Jews. This is no more necessary than the correlation (which Meier strenuously rejects) that the saying contrasts Gentiles with all the Jews. Rather, the “you” or “sons of the kingdom” refer to those who have consciously rejected Jesus, as Meier (Marginal Jew, 316) himself concludes, “The ‘you’ must be those among his contemporaries in Israel who made a point of rejecting his mission.” We would argue that this contrast works equally well using Diaspora Jews who have not had the privilege of witnessing Jesus’ ministry first hand as a foil.

31 Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.28.

One basket had very good figs, like first-ripe figs, but the other basket had very bad figs, so bad that they could not be eaten. Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles from Judah, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans. I will set my eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up, and not tear them down; I will plant them, and not pluck them up. I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart. But thus says the Lord: Like the bad figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten, so will I treat King Zedekiah of Judah, his officials, the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who live in the land of Egypt. I will make them a horror, an evil thing, to all the kingdoms of the earth—a disgrace, a byword, a taunt, and a curse in all the places where I shall drive them. And I will send sword, famine, and pestilence upon them, until they are utterly destroyed from the land that I gave to them and their ancestors.

This interpretation also accords well with numerous features of the Jesus tradition. There are predictions of judgment on those who refused to respond to him (Q 11:31-32 and Q 12:8-9). The Jesus tradition is replete with condemnations of Israel’s spiritual leaders. It corresponds well with the geographic limitations of Jesus’ own ministry (Mark 7:24-30 pars.; Matt 10:5-6, 23). Lastly, it resonates with other passages in the New Testament that continue to look forward to the restoration of Israel. For example, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). “Truly, I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt 19:28).

It should be noted that the evidence points to the validity of this interpretation whether the most primitive form used the phrase “sons of the kingdom” or simply “you.”

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33 Both of which, it should be noted, we have previously demonstrated to be authentic.

However, if Jesus did refer to his enemies as “sons of the kingdom,” it would have carried a particular sting in light of the contrast with Diaspora Jews.

Arguments for Authenticity:

Q 13:28-29 does not benefit from the criterion of multiple independent attestation. However, the image of an eschatological banquet is widely attested throughout the Jesus tradition, with six additional occurrences spread over four independent sources.\(^3^5\)

The criteria of dissimilarity points to two indicators of dissimilarity with the early church.\(^3^6\) First, we have seen that it ran against the grain of the early church to use a phrase like “sons of the kingdom” in reference to Jews who rejected Jesus’ call. As Matt 13:38 confirms, those who enter the kingdom and are rightly to be considered “sons of the kingdom” are followers of Jesus. We think it unlikely that a member of the early church would have created a saying in which Jesus addressed his enemies in such a fashion—even ironically. That being said, the fact that it is clearly used ironically within


\(^3^6\) Meier (Marginal Jew 2.315) has suggested another argument from dissimilarity. “Indeed, if the ‘many’ are Gentiles, this depiction of their coming to salvation only at the final banquet in the kingdom does not fit the situation of the early church, which conducted a lively mission to the Gentiles in the decades after Jesus’ crucifixion. On the other hand, a prophecy that the Gentiles would come to salvation only at the final banquet (and hence not within ordinary human history) would fit the situation of the historical Jesus, who did not see view either himself or his disciples as charged with the task of undertaking a mission to the Gentiles while this present world ran its course” (emphasis original). An abbreviated form of this argument can also be found in Theissen and Merz, Historical Jesus, 254. There are however two problems with this argument which make it untenable. First, as we have argued, the most primitive form of the passage did not contrast Jews and Gentiles. Second, there is nothing in the saying to suggest that those coming from east and west receive salvation only when they come to the final banquet. In fact, it would be more natural to imagine that those making the eschatological pilgrimage to Zion are the saved. Furthermore, the presence of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob implies that this banquet involves the arrival of the faithful not only from all places, but from all times. The contrast between “coming” and “being cast out” in Q 13:28-29, therefore, refers to the divine disclosure of who is inside and who is outside of the eschatological kingdom—a disclosure which will be full of surprises!
the saying bars us from making a further argument for its embarrassment to the early church. Given the pejorative context of the saying, we must assume that they naturally interpreted the phrase accordingly. In addition, it is not certain that the phrase was even in the most primitive version of the saying. Hence, the phrase “sons of the kingdom” only marginally improves the case for Q 13:28-29’s potential authenticity.

It is also worth noting that the original saying seems to have been modified through its context in the Gospel of Matthew. A contrast between diaspora Jews and obstinant Palestinian Jews has been changed into a contrast between Gentiles and Jews. This new interpretation clearly suits the circumstances of the early church and its mission to the gentiles. That such alterations were deemed advantageous points out the basic dissimilarity of the original saying to the precise situation of the early church.

The criterion of coherence adds a significant twist to the argument for authenticity. One common theme of Jesus’ sayings is that of eschatological reversal. The day of judgment will be a day of remarkable surprises. Many of those who feel most confident in their privilege, power, and status will find that they have put stock in the wrong things. Though they had access to Jesus and opportunity to respond to his ministry, they will find themselves on the outside of the kingdom of God at the final judgment, while their “lesser” brethren enter. Following are three texts displaying eschatological reversal that are very widely considered authentic—even by those who widely dismiss an eschatological approach to the historical Jesus.  

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what your ancestors did to the prophets. 

Q 6:20-23; (Matt 5:3-12) // Gos. Thom. 54, 58, 68, 69 // I Peter 3:14; 4:14. 38

Then Jesus said to him, “Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for everything is ready now.’ But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my regrets.’ Another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my regrets.’ Another said, ‘I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come.’ So the slave returned and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’ And the slave said, ‘Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.’ Then the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner.’

Q 14:16-24; (Matt 22:1-14) // Gos. Thom. 64. 39

But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

Mark 10:31; (Matt 19:10) // Q 13:30; (Matt 20:16) // Gos. Thom. 4. 40

The theme of eschatological reversal lies at the very heart of Q 13:28-29. It too contrasts those who should be the consummate insiders, Jews living in the land of Israel, worshipping at the temple, listening to Jesus’ teaching, witnessing his ministry, with those of lesser privilege, Diaspora Jews struggling to maintain their religious identity in a hostile environment, those who have neither heard of nor seen their Messiah. As such, it

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38 Meier, Marginal Jew, 2.325-33; Dunn, Jesus, 412-14; Funk (Five Gospels, 289) prints Luke 6:20-21 in red and 6:22-23 in grey.


40 The saying enjoys a rare triple independent attestation. Crossan, In Fragments, 42-47; Funk (Five Gospels, 224) prints Matt 20:16 in pink.
stands in perfect harmony with a subject that seems to have resounded throughout Jesus’ ministry: the first will be last and the last will be first.

Finally, sayings like Q 13:28-29 are rhetorically effective precisely because they target those in Israel who think that they have cause for confidence at the final judgment. In pointedly questioning the eschatological destiny of such people, Jesus was surely provoking people of some influence. The criterion of execution reminds us that sayings such as Q 13:28-29 are capable of arousing the ire of important people—people who could have facilitated Jesus’ execution. Hence, such attacks cohere well with the ultimate manner of his death.

Arguments Against Authenticity:

Several scholars have argued that Q 13:28-29 was created by the early church. Käsemann, Zeller, Schulz, and Chilton have all argued that the saying was specifically the work of a Christian prophet. Their reasoning, however, adds nothing to the problematic series of arguments and presuppositions we have encountered previously regarding Christian prophecy finding its way into the Jesus tradition. For a response, see pages 146-47. Boring, typically a prime exponent of the Christian prophet hypothesis, notably concludes that there is “no compelling evidence of a post-Easter origin of the saying.” Bultmann earlier declared his inability to “reach any firm conclusion.”

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41 Käsemann, “Beginnings,” 100; Zeller, “Das Logion,” 91; Schulz, Q, 328-30. Chilton (God in Strength, 197-98) argues that Q 13:29 is the creation of a Christian prophet.

42 Boring, Sayings, 170.

43 Bultmann, History, 128.
The Five Gospels argues for inauthenticity on two grounds. First, “The rejection of Israel certainly belongs to a secondary stage of the tradition.” Sanders and Lüdemann reject the authenticity of Q 13:28-29 on the same grounds. However, as we have seen, though the saying certainly contrasts Jews and Gentiles in the context of Matthew, the evidence suggests that the contrast in the most primitive version involves first and foremost two groups of Jews.

Second, The Five Gospels argues that, “the Fellows of the Seminar do not think such wholesale condemnations are typical of Jesus, even though they do cut against the social grain. They reflect, rather the invective of a young sectarian movement against the Judeans who did not espouse the new sect.” This argument only works if one assumes that Jesus himself was not sectarian. Such a claim is simply not demonstrable. In fact, mounting evidence from the passages treated in this very study suggest that the opposite was true of the historical Jesus.

Conclusions and Implications:

Several different lines of evidence converge to suggest the authenticity of Q 13:28-29. It uses the image of a banquet in order to depict the eschaton. This image is found throughout the different layers of the Jesus tradition. It applies the phrase “sons of the kingdom” to Jesus’ enemies even though the phrase is elsewhere applied to those who follow Jesus. The new meaning it gains with the introduction of the Matthean context

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44 Funk, Five Gospels, 348.
45 Sanders, Jesus, 114; Lüdemann, Jesus, 155-56.
46 Funk, Five Gospels, 348.
suggests that the original saying did not line up well with the circumstances of the early church. It also coheres well with the historical Jesus’ apparent emphasis on eschatological reversal. Finally, the saying coheres well with Jesus’ antagonism with the Jewish leadership.

We see in Q 13:28-29 an emphasis on division at the final judgment—a division that will run right through Israel. Ironically, many of those among the spiritually “privileged” will find themselves on the outside when the eschatological banquet convenes.
Q 17:1-2

“SNARES ARE SURE TO COME…”


Matthew 18:7
Οὐάι τῷ κόσμῳ ἀπὸ τῶν σκανδάλων ἀνάγκη γαρ ἐλθεῖν τὰ σκάνδαλα.

Luke 17:1

Matthew 18:6b

Luke 17:2a

συμφέρει αὐτῷ ἵνα κρεμασθῇ μύλος ὀνικός

λύσιτελεὶ αὐτῷ εἰ

καὶ ἐρχεται.

κρεμασθῇ μύλος ὀνικός

λίθος μυλικὸς περίκειται

καὶ ἐρριπται
eν τῷ πελάγει τῆς θαλάσσης.
eἰς τὴν θάλασσαν

1 B W Θ f13 TR include ἐκεῖνος, probably in light of Matt 26:24.
Matthew 18:6a
"Ος δὲ ἄν
σκανδαλίσῃ
ἐνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων
tῶν πιστεύοντων εἰς ἐμὲ,

Luke 17:2b
ἡ ἵνα
σκανδαλίσῃ
tῶν μικρῶν τούτων ἐνα.

Luke 17:3a
προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς.

Matthew 18:7
Woe to the world because of snares.

For it is necessary that snares come,
but woe to the person by whom
the snare comes.

Matthew 18:6b
it would be better for him
2 to have a large millstone fastened
around his neck
and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

Matthew 18:6a
But, whoever
cause to fall
one of these little ones
who believes in me,

Luke 17:2a
It would be better for him
if a large millstone were hung
around his neck
and he were cast into the sea,

Luke 17:2b
than that he should
cause to fall
one of these little ones.

Luke 17:3a
Be on your guard!

Mark 9:42a
Καὶ δὲ ἄν
σκανδαλίσῃ ἑνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων
tῶν πιστεύοντων [εἰς ἐμὲ],

Matthew 18:6a
"Ος δὲ ἄν
σκανδαλίσῃ ἑνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων
tῶν πιστεύοντων εἰς ἐμὲ,

Mark 9:42b
καλὸν ἐστὶν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον

Matthew 18:6b

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2 Throughout Matt 18:6, Luke 17:2, and Mark 9:42 the NRSV unwisely translates all of the third person singular pronouns in the second person singular. The result is that in each case the saying is directed against the disciples, who are the auditors in each context.
Mark 9:42a
And whoever
causes one of these little ones to fall
who believes in me,

Mark 9:42b
It would be better for him
if a large millstone
were hung
around his neck
and he were thrown into the sea.

Matthew 18:6a
And whoever
causes one of these little ones to fall
who believes in me,

Matthew 18:6b
it would be better for him
to have a large millstone
fastened
around his neck
and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

1 Clement 46:8
Οὐάι τῷ ἄνθρωπῳ ἐκείνῳ·
καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐὰν οὐκ ἐχεῖνηθή,
ἡ ἑνὰ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν μου
σκανδαλίσαι·
κρεῖττὸν ἂν αὐτὸν
περιτεθῆναι μύλον·
καὶ καταποντισθῆναι
ἐὶς τὴν θάλασσαν,
ἡ ἑνὰ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν μου
diastrepsei.

Woe to that man!
It was better if he had not been born
than that one of my elect
should fall away.
It would have been better for him
to have been tied to a millstone
and cast
into the sea,
than that one of my elect
should be perverted.

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3 L, S, K¹ and Clement of Alexander all have this reading. It is to be preferred to text A. See Donald Hagner, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (SupNovTest 34; Leiden: Brill, 1973), 154-5.

4 C has ἔι μὴ.

5 Latin omits the equivalent of ἀυτῶ.

6 Latin adds *collo eius* in light of the Synoptics.
Context and Meaning in Matthew 18:6-7:

Matt 18:6-7 are found in a block of material that extends from 18:1-14. Matt 18:1-4 discuss the necessity of “becoming like children” in order to enter the kingdom, indicating the humility and dependence required of every disciple. “Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 18:4). Verse 5 is a bridge between verses 1-4 and 6-14. The context of the passage makes it clear that the phrase “one such child” (ἕν παιδίον τοιούτο) in verse 5 shifts the referent from the literal child of verses 1-4 to the disciple who has taken Jesus’ counsel to heart and become like a child. Such a disciple is a representative of Christ himself. “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me” (Matt 18:5). The shift in terminology from the “child” (παιδίον) of verse 5, to “one of these little ones who believes in me” (ἐνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ) found in verse 6 confirms that the faithful disciple is in view. While verse 5 discusses the benefit of welcoming one of Jesus’ disciples, verses 6-7 contemplate the fate of the one who “scandalizes” (σκανδαλίζω) a faithful disciple, one of Jesus’ “little ones.” Verses 8-9 then address a disciples’ personal responsibility to avoid sin at any cost, using the key term of 6-7, “scandalize” (σκανδαλίζω), which appears prominently in both 8 and 9. Finally, verses 10-14 emphasize the value of every faithful disciple to the Father, concluding in the following manner, “So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost” (18:14).

The designation “one of these little ones” appears in Mark and Luke only in the parallels to Matt 18:6. Matthew, however seems to have liked the phrase enough to add it elsewhere (Matt 10:42; 18:6, 10, 14).
The verb σκανδαλίζω and the corresponding σκάνδαλον play a prominent role in Matt 18:6-7. The original image seems to have involved a snare, but its use quickly spread to include anything that leads one into sin, temptation, destruction or apostasy. In addition, σκάνδαλον can be used to describe that which gives offense. Therefore, appropriate English equivalents would include: “to cause to no longer believe,” “to cause to sin,” and “to offend.” In the context of Matthew it would appear that apostasy, specifically rejection of Jesus, is in view. The “little ones” are explicitly described as those who “believe in me,” most of Matthew’s other uses of the term point to the rejection of Jesus (Matt 11:6; 13:21, 57; 15:12; 24:10; 26:31, 33), and the section concludes with the importance to God that not “one of these little ones should be lost” (Matt 18:14).

Hence the meaning of Matt 18:6-7 is fairly clear. The one who causes a follower of Jesus to fall away will suffer the severest punishment. Verse 6 obviously refers to the final judgment. The only way it could be better for the offender (συμφέρει αὐτῷ) to have a large millstone fastened around his neck and drowned in the sea is if he has an even worse eschatological fate in store at the final judgment.

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8 See Stählin, “σκάνδαλον, σκανδαλίζω,” TDNT, 7.339-58; BDAG 926; Louw and Nida 308, 376, 775; Conzelmann, Matthew, 2.432-33.


10 A large millstone is used as a means of dispensing divine judgment in Judges 9:53 (cf. 9:56). In addition, Jeremiah is told to prophetically symbolize the judgment of Babylon by tying a stone to the scroll of God’s words and casting it into the sea (Jer 51:63-64). It is difficult to say weather the image as it occurs in Revelation is drawing on these two texts or has been influenced by our synoptic saying. “Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, ‘With such violence Babylon the great city will be thrown down and will be found no more…” (Rev 18:21). What is clear is that this imagery is at home in Judaism. There is also evidence of Rabbinic use the millstone motif. See Strack and Billerbeck, 1.778.
Context and Meaning in Luke 17:1-3a:

At first glance, it appears that Luke 17:1-3a have little explicit connection with their surrounding context. They come after the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31), and are followed by three other seemingly unrelated sayings (Luke 17:3b-4, 5-6, and 7-10). As Fitzmyer notes, “The sayings are, moreover, unrelated to each other. The only link that they seem to have is a bearing on various aspects of discipleship.”

However, further exploration reveals that there is a progression of thought linking the four sayings. Immediately following Luke 17:1-3a is a saying about the necessity of forgiving a repentant disciple (Luke 3b-4). This juxtaposition is likely intended to assist in the interpretation of 17:1-3a, suggesting that the particular scandal envisaged is falling away from Jesus. If the scandal were to be conceived of more generally as a reference to sin, it would stand in awkward tension with the following verses’ emphasis on the absolute necessity of forgiveness. The sinner must always be forgiven but the one who causes another to sin can never be forgiven?

In Luke 17:5-6 the disciples express amazement at Jesus’ demand for unconditional forgiveness of the repentant sinner, proclaiming, “Increase our faith!” Jesus responds that even the tiniest amount of faith should be sufficient. The reference to “in the sea” (ἡ θαλάσσα) echoes 17:2, further indicating intentionality of placement.

Finally, the section ends with a parable (17:7-10) in which the slave is reminded of his duty to do what is commanded. In light of the disciples’ response to the command of 17:3b-4 it would seem evident that the parable is reminding the disciples that granting forgiveness to a repentant sinner is one’s basic duty to God.

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The meaning of Luke 17:1-3a is the same as that of Matt 18:6-7. We have already seen that Luke interpreted the scandal as causing to fall away from Jesus. In spite of the absence of Matthew’s πιστευόντων, Luke’s reference to the “little ones” certainly has disciples in mind. His only other uses of the word as a noun occur in 7:28; 9:48. In both cases disciples are the intended referent. Hence, we are dealing here with the sternest of warnings directed against those who might cause Jesus’ disciples to fall away from him.

Structurally, Luke 17:1-3a differ from their Matthean counterpart in a number of ways. Matthew concludes the saying with a woe to the world, followed by a prediction of the inevitability of scandal and a corresponding woe upon the offender (Matt 18:7). Luke lacks the initial woe and begins the saying with the prediction and the second woe (Luke 17:1). In addition, while Matthew places the problem of scandalizing disciples before the comment on the millstone, Luke places them in reverse order (Matt 18:6a = Luke 17:2b; Matt 18:6b = Luke 17:2a). Finally, Luke 17:3a ends the sayings with an exhortation, “Be on your guard!”

*Context and Meaning in Mark 9:42:*

Mark 9:42 is found in a sequence stretching from 9:33-50. The section begins with a dispute among the disciples about who is the greatest (Mark 9:33-34). Using a little child as an example, Jesus teaches the disciples about the importance of service. He concludes with the words “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me” (Mark 9:37). In the next section the disciples demonstrate that they have not understood the message. They seek to end the ministry of an exorcist operating in Jesus’ name because he is not
“following us” (ὁς οὐκ ἔχει πάθηται ἡμῖν). Jesus replies that “whoever is not against us is for us” (Mark 9:40), forcing the disciples to adopt a more inclusive understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus, and challenging their assumption that as his companions they enjoy a unique position of authority. Continuing his teaching, Jesus tells his disciples that anyone who renders even the smallest service to them because they bear the name of Christ will be rewarded (Mark 9:41). Their own connection to Jesus is of immeasurable significance. In Mark 9:42 Jesus explains that this importance extends to all those who believe in him. “If anyone puts a stumbling block in front of one of these little ones who believe in me…” In light of the previous context it is clear that the “little ones who believe in me” refers back to the example of the little child. Not only is this the model for the disciples, but it is exemplified by the exorcist who casts out demons in Jesus name. Such fledgling disciples are precious to Jesus. Anyone who causes them to fall away (presumably including the disciples themselves!) will come under punishment. Thus, in the context of Mark, 9:42 functions both as an encouragement to the disciples and as a veiled warning. In Mark 9:43-48 Jesus proceeds to instruct the disciples to deal with their personal sin in the severest manner possible, lest they be thrown into hell. Finally, after a series of enigmatic sayings about salt (Mark 9:49-50), the section ends with an exhortation for the disciples to “be at peace with one another” (Mark 9:50), reinforcing the point of the entire section.
Text, Context and Meaning of Q 17:1-2:

There is some debate over whether Matthew and Luke used Q as a source or simply represent different redactions of Mark 9:42. Ultimately, several factors suggest that a version of Luke 17:1-2 // Matt 18:6-7 was in Q. 1) Both Matthew (18:7) and Luke (17:1) contain an additional saying about the inevitability of scandal and the corresponding woe on those through whom they occur. Neither of these elements is found in Mark. 2) While Matthew loosely follows the Markan sequence of material, Luke places the saying in an entirely different context. There is evidence that this Lukan context reproduces that of Q, since the sayings in Luke 17:3b-4 and 6 both represent Q material. 3) We have noted the structural differences between the versions in Matthew and Luke. It is likely that one of these differences is attributable to the existence of two different versions, Mark and Q. The order of Matt 18:6a and b follows Mark 9:42a and b, while Luke 17:2a and b reflect the Q order. 4) The Matthean and Lukan versions display marked variation in vocabulary—including differences that are difficult to explain along redactional lines.

The argument is complicated by the fact that Luke 17:2, which appears to have more faithfully transmitted the structure of the Q saying, was probably influenced by the

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13 The position of 17:1-2, 3b-4 and 6 in Q remains debated for good reason (Kloppenborg, *Formation*, 100). However, Luke’s general tendency to more faithfully preserve the order of Q, coupled with the string of Q passages in the beginning of chapter 17 lead us to conclude that the Lukan order is preferable.

14 On the existence of Q 17:2 see also Schlosser, “Lk 17.2 und die Logienquelle,” 74-76.
wording of Mark 9:42. Nevertheless, it seems likely that Matthew and Luke had two sources at their disposal.

Since Luke retained the order of Q 17:2a and b, it is more likely that he also reproduced the overall order of the passage, rendering Q 17:1 prior to 17:2. Evidence of Matthean redaction can be seen in the following: 1) Оὐαὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ἀπὸ τῶν σκανδάλων is probably a Matthean addition. It was likely added to smooth the transition from 18:6 to the rest of 18:7. 2) Matthew’s entire first phrase (Ὁ ζῆν δ’ ἀν σκανδαλίσῃ ἔνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ,) follows Mark 9:42. The extent of the overlap makes dependence upon Mark rather clear here. 3) συμφέρει is a Matthean favorite (Matt 24; Mark 5; Luke 6). 4) μύλος ὁνικός also reproduces the Markan source.

Luke has also made use of Mark 9:42, borrowing the construction εἰ... περίκειται and reproducing Mark’s simpler εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν. In addition, his

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19 Contra Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 2.762), who prefer περίκειται, citing the redactional use of κρεμάννυμι in Matt 22:40 as evidence of its redactional nature here. They are followed by Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, *Critical Edition*, 474-77; Polag, *Fragmenta*, 74. We, however, are skeptical that one use of the verb constitutes a redactional tendency. It is more logical to assume that Luke reproduced Mark’s version.

20 Contra Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 2.762), who argue that the ἐν τῷ πελάγει is a Matthean addition intended to provide emphasis. See also the reconstructions of Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, *Critical Edition*, 474-77; Polag, *Fragmenta*, 74. One wonders what emphasis is really needed at this point. In any case, it is once again more logical to assume that Luke deferred to the Markan version.
final admonition (προσέχετε ἐαυτοῖς) is a Lukan creation. The phrase is distinctive of Luke (12:1 and 21:34).²¹

Therefore a reconstruction of the Q text would read as follows:


λυσιτελεῖ αὐτῷ ἵνα κρεμασθῇ λίθος μυλικὸς περὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ καὶ (ἐρριπτω) ἐν τῷ πελάγει τῆς θαλάσσης ἤ ἵνα σκανδαλίσῃ τῶν μικρῶν τούτων ἔνα.

a. ἀνένδεκτόν ἐστιν τού... μὴ ἐλθεῖν,
b. καταποντισθῇ

It is necessary that occasions to fall come, but woe to him [the person] through whom it [the scandal] comes.

It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he was thrown into the depth of the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to fall.

The context and the meaning of Q 17:1-2 is similar to that of Luke, who reproduced the section from Q. However, it appears that Luke has added the exhortation in verse 3a and the disciples’ exclamation in verse 5. We have seen that the latter helps provide a clear connection between 17:1-4 and 6.

Relationship to the Gospels, Context, and Meaning of 1 Clement 46:8:

1 Clem. 46:8 provides us with another attestation of Q 17:2 // Mark 9:42. 1 Clem. 46:8 is composed of two parts. The first part begins with words that parallel those spoken by Jesus to Judas in light of his imminent betrayal “woe to that man, it would be better for him if he had not been born” (see Matt 26:24 // Mark 14:21). However, these words

²¹ Schulz, Q, 320; Fitzmyer, Luke, 1137; Jeremias, Sprache des Lukasevangeliums, 262.
are applied to a new situation: causing one of his “elect” to fall away. This paves the way for the second part of the saying, which parallels Q 17:2 and Mark 9:42, “It would have been better for him to have been tied to a millstone and cast into the sea than that one of my elect should be perverted.”

1 Clem. 46:8 addresses the Corinthian church’s spirit of division and strife. It is used as a warning against those who would cause their brothers and sisters within the church to stumble and fall away from the church. “Your schism has perverted many; it has brought many to despair, plunged many into doubt, and caused all of us to sorrow” (1 Clem. 48:9).

The relationship between 1 Clem. 46:8 and the Synoptics has been explored at length by Donald Hagner, who concludes that 1 Clem. 46:8 should be considered independent of the synoptic gospels. His arguments are as follows: 1) Noting that 1 Clem. 46:8 combines two sayings that occur in very different contexts within the synoptic gospels, Hagner argues, “Rather than believe that Clement knew that the words referred to Judas and yet purposefully removed them from their context by combining them with a second saying, it seems preferable to believe that the combination presented itself to Clement through extra-canonical tradition.”22 2) There are also substantial differences in wording. “There is no parallel to the words of Clement’s first saying ἦ ἔνα τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν μου σκανδαλίσαι, nor to the parallel clause in the second saying, ἦ ἔνα τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν μου διαστρέψαι.”23 Both κραίττον and περιτεθῆναι differ from their synoptic equivalents, and 1 Clement does not qualify μύλον as do each of the

22 Hagner, The Use of Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome, 162.
23 Hagner, The Use of Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome, 163;
Synoptics. In addition, he does not include περὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ which is found in all three synoptic accounts. 3)

The parallelism of the two sayings exhibited in the final clauses suggests that the combination has an identity of its own apart from the Synoptic Gospels. That this citation is not a free rendering of the Synoptics on Clement’s part would seem to be indicated by the introductory formula μνημήσατε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ εἶπεν γὰρ. Thus presumably the words which Clement cites are regarded by him as being well known to the Corinthians. The introductory formula seems to designate more than simply the general content of Jesus’ teaching; it appears to refer to the words themselves, in a form already available to the Corinthians. 24

4) Finally, Hagner notes that, in light of the conclusion that Clement made use of an extra-canonical source of Jesus’ sayings in chapter 13, 25 the possibility that he did so in 46:8 gains further credibility.

Most Primitive Version and Meaning of Q 17:1-2:

Without another attestation of Q 17:1 there are no grounds on which to posit additional redactions. We are faced with the opposite problem in Q 17:2. Such substantial differences exist between the wording and structure of Q 17:2 // Mark 9:42 // 1 Clement 46:8 that, rather than reconstruct a most primitive version, we will simply list those features that all three attestations have in common. They each speak of being “attached” (Q: κρεμασθῇ; Mark: περίκειται; 1 Clement: περιτεθήκαται) to a “millstone” (Q: λίθος μυλικὸς; Mark: μύλος ὄνικος; 1 Clement: μύλον) and “being thrown” (Q: ἔρριπται; Mark: βεβληται; 1 Clement: καταποντισθήκαται) “in the sea” (Q: ἐν τῷ


Two questions make determining the original meaning of Q 17:1-2 quite difficult. Who was it important not to cause to fall, and what was the nature of the “scandal” that the historical Jesus had in mind? The original saying almost certainly said simply “one of these little ones” (ἐνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων), which is found in both Mark and Q.\(^{26}\) Mark (who is followed by Matthew) has added τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ. The description of Jesus’ followers as οἱ πιστεύοντες did not emerge until the period of the early church, when it took on great significance (John 4:41; Acts 19:18; 2 Thess 1:10; Eph 1:19).\(^{27}\) The addition is probably indicative of a desire on the part of the evangelists to clarify the identity of the “little ones.” It would seem that 1 Clement’s ἐνα τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν reflects the same concern, leaving no room for doubt that followers of Jesus are in view. If, then, the original saying simply referred to “one of these little ones” who did Jesus have in mind. Without additional context it is impossible to tell. The historical Jesus may indeed have had his own followers in mind, but this is by no means the only

\(^{26}\) Mark and Q place the ἐνα in different places, one before the phrase and one after.

\(^{27}\) See Davies and Allison, Matthew, 2.761 n. 46.

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possibility. He may have referred to anyone who is “small” in the eyes of the world: children, servants, poor, outcasts, sinners, etc.

1 Clement’s διαστρέψαι is ultimately secondary to σκανδάλιση, which is found in both Mark and Q. It fits the context of 1 Clement (and the early church) perfectly, specifically charging dissenters with the perversion of teaching and community. The more ambiguous σκανδαλισθή is original. Hence, we are confronted with the same problem. It is impossible to tell what sort of “scandal” the historical Jesus had in mind. Jesus could have meant causing his followers to fall away from him, but the saying is also open to a broader interpretation: do not lead one of these little ones into sin. In the absence of a larger context it is impossible to determine the original intent.

Arguments for Authenticity:

We have already seen that Q 17:2, the verse that directly alludes to the final judgment, benefits from triple independent attestation: Q, Mark, and 1 Clem. There are, however, additional reasons to suspect that it originated with the historical Jesus.

The most primitive version of Q 17:2 displays signs of dissimilarity with the early church. The early church sought to narrow the focus of the saying by clearly defining the “little ones” as Jesus’ disciples and the “scandal” as causing one to fall away from him. This was accomplished in various ways by our various sources. We have already seen that the context of all five (Mark, Q, Matthew, Luke, 1 Clement) sources suggests that the “little ones” are to be interpreted as Jesus’ disciples. Other changes are made to reinforce the identification. Matthew and Mark’s versions both add the explanatory “who believe

28 See BDAG 926.
in you” to the phrase “one of these little ones.” 1 Clement’s version replaces the phrase with the unambiguous “elect.” It is similarly clear that each of our sources intended “scandal” to be understood specifically as causing one to fall away from Jesus. Q and Luke’s juxtaposition of Q 17:1-2 and 3b-4 leave no other reasonable interpretive option. Matthew, Mark and 1 Clement’s additional emphasis on the believer makes the same point.

Hence, we can see that through both placement and wording each of our sources strove to clarify the meaning of the saying—through different means, but each time in the same direction. Why did they each find the same clarifications necessary?

There are two potential answers to this question. 1) The most primitive version of Q 17:2 made the early church uneasy. If left open-ended, the primitive version of Q 17:2 was seen as potentially standing in tension with Jesus’ own ministry of forgiving sin, a theme that gained increasing prominence in the early church. They probably reasoned that these harsh words of judgment should surely be reserved for those who had sinned in the worst way, by causing another to fall into apostasy. Consequently, they apparently constructed the context and altered the wording of the saying so that no other interpretive option would present itself. This tension is presented directly by both Q and Luke, who place the saying directly alongside Jesus’ exhortation to forgive the repentant sinner.

2) It is also possible that the changed Sitz im Leben of the early church encouraged the evangelists to modify the original saying so that it might better fit the situation confronting them. In its new Sitz im Leben, the saying was employed as a threat

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29 See for example: Mark 2:5-10 and par.; Matt 26:28; Luke 7:47-49; 23:34 (an early church addition—see Metzger, TCGNT, 154); 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; Jas 5:15; 1 Jn 1:9; 2:12.
against those whose dissention threatened to break up the community of believers, causing some disciples to fall away from Christ. This is plainly the case in 1 Clement, but there are other hints that this might have been the impetus for modifying Q 17:2. In both Rom 14:3 and 1 Cor 8:13, Paul warns those within the church not to cause a fellow believer to fall. Both passages use the term σκάνδαλον. These two verses may well be indicative of Paul’s familiarity with the tradition and provide us a further glimpse into how the early church appropriated the saying in its own Sitz im Leben.30

In the final analysis, both of these options support the authenticity of Q 17:2. On the one hand, if the early church felt discomfort regarding the most primitive version of Q 17:2, then this discomfort points to the authenticity of the saying’s core. If, on the other hand, the early church consistently modified the saying in order to fit their current Sitz im Leben, then the criterion of dissimilarity suggests that the primitive form of Q 17:2 is authentic. Only an authentic saying would have been modified in so many different ways in order to achieve the same desired affect. If the saying were a community creation, such modification would be unnecessary.

The criterion of coherence also contributes to the authentication of Q 17:2. That Jesus would have demonstrated special concern for those he called “little ones” (Ἔνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων) coheres well with what we know of the historical Jesus. It is almost universally agreed that the historical Jesus sought to lift up those who were often held in little esteem by society.31 Examples include: “Blessed are you who are poor, for


31 See, for example, Dunn, Remembering Jesus, 516-37; Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 174-211; Crossan, Historical Jesus, 266-76; Wright, Jesus, 264-74; Funk, Five Gospels, 289-90; Becker, Jesus, 155-69.
yours is the kingdom of God” (Q 6:20 // Gos. Thom. 54). “Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled” (Q 6:21a // Gos. Thom. 69). “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the poor have good news brought to them” (Q 7:22). “Let the children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs” (Mark 10:14 cp. Mark 9:36-37). “I came not to call the righteous, but the sinners” (Mark 2:17). “As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me” (Mark 2:14). “The Son of Man has come eating and drinking and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of sinners and tax collectors” (Q 7:34).

Moreover, he consistently exhorted his disciples to adopt the attitude of the lowly servant, suggesting that this was the true indicator of status in the kingdom of God. Examples include: For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted” (Q 14:11). Many who are first will be last and the last will be first” (Mark 10:31 // Q 13:30 // Gos. Thom. 4). “Whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be the slave of all (Mark 10:43-44). “Truly I tell you, whoever does not enter the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it” (Mark 10:15).

Hence, singling out the “little ones” resonates with the historical Jesus, as does the special concern that they not be “scandalized.” It is also worth noting that there is no comparable use of the term μικρός to designate a favored group of people in the rest of the New Testament or the Apostolic Fathers.
Arguments Against Authenticity:

The *Five Gospels* and Lüdemann’s *Jesus* both argue for the inauthenticity of Q 17:1-2 on the grounds that they reflect the situation of the early church. “Apostasy, backsliding, heresy were inevitable once the community defined itself. Such developments lie well beyond what Jesus envisioned.” There are two significant problems with this line of reasoning. First, we have seen that once the saying is stripped of its redactional additions and context there is no way to determine the identity of the little ones or the nature of the scandal. Second, it is precisely the evangelists’ redactional additions and context that render the saying useful to the *Sitz im Leben* of the early church.

Conclusions and Implications:

There is very little with which to demonstrate the authenticity of Q 17:1. There is, however, good evidence for the authenticity of Q 17:2. It has triple independent attestation within the Jesus tradition. It displays signs of dissimilarity with the early church, and its language and content cohere well with what we know of the historical Jesus.

The implications of Q 17:2 for our study are three-fold. First, though we can no longer ascertain the precise identity of the “little ones,” the saying certainly stresses their importance to God. Second, there are severe eschatological consequences for causing one of these little ones to fall, whether such falling pertains to following Jesus or simply sinning. Third, it emphasizes the hideous fate in store for those who find themselves

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condemned at the final judgment: it would have been better to have died a hideous death on earth.
Q 17:26-30

“AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH…”


Matthew 24:37-39

״Ωσπερ γάρ αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ Νω, οὐτὸς ἐστιν ἡ παροισία τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ὅς γὰρ ἦσαν ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ταῖς πρὸ τοῦ κατακλισμοῦ τρῳγοντές καὶ πίνοντες, γαμοῦντες καὶ γαμίζοντες, ἀχρὶ ἧς ἡμέρας εἰσῆλθεν Νω ἐἰς τὴν κιβωτόν,  

Luke 17:26-30

καὶ καθὼς ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου: ἡσθιον, ἔπινον, ἐγάμουν, ἐγαμίζοντο, ἀχρὶ ἧς ἡμέρας εἰσῆλθεν Νω ἐἰς τὴν κιβωτόν,

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1 καί is added by D W Θ f.13 TR
2 ἐκείναις is absent in N L W Θ f.13 TR. Hence, brackets are present in the in the UBSGNT. Metzger (TCGNT, 52) rates its inclusion with a {C}. 

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Matthew 24:37-39
For as the days of were,
so will be
the coming
of the Son of Man.
For as they were in those days
before the flood
eating and drinking
marrying and being given in marriage
until the day
Noah entered the ark,
and they did not know until
the flood came
and took them all away,

Luke 17:26-30
And just as it was
in the days of Noah
so will be
also the days
of the Son of Man;
they were eating, drinking
marrying and being given in marriage,
until the day
Noah entered the ark,
and the flood came
and destroyed them all.
Likewise, just as it was
in the days of Lot;

καὶ οὕτως ἤλθεν ὁ κατακλυσμός καὶ ἦρεν ἀπάντας.
καὶ ἠλθὲν ὁ κατακλυσμὸς καὶ ἀπώλεσεν πάντας.

οὐτώς

ἔσται
καὶ ἡ παρουσία
tου υἱοῦ του ἀνθρώπου.
κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ

καὶ ἡ ἡμέρα

ὁ υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου ἀποκαλύπτεται.

Matthew 24:37-39
For as the days of were,
so will be
the coming
of the Son of Man.
For as they were in those days
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marrying and being given in marriage
until the day
Noah entered the ark,
and they did not know until
the flood came
and took them all away,

Luke 17:26-30
And just as it was
in the days of Noah
so will be
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of the Son of Man;
they were eating, drinking
marrying and being given in marriage,
until the day
Noah entered the ark,
and the flood came
and destroyed them all.
Likewise, just as it was
in the days of Lot;

3 κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ is found in Β Δ Ψ, while Α L W Θ have κατὰ ταύτα.

4 καὶ is missing from B D. Hence brackets are present in the UBŚGNT.
eating, drinking, buying, selling,
planting, building,
but on the day Lot went out
from Sodom,
it rained fire and sulphur from heaven
and destroyed them all.

So will be
also the coming of
the Son of Man.

It will be like that
the day
the Son of Man
is revealed.

Context and Meaning in Matthew 24:37-39:

Matt 24:37-39 is located in the midst of Matthew’s eschatological discourse, which runs from the beginning of chapter 24 through the end of chapter 25. The immediate context begins in verse 36: “But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the son, but only the Father.” Verses 37-39 elucidate the point by means of analogy with the time of Noah. Noah’s contemporaries were oblivious of the coming judgment. They continued on with the normal patterns of life: eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. They presumed things would continue on as normal. When the flood struck it surprised all but Noah. It was too late for preparations, too late for repentance. “They knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away” (Matt 24:39). The “arrival” (προσήκω) of the Son of Man will mark a new dispensation of judgment—one just as all encompassing as the judgment on Noah’s generation. Its timing will be a surprise, but those who remain vigilant will be ready. This point is reinforced in verses 42 and 44, which concludes the subsection. “Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming” (Matt 24:42). “Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour”
(Matt 24:46). Hence, in the context of Matthew, the primary purpose of verses 37-39 is to underscore the indeterminate timing of the Son of Man’s arrival.


Luke 17:26-30 is found in a small eschatological discourse (Luke 17:20-37) that is placed toward the end of the travel narrative. Though many of the ideas are the same, this discourse stands apart from the lengthy Markan Olivet discourse that Luke will reproduce in chapter 21. The Lukan version of the saying diverges from the Matthean version in a number of critical ways. 1) Luke speaks of the “day(s) of the Son of Man” (Luke 17:26, 30) rather than his “arrival” (Matt 24:37, 39). 2) The saying about Noah’s generation is followed by a parallel saying concerning God’s judgment in the days of Lot (Luke 17:28-29) that is absent in the Matthean version. 3) The saying also takes on a different emphasis in its Lukan context. It lacks the numerous Matthean contextual clues that focus the reader on the surprising timing of the judgment. Even within the saying, Matthew’s reference to knowing, “They knew nothing until the flood came” (Matt 24:39) is absent in Luke. In contrast, the Lukan version seems to lay its emphasis on the inevitability and severity of the judgment. “The flood came and destroyed all of them” (Luke 17:27). “It rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed all of them” (Luke 17:29). Just as God unleashed his judgment on wicked generations of the past, so too will judgment be unleashed in the days of the Son of Man. However, this judgment will also bring salvation to a remnant, those like Noah and Lot who remain faithful to God.

5 The days of Noah and Lot were often referenced together in this capacity. See, for example, Wis. 10:4-6; *T. Naph* 3:4-5; 3 Macc. 2:4-5; Philo, *Mos.* 2:10-12; 2 Pet 2:5-7. For discussion, see the excurses in 342
Text, Context, and Meaning in Q 17:26-30:

The greatest issue involved in reconstructing the Q text is deciding whether Luke 17:28-29 was derived from Q or represents Lukan addition. A number of converging factors render it highly likely that Q did indeed contain the saying about the days of Lot. 6 1) Neither the style nor the vocabulary is particularly representative of Luke. It is Matthew, not Luke who is fond of parallels. In fact, Luke displays a tendency to deconstruct existing parallels. 7 The string of asyndetic imperfect verbs is unusual for Luke and many of the words appear only in material that Luke has clearly incorporated from another source. 8 2) Q appears to have been fond of coordinated sayings: Q 11:31-32; 13:18-21; 15:4-9; 17:34-35. 3) Kloppenborg has argued that verses 31-32 betray Luke’s true redactional interests. Not only is Luke 17:31-32 missing from Matthew’s transmission of a Q section, but it takes the passage in a different direction (shifting the focus onto material goods). It is likely that this saying, with its reference to Lot’s wife, was attached to the previous sayings because of an already existing reference to Genesis 19. 9 4) Finally, Matthean omission of the Lot saying can be understood on the grounds that the days of Lot are not an adequate parallel for the arrival of the Son of Man. The


6 Those who agree that Luke 17:28-29 were originally part of Q include: Kloppenborg, Formation, 157; Marshall, Luke, 662; Manson, Sayings, 143; Crossan, In Fragments, 176-79; Polag, Fragmenta Q, 78; Schenk, Synopse zur Redenquelle, 122; Schürmann, Luke, 139. Those who oppose a Q origin include: Fitzmyer, Luke, 1165; and Zmijewski, Eschatologiereden, 452-57. Schulz (Q, 278, 280) and Zeller (Kommentar, 89) remain unsure.


8 Jeremias, Sprache des Lukasevangelium, 269.
scope of the judgment which will accompany the *parousia* will mirror the days of Noah, when *all the earth* was judged.

Each of the remaining demonstrable redactions appears to be the work of Matthew. These redactions include: 1) *αἱ ἡμέραι* is Matthean redaction.\(^9\) Not only is the semitic *ἐν* plus dative preferable, but Luke retains an uncharacteristic parallelism between the two halves of the verse. 2) *ἡ παρουσία* has been inserted by Matthew into both 24:37 and 24:39.\(^{10}\) Within the Synoptic gospels *παρουσία* is unique to Matthew. He also uses it four times in the current section (24:3, 27, 37, 39.) 3) Matthew’s wording of the worldly activities, *τρώγοντες καὶ πίνοντες, γαμοῦντες καὶ γαμίζοντες*, has also been redacted.\(^{11}\) Luke’s series of asyndetic imperfect verbs is completely contrary to his style, and is paralleled by a similar list in Luke 17:28. Matthew’s participles, on the other hand, are divided into pairs and all share the same ending, enhancing euphony. 4) *οὐκ ἔγνωσαν ἔως* is an obvious Matthean addition insofar as it orients this saying in the same direction as the entire Matthean subsection.\(^{12}\) The same emphasis on knowing the time can be seen in Matt 24:32, 33, 43, 50.

Hence, Q 17:26-30 reads as follows:

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\(^{9}\) Kloppenborg, *Formation*, 156-57.


[καὶ] (καθὼς ἐγένετο) ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Νῶε, οὕτως ἦσται καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ οὐδὲν τοῦ ἄνθρωπον [ὡς γὰρ ἦσαν ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ταῖς πρὸ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ] ἡσθιόν, ἐπινόν, ἐγάμουν, ἐγαμίζοντο, ἄχρι ἡ ἡμέρας εἰσῆλθεν Νῶε εἰς τὴν κιβωτόν καὶ ἤλθεν ὁ κατακλυσμὸς καὶ ἦρεν ἀπάντας. ὁ ὁμοίως καθὼς ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Λώτ ἡσθιόν, ἐπινόν, ἡγόραζον, ἐπώλουν, ἐφυτευον, ὕκοδομον ἢ δὲ ἡμέρας ἐξῆλθεν Λώτ ἀπό Σοδόμων, ἐβρεζέν πῦρ καὶ θείον ἅπ' οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἀπόλεσεν πάντας. (οὕτως) ἦσται ἡ ἡμέρα ὁ οὐδὲν τοῦ ἄνθρωπον ἀποκαλύπτεται.

a. (ὡσπερ γάρ)
b. (ἀπόλεσεν πάντας.)
c. (κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ)

[And] just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man.

[For as it was in those days before the flood] eating, drinking, marrying, and being given in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, just as in the days of Lot; they were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting and building, but on the day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed all of them—it will be like that on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

Most Primitive Version of Q 17:26-30:

Without the benefit of a second independent attestation, attempts to identify redaction within Q 17:26-30 would prove too speculative to be of use. Therefore, the reconstruction of Q will be treated as the most primitive version available to us.

Arguments for Authenticity:

None of the potential arguments for authenticity are particularly persuasive.14

There is only one attestation of Q 17:26-30. It is neither dissimilar from nor embarrassing to the early church. Positive contributions come only from the criterion of coherence.

14 Davies and Allison, (Mary 3.382) argue for the authenticity of Q 17:26-30 on the basis of its consistency with Jesus’ overall message of judgment (though the saying is by no means clear that the current generation is in view, as Davies and Allison have suggested); Becker, (Jesus 205-6) perceives dissimilarity with the early church insofar as Jesus refers to the Son of Man as a different person. This is, however, by no means clear.
Sodom was used to evoke the final judgment in Q 10:12, and probably also in the original Q version of 10:13-15 (preserved in Matt 10:11:24), both of which we have seen bear several marks of authenticity. In addition, the image of a flood was used in the context of final judgment in Q 6:47-49, but the criteria had little to contribute to discussions of its authenticity.

*Arguments Against Authenticity:*

We are already familiar with many of the arguments used to dispute the authenticity of Q 17:26-30. *The Five Gospels* argues against the authenticity on the grounds that, “the emphasis on destruction is typical of apocalypses, but seems not to have been characteristic of Jesus.”\(^{15}\) Guenther also proceeds under the assumption that the early church was concerned with eschatology but the historical Jesus was not.\(^{16}\) We have already discussed the circularity of such argumentation.

Perrin’s rejection of all future Son of Man references lead him to dismiss Q 17:26-30, but we have established that this conclusion is reductionistic, and fails to account for either the totality of the evidence or the multiplicity of explanations concerning Jesus’ use of the term Son of Man.\(^ {17}\)

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\(^{15}\) Funk, *Five Gospels*, 367.


\(^{17}\) Perrin, *Rediscovering*, 197-98.
A final argument comes from Richard Edwards. Q 17:26-30 contains two examples of a form that he labels an “eschatological correlative.” Edwards defines an eschatological correlative as any two-part saying with a comparative particle and present or past tense verb in the protasis and a correlative particle and future tense verb in the apodasis. He notes that there are four such sayings in the Q tradition—each of which includes mention of the Son of Man in the apodasis. Coupled with the relative scarcity of the form in the rest of the Synoptic tradition (Matt 13:40), Edwards deduces that the form points to an origin of these four sayings in the Q community rather than in the historical Jesus.

However, as David Aune has ably demonstrated, this form is by no means unique to Q. In fact, in addition to Matthew, the same formal elements can be found in the Torah (Deut 28:63; Lev 24:19b, 20b), the Prophets (Amos 3:12; Jer 38:28), and in Paul (Rom 5:19; 1 Cor 15:22, 49). As Aune deduces, “Since the rhetorical models for the eschatological correlative were as available to Jesus as they were to early Christians, there seems little reason to deny that Jesus could have used such a speech form.”

Conclusions and Implications:

Without convincing arguments for or against the authenticity of Q 17:26-30 our conclusions must remain open. However, the potential authenticity of the saying does

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gain a measure of support from the apparent reliability of Q’s other final judgment sayings.
Q 17:33

“WHOEVER WANTS TO SAVE HIS LIFE...”


Matt 10:39
ο ἐφίπτεν
τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ
ἀπολέσηι αὐτήν,
καὶ ο ἀπολέσας τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ εὐφῆσει αὐτήν.

Luke 17:33
ος ἐγὼς ζητήσῃ
tὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ
περιποίησασθαι
ἀπολέσῃ αὐτήν, ος δι ἀπολέσῃ ξυγογνησει αὐτήν.

Matt 10:39
The one who finds
his life
will lose it,
but the one who loses his life
for my sake will find it.

Luke 17:33
Whoever seeks to preserve
his life
will lose it,

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1 A number of early texts (أخلاق Θ Ψ φ) replace the hapax legomenon περιποίησασθαι with σώσει in order to bring it into conformity with Luke 9:24. περιποίησασθαι is almost certainly the original reading. See Metzger (TCGNT, 142) where it receives a {B} rating.

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but whoever will lose [it]

will preserve his life.

Mark 8:35
δὲ γὰρ ἐὰν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σώσαι ἀπολέσει αὐτὴν
δὲ δὲ ἂν ἀπολέσει

τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐνεκὲν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου

σώσει αὐτὴν.

Matt 16:25
δὲ γὰρ ἐὰν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σώσαι ἀπολέσει αὐτὴν
δὲ δὲ ἂν ἀπολέσῃ

τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐνεκὲν ἐμοῦ

εὐρήσει αὐτὴν.

Luke 9:24
δὲ γὰρ ἐὰν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σώσσῃ ἀπολέσῃ αὐτὴν
δὲ δὲ ἂν

τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐνεκὲν ἐμοῦ

οὕτως σώσει αὐτὴν.

Mark 8:35
For whoever wants
to save his life
will lose it;
but whoever
will lose
his life for me
and the gospel
will save it.

Matt 16:25
For whoever wants
to save his life
will lose it;
but whoever
loses
his life for me
will find it.

Luke 9:24
For whoever wants
to save his life
will lose it;
but whoever
loses
his life for me
will save it.

The one loving his life
loses it,
but the one hating his life
in this world
will keep it for life eternal.

John 12:25
ὁ φιλῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἀπολλύει αὐτὴν.
καὶ ὁ μισῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τοῦτῷ
eἰς ᾧ ἐν αἰῶνιον φυλάξει αὐτὴν.

John 12:25
The one loving his life
loses it,
but the one hating his life
in this world
will keep it for life eternal.
**Context and Meaning in Matt 10:39:**

Matt 10:39 and its parallels in Mark and Luke all have a chiastic structure and employ antithetical parallelism. Matt 10:39 is located near the end of Matthew’s extended mission discourse (Matt 10:5-42). After commissioning the disciples, Jesus begins to warn them of coming persecutions (Matt 10:16-39). Verses 34-38 provide the immediate context for our saying. They focus on familial strife engendered by the coming of Jesus. Persecution will not only come from outside forces, it will also come from one’s family members (Matt 10:34-36). As a consequence, the disciple is exhorted to place allegiance to Jesus even above family. “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me” (Matt 10:37-38) In the context, taking up one’s cross becomes a symbol of self denial. Only when one is willing to die to earthly priorities and relationships, is one worthy of Jesus. Matt 10:39 continues this thought, emphasizing the importance of self-denial through a saying that juxtaposes two kinds of “life.” The one who tries to find his “current” life will end up losing “eternal” life. Only the one who is willing to sunder all for Jesus’ sake will be rewarded with eternal life.

**Context and Meaning in Luke 17:33:**

Luke 17:33 has a different context and meaning from its Matthean counterpart. It is located near the end of Luke’s small eschatological discourse (Luke 17:20-37), which

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2 As Dautzenberg (Sein Leben Bewahren, 60-61) suggests, ὄμοιος should be understood as the whole of one’s existence.
is concerned with the coming of the Son of Man to judge. After assurances that destruction will fall on the wicked in that day (Luke 17:26-30), Luke proceeds to stress the importance of immediate action on the day of the Son of Man. Those who tarry because of worldly attachments will be engulfed in the judgment, much like Lot’s wife (Luke 17:31-32). This is the immediate context for verse 33.

Luke’s wording also impacts the exegesis of the saying. Two different verbs stand in place of Matthew’s εὑρίσκω. The first, περιποιέω, means “to make secure for oneself.” The second, ζωογονέω, means “to cause to remain alive.” Both emphasize the preservation of life. Hence, in light of its wording and context, Luke 17:33 should be understood as an admonition to forsake the things of the world in order to preserve one’s life on the day of the Son of Man.

Context and Meaning in Mark 8:35:

Mark 8:35 occurs at a pivotal point in the gospel of Mark, after Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Christ, and Jesus’ first prediction of his future suffering, rejection, and death. In verse 34 the implications of this prediction are extended to Jesus’ followers. If anyone would come after Jesus, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow him. The path on which they will follow has been laid out in advance. The disciples know what they are getting into. Hence, the context of our saying renders interpretation rather straightforward. It pertains to the possibility of impending suffering and potential martyrdom. In the time of trial, the one who tries to save his life by forsaking Jesus will

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3 See BDAG 804.
4 See BDAG 431.
lose his life for eternity. However, the one who gives up his life in the time of trial for the sake of Jesus and the gospel will save it for eternity. This meaning is confirmed in the next verse, “For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed what can they give in return for their life?” (Mark 8:37-38).

**Context and Meaning in Matt 16:25:**

Matt 16:25, which reproduces Mark 8:35, is part of an entire block of material that Matthew has taken over from Mark. Consequently the context and meaning of the saying in Matthew is exactly the same as that of Mark. The only significant exegetical difference between the two is Matthew’s omission of “for the sake of the gospel” in the second half of the saying.⁵

**Context and Meaning in Luke 9:24:**

Luke also reproduces the entire section from Mark. Hence, the context and the meaning mirror the Markan parallel. In a rare minor agreement, like Matthew, Luke omits the reference to “for the sake of the gospel.”

**Context and Meaning in John 12:25:**

John 12:25 is part of a discussion about the imminent “glorification” of the Son of Man (John 12:23). In John, this glorification refers to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Verse 24 reads, “Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” This clearly

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prefigures the salvific effect of Jesus’ death. In verse 25, this same principle that death is
the doorway to greater life is then applied to all. The one who “loves” his life represents
the one who seeks to enrich and preserve his worldly life at any cost. This one will surely
forfeit eternal life. The one who “hates” his worldly life, on the other hand, is willing to
sacrifice his desires and even life for the greater good. Eternal life will be his reward.

Text, Context, and Meaning in Q 17:33:

The first question that must be addressed is whether Matt 10:39 and Luke 17:33
were derived from Q or whether they represent an expansion of Markan material. Two
factors suggest that we are, in fact, dealing with a Q saying. First, Luke tends to avoid
doublets. Luke both abstains from duplicating sayings himself and periodically omits
one of two similar sayings which have been passed down in two separate sources. On no
occasion has he duplicated another saying found in Mark. Second, both Matt 10:39 and
Luke 17:33 are located in the midst of extensive Q quotations. It is highly likely that one
of these two contexts corresponds to the original placement in Q.

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6 This use of the word “hate” is Semitic. See for example, מְשַׁמְשָׁה in Gen 29:31, 33 and Deut 21:15.
7 Those who conclude that there is a Q parallel include: Robinson, Hoffmann, Kloppenborg, Critical Edition, 456-7; Schultz, Q, 444-46; Polag, Fragmenta, 78; Luafen, Doppelüberlieferungen, 315-18; contra Zmijewski (Die Eschatologieder des Lukas-Evangeliums, 479-82) who adamantly defends the dependence of Luke 17:33 on Mark.
9 Kloppenborg, Formation, 158-59; Schulz, Q, 278; Luafen, Doppelüberlieferungen, 319-20; Marshall, Luke, 664; Schürmann, Luke, 544; Lührmann, Redaktion, 74-75; Polag, Fragmenta, 78; Manson, Sayings, 145; Rebell, “Sein Leben verlieren,” 207; contra Meier, Marginal Jew, 102-3 n.64 and Hoffmann, Studien, 5, 42.
The wording of the saying in Q seems to have been close to the Matthean version. Likely Lukan redactions include the construction ζητήσῃ... περιποιήσωσθαι\(^\text{10}\) and ζωογονήσει\(^\text{11}\) ζητέω is a common Lukan word (Matt 14, Mark 10, Luke 25). περιποιήσω, a gospel hapax, occurs only in Lukan material (Luke 17:33, Acts 20:28). ζωογονήσει is also a gospel hapax with attestations only in Lukan material (Luke 17:33, Acts 7:19). If εὑρίσκω was originally present in Q, it would explain Matthew’s addition of εὑρίσκω in the second half of 16:25, a passage in which Matthew has otherwise by and large followed Mark. The change to Mark would have resulted from a blending of the Markan and Q forms of the saying. Both περιποιήσωσθαι and ζωογονήσει also fit well within Luke’s specific context. The verbs may have been added in order to enhance the parallel with Lot’s wife. Finally the use of two different verbs is congruent with Luke’s preference to do away with parallels.\(^\text{12}\)

What is more difficult to discern is whether Matthew’s ἔνεκεν ἠμοῦ is a redactional addition based on the Markan form. At first such a conclusion would seem probable since neither Luke 17:33 nor the parallel in John 12:25 include this phrase. However, upon closer examination it becomes apparent that in both of these instances the phrase is an awkward fit in its present context. Luke 17:33 is explicitly tied to the behavior which the disciple is to exhibit on the day the Son of Man comes to judge. Unlike Lot’s wife, the disciple who wants to preserve his life must turn his back on his

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possessions, his relations—his “old” life when the Son of Man comes in judgment. This is not done for Jesus’ sake, but rather for the disciple’s. The issue is preservation of one’s life on the day of the Son of Man. The phrase “for my sake” is likewise out of place in the context of John 12:25. John 12:24 speaks of the abundant life that will result from Jesus’ impending death. Verse 25 applies this principle to all. Hence, John 12:25 urges first and foremost imitation of Jesus. He does not point to hating one’s life for Jesus, but rather following the pattern established by Jesus. Lacking is Mark and Matthew’s contextual trial imagery that necessitates the qualifier “for my sake.” In addition, John never uses the word ἐνέκεν in his gospel. The critical question, therefore, is whether Q 17:33 was originally found in its current Matthean or Lukan context. We will argue below that Matthew retains the original context of Q 17:33. Hence, ἐνέκεν ἐμοῦ was probably present in Q 17:33 and was eliminated by Luke.13

Q 17:33 read something like this:

(ὁ εὑρὼν) τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἀπολέσει αὐτὴν, καὶ (ὁ ἀπολέσας) τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐνέκεν ἐμοῦ εὑρήσει αὐτὴν.

a. (ὁς ἐὗρεν)
b. (ὁς δὲ ἐν ἀπολέσῃ)

(The one finding) his life will lose it, but (the one losing) his life for my sake will find it.

a. (whoever finds)
b. (whoever loses)


The original context of Q 17:33 has been preserved by Matthew. Luke 17:31-32 is a redactional insertion into Q material. If it was to be taken out, 17:33 would be connected directly to the double comparison of the days of Noah and Lot to the day of the Son of Man. This context renders 17:33 incomprehensible. Noah and Lot tried to save themselves and they clearly did not lose their lives! It is only with the addition of 17:31-32 that the saying makes sense. Furthermore, Luke 14:26, with its addition of τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, appears to retain a remnant of the saying in its current Matthean context. Hence, the context and the meaning of Q 17:33 are the same as that found in Matthew.

Most Primitive Version of Q 17:33:

The differences in form and vocabulary make it quite clear that we are dealing with three independent attestations. They also render it virtually impossible to reconstruct a most primitive version with any certainty, especially considering that many of the differences might be attributable to the possibility that similar sayings were uttered by Jesus on more than one occasion. The version in John, in particular, suggests the possibility of a separate but similar saying. Not only is the vocabulary different, but the chiastic structure found in Mark and Q is also missing. Therefore, as has been our practice in such situations, we will confine our observations to pointing out the elements shared by all three versions.

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Q 17:33, Mark 8:35, and John 12:25 all employ antithetical parallelism. The one who clings (Q ὁ εὑρὼν; Mark θέλῃ...σῶσαι; John ὁ φιλῶν) to his life will lose it (Q ἀπολέσει; Mark ἀπολέσῃ; John ἀπολλάξῃ); but the one who loses (Q ὁ ἀπολέσας; Mark ἀπολέσει; John ὁ μισῶν) his life will save it (Q εὑρήσει; Mark σώσει; John φυλάξει).

We have seen that the evangelists placed the saying in a variety of different contexts, suggesting that we are dealing with a free-floating saying. What then was the original meaning of the most primitive version(s)? Each of the three sayings assumes that there are two kinds of life, one that is worth losing so that the other may be gained. They all contrast one’s present life in the world with one’s eschatological life with God. Those who consistently surrender their present life, even to the point of actual martyrdom, will gain an eternal future life with God at the final judgment. What is less clear is when this “eschatological” life begins. It may well be that the faithful disciples’ eschatological life includes the “new” life they now live in the presence of God. In the process of surrendering oneself, the eschatological judgment is anticipated, and the quality of one’s future life is poured out even in the present. Hence, the saying would apply not only to life after death, but also life in the present.16

Another significant overlap, however, exists between two versions of the saying. Mark and Q explicitly point to the significance of Jesus. One’s current life is not to be sacrificed without cause. Rather, eschatological life will be gained if one’s life is lost “for my sake.”

16 This is certainly the case from John’s theological perspective.
Funk objects to the eschatological interpretation of the saying as it is found in Mark 8:35, Q 17:33, and John 12:25, arguing that the historical Jesus did indeed say something along these lines, but that each of the evangelists distorted his original meaning. Funk argues that the saying was a “secular proverb” adopted and disseminated by Jesus.\(^{17}\) This existential riddle encouraged one to realize that life can only be truly “lived” when it is lived without fear of losing it.\(^{18}\) However, such a possibility seems rather remote when one considers that the combination of wording, future tenses, and contexts of all three independent versions of the saying point toward an eschatological interpretation.

*Arguments for Authenticity:*

As we have seen, Q 17:33 enjoys a rare triple independent attestation, occurring in Q, Mark, and John. Clearly we are dealing with a very old tradition that was widely known and acknowledged to have come from Jesus.

In addition, the criterion of coherence suggests that we are dealing with an authentic tradition. First, Q 17:33 bears a great deal of similarity to two sayings which we have already treated in this study: Q 12:4-5 and Q 12:8-9. All three exhort the faithful not to cling to their lives in the face of danger and difficulty, arguing that such an attitude has direct implications for one’s eschatological future and that choices must be made accordingly. Since both of these sayings were determined to be authentic, it becomes more probable that Q 17:33 is authentic as well.

\(^{17}\) Funk, *Five Gospels*, 79.
Second, as we discussed in the arguments for the authenticity of Q 13:28-29, the theme of eschatological reversal seems to have been a favorite of the historical Jesus. The core of Q 17:33 relies on this same theme.

Arguments against Authenticity:

Arguments against the authenticity of Q 17:33 and parallels are virtually non-existent. Lüdemann provides a rare dissenting voice in his claim that, “The authenticity of this profane proverb is extremely uncertain even without the Markan additions and without reference to Jesus.” Unfortunately, he provides no arguments for the skepticism he espouses.

Satake argues that the saying is a creation of the early church on the grounds that Jesus refers only of his disciples’ future suffering. For Satake, who believes that Jesus knew he was destined to suffer, the omission of a direct mention of Jesus’ suffering renders the saying inauthentic. The basis of the presupposition, however, remains unclear. There is no reason why Jesus could not have referred to the suffering of his disciples without mentioning his own suffering. Nor is it clear why the saying in Luke 17:33 and parallels excludes Jesus.

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18 For examples of such an exhortation used in a military context in order to instill courage, see Bauer, “Wer sein Leben retten will…,” 7-10.

19 Lüdemann, Jesus, 58.

Conclusions and Implications:

The saying(s) found in Q 17:33 and its parallels appear to have originated with the historical Jesus. Not only are they widely attested, but they also cohere well with other authentic sayings treated in the course of this study.

In Q 17:33 and its parallels we see that eschatological life can only be gained through the surrender and sacrifice of one’s current life in the world. This surrender and sacrifice of one’s life is undertaken for the sake of Jesus (Mark and Q) or in imitation of Jesus (John). This process of self-denial will have real costs, perhaps even physical death, but will result in a favorable verdict at the final judgment. Conversely, the one who seeks to preserve his current life at the cost of turning aside from Jesus and his ways will lose eschatological life.
CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis of Q’s twelve final judgment passages has yielded an interesting set of results, which collectively enable us to draw helpful conclusions about the historical Jesus and Q.

Authenticity of Q’s Final Judgment Sayings

In ten of the twelve passages the criteria of authenticity delineated in this study suggested that we are dealing with a saying that originated with the historical Jesus. These include: 1) Q 10:10-12 “If They Do Not Receive You…” 2) Q 10:13-15 “Woe to You, Chorazin; Woe to You, Bethsaida…” 3) Q 11:31-32 “The Queen of the South Will Rise…” 4) Q 12:4-5 “Do not Fear…” 5) Q 12:8-9 “Everyone who Confesses…” 6) Q 12:10 “Whoever Speaks a Word Against…” 7) Q 12:42-46 “Who is the Faithful and Wise Slave…” 8) Q 13:29,28 “Many Will Come From East and West…” 9) Q 17:1-2 “Snares are Sure to Come…” 10) Q 17:33 “Whoever Wants to Save his Life….”

Moreover, close inspection has revealed serious flaws inherent in arguments that have been used against the authenticity of such sayings. In two other cases, Q 6:47-49 “Everyone Who Hears my Words and Acts on Them…” and Q 17:26-20 “As it was in the Days of Noah…”, a conclusion proved elusive. Statistically, these results are not difficult to interpret. They demonstrate that the final judgment was indeed among the subjects
treated by the historical Jesus, with the obvious corollary that the message of the
historical Jesus was, in fact, eschatological.

The Historical Jesus’ Perspective on Final Judgment
in the Context of Second Temple Judaism

What, then, do the ten sayings deemed authentic tell us about the historical Jesus’
perspective on the final judgment, and how does this perspective compare with the
notions prevalent in second temple Judaism?

How is the final judgment depicted? Unlike many other texts from the late second
temple period, none of our ten final judgment sayings contains a full-blown description of
the final judgment. By and large they seek to provide new insight into traditionally
accepted scenarios. Unfortunately, the precise scenario assumed in any given instance is
not always clear. As in every other late second temple text dealing with final judgment,
God’s concrete intervention in the course of history is clearly the starting point, but how
is the separation of the righteous and the wicked envisaged? God’s separation of the
righteous from the wicked by sending them to their respective eschatological destinations
clear is whether the final judgment also includes God’s earthly destruction of the wicked
and preservation of the righteous, a feature of many second temple final judgment
scenarios (see especially Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, Hodayot, War Scroll,
Wisdom). Only the parabiotic imagery of the returning Master in Q 12:42-46 suggests that
this might be the case.
The two passages that provide a brief glimpse into the process of final judgment both employ the image of a trial. Q 11:31-32 describes the Queen of the South and the men of Nineveh offering prosecutorial testimony against “this generation.” Q 12:8-9 and parallels describe the testimony of the Son of Man before an angelic tribunal. His confession or denial seals one’s fate, resulting in salvation or damnation. This trial imagery is consonant with many of the second temple depictions of the final judgment.¹

**Who is the judge?** Only three passages offer any insight into the identity of the judge. Q 12:8-9 and parallels speak of a trial before God’s angels. However, in keeping with the Old Testament, this heavenly host is almost surely meant to signify God’s own presence (as both Matt 10:32-33, Rev 3:5 and 2 Clem. 3:2 have already interpreted it). By employing the idiom of the master’s return, Q 12:42-46 likewise points to God, Israel’s true master, as judge. Presumably, Q 12:4-5 and its parallel also place judgment in the hands of God, who alone can destroy both body and soul in Gehenna. Perhaps most significantly, there is no suggestion that anyone other than God will administer the final judgment. The role of the Son of Man never exceeds that of chief witness (Q 12:8-9 and parallels).

**Who is judged?** Two passages indicate that the final judgment stretches throughout the world and throughout time. It will include Gentiles, as well as the living and the dead. Q 10:13-15 presupposes that the final judgment will include the inhabitants of those ancient bywords of sinfulness and rebellion Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom. They will all stand before God on the last day to receive their due. Similarly, Q 11:31-32 contends that the final judgment will include such figures as the Queen of the South of Solomon’s

day and the Ninevites from the time of Jonah. That the final judgment should include Gentiles and the dead should come as no surprise in light of many similarly inclusive scenarios from the late second temple period.²

What stands out, however, is the degree to which many of the final judgment sayings seem aimed specifically at those within Israel. Q 10:10-12 speaks of the judgment of those in Israel who reject Jesus’ emissaries. Q 10:13-15 condemns the entire towns of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, comparing them to the likes of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom. Q 11:31-32 pronounces judgment on “this generation,” a clear allusion to the Jewish generations of the flood and the wilderness. Q 12:42-46 levels its attack on the Jewish leadership that has mishandled the charge given to it by God. Q 13:28-29 deliberately calls attention to the unexpected nature of the judgment of some within Israel by declaring that they will find themselves thrown out of the eschatological banquet, unable to feast with the saved alongside Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That the historical Jesus would aim the threat of divine judgment first and foremost at his Jewish contemporaries parallels our findings from the late second temple period. Most of the final judgment texts that we considered placed special emphasis on a separation within Israel.³

Lastly, some of the final judgment sayings seem directed at those who would already be considered “insiders.” In order to enjoy salvation at the final judgment, they

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² All of the second temple texts surveyed in this study assumed that judgment would extend to the nations. Resurrection is coupled with judgment in: Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, Book of Watchers, Epistle of Enoch, Wisdom, and 2 Maccabees.

must persevere in the face of persecution. Q 12:4-5 and Q 12:8-9 explicitly point in this direction, and Q 17:33’s injunction to lose one’s life contains similar implications.

What criteria are used in the final judgment? Nine of the ten passages directly address the question of criteria used in the final judgment: Q 10:10-12; 10:13-15; 11:31-32; 12:4-5; 12:8-9; 12:10; 12:42-46; 17:1-2; 17:33. In fact, it would appear that the standard by which the saved and the condemned were to be differentiated was a question of foremost concern for all nine of these sayings. Five of the nine sayings explicitly focus on one’s response to Jesus’ person, message, and ministry as the criterion for salvation. Q 12:8-9 suggests that salvation awaits the one who confesses Jesus and condemnation awaits the one who denies him. Q 17:33 calls for a willingness to surrender or sacrifice one’s life in order to gain eternal life. Such sacrifice is either undertaken for Jesus’ sake or in imitation of him. Q 10:13-15 and Q 11:31-32 both demand repentance specifically in response to Jesus’ message and miracles. Q 10:10-12 extends the absolute importance of Jesus to those who seek to advance his message. Reception of such followers and their message will earn one hospitality in the kingdom of God. Their rejection will spell doom.

In the case of three other passages, lack of the original context makes it less obvious precisely how the criteria of salvation and condemnation are to be interpreted. Q 12:10 describes speaking against the Holy Spirit as the unforgivable sin. Yet speaking against the Spirit clearly entails speaking against the one through whom the Spirit has spoken or acted. It is only natural to assume that this agent would be the one who spoke

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4 The lone exception is Q 13:28-29 (Many will come from east and west…) whose point of emphasis is the unexpected identity of the saved and condemned.
the saying in the first place. Hence, it is quite likely that Q 12:10 is also making a statement about the absolute importance of Jesus and his words.

Q 12:4-5 instructs one to fear God rather than man in the face of persecution and suffering. The implication is that one’s fate in the final judgment depends on continued faithfulness. What are not spelled out are the reason for persecution and the object of this fidelity. However, given its resonance with two of the other final judgment sayings (Q 12:8-9 and Q 17:33), it is likely that the threat of God’s judgment looms over those who, in the midst of persecution, reject Jesus and his message.

Q 17:2 speaks of condemnation for those who cause “little ones to fall.” We noted the impossibility of identifying with certainty the identity of these “little ones” or the original meaning of “to fall.” It may be, as the tradition holds, that the saying refers to causing one of Jesus’ followers to fall away from him, in which case allegiance to Jesus’ person and message once again emerges as the primary criterion at the final judgment. But the saying may have originally referred more broadly to the propensity of Israel’s leaders to lead society’s “small” people into sin. As it stands, a verdict remains beyond our grasp.

Q 12:42-46 alone clearly points to a criterion of judgment other than one’s response to Jesus and his message. This parable spells out judgment for Israel’s leaders because they have been unfaithful with their charge and mistreated the people of God placed in their care.

In summary, of the nine sayings which speak of the criteria of final judgment, seven of them seem to indicate that one’s response to the person, message, and ministry of Jesus is the chief criterion by which one will be judged on the last day. Of the
remaining two sayings, the context of one prevents us from drawing a firm conclusion about its criterion of final judgment, and the other points to the sin of Israel’s leadership. The conclusion that clearly emerges from this evidence is that the historical Jesus saw his own words, actions, and ultimately person as the great divider of people. As chief envoy of the kingdom of God, Jesus proclaimed the absolute necessity of a positive response to himself. Fidelity to Jesus would result in salvation at the final judgment. Rejection of Jesus would result in condemnation at the final judgment.

The criterion of final judgment espoused by the historical Jesus fits well into the pattern we discovered in our survey of late second temple texts. We encountered an overarching premise shared by a majority of these texts, including: Apocalypse of Weeks, Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Psalm of Solomon 17, Hodayot, Rule of the Community, Damascus Document, Book of Watchers, Jubilees, Pesher to Habakkuk, and Epistle of Enoch. First, they agreed on the dismal state of Israel in the time preceding the final judgment. A similar view seems to pervade our final judgment sayings. Both Q 10:13-15 and Q 11:31-32 speak of the necessity of repentance. In addition, Q 11:31-32 castigates the unfaithful in Israel as “this generation.” The generation of the flood and the generation of the wilderness were forsaken by God because of their sin and hardness of heart. Members of “this generation” are equally bankrupt. Q 12:42-46 explicitly attacks Israel’s leaders who have forsaken their God-given responsibilities, and Q 13:28-29 implies that many Jews would not deserve to dine with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the eschatological banquet.

This same group of second temple texts was also in agreement that, in response to this apostasy, God would raise up a remnant within Israel. We saw that this remnant
was defined in various ways. In the Apocalypse of Weeks the members of the remnant were “chosen” from the “eternal plant of righteousness” to receive “sevenfold wisdom and knowledge” (93:10). In Daniel they were the “wise,” who “lead many to righteousness” (12:3). In the Animal Apocalypse they were the lambs, born to the white sheep, who “began to open their eyes and to see and to cry out to the sheep” (90:6). In Psalm of Solomon 17 they were the members of the exiled “assemblies of the devout” (17:16). In the Book of Watchers they were the “righteous chosen” (1:1). In Jubilees the members of the remnant were called the “children,” who “begin to search the law and to search the commandments and to return to the way of righteousness” (23:26). In the Qumran documents, Hodayot, Rule of the Community, Damascus Document, Pesher to Habakkuk, the remnant consisted of those who were members in the “community of the renewed covenant” and who displayed allegiance to the Teacher of Righteousness, their instructor in the ways of God.

Our sayings suggest that the definition of the remnant operative at Qumran provides the best parallel to the teaching of the historical Jesus. The Teacher of Righteousness and his message defined the community of the renewed covenant. Allegiance to the Teacher and his teaching was essential to membership in the community and membership in the community was directly related to one’s salvation at the final judgment. Similarly, our sayings suggest that Jesus considered allegiance to himself as the defining feature of God’s remnant.

Where is the final judgment enacted? Several passages suggest that the final judgment is enacted on earth. Q 12:42-46 describes the departure and subsequent return of the master, suggesting that the final judgment will transpire on earth. Q 10:13-15, Q
11:31-32, Q 12:4-5 and Q 13:28-29 all clearly point to a resurrection of the dead, which implies that the final judgment will take place on the earth. Those sayings which refer to a divine trial, Q 11:31-32 and Q 12:8-9 are ambiguous about the location of that trial.

*When will the final judgment take place?* The question of the final judgment’s timing is not specifically addressed by any of the sayings. Q 11:31-32 with its condemnation of “this generation” is the only passage that might be construed as a timetable for the advent of the final judgment. We noted that the phrase “this generation” was not intended to refer to a chronological generation, but rather the disposition of those who encountered Jesus and still rejected him. Nevertheless, it is clear that Jesus’ contemporaries are specifically the object of the condemnations of Q 11:31-32. Their judgment will be especially severe precisely because they failed to respond in spite of the fact that something greater than Solomon or Jonah is *here*. However, in spite of the focus on Jesus’ contemporaries, there is nothing in Q 11:31-32 to suggest that “this generation” should be considered the “last generation.”

*What are the results of the final judgment?* Our passages offer very little in the way of description pertaining to the fate of those who are saved in the final judgment. Q 10:13-15 speaks generically of their “exaltation” and Q 13:28-29 describes them partaking in an eschatological banquet alongside Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This contrasts sharply with many of the second temple texts, which vividly describe the rewards of salvation.

Conversely, there is a good deal of focus on the fate of those who are condemned in the final judgment. Various images are employed in order to communicate the severity of the verdict. Q 12:4-5 speaks of one’s destruction, body and soul, in the flaming valley.
of Gehenna. In Q 12:42-46 the returning master commands that the wicked slave be “cut in two and assigned a place with the unfaithful.” With chilling pathos, Q 13:28-29 describes the “weeping and gnashing of teeth” that will result when many are thrown out of the kingdom of God, their invitations to the messianic banquet revoked. Q 17:1-3a evokes the grotesque image of being cast into the depth of the sea with a giant millstone hung around one’s neck—and then proclaims that such a fate is superior to that of those who are condemned at the final judgment.\(^5\)

Two sayings imply that there are degrees of punishment (and reward?) at the final judgment. Both Q 10:10-12 and Q 10:13-15 claim that the results of the final judgment will be more tolerable for the most wicked cities of old than for those who spurn Jesus and his message.

Given that the emphasis of our sayings falls principally on the fate of the condemned, we can adduce that they were intended to serve as warnings. Jesus’ final judgment sayings were crafted to shock and dismay, to cause his listeners to heed the gravity of his message and to graphically impress upon them the consequences of rejection.

**Implications for the Study of the Historicity of Sayings in Q**

Finally, the results of our study also have implications for the historicity of sayings in Q. We noted that the eschatological material in Q is often considered part of a second strata, material that was added by a redactor to a pre-existing collection of

\(^5\) These punishments are congruent with similar images employed in Daniel, Animal Apocalypse, Book of Parables, *Psalms of Solomon*, *Rule of the Community*, Book of Watchers, *Pesher to Habakkuk*, and Epistle of Enoch.
sayings. Some scholars have inferred from this hypothesis that the eschatological material in Q was the *creation* of a redactor. All twelve of Q’s final judgment sayings are typically assigned to this second strata. Since our conclusions overwhelmingly point to the authenticity of the bulk of these sayings, we have concretely established that there is indeed authentic eschatological material in Q. A facile rejection of this material is quite simply historically inadequate. What is needed is an approach to Q that takes the potential historicity of all of its source material seriously.
APPENDIX

In the saying “I Do Not Know You,” Matt 7:22-23 // Luke 13:26-27 are placed in different sections of their respective books. Matthew places the saying toward the end of the Sermon on the Mount, while Luke places it in the middle of his travel narrative. Both sections display a fair amount of redaction. Thus the placement of the verses does not confirm their origin in Q. The two versions of the saying are radically different, as a graphic demonstration reveals. In the following chart, identical words have been underlined in both Matthew and Luke. Only those sections with more than one identical word have been reproduced on the same line. General parallels in content are staggered, with the Lukan version following the Matthean version.

Matthew 7:22-23
τοι γένειν
καὶ τούτῳ ὑμῶν
ἀποχωρεῖτε ἀπὸ ἐμοῦ
οἱ ἔργαζόμενοι τὴν ἁνωμίαν.

καὶ εἰ ἔργαζετε λέγειν,
ἐφάγομεν ἐνωπιόν σου καὶ ἔπισταμεν καὶ ἐν ταῖς πλατείαις ἡμῶν ἐδίδαξας:
καὶ ἔρει λέγων ύμίν:
οὐκ οἴδα σὺν ύμῖν πόθεν ἔστε:
ἀπόστητε ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ
πάντες ἔργαται ἁδικίας.
Among the key differences are: 1) In Matthew those seeking fellowship are depicted as disciples of Jesus. They argue that they prophesied, exorcised, and did mighty works in Jesus’ name. In Luke the outsiders argue for their inclusion on the basis of their familiarity with Jesus. They ate and drank with him and he taught in their streets. 2) In Matthew they are subsequently called “workers of lawlessness” (ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν). In Luke they are called “workers of unrighteousness” (ἐργάται ἀδίκιας).

These differences could be explained on the basis of redaction. Indeed most scholars have tended in this direction.¹ However, one additional factor should be considered. Unlike the beginning portion of both sayings, Matt 7:23 and Luke 13:27 are quite similar in content. This is where the presence of similar wording and grammar would bolster the case for a shared origin in Q. However, as the chart clearly indicates, the two verses betray no sign of dependence on a common literary source, displaying only the most rudimentary commonalities (ὑμᾶς and ἀπί ἐμοῦ). This is particularly intriguing considering that the phrase is almost certainly an allusion to Psalm 6:8a in the LXX, “Depart from me all you workers of lawlessness” (Ἀπόστητε ἀπί ἐμοῦ πάντες οἱ εργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν). Neither Matthew nor Luke reproduces it exactly. Luke adopts the πάντες and the ἀπόστητε, while Matthew omits the πάντες and uses ἀποχωρεῖτε instead. Matthew, on the other hand, reproduces the phrase οἱ εργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν which Luke changes to ἐργάται ἀδίκιας. Therefore, one

can neither argue that one of the Gospel writers has redacted the verse toward the LXX, nor that one of the gospel writers redacted the verse away from the LXX. Rather, it would seem that the two different manners of alluding to Psalm 6:8a point to independent origins. The use of Psalm 6:8a also explains the presence of the one word that might have cast doubt on an argument for independence: “workers.” Rather than simply condemn the lawless or the unrighteous, both Matthew and Luke employ a form of ἔργαζόμενοι. In both cases, the phrase is intended to point back to Psalm 6:8a. Consequently, the most reasonable conclusion is that Matt 7:22-23 // Luke 13:26-27 do not share a common literary source.

The two versions of “The Parable of the Entrusted Money,” Matt 25:14-30 // Luke 19:11-27 also bear the marks of independent traditions, lacking substantial parallels in grammar and vocabulary, and containing strikingly different content. They occur in different contexts in Matthew and Luke and are joined to material that is unique to their respective gospels (Matt 25:1-13; 25:31-46 and Luke 19:1-10). By laying the two texts side by side the extent of the differences can easily be surmised.

Matthew 25:14-30

"Ωσπερ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος ἀποδημῶν

ἐκάλεσεν τοὺς ἴδιους δούλους
καὶ παρέδωκεν αὐτοῖς
tὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτοῦ,

καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐδώκεν πέντε τάλαντα,
ὁ δὲ δύο, ὁ δὲ ἐν,
ἐκάστῳ κατὰ τὴν ἴδιαν δύναμιν,
cαὶ ἀπεδήμησεν.

ἐνθεώς πορευθεὶς
ὁ τὰ πέντε τάλαντα λαβὼν
ηργάσατο ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐκέρδησεν ἄλλα πέντε·
ὁ δὲ δύο ἐκέρδησεν ἄλλα δύο.
ὁ δὲ τὸ ἐν λαβὼν ἀπελθὼν
ὁρυζεν γῆν καὶ ἐκρυφεν
tὸ ἀργύριον τοῦ κυρίου αὐτοῦ.

καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς· πραγματεύσασθε ἐν ὦ ἐρχομαι.
οἱ δὲ πολίται αὐτοῦ ἐμίσουν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀπέστειλαν προσβείαν
ὅπισοψ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες· οὐ θέλομεν τοῦτον βασιλεύσαι ἐφ' ἡμᾶς.

μετά δὲ πολὺν χρόνον
ἔρχεται ὁ κύριος τῶν δούλων ἐκείνων καὶ συναίρει λόγον μετ' αὐτῶν.

καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ἐπανελθεῖν αὐτὸν

καὶ εἶπεν φωνηθήναι αὐτῷ τοὺς δούλους τούτους
οἷς δεδόκει τὸ ἀργύριον,

καὶ προσελθὼν
ὁ τὰ πέντε τάλαντα λαβὼν

Luke 19:11-27

'Ακούσαντον δὲ αὐτῶν ταύτα προσῆκεν εἰπεν παραβολὴν διὰ τὸ εἶναι ἤλευσανλήμ αὐτῶν καὶ δοκεῖν αὐτοὺς ὅτι παραχρήμα μέλλει ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἀναφαίνεσθαι.

eἰπεν οὖν ἄνθρωπος τις εὐγενής ἐπορεύθη εἰς χώραν μακρὰν λαβεῖν ἕαυτῷ βασιλείαν καὶ ύποστρέψας.

καλέσας δὲ δέκα δούλους ἕαυτοῦ

ἐδώκεν αὐτοῖς δέκα μνᾶς καὶ δεῦτε πορευθήσασθε ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ καὶ λαβεῖτε τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ὑμῶν...
προσήνεγκεν ἄλλα πέντε τάλαντα λέγον· κύριε,
πέντε τάλαντα μοι παρέδωκας· ἰδε ἄλλα πέντε τάλαντα ἐκέρδησα.

η ἐφι αὐτῷ ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ·
eu. δοῦλε ἄγαθε καὶ πιστέ,
ἐπὶ ὀλίγα ἡς πιστῶς,
ἐπὶ πολλῶν σε καταστήσω·
eἰσελθείς εἰς τὴν χαράν
tοῦ κυρίου σου.

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ εὖγε, ἄγαθε δοῦλε,
ὅτι ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστῶς εἶχέν οὐ,
ἰσθι ἐξουσίαν εἶχων
ἐπάνω δέκα πόλεων.

καὶ ἤλθεν ὁ δεύτερος λέγον·
ἡ μνα σου, κύριε,
ἐποίησεν πέντε μνας.

η ἐπίπεν δὲ καὶ τούτῳ·
καὶ σὺ ἐπάνω γίνου πέντε πόλεων.

καὶ ὁ ἐτερος ἤλθεν λέγον· κύριε,
-indent. ἡ μνα σου
ἤν εἶχον ἀποκειμένην ἐν σουδαρίῳ
ἐφοβοῦμην γὰρ σε.
ὁτι ἄνθρωπος αὐστηρὸς ἐϊ,
αἰρεῖς ὃ ὅωκ ἐθηκας καὶ θερίζεις ὃ ὅωκ ἐπειρᾶς.

ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ

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The differences between the two versions can be summed up as follows: 1) Luke begins with an explicit allegory about a nobleman who is going away to receive a
kingdom. He returns to this allegory on a number of occasions and it forms the backdrop of the parable. In contrast, Matthew simply begins with a man going on a journey. 2) Luke says that there were ten servants, though he only describes an interaction with three of them. 3) The sums of money are entirely different. Matthew’s master gives five talents, two talents and one talent to three servants. Luke’s nobleman gives one mina to each of the ten servants. 4) Luke provides a record of the nobleman’s instructions. Matthew does not. 5) Luke returns to the allegory of the nobleman and describes the discontent of the citizens. 6) Matthew provides an account of the labors of the three servants. Luke does not. 7) When the master returns and the accounts are settled, the sums made by the slaves are different. In Matthew the first two slaves double their talents. In Luke, though the ten all started with one mina, one of them has made ten and another five. 8) In Matthew the faithful servant is told that he will be set over “much” and to “enter into the joy of your master.” In Luke the good slave is given authority over a number of cities that corresponds to the number of minas earned. 9) The wicked slave in Matthew buries his talent, while the wicked slave in Luke puts his mina in a napkin. 10) In Matthew’s conclusion, the wicked slave is cast into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Luke returns to his allegory and narrates a command to slay all those who opposed his reign.

Certainly a good number of these differences can be attributed to redaction. For instance, the allegory that is woven throughout the Lukan version is almost certainly secondary. It disrupts both the flow and the logic of the original parable. Likewise, Matthew’s conclusion employs phrases that are distinctive to his gospel. Nevertheless, there are also a number of differences that cannot be explained along redactional lines.
What would have compelled Matthew or Luke to change the currency from talents to minas or vice versa? Why change the sums of money given or the sums of money earned, or the nature of the reward? Why change the number of servants involved in the parable? What would motivate one of the author’s to change the manner in which the wicked slave hid his money? Each of these changes defies a clear redactional explanation, rendering it likely that the two versions of the parable were not both derived from Q. There are similarities between the wording of the two versions, but they are precisely the kind of words one would expect to find repeated in two independent versions of the same story. It is worth noting that greater correspondence of vocabulary and grammar is found in the climax of the parable and in the memorable aphorism found at the end. This is precisely where we would expect to find greater degrees of verbal correlation among two independent traditions.

The “Parable of the Banquet” in Matt 22:1-10 // Luke 14:16-24 presents us with a slightly less straightforward situation. To begin with, the vocabulary, grammatical constructions, and content of the two versions betray no hint of literary dependence upon the same source.

Matt 22:2-10  
Luke 14:16-24

ωμούωθη ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν
ἀνθρώπῳ βασιλείᾳ,
δεστὶς ἐποίησεν γάμους τῷ νίῳ αὐτοῦ.

καὶ ἀπέστειλεν
τοὺς δούλους αὐτοῦ

καὶ ἐκάλεσεν πολλοὺς
καὶ ἀπέστειλεν

3 Those who argue for literary independence include: Davies and Allison, Matthew, 3.194; Luz, Matthew, 3.233; Weiser, Knechtlehre, 59-60; Jeremia, Parables, 63; Linnemann, Parables, 166 n. 20; Dodd, Parables, 93; Streeter, Four Gospels, 243-44. Those who argue for their inclusion in a common Q source include: Robinson, Hoffmann, Kloppenborg, Critical Edition, 432 (with reservation); Polag, Fragmenta, 70; Schulz, Q, 391-98; Manson, Sayings, 129-30; Edwards, Theology, 172-73.
καλέσαι τοὺς κεκλημένους
eἰς τοὺς γάμους,
kαὶ οὐκ ἠθελον ἑλθείν.

πάλιν ἀπέστειλεν ἅλλους δούλους
λέγων· εἴπατε τοὺς κεκλημένους·
ἰδοὺ τὸ ἀριστόν μου ἠτοίμακα,
οἱ ταύροι μου καὶ τὰ σιτιστὰ
teθυμένα καὶ πάντα ἑτοιμα·
δεῦτε εἰς τοὺς γάμους.
οἱ δὲ ἀμελησάντες ἀπήλθον,
ὅς μὲν εἰς τὸν ἴδιον ἄχρον,

ὃς δὲ ἐπὶ τὴν ἐμπορίαν αὐτοῦ·

οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ κρατήσαντες
toὺς δούλους αὐτοῦ
ὑβρίσαν καὶ ἀπέκτειναν.

ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὤργίσθη,
καὶ πέμψας τὰ στρατεύματα αὐτοῦ
ἀπώλεσεν τοὺς φονεῖς ἐκείνους
καὶ τὴν πόλιν αὐτῶν ἐνέπρησεν.

τότε λέγει τοὺς δούλοις αὐτοῦ·

ὁ μὲν γάμος ἑτοιμός ἐστίν,
οἱ δὲ κεκλημένοι οὐκ ἦσαν ἄξιοι·
πορεύσατε οὖν
ἐπὶ τὰς διεξοδους τῶν ὁδῶν

καὶ ὁσοὺς ἔδαν εὑρητε
cαλέσατε εἰς τοὺς γάμους.

τὸν δούλον αὐτοῦ
τῇ ὥρᾳ τοῦ δείπνου

εἴπειν τοῖς κεκλημένοις·
ἐρχεσθε, ὅτι ἡ ἡ ἑτοιμα ἐστίν.

καὶ ἤρξατο ἀπὸ μιᾶς
πάντες παρατείσθαι.

ὁ πρῶτος εἶπεν αὐτῷ·
ἄχρον ἡγόρασα
καὶ ἔχω ἀνάγκην ἐξελθῶν ἰδεῖν αὐτόν·
ἐρωτῶ σε, ἔχε με παρηθημένον.

καὶ ἄτερος εἶπεν·
ζεῦγη βοῶν ἡγόρασα πέντε
καὶ πορεύσαμε δοκιμάσαι αὐτά·
ἐρωτῶ σε, ἔχε με παρηθημένον.

καὶ ἄτερος εἶπεν·
γυναῖκα ἔγνιμα
καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐ δύναμαι ἑλθείν.

καὶ παραγενόμενος ὁ δοῦλος
ἀπήγγειλεν τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ ταύτα·
tότε ὁργίσθη ὁ οἰκοδεσπότης
eἶπεν τῷ δοῦλῳ αὐτοῦ·

ἐξελθε ταχέως εἰς τὰς πλατεῖας
καὶ ρύμας τῆς πόλεως.
The few words that the two versions share are all words that are integral to the basic development of the parable. No shared words are indicative of a detail or superfluous concept that has been reproduced in both versions from a common source. The only phrases of two or more words are: καὶ ἀπέστειλεν, τοῖς κεκλημένοις, and εἰς τὰς ὁδοὺς. Clearly these connections are insufficient to establish a common literary source.

The differences in content are equally striking. 1) Luke’s “man” is a “king” in Matthew. 2) Luke’s “banquet” is a “wedding feast” held for the king’s son. 3) Luke’s one “servant” stands in contrast with Matthew’s “servants.” 4) Luke has a single invitation to the guests, while Matthew has a double invitation. 5) Two of Luke’s three extended excuses are offered in severely abbreviated form in Matthew. 6) In Matthew, but not in Luke, some of the servants are then seized, treated shamefully, and killed. 7) Matthew’s version alone then narrates a swift judgment upon the murderers in which they are destroyed. 8) Luke has two latter invitations, including one specifically to the “poor and maimed and blind and lame.” Matthew has a single invitation to both “good and bad.” 9)
Luke concludes with a judgment upon those who were initially invited, while Matthew contains a further expansion of the parable, detailing the judgment upon the guest without a wedding garment.

Unlike Matt 7:22-23 // Luke 13:26-27 and Matt 25:14-30 // Luke 19:11-27, it is not at all difficult to surmise the underlying redactional motivations which have led to the differences between Matt 22:1-10 and Luke 14:16-24. Some minimal additions are probably attributable to Luke. For instance, his reference to the “poor and maimed and blind and lame” is consistent with both his theology and vocabulary. The bulk of the redaction, however, seems to belong to Matthew’s version. On the one hand, numerous additions can be explained as the product of extensive allegorization of the original parable. For example, Matthew’s king and the wedding banquet given on behalf of the king’s son both add a level of specificity to the parable’s allegory which is almost certainly a sign of growth in the tradition. Likewise, the extended ending in Matthew’s version strives to make the parable immediately applicable to those in the early church. There is no reason to doubt that Matthew himself may have been responsible for these “improvements.” In addition to these allegorical expansions, it would seem that the Matthean version of the parable of the banquet has absorbed elements from the parable of the wicked tenants. The plural servants, the violent mistreating of the king’s messengers, and the king’s violent response, are all elements found in the parable of the wicked tenants. Here we initially have reason to believe that the redaction is specifically due to Matthew. After all, the parable of the wicked tenants is placed immediately prior to the parable of the banquet in Matthew, suggesting that he intended them to be read in light of one another. These preliminary observations would seem to suggest that Matt 22:1-10
and Luke 14:16-24 do indeed come from the same source and that Matthew himself was responsible for the extensive reworking.

However, the situation is not quite so simple. Three other factors must be taken into consideration. First, the Matthean version of the parable of the banquet includes an unusual number of Matthean hapax. Including cognates with the same meaning, the following occur only one time in Matthew: ἄριστον (vs. 4 times in Luke); ταῦτα τοῖς θύω (vs. 8 times in Luke-Acts); σιντστός (vs. 3 times in Luke); ἀμελέω. The regular use of some of these words by Luke makes it unlikely that they were part of the original source. Hence, the high degree of words with a single attestation in Matthew raises doubt as to whether Matthew himself was responsible for all the redactions found in 22:1-13.

Second, in those few places where the general content of the Matthean and Lukan versions of the parable coincide, one would expect to find some degree of verbal agreement. However, even these sections betray no indication that they were working with a common literary source.

Finally, there is another version of the parable of the banquet in the Gos. Thom. 64. This version closely parallels the Lukan version, supporting our initial redactional presuppositions about the Matthean version. Furthermore, it shows no real signs of dependence on Matthew or Luke. It appears to be an independent attestation of the parable (with its own redactional additions).4 What is odd is the fact that Gos. Thom. 64,

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the parable of the banquet, is placed right next to the parable of the wicked tenants, Gos. Thom. 65 (which is followed by a version of the proverb about the capstone, Gos. Thom. 66). Significantly, this is the only section of the Gospel of Thomas that resembles the order of one of the gospels. This might very well indicate that there was a long tradition of these two parables (and the saying in logion 66) circulating together in the Jesus tradition and being read in light of one another. If this was the case, Matthew’s redactions might not be “Matthew’s” at all. Rather, they might be the product of an earlier redactor whose version Matthew incorporated into his gospel in its traditional place next to the parable of the wicked tenants.

None of this is to say that Matthew may not be responsible for some of the redaction found in Matt 22:1-13. In all likelihood he was. However, there are equally compelling reasons to be wary of assigning both the Matthean and Lukan versions of the parable of the banquet to Q.

In conclusion, the burden of evidence suggests that Matt 7:22-23 // Luke 13:26-27; Matt 25:14-30 // Luke 19:11-27; and Matt 22:1-10 // Luke 14:16-24 were not derived from the same literary source. The remaining possible source scenarios for each pair are as follows: M and L, or Q and M, or Q and L. Since we have no means of determining what, if anything actually derived from Q, these three passages will not be treated in this study.
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