

What If the Gospel according to the Hebrews Was Q?

Introduction

The absence of references to Q in the Church Fathers has often been taken as evidence against the two-document hypothesis. Michael Goulder writes: “There is no reference to Q in any ancient source.”¹ Eta Linnemann says: “The writings of the ancient church give *not the slightest hint* that such a source ever existed. Among the early church fathers there is *not even a rumor* of a lost canonical gospel.”² And Nicholas Perrin writes: “We have no manuscript of Q, no attestation in the early Church Fathers or elsewhere that such a text ever existed. We have no hard evidence at all for Q.”³ Today I want to consider the evidence for and the implications of the idea that Q continued to be used by Christian Jews for centuries after it was taken up by Matthew and Luke and that several of the church fathers were aware of this gospel and have even provided us with a handful of quotations of it. Q specialists often hold that Q originated among a group of Christians who maintained their Jewish identity.⁴ Since the church fathers tell us that Christian Jews used a different gospel, known as the Gospel according to the Hebrews (GHeb),⁵ it is paramount to ask whether GHeb might have been Q.

Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome quote twenty-six passages from GHeb.⁶ I do not have the time to defend the unpopular notion that these five authors are indeed working from the same gospel,⁷ but let me say that it would only help my case if I could bracket out, for example, the quotations by Jerome as not being from GHeb. Instead, I will consider all twenty-six passages and make the case that these could very well be quotations of Q.

¹ Michael Goulder, “Is Q a Juggernaut?” *JBL* 115 [1996]: 669.

² Eta Linnemann, “The Lost Gospel of Q—Fact or Fantasy?” *Trinity Journal* 17 (1996): 3-18.

³ Nicholas Perrin, “Introduction: Reasons for Questioning Q,” in *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique*, ed. Mark Goodacre and Nicholas Perrin (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), 1-12, here p. 10.

⁴ See, for example, Christopher M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies in Q* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996), 425-450; William E. Arnal, “The Q Document,” in *Jewish Christianity Reconsidered: Rethinking Ancient Groups and Texts*, ed. Matt Jackson-McCabe (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 119-154.

⁵ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.25.5; 3.27.4; *Theoph.* 4.12; Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30.3.7; Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 12.13; etc.

⁶ I agree with A. F. J. Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 17 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), in not including later quotations in GHeb since medieval scholars tended to attribute to GHeb ideas found in Jerome for which a source is not given. I also believe it is a mistake to attribute “Judaikon” references to GHeb. It appears that these marginal readings come from an old, Greek copy of the Gospel of Matthew that is housed in Jerusalem, but there is no good reason to think that this work was GHeb (see Petri Luomanen, *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects and Gospels*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae [Leiden: Brill, 2012], 83-89). I also do not count Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30.14.5; Jerome, *Vir. Ill.* 3; or Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 2.5, because in the first case Epiphanius is guessing what text the Ebionites might use to deny Jesus’ humanity but is not indicating that this text was actually in GHeb, and in the second and third case Jerome is guessing how the Greek text of Matthew may have come about from the Hebrew but is not indicating that his copy of GHeb contained these texts. Klijn also excludes the two Jerome texts.

⁷ For one such argument, see James R. Edwards, *The Hebrew Gospel and the Development of the Synoptic Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

The greatest objection, of course, is that the majority of the quotations are of passages that we do not normally assign to Q. Whereas only five of the twenty-six quotations are double tradition passages, twelve are unattested in the canonical gospels, five are triple tradition, three are uniquely Lukan, and one is uniquely Matthean. In order to address this, it is important to think about our assumptions of Q and about how the church fathers would have used it if they had access to Q.

We generally identify Q with the double tradition, but as Streeter noted long ago, if Mark had been lost but Q preserved, and we tried to reconstruct Mark based only on the portions of Mark included in *both* Matthew and Luke, we would exclude one-third of Mark's content.⁸ Eric Eve took this thought experiment further and noted that we would not know that Mark portrayed the disciples negatively or included a secrecy motif or had a ransom theology.⁹

And if the Gospel of Mark was a "disputed" gospel, how would the church fathers have used it? They wouldn't often have talked about it when referring to passages that were in Matthew or Luke. Most of their quotations of Mark would be of passages unique to Mark. Perhaps one father would have told us that the Gospel of Mark says that Jesus was with the wild beasts at his temptation or that a man ran away naked at Jesus' arrest or that the women at the tomb told no one, for they were afraid, and we would have concluded that Mark was based on the canonical gospels but added its own theological agenda not found in those gospels. Maybe another father would have quoted the parable of the seed growing secretly or Jesus' statement that "everyone will be salted with fire" or that Jesus' family tried to seize him because they thought he was crazy, and we would have concluded that this father was not looking at the same gospel as the other father, but was looking at a non-synoptic tradition about Jesus.

So the fact that twelve of the twenty-six quotations of GHeb are unique to that gospel should not trouble us. There is no reason to think that these passages could *not* have been in Q; it may simply be that these are the Q traditions that Matthew and Luke both omitted. Therefore I am not going to address either the twelve unique passages or the five double tradition passages in GHeb.¹⁰ Instead, my

⁸ Burnett Hillman Streeter, "The Original Extent of Q," in *Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, ed. W. Sanday (Oxford: Clarendon, 1911), 185.

⁹ Eric Eve, "Reconstructing Mark: A Thought Experiment," in *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique*, ed. Mark Goodacre and Nicholas Perrin (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 89-114.

¹⁰ For a discussion of these passages, see Edwards, *Hebrew Gospel*. The double tradition passages are interesting. In one of them (the parable of the talents, discussed in Eusebius, *Theoph.* 4.22), Matthew and Luke agree against GHeb but in a way that suggests that GHeb is more primitive. It appears that the GHeb version has the master accept a servant who squanders the money with prostitutes and flute-players, rebuke a servant who multiplies the trade, and then imprison the servant who buries the money. The Greek version known to Matthew and Luke had apparently corrected the parable by replacing the first servant with another who multiplies the business. This suggests, then, that the Aramaic copy of GHeb in the library at Caesarea represents an earlier text form than Greek Q. The opposite appears to be the case in two instances quoted by Jerome (Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 6.11//Jerome, *Tract. Pss.* 135//Q 11:3 and Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 23.35 // Q 11:51). In the first case, it is easier to imagine someone having changed the confusing τὸν ἄρτον τὸν ἐπιούσιον to "bread of tomorrow" than to imagine someone having rendered מִן הַלֶּחֶם with ἐπιούσιος. In the second, it is easier to imagine someone having corrected Matthew's "Zechariah son of Berechiah" to read "Zechariah son of Johoiada" than to imagine the GHeb reading having gotten changed incorrectly. Perhaps the best explanation is that the Aramaic text known to Jerome (which has come down through the Nazarenes of Beroea) has been corrected from an earlier text form. An alternative explanation is that the gospel Jerome received from the Nazarenes of Beroea is not the same gospel attested by Clement, Origen, Eusebius, and Epiphanius, a suggestion that has found widespread support, though I am hesitant to embrace it.

focus here will be on the triple tradition passages and the passages otherwise unique to Matthew or Luke.

Triple Tradition Passages

Five triple tradition passages are assigned to GHeb: a description of John's food and clothing (Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.13.4), a narration of Jesus' baptism (Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.13.7; Jerome, *Comm. Isa.* 11.1-3), Jesus' encounter with the rich man (Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 15.14), Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, and a reference to Barabbas (Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 27.16). The baptism of Jesus is not surprising since many Q specialists have already assumed that Q had an account of Jesus' baptism in which he is identified as the Son of God. The baptism account in GHeb does not look like it is dependent upon Mark's account in any way, and it is quite conceivable that if Matthew and Luke had before them two different baptism accounts they would have both followed Mark rather than Q.¹¹ It is also possible that Q described John's food and clothing as does Mark, and that we have here a Mark-Q overlap.¹² Jerome's mention of the words *osianna barrama* and of the name Barabbas are surprising if we assume that Q did not narrate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem or his death, but I argued two years ago that Luke's unique traditions here come from Q and that Q did have a brief account of Jesus' death.¹³ In neither of these brief quotations is it evident that GHeb is dependent on the canonical gospels.

This leaves only the story of the rich man, which is the most interesting of the five because (1) GHeb's reading is in many ways more primitive than Mark's; (2) Matthew seems to reflect the GHeb reading at a few points; and (3) Luke's arrangement of his material may suggest his awareness that Q contained this story. Let us consider these points in order.

First, looking at the handout [last page of this pdf], we can see that the GHeb version is shorter than the Markan version and is missing several secondary elements that are found in the Gospel of Mark.

1. In Line B, whereas in Matthew, Mark, and Luke the man addresses Jesus as "teacher" or "good teacher," in GHeb he addresses him as Lord. This difference is exactly what we would expect if Matthew and Luke are following Mark here but there is a parallel in Q. In Mark, Jesus is addressed with the vocative διδάσκαλε ten times (4:38; 9:17, 38; 10:17, 20, 35; 12:14, 19, 32;

¹¹ Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition*, 27, argues that Epiphanius' and Jerome's accounts of the baptism narrative could not have come from the same gospel because they differ from one another, but we must consider the likelihood that Epiphanius is quoting GHeb from memory and that it has been over ten years since he has seen this gospel (he may have encountered it through Josephus of Tiberias or from the Christian who "was still a Jew from fear of the Jews" before he ever moved to Cyprus [*Panarion* 30.9.4]).

¹² Epiphanius thought that the Ebionites had deliberately changed Mark and Matthew's mention of ἀκρίδων ("locusts") to ἐγκρίδα ("cake") because of their vegetarian agenda, but GHeb likely used this word as an allusion to the manna in the wilderness in Exodus 16:31, which is described with the same words (τὸ δὲ γεῦμα αὐτοῦ ὡς ἐγκρίς ἐν μέλιτι; cf. GHeb: ἡ γεῦσις ... ὡς ἐγκρίς ἐν ἐλαίῳ; Edwards, *Hebrew Gospel*, 69). It is not at all apparent that GHeb took this from Greek Mark or Matthew.

¹³ David B. Sloan, "A Passion Narrative in Q?" paper presented for the Q Section at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, November 2015; online: <http://www.reconstructingQ.com/passion.pdf>.

13:1) but with the vocative κύριε only once (7:28). In *CritEd*, we never see the vocative διδάσκαλε,¹⁴ but κύριε is used nine times (Q 6:46 [2x]; 7:6; 9:59; 10:21; 13:25; 19:16, 18, 20).¹⁵

2. In Line D, Mark and Luke have Jesus respond to the man calling him good, and Matthew even preserves this line but rewords it since Matthew did not have Jesus addressed as “good teacher.” GHeb omits this entirely.
3. Line E: Whereas Mark has, “You know the commandments,” GHeb has, “Man, do the Law and the Prophets.” The word ἐντολή occurs six times in Mark and never in the double tradition, whereas the expression “the Law and the Prophets” occurs in Q 16:16, but never in Mark. The word ποιέω, found here in GHeb but not in Mark, is also a characteristic Q word.¹⁶ So we are seeing that the differences between the GHeb version and the Markan version are characteristic differences between Q and Mark.
4. GHeb does not list the commandments as Matthew, Mark, and Luke did (Line F).
5. GHeb and Mark are similar on Jesus’ response to the man in Lines I–L, but Mark includes the words “you will have treasure in heaven,” whereas GHeb does not (Line K). The fact that there is a separate saying about storing up treasures in heaven in Q 12:33 suggests that Mark has merged together two sayings that were originally separate, whereas GHeb preserves these two sayings as being distinct.
6. At Line N, we find a place where Mark is more primitive than GHeb. Interestingly the language here is very Q-like. “Sons of Abraham” recalls Q 3:8 and several Lukan verses that are in my more expansive Q (Luke 13:16; 16:19-30; 19:9), and the condemnation of the rich man is similar to that in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, which is also in my more expansive Q.
7. Jesus “turning” to Simon (Line O) is significant, for we see this in the Lukan version of three double tradition passages, where Jesus addresses one audience, we find the word στραφεῖς, and then Jesus addresses another audience (Luke 7:9; 10:23; 14:25).
8. In Line Q we see the amazement of the disciples in Mark but not in GHeb. This is, of course, a Markan theme (Mark 1:27; 2:12; 5:20, 42; 6:51; 9:15; 10:24, 32; 12:17; 15:5), and so it would not be surprising if Mark has added it to his tradition. Once again, GHeb is more primitive than Mark.
9. In Line S, GHeb is also more primitive than Mark in using the Semitic expression “kingdom of heaven” rather than “kingdom of God.” Matthew surprisingly agrees with Mark on the latter expression here, so it cannot be said that GHeb has picked this up from Matthew.

¹⁴ In the Matthean version of two double tradition passages, we have διδάσκαλε (Matt 8:19; 12:38), but the committee discerned that neither was original.

¹⁵ Four of these are in reference to Jesus (Q 6:46; 7:6; 9:59), one is in reference to God (10:21), and four are in reference to a character in a parable (13:25; 19:16, 18, 20). There may have been more addresses to Jesus as κύριε, since in three additional double tradition passages Matthew alone addresses Jesus as κύριε (Q 7:3; 13:26; 17:4) and in two additional double tradition passages Luke alone addresses Jesus as κύριε (Q 13:23; 17:37), but *CritEd* omits all of these.

¹⁶ Harry T. Fleddermann, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*, Biblical Tools and Studies (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 89, notes that this word is “the main catchword” of the key sermon in Q 6 and “dominates the text.”

10. GHeb appears to be missing the equivalent of Mark 10:26-31 (Lines T–W), which Collins argues is Markan elaboration on the original saying that ended with verse 25, where GHeb appears to end.¹⁷

This is striking evidence that GHeb gives us an independent version of this story, and we have already seen that some of the language in this version represents the language of Q. We should also note that some of the ways Matthew edits Mark's text suggests his awareness of this version.

1. In Line B, Matthew agrees with GHeb against Mark and Luke in speaking of doing good rather than in referring to Jesus as "good" and in omitting the word "inherit."
2. In Line E Matthew may have been influenced to change Mark's "You know the commandments" to "Keep the commandments" on the basis of GHeb, which says, "Man, do the law and the prophets."
3. Most importantly, in Line F, Matthew adds the love command to Mark's list of commandments. Matthew may be influenced here by the presence of this command in Line N of GHeb (this is the only commandment given in the GHeb version). It is more likely that Matthew has moved the commandment up to Line F to place it with the list of commandments in Mark's version than that the author of GHeb has seen Matthew's version, decided to remove from Matthew the Markan list, but kept Matthew's one redactional commandment and moved it to a different location in the passage. Matthew here is merging Mark and GHeb.

So we have seen that the GHeb version is independent of Mark. We have also seen evidence that Matthew's changes to Mark were inspired by the GHeb version. Unlike Matthew, Luke does not tend to conflate his sources, so it is not surprising that GHeb leaves less of a trace on Luke, but in the longer version of my paper I argue that Luke's switching of sources here suggests his knowledge of this Mark-Q overlap and that there is good reason based on the outline of Q to think that Q contained this story here.¹⁸ So having considered the five triple tradition passages in GHeb, we have seen that there is no

¹⁷ Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary on the Gospel of Mark*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 475.

¹⁸ First, it is with this passage (assuming Luke sees 18:15-34 as one united pericope, as David E. Garland, *Luke*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 724, has shown) that Luke switches sources. I have argued before that almost everything in Luke 3-23 comes from either Mark or Q. The so-called "L" material is simply Q material that Matthew omitted. I have also argued that Luke's "orderly account" is simply a weaving together of these sources by switching sources at overlap points. Luke 3:1-4:30 comes from Q, but because Q 4:31 is very closely worded to Mark 1:21, Luke switches sources here. Then when Luke comes to Mark 3:7-13 about the crowds following Jesus, he switches to Q because Q preceded the Sermon on the Mount/Plain with a very similar statement. Luke 6:17-8:1 is taken from Q, but the mention of Jesus going "through cities and villages, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God" in 8:1 leads Luke to switch to Mark here since the next few chapters of Mark tell of this kind of activity. Once Luke arrives at Mark 9:42, which parallels Q 17:2, Luke stops following Mark and follows Q until he comes to this passage. He continues to copy the next few passages in Q, which brings him to the story of the rich man. At this point he switches to Mark and skips over Jesus' teaching on divorce in Judea since he has already had Jesus teach on divorce (Q/Luke 16:18) and since he does not yet have Jesus in Judea. Luke then copies the next two pericopes in Mark, which brings Jesus to Jericho (Mark 10:44). Because Q had the story of Zacchaeus in Jericho, he tells the story of Jesus in Jericho from Mark and then switches to Q for Luke 19:1-27. I argued in a paper two years ago that Q contained an entry narrative, but without the story of the procurement of the colt, so Luke switches to Mark for this story (Luke 19:28-36) but then back to Q for the entry and the dialogue that follows (19:37-44). Because Mark has more about the passion week, Luke

reason to think they could not have been in Q, and there is very much reason to think that in the story of Jesus' encounter with the rich man we have a Mark-Q overlap.

Sondergut Passages

We also find in GHeb one passage that is otherwise unique to Matthew and three that are otherwise unique to Luke. Could these too have been in Q? Three of these are found in Epiphanius, who wants to show how the Ebionites "mutilated" the gospel, so unlike Origen and Clement, who are turning to GHeb only when it gives a saying unattested in the canonical gospels, Epiphanius is turning to GHeb when he can find evidence that the Ebionites have changed the canonical text. For this reason, Epiphanius' gospel has often been distinguished from GHeb and seen as "a harmony ... of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke."¹⁹ Epiphanius, however, calls it "According to the Hebrews" as do the other fathers (*Panarion* 30.3.7). I believe that this gospel has been mislabeled as a harmony of Matthew and Luke because we have bought Epiphanius' arguments for its dependence on Matthew and Luke without examining the likelihood that Matthew and Luke are variations on this text.

First, let us look at how the gospel begins:

It happened in the days of Herod the king of Judea, during the high priesthood of Caiaphas, that certain man named John came, baptizing with the baptism of repentance in the Jordan River. He is said to be from the family of Aaron the priest, the son of Zachariah and Elizabeth. And all went out to him. (*Panarion*, 30.13.6)

follows Mark for the next two chapters but returns to Q in the passion narrative. If I am correct, Luke's method is quite simple. He sees overlaps between his sources as reasons to switch sources. If Q contained the story of a rich man in Chapter 18, it would explain why Luke switches sources precisely at this point; if not, we have no explanation for this. I take this as evidence, even if slightly that not only Matthew but also Luke saw this story at this point in Q.

As further evidence for this, Craig Blomberg, "Midrash, Chiasmus, and the Outline of Luke's Central Section," in *Studies in Midrash and Historiography*, ed. R. T. France and David Wenham (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), 217-61, argues that the parables in Luke are arranged in a concentric outline and that Luke seems to be unaware of or at least uninterested in this. Blomberg argues that Luke must have had a "chiastic parables source" that provided him with all of these parables. He has been followed by Nolland and Parsons and others (John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, Word Biblical Commentary 35B [Dallas: Word, 1998], 525-31; Mikeal C. Parsons, *Luke: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* [Peabody: Hendrickson, 2007], 116-21). What these authors have failed to notice, however, is that it is not only the parables but also the narrative settings that match each other. So Luke 13:10-35 and Luke 14:1-35 are the only non-Markan passages with a Sabbath healing controversy; the twofold message to repent or perish followed by second chance offered to the fig tree in Luke 13:1-9 parallels the twofold joy in heaven over the one who repents followed by the second chance offered to the prodigal and then to the older brother in Luke 15:1-32; the description of the Pharisees as lovers of money in Luke 16 parallels the approach of the brother who wants a share of the inheritance in Luke 12; and so on. Last year I argued in my SBL paper that the question raised by the lawyer in Luke 10:25 ("What shall I do to inherit eternal life?") was in Q. It is this passage that parallels our passage in which the rich man asks, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" in Luke's outline. This concentric outline is only visible when we remove the Markan material from Luke and is thus further evidence that it is the structure not of Luke but of Luke's non-Markan source. This provides further evidence that the story of the rich man was in not only Matthew's non-Markan sources but also in Luke's non-Markan source, Q.

¹⁹ Ron Cameron, *The Other Gospels: Non-Canonical Gospel Texts* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), 103.

The resemblance to Luke 3:1-3 is striking, especially if the Ebionites claimed that this was a gospel of Matthew (*Panarion* 30.3.7; 30.13.2). I argued in a paper in 2013, before I was even aware of this gospel, that Luke 3:1-3 must reflect the original beginning of Q.²⁰ These verses so resemble the standard introduction to a historiographical or prophetic work that Joseph Fitzmyer concludes that they were “at one time a formal introduction to the [Gospel of Luke].”²¹ More likely than Fitzmyer’s view of Luke having added Chapters 1-2 at a late stage is the possibility that Luke 3:1 resembles the incipit of Luke’s second source. In fact, Luke 3:1-3 reads as an improvement of GHeb. First, Luke gives a more precise date, indicating the exact year of Tiberius’ reign that John appeared, whereas GHeb does not mention the emperor at all. Luke’s interest in chronology and in the Roman empire suggests that this difference is due to Luke’s special concerns. Second, Luke’s version correctly identifies Pontius Pilate as the governor of Judea and Herod as the tetrarch of Galilee, whereas GHeb identifies Herod as “king of Judea.” It is hard to imagine that the author of GHeb harmonized Luke and Matthew and in the process changed Herod’s title and region incorrectly. It is somewhat easier to envision someone writing 40 years after the fact thinking that Herod Antipas was king of Judea as was his father, Herod the Great, and his nephew Herod Agrippa ten years later.²² Mark makes a similar mistake in naming Antipas “King Herod” (Mark 6:14). Third, Luke names the other tetrarchs and their regions, which he may have seen as important since he had already named Pilate and Herod Antipas. Fourth, Luke mentions “the high priesthood of *Annas* and Caiaphas” where GHeb mentions only Caiaphas. The fact that Luke speaks of “Annas the high priest” in Acts 4:6 suggests that the addition of Annas may have been Luke’s own redaction. Fifth, Luke 3:2 identifies John as “the son of Zechariah,” an identification that is not needed in Luke’s narrative, since John’s father is already named in Luke 1. Fitzmyer takes this as evidence that Luke 3:1 was the original beginning of Luke,²³ but once again it may simply be that Luke has carried this over from Q, which was introducing John for the first time. Sixth, Luke 3:2 says John’s baptism was “for the forgiveness of sins.” Luke has likely taken this phrase from Mark 1:4, but it is missing in GHeb, further indicating that GHeb is not dependent upon Luke.²⁴ Matthew may even betray his knowledge of this source by beginning Chapter 3 with the words, “In those days” (Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις), a Septuagintal expression that may have been inspired by Q’s having begun with the words ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἡρώδου.

The second *Sondergut* passage in Epiphanius’ quotations comes at the baptism of Jesus:

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| Epiphanius, <i>Panarion</i> 30.13.8 | Matthew 3:14-15 |
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²⁰ David B. Sloan, “Luke 3-4 – How Much Is From Q?” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society, Erie, PA, 5 April 2013; online: <http://reconstructingq.com/luke3-4.pdf>.

²¹ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I–IX: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, Anchor Yale Bible 28 (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 310-11.

²² It is also possible that because Epiphanius is recalling the passage from memory he is misquoting GHeb. Epiphanius varies in how he quotes this passage the two times he quotes it. It is likely that Epiphanius came across the Ebionite gospel while he lived in Palestine ten to twenty years before writing *Panarion*, and there is no evidence that Epiphanius had access to a copy of it while writing *Panarion*.

²³ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 459.

²⁴ There is one point on which GHeb does not look like Q here. *CritEd* has the phrase πᾶσα ἡ περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου as coming from Q since it is shared by Matthew and Luke and may be one of several allusions to the Lot narrative in Q (see John S. Kloppenborg, “City and Wasteland: Narrative World and the Beginning of the Sayings Gospel [Q],” *Semeia* 52 [1990]: 145-60). Epiphanius’ omission of this phrase may be due to faulty memory. See n. 22 above on the likelihood that at least a decade had passed since Epiphanius had encountered this gospel.

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| <p>ὁ Ἰωάννης προσπεσὼν αὐτῷ ἔλεγεν· δέομαί σου, κύριε, <u>σὺ με βάπτισον</u>. ὁ δὲ ἐκώλυσεν αὐτὸν λέγων· ἄφες, ὅτι οὕτως ἐστὶ πρέπον πληρωθῆναι πάντα.</p> | <p>ὁ δὲ Ἰωάννης διεκώλυεν αὐτὸν λέγων· ἐγὼ χρεῖαν ἔχω ὑπὸ σοῦ βαπτισθῆναι, καὶ σὺ ἔρχη πρὸς με; ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν· ἄφες ἄρτι, οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πάσαν δικαιοσύνην. τότε ἀφίησιν αὐτόν.</p> |
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Two of the differences between GHeb and Matthew are distinctives of Matthew's style. The words ἄρτι and δικαιοσύνη, which are present in Matthew alone each occur seven times in Matthew but none in Mark and, between them, only once in Luke. So if GHeb is dependent upon Matthew, it is surprising that it omits two of the words that make the passage look Matthean. More likely, Matthew has found this in his second source and Luke has omitted it, perhaps out of necessity since he has already taken John the Baptist out of the picture before he comes to the baptism scene (cf. Luke 3:19-20).

The third *Sondergut* passage is GHeb's equivalent to Luke 22:9, 15. Once again we must ask why a mutilated version of Matthew contained a uniquely Lukan passage. And if, as in the typical explanation, this gospel is a harmony of Matthew and Luke, we must ask why it apparently jumped from Luke 22:9 to Luke 22:15. Luke 22:10-13 relates Mark's story of Jesus' prescience in telling the disciples how to find the room where they will eat the Passover (Mark 14:13-16). The wording of this story in Mark closely matches that of Mark 11:1-6, suggesting that this is Mark's own composition. Luke copies this section from Mark and uses it to interrupt the question and answer found here in GHeb.

Moreover, the difference between Luke 22:15 and GHeb is significant. GHeb negates the statement of Jesus' desire to eat the Passover. Epiphanius thinks the Ebionites have tampered with the text because of their vegetarianism, but it is more likely that Luke has reversed the statement to make his source agree with Mark, in which Jesus *does* eat the Passover. Luke betrays his source in the next verse: "For I tell you that I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." This statement is quite puzzling in Luke and has led to various attempts by scribes to amend the text, but it would make perfect sense immediately following the previous verse in GHeb. It is generally thought that in Mark's source for his passion narrative, as in John, Jesus is crucified before the Passover.²⁵ GHeb retains this older tradition, even though Luke has attempted to remove it by removing the word μή. Once again it appears that Luke is dependent on GHeb, not vice versa.

In the final Lukan *Sondergut* in GHeb (Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 16), it is not clear whether the Lukan or the GHeb version is more original,²⁶ so we need not address it here. In three of the four quotations of GHeb that match a tradition unique to Matthew or Luke, it appears that the GHeb version is the source for Matthew or Luke rather than vice versa.

So we have seen that the presence of twelve quotations in GHeb that are not attested in the canonical gospels is not a problem if we grant to Matthew and Luke the freedom to omit passages and if we consider the likelihood that the church fathers would typically only cite GHeb when they are quoting its unparalleled traditions. We have also seen that the presence of five triple tradition passages in GHeb is

²⁵ See, for example, Gerd Theissen, *The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in the Synoptic Tradition* (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 167.

²⁶ For an argument that Luke is more likely dependent upon this quote than vice versa, see Edwards, *Hebrew Gospel*, 45-55. We should also note that this quotation of GHeb has been labeled "doubtful" by Klijn, *Jewish Christian Gospels*, 121-23.

not problematic and in one case, the story of the rich man, the evidence points to Matthew's and Luke's awareness of this passage having been in Q. Finally, we saw that in three of the four quotations that are paralleled in only one gospel, GHeb gives the more primitive reading. This suggests that GHeb was the second source used by Matthew and Luke in writing their gospels. I now want to consider the implications of this.

Implications

First, I think I have added support for the two-document hypothesis. No longer is the second source hypothetical, but it is one that was discussed for hundreds of years after Matthew's and Luke's use of it. Jerome even says that "many" call GHeb "authentic Matthew" (*Comm. Matt.* 12.13), suggesting that Papias may not have been as ignorant as is often supposed when he speaks of two early Christian gospels, a Greek one written by Mark as a reminiscence of Peter's teaching and a Hebrew one written by Matthew. Thomas Saying 13 may be alluding to the same two gospels in having Matthew and Peter both say what Jesus is like and then having Thomas give a better answer that results in his praise. Matthew's reference to Jesus there as a "wise philosopher" may be a nod to Q's wisdom Christology. By identifying Q as the Gospel according to the Hebrews, written in Aramaic by Matthew, patristic evidence and modern scholarship fall nicely into line with one another.

Second, this study raises questions about whether there are further witnesses to Q. Surely not every time GHeb was quoted it was named. Could many of the quotations of Jesus in Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, the Pseudo-Clementine literature, and 2 Clement also be quotations of GHeb?

Third, as we identify new portions of Q, we open up a new avenue for understanding the Q community and their gospel. Not only do we include new passages in our inventory of Q, but we see what I have been arguing for the last few years – that Q was a narrative gospel, complete with an account of Jesus' death and resurrection.²⁷ I believe that we have mislabeled Q as a sayings or speech collection simply because Matthew used it primarily for its speeches, but we do have hints in Matthew and Luke that Q was more than this, even if it did focus on the words of Jesus.²⁸ We should also reevaluate the original language of Q. It appears that Matthew and Luke accessed Q in Greek,²⁹ but might this Greek document have had an Aramaic prehistory? The fact that "Q does not read like translation Greek" does not tell us that Greek Q is not simply a freer translation of an Aramaic *Vorlage*.³⁰ Furthermore, the theology of Q should be reevaluated. I think especially of John Kloppenborg's evaluation of the "Easter faith" of the Q community. If we accept Jerome's two resurrection appearances as having been in Q, this changes the theological profile of Q drastically. I also think of the fact that in GHeb Christ refers to the Holy Spirit as

²⁷ David B. Sloan, "Q as a Narrative Gospel," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society, Perrysville, OH, 12 March 2015; online: <http://www.reconstructingQ.com/narrative.pdf>; "A Passion Narrative in Q?" paper presented for the Q Section at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, November 2015; online: <http://www.reconstructingQ.com/passion.pdf>.

²⁸ See Sloan, "Q as a Narrative Gospel."

²⁹ John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 73, notes that the "near-verbatim agreement in pericopae such as Q 3:7b-9; 10:13-15; 11:24-26; 11:31-32, and 13:20-21 would be inexplicable" if Matthew and Luke were not looking at the same Greek text of Q.

³⁰ The quotation is from Fleddermann, *Q*, 156. For more in-depth studies, see Nigel Turner, "Q in Recent Thought." *Expository Times* 80 (1968): 324-28; John S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1987), 59-64.

his mother (Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.12, etc.) and claims that he came to abolish the sacrifices (Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30.16.4-5), which suggests a different Christology than we normally ascribe to Q.³¹

Fourth, further reevaluation of the history of the Q community and its theology could be made based on a consideration of the groups who used Q. It is not only the contents of Q that can indicate something of its theological profile, but also the impact that such a gospel had on the various groups who used it, including the Nazarenes, the Ebionites, possibly Cerinthus, and also possibly Muhammad's cousin Waraqa ibn Nawfal, who had a significant impact on Islamic thought (cf. *Sahih al-Bukhari* 1.3).³²

Fifth, the identification of GHeb with Q could tell us quite a bit about the history of Christian Judaism after the composition of Q. Why were Christian Jews increasingly alienated from Gentile Christianity? Why was their gospel eventually lost to history? What might the fuller profile of the Q community and their gospel tell us about their theological successors?

Finally, if GHeb was the main gospel within Jewish Christianity and Mark was the main gospel within Gentile Christianity toward the end of the first century, further analysis of why and how Matthew and Luke have attempted to combine these gospels may tell us quite a bit about Matthew's and Luke's purposes for writing. Was Mark the preferred gospel for each of these evangelists? What did Matthew and Luke hope to accomplish by incorporating what they did from GHeb? Why did Matthew omit both resurrection appearances in GHeb (assuming these were in Matthew's copy of GHeb)? Why did Luke replace James with Cleopas and an unnamed disciple? Why did both omit the statement about abolishing sacrifices? The avenues for further study are endless.

³¹ Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition*, 75, notes that Epiphanius' wording suggests that the Ebionites viewed Jesus as having authority to abolish sacrifice because he was a heavenly being.

³² Edwards, *Hebrew Gospel*, 42, notes that in *Sahih al-Bukhari* 1.3 Waraqa ibn Nawfal is said to have often transcribed a Hebrew version of Matthew. Some of the parallels between Islamic understandings of Jesus and that found in GHeb are striking.

| | The Rich Man in GHeb (Klijn translation) | The Rich Man in Mark 10:17-31 (NRSV) |
|---|---|---|
| A | Another of the rich men said to him: | As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, |
| B | “Master, what good must I do to live?” | “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” |
| C | He said to him: | Jesus said to him, |
| D | | “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. |
| E | Man, do the law and the prophets. | You know the commandments: |
| F | | ‘You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.’” |
| G | He answered him: I did. | 20 He said to him, “Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.” |
| H | He said to him: | 21 Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, |
| I | | “You lack one thing; |
| J | Go, sell all that you possess and divide it among the poor | go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, |
| K | | and you will have treasure in heaven; |
| L | and come, follow me. | then come, follow me.” |
| M | But the rich man began to scratch his head and it did not please him. | 22 When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions. |
| N | And the Lord said to him: Is it not written in the law: Love your neighbor as yourself? And see, many of your brothers, sons of Abraham, are covered with dung, dying from hunger, and your house is filled with many good things, and absolutely nothing goes out of it to them. | |
| O | And he turned to Simon his disciple who sat with him and said to him: | 23 Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, |
| P | | “How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” |
| Q | | 24 And the disciples were perplexed at these words. |
| R | | But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! |
| S | Simon, son of Jona, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man into the kingdom of heaven. | 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” |
| T | | 26 They were greatly astounded and said to one another, “Then who can be saved?” |
| U | | 27 Jesus looked at them and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.” |
| V | | 28 Peter began to say to him, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.” |
| W | | 29 Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, 30 who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.” |