

BRIEF NOTES

SOME FURTHER EXAMPLES OF ANTI-JUDAIC BIAS IN THE WESTERN TEXT OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

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In the last issue of *AUSS*, I presented a brief note on variant readings found in the Western text (particularly in Codex Bezae [D]) of the Gospel according to Luke that show an anti-Judaic bias.¹ In this present study I will conclude this appraisal of anti-Judaic variants, but by no means exhaust the total number of such variants.

1. *The Old Wine*

The first variant to be considered here is found in a passage that already contains anti-Judaic overtones (Luke 5:33-39). Some of Jesus' hearers asked him why it was that his disciples did not fast when the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fasted religiously. Jesus replied that the attendants of the bridegroom could not fast while he was with them. However, the days would come when the bridegroom would be taken from them, and then they would fast. This explanation is followed by the parable of the patched garment and the wineskins. The parable is concluded by a statement on the quality of the old wine.

¹*AUSS* 18 (1980): 51-57.

Luke 5:37-39

Codex B

Codex D

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>37. και ουδεις βαλλει
οων νεον εις ασκους
παλαιους ει δε μηγε
ρηξει ο οωος ο νεος
τους ασκους
και αυτος εκχυθησεται
και οι ασκοι απολουνται</p> <p>38. αλλ οων νεον εις
ασκους καωους βλητεον</p> <p>39. ουδεις πιων παλαιον
θελει νεον λεγει γαρ
ο παλαιος χρηστος εστω</p> <p>37. "And no one places
new wine into old wine-
skins lest the new
wine will burst the
skins and will be
poured out and the wine-
skins destroyed.</p> <p>38. But new wine must
be placed into new wine-
skins.</p> <p>39. No one drinking
old wine wishes new
for he says
the old is better."</p> | <p>37. και ουδεις βαλλει
οων νεον εις ασκους
παλαιους ει δε μηγε
ρηξει ο οωος ο νεος
τους ασκους τους παλαιους
και αυτος εκχυθησεται
και οι ασκοι απολουνται</p> <p>38. αλλα οων νεον εις
ασκους καωους βαλλουσω
και αμφοτεροι τηρουνται</p> <p>37. "And no one places
new wine into old wine-
skins lest the new
wine will burst the
old skins and will be
poured out and the wine-
skins destroyed.</p> <p>38. But they place new wine
into new wineskins
and both are preserved."</p> |
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v. 37
+ τους παλαιους post ασκους, D cop^{sa,bo}

v. 38
βλητεον] βαλλουσω, N * D sy^P cop^{sa,bo} Marcion
+ και αμφοτεροι τηρουνται post βλητεον, D a e r

v. 39
om. vs., D it Marcion Irenaeus Eusebius

Jesus' parable on the patched garment and the wineskins is found in Matthew and Mark, as well as in Luke. However, the concluding statement at Luke 5:39 on the quality of the old wine is found in neither Matthew

nor Mark. It is generally agreed that the old wine in this verse is a symbol of Judaism and the new is a symbol of Christianity.²

Marcion's influence is recognized by some as a possible reason for the omission of this verse, for he would not wish to say that the Jewish religion was "better" than Christianity.³ However, it must be noted that many variant readings in the Western text, and particularly in D, result from an attempted harmonization with Matthew and Mark. Therefore, to say that this variant was influenced by Marcion is rather arbitrary. Whether one sees the omission of vs. 39 as a result of Marcion's influence, or as an attempted harmonization, it is clear that the omission is in keeping with the anti-Judaic sentiment of the Western text in Luke. This verse virtually admits the contentment of the Jewish people with their religion and Christianity's lack of appeal to them. This would be reason enough to lead the Western text, with its biases, to omit the verse. It is for this very reason also that some commentators believe that vs. 39 is "an interpolated apology for the relative failure of Christian missions among the Jews."⁴

If it is an interpolation, two things may be concluded: (1) the text is early, as is shown by the number of early witnesses that have this reading, and (2) the Western reading is the original. On the other hand, if it is not an interpolation, the omission of vs. 39 shows a reluctance on the part of the Western text to admit that Judaism has an appeal for some people that is stronger than the appeal of Christianity, a reluctance that may have led Matthew and Mark not to record the statement.

²William F. Arndt, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (St. Louis, Mo., 1956), p. 172; John Martin Creed, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London, 1960), p. 83; Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1966), pp. 196-197; S. MacLean Gilmour, ed., *The Gospel According to St. Luke, IB* (Nashville, 1952), 8:110; Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke*, ICC (New York, 1906), pp. 163-164; J. J. van Oosterzee, *The Gospel According to Luke* (Lange's Commentary, trans. of 2d German ed. by Philip Schaff and Charles C. Starbuck; New York, 1869-1885), 17:89-90. Cf. Alistair Kee, "The Old Coat and the New Wine," *NovT* 12 (1970): 13-21, who believes that the original intent of the parable was not to introduce tension between the old and the new, but rather to indicate that the old is still worth patching. The significance of the double parable deals with the danger of loss, not with incompatibility.

³Arndt, p. 172; Creed, p. 83; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary of the Greek New Testament* (London and New York, 1971), pp. 138-139.

⁴Gilmour, p. 110. Cf. Plummer, pp. 164-165, and F. W. Farrar, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (Cambridge, Eng., 1891), p. 125.

2. *Jesus and Jewish Custom*

Several anti-Judaic variants represent an attempt to free Jesus (and in one instance, his followers) from the restrictions of the law and from Jewish customs. The following variants prepare the reader of the Western text for the denunciation of Pharisaic customs:

a. At Luke 11:37 Jesus was invited to a morning meal at the home of a Pharisee. Upon accepting the invitation, Jesus sat at the meal without having washed his hands. Offended at Jesus' lack of sensitivity to the laws of ritual purity, the Pharisee was critical of him.

Luke 11:38, 39

Codex B

Codex D

38. ο δε φαρισαιος ιδων
εθαυμασεν
οτι ου πρωτον
εβαπτισθη προ του αριστου

38. ο δε φαρισαιος ηρξατο
διακρευομενος εν εαυτω
λεγει δια τι ου πρωτον
εβαπτισθη προ του αριστου

39. ειπεν δε ο κς προς
αυτον νυν υμεις οι
φαρισαι

39. ειπεν δε ο κς προς
αυτον νυν υμεις οι
φαρισαι υποκριται

38. "And the Pharisee
when he saw it
marveled because
he did not wash first
before taking of the
meal.

38. "And the Pharisee
taking issue within him-
self began to say why
does he not wash first
before taking of the
meal?

39. And Jesus said to
him, Now you Pharisees
. . . ."

39. And Jesus said to
him, Now you Pharisees
hypocrites"

v. 38

ιδων εθαυμασεν οτι] ηρξατο διακρευομενος εν εαυτω
λεγει δια τι, D 251 lat Tatian

v. 39

+ υποκριται post φαρισαι, D b

In vs. 38 the Western text intensifies the reaction to Jesus' unconcern for ritual purity by having the Pharisee take issue "within himself" against Jesus, rather than just marvel because Jesus did not wash first. Furthermore, Jesus' rebuke of the Pharisee is intensified in D and b by Jesus calling his host a hypocrite. The intensified narrative results in a clear statement as to how the efforts of the Pharisees for ritual purity are viewed by the

scribes of D and b. Also, by this intensified dialog between Jesus and his host, the stage is dramatically set for the scathing rebukes that immediately follow in this passage.

b. The omission of the last part of the following verse is clearly anti-Judaic, for it eliminates from Jesus' teaching instruction which supports tithe paying, a teaching that would be thought of as a Jewish custom and tradition.

Luke 11:42

Codex B

αλλα οναι υμω τοις
φαρισαιωις οτι αποδεκα-
τουτε το ηδυοσμον και
το πηγανον και παν
λαχανον και παρερχεσθε
την κρισω και την
αγαπην ταυτα
δε εδει ποιησαι κακεωα
μη παρεωαι

"But woe to you Pharisees
because you tithe mint
and rue and every herb
and you pass by justice
and love
but these things one must
do and the others must
not be neglected."

Codex D

αλλα οναι υμew τοις
φαρισαιωις οτι αποδεκα-
τουτε το ηδυοσμον και
το πηγανον και παν
λαχανον και παρερχεσθαι
την κρισω και την
αγαπην του θυ

"But woe to you Pharisees
because you tithe mint
and rue and every herb
and you pass by justice
and the love of God."

+ του θυ post την αγαπην, [rell; B]

om. ταυτα δε εδει ποιησαι κακεωα μη παρεωαι, D Marcion

C. G. Montefiore believes D is consistent in the omission of this clause. The principle of the omitted words ("These things one must do, and the others must not be neglected") is opposed to Jesus' behavior as a sensitive guest at the Pharisee's morning meal, i.e., the refusal to wash before eating is such a minor matter. Washing his hands would easily have accommodated the conscience of his host.⁵ Bruce Metzger feels these words were unacceptable to Marcion, who omitted them from his text, and this influenced the omission in D.⁶ However, as noted previously, D feels quite free to use

⁵C. G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2d ed. (London, 1927), 2:482.

⁶Metzger, p. 159.

any reading with which he is acquainted that fits his bias, whether it is found in Matthew or Mark, Marcion or Tatian. He even uses his own creations, as the addition of the man found working on the Sabbath at Luke 6:4 testifies.⁷

c. In the next series of variants, D attempts to free Jesus from the Jewish "custom" of Sabbath observance.

Luke 4:16

Codex B

και ηλθεν εις ναζαρα ου ην
τεθραμμενος και εισηλθεν
κατα το ειωθος αυτω εν τη
ημερα των σαββατων εις την
συναγωγην και ανεστη αναγ-
νωνα

"And he came to
Nazareth, where he had
been brought up, and en-
tered the synagogue on the
Sabbath according to his
custom

and stood up to read."

Codex D

ελθων δε εις ναζαρεδ ου ην
κατα το ειωθος εν τη
ημερα των σαββατων εις την
συναγωγην και ανεστη αναγ-
νωνα

"And when he had come to
Nazareth, where,

according to the
custom, he was in the syna-
gogue on the Sabbath, he
also stood up to read."

και ηλθεν εις ναζαρα ου ην τεθραμμενος | ελθων δε εις
ναζαρεδ ου ην, D
om. και εισηλθεν, D
om. αυτω, D

The variants in this verse have long been considered as resulting from Marcion, primarily because the verse in Codex B contains a statement that identifies Nazareth as the place where Jesus was brought up, and secondarily because Sabbath observance is presented as being Jesus' custom. Else-

⁷Speculations as to the origin of this unique reading are numerous. However, when the variants in the next two verses to be considered in our study (Luke 4:16; 23:56), as well as D's anti-Judaic bias, are taken into consideration, the origin of this reading should not be a mystery. D wishes to teach his community that the "Jewish Sabbath" is no longer binding. The variants at 4:16 and 23:56 show Jesus and his followers as being freed from Jewish law and customs regarding the Sabbath. The addition at 6:4 supports D's position. It would be much simpler to see this reading as a creation of D, reflecting what happened historically in the Christian church, i.e., the "Jewish Sabbath" was abandoned for the Christian "Lord's Day."

where I have shown that D is not adverse to Jesus' being brought up in Nazareth.⁸ Therefore, it seems that D used this so-called "Marcionite reading" for a reason other than removing a statement about Jesus' earlier residence in Nazareth.

Once *τεθραμμενος* ("brought up") is eliminated as a possible motivation for D's use of this reading, we are left with two variants that reflect a biased attitude toward the Sabbath as a Jewish institution. D simply carried over the omission of *τεθραμμενος* into his text along with the other omissions in which he was theologically interested.

By omitting *αυτω* ("his"), D implies that it was the custom of the townspeople of Nazareth to attend synagogue services on the Sabbath, and that it was not necessarily Jesus' custom, but that he attended the services for the opportunity of addressing the people. By this omission it becomes clear that D does not want to say that Jesus was personally bound by Jewish custom and tradition. If on the Sabbath he entered a synagogue where worship was being held according to the custom of the Jews, he did so on his own volition and not because he was bound by law or Jewish tradition.

d. It also appears that D intended to free the followers of Jesus from Jewish tradition concerning the Sabbath. In connection with the placing of Jesus' body in the tomb, we have this statement that is peculiar to Luke:

Luke 23:56

Codex B

*υποστρεψασαι δε ητοιμασαν
αρωματα και μυρα και το
μεν σαββατον ησυχασαν
κατα την εντολην*

"And they returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment."

Codex D

*υποστρεψασαι δε ητοιμασαν
αρωματα και μυρα και το
μεν σαββατον ησυχασαν*

"And they returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath day."

om. *κατα την εντολην*, D

⁸George Edward Rice, *The Alteration of Luke's Tradition by the Textual Variants in Codex Bezae* (Ph.D. dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 1974), pp. 11-30.

By omitting the phrase *κατα την εντολην* (“according to the commandment”), D again changes Luke’s textual tradition. Luke endeavored to maintain the Sabbath as a Christian institution by saying, among other things, that it was Jesus’ personal custom not only to attend worship services on the Sabbath but also to participate in them when the opportunity was presented (4:16), and by having his followers rest according to the commandment contained in the Decalogue. D, on the other hand, presents Jesus and his followers as free from the law and Jewish traditional restrictions. The significance of the Sabbath as a Christian institution is lessened, if not destroyed.

3. Conclusion

In the previous study and in the present study I have presented a number of variants that show an anti-Judaic bias on the part of the Western text, and particularly on the part of D. In this study the anti-Judaic bias is shown by the Western text’s omission of Luke’s statement about the quality of the old wine. Thus any suggestion that the Jews would reject the teachings of Christianity because they were well satisfied with Judaism is removed.

The narrative of a confrontation between Jesus and a Pharisee is intensified in that the Pharisee’s concern for ritual purity is seen as hypocrisy. D especially, by a series of variant readings, attempts to free Jesus from what many consider to be Jewish customs, i.e., paying tithe and observing the seventh-day Sabbath.