

# Jerusalem Perspective

Exploring the Jewish Background to the Life and Words of Jesus

Special Double Issue

Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary Preview  
The Rich Young Ruler Story



# Good Morning, Elijah!

In Israel, when someone finally realizes something that everyone else already knows, people say to this latecomer, "בֹּקֶר טוֹב אֵלִיָּהוּ" (*BO-ker tov e-li-YA-hu*, Good morning, Elijah!). In other words, "Where have **you** been!"

There is an alternate Hebrew expression. Israelis speak of someone "discovering America" when a person discovers information that has been known to others for a long time. They say, "So and so גִּלָּה אֶת אֲמֵרִיקָה" (*gi-LAH et a-ME-ri-kah*, discovered America).

Last August, as a result of two articles in *Biblical Archaeology Review* (usually referred to as *BAR*), the news media in the United States finally discovered the tomb and bones of the Caiaphas family. The story made the front page of the *New York Times* and other newspapers across the United States. However, this important archaeological find had already been published ten months earlier by JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE. We devoted an entire double issue (July/October 1991) to the Caiaphas find, and subsequently the story was widely covered by major newspapers, magazines and radio and television networks in Israel and Europe. *Jerusalem Report*, the Israeli equivalent of *Newsweek*, carried an article

about the find (with cover headline) in its December 19, 1991 issue. The official publication of the find by the Israel Antiquities Authority (*Atiqot* XXI, pp. 63–87) also preceded *BAR* by two months.

However, it was only in August, 1992 that America "discovered America." We think it is appropriate to say to America, "Good morning, Elijah!"

Mira Avrech, the well-known columnist for Israel's largest daily newspaper, *Yediot Aharonot*, and a correspondent for the U.S. magazine *People*, was so intrigued by America's belated "discovery" of the bones of Caiaphas that she made it the subject of her August 20, 1992 column in *Yediot Aharonot* (accompanied by a photograph of David Bivin).

The Caiaphas tomb episode demonstrates that archaeological discoveries in Israel are not considered significant by the U.S. news media until *BAR* reports them. This is a tribute to *BAR* magazine. Its editors have produced an outstanding publication that deserves the confidence of the media. Although the JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE issue devoted to the Caiaphas find was not mentioned by *BAR*, *JP* was privileged to be credited twice by *BAR* (pp. 40, 44) for

(continued on page 31)

## Jerusalem Perspective

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**Cover photo:**  
**Columns of the**  
**Qumran Isaiah**  
**Scroll (1 QIs<sup>a</sup>),**  
**written about**  
**125–100 B.C.**

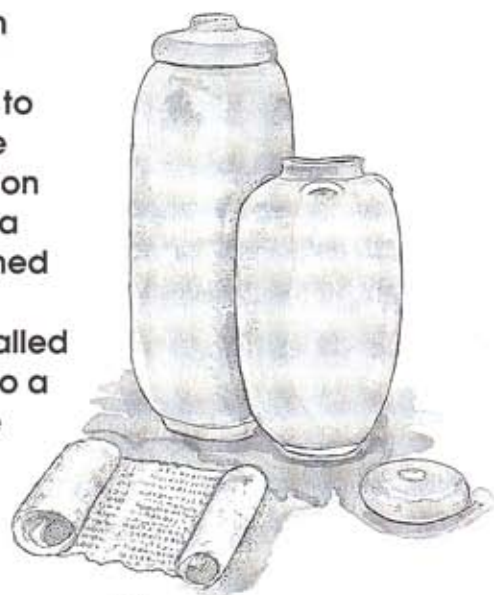
(Courtesy of the Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum)



# Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary Preview

## The Rich Young Ruler Story

JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE readers frequently request information about the Jerusalem School's reconstruction of the Hebrew biography of Jesus. Scholars of the Jerusalem School hope to eventually publish this conjectured biography as part of the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*. The School's reconstruction is not an attempt to "discover the inspired text," but simply a scholarly exercise in linguistic and textual archaeology aimed at "unearthing" an earlier written account of Jesus' life and teaching. In no way is the inspiration of the received text called into question. Rather, perhaps our findings may contribute to a better understanding of the nature and expression of divine inspiration.



edited by David Bivin

**J**ERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE has already featured a preview of the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*.<sup>1</sup> This was a reconstruction of the Hebrew behind Matthew 5:17, "Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." In this issue we present the reconstruction of a much longer passage, the so-called "Rich Young Ruler" story (Mt. 19:16–30; Mk. 10:17–31; Lk. 18:18–30).

### Arrangement of Commentary

The Jerusalem School's linguistic reconstruction work is an attempt to draw from the biblical texts Jesus' message as those who heard him speak understood it. In the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*'s final form, the upper part of each page will contain five columns: four columns of Greek and one column of Hebrew. Beginning on the upper left, the first three columns will contain the text of the synoptic Gospels, arranged in their traditional order: Matthew, Mark and Luke. During the past century and

a half, this Greek text has been carefully analyzed, and although the text scholars use is a composite based on more than 1000 Greek manuscripts and is not identical with any of the existing manuscripts, the vast majority of the readings in this composite text are very sure.

The fourth column will contain the conjectured ancestor of the canonical Gospels, the Greek translation of the Hebrew biography of Jesus. One can usually reconstruct it from the canonical Gospels using the method outlined below. The text in columns 1–3 will be highlighted to indicate what we have decided was part of that Greek translation. Thus the reader will be able to trace the highlighted words from the first three columns to the fourth.

Jerusalem School scholars often arrive at the Greek reconstruction after attempting to translate the Greek of Matthew, Mark and Luke to Hebrew. This is one of the distinguishing features of the Jerusalem School's methodology, and an important factor in deciding what words were in the Hebrew story and its Greek translation from which we believe the canonical Greek





**Rich Young Ruler Seminar participants engaged in discussion.**

**From left to right: David Bivin, Robert Lindsey, Weston Fields, Mirja Ronning, Shmuel Safrai, Stephen Pfann, Chana Safrai, Bradford Young, Halvor Ronning.**

*(Photo: JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE)*

Gospels derived. The assumption is that if a Greek Gospel text translates easily and naturally to Hebrew, it may reflect the text of the conjectured Hebrew gospel. On the other hand, if a Greek passage in the synoptic Gospels is difficult or impossible to translate into Hebrew, we suspect that it may have been amended by Matthew, Mark or Luke, or the Greek editor of one of their sources. Therefore, when scholars of the Jerusalem School analyze a Gospel text, they make decisions about the Greek and Hebrew reconstructions simultaneously.

The fifth column will contain the School's reconstruction of the Hebrew story of Jesus. We believe that it was written soon after Jesus' death, perhaps, as early church tradition states, by the disciple Matthew.

Each of these five columns (the texts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, the reconstruction of the Hebrew biography, and the reconstruction of that biography's Greek translation) will be supplied with a completely literal interlinear English translation. There will also be two additional levels of English translation of the Hebrew reconstruction: an idiomatic translation that is as literal as possible while still being acceptable English, and a dynamic translation that reflects what a modern English-speaker may have written had he originally recorded the story. The idiomatic and dynamic English translations will be printed on the lower part of the commentary page below the Hebrew reconstruction.

The lower part of each page will also contain: 1) linguistic comments on the high-

lighted words in columns 1-3 explaining why we think some words in the synoptic Gospels were part of the Greek translation of the Hebrew story and others not, or why we think the order of words in one of the Gospels is better preserved than the word order of another Gospel; 2) linguistic and exegetical comments on the proposed reconstruction of the Hebrew story; 3) expository comments that will dwell on the meaning and ramifications of the words of Jesus.

The information presented in this preview is condensed from the Rich Young Ruler material to be published in the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*. We estimate that the final version of this section of the *Commentary* will be several hundred pages in length. In this condensation we have not printed the Greek texts of Matthew, Mark and Luke — these texts are easily obtained — and we have presented only a selection of the comments. However, we hope we have succeeded in giving readers a glimpse of the *Commentary*, as well as some insight into the methodology of the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research.

## Rich Young Ruler Seminar

Preliminary work on the Rich Young Ruler passage was carried out in 1986-1987. Seventeen seminar sessions were devoted to this pericope: eight seminars were held February-June 1986, and a further nine seminars between November 1986 and May 1987. Seminar participants were: David Bivin, Randall J. Buth, Weston W. Fields, David Flusser, Robert L. Lindsey,



Jerome Lund, Jeffrey Magnuson, Charles Meehan, R. Steven Notley, Claire Pfann, Stephen Pfann, Halvor Ronning, Mirja Ronning, Chana Safrai, Shmuel Safrai and Bradford H. Young. All of the participants have helped to mold this condensation of the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*, especially Dr. Lindsey and Professors Flusser and Shmuel Safrai, and we have had the advantage of their many insights. We have attempted where possible to note major contributions of seminar participants to an understanding of this passage. Where credit is attributed but there is no reference to a published work, the reader can assume that the opinion expressed was communicated orally during the seminar.

## Limitations of the Preview

Because of its brevity, this preview of the Rich Young Ruler story is by nature inferior to the version that we will publish in the *Commentary*: we have not usually recorded differences of opinion among the seminar participants; at points where no discussion took place during the seminar, interpretations are often those of the editor, or where the discussion was inconclusive, the subjective judgment of the editor about the collective opinion of the participants.

One difference of opinion among seminar participants concerned the style of Hebrew that should be used in the reconstruction. Should we assume that Jesus' teaching was recorded in late biblical Hebrew, or in rabbinic (mishnaic) Hebrew? The latest books of the Hebrew Scriptures date from 200 or more years before Jesus, while the Mishnah — among the earliest rabbinic works — was redacted almost 200 years after the time of Jesus. There is relatively little extant epigraphical material dating from the intermediate period other than the non-biblical writings of the Dead Sea sect, and these were often written in an artificial style that imitates biblical Hebrew. Consequently, the task of reconstructing Jesus' biography is formidable.

All seminar participants agreed, however, that the narrative portions of the Hebrew story were probably more biblical in style, while dialogue was more mishnaic. In this preview we have reconstructed the Hebrew text using a mixture of biblical and mishnaic Hebrew, a style advocated by Robert Lindsey.<sup>2</sup>

## Greek Reconstruction

Καὶ ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτὸν λέγων, Διδάσκαλε, τί ἀγαθὸν ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω;

εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ, Τί λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἰς. τὰς ἐντολάς οἶδας· Μὴ μοιχεύσης, Μὴ φονεύσης, Μὴ κλέψης, Μὴ ψευδομαρτυρήσης.

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν, Ταῦτα πάντα ἐφύλαξα ἐκ νεότητος.

εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ, Ἐτι ἔν σοι λείπει· πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις πώλησον καὶ διάδος πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἔξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολουθεῖ μοι.

ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας ταῦτα περίλυπος ἐγενήθη· ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος σφόδρα.

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Πῶς δυσκόλως οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσπορεύονται· εὐκοπώτερον γὰρ ἔστιν κάμηλον διὰ τρήματος βελόνης εἰσελθεῖν ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν.

εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Πέτρος, Ἰδοὺ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν πάντα καὶ ἠκολουθήσαμεν σοι.

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ἀμὴν. Λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶς ὃς ἀφήκεν οἰκίαν εἵνεκεν τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ λήμψεται πολλαπλάσιον ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ καὶ ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

## Literal Translation of Greek Reconstruction

And he asked him, saying: "Teacher, what good doing life eternal may I inherit?"

And he said to him: "Why you say 'good'? Nothing/No one [is] good except one. The commandments you know — 'Do not commit adultery; Do not murder; Do not steal; Do not give false testimony.'"

And he said: "These all I kept from youth."

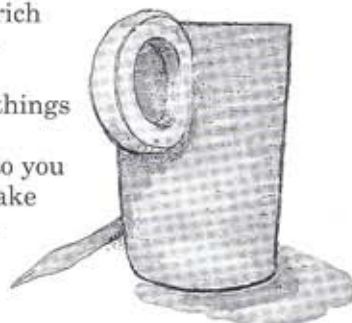
And he said to him: "Still one [is] to you lacking: All things as many as you have sell and distribute to poor persons, and you will have treasure in the heavens, and come follow me."

And he hearing these things very sad became for he was rich exceedingly.

And Jesus said: "How with difficulty they the riches having into the kingdom of the God go in. Easier it is [for] a camel through eye of needle to enter than a rich person into the kingdom of the God to enter."

And said Peter: "Behold we left all things and followed you."

And he said to them: "Amen. I say to you that everyone who left house for the sake of the kingdom of the God will receive many times more in the time this and in the age the coming, life eternal."





## Comments on the Greek Reconstruction

This gospel story has come to be titled "The Rich Young Ruler." However, it seems probable that the man who approached Jesus was neither young nor a ruler. The words "rich young ruler" do not appear together in any of the versions of the story. The title is a composite: "ruler" comes from Lk. 18:18 where it is part of the Lukan story setting; "young man" comes from Mt. 19:20, 22.

We assume that each synoptic author composed his own story setting, since the three settings are so dissimilar. Luke's "ruler" was apparently not part of the original story and does not appear in the parallels in

Matthew and Mark. It is likely that Matthew's "young man" resulted from the words ἐκ νεότητος (*ek neotētos*, from youth) which Matthew saw in Mark 10:20, as well as in his second source, the Anthology. The rich man's testimony that he had kept the commandments from his youth may indicate that he was **not** a young man. Note that Matthew seems to have deliberately omitted ἐκ νεότητός μου (*ek neotētos mou*, from my youth) in his parallel to Mk. 10:20.

**Matthew 19:16 = Mark 10:17 = Luke 18:18**

*a man ran up and knelt before him.* This Markan dramatization appears to have

## Conjectured Process of Gospel Transmission outlined by Robert Lindsey

**1. Hebrew Life of Jesus (36–37 A.D.)** Jesus' words were recorded in Hebrew within about five years of his death. This was a straightforward Hebrew story, about thirty to thirty-five chapters long, similar to the simple biographies of Elijah and Elisha in the Bible.

**2. Greek Life of Jesus (41–42 A.D.)** Within the next five years, Greek-speaking congregations demanded a Greek translation of this biography. As was typical of the period, the translation was generally slavishly literal. Also, Greek being a less concise language than Hebrew, the translation was ten to twelve chapters longer than the Hebrew *Life of Jesus*.

**3. Anthology (Reorganized Scroll) (43–44 A.D.)** Before the Greek *Life of Jesus* was widely circulated, its contents were reorganized: opening incidents were collected from teaching-context stories and, together with miracle and healing stories, placed at the beginning of the new scroll; discourses were collected from the teaching-context stories and placed in the second section of the scroll (these discourses were often grouped on the basis of common key words); twin parables, normally the conclusion to teaching-context stories, were collected and placed in the third and final section of the scroll. Thus, parts of the Greek translation were divorced from their original contexts and the original story outline was lost.

**4. First Reconstruction (55–56 A.D.)** Not long before Luke was written, an attempt was made to reconstruct a chronological record by excerpting units from the Anthology. This resulted in a much shorter version of Jesus' biography (a condensation of about eighteen chapters), as well as a significant improvement in its quality of Greek.

**5. Gospel of Luke (58–60 A.D.)** The author of Luke used the Anthology and the First Reconstruction in writ-

ing his Gospel. As specifically stated in the Gospel's prologue, Luke desired to present an "orderly account" of Jesus' life, and took his cue for much of his chronological story outline (chapters 3–9 and 18–24) from the First Reconstruction. Of the synoptic Gospel writers, only Luke knew the First Reconstruction directly.

**6. Gospel of Mark (65–66 A.D.)** The author of Mark rewrote the stories he copied from Luke's Gospel, changing more than fifty percent of Luke's wording. Although Mark also knew the Anthology, surprisingly he rarely made use of its wording, preferring to draw his substitute words from other sources. Mark took words and phrases from Acts, Romans, I & II Corinthians, Colossians, I & II Thessalonians, James and Luke. (Since Mark made little direct use of the Anthology, in the diagram on the opposite page we have indicated Mark's relationship to the Anthology by a broken rather than a solid line.)

By comparing Luke's text with the Anthology, Mark could identify the stories that Luke took from the First Reconstruction, the stories that gave Luke's Gospel a skeleton of chronology. It is mainly these chronologically arranged stories that Mark drew upon in composing his own Gospel.

**7. Gospel of Matthew (68–69 A.D.)** The author of Matthew used Mark's Gospel and the Anthology, trying, when the two sources differed, to be faithful to both. Matthew did not know the Gospel of Luke; however, like Luke, he took many stories from the Anthology, inserting them into the chronological story order he borrowed from Mark. Because Matthew's chronology came from Mark and Mark's from Luke, the chronology of Matthew and Mark is indirectly derived (through Luke) from the First Reconstruction.



## Lindsey's Synoptic Hypothesis

Hebrew Biography

Greek Translation

Anthology

First Reconstruction

Luke

Mark

Matthew

originally been written in Greek for it does not translate easily to Hebrew. Note particularly the Greek genitive absolute construction: "as he was setting out on his journey."

*asked him.* Mark substituted an imperfect form of the verb ἐπερωτάω (*eperōtaō*, ask) for Luke's aorist form. According to Robert Lindsey, this seems to be another example of Mark's method of writing his own Gospel by revising Luke's text.<sup>3</sup> Mark apparently copied from Lk. 23:9 where Luke also used the imperfect verb form. In all of Luke and Acts (of a total of 19 occurrences of the verb), this form occurs only once, in Lk. 23:9. It is not used by any New Testament writers except Luke (23:9) and Mark (5:9; 8:23, 27, 29; 9:33; 10:17; 13:3; 14:61; 15:4).

*Good teacher.* Both Mark and Luke give an account of a man who addressed Jesus as "good teacher." This form of address is contrary to usual Jewish custom. It is true that human beings, Moses for example, were sometimes called "good" by the sages, but there is no example of a teacher or any other mortal being addressed as "good." In Jewish culture, "good" was used only in speaking **about** someone, never **to** someone.

On the other hand, in Greek culture, the form of address suggested by Mark and Luke was quite usual. "Good teacher" conforms to Greek ideas of politeness, and one may suppose that either Mark or Luke introduced the improvement, only to be copied by the other. Matthew seems to preserve the original address of the rich man — simply "teacher." (See "Teacher" in

"Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction" under the heading "Matthew 19:16 = Mark 10:17 = Luke 18:18.")

Already in 1896 Alfred Plummer noted, "There is no instance in the whole Talmud of a Rabbi being addressed as 'Good Master.'" He also cited the rabbinic saying, "There is nothing that is good except the Torah." However, from this evidence he drew the conclusion that the title "Good Master" was "an extraordinary address, and perhaps a fulsome compliment." Plummer did not suppose, as we do, that Matthew has a superior reading.

**Matthew 19:17 =  
Mark 10:18 = Luke  
18:19**

*me.* We have omitted the word μέ (*me*, me) from our reconstruction. Although μέ (*me*) is found here in all three synoptic Gospels, it probably was

not present in the earliest version of the Greek text. (For a fuller explanation, see David Bivin, "A Hebraic Nuance of *legō*: Key to Understanding Luke 18:18–19," forthcoming in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE.)

*God.* We have omitted from our reconstruction the two words ὁ θεός (*ho theos*, the God), found in Mark and Luke but not in Matthew. The Hebrew equivalent of εἷς (*heis*, one), the Greek word preceding "God," is **אֶחָד** (*e-HAD*, one). Since Hebrew, unlike Greek, has no distinct form for the neuter gender, this Hebrew word can mean "one person" (masculine) or "one thing" (neuter). We believe that the Greek translator of the Hebrew *Life of Jesus* mistranslated this word by using the Greek masculine form of "one" (*heis*) rather than the neuter form (*ἓν*, *hen*). This caused later Greek editors of the text to assume that Jesus was referring to God, and eventually, one of them added *ho theos*. However, when Jesus spoke of the one good, he was referring to the Torah. (See "Nothing is good except one" in "Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction" under the heading "Matthew 19:17 = Mark 10:18 = Luke 18:19.")





## Matthew 19:18–19 = Mark 10:19 = Luke 18:20

*Do not defraud.* Against Matthew and Luke, Mark wrote, “Do not defraud.” Robert Lindsey sees this as a typical Markan “pickup,” apparently borrowed from I Cor. 7:5. The word here translated “defraud” (ἀποστερέω, *apostereō*) is found only four other times in the New Testament (I Cor. 6:7, 8; 7:5; I Tim. 6:5), its imperative form only here in Mark and in I Cor. 7:5. Lindsey believes the negative imperative in I Cor. 7:5 triggered Mark’s creation of this commandment.

“Do not defraud” is not one of the Ten Commandments, nor a commandment anywhere explicitly stated in the Hebrew Scriptures. In an attempt to solve this difficulty, scholars have suggested that Mark’s additional commandment might be inferred from Dt. 24:14–15, which forbids taking advantage of hired laborers;<sup>6</sup> or that it is a reference to the eighth commandment, “Do not steal,” or the tenth commandment, “Do not covet.”<sup>7</sup> A simpler solution, however, is to view this “commandment” as a Markan innovation.

*Honor your father and mother.* We assume that the commandment “Honor your father and mother” was originally absent from Jesus’ statement. One would expect this commandment, which belongs to the first half of the Decalogue, to be

found at the head of the list rather than at the end. It was probably first inserted in the source from which Luke copied at this point, the First Reconstruction.<sup>8</sup> It was later copied from Luke by Mark, and still later from Mark by Matthew.

*Love your neighbor as yourself.* Matthew has one commandment more than Mark and Luke: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18). This commandment is out of place here. Perhaps

Matthew inserted it on the basis of an association with a similar story (Mt. 22:34–40) about commandments of Torah and a man who came to ask Jesus a question. Luke likewise connected the two stories: in Lk. 10:25, in the lawyer story, Luke substituted “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (from the Rich Young Ruler story), for the presumed original, “What is the great commandment in the Torah?” (preserved in the Matthean parallel, Mt. 22:36).<sup>9</sup>

## Matthew 19:20 = Mark 10:20 = Luke 18:21

*the youth.* Matthew apparently added ὁ νεανίσκος (*ho neaniskos*, the youth), found here and in Mt. 19:22, because he saw “from my youth” in Mark’s version of the story (Mk. 10:20; Luke’s parallel is “from youth”). Since he had written “The youth says” (19:20), in contrast to Mark and Luke’s “he said,” Matthew was obliged to delete “from my youth” in the continuation of the verse. That is, after writing “the youth,” it was not possible for Matthew to continue, “All these I kept from my youth.”

*What yet do I lack?* Matthew reports that the rich man added, “What yet do I lack?” Then Jesus said, “If you wish to be perfect....” According to Mark and Luke, Jesus said, “You are lacking one thing.” It is more likely that Jesus mentioned the rich man’s lack since Matthew’s “perfect” (see below) does not seem to reflect the earliest version of the text.

## Matthew 19:21 = Mark 10:21 = Luke 18:22

*And hearing Jesus said to him.* Apparently, the author of the First Reconstruction, or Luke himself, introduced “hearing” (ἀκούσας, *akousas*) under the influence of “hearing” in the next verse. There, “hearing” fits the context, “hearing these things” is the cause of the rich man’s sadness. Furthermore, there, Matthew (19:22) and Luke (18:23) are in agreement against Mark in the use of “hearing.” Here, however, Luke alone uses “hearing,” and it seems superfluous. Note that Matthew (19:21), perhaps following the Anthology, only recorded, “Jesus said to him.”

*Jesus looking at him loved him.* Mark supplied the colorful phrase, “looking at him loved him.” This is an example of the editorial dramatization found continually in Mark’s Gospel, but rarely in Hebrew

Clay jars in which some of the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. The height of the taller jar is 70 cm. (c. 27 in.). (Courtesy of the Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum)





narrative. The absence of the phrase in Matthew and Luke increases the likelihood that it was not part of the original text. Perhaps Mark inserted this detail in order to ease the apparent harshness of Jesus' demand.

*If you wish to be perfect.* This is the third in a series of unique Matthean readings: "the youth," "What yet do I lack?" and "If you wish to be perfect." Therefore, we suspect that these are changes that Matthew introduced.

Apparently, Matthew remembered the word "perfect" (τέλειος, *teleios*) from Mt. 5:48, the only other place that the word appears in the Gospels, and used it here as a replacement for "There is still one thing you are lacking," which he saw in the Anthology, and, in a slightly modified form, in Mark. "Perfect" seems to fit the Mt. 5:43–48 context, in which Jesus urges his disciples to be loving and merciful like God. Robert Lindsey suggests that in Mt. 5:48 *teleios* probably represents תָּמִים (*ta-MIM*, sincere, honest, morally blameless), rather than שָׁלֵם (*sha-LEM*, complete),<sup>10</sup> and that Jesus did not mean sinless perfection.

It is unlikely that Jesus used "perfect" in a discussion about Torah commandments. Here Matthew seems to suggest that Jesus demanded a higher perfection than the keeping of the commandments. It should be noted that Mt. 19:21 was later seen as important Scriptural justification for Christian monasticism, a religious life that included the vow of poverty, the complete renunciation of personal property.

*go sell your belongings.* At first glance, Matthew's "go sell your belongings" appears to represent more idiomatic Hebrew than Luke's version, "all what things you have sell": ὑπάγε πώλησον (*hypage pōlēson*, go sell) is the equivalent of לֵךְ מֵכֹר (leḵ me-*kor*, go sell), and is more elegant than me-*kor* alone. Furthermore, in Hebrew the normal position of the verb is at the beginning of the clause (as here in Matthew) rather than at its end (as in Mark and Luke).

However, when we compare the three synoptic versions of this clause, we find that ὑπάγε (*hypage*) is not present in Luke's parallel. The word *hypage* was probably introduced by Mark, and then copied from Mark by Matthew. Robert Lindsey has pointed out that the verb ὑπάγω (*hypagō*) is one of Mark's stereotypic words.<sup>11</sup> This casts doubts on its originality here. Furthermore, the expression that appears here in Luke, "all what things you have," also appears in

Mt. 13:44 and 46 in the Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl of Great Price. This verbal contact caused Lindsey to conclude that originally the two parables were the direct continuation of the Rich Young Ruler story, since it is natural for a speaker, as he develops a teaching theme, to repeat an expression he used earlier. If it is true that these parables and the rich man episode were part of the same context, then it is probable that the expression

"all what things you have" represents the original Hebrew text. (For a discussion of the conjectured longer version of the rich man story, see David Bivin, "Counting the Cost of Discipleship: Lindsey's Reconstruction of the Rich Young Ruler Complex," forthcoming in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE.)



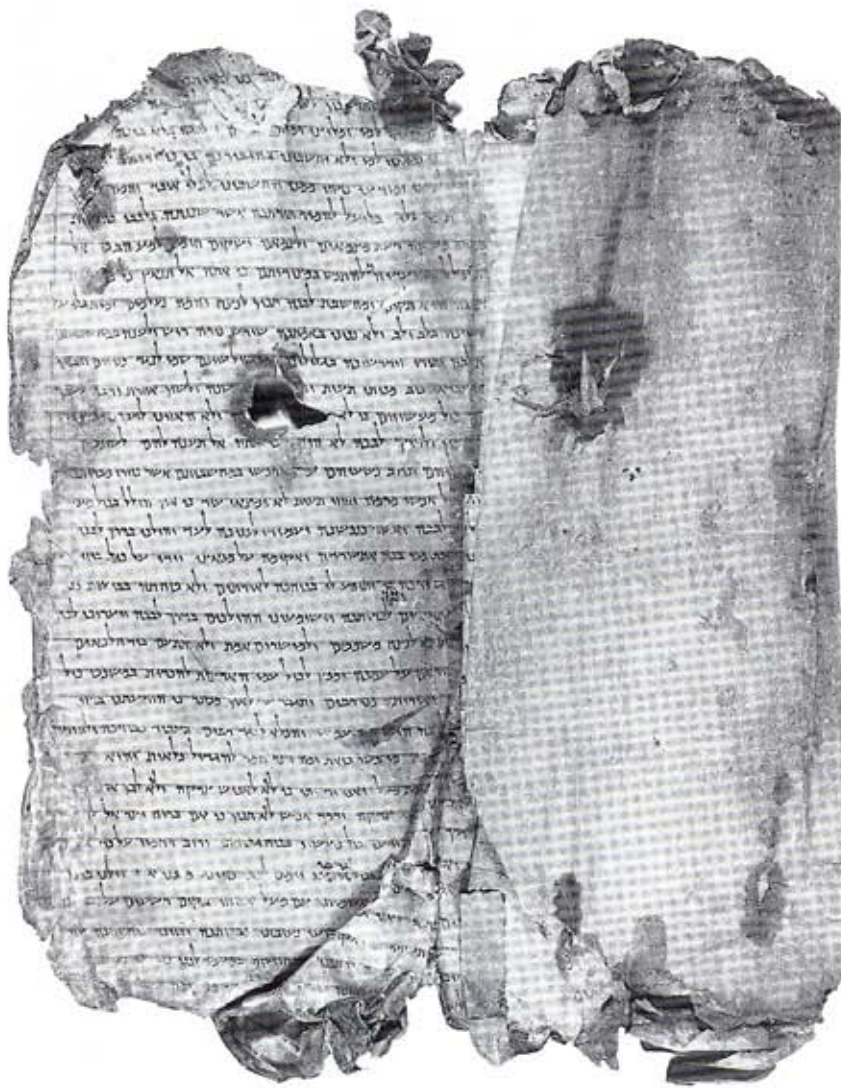
## Matthew 19:22 = Mark 10:22 = Luke 18:23

*And being sad at the word he went away grieving.* Mark's text is "fresher," more dramatic than Luke's parallel: "And hearing these things he became very sad." Matthew followed Mark in the use of "the word" and "went away." According to Luke, the rich man did not necessarily leave. Perhaps he remained to hear the rest of Jesus' teaching.

## Matthew 19:23 = Mark 10:23 = Luke 18:24

*And seeing him.* The phrase ἰδὼν δὲ αὐτόν (*idōn de auton*, and seeing him), found in Lk. 18:24, has not been included in our Greek reconstruction because the phrase seems to be a Greek stylistic improvement. According to Robert Lindsey, the word *idōn* is a Lukan editorial word: it is common in Luke, but Luke never has Matthew's agreement in the use of the word in a non-Markan context (i.e., in Double Tradition), or his agreement against a Markan variant in Triple Tradition, that is, the word never





**The Qumran Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH) as it looked at the beginning of its unrolling. Members of the Jerusalem School believe that the first biography of Jesus was a Hebrew scroll like this.**  
(Courtesy of the Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum)

forms a Matthean-Lukan “minor agreement.”<sup>12</sup>

*And looking around.* Mark substituted the more dramatic *καὶ περιβλεψάμενος* (*kai periblepsamenos*, and looking around) for Luke’s “and seeing him.” In our opinion, Mark “picked up” *periblepsamenos* from Luke (from its only occurrence in the New Testament outside Mark). Robert Lindsey suggests that Mark’s *periblepsamenos* came from copying Lk. 6:10 at Mk. 3:5. As with many such “pickups,” Mark proliferated, using the word repeatedly in subsequent chapters of his Gospel (3:34, 5:32, 9:8, 10:23, 11:11). It became, in Lindsey’s terminology, a “Markan stereotype.”<sup>13</sup> Matthew never used *periblepsamenos* even though he gave sentence or phrase parallels to four of the Markan occurrences of the word.

This evidence suggests that *periblepsamenos* was not found in the earliest Greek versions of the Rich Young Ruler story, nor is it likely that a Hebrew equivalent of *periblepsamenos* was part of the Hebrew

substratum. The word is rare in translation Greek: although *periblepsamenos* appears ten times in the Septuagint, it is just six times the translation of a word in the Hebrew text, and in only two of these instances is it the translation of a word for seeing.

*Amen I tell you.* Apparently, Matthew has introduced this phrase. Here, “amen” is not a response, and therefore, seems to be out of place. (See “Amen” in “Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction” under the heading “Matthew 19:28–29 = Mark 10:29–30 = Luke 18:29–30.”) Additionally, there is no support for the phrase in Mark or Luke’s text.

*kingdom of heaven.* Matthew ordinarily replaced the phrase “kingdom of God,” which he found in Mark or the Anthology, with “kingdom of heaven.”<sup>14</sup> Therefore, paradoxically, Matthew has usually transmitted the more correct Hebrew term. Here, opposite Mk. 10:23, Matthew again wrote “kingdom of heaven”; however, one verse later (19:24), he used “kingdom of God.”

It can be seen from an analysis of the synoptic Gospels that the earliest Greek form of Jesus’ biography employed the term “kingdom of God.” We have retained “Kingdom of God” in our Greek reconstruction even though we are certain the underlying Hebrew expression was מְלִכְוֹת שָׁמַיִם (*mal-KUT sha-MA-yim*, kingdom of heaven): the expression “kingdom of God” does not exist in Hebrew.

The sages developed the term “Kingdom of Heaven” to describe the rule of God, but Jesus used it in an additional sense — his company of attending disciples. (See “the Kingdom of Heaven” in “Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction” under the heading “Matthew 19:23 = Mark 10:23 = Luke 18:24.”) “Kingdom of God” was an appropriate Greek equivalent for the Hebraic “Kingdom of Heaven” because “Heaven” was used in Jewish society as a synonym for “God.” By using substitutes for the biblical names of God, Jews avoided the risk of employing the Divine Name irreverently.<sup>15</sup> However, the original Greek translator of Jesus’ Hebrew biography probably thought “heaven” (literally, “heavens”) would be unclear to his Gentile readers, or might suggest to them the pagan belief in a pantheon of Gods on high.

## Mark 10:24

*And the disciples were amazed at his words.* Mark heightened the drama by repetition of



Jesus' statement about the difficulty the rich have in becoming part of his movement. Mark's text reads, "And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus again answers and says to them, 'Children, how hard it is for those who trust in their riches to enter the kingdom of God.'" Matthew and Luke independently agreed to omit this passage from their accounts, evidence that Mark composed it. Note also the amazement of Jesus' disciples. The proliferation of verbs of amazement and wonder is characteristic of Mark's writing.<sup>16</sup>

## Matthew 19:25–26 = Mark 10:26–27 = Luke 18:26–27

*And they were exceedingly astonished.* Mark described the disciples' further and even greater amazement: the disciples were "exceedingly astonished." Although Mark might have logically assumed this from the contents of Lk. 18:26, there is no explicit reference to astonishment in Luke's text. Matthew's parallel, "they were greatly astonished," is probably due to the influence of Mark's text, which Matthew copied at this point.

*What is impossible with men is possible with God.* We have omitted from the Greek reconstruction: "And those who heard said, 'Who then can be saved?' And he said, 'The impossible with men is possible with God'" (Lk. 18:26–27 and parallels). Our reasons are the following:

1) The passage is extremely difficult to translate to Hebrew, indicating that it may originally have been composed in Greek. Note, for instance, the *a privativus* (ἀδύνατα, *adynata*, impossible), a grammatical form that is common in normative Greek, but rare in translation Greek.

2) The verb σωθῆναι (*sōthenai*, to be saved) appears to be used in its later Christian sense of "deliverance from the power and effects of sin" (cf. Lk. 8:12, 13:23; Mk. 16:16). In Hebrew, "save" refers to deliverance from physical danger, that is, the saving of human life, or the restoration of the body to health.

3) The disciples' question does not make sense. When Jesus said that it is difficult for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God, the disciples logically should have responded: "Then almost everyone can enter! Only those few with wealth will have difficulty getting into the Kingdom."

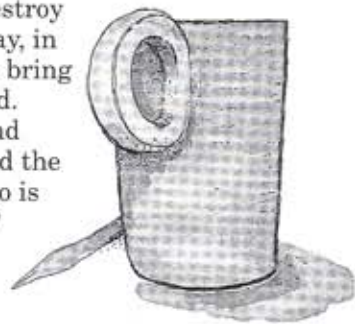
4) "The impossible with men is possible with God" is almost identical to a saying by

Philo (lived c. 20 B.C.–50 A.D.): "Not even the longest [space of time can transform the behavior of a soul trained in prostitution], but only God, with whom the impossible with us is possible (ὁ δυνατὰ τὰ παρ' ἡμῶν ἀδύνατα)" (On the Special Laws 1:282). On the basis of the evidence in Philo, David Flusser believes this saying must have existed in first-century Jewish Hellenistic circles, and that Luke, or the author of a source used by Luke, may have inserted it in the Rich Young Ruler story.

5) It seems unlikely that Jesus would modify his preceding statement about the difficulty the rich have in getting into the Kingdom by adding a general statement about everybody's difficulty ("the impossible with men"), in effect making the disposal of one's possessions a condition for everyone who wished to enter the Kingdom.

However, despite reservations about the originality of this passage, one cannot be sure there was not an exchange between Jesus and the disciples at this point in the story. First, there are three Matthean-Lukan "minor agreements" in the two verses. Second, the disciples may have held the common Jewish view that riches are a sign of God's blessing (cf. Job 1:1–3, 10; Ps. 128:1–4; 112:1–3). Their question would then make sense: "If the rich (whose wealth is a mark of God's blessing) have difficulty entering the Kingdom of God, how much more difficult it will be for those of ordinary means like us?" Third, Jesus' teaching often includes subtle hints at Scripture. Here, there may be a reference to Genesis 18:14, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" (Cf. Jer. 32:17, 27.) If Jesus' reply is a hint at Scripture, it is unlikely that later Greek editors created it: they would not have had the ability to imitate this rabbinic sophistication.

Robert Lindsey proposes that Jesus, playing on יכול (ya-KOL, can, able) in the disciples' question, hinted at יכלה (ye-KO-let, ability) found in Num. 14:16 (cf. Dt. 9:28). In this passage Moses argues that if God carries through with his decision to destroy the people of Israel, the nations will say, in ridicule, that God lacked the *ability* to bring his people into the land as he promised. Lindsey suggests that Lk. 18:26–27 and parallels should be reconstructed, "And the listeners said: 'Then who can [i.e., Who is able to give away everything he owns? Who has enough strength to make that sacrifice?]' And he [Jesus] said: 'Man's inability is God's







The logo of the Jerusalem School (designed by Richard Sears). The logo, an unrolling scroll, symbolizes the efforts of Jerusalem School scholars to recover the lost Hebrew biography of Jesus. The name שוע (ye-SHU-a', Jesus) represents the contents of the scroll. The letters of the name were selected from the text of the Qumran Commentary of Habakkuk.

ability [i.e., God can supply a person with the inner resolve to make such a sacrifice].”

### Matthew 19:27 = Mark 10:28 = Luke 18:28

began to say. Mark wrote “began to say” in contrast to Luke’s “said” (“answered and said” in Matthew). “Began to say” is a Hebrew idiom, and therefore, at first glance, Mark’s reading would seem to reflect the Hebrew undertext; however, we have omitted “began to say” from our Greek reconstruction because it appears to be a Markan editorial change.

The Greek phrase employed here by Mark, ἤρξατο λέγειν (*ērxato legein*, began to say), appears twelve times in the New Testament: five times in Luke (4:21; 7:24; 11:29; 12:1; 20:9); five times in Mark (10:28; 32, 47; 13:5; 14:69); and twice in Matthew (4:17; 11:7). Matthew and Luke even agree once in Double Tradition material to use the expression (Mt. 11:7; Lk. 7:24), evidence that the idiom can reflect the earliest Greek text. However, every instance of this expression’s use in Mark appears to be secondary: Luke has a parallel to each of the five passages in which the phrase appears in Mark, but Luke’s parallel never contains “began to say.” Matthew also has parallels to the five Markan passages, but he too never uses the expression opposite Mark. This is an example of Mark’s practice of systematically replacing Luke’s vocabulary using synonyms he gleaned from Luke and other sources.<sup>17</sup>

our own things. According to Luke, Peter said ἀφέντες τὰ ἴδια (*aphentes ta idia*, leaving our own things). According to Matthew

and Mark, he said ἀφήκαμεν πάντα (*aphēkamen panta*, left all [things]). Which version reflects the Hebrew undertext? Has Mark changed Luke’s wording, replacing *ta idia* with *panta* (perhaps picked up from Lk. 5:11); or has Mark copied *panta* from the Anthology? The decision is not easy.

It is very possible that originally Peter used the Hebrew word בַּיִת (*BA-yit*, house), probably with a pronominal suffix: בֵּיתֵנוּ (*be-TE-nu*, our house). Jesus’ response, “Everyone who has left house...,” seems to indicate that Peter used the singular or plural of “house.” If Peter had said, “We have left everything,” wouldn’t Jesus have responded, “Everyone who has left everything...”?

The Greek translator of the Hebrew biography may have employed *ta idia* (our own things) to translate Peter’s בֵּיתֵנוּ (*be-TE-nu*). The expression *ta idia* was sometimes used to translate *BA-yit* (house): in the Septuagint *ta idia* twice translates בֵּיתוֹ (*be-TO*, his house),<sup>18</sup> and *ta idia* was used in the sense of “home” by non-Jewish Greek authors at least as early as the second century B.C.<sup>19</sup> Alternatively, the Greek translator may have employed οἰκίαν (*oikian*, house), the literal Greek translation of the Hebrew “house.” In that case, it was probably the author of the First Reconstruction who replaced οἰκίαν (*oikian*, house), which he found in the Anthology, with *ta idia*.

After considerable vacillation, we have decided that Matthew and Mark reflect the earliest version of the text:

1) the Matthean-Markan “we left...and followed” is more Hebraic than Luke’s “leaving [Greek participle]...we followed.”

2) The Greek *ta idia* (our own things) is not usually found in translation Greek<sup>20</sup> and it is unclear how one should translate the expression to Hebrew.

3) It is unlikely that a Greek translator who found a form of *BA-yit* (house) in Peter’s statement would have translated it differently than he did the *BA-yit* in Jesus’ immediately following words (“everyone who left house”).

4) Peter may have been referring to Jesus’ words to the rich man, “sell everything [*panta*]” (Lk. 18:22), when he exclaimed, “We have left everything.” Therefore, *panta* is the logical choice in reconstructing Peter’s exclamation.

5) Jesus had just spoken to the rich man about giving up his possessions; therefore, Peter would have responded, “We have



given up our possessions." He cannot logically respond, "We have left our home [i.e., our family]." <sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the words "will receive much more in this life" in Jesus' reply to Peter indicate that Peter referred to material possessions, things given up permanently, and not to family members left behind temporarily. Jesus commanded the rich man to sell his possessions and give away the proceeds, a permanent transaction. Logically, Peter would not react by saying that he has left family, a sacrifice that was temporary in nature.

## Matthew 19:28–29 = Mark 10:29–30 = Luke 18:29–30

*Jesus said.* Mark transmits the version, "Jesus said," while Matthew and Luke transmit, "and he [Matthew: Jesus] said to them." According to the common theory of Markan priority, both Matthew and Luke independently copied Mark in writing their Gospels, yet here they agree **against** Mark in the verb used, *εἶπον* (*eipon*) rather than *φημί* (*phēmi*), and in adding the pronoun *αὐτοῖς* (*autois*, to them).

Such "minor agreements," hundreds of which exist in the synoptic Gospels, are evidence that Matthew and Luke copied a literary source other than Mark. Therefore, we have preferred "and he said to them," supposing that Matthew and Luke are not dependent on Mark for their wording, but on an earlier shared source.

*I say to you.* Here also Matthew and Luke agreed, against Mark, to add one small word, the conjunction *ὅτι* (*hoti*, that). We assume that they independently copied this word from their common non-Markan source, the Anthology, and that, therefore, their version best represents the original text.

*in the regeneration.* Mt. 19:28 reads: "In the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on his throne of glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." We assume that Matthew took from the Anthology a text like Lk. 22:30, rewrote it <sup>22</sup> and inserted it here. The saying is peculiar in this context. Its original context is more likely the last Passover meal and Jesus' instruction that the leaders of his movement were to behave like servants (cf. Lk. 22:24–30).

*There is no one who left.* We have followed Matthew's construction, "Everyone who left...will receive..." rather than the

Markan-Lukan, "There is no one who left... who will not receive...." Since Matthew's sentence (19:29) is framed in more natural Hebrew syntax, we assume that his version preserves the more original form of the sentence.

"Everyone who" very likely reflects the mishnaic Hebrew *כָּל שֶׁ* (*kol she*-). Rabbinic sayings frequently begin in this way; <sup>23</sup> however, in rabbinic literature, one rarely meets the sentence arrangement, "There is no one who...who will not...." In Greek, the opposite may be true. Matthew's sentence probably appeared somewhat inelegant to a Greek-speaker, and perhaps Luke or the author of the First Reconstruction improved it.

The "everyone who" syntax seems to indicate translation Greek. All examples of this construction in the synoptic Gospels are in sayings of Jesus, and all such sayings appear to be original. <sup>24</sup> Apparently, "everyone who" is such a deeply embedded Hebrew structure that it survived the attempts of Greek editors to improve the Semitic Greek of the synoptic Gospels.

Although many parts of this saying (Mt. 19:29) are better preserved in Luke, there is no need to prefer Luke's "there is no one who" sentence structure. Matthew has broken with Mark's syntax, and, according to our synoptic theory, this may indicate that Matthew has begun to copy the second of his two sources, the Anthology. The odd *πᾶς ὅστις* (*pas hostis*, everyone of whatever kind) — the combination occurs in the New Testament only in Mt. 7:24, 10:32 and 19:29, — should not cause one to favor the Markan-Lukan syntax. This usage is simply Matthew's special substitute for the ordinary *πᾶς ὅς* (*pas os*, all which, everyone who): Matthew's two other examples of *pas hostis* are also located in original sayings of Jesus.

Luke's text likewise shows signs of Greek editing: for example, *οὐχί* (*ouchi*), an emphatic negative, seems out of place. It is not the same Semitic *ouchi* representing *הַלּוֹ* (*ha-LO*, surely, certainly) that we find in Mt. 5:46, 47; 6:25; 10:29 (= Lk. 12:6); 13:27; and 20:13. Moreover, it is the only *ouchi* followed by *μή* (*mē*, not) in the New Testament (of 52 occurrences of *ouchi*). It is probable that the structure of the Lukan saying, "There is no one who...who will not....," is also a Greek editorial "improvement."

*or wife or brothers or parents or children.* We assume that Jesus did not say, "or wife







**A clay inkwell  
discovered at  
Qumran.**

(Courtesy of the Israel  
Museum, Jerusalem)

or brothers or parents or children.” In Hebrew, a reference to  $\text{בֵּית}$  (*BA-yit*, house) is sufficient to imply “family.” There is no need to clarify by the addition of “wife, brothers, parents and children.” They are included in this sense of “house.”<sup>25</sup> For examples of “house” in the sense of “family,” see “house” in “Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction” under the heading “Matthew 19:28–29 = Mark 10:29–30 = Luke 18:29–30.”

According to Robert Lindsey, it is probable that “or wife or brothers or parents or children” was introduced by Luke or the author of the First Reconstruction due to the influence of Lk. 14:26–33, a similar passage. That passage is also about giving up family to be Jesus’ disciple. There, Jesus even states that one must “hate” one’s family. The use of  $\eta$  (*ē*, or) in Lk. 18:29 to connect wife, brothers, parents and children is a sign of Greek editing, a Greek improvement. Another telltale sign of Greek editing is the use of  $\gammaονεῖς$  (*goneis*, parents) instead of “father and mother.” Note the more Semitic syntax of Lk. 14:26 — “father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters.”

*sisters...or fields.* Mark expanded Luke’s list of family members by specifying “mother or father”<sup>26</sup> in place of Luke’s “parents.” Perhaps prompted by Luke’s “brothers,” Mark also added “sisters.” However, the most conspicuous difference in the two lists is Mark’s addition of “fields.” Apparently, he understood the word “house” in its literal sense, and therefore felt justified in introducing “fields,” the corollary of “houses.” That Mark really understood “house” to be a building is confirmed by his change to the plural “houses” in Mk. 10:30 where he repeated the list.

Such repetition is characteristic of Mark. (For example, note Mark’s long expansion in verse 24. There he repeated the disciples’ amazement and Jesus’ statement about the difficulty of the rich.) In repeating the list (10:30), Mark inserted “houses” and “persecutions.” Since Mark used “house” in a literal sense, he was obliged to drop the reference to “wife” that he saw in Luke<sup>27</sup> — a follower of Jesus cannot expect to get more wives [“much more”] in this life! At his second reference to “fields,” Mark perhaps felt uncomfortable at the idea of the believer receiving so much material wealth, and therefore he added “with persecutions.”

Matthew copied Mark’s first list word for word, but reversed the order of “mother”

and “father.” Matthew also knew Mark’s second list: this is shown by Matthew’s change to “houses” (19:29) in the phrase “everyone who left house.” Matthew, like Mark, apparently did not understand the Hebraic nuance of “house.” Mt. 10:12–13 confirms that the author of Matthew did not know Hebrew: “And when you enter the house, greet it.” However, as the parallel in Lk. 10:5–7 makes clear, in this saying too Jesus used the word “house” in its Hebraic sense of “family.”

*a hundred times more.* In copying Luke’s text, Mark has apparently substituted  $\epsilon\kappa\alpha\tau\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\pi\lambda\alpha\sigma\iota\omicron\nu\alpha$  (*hekatontaplasiona*, a hundred times more) for Luke’s  $\pi\omicron\lambda\lambda\alpha\pi\lambda\alpha\sigma\iota\omicron\nu\alpha$  (*pollaplasiona*, many times as much, many times more). This substitute seems to have been “picked up” by Mark from Lk. 8:8 — the word *hekatontaplasiona* is found only twice in the New Testament, here in Mk. 10:30, and in Lk. 8:8 in the Parable of the Sower.

There are two variants of Matthew’s parallel (at 19:29): one is identical with Luke’s text — *pollaplasiona*, the reading of Manuscripts B (Vaticanus) and L; the other is identical with Mark’s text — *hekatontaplasiona*, the reading of Manuscripts  $\aleph$  (Sinaiticus), C, D and W. We prefer the reading of Codex Vaticanus.<sup>28</sup> If it is the original reading, it furnishes a Matthean-Lukan minor agreement (an independent agreement of Matthew and Luke against Mark in their use of *pollaplasiona*), significant additional evidence that Luke has preserved the superior text and that Mark is responsible for the word *hekatontaplasiona*.

*for my sake and the sake of the gospel.* Mark’s “for my sake and for the sake of the gospel” almost certainly was not part of the first account of Jesus’ life. Vincent Taylor asserts that the phrase “for the sake of the gospel” is “editorial...as many commentators recognize.”<sup>29</sup> The term “gospel” was apparently coined by Paul. Mark’s Gospel opens with the words, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ...” Robert Lindsey has noted the difficulty he experienced in finding a Hebrew equivalent for the word “gospel.”<sup>30</sup>

When the rich man refused to give up everything to *follow* him, Jesus spoke about how hard it is for the rich to *enter the Kingdom of God*. Peter pointed out that he and the other disciples had left all to *follow* Jesus. Logically, Jesus should not then have spoken about making a sacrifice for him and for the gospel, but, as in Luke’s text,



about making a sacrifice for the *Kingdom of God*.

*and will inherit eternal life*. Matthew omitted the beautiful Hebraisms, “this world” and “the world to come,” that are found in Mark and Luke. (See “*this world*” in “Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction” under the heading “Matthew 19:28–29 = Mark 10:29–30 = Luke 18:29–30.”) However, Matthew added the verb “will inherit” after the words “life eternal,” perhaps due to the influence of Mk. 10:17 (“What may I do that *life eternal I may inherit*?”) in the early part of the Rich Young Ruler story.

## Matthew 19:30 = Mark 10:31

*But many that are first will be last*. Mark, followed by Matthew, wrote, “And many that are first will be last, and that are last first.” However, this saying appears to be out of context. Its original context is apparently the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard (Mt. 20:1–16). Mark probably copied the saying from Luke 13:30 where it was part of a complex of five short passages (Lk. 13:22–30). The parallels, scattered in Matthew (7:13–14; 25:10b–12; 7:22–23; 8:11–12; 19:30), suggest that this complex was put together by the author of the First Reconstruction, from whose text it was copied by Luke. Vincent Taylor regards the saying as secondary: “In view of Mark’s editorial methods elsewhere...it is best to regard the saying as an appendage to the story.”<sup>31</sup>

## Hebrew Reconstruction

וַיִּשְׁאַל אוֹתוֹ לֵאמֹר: רַבִּי, מִה טוֹב אֲעֲשֶׂה וְאִירֶשׁ  
חַיִּי עוֹלָם?  
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ: לְמַה אַתָּה אוֹמֵר, “טוֹב”? אֵין טוֹב אֶלָּא  
אַחַר. אֵת הַמְצוּוֹת אֵתָּה יוֹדֵעַ: לֹא תִנְאַף, לֹא תִרְצֹחַ,  
לֹא תִגְנוֹב, לֹא תִשְׁנֶה עַד שֶׁקָּרָא.  
וַיֹּאמֶר: כָּל אֵלֶּה עָשִׂיתִי מִלְּדוּתִי.  
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ: עוֹד אַחַת חֲסִרָה לְךָ. מִכֵּר כָּל מַה שֶׁיֵּשׁ  
לְךָ וְתִשְׁלַק לַעֲגִיִּים (וְיָתִיתָ לָּךְ אוֹצֵר בְּשָׂמִים) וּבֹא לְךָ  
אַחֲרָי.  
וַיִּשְׁמַע זֶאת וַיִּתְעַצֵּב כִּי הָיָה עֲשִׂיר מֵאֲדָר.  
וַיֹּאמֶר יֵשׁוּעַ: מַה קִּשְׁתָּ לֵאמֹר שֶׁיֵּשׁ לָךְ נֶכְסִים  
לְבֹא לְמַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם. נוֹחַ לְנַקֵּל לְהִכָּנֵס בְּחִרְיָה שֶׁל  
מַחֲט מִלְּעֲשִׂיר לְבֹא לְמַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם.  
וַיֹּאמֶר פְּטָרוֹס: הֲרֵי אֲנִי וְאֶחָיו עֲזָבוּ אֶת הַכֹּל וְהִלְכְּנוּ  
אַחֲרֶיךָ.  
וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם: אֲמֵן! אֲנִי אוֹמֵר לָכֶם כִּי כָל שֶׁעֲזָבוּ אֶת  
בֵּיתוֹ לְשֵׁם מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם וְנִקְבַּל הֶרְבֵּה יוֹתֵר בְּעוֹלָם  
הַחַיִּי וְחַיִּי עוֹלָם בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

## Literal Translation of Hebrew Reconstruction

...and he asked him, saying: “My teacher, what good will I do and I will inherit life [of] eternity?”

And he said to him: “Why you say ‘good’? There is no good but one. The commandments you know: ‘Not you shall commit adultery; Not you shall murder; Not you shall steal; Not you shall answer witness [of] falsehood.’”

And he said: “All these I have done from my youth.”

And he said to him: “More one [is] missing to you: Sell all what there is to you and divide to the poor people (and will be to you treasure in the heavens) and come walk after me.”

And he heard this and he grew sad because he was rich very.

And said Jesus: “How hard for those that there are to them possessions to come into [the] kingdom [of] heavens. Easy for the camel to enter [the] eye of [a] needle than for the rich person to come into [the] kingdom [of] heavens.”

And said Peter: “Behold we have left everything and walked after you.”

And he said to them: “Amen! I say to you that everyone who has left his house for [the] name [of] [the] kingdom [of] heavens will receive much more in the world the this, and life [of] eternity in the world the coming.”

## Idiomatic Translation of Hebrew Reconstruction

...and he asked him: “Teacher, what good can I do and inherit eternal life?”

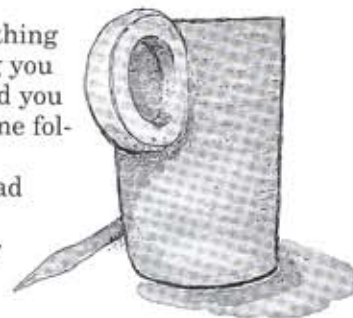
And he said to him: “Why are you using ‘good’ in this way? There is nothing good except one thing. You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery; Do not murder; Do not steal; Do not give false testimony.’”

And he said: “All these I have done since my youth.”

And he said to him: “There is one thing more you are lacking: Sell everything you have and distribute it to the poor (and you will have treasure in heaven) and come follow me.”

And when he heard that, he was sad because he was very wealthy.

And Jesus said: “How hard it is for those who have wealth to come into the Kingdom of Heaven.





It is easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for a rich person to come into the Kingdom of Heaven."

And Peter said: "Look, we have left everything and followed you."

And he said to them: "Amen! I tell you that everyone who has left home for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven will receive much more in this life, and eternal life in the next life."

## Dynamic Translation of Hebrew Reconstruction

"Teacher," he asked, "what 'good' can I do to obtain eternal life?"

Jesus replied: "Why do you refer to a deed as 'good'? Call only one thing 'good' — the Torah. You already know how to obtain eternal life: keep the commandments — 'Do not commit adultery; Do not murder; Do not steal; Do not give false testimony.'"

"All these I have kept since my youth," the man said.

At that, Jesus said: "There is something more you should do: Give away all your wealth to charity — you'll have spiritual wealth — and become my disciple."

The man's face fell: he was very rich.

"How difficult it is," Jesus said, "for someone who is rich to join my band of disciples; it is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye."

"Look at us, we have left everything to become your disciples!" Peter exclaimed.

"You have done the right thing," Jesus replied. "I promise you that all who have left family, livelihood and possessions to join my band of disciples will in this life get much, much more than what they have given up, and in the life after death, eternal life."

## Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction

**Matthew 19:16 = Mark 10:17 = Luke 18:18**

...and he asked him. It is obvious that we have begun our reconstruction in the middle of a sentence: the subject of this first sentence is missing. No doubt a story character was mentioned in the preceding sentence or sentences; however, it appears that none of the synoptic Gospels have preserved the original story setting, each author composing his own setting to the story. It is therefore impossible to reconstruct the introduction

to the Rich Young Ruler story.

*Teacher.* The rich man addressed Jesus as "Teacher." This was the usual respectful form of address employed when approaching a sage.<sup>32</sup> The Hebrew word for "teacher" in Jesus' day was רַב (rav, master). In addressing a teacher, one said רַבִּי (ra·BI, my teacher), adding a suffixed "ee" sound, the possessive pronoun "my." This pronoun is unidiomatic in Greek and was probably dropped when the Hebrew text was translated to Greek.

In the time of Jesus, ra·BI (my teacher) was used in its literal sense to refer to one's teacher, or idiomatically, in addressing a teacher. It did not become a title (e.g., Rabbi Eleazar, Rabbi Meir) until the second century A.D.<sup>33</sup>

Notice that the rich man did not address Jesus by name. A sage might address his disciples by name;<sup>34</sup> however, out of respect, the sage's disciples and the general public avoided addressing him by name.<sup>35</sup> This social convention is confirmed in the synoptic Gospels: Jesus' disciples never address him by name, and he is ordinarily addressed "ra·BI" by outsiders.<sup>36</sup>

*what good thing.* Matthew's version, "Teacher, what good can I do....," because of its rabbinic sophistication, appears to better preserve the original than Luke's, "Good teacher, what can I do...." As a result of David Flusser's insistence that the Markan-Lukan "Good teacher" is impossible in the context of first-century Jewish society, Robert Lindsey reexamined Matthew's parallel. Translating the text to Hebrew, Lindsey discovered that the rich man's question echoes the question implied in Micah 6:8, "What good does the LORD require of you." Matthew's τί ἀγαθόν (ti agathon, what good) reflects מה טוב (ma tov, what good), a phrase found in Micah 6:8. Apparently, the rich man interpreted "good" as "good deed" or "mitzvah," due to a popular misunderstanding of the rabbinic interpretation of "good" in the Micah passage.

*inherit eternal life.* The word יָרַשׁ (ya·RASH, inherit) is used not only in the sense of "be an heir," but also "take possession of, get, obtain"; therefore, it can be combined with "eternal life." Hebrew synonyms for "inherit eternal life" are expressions such as "inherit the land," "inherit the world to come" and "inherit the Garden of Eden":

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. (Mt. 5:5)<sup>37</sup>





Our father Abraham did not inherit this world and the world to come but by faith; he put his trust in the LORD, as it is said, "And he trusted in the LORD and it was counted to him as righteousness." (Mechilta, Beshallah 6; to Exodus 15:1 [ed. Horovitz-Rabin, p. 114])

How do the disciples of Abraham our father [who are characterized by generosity (literally, a "good eye"), humility and meekness] differ from the disciples of Balaam [in terms of reward]? The disciples of Balaam go down to Gehenna... but the disciples of Abraham our father inherit the Garden of Eden.... (Mishnah, Avot 5:19 [reading of Kaufmann and Cambridge manuscripts]; cf. Avot 1:5)

In the morning prayer service, there is a petition that includes the expression, "inherit happiness and blessing...in the life of the world to come":

May it be your will, O LORD our God and the God of our forefathers, that we may keep your laws in this world, and be counted worthy to live to see and inherit happiness and blessing in the time of the Messiah and in the life of the world to come.<sup>38</sup>

The Greek expression ζωὴ αἰώνιος (zōē aiōnios, life eternal) is the Septuagintal equivalent of עוֹלָם וָעוֹלָם (ha-YE 'o-LAM, life eternal).<sup>39</sup> (For the use of 'o-LAM, see "this world," below, under the heading "Matthew 19:28–29 = Mark 10:29–30 = Luke 18:29–30.")

## Matthew 19:17 = Mark 10:18 = Luke 18:19

Why do you say good? It follows that if the rich man did not address Jesus as good, then Jesus did not ask, "Why do you call me good?" However, the Markan-Lukan version of Jesus' question is problematic also because in this period, apparently, neither the Greek verb λέγω (legō, say) nor its Hebrew equivalent, אָמַר ('o-MER, say), had the meaning "call" in the sense of "to address."

Jesus may have used 'o-MER in the sense of "interpret." His question, "Why do you say 'good'?" would then mean, "Why do you use 'good' in this way?" (For a fuller explanation, see David Bivin, "A Hebraic Nuance of legō: Key to Understanding Luke 18:18–19," forthcoming in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE.)

It seems probable that Jesus' response was not a reaction to being addressed as

"good," but rather a reaction to the rich man's use of "good" in the sense of "good deed" or "mitzvah." Jesus opposed attempts to obtain spiritual rewards by doing good deeds, and certainly he opposed this attempt to gain eternal life by performing one good deed.

Nothing is good except one. The one good of which Jesus spoke is Torah. This seems clear from his continuation, "You know the commandments" (in Matthew, "If you want to enter life, keep the commandments"),<sup>40</sup> and from the structural similarity of Jesus' saying, "There is no good except one," and a well-known saying of the sages, "There is no good except Torah."<sup>41</sup> The rabbinic saying is an interpretation or midrash of Proverbs 4:2, a verse that associates good and Torah — "For I give you good teaching; do not forsake my Torah."<sup>42</sup>

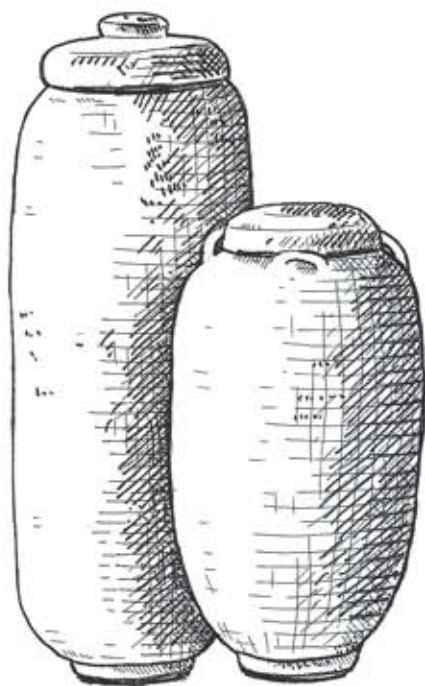
Jesus not only connected good and Torah, he also connected eternal life and Torah: when the rich man expressed a desire to obtain eternal life, Jesus directed him to the commandments. Jesus indicated that by observing the commandments of the Torah, the man could obtain eternal life. As David Flusser has pointed out:

The connection between the Torah and eternal life had long been taken for granted. It is expressed in the ancient benediction which is recited after reading from the Torah: "Thanks be to Him who gave us the Torah of truth, and so implanted eternal life within us".... The phrase "Torah of life" appears in Ben Sira 17:11, where we read: "He bestowed knowledge upon them, and allotted to them the Law [Torah] of life".... The Hebrew original of that sentence is not among those [i.e., the Hebrew fragments of Ben Sira] that have been discovered. However, we do have the Hebrew for another passage that uses the phrase: "He placed in his [Moses'] hand the



An inkwell (pottery) used by the scribes who copied the Dead Sea Scrolls. (Courtesy of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem)





commandment, the Torah of life and understanding." (Ben Sira 45:5)<sup>43</sup>

Some scholars have supposed that the Markan-Lukan version of Jesus' response is authentic because Jesus' words, "No one is good except one — God," is a contradiction to early Christian belief.<sup>44</sup> They believe that Matthew has rewritten Mark's version in order to eliminate this contradiction. Their reasoning is: Jesus here rejects the suggestion that he is deity. Because this does not fit the theology of the early Church, a later Christian editor would not have put the saying in Jesus' mouth since it is unlikely that the Christian editor would have introduced a saying that

questions Jesus' deity. Therefore, the Markan-Lukan version must be authentic.

Rather than Matthew's having deleted "God," it is more likely that a later Greek editor added ὁ θεός (*ho theos*, the God) to the sentence. The Greek editor was apparently misled by a mistranslation of the Hebrew word for "one." (See "God" in "Comments on the Greek Reconstruction" under the heading "Matthew 19:17 = Mark 10:18 = Luke 18:19.")

### Matthew 19:18 = Mark 10:19 = Luke 18:20

*Do not commit adultery. Do not murder.* In Luke, the seventh commandment, "Do not commit adultery," precedes the sixth, "Do not murder." We have preferred the Lukan order of the commandments to the Matthean-Markan order.

There apparently were two traditions regarding the order of the Ten Commandments which circulated in the time of Jesus: one like that preserved in the Masoretic text, and one like that preserved in the Septuagint.<sup>45</sup>

The Matthean-Markan order (Do not murder; Do not commit adultery) is supported by the Masoretic text, an unpublished manuscript of Deuteronomy from Qumran, Josephus (Antiquities 3:91–92), the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch, rabbinic literature, Matthew 5:21–30, and Matthew 15:19 = Mark 7:21–22.

The Lukan order (Do not commit adultery; Do not murder) is supported by the Septua-

gint (its order in Ex. 20 is, "Do not commit adultery; Do not steal; Do not murder"), Philo (On the Decalogue 12:51), Rom. 13:9 (cf. James 2:11), the Nash Papyrus, the Epistle of Barnabas 20:1, and Pseudo-Philo's Biblical Antiquities 11:10–11 ("Do not steal" is omitted) and 44:6–7 (in reverse order).

There is no reason to reject the Lukan order of the Ten Commandments: this order is well attested. Luke's version is preferable also because it appears that Matthew and Mark have corrected their order on the basis of the Masoretic text.

### Matthew 19:20 = Mark 10:20 = Luke 18:21

*All of these I have done.* In our reconstruction we have used the Hebrew verb פָּעַל (*ʿa-SAH*, to do), yet all the synoptic Gospels have forms of the Greek verb φυλάσσω (*phylassō*, to guard; keep), normally the translation equivalent of שָׁמַר (*sha-MAR*, to guard; keep). In biblical Hebrew, "to guard" was the verb that usually accompanied "commandments"; however, it was replaced in post-biblical Hebrew by "to do."<sup>46</sup> Though rare, the usage "do commandments" is already found in the Hebrew Bible: *ʿa-SAH* is used twenty-eight times with *mitzvah* or one of its synonyms. Two of these twenty-eight occurrences of *ʿa-SAH* were even translated in the Septuagint by *phylassō*,<sup>47</sup> the Greek verb that appears here.

*youth.* Franz Delitzsch, in his 1877 Hebrew translation of the New Testament, rendered νεότης (*neotēs*, youth [as stage of life]) by the Hebrew word נְעוּרִים (*ne-ʿu-RIM*, youth; the time of life before betrothal). In their 1976 Hebrew version, the United Bible Societies followed suit. However, on the basis of rabbinic usage, we have reconstructed with יָלֻדָּה (*yal-DUT*, youth, adolescence).<sup>48</sup> In the Septuagint, *neotēs* is thirty-seven times the translation of *ne-ʿu-RIM*, and only twice the translation of *yal-DUT*; consequently, *ne-ʿu-RIM* seems the more likely equivalent of *neotēs*. However, *neotēs* is also the translation equivalent of *yal-DUT*: *yal-DUT* appears only three times in the Hebrew Scriptures (Ps. 110:3; Eccl. 11:9, 10), but is translated twice in the Septuagint by *neotēs* (Eccl. 11:9, 10).

### Matthew 19:21 = Mark 10:21 = Luke 18:22

*one thing more you are lacking.* Jesus challenged the rich man's sincerity, but did



not dispute his claim that he had kept the commandments. Apparently, Jesus, like other Jews of his time, considered it possible to keep all the commandments. The commandments became part of the routine of everyday life, and observant Jews then and now could sincerely say, "I have kept all the commandments since I became an adult religiously [at age thirteen plus one day]. From that time, there has never been a day that I have failed to put on tefillin. I have never profaned the Sabbath or eaten unclean food."

The parents of John the Baptist were "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Lk. 1:6). Paul claimed that "in regard to righteousness under the Torah," he was "blameless" (Phil. 3:6). In rabbinic sources, there are many examples of persons making the same claim. Abraham, Moses and Aaron were believed to have kept all the commandments.

Jesus told the rich man he lacked one thing. Note the similar statement that Jesus made to Martha (Lk. 10:42): ἐνὸς ἐστὶν χρεία (*henos estin chreia*, one thing is needed). If we accept Robert Lindsey's supposition that Mt. 6:25–34 (= Lk. 12:22–31) was originally the continuation of the Mary and Martha story,<sup>49</sup> that one thing is to "put the Kingdom of Heaven above all else" — the very thing Jesus challenged the rich man to do.

The Greek word *ἐν* (*hen*, one thing) in Jesus' statement to the rich man could be the translation of *אֶחָד* (*ʾa-HAT*, feminine form of "one") or *אֶחָד* (*ʾe-HAD*, masculine form of "one"). Both Hebrew words are sometimes used in the neuter sense, that is, in the sense of "one thing," since Hebrew has no distinct form for the neuter gender. We have used the feminine form, *ʾa-HAT*, in our Hebrew reconstruction. Compare *אֶחָד שְׁאֵלָתִי מֵאֵלֹהִים* (*ʾa-HAT sha-ʾAL-ti me-ʾET YHVH*, One thing I ask of the LORD) in Psalm 27:4.

*Sell everything you have and distribute it to the poor.* Jesus' demand was probably not unique: there were streams within Jewish society that viewed poverty as an ideal. The Hasidim, for instance, believed that as long as one holds on to any wealth, one is apt to violate the higher meaning of the commandments; the only way to avoid such sin is to get rid of one's wealth.<sup>50</sup> Many people gave all of their wealth, or a large part of it, to the needy.<sup>51</sup> This practice apparently became so common that the sages ruled that

one should give away no more than twenty percent of one's wealth. Their objective was to prevent the donor from becoming destitute and constituting a burden to the community.

There is an example in rabbinic literature of someone who gave all his wealth to the poor: Yeshevav, a sage and scribe who lived at the end of the first century A.D.<sup>52</sup> Rabban Gamaliel of Yavneh<sup>53</sup> rebuked Yeshevav for his action: "Don't you know that the sages have ruled, '[One should distribute no more than] a fifth of one's wealth as alms?'"<sup>54</sup> The text reads, literally, "A fifth of one's wealth for the *mitzvah*." In Jewish Palestinian Aramaic and Mishnaic Hebrew, the word *mitzvah* (commandment) often is used in the sense of "alms, charity";<sup>55</sup> and thus, in this context, "for the *mitzvah*" means "as alms."

*you will have treasure in heaven.* Jesus promised the rich man "treasure in heaven" for giving his wealth to the poor. Elsewhere Jesus taught, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth...but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...." (Mt. 6:19–20).<sup>56</sup> Although there is no mention of the poor in this second passage, it too is probably a teaching about giving alms to the poor.<sup>57</sup>

The following three examples from ancient Jewish literature illustrate the connection between giving to the poor and "storing treasure in heaven":

Monobazus the king gave away all his wealth to the poor. His officials complained to him: "Your forefathers added to their wealth and to what their forefathers had accumulated, but you have squandered your wealth and the wealth of your forefathers." He replied: "Certainly! My forefathers stored up on earth, but I have stored up in heaven... my forefathers stored up treasures that do not produce fruit, but I have stored up treasures that produce fruit...my forefathers accumulated mammon, but I have accumulated souls...my forefathers gathered in this world, but I have gathered for the World to Come...." (Jerusalem Talmud, Peah 15b)<sup>58</sup>

Monobazus became king of Adiabene, a small kingdom in northern Mesopotamia, in 55 A.D. A convert to Judaism, Monobazus is mentioned elsewhere in rabbinic literature

**Jesus challenged the rich man's sincerity, but did not dispute his claim that he had kept the commandments.**



(cf. Mishnah, Yoma 3:10), and described in great detail by Josephus (Antiquities 20:17–53, 75–96).

Tobit, probably written in the second century B.C., is one of the books of the Apocrypha. It records Tobit's exhortation to his son to be responsive to the poor:

Give alms from your possessions to all who live uprightly, and do not let your eye begrudge the gift when you make it. Do not turn your face away from any poor man, and the face of God will not be turned away from you. If you have many possessions, make your gift from them in proportion; if few, do not be afraid to give according to the little you have. You will be laying up a good treasure for yourself against the day of necessity; for charity delivers from death [Prov. 10:2] and keeps you from entering the darkness. (Tobit 4:7–10)

Ben Sira, another book of the Apocrypha, offers this advice:

Be patient with a man in humble circumstances, and do not make him wait for your alms. Help a poor man for the commandment's sake, and because of his need do not send him away empty. Lose your silver for the sake of a brother or a friend, and do not let it rust under a stone and be lost. Lay up your treasure according to the commandments of the Most High, and it will profit you more than gold. Store up almsgiving in your treasury, and it will rescue you from all affliction; more than a mighty shield and more than a heavy spear, it will fight on

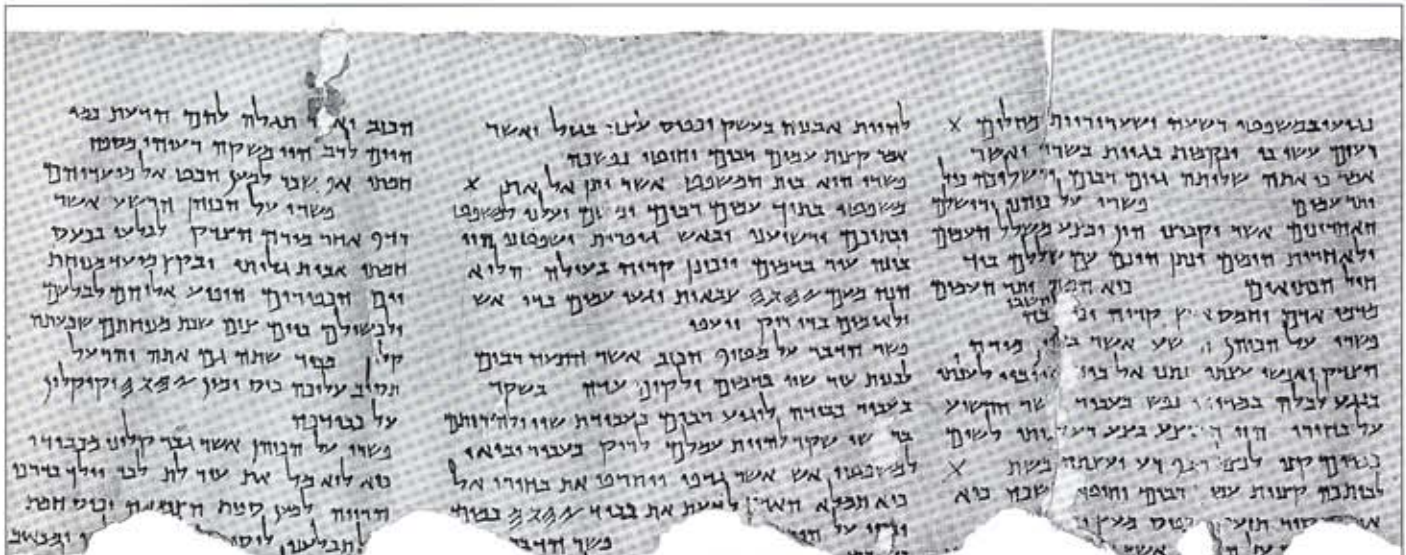
your behalf against your enemy. (Ben Sira 29:8–13)

Paul's charge to Timothy also contains a striking parallel to Jesus' teaching about wealth. Paul wrote of those who are rich in "this world," of laying up treasure "as a good foundation for the future," and of taking hold of "true life."

People who want to be rich fall into temptation, into a trap, into many foolish and injurious desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil; through this craving some people have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee these things.... Command those who are rich in this world not to be haughty nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly offers us everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of true life. (I Tim. 6:9–11a, 17–19)<sup>59</sup>

*follow me.* It is very important to understand that "follow" in this context means, literally, "to walk after." Jesus, like contemporary sages, was on the move. Lacking modern methods of mass communication, sages had to carry their teachings to the people. Jesus spent much of his time itinerating throughout the country, and those

**Columns IX–XI of the Qumran Peshar or Commentary to Habakkuk Scroll (1 QpHab), written at the end of the first century B.C.**  
(Courtesy of the Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum)





who wanted to learn from him were forced to follow him from place to place.<sup>60</sup> Jesus led the way along the dusty roads of the land, and his disciples followed behind, literally being covered with the dust of his feet. As Shmuel Safrai has pointed out, the correct understanding of Yose ben Yoezer's saying, "Cover yourself with the dust of their [the sages'] feet" (Mishnah, Avot 1:4), is, "Attach yourself to a sage."<sup>61</sup>

Today, we often read another meaning into Jesus' words to the rich man. We assume that "follow Jesus" means "become a believer in Jesus." Thus, we miss the point of the invitation extended to this rich man: it was a call to join Jesus' traveling school of disciples. Accepting this call, of necessity, meant leaving family and property behind.

### Matthew 19:23 = Mark 10:23 = Luke 18:24

*the Kingdom of Heaven.* It seems apparent from this Gospel story that Jesus equated following him with joining the Kingdom of Heaven: Jesus invited the rich man to follow him, and when this prospective disciple declined, Jesus said, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to come into the Kingdom of Heaven." Similarly, when Peter declared that he and the others had left everything to follow Jesus, Jesus spoke of leaving home for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, leaving home in order to join the Kingdom of Heaven. The Rich Young Ruler story provides the clearest examples in the synoptic Gospels of Jesus' use of the term "Kingdom of Heaven" in the sense of his band of itinerating disciples,<sup>62</sup> a usage that is apparently without precedent in contemporary Jewish literature.

The expression "Kingdom of Heaven" is not found in the Hebrew Scriptures; the term was developed by the sages from Scriptures that refer to God as king or to God reigning, for example, "The LORD reigns for ever and ever" (Ex. 15:18). The sages employed "Kingdom of Heaven" to refer to God's rule as expressed in the lives of people who do his will by keeping his commandments.<sup>63</sup> The sages also employed "Kingdom of Heaven" to refer to God's rule as expressed in his authority over the natural world and over the kingdom of Satan — when a miracle demonstrated God's power, one spoke of seeing God's Kingdom, or of the arrival of God's Kingdom.<sup>64</sup>

Jesus used "Kingdom of Heaven" in one additional way: to refer to his band of attending disciples. He said, for instance, that whoever "did" and taught the "light" commandments of Torah would be called "heavy" in the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt. 5:18–19), that is, those disciples who kept the less significant mitzvot and who taught them to others would be considered the most significant members of his band of disciples. He said, "The smallest in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than John" (Mt. 11:11; Lk. 7:28), that is, "My lowest ranking disciple is greater than John the Baptist." He said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God" (Lk. 9:62), that is, "No one who begins to walk with me but still thinks about the people and things he has left behind is fit to be a member of my group of apprentice disciples."

It was so thrilling to be a member of that inner circle that one of Jesus' disciples, unable to contain himself, shouted out, "Blessed is the person who eats bread in the Kingdom of God" (Lk. 14:15), that is, "How wonderful it is to be part of this fellowship of disciples!"

The extreme demands Jesus made of prospective disciples must be seen in the light of first-century Jewish society. In that society, the disciple was his teacher's full-time apprentice or attendant, and the disciple's total allegiance to his teacher was expected. For example, if a disciple's teacher and father were both taken captive, the disciple was obligated to ransom his teacher first, and only afterwards, his father.<sup>65</sup> Therefore, Jesus' command to a would-be disciple to come with him and leave the burial of his father to others (Lk. 9:59–60; Mt. 8:22), or Jesus' statement to a prospective disciple forbidding him to say good-bye to his family (Lk. 9:62), would not have been considered unusual by Jesus' contemporaries.

Claude Montefiore saw in the Rich Young Ruler story a series of increasingly severe demands.<sup>66</sup> First, Jesus indicates that a person can gain eternal life by keeping the commandments; it is only Jesus' disciples who are required to leave family and possessions. Next, Jesus says that it is difficult

**The Rich Young Ruler story provides the clearest examples in the synoptic Gospels of Jesus' use of the term "Kingdom of Heaven" in the sense of his band of itinerating disciples.**



for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God. (Here, Montefiore assumes that “Kingdom of God” is a synonym for “eternal life.”) Finally, when asked who can be saved, Jesus replies, “The impossible *for men* is the possible for God.” (At this point, according to Montefiore, there is a switch from the rich to all men: Jesus makes leaving family and possessions a universal requirement for all who want to enter the Kingdom.)

Montefiore quotes Julius Wellhausen, who put it this way:

In spite of the words “one thing thou lackest,” Jesus regards the fulfilment of the commandments as adequate for the acquisition of eternal life (*cp.* Luke 16:29). Only for his disciples and followers does he demand something more, or rather something totally different: a complete severance from the world. But finally he declares that this complete discipleship, with its abandonment of all earthly ties and goods, is the general and indispensable condition for everyone who would enter into the Kingdom of God. That is a tremendous increase of demand. The distance from the one stage to the other is so great that it only becomes intelligible on the supposition that a historic development lies between the two.<sup>67</sup>

Because Wellhausen and Montefiore mistakenly equated “eternal life” with “Kingdom of God,” they concluded that the Rich Young Ruler story had gone through several stages of development in its transmission. It is true that Jesus promised eternal life to those who joined the Kingdom of Heaven, as well as greater blessing in this life (Lk. 18:30); however, he did not demand that the rich man give up his possessions to gain eternal life — when the rich man inquired about obtaining eternal life, Jesus simply pointed him to the commandments. It was only when Jesus invited the man to become a disciple that he asked him to sacrifice his wealth.

### Matthew 19:24 = Mark 10:25 = Luke 18:25

*easier for.* We have used נָחַל (*NO-ah*, pleasing, kind, easy) to reconstruct εὐκοπώτερος (*eukopōteros*), the comparative of the Greek adjective εὐκοπος (*eukopos*, easy). Today, the word קָל (*kal*) supplies the meaning “easy”; however, this is modern Hebrew usage only.<sup>68</sup> In biblical Hebrew, “easy” was expressed by קָלָה (*na-KEL*; cf. II Ki. 20:10,

Prov. 14:6);<sup>69</sup> in the time of Jesus, one used the word *NO-ah* (e.g., Mishnah, Avot 5:11).<sup>70</sup>

Unlike Greek adjectives, Hebrew adjectives do not have degrees of comparison. The Hebrew equivalent of εὐκοπώτερος (*eukopōteros*, easier) can mean “easy,” “easier,” or “easiest,” depending on the context. It is unnecessary to add מְיֻשָּׁר (yo-TER, more) to an adjective to form its comparative, as in colloquial modern Hebrew.

*a camel.* Jesus used the camel in his caricature because it was the largest animal in the land of Israel. In rabbinic literature there are two instances of the hyperbole of a large animal entering, or trying to enter, the eye of a needle. Both instances are found in the Babylonian Talmud in Aramaic contexts (Berachot 55<sup>b</sup>, Bava Metsi’a 38<sup>b</sup>), and in both cases the animal is an elephant rather than a camel. Shmuel Safrai believes that in Babylonia the elephant replaced the camel in this hyperbole. Elephants were the largest animals found in Babylonia, having been imported from India; however, there were no elephants in the land of Israel. The only elephants to reach the land of Israel during the Second Commonwealth were those that took part in the military campaigns of foreign rulers.<sup>71</sup>

Indefinite Greek nouns are often the translation equivalents of definite Hebrew nouns that are indefinite in sense. The indefinite Greek nouns πτωχοῖς (*ptōchois*, poor [persons]), κάμηλον (*kamēlon*, camel) and πλούσιον (*plousion*, rich person), which appear in the Rich Young Ruler story, are probably the translations of the definite Hebrew nouns הָעָנִי־יִימ (*ha-‘a-ni-YIM*, the poor), הַגָּמָל (*ha-ga-MAL*, the camel) and הָעָשִׁיר (*he-‘a-SHIR*, the rich person), respectively. These definite Hebrew nouns are indefinite in meaning; the article הַ (*ha-*, the) is employed to indicate a group or class. This idiomatic Hebrew usage is known as the generic.

*enter the eye of a needle.* A rabbinic midrash on Song of Songs 5:2 helps us to better understand the saying of Jesus.

Rabbi Yose said: “The Holy One, blessed be he, said: ‘Open for me a door as big as the eye of a needle,<sup>72</sup> and I will open for you a door through which tents and camels<sup>73</sup> can enter.’” (Pesikta Rabbati 15 [ed. Friedmann, p. 70<sup>a</sup>])

This midrash conveys a message about repentance: if a person will only “open a door,” will only make a beginning, turn and start back to God, God in his mercy will accept him and help him go the rest of the



way. By referring to the eye of a needle, Jesus may have hinted at a rabbinic tradition similar to the above. Therefore, Jesus' saying, while pointing out the difficulty the rich have in joining the Kingdom of Heaven, may also subtly allude to God's willingness to accept a rich man's repentance.

Since ancient times, many people have been unable to bear Jesus' hyperbolic statement. They have supposed that Jesus could not have meant the eye of a needle used for sewing. Even copyists of the New Testament sometimes found this statement difficult. At least one copyist assumed that κάμηλον (*kamēlon*, camel) is a mistake for κάμιλον (*kamilon*, rope; ship's hawser) and corrected the text accordingly.<sup>74</sup>

There have been other attempts to soften Jesus' saying. For instance, it has been suggested that the eye of a needle refers to a small opening in a city gate that provided entrance for people but not for animals of burden. However, absolutely no proof exists for this assertion.<sup>75</sup> Those who make such suggestions ignore the possibility that Jesus may have used hyperbole to drive home an important teaching. They reduce the exaggeration, but they do not solve the problem — a hawser will not go through the eye of a needle either.

### Matthew 19:27 = Mark 10:28 = Luke 18:28

*Peter.* Jesus' most prominent disciple had three names: שִׁמְעוֹן (*shim-ON*, Shim'on), a Hebrew name; סֶפֶד (ke-FA', stone, rock), an Aramaic name;<sup>76</sup> and Πέτρος (*Petros*, stone, rock; Peter), a Greek name, or what appears to be a Greek name.

Matthew, Mark and Luke all testify that the Greek translation of the Hebrew *Life of Jesus* had the reading *Petros* at this point; but, assuming a Semitic undertext, which of Peter's two Semitic names does *Petros* represent: *shim-ON* or *ke-FA'*?

It is unlikely that *Petros* represents the Aramaic *ke-FA'*: although Κηφᾶς (*Kēphas*, Cephas), the Greek transliteration of Peter's Aramaic name, occurs nine times in the New Testament, it never occurs in the synoptic Gospels.<sup>77</sup> Peter is known in the synoptic Gospels only by his Hebrew name — translated Σίμων (*Simōn*, Simon); infrequently, transliterated Συμεών (*Symeōn*, Simeon) — and by the name *Petros*. Consequently, one would naturally assume that the reading of the Hebrew biography was *shim-ON*, Peter's Hebrew

name. However, *Simōn*, the usual Greek translation of the Hebrew name *shim-ON*, occurs frequently in the synoptic Gospels and there was no reason for the Greek translator to avoid it here.

We are left to conclude that the Greek translator saw *shim-ON* in the Hebrew text before him, but for some reason translated with *Petros* rather than *Simōn*. The difficulty is that the name *Petros* did not yet exist in the Greek language.<sup>78</sup> Why would a Greek translator, if translating rather than transliterating the name *shim-ON*, employ a name that was unknown to his Greek readers? The only logical explanation is that the translator saw פֶּטְרוֹס, (*pet-ROS*, *Petros*) in the Hebrew biography.

Although *Petros* was not a Greek name in Peter's day, it may have already become a Hebrew name.<sup>79</sup> Hebrew-speaking residents of the land of Israel, who used Greek as their second or third language, had apparently borrowed the Greek word *petros* and turned it into a Hebrew nickname.<sup>80</sup>

In the Second Temple period, the most common Hebrew name for Jewish males was שִׁמְעוֹן (*shim-ON*).<sup>81</sup> It was so common that, in order to distinguish one *shim-ON* from another, a second name, often a nickname such as *Petros*, was a practical necessity. For that reason, Peter had two Hebrew names, a given name and a nickname. When addressing Peter, one normally used Peter's given name, *shim-ON*; when referring to him, one used both names, *shim-ON* and *pet-ROS*.<sup>82</sup>

We find evidence of the use of this double name "Simon Peter" in the synoptic Gospels (e.g., Lk. 5:8, Mt. 16:16). Outside the New Testament, double Hebrew names can be documented from contemporary inscriptions. Compare, for instance, the ossuary inscription יְהוֹדָן בֶּן יִשָּׁי (*ye-hu-DAN ya-SON*, Judan [a form of Judah] Jason), dating from the first century B.C.–first century A.D., discovered in a Jewish burial cave on Mt. Scopus in Jerusalem.<sup>83</sup> The second word of the deceased's name, *ya-SON*, is a transliteration of the purely Greek name Ἰάσων (*Iasōn*, Jason).<sup>84</sup> Apparently, the Hebrew loanword *ya-SON* was Judan's nickname. One can imagine that if archaeologists discovered Peter's ossuary, they might find the inscription שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּטְרוֹס (*shim-ON*

**Jesus' saying, while pointing out the difficulty the rich have in joining the Kingdom of Heaven, may also subtly allude to God's willingness to accept a rich man's repentance.**



pet-ROS) scratched on its side.

*we have left everything.* Our reconstruction is אָנְחֵנוּ עָזַבְנוּ אֵת הַכֹּל ('a-NAH-nu 'a-ZAV-nu 'et ha-KOL, we have left everything), however it is possible that the Hebrew biography read אָנְחֵנוּ עָזַבְנוּ אֵת בֵּיתֵנוּ ('a-NAH-nu 'a-ZAV-nu 'et be-TE-nu, we have left our house). (See "our own things" in "Comments on the Greek Reconstruction" under the heading "Matthew 19:27 = Mark 10:28 = Luke 18:28.")

*followed you.* See "follow me," above, under the heading "Matthew 19:21 = Mark 10:21 = Luke 18:22."

### Matthew 19:28–29 = Mark 10:29–30 = Luke 18:29–30

*Amen! I tell you.* In Hebrew, "amen" is a response. Nevertheless, English translations of the Gospels understand the Greek word ἀμήν (*amēn*), a transliteration of the Hebrew אָמֵן ('a-MEN), as an adverb (truly, verily). If this understanding is correct, Jesus would seem to have been the only person to have used "amen" in this way. Assuming this to be the case, many scholars have supposed that "Amen I tell you..." is an example of Jesus' uniqueness, while other scholars have suggested that it was simply a convenient heading for invented sayings attributed to Jesus.

While translating the Gospel of Mark to modern Hebrew, Robert Lindsey examined the occurrences of "amen" in the Gospels and detected a pattern. Almost every "amen" spoken by Jesus is preceded by a statement or event that had attracted his notice, and is followed by a teaching in which he emphasized the significance of the statement or event. This prompted Lindsey to conclude that Jesus' "amen" is not connected to "I tell you..."; but, as in normal Hebraic usage, stands alone as an affirmative

response to what precedes it.<sup>85</sup> Here too, "amen" fits Hebraic usage if it is considered Jesus' response to Peter's statement. Jesus affirmed Peter's declaration by saying "Amen!" and went on to make a further point prefaced with "I tell you."

According to Lindsey, "I tell you" was typically Jesus' opening to a teaching discourse. Here, however, the expression appears in the story's last sentence; therefore, Lindsey assumes that originally this

story was much longer. He has suggested that the Rich Young Ruler episode and two other passages (Mt. 13:44–46, Lk. 14:26–33) once formed an extended story.<sup>86</sup>

*house.* One of the most nuanced words in the Hebrew language is בַּיִת (*BA-yit*, house). Clearly, Jesus did not refer to a building when he mentioned "house." Rather, he probably used "house" in the sense of "family."<sup>87</sup>

Jesus may have intended to hint at other senses of the word *BA-yit*. "House" can also mean "wife" in Hebrew. During the Second Temple period, a priest was prepared as an understudy for the High Priest beginning seven days before the Day of Atonement. If the High Priest was disqualified by becoming unclean, the understudy replaced him. According to one tradition (Mishnah, Yoma 1:1), a second wife was prepared for the High Priest in case his wife should die before the Day of Atonement. This custom was based on Lev. 16:6, "He shall make atonement for himself and for his house," where "his house" was interpreted to mean, "his wife." At least one sage, a disciple of Akiva, always referred to his wife as "house":

Rabbi Yose said, "I have never called my wife 'my wife' [יְשָׁרָא, 'ish-TI]...rather, I have always called my wife 'my house' [בֵּיתִי, be-TI]." (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 118<sup>b</sup>)

Another Hebraic nuance of "house," extremely significant in this context, is "wealth."

And the man of God said to the king, "If you give me half your *house*, I will not go in with you." (I Kings 13:8 [RSV]; "Even if you were to give me half your *possessions*...." [NIV])

*for the sake of.* We have used the Hebrew expression לְשֵׁם (*le-SHEM*) to reconstruct the Greek preposition ἐνκεν (*heineken*, on account of, because of). Literally, *le-SHEM* means, "for [the] name [of]," that is, "for the sake of." Here, the phrase לְשֵׁם מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם (*le-SHEM mal-KUT sha-MA-yim*, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven) probably means, "in order to join the Kingdom of Heaven," that is, "in order to join me and my company of itinerating disciples."

*much more.* It is perhaps impossible to know what expression lies behind the word πολλαπλασίονα (*pollaplasiona*, many times as much, many times more). This Greek word never appears in the Septuagint; therefore, there are no Septuagintal translation equivalents for it. It occurs outside the New Testament in Josephus (War 1:514) and in the Testaments of the Twelve

**The rich man was shocked. He had not imagined that the sage would ask him to give up his entire fortune.**



Patriarchs (Testament of Zebulun 6:6). We have reconstructed *pollaplasiona* according to Robert Lindsey's suggestion: *הַרְבֵּה יוֹתֵר* (*har-BEH yo-TER*, much more).

*this world*. The Greek phrase *ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ* (*en tō kairō toutō*, in this time) seems to be a free translation of *הַיָּמִים הַזֵּהִם* (*ba-ʿo-LAM ha-ZEH*, in this world) since here it is contrasted with *ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ* (*en tō aiōni tō erchomenō*, in the coming age), apparently the translation of *הַיָּמִים הַבָּאִים* (*ba-ʿo-LAM ha-BAʾ*, in the coming world).<sup>88</sup> The expressions *הַיָּמִים הַזֵּהִם* (*ha-ʿo-LAM ha-ZEH*, this world, i.e., this existence) and *הַיָּמִים הַבָּאִים* (*ha-ʿo-LAM ha-BAʾ*, the coming world, i.e., the future existence) are frequent in rabbinic literature.<sup>89</sup> When *ha-ʿo-LAM ha-BAʾ* appears with its opposite in rabbinic sources, that opposite is always *ha-ʿo-LAM ha-ZEH*.<sup>90</sup>

Joseph Fitzmyer has noted, "Neither Philo nor Josephus makes use of this distinction of aeons, nor is it found in Qumran literature; but it occurs later in rabbinic literature."<sup>91</sup> Although rabbinic literature only began to be written down in the third century A.D., it often reflects the linguistic, cultural and social milieu of first-century Israel.<sup>92</sup> Here, two New Testament documents, Mark and Luke, confirm that the contrasting expressions we find in late rabbinic sources, "this world" and "the coming world," already existed in the first century. This example also reminds us that, much of the time, the synoptic Gospels align themselves with rabbinic literature rather than with other Jewish literary genres.

Jesus concludes his saying with a beautiful play on the word *עוֹלָם* (*ʿo-LAM*, world) in back-to-back expressions: *וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא* (*ve-ha-YE ʿo-LAM ba-ʿo-LAM ha-BAʾ*, and life of world in the world the coming). The word *ʿo-LAM* refers to duration of time and not to the physical world, the Greek *κόσμος* (*kosmos*, the world, the universe). In the expressions "this world" and "the coming world," *ʿo-LAM* can be translated idiomatically as "life, existence," and in the expression "life of world," it can be translated as "eternal."<sup>93</sup>

## Exposition

The questioner was very rich, as Luke 18:23 tells us, and very observant. As an observant Jew of the first century, he undoubtedly already gave heavily to the poor. However, he wished to do something out of the ordinary, a deed that would assure him eternal life.

It is likely that Jesus' teaching had stirred the man. His question implies an

inner unrest. Although he kept the commandments, and therefore Written and Oral Torah promised him eternal life, he desired to be sure that he would obtain it.

Being rich, the man probably imagined that Jesus would command him to give a significantly large donation to the poor. Instead, Jesus admonished him, indicating that he should have a more balanced approach to Torah. Only then did Jesus answer the man's question; Jesus suggested that by observing the commandments the man could gain eternal life.

The man persisted in his almost flippant attitude toward Torah. He insisted impatiently: "You still have not given me an answer. I already keep these commandments." It was at this point that Jesus presented the rich man with a test that would reveal to the man and to everyone else how sincere he was in his desire for eternal life.

The rich man was shocked. He had not imagined that the sage would ask him to give up his entire fortune. His face fell, and he asked no further questions.

Jesus used this situation, the rich man's negative response, to teach his disciples some important spiritual truths, such as the extreme difficulty the rich had in becoming members of his band of disciples.

Peter, like King David, was a man "after God's own heart." Peter was impetuous,<sup>94</sup> but he always tried hard to please Jesus, and he was Jesus' most trusted disciple. Now, witnessing this dramatic exchange between Jesus and the rich man, Peter wanted to say or do something that would match the occasion.

Peter could not claim that he and the other disciples had divested themselves of all their possessions,<sup>95</sup> but they **had** joined Jesus' kingdom of disciples. So he stated that they had "left" everything, that is, they had temporarily given up family and possessions to follow Jesus.

Jesus did not put Peter down by reminding him that he had not made the sacrifice demanded of the rich man — "Look here, you haven't given away everything." Rather, he tenderly affirmed Peter's declaration: "Yes, that is wonderful. You, my dear disciples, made the sacrifices I demanded of you, and I know that you are still ready to make **any** sacrifice I ask of you, including the giving away of all your wealth. Therefore, I

**Peter, like King David, was a man "after God's own heart."**



want you to know that anyone who leaves his family and livelihood for me, will, in the here and now, receive a blessing that will more than compensate for what he has given up; and, of course, he will also receive eternal life." JP

1. David Bivin, "Preview: The *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*," *Jerusalem Perspective* 1.6 (Mar. 1988), 1, 4.

2. Robert L. Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark*, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: Dugith Publishers, 1973), pp. 76–79.

3. Lindsey's opinion, expressed during the seminar. For a discussion of Mark's editorial habits, see *ibid.*, pp. 49–65.

4. Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke*, 5th ed., International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh, 1896), p. 422.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Ezra P. Gould, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh, 1896), p. 191.

7. Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 8th ed. (London: Macmillan & Co., 1969), p. 428.

8. David Flusser, "The Ten Commandments and the New Testament" in *The Ten Commandments in History and Tradition*, ed. Gershon Levi (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1985), pp. 223–224.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

10. These are the two possible translation equivalents: in the Septuagint τέλειος is eight times the translation of the root מלך, and seven times of the root מלך. Compare Gen. 6:9, "Noah was a righteous man, *ta-MIM* in his age."

11. Lindsey, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

12. The masculine, singular, nominative, second aorist participle ἰδών (*idōn*) appears twenty times in Luke: eleven times in unique Lukan material (1:12; 7:13; 10:31, 32, 33; 13:12; 17:14, 15; 19:41; 22:58; 23:8); eight times in Triple Tradition material (5:8, 12, 20; 7:39; 8:28; 18:24, 43; 23:47); and once in Double Tradition material (11:38). It appears eleven times in Matthew: twice in unique Matthean material (2:16; 27:3); six times in Triple Tradition material (8:18; 9:2, 22, 23, 36; 27:24); and twice in Double Tradition material (3:7; 5:1). It appears four times in Mark: three times in Triple Tradition material (Mk. 2:5, opposite Mt. 9:2 and Lk. 5:20; Mk. 5:6, opposite Lk. 8:28; Mk. 15:39, opposite Lk. 23:47); and once in a Matthean-Markan pericope (Mk. 11:13, opposite Mt. 21:19).

13. Lindsey, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

14. The term "kingdom of heaven" appears

thirty-one times in Matthew's Gospel, while "kingdom of God" appears only four times.

15. David Bivin, "Jesus and the Oral Torah: The Unutterable Name of God," *Jerusalem Perspective* 1.5 (Feb. 1988), 1–2; *idem*, "'Jehovah' — A Christian Misunderstanding," *Jerusalem Perspective* 4.6 (Nov./Dec. 1991), 5–6.

16. Lindsey, *loc. cit.*

17. Mark gives one parallel to the five Lukan occurrences of ἐρξάτο λέγειν (Mk. 12:1, opposite Lk. 20:9). The parallel contains the expression "began to say," but in a different Greek form: Mark uses ἤρξατο λαλεῖν (*ērξato lalein*), replacing the infinitive of the verb λέγω (*legō*, say) with the infinitive of a synonym, λαλέω (*laleō*, say). This Greek combination occurs only one other time in the New Testament, in Lk. 7:15. Apparently, Mark's parallel is a "Markan pickup."

18. Esther 5:10, 6:12.

19. Walter Bauer, "ἰδιος," *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and ed. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (University of Chicago Press and Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 370.

20. The adjective ἰδιος (*idios*, one's own) does not usually appear in Greek texts translated from Hebrew. For example, of the eighty-three occurrences of this adjective in the Septuagint, only twenty-two are translations of a word or phrase in the Masoretic text. Of these twenty-two, fifteen are translations of Hebrew possessive pronouns ("his," "her," "our," etc.). Plural forms of the adjective, such as *idia*, account for thirty of the eighty-three occurrences; however, only six times (including the Hebrew texts of Ben Sira) is a plural form of *idios* the translation of an element in the Hebrew text: three times it translates a Hebrew possessive pronoun, and twice it is the translation of בֵּיתוֹ (*be-to*, his house). In the New Testament, the expression *ta idia* occurs six times in John (1:11; 10:3, 4, 12; 16:32; 19:27), and once each in Luke (18:28), Acts (21:6) and I Thessalonians (4:11).

21. However, the expression *ta idia* can also reflect "possessions" since, literally, it means "our own things." Note that if Peter's *panta* or *ta idia* referred to possessions, then Jesus, in his response, probably used "house" in the sense of "wealth."

22. Mt. 19:28 shows signs of editing by Matthew. Note that the word rendered "regeneration" (παλιγγενεσία, *paliggenesia*) is rare in Greek texts translated from Hebrew: it never occurs in the Septuagint, and except for Mt. 19:28, appears only one other time in the New Testament (Titus 3:5).

23. Compare, for example, Mishnah, Eruvin 8:1, "Anyone who accepted...is permitted"; Nazir 5:4, "Anyone who vowed a Nazirite vow...is a Nazirite."



24.  $\pi\alpha\varsigma \delta$  (*pas ho*, all the, everyone who): Mt. 5:22, 28, 32; 7:21, 26; Lk. 6:47; 14:11; 16:18; 18:14; 20:18.  $\pi\alpha\varsigma \delta\varsigma$  (*pas os*, all who, everyone who): Lk. 12:8, 10; 14:33.

25. A Hebrew-speaking student of David Flusser drew his attention to the Hebrew idiom "to leave house," i.e., "to leave family." Cf. Lindsey, op. cit., p. 48.

26. In the New Testament, the words "mother" and "father" appear in proximity twenty-three times (seven times each in Mt. and Mk., five times in Lk, twice in Eph., and once each in Jn. and Heb.). Their order is always "father" followed by "mother." This order is reversed only once — here in Mark.

27. Lindsey, op. cit., p. 49.

28. In the past, most critical editions of the Greek text of Matthew adopted the reading *pol-laplasiona*: Tischendorf (1869–1872); Westcott and Hort (1881); Legg (1940); British and Foreign Bible Society (2nd edition, 1958); Albert Huck in his synopsis; and even Kurt Aland in the first editions of his synopsis. Recently, however, some text critics have tended to adopt the reading *hekatontaplasiona*: Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger and Allen Wikgren in their revisions of Nestle's text of the New Testament (26th edition, 1979) and the United Bible Societies' text (3rd edition, 1975). In *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, corrected edition (London and New York: United Bible Societies, 1975), Metzger justified the variant readings that he, Aland, Black, Martini and Wikgren adopted or rejected in preparing the United Bible Societies' third edition. On page 50 he states the reasons why the committee adopted *hekatontaplasiona*: "What was judged to be predominant external support, as well as considerations involving the dependence of Matthew upon Mark, led the Committee to prefer  $\epsilon\kappa\alpha\tau\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\pi\lambda\alpha\sigma\iota\omicron\nu\alpha$ ."

29. Taylor, op. cit., p. 434.

30. Lindsey, op. cit., p. 62.

31. Taylor, op. cit., p. 435.

32. Compare the following examples from the Mishnah: Rosh ha-Shanah 2:9; Nedarim 9:5; Bava Kamma 8:6.

33. Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar and Matthew Black (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 2:325–326. See also David Bivin, "Was Jesus a Rabbi?" *Jerusalem Perspective* 1.9 (Jun. 1988), 1–2.

34. For example, Mt. 16:17–18; Lk. 22:31, 34; 22:48.

35. Compare the exchange between the sage Eliezer (beginning of second century A.D.) and his disciples (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 101<sup>a</sup>–101<sup>b</sup>). Eventually, it was even asserted

that one who calls his teacher by name is an *epikoros* (unbeliever): R. Nahman (died about 320 A.D.) said:

[An *epikoros* is] one who calls his teacher by name, for R. Yohanan [circa 180–279 A.D.] said: "Why was Gehazi punished? Because he called his master by name, as it is written, 'And Gehazi said, "My lord, O King, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life" [II Kings 8:5].'" (Sanhedrin 100<sup>a</sup>)

36. Exceptions are: " $\text{I}\eta\varsigma\omicron\upsilon\varsigma \text{N}\alpha\zeta\alpha\rho\eta\nu\acute{\epsilon}$  [Jesus of Nazareth]" (Mk. 1:24 = Lk. 4:34), by an unclean spirit, which Jesus rebuked and told to be silent; " $\text{I}\eta\varsigma\omicron\upsilon \text{u}\acute{\iota}\epsilon \text{t}\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon \text{t}\omicron\upsilon \text{i}\psi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$  [Jesus, Son of the Most High God]" (Mk. 5:7 = Lk. 8:28), by a demoniac; " $\text{I}\eta\varsigma\omicron\upsilon \epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\tau\alpha$  [Jesus, Master]" (Lk. 17:13), by ten lepers; " $\text{u}\acute{\iota}\epsilon \Delta\alpha\upsilon\iota\delta \text{I}\eta\varsigma\omicron\upsilon$  [Jesus, Son of David]" (Mk. 10:47 = Lk. 18:38), by a blind man at Jericho; " $\text{I}\eta\varsigma\omicron\upsilon$  [Jesus]" (Lk. 23:42), by the thief on the cross.

37. The expression "inherit the land" in its metaphorical sense was developed from Scripture (cf. Ps. 37:9, 11, 22, 29; Is. 60:21).

38. The Jewish Prayer Book (Seligman Isaac Baer edition, *Avodat Yisrael*, pp. 128–129; or, Joseph H. Hertz edition, *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book*, p. 204).

39. Compare Dan. 12:2, "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to eternal life, others to shame and eternal contempt." The Hebrew expression  $\text{חַיִּים וְעוֹלָם}$  (*ha-YE 'o-LAM*) is also attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q181 1:4, 6), the Hebrew fragments of Ben Sira (37:26, Cairo Geniza manuscript D), and the Jewish Prayer Book (Seligman Isaac Baer edition, *Avodat Yisrael*, p. 225; or, Joseph H. Hertz edition, *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book*, p. 486). The expression is found elsewhere in Jewish literature: II Maccabees 7:9; Psalms of Solomon 3:12; Enoch 37:4, 40:9, 58:3; IV Maccabees 15:3.

40. Flusser, op. cit., p. 222.

41.  $\text{אֵין טוֹב אֶלָּא תּוֹרָה}$  (*'en tov 'e-LA' to-RAH*, There is no good except Torah). Cf. Mishnah, Avot 6:3; Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 5<sup>a</sup>.

42. Compare Paul's statement: "The Torah is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good" (Romans 7:12).

43. Flusser, op. cit., p. 223. Compare Mishnah, Avot 6:7, "Great is the Torah for it gives life to them that do it in this world and in the world to come."

44. Lk. 18:19 is one of the pillar texts used by Schmiedel to prove that Jesus never intended for anyone to think of him as God (P. W. Schmiedel, "Gospels," *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, ed. T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black [New York, 1901], 2:839–98).

45. David Flusser, "Do not Commit Adultery," "Do not Murder," *Textus* 4 (1964), 220–224;



idem, "The Ten Commandments and the New Testament," op. cit., pp. 219–246. For the textual witnesses to the two traditions, see *ibid.*, pp. 220–221, n. 2.

46. Compare, for example, "Anyone who performs [literally, 'does'] even a single commandment will be blessed, have length of days and inherit the land" (Mishnah, Kiddushin 1:10 [reading of Kaufmann, Cambridge and Parma manuscripts]).

47. "...therefore the LORD your God commanded you to do the Sabbath day" (Deut. 5:15); "I will establish his [Solomon's] kingdom for ever if he resolutely does my commandments and ordinances (I Chron. 28:7).

48. As an example of rabbinic usage, note, "Blessed is יְדִידִי [yal-du-Ti, my youth] that has not embarrassed my old age" (Tosefta, Sukkah 4:2).

49. Robert L. Lindsey, *Jesus Rabbi & Lord: The Hebrew Story of Jesus Behind Our Gospels* (Oak Creek, WI: Cornerstone Publishing, 1990), pp. 88–92; David Bivin, "The Mary & Martha Story," *Jerusalem Perspective* 1.12 (Sept. 1988), 1, 4.

50. Shmuel Safrai, "Teaching of Pietists in Mishnaic Literature," *The Journal of Jewish Studies* 16 (1965), 15–33; *idem*, "Pietists and Miracle-Workers," *Zion* 50 (1985), 133–154 (Hebrew).

51. Compare, for example, the tax collector Zacchaeus, who gave half of his possessions to the poor (Lk. 19:8).

52. According to Shmuel Safrai, Yesheav was one of the Hasidim, or close to them.

53. Rabban Gamaliel became *nasi*, religious and political head of the Jewish people, about 80 A.D.

54. Jerusalem Talmud, Peah 15<sup>b</sup>; Babylonian Talmud, Ketubot 50<sup>a</sup>, 67<sup>b</sup>; Babylonian Talmud, Arachin 28<sup>a</sup>; Pesikta Rabbati 25 (ed. Friedmann, p. 126<sup>b</sup>).

55. Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (repr. New York: Pardes Publishing House, 1950), pp. 823–24; Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period* (Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 1990), p. 325.

56. Luke's equivalent is, "Sell your possessions and give alms" (Lk. 12:33). This version seems to be the First Reconstructor's paraphrase of a text like the one we see in Matthew. In writing his revision, the First Reconstructor was probably influenced by the text in the Anthology from which Luke 18:22 is drawn.

57. It is not certain that Jesus' saying concerning the "good eye" and the "bad eye" (Mt. 6:22–23) originally followed Mt. 6:19–21. There-

fore, it is not certain that Mt. 6:22–23 also was about giving alms to the poor: in Luke's Gospel the two passages appear in different contexts (Lk. 12:33–34; Lk. 11:34–36). However, "good eye," an idiom for generosity, is often associated with almsgiving in Jewish sources: "A generous man [literally, 'good of eye'] will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor" (Prov. 22:9; cf. Dt. 15:7–11 ['bad eye']). The Mishnah divides almsgivers into four types on the basis of whether the almsgiver possesses a "good" or "bad" eye (Avot 5:13). The Mishnah (Avot 5:19) also teaches that one of the three characteristics of disciples of Abraham is a "good eye," and that disciples who have this characteristic inherit the Garden of Eden (i.e., Paradise).

58. This story also appears with variations in Tosefta, Peah 4:18–19; Babylonian Talmud, Bava Batra 11<sup>a</sup>; Pesikta Rabbati 25 (ed. Friedmann, p. 126<sup>b</sup>).

59. In his interpretation of the Parable of the Sower, Jesus also alluded to the danger of riches. Jesus explained that the seed that do not bear fruit to maturity are those that are choked by the thorns of worries, riches and pleasures (Lk. 8:14).

60. David Bivin, "The Traveling Rabbi," *Jerusalem Perspective* 1.10 (Jul. 1988), 1, 4.

61. *Idem*, "At the Feet of a Rabbi," *Jerusalem Perspective* 1.11 (Aug. 1988), 1–2. Yose ben Yoezer was active during the first half of the second century B.C.

62. Lindsey, *Jesus Rabbi & Lord*, pp. 53–60; *idem*, "The Kingdom of God: God's Power Among Believers," *Jerusalem Perspective* 3.1 (Jan./Feb. 1990), 6–8; Brad H. Young, *Jesus and His Jewish Parables: Rediscovering the Roots of Jesus' Teaching* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1989), pp. 196–205; *idem*, *The Jewish Background to the Lord's Prayer* (Dayton, OH: Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, 1984), pp. 10–17.

63. Jesus also used the term in this sense: he taught his disciples to pray, "Your Kingdom come" (Mt. 6:10), a petition that God's rule will encompass more and more people. The rule or kingdom of God also has its future completion (e.g., Mt. 8:11–12 = Lk. 13:27–29), what Robert Lindsey calls "the final stage of the Kingdom" (private communication) and Shmuel Safrai refers to as "a final redemption or completion of the Kingdom" (sidebar within Lindsey, "The Kingdom of God: God's Power Among Believers," p. 8). Compare Acts 14:22, "We must go through many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God."

64. For example, "Your sons saw your Kingdom as you split the sea before Moses" (The Jewish Prayer Book, Seligman Isaac Baer edition, *Avodat Yisrael*, p. 185; or, Joseph H. Hertz edition, *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book*, p. 370). In other words, God demonstrated his rule



**Apocrypha** — books included in the Septuagint and Vulgate, but excluded from the Hebrew Bible and Protestant canon. The Apocrypha contains I & II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, additions to Esther, The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (= Ben Sira), Baruch, The Letter of Jeremiah, The Prayer of Azariah and The Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasseh and I and II Maccabees.

**ben** — the Hebrew word בן (son), or בן (son of). In the Second Temple period there were relatively few personal names, and *ben* often was used together with the father's name to distinguish males bearing the same personal name. Females with the same personal name often were distinguished by adding בת (*bat*, daughter) and the father's name.

**Double Tradition** — pericopae shared only by Matthew and Luke, for instance, the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer.

**hasidic** — pertaining to the Hasidim (חסידים, *ha-si-DIM*, pious ones), a sect of pious sages who shared the Pharisees' ethical and religious values, but were also characterized by an extreme familiarity with God and their emphasis on deeds.

**"Markan pickups"** — a term coined by Robert Lindsey to describe the borrowed words and expressions that Mark substituted in Luke's text as he rewrote it to form his own account. Mark "picked up" these synonyms from elsewhere in Luke, and from Acts, Romans, I & II Corinthians, Colossians, I & II Thessalonians and James. Occasionally, Mark proliferated one of these synonymic replacements or "pickups" and it became, in Lindsey's terminology, a "Markan stereotype."

**midrash** — (מדרש, *mid-RASH*) literally, an inquiry or investigation, but as a technical term it refers to an exposition of biblical text. The term also can be applied to a collection of such expositions or, capitalized, to the whole midrashic literature written during the first millennium A.D.

**minor agreements** — instances within the pericopae of the Triple Tradition where Matthew and Luke exhibit verbal agreement against

Mark. Minor agreements usually consist in the addition of only a word or short phrase which is not found in Mark's parallel passage.

**Mishnah** — (משנה, *mish-NAH*) the collection of Oral Torah committed to writing around 200 A.D. by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi. It records the sayings of sages who lived and taught during the previous several hundred years.

**Mishnaic Hebrew** — the Hebrew spoken in the land of Israel during the first centuries B.C./A.D., used loosely to refer to post-biblical Hebrew. Since this dialect is the language of the rabbinic works composed during this period, it also is referred to as "rabbinic Hebrew."

**ossuary** (ash'ō-wer-ē) — a "bone box," a depository for the bones of the dead. According to Jewish burial practices in the land of Israel at the time of Jesus, the bones of the deceased were collected one year after an initial interment and reinterred in a small container, usually carved from stone. Sometimes the bones of several members of the same family were collected and placed in the same ossuary. The average size of these boxes was 50 cm. long, 30 cm. wide and 30 cm. high. Thousands of ossuaries have been found in the vicinity of Jerusalem alone.

**pericope** (pə-rik'ō-pē) — an episode or story unit in the synoptic Gospels; a division of a synopsis. Plural: pericopae.

**R.** — the English translation of ר, an abbreviation used in rabbinic literature for the honorific titles רבי (*ra-BI*, Rabbi), רבן (*ra-BAN*, Rabban), רב (*rav*, Rav) and רבנו (*ra-BE-nu*, Rabbenu).

**Second Commonwealth** — a synonym for "Second Temple period."

**Second Temple period** — literally, the period from the rebuilding of the Temple (536–516 B.C.) to its destruction by the Romans in 70 A.D. The term usually refers to the latter part of this period, beginning with the Hasmonean Uprising in 168 B.C. and often extending to the end of the Bar-Kochva Revolt in 135 A.D.

**Septuagint** — the second-century B.C. Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

**Synoptic Gospels** — Matthew, Mark and Luke.

**Synoptic Problem** — the scholarly debate concerning the order in which the synoptic Gospels were written and the literary sources used by each.

**synoptic** — adjective from συνόψεσθαι (*synopsesesthai*), a Greek word meaning "to view together or at the same time"; specifically, refers to the first three Gospels of the New Testament.

**Talmud** — (תלמוד, *tal-MUD* ["instruction," from *lamad*, to study]) a collection of Jewish halachah and aggadah comprising the Mishnah and the Gemara. The Gemara, commentary on the Mishnah, is printed section by section following each verse of the Mishnah. "Gemara" can be used in its narrow sense, the commentary on the Mishnah found in the Talmud, or in its wider sense as a synonym for "Talmud." There are two Talmuds: the Jerusalem (or Palestinian) Talmud was completed about the end of the fourth century A.D.; the Babylonian Talmud, which became authoritative, was completed about a century later.

**targum** — an Aramaic translation of a portion of the Hebrew Scriptures. Plural: *targumim* or *targums*. The *targumim* not only provided a translation for those who did not understand the original language, but also provided an interpretation of the biblical text. Since the inspired text could not be changed or altered in even the smallest way, the targum made possible the insertion of various explanations and clarifications which amplified the text.

**Tosefta** — (תוספתא, *to-sef-TA*), the addition) a collection of Oral Torah supplementing the Mishnah. Compiled about 220–230 A.D., a generation after the Mishnah.

**translation Greek** — Greek found in texts that have been translated from Hebrew.

**Triple Tradition** — pericopae shared by all three synoptic Gospels (for example, the Baptism of Jesus, the Stilling of the Storm).

**unique Lukan material** — pericopae found only in Luke's Gospel.

**unique Matthean material** — pericopae found only in Matthew's Gospel.



or authority when he performed the miracle of splitting the sea. Jesus also used "Kingdom of Heaven" in this sense: "But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you" (Lk. 11:20). After healing the sick, Jesus' disciples were to explain the miracle by saying, "You have seen the Kingdom of God [literally, the Kingdom of God has come near to you]" (Lk. 10:8–9).

65. David Bivin, "At the Feet of a Rabbi," pp. 1–2; idem, "First-century Discipleship," *Jerusalem Perspective* 2.1 (Oct. 1988), 1–2.

66. C. G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1927), 1:244.

67. Ibid.

68. Avraham Even-shoshan, *Ha-Millon He-Hadash* (Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher, 1966), p. 1191.

69. Both Franz Delitzsch (1877) and the United Bible Societies (1976) translated the Greek adjective in this passage, *εὐκοπώτερος* (*eukopōteros*), with קַל (na-KEL).

70. Jastrow, op. cit., p. 886; Even-shoshan, op. cit., p. 835.

71. I Maccabees 1:17; 6:30, 34, 35, 37, 46; II Maccabees 11:4; 13:2, 15; 15:20, 21.

72. חַרְיָה שֶׁל מַחַט (ha-ri-RAH shel MA-hat, the eye of a needle).

73. Several variant readings appear in the manuscripts for the word here translated "camels." The text is not clear. Israel Abrahams has suggested that "the real reading is the hapax legomenon כַּרְמֵי in Isaiah 66:20 where the meaning is probably dromedaries" (I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels* [Cambridge University Press, 1924; repr. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1967], 2:208). Our translation follows Abrahams' suggestion.

74. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, p. 169.

75. In *The Gospel According to Luke (X–XXIV)*, Anchor Bible, Vol. 28A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1985), p. 1204, Joseph A. Fitzmyer mentions this suggestion and the ship's hawser suggestion, rejecting them both.

76. The Aramaic ke-FA' is attested in the fifth-century-B.C. Elephantine papyri (Emil G. Kraeling, *The Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953], p. 226). On the Aramaic name, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Aramaic Kepha' and Peter's Name in the New Testament," *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black*, ed. E. Best and R. M. Wilson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 121–132.

77. In the Gospels, the name Cephas occurs only in John 1:42. Paul gives us the other eight references to Cephas in the New Testament (I Cor. 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Gal. 1:18; 2:9, 11, 14). Paul usually refers to Peter by his Aramaic name

(except for Gal. 2:7, 8, references to *Petros*). Note that it is also Paul who uses the Aramaic *marana tha* (I Cor. 16:22, only here in the New Testament).

78. Walter Bauer comments that Πέτρος (*Petros*) "as a name can scarcely be pre-Christian." See Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich, "Πέτρος," *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 660.

79. The name פֶּטְרוֹס (*pet-ROS*) is only attested at the end of the second century A.D., however there is reason to believe it existed earlier. See David Bivin, "The Petros-petra Wordplay," forthcoming in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE.

80. The Gospels themselves note that *Petros* was a nickname: Mt. 4:18, 10:2; Mk. 3:16; Lk. 6:14.

81. Approximately twenty percent of the Jews we know by name from the Second Temple Period were named שִׁמְעוֹן (*shim-ON*). See Tal Ilan, "Names of Hasmoneans in the Second Temple Period," *Eretz-Israel* 19 (1987), 238–241 (Hebrew); Rachel Hachlili, "Names and Nicknames of Jews in Second Temple Times," *Eretz-Israel* 17 (1984), 188–211 (Hebrew).

82. Peter could also be distinguished by reference to his father, Yonah. Cf. Mt. 16:17, Σίμων Βαριωνᾶς (*Simōn Bariōnas*), the transliteration of שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּר יוֹנָה (*shim-ON bar yo-NAH*, Shim'on son of Jonah).

83. Amos Kloner, "A Burial Complex and Ossuaries from the Second Temple Period on Mount Scopus," *Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple, Mishna and Talmud Period: Studies in Honor of Shmuel Safrai*, ed. Isaiah Gafni, Aharon Oppenheimer and Menahem Stern (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1993), pp. 90–91 (Hebrew).

84. The name ya-SON is also attested in an Aramaic inscription dating from the first century B.C. discovered in the Jason Tomb complex (Rehaviah, Jerusalem). See Nahman Avigad, "Aramaic Inscriptions in the Tomb of Jason," *Israel Exploration Journal* 17 (1976), 101–111, pls. 26–27.

85. Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark*, pp. 74–76; David Bivin, "אָמֵן — Amen: Introduction or Response?" *Jerusalem Perspective* 1.3 (Dec. 1987), 1–2; idem, "Jesus' Use of 'Amen,'" *Jerusalem Perspective* 1.4 (Jan. 1988), 4.

86. See idem, "Counting the Cost of Discipleship: Lindsey's Reconstruction of the Rich Young Ruler Complex," forthcoming in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE.

87. One well-known example of BA-yit in the sense of "family" is found in Gen. 45:18. Pharaoh urged Joseph to have his brothers bring their father and *houses* to Egypt.

88. It is also possible that the earliest Greek version of this text was ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ τούτῳ (*en tō aiōni tō toutō*, in this age), and that ἐν τῷ



καὶρῷ τούτῳ (*en tō kairō toutō*, in this time), the reading of Mark and Luke, is a redaction by the author of the First Reconstruction.

89. Compare rabbinic sayings such as, "Great is Torah: to those who do it it gives life in this world and in the coming world" (Mishnah, Avot 6:7); "This world is like a vestibule before the coming world; prepare yourself in the vestibule so you may enter the banquet hall" (Mishnah, Avot 4:16).

90. In the Mishnah, for example, *ha-ʿo-LAM ha-BAʿ* occurs thirty times, fifteen times with its opposite, *ha-ʿo-LAM ha-ZEH*: Peah 1:1; Kiddushin 4:14; Bava Metsi'a 2:11; Sanhedrin 10:3 (four times); Avot 4:1, 16, 17 (twice); 5:19; 6:4, 7, 9.

91. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (X-XXIV), p. 1206.

92. Shmuel Safrai, "Talmudic Literature as an Historical Source for the Second Temple Period," *Mishkan* 17-18 (1993), 121-137.

93. For a full discussion of the Greek term *aion* (aeon), see Hermann Sasse, "αἰών," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 1:197-208.

94. At the Transfiguration Peter said, "Lord, it is well that we are here. Let us build three booths." A heavenly voice reproached him: "Do not dare! Only one is my Chosen" (Lk. 9:33, 35).

95. Peter left behind his fishing business, house, and wife to itinerate with Jesus, but, presumably, he did not permanently abandon them. Perhaps other members of the family looked after his fishing business. It is likely that Peter was already married when Jesus called him to be a disciple: Peter's mother-in-law is mentioned in connection with a visit by Jesus to Peter's home (Mt. 8:14, Mk. 1:30, Lk. 4:38). Although in Paul's day, Peter was accompanied by his wife (I Cor. 9:5), that probably was not the case when Peter traveled with Jesus.

## Good Morning, Elijah!

(continued from page 2)

illustrations used in *BAR*'s Caiaphas issue.

While *BAR* did its usual excellent job reporting the Caiaphas tomb find, there was one important defect in its coverage. In the *JP*, *Atiqot* and *BAR* issues, there were articles by Zvi Greenhut, the archaeologist who excavated the Caiaphas tomb, and Ronny Reich, the archaeologist and epigrapher who deciphered the inscriptions on the ossuaries. (There were no inscriptions on the walls of the tomb as erroneously reported by *BAR*). However, in *JP* and *Atiqot*, but not in *BAR*, there was a third article which discussed the significance of Caiaphas and his role in the death of Jesus as portrayed

## Transliteration Key

### Hebrew & Aramaic

Syllables of transliterated words are separated by dots. Capitalization is used to indicate the accented syllable in words of more than one syllable. See p. 11 of the Nov/Dec 1989 issue for a full description of the transliteration system used in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE.

### Consonants

א - ʾ (silent)  
ב - b  
ב - v  
ג - g  
ד - d  
ה - h (or silent)  
ו - v  
ז - z  
ח - h (voiceless guttural)  
ט - t  
י - y (or silent)

כ - k  
ך - ʿ (like ch in the Scottish loch)  
ל - l  
מ - m  
נ - n  
ס - s  
ש - ʃ (voiced guttural)  
פ - p  
ף - f  
צ - ts (like ts in nets)

ק - k  
ר - r  
ש - sh  
ס - s  
ת - t  
\*The form of the letter at the end of a word.

### Vowels

(The ʾ is used here as a point of reference.)  
א - a (like a in father; rarely like o in bone)

א - a (like a in father)  
ע - e (like e in net, or e in hey, or somewhere in between)  
א - e (like e in net)  
א - i (like i in ski)  
א - o (like o in bone)  
א - u (like u in flu)  
א - e (silent, or as short as e in happening, or as long as e in net)

### Diphthongs

א - ai  
א - oi  
א - ui

### Greek

Transliterations are based on the Society of Biblical Literature system.

in the New Testament. This article — the most significant for Christian readers — was written by Jerusalem School scholar and Hebrew University specialist on early Christianity, Prof. David Flusser. (Flusser's *JP* article was titled "...To Bury Caiaphas, Not to Praise Him.")

*JP* subscribers expect us to be quick and accurate in bringing them the latest research from Israel. As we stated in the introduction to the *JP* Caiaphas issue, "One of the advantages of living in Israel and publishing our magazine here is that we are on the scene to bring you the latest discoveries in fields that relate to the life and words of Jesus." This advantage was never better illustrated than in the U.S. news media's coverage of the Caiaphas tomb discovery. **JP**

## Postscript

The Yehosef bar Caiapha ossuary is now on display in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Visitors to the exhibit can purchase JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE's Caiaphas issue at the Museum's bookstores.

JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE would like to thank Steve & Julie Bivin of Stroud, Oklahoma; Rodney & Diana Burrow of Birmingham, Alabama; Dr. Michael & Ruby Butchko of Riverside, California; Herbert & Lorraine Lowe of Woodstock, Maryland; Lynda McCoy of Robinson, Illinois; Gerald & Mary McPhillips of Culpeper, Virginia; Dr. George & Joyce Mindeman of Tulsa, Oklahoma; Daniel Pierce of Saugus, California; Harold & Phyllis Thomas of Boise, Idaho; and Derek & Grace White of London, England. Their generous donations helped make this special issue possible.



# International Synoptic Society

**T**he International Synoptic Society supports the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research by serving as a vehicle through which interested individuals can participate in the School's research.

The Society raises financial support for publication of the Jerusalem School's research, such as the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*; facilitates informal discussion groups focusing on the synoptic Gospels; sponsors student research assistants and other volunteers who work with the Jerusalem School.

Annual membership in the Society is: Regular £60 or US\$100; Fellow £180 or \$300; Sponsor £300 or \$500; Patron £600 or \$1000; Lifetime membership £3000 or \$5000 and over. Membership dues can be paid in monthly or quarterly installments, and in most currencies (see box at bottom of page 2).

Members of the Society receive a beautiful certificate of membership and free subscription to *JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE*. They also are entitled to unique privileges such as pre-publication releases of *Commentary* materials including preliminary Hebrew reconstructions with English translation of stories in the conjectured biography of Jesus. Major publications of the Jerusalem School will be inscribed with Society members' names.

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## Jerusalem School Evenings

Please contact us if your synagogue, church or organization would like to know more about the International Synoptic Society and Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research. We will be delighted to arrange a visit by one of the Jerusalem School's representatives.

The School's representative will answer questions and present an interesting program that includes the showing of a colorful video. Filmed in Israel, the video incorporates on-site interviews with members of the Jerusalem School: accompany Prof. David Flusser to the site of Caiaphas' tomb; join Dr. Robert Lindsey at the Sea of Galilee where he explains the significance of Jesus' "woes" to Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum; and more.

## The Jerusalem School

**T**he Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research (מכון ירושלים לחקר האוונגליזם הסינפטי) is a consortium of Jewish and Christian scholars who are examining the synoptic Gospels within the context of the language and culture in which Jesus lived. Their work confirms that Jesus was a Jewish sage who taught in Hebrew and used uniquely rabbinic teaching methods.

The Jerusalem School scholars believe the first narrative of Jesus' life was written in Hebrew, and that much of it can be recovered from the Greek texts of the synoptic Gospels. The School's central objective is to reconstruct as much as possible of that conjectured Hebrew narrative. This is an attempt to recover a lost Jewish document from the Second Temple period, a Hebrew

scroll which, like so much Jewish literature of the period, has been preserved only in Greek.

As a means to its objective, the Jerusalem School has begun preparations for production of the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*, a detailed commentary on the synoptic Gospels which will reflect the insight provided by the School's research. Current research of Jerusalem School members and others is reported in the pages of *JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE*.

The Jerusalem School was registered in Israel as a non-profit research institute in 1985. Its members are Prof. David Flusser, Dr. Robert L. Lindsey, Prof. Shmuel Safrai, David Bivin, Dr. Randall J. Buth, Dr. Weston W. Fields, Dr. R. Steven Notley, Dwight A. Pryor,

Halvor Ronning, Mirja Ronning, Prof. Chana Safrai and Prof. Bradford H. Young.

