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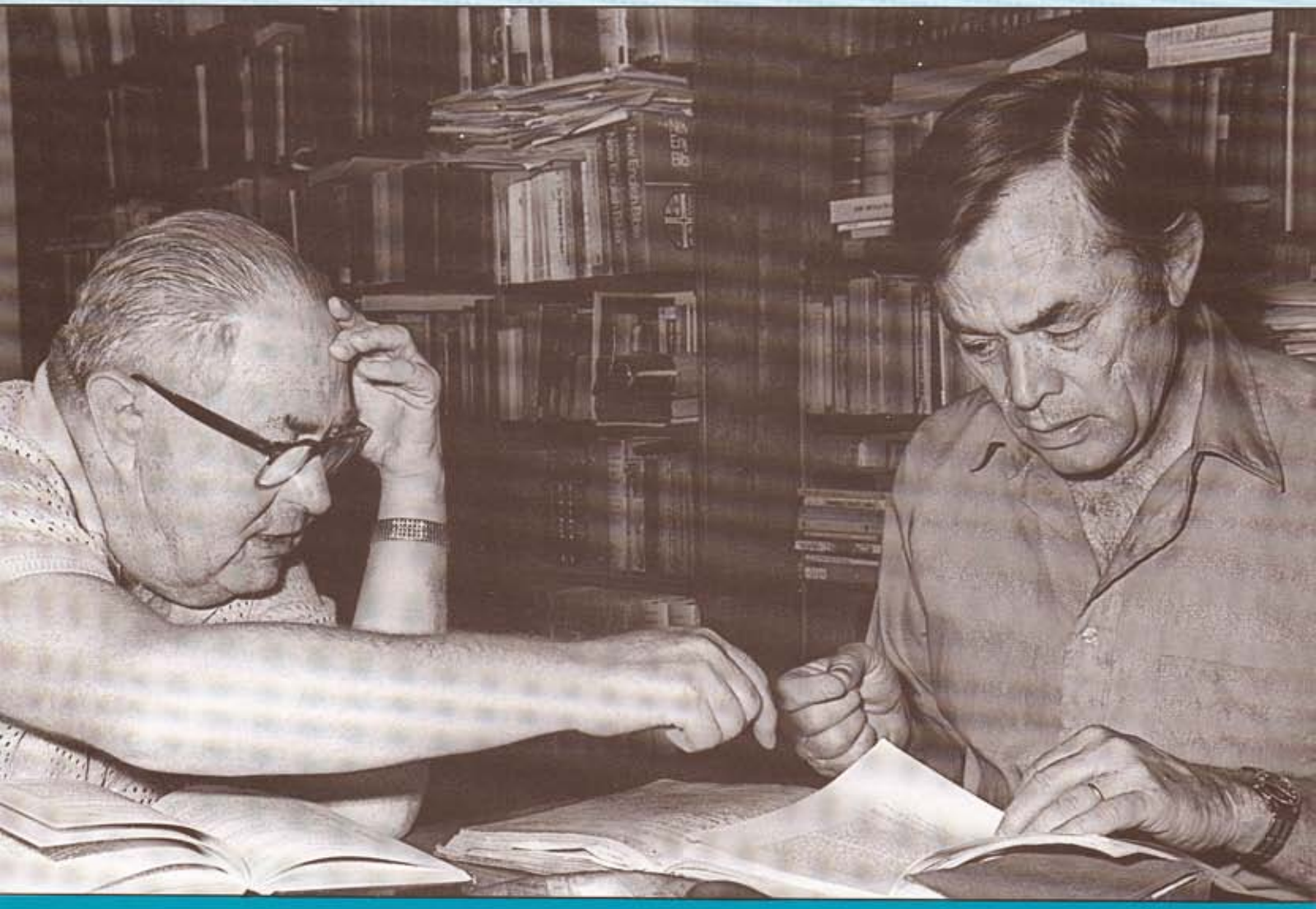
מנקודת ראות ירושלמית

Jerusalem Perspective

Exploring the Jewish Background to the Life and Words of Jesus



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Readers' Perspective

Robert Lindsey's Response to Lindsey Issue

I have no adequate words to express my appreciation for the honor you gave me in producing your May/June 1991 issue (Number 32) concerning my conclusions about the Synoptic Gospels. The articles by David Bivin, Randall Buth, Joseph Frankovic and Steven Notley were excellent summaries of many of my findings and I am grateful to each of you for your help in publicizing them.

However, many of your readers may ask, "Just what do Lindsey's conclusions mean for the average reader of the Gospels?" As you know so well, I am not interested in scholarship for the sake of scholarship. What seems important to me is how these conclusions affect our understanding of Jesus. Do they give us more light on his life, on his teaching, on his views of his Messianic role, on his prophecies, on his works of healing and casting out of demons, on his final instructions to the people of his Kingdom of God, the Edah *(Church), and on his appearances after his death and resurrection?*

I think they do. In my books I have tried to give more detailed reasons for coming to these conclusions—and thanks for mentioning some of them. However, your journal did not emphasize one particular point that has become increasingly important to me, and I think to David Flusser, my beloved colleague. This is a suggestion that should be of much interest to even the casual reader of our Gospels. I refer to my suggestion that it is possible to pick out story and saying units in Matthew and Luke and combine them to make longer stories. We call these "reconstructions," and you have published two of these (*JP *11 [Aug. 1988], 4;* JP *12 [Sept. 1988], 1, 4). Such stories appear to have made up the bulk of the first narrative of Jesus' life and teaching.*

You will agree that the results obtained by this method are often startling. It is like taking two scroll fragments found in a cave, comparing their shape and style of writing, and discovering that they belong together. In my book Jesus Rabbi & Lord *I explain how I first noticed this possibility when I placed the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin parables from chapter fifteen of Luke after the verses about Jesus and Levi found in Luke chapter five.*

It is, of course, necessary to look at a suggested reconstruction critically, testing passages by retranslating them from Greek to Hebrew and checking common idioms in the passages to be brought together; but when this is done, we find fascinating evidence that we can indeed get back to an earlier stage of our Gospel materials and learn details about Jesus we could not otherwise

(continued on page 15)

Cover photo: Colleagues Robert Lindsey and David Flusser in the mid-sixties. Pursuing a common goal: to know more about Jesus. (See Lindsey's letter to the editor, page 15.
(Photo: Kurt Ben-Joseph)

Jerusalem Perspective

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Jesus' Twin Parables

Doyen of the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research, Robert L. Lindsey, believes he has discovered Jesus' teaching format: incident, teaching discourse and two concluding parables. In this article he discusses Jesus' double parables.

The discoveries of Dr. Robert Lindsey, Pastor Emeritus of Jerusalem's Narkis Street Baptist Congregation, became the foundation of the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research. His research is challenging many conclusions of New Testament scholarship from the past 200 years.

by Robert L. Lindsey

The wit and wisdom of Jesus' parables, and the economy of their words, have convinced many scholars that in these allegories one can hear the very voice of Jesus. The twentieth-century, German scholar, Joachim Jeremias, pointed out the many Semitisms in the Greek texts of the Gospels and contended that, at least in many parables, we have the literal words of Jesus.

I believe that Jesus normally employed twin parables in his teaching. These double parables usually concluded his teaching discourses and served to emphasize whatever point or points he was making in his teaching. I think it is now possible to identify the "partner parables" and to place them in their original contexts.

For the most part, scholars who have written about the parables have tended to ignore the significance of twin parables despite recognizing that some do exist. Jeremias, for instance, believed the existence of a parable that appears to be a "twin" is due to the imitation of an original parable by a later editor. This approach illustrates the tendency of many modern scholars who have become skeptical of the reliability of the Synoptic materials. My view is that it would be impossible to reconstruct so many complete stories (composed of an incident and a teaching discourse concluded with twin parables) if these stories had not existed before the chronology of Jesus' biography was disturbed by the author of the source I have named the Anthology. It is this source primarily that provided the parables we find in Matthew and Luke, which are the Gospels containing most of Jesus' discourses and parables.

Accepted "Twin Parables"

George A. Buttrick, an authority on Jesus' parables, states: "Jesus frequently used twin parables" (*The Parables of Jesus* [New York: Harper and Brothers, 1928], p. 7). He refers to several of Jesus' parables as "twin parables": Old Garment and Old Wineskins, Lost Sheep and Lost Coin, and Mustard Seed and Yeast. Buttrick also displays the parable of the Friend in Need (from Luke chapter eleven) with the parable of the Persistent Widow (from Luke chapter eighteen), and comments, "These might almost be termed twin parables" (p. 167). Note his statement: "Though they are separated in Luke's gospel and assigned to different occasions it seems that they were originally spoken in uninterrupted sequence" (ibid.).

Had Buttrick carried his suggestion further, he might have concluded that Matthew and Luke have preserved not only many twin parables, but also other parts of complete stories about Jesus, and that these now separated elements can be restored to their original sequences.

The "How to Pray" Story

Let us follow up Buttrick's suggestion that the Friend in Need and Persistent Widow parables are twin in nature and were probably given on the same occasion. Jesus told the two parables, we may suppose, in response to a question about prayer. In Luke 11:1–2, we read:

> And it happened that as he was praying in a certain place...one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." And he said to them, "When you pray, say...."

This is the kind of opening incident we find in other complete stories. We could now insert the Matthean form of the Disciples' Prayer (Mt. 6:9–13), which is much more Hebraic than the Lukan version (Lk. 11:2–4).

> Our father who is in heaven. May your name be sanctified, your kingdom come, and your will done in heaven and on

earth. Give us today enough food to sustain us. Forgive us our debts just as we also have forgiven our debtors. Do not place us in trials [to hard for us], but deliver us from evil.

Next, we could add to this story the teaching discourse found in Matthew 7:7–11:

> Ask, and it will be given you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone, or, if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you, then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him.

Coming back to chapter eleven of Luke, we could add:

> And he said to them, "Which of you will go to his friend at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves. A friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him,' and the friend will answer from within, 'Do not bother me. The door has been

Lindsey's Assumptions

When reading Robert Lindsey's article about twin parables, it is helpful to be aware of the assumptions he makes as he approaches the Synoptic Gospels:*

1. The order in which the Synoptic Gospels were written is Luke – Mark – Matthew.

2. The Greek Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke descended from a Hebrew biography.

3. This biography was the work of an eyewitness who was present for most or all of Jesus' healings and other miracles.

4. The Hebrew biography was translated into Greek soon after it was composed. This translation was so literal that the resultant Greek was often not idiomatic. The Hebrew biography and its Greek translation included 1) miracle stories, and 2) stories composed of incident, teaching discourse, and parables (usually twin). The latter stories we may call "teaching complexes."

5. The Greek translation underwent a major revision. Because of its nature, Lindsey refers to this revision as the Reorganized Scroll or Anthology. The author of this work completely rearranged the Greek translation. First, he collected the incidents from Jesus' teaching complexes and combined them with the miracle stories. These he arranged at the beginning of his work. Next, he took the discourses from Jesus' teaching complexes and put them in the middle of his reorganized text. Finally, he removed all of Jesus' parables from their original contexts within teaching complexes and placed them at the end of the revision. Although the Anthology's editor radically reorganized the stories in his source (the Greek translation), he apparently made little change in its very Hebraic Greek. Matthew, Mark and Luke used the Anthology, but they made no use of its predecessor, the Greek translation. Perhaps this is an indication that the Greek translation perished or fell into disuse very early.

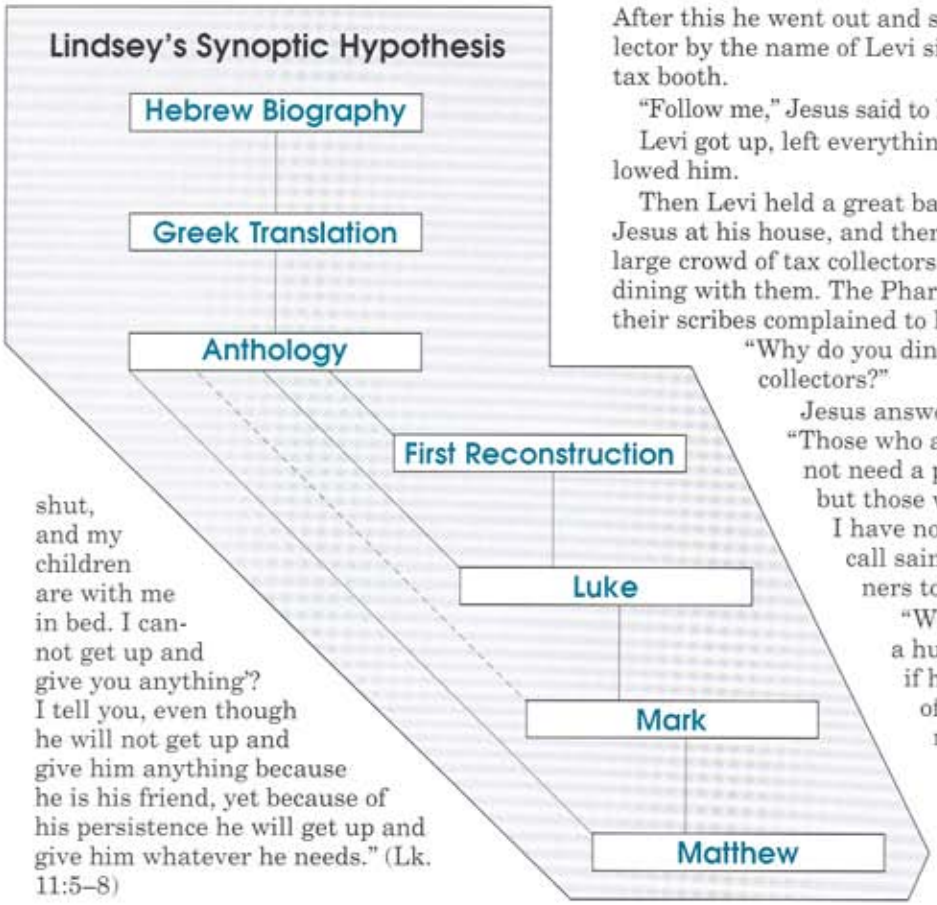
6. The Anthology was abridged. Lindsey calls this abridgement the First Reconstruction because it was an attempt, even before similar attempts by Matthew, Mark and Luke, to reconstruct the chronology of Jesus' biography. In addition, the author of the First Reconstruction attempted to correct the Anthology's very Hebraic Greek.

7. Luke used the First Reconstruction as the skeleton of his Gospel—it provided Luke's chronology. Into that framework he spliced many additional stories from the Anthology not included in the First Reconstruction. Thus, all of Luke's material is derived ultimately from the Anthology, some directly, and some indirectly by way of the First Reconstruction.

8. Mark knew the Anthology and Luke, but used Luke as his source almost exclusively. Apparently, this preference was because Mark saw in Luke's Gospel chronological order, something that was lacking in the Anthology. Consequently, Mark generally followed Luke's story order, while making many changes in Luke's wording. (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.)

9. Matthew used Mark and the Anthology, but did not know Luke's account. Matthew depended heavily on Mark for the same reason that Mark depended so heavily on Luke—he saw chronological order in Mark's Gospel. Like Luke, Matthew spliced into his chronological framework many additional stories from the Anthology. Since the Anthology had little or no story order, and Matthew did not know Luke's Gospel, Matthew's placement of stories he copied from the Anthology differs greatly from Luke's placement of the same stories.

*Lindsey has presented these assumptions elsewhere in greater detail: "Our Reconstructing Editor," Appendix in *Jesus Rabbi & Lord* (Oak Creek, WI: Cornerstone Publishing, 1990), pp. 209–217; "Conjectured Process of Gospel Transmission," *Jerusalem Perspective* 38 & 39 (May/Aug. 1993), 6.



shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything'? I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs." (Lk. 11:5–8)

Finally, we could add Luke 18:2–8a: He said, "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor care about men, because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, or she will wear me out by her continual coming.'"

The Lord said, "Note the words of this unrighteous judge. Will God not grant justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he put them off? I tell you, he will quickly grant them justice."

The above reconstruction provides the parts of a complete story that we seek: an opening episode, a teaching section and twin parables.

The Full "Call of Levi" Story

I first became aware of the possibility of joining disconnected Gospels passages by noting that the story of Levi in Luke 5:27–32 could be joined with the parables of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin in Luke 15:4–10.

After this he went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth.

"Follow me," Jesus said to him.

Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others dining with them. The Pharisees and their scribes complained to his disciples, "Why do you dine with tax collectors?"

Jesus answered them, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call saints but sinners to repentance. "What owner of a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? After finding it, he joyfully places it on his shoulders. When he gets home, he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me. I have found my lost sheep.' In the same way, I tell you, there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine saints who have no need of repentance.

"What woman who has ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house, looking carefully until she finds it? When she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me. I have found the coin I lost.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing among the angels of God over just one sinner who repents."

In this story, we again have the characteristic pattern: incident in Jesus' life, Jesus' instruction in response to the incident, and two parables that illustrate and conclude Jesus' teaching. However, the clue that originally helped me see the connection between these now separated passages was the Greek phrase οὐ χρείαν ἔχουσιν (*ou chreian echousin*, have no need), which

(continued on page 12)

Jesus' Parables and Their Contexts

1. Forgiveness
Woman with Ointment (Lk. 7:36–40)
*Creditor and Two Debtors** (Lk. 7:41–42)
Woman with Ointment, cont. (Lk. 7:43–49)
Unforgiving Slave (Mt. 18:23–34)

2. Penitents and the Self-righteous
The Call of Levi (Lk. 5:27–32)
Lost Sheep (Lk. 15:4–7)
Lost Coin (Lk. 15:8–10)

3. The Word of God
Jesus' True Relatives (Lk. 8:19–21)
Blessedness of Doers of the Word of God (Lk. 11:27–28)
Sower and the Soils (and Its Interpretation) (Lk. 8:5–8, 11–15)
Wise and Foolish Builders (Mt. 7:24–27)

4. God Fills His Banqueting House with the Uninvited
Zacchaeus (Lk. 19:1–10)
Pharisee and Tax Collector (Lk. 18:10–14a)
Great Banquet (Lk. 14:16–24)

5. The Expanding Kingdom
The Kingdom Is Breaking Forth (Mt. 11:12a)
Mustard Seed (Lk. 13:18–19)
Yeast (Lk. 13:20–21 = Mt. 13:33)

6. How to Pray
"Teach Us to Pray" (Lk. 11:1–2)
The Disciples' Prayer (Mt. 6:9–13)
Ask...Knock (Mt. 7:7–11)
Friend in Need (Lk. 11:5–8)
Persistent Widow (Lk. 18:2–8a)

7. The Sin of Anxiety
Mary and Martha (Lk. 10:38–42)
Discourse on Being Anxious about Material Things (Mt. 6:25–34 = Lk. 12:22–31)
Rich Fool (Lk. 12:16–20)
Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19–31)

8. Covetousness
"Divide the Inheritance!" (Lk. 12:13–15)
Laying Up Treasure in Heaven (Mt. 6:19–21)
Having a Good Eye (Mt. 6:22–23)
Serving Two Masters (Mt. 6:24)
Shrewd Manager (Lk. 16:1–12)
Talents (Mt. 25:14–30)

9. The Cost of Being Jesus' Disciple
Rich Young Ruler (Mt. 19:16b; Lk. 18:19–25, 28–30)
Cost of Discipleship (Lk. 14:26–27)
Hidden Treasure (Mt. 13:44)
Valuable Pearl (Mt. 13:45–46)
Tower Builder (Lk. 14:28–30)
King Going to War (Lk. 14:31–33)

10. Jesus' Approach to Torah
The Lawyer's Question (Lk. 10:25a; Mt. 22:36; Lk. 10:26–28)
Jesus' Words about the Torah (Mt. 5:17–20)
On Murder (Mt. 5:21–26)
On Adultery (Mt. 5:27–30)
On Swearing (Mt. 5:33–37)
On Retaliation (Mt. 5:38–42)
On Love of One's Enemies (Mt. 5:43–48)
"Who Is My Neighbor?" (Lk. 10:29)
Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30–37)

11. The Great Separation
Samaritan Villagers (Lk. 9:51–55)
Baptism of Fire (Lk. 12:49–53)
Wheat and Weeds (and Its Interpretation) (Mt. 13:24b–30, 37–42a)
Good and Bad Fish (and Its Interpretation) (Mt. 13:47b–50a)

12. Obedient and Disobedient Sons
The Question about Authority (Lk. 20:1–8)
Why Jesus' Disciples Do Not Fast (Lk. 5:33–35)
Old Garment and Old Wineskins (Mt. 9:16–17)
"This Generation Is Like Children Playing" (Lk. 7:31–35 = Mt. 11:16–19)
Two Sons (Mt. 21:28–32)
Prodigal Son (Lk. 15:11–32)

13. The Unfruitfulness of Jerusalem's Tenants
Prediction of Jerusalem's Destruction (Lk. 21:5–7)
Jerusalem Surrounded by Invading Army (Lk. 21:20–24)
Simile of the Fig Tree (Lk. 21:29–31)
Those Who Witness the Beginning of Jerusalem's Siege Will Live to See the Temple Destroyed (Lk. 21:32)
Unfruitful Fig Tree (Lk. 13:6–9)
Wicked Tenants (Lk. 20:9b–15; Mt. 21:41, 43; Lk. 20:17b–18)

14. Humility, a Necessity for Sons of the Kingdom
"Just Doing My Job" (Lk. 17:7–10)
Many Outsiders in the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt. 8:11–12)
Latecomers Get Equal Pay (Mt. 20:1–15)

15. The Coming of the Son of Man
Ascension at Bethany (Lk. 24:50a)
Days of Son of Man (Lk. 17:22–24, 26–31, 34–37, 32–33)
Do Not Be Led Astray (Lk. 21:8–11)
Son of Man Coming on a Cloud (Lk. 21:25–28)
Be Ready for Son of Man's Coming (Lk. 12:35–40, 42–46)
Waiting Virgins (Mt. 25:1–13)

16. (Unknown Context)
Owner of a House (Mt. 13:52)

The above contextual reconstructions are based on Robert Lindsey's book, *Jesus Rabbi & Lord*. The first reconstruction, titled "Forgiveness," is the suggestion of David Bivin, and is not found in Lindsey's book.

*Parables are indicated by italics.

John's Targumic Allusions

מְתוּרְגְּמָן (*me·tur·ge·MAN*) is Hebrew for translator. The articles in this series illustrate how a knowledge of the Gospels' Semitic background can provide a deeper understanding of Jesus' words, and influence the translation process.

Dr. Randall Buth is a Bible translation consultant in Africa.

by Randall Buth

The viewpoint of scholars toward the Gospel of John has changed considerably during the last generation. (See "Scholarly Attitudes to John" on page 9.) Thanks to several recent discoveries, we are now able to appreciate a number of literary allusions in the Gospel's introductory verses (1:1–18) that had previously escaped attention. We will discuss the background of a few of these allusions, and then consider some implications for translation.

Light from the Targums

In the synagogue, the targum (Aramaic translation of the Bible) was provided along with the Hebrew Scripture readings. By means of the targum, rabbinic interpretations of Scripture could be introduced without altering in any way the text of the Hebrew original. The tradition of an Aramaic translation may go back to the Persian era (539–332 B.C.) when Aramaic was the official language of government. In the first century it still provided help for those from outside the land of Israel who may not have known Hebrew well. The targums were transmitted orally at first and only written down in the second to seventh centuries A.D. The Qumran manuscripts and early rabbinic literature give evidence that some targums were written at an earlier date.[1]

A complete manuscript of a "Palestinian Targum" was found in the Vatican library in Rome in 1956. This discovery, while much less famous than the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, has provided important insight into a number of Jewish allusions in John 1:1–18.

Targums known prior to 1956 included the less paraphrastic Targum Onkelos to the Torah, Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, a late mixed-dialect Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, and a Palestinian collection of texts known as the Fragment Targum. The Fragment Targum testified to a targumic tradition that had disappeared, and Targum Neofiti (the name of the Vatican manuscript discovered in 1956), turns out to come from the same milieu as the Fragment Targum.

Word, Presence and Glory

One of the phenomena in the targums, and one that is more prevalent in the "Palestinian Targum" tradition, is the use of certain phrases to make references to God more abstract. Such phrases distanced God, in his utter holiness, from his creation.

The Fragment Targum gives an example of this at Genesis 1:27. The Hebrew text reads: "And God created man in his image." The Aramaic "translation" is, "And the word [מֵימְרָא (*mem·RA*ʾ)] of YHVH created Adam in his image."

Something similar happens in Targum Neofiti at Genesis 1:3–5: "And the word of YHVH said, 'Let there be light.' And there was light according to the decision of his word.... And the word of YHVH divided between.... And the word of YHVH called...." Throughout the creation account, this targum frequently substitutes "the word [*mem·RA*ʾ] of YHVH" for "God [ʾ*e·lo·HIM*]." The repetition of "God said" in the Hebrew source was taken to imply that God spoke by means of his word.[2]

Two other favorite words for "God" in the targum tradition are אִיקָר (ʾ*i·KAR*, glory;

variant יְקָר [*ye·KAR*]) and שְׁכִינָה (*she·ḵi·NAH*, dwelling; presence; Shechinah). The Masoretic text of Exodus 24:10, "And they saw the God of Israel," is rendered by the Onkelos Targum as "And they saw the glory [*ye·KAR*] of the God of Israel." The Hebrew of Exodus 25:8, "And I will dwell [from the root שכן (*sh-ḵ-n*)] among them," is rendered by the same targum as "And I will put my Shechinah among them."

John's Allusions

This targumic background becomes particularly meaningful in John 1:1, 14. The linking of God's "word" with the opening verse of Genesis and with the creation is something that made its way into the written targumic tradition. The first creative act mentioned in Genesis is "And God said" (1:3), an act of using words. The targumist, by rendering, "And the word of YHVH said," did not understand this in a Christian sense as defining an entity or person within God. In the Jewish context it was simply a circumlocution, a way of talking about God more abstractly.

John made the same literary connection between Genesis 1:1 and "God's word" when he began his Gospel. The shock and the beauty of his images come into focus in verse 14:

> The word became flesh
> and dwelt among us
> and we beheld his glory....

Those are the three major terms that the targums used to allude to God. John used the same terms, but did not leave them as abstract references to God. Instead, they describe a penetration of our earthly and phenomenological realm by the deity.

There is evidence that John intended his readers to catch these allusions to God. For instance, John did not use a normal Greek word for "dwell." Instead he picked a rare verb, σκηνόω (*skēnoō*, dwell [in a tent]), which contains the Greek equivalent of the same consonants (*s-k-n*) as the Hebrew and Aramaic word for "presence, dwelling"—שְׁכִינָה (*she·ḵi·NAH*, Shechinah).[3]

Jewish Prayer and John 1:3

The connection between creation[4] and "word" is reinforced in John 1:3: "Everything through him [or it, i.e., the word] came into existence." These are words that were frequently on the lips of an observant Jew.

In the first century, different blessings were said before eating, depending on the class of food. The most generic blessing, used when other specific blessings did not fit or when one did not know which blessing was appropriate, was, שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בִּדְבָרוֹ (*she·ha·KOL nih·YAH vid·va·RO*, that everything came into existence by His word). The Mishnah states that when a person says this blessing he fulfills his obligation to bless God before partaking of food (Berachot 6:2).

So, when John made the connection between creation and the word and used "the word" as the instrument of creation, he was using a term that was very well known in Jewish culture.

The Law and Jesus

The relationship between the Law (i.e., Torah—the Instruction, the Guidance) and Jesus in John 1:16–17 has often been viewed as an antithesis, as though the Law were something bad. *The Living Bible*, often a helpful translation in other contexts, provides an example of this approach:

> We have all benefited from the rich blessings he brought to us—blessing upon blessing heaped upon us! For Moses gave us only the Law with its rigid demands and merciless justice, while Jesus Christ brought us loving forgiveness as well.

That is an unfortunate[5] translation because it misses the fact that John portrays the grace of Jesus as built on top of a blessing—the Law. The Law is a blessing and Jesus came and added a blessing on top of it.

The grammar here is not contrastive.[6] The statements of verse 17 elaborate what was meant in verse 16; these statements are simply a listing of the points of elaboration, and are without explicit connective.[7] Barnabas Lindars brings this out in his commentary by using comparison: "Just as the law was given through Moses, so grace and truth...came into being...through Jesus Christ."[8]

This is a better translation, but leaves out the sense of development and culmination that John means to give us. The *Jerusalem Bible* and *New International Version* avoid this pitfall by mimicking the terse quality of the Greek: "For the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ."[9]

However one translates John 1:17, both clauses should be positively portrayed. After all, it is John himself who states that "salvation is of the Jews" (4:22) and that "the Hebrew Scriptures testify about Jesus" (5:39).

Allusions and Translation

Allusions are an aspect of language that often defy translation. They are part of the broad cultural and textual framework that help a speaker communicate with an audience. A speaker can rely on an audience making comparisons between his presentation and some common background knowledge, thus making it easier to communicate and to be sure that the audience will get the right overall interpretation.

John knew that expressions like "word," "glory," "dwell in a tent" and "came into existence by the word" would provide a powerful common base for some of his audience. These terms reinforced his claim that Jesus is the Deity-become-man.

Translators and exegetes need to consider the intended allusions of a text. This will influence their translation and their choice of words and grammar, even though they may not be able in the translation to refer specifically to the background knowledge. The easiest and fullest way to present such information is by means of an annotated translation, otherwise known as a "study Bible." If only all translators had that option! JP

1. Compare, for example, the Qumran Targum to Job (early first century A.D.) and Tosefta, Shabbat 13:2.

2. This traditional exegesis of Genesis 1 was strengthened by the connection between "wisdom" and "the beginning" in Proverbs 3:19 and 8:22. At Genesis 1:1 the Palestinian targums replace "In the beginning God created" with "By wisdom God created." However, John 1 only develops the "word" terminology, so the "wisdom" terminology will not be discussed here.

3. The close connection between John 1:14 and targumic phraseology has been pointed out by Alejandro Diez Macho, "El Logos y el Spiritu Santo," *Atlantida* 1 (1963), 389, and Martin McNamara, *Targum and Testament* (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1972), pp. 103–104.

4. It can be assumed that from the time John's Gospel was written informed readers have all seen the connection between Ἐν ἀρχῇ (*En archē*, In the beginning) in John 1:1 and [the Greek translation of] Genesis 1:1.

5. "Unfortunate" is euphemistically mild. Such mistakes can provide the seeds for Christian anti-Semitism. Much depends on one's starting point. In order to correctly read the New Testament, one must start from within a Jewish context and look out inclusively to the Gentile world.

6. Leon Morris made a correct grammatical observation even though he ended up interpreting the verse antithetically: "We should have expected the contrasting μέν [*men*] and δέ [*de*]. But John simply puts the two statements side by side" (*The Gospel According to John, The New International Commentary* [Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971], p. 111).

7. Randall Buth, "Oun, De, Kai and Asyndeton (Null) in the Gospel of John," *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation*, ed. David Alan Black with Katherine Barnwell and Stephen Levinsohn (Nashville: Broadman, 1993).

8. Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John, New Century Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972), p. 98.

(continued on page 12)

Scholarly Attitudes to John

Last century many scholars viewed the Gospel of John as a second-century work of the Greek church, and it was taken as axiomatic that the writer knew and used the Synoptic Gospels. However, the discovery in Egypt of an early second-century papyrus fragment* containing the text of John 18:31–33, 37–38 undermined the late dating of the book. Since John's Gospel was circulating in Egypt by the early second century, as evidenced by this papyrus copy, the original must have been written in the first century or very early second century A.D. Today, most scholars would date the writing of John between 65–110 A.D., with 80–90 A.D. a common conclusion.

In 1938 the British scholar Percival Gardner-Smith published a widely influential book, *Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge University Press), which suggested that John was independent of the Synoptics. Many scholars now have taken a middle position that treats John as an independent work, recognizing that its author probably knew at least one of the Synoptic Gospels but may not have used these Gospels as sources.

Much discussion in the last century centered on the Greek background of John's Gospel. The debate was fueled by discussions about the philosophical background of the "logos" doctrine so prominent in the opening verse. However, nagging questions persisted about the unique geographical and Jewish background of the Gospel.

In John, most of Jesus' ministry occurs in Judea, and it is John alone among the four Gospels that provides the long discussion with a Samaritan woman. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has reinforced a trend to view the traditions transmitted by John as authentic. Some of the abstract terminology that appears in John, such as "light" and "darkness," turns out to be prominent in writings of the Dead Sea sect. In addition, like John, the Qumran sectarians are highly critical of the Jerusalem Temple authorities, something that used to be considered a reason for questioning the Jewish background of John.

With the rediscovery of Jewish roots to John's Gospel, scholars pay more attention to layers of historical data within the Gospel. This does not mean, however, that scholars now read John as unedited history. There is still a problem of determining where Jesus' words end. (For example, do his words end at 3:13 where the *Good News Bible* marks the end of the quotation, or at 3:21 where the *New International Version* concludes Jesus' speech?) John may not have been concerned to distinguish his own words from those of Jesus. In addition, the problem of the order of events in John's Gospel is as difficult as ever (for instance, a cleansing of the Temple at the beginning of Jesus' ministry rather than at its end as in the Synoptic Gospels).

*Designated Papyrus Rylands Greek 457 (Gregory-Aland $\mathfrak{P}^{52}$). Acquired in Egypt in 1920, this fragment is the earliest known manuscript of any identifiable portion of the New Testament. It was published by C. H. Roberts (*An Unpublished Fragment of the Fourth Gospel*, Manchester, 1935). Roberts dated this fragment to the end of the first century–beginning of the second century A.D. (Roberts, pp. 13–16).

– Randall Buth

The Appearance of Jesus

Hairstyles and Beards in Bible Times

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No one knows for sure how Jesus looked in the eyes of his contemporaries. However, there is evidence that suggests the hair of Jesus may have been rather short—black or dark in color—and his beard closely trimmed.

by Marvin R. Wilson

Like Abraham the first Hebrew, Jesus was a Semite, a descendant of Noah's son Shem.[1] As such, Jesus faithfully identified himself with the customs of the Jewish people and the teachings of Moses. He came not to abolish the Law but to establish and uphold it.[2] Given the Israelite ancestry of Jesus of Nazareth, what information do we have about the physical appearance of Jews in Bible times? Specifically, what archaeological and textual evidence do we have from the ancient world concerning Semitic hairstyles and the wearing of beards? Furthermore, how may this evidence on hair and beards assist us in trying to find out how Jesus looked to his contemporaries in that first-century milieu of Judaism in the land of Israel? We shall consider a variety of relevant ancient sources as we attempt to answer these questions.

In the land of Egypt, directly south of Israel, the people were usually clean-shaven. Joseph, a Semite, shaved before he entered the presence of Pharaoh, an obvious accommodation to Egyptian culture.[3] According to Herodotus, a fifth-century B.C. Greek historian, Egyptians shaved their heads from childhood but let the hair and beard grow when they were in mourning.[4] Egyptian priests shaved their whole body every third day for fear of harboring vermin when in the service of the gods.[5] Slaves brought to Egypt from other countries also had their beards and heads shaved. Both men and women of all but the poor classes wore wigs, both indoors and out. For religious ceremonies, Egyptian men sometimes wore artificial beards tied to the chin. Among the finds at Beni Hassan in Middle Egypt, dating to the early nineteenth century B.C., is a fresco depicting a group of Semites—probably from the Sinai or the Negeb—who have come to an Egyptian frontier post to trade. The Semites are painted with thick dark hair and beards. However, the Egyptians on the fresco are beardless.

The Semitic peoples of Mesopotamia, the homeland of the patriarchs of Israel, normally had a full head of hair and beard. This was true for both high officials and commoners, and is supported by textual materials and by archaeological evidence on statues, panels, bas-reliefs and cylinder seals. The main exceptions to this rule were slaves, priests and apparently doctors, each group being marked by a different tonsure. Semitic kings and warriors from the start of the Old Assyrian period (1900 B.C.) through the end of the Neo-Assyrian period (612 B.C.) are normally depicted in Mesopotamian art with beautiful curly beards and long wavy hair extending neatly over the shoulder. In addition, in ancient Near Eastern culture, a full head of hair was often displayed by gods and other heroic figures.

The Hebrews, like other Semitic peoples, considered well-kept hair something to be desired. Indeed, thick, lengthy hair was considered a sign of vitality and strength. Absalom, handsome claimant to David's throne, is described as cutting his luxuriant hair from time to time and weighing it when it became too heavy for him.[6] Baldness, on the other hand, was disliked. It was often related to mourning or catastrophe,[7] as was unkempt or disheveled hair.[8] The prophet Elisha experienced ridicule in connection with his baldness.[9] The dread of baldness may also have been due to its association with leprosy.[10] As a purification rite, a leper was required to shave off all his hair, an act that called public attention to this offensive disease.[11]

Hairstyles varied in Hebrew society. Women's hair was usually at least shoulder length, and often longer, as the Beni Hassan fresco indicates.[12] Women usually plaited or braided their hair;[13] they rarely cut their hair except in times of deep mourning.[14] The Mishnah forbids women plaiting hair on the Sabbath.[15]

Men's hair was trimmed periodically, especially among those of the working classes who could not afford the time or money often required to maintain longer styles.

The Bible is silent about professional hairdressers and only once does it mention the term "barber" (גַּלָּב *ga·LAV*).[16] It would seem certain, however, that every town of any size in Israel must have employed the services of at least one person who specialized in the trimming of hair and beards. Typical of the lowly standing of a number of professions singled out in early rabbinic literature, the Mishnah (c. 200 A.D.) calls the occupation of a barber, "the craft of robbers."[17] Nevertheless, the Talmudic rabbis affirmed, "The glory of a face is its beard."[18]

Jewish priests were not allowed to shave their hair; neither were they permitted to let their hair grow uncut like Nazirites.[19] According to the Law of Moses, if an Israelite trimmed his hair, he was to leave uncut the hair at the sides of the head (i.e., the *pe'ot*, or forelocks, around the sides of the temple) and on the edges of his beard.[20] The Torah proscribed cutting of this hair since it appears to have been a pagan practice.

Jewish people of Bible times frequently used hair oil, especially on joyous occasions.[21] It helped condition the hair and eliminate dryness of the scalp and vermin. To anoint the hair of a guest was a token of hospitality[22] or a sign of honoring a guest at a banquet.[23] The Psalmist compares the pleasantness of unity among brothers to "precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard."[24]

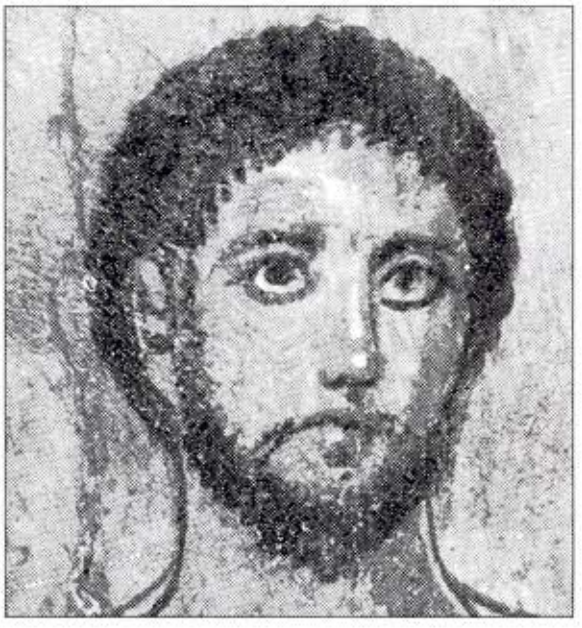
Most Semites seem to have had black or dark hair.[25] In the Hebrew Scriptures, the hair of Israelites is likened to the dark color of goat's hair.[26] Josephus states that Herod the Great dyed his hair black to conceal signs of aging.[27] Gray hair was considered a crown of splendor for the old.[28] Old age and gray hair go together,[29] but with them come respect and wisdom.[30] White hair symbolized the wisdom and dignity of the divine presence.[31] Biblical literature does not mention the use of wigs among the Hebrews.

The beards of Israelites seem to have been quite full and rounded.[32] The Hebrew term for "beard" (זָקָן, *za·KAN*) is a cognate of the word "elder" or "old man" (זָקֵן, *za·KEN*). The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III (c. 850 B.C.) depicts both King Jehu of Israel and thirteen Israelite porters with beards. The Lachish reliefs (c. 700 B.C.) portray bearded Hebrew citizens of the city as they kneel before Sennacherib.

The beard was a mark of vitality and manhood and treated with utmost care and respect.[33] To take hold of the beard of another in one's right hand to embrace him was a sign of friendship,[34] but to cut off a man's beard was a grievous insult and token of public shame.[35] Accordingly, the Lord plans to humiliate completely his wayward people, Judah, by using Assyria as a razor to shave the beard, head and pubic hair.[36] To pull hair from the head and beard was an expression of anguish or distress.[37]

In ancient Greece and Rome, men wore their hair long. Shortly after the time of Alexander the Great (c. 300 B.C.), hairstyles among Greek and Roman men became short. Barbershops became a familiar sight in towns and cities of the Greco-Roman world. The evidence from coins, statues, busts and ancient writers reveals that the Roman emperors from the time of Augustus (27 B.C.–14 A.D.) to the time of Trajan (98–117 A.D.) and many other notable figures during this period visited the barber on a daily basis. Among most free-born Greeks and among Romans—slaves, soldiers and the poor excepted—to be clean-shaven was the rule during New Testament times.

In our effort to establish the appearance of Jesus, we must keep in mind not only the customs of the Semitic world of the ancient Hebrews, but also those Jewish customs practiced several centuries either side of Jesus. There is indication that the Jewish world of New Testament times was not immune to the shorter hairstyles adopted by Greek and Roman men some three centuries earlier. Indeed, Jewish art from the Roman



Ezra, as depicted on a panel of the frescoes that covered the walls of the synagogue at Dura-Europos. Ezra's hair and beard reflect Jewish styles in Dura-Europos in the first half of the third century A.D.
(Reproduced from Carl H. Kraeling, The Excavations at Dura-Europos, The Synagogue *[New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956], Plate XLVIII.)*

period, especially the synagogue wall paintings at Dura-Europos on the Euphrates, generally depicts well-trimmed beards and rather short hair that follows the contour of the head. Likewise, in Talmudic times, rabbinic authorities permitted Jews who had frequent dealings with Roman authorities to clip their hair in the Gentile fashion.[38] Thus, in Jesus' day, the length of hair and style of beards must have varied, determined to some degree by the accepted custom of the time. JP

1. Gen. 11:10–32; 14:13; Matt. 1:1–17.
2. Cf. Matt. 5:17.
3. Gen. 41:14.
4. Herodotus II.36; III.12.
5. Herodotus II.37.
6. 2 Sam. 14:25, 26.
7. Isa. 3:17–24.
8. Lev. 10:6.
9. 2 Kgs. 2:23.
10. Cf. Lev. 13.
11. Lev. 14:8, 9; cf. Lk. 17:12.
12. Cf. 1 Cor. 11:15.
13. Cf. 2 Kgs. 9:30; Judith 10:3.
14. Deut. 21:12; Mic. 1:16.
15. Mishnah, Shabbat 6:5.
16. Ezek. 5:1.
17. Mishnah, Kiddushin 4:14.
18. Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 152a.
19. Lev. 21:5; Ezek. 44:20; cf. Num. 6:5.
20. Lev. 19:27; Deut. 14:1.
21. Matt. 6:17.
22. Lk. 7:46.
23. Ps. 23:5.
24. Ps. 133:1–2.
25. Cf. Song 5:11.
26. 1 Sam. 19:13; Song 4:1.
27. *Antiquities* 16:233.
28. Prov. 16:31; 20:29.
29. 1 Sam. 12:2; Job 15:10; Ps. 71:18; Isa. 46:4.
30. Cf. Lev. 19:32; Wisdom of Solomon 4:8–9.
31. Dan. 7:9; Rev. 1:14; 2 Macc. 15:13.
32. Cf. Lev. 19:27.
33. Ps. 133:2; 2 Sam. 19:24.
34. 2 Sam. 20:9.
35. 2 Sam. 10:4; Isa. 50:6.
36. Isa. 7:20.
37. Ezra 9:3.
38. Babylonian Talmud, Bava Kamma 83a.

Abraham, as depicted in the Dura-Europos synagogue frescoes. *(Reproduced from Carl H. Kraeling, The Excavations at Dura-Europos, The Synagogue [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956], Plate XLVIII.)*

John's Targumic Allusions
(continued from page 9)

9. Peter Renju, a United Bible Societies translation consultant in Africa, has suggested (oral communication) another model for translation: "For the divine blessing started with Moses, who has given us the Law, and has reached its fulness in Jesus Christ, who has given us grace and truth." This kind of restructuring may be necessary for many translation audiences. Putting short clauses together like the *Jerusalem Bible* and *New International Version* may not make for clear, smooth communication.

Jesus' Twin Parables
(continued from page 5)

appears in the story about Levi (Lk. 5:31) and in the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin parables (Lk. 15:7). In addition, both passages have the key words "saints," "sinner(s)" and "repentance."

Reason for Double Parables

Why did Jesus use twin parables in his teaching? We can only make educated guesses. I like the suggestion of a Jerusalem resident who attended a Bible class I conducted years ago. After I had explained the evidence I found for "partner parables" in the teaching of Jesus, I remarked that although I did not understand why, I was sure Jesus followed this method of teaching. "Well," the student said, "maybe it was because in the Torah it is written, 'By the mouth [testimony] of two or three witnesses a thing will be established.' [Deut. 19:15]." In its original context, this Scripture meant that in capital cases, the accused cannot be convicted on the basis of the testimony of only one witness; however, a sage such as Jesus might have interpreted the word "thing" as "teaching." Accordingly, two parables making the same point could serve as the two witnesses corroborating what a sage had just taught. Apparently, Jesus' use of twin parables was one further way of indicating to his audience that his teaching was God's truth.

I believe this student's answer is the correct explanation of Jesus' use of twin parables. Note that Gideon asked God for two signs, not one (Jdg. 6:36–40). Only after he had seen *two* miracles was Gideon convinced that God would give him victory over the combined armies of the eastern peoples.

Even more striking is the story of the twin dreams of Pharaoh. Joseph explained to Pharaoh the meaning of his double dream: "The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same...and the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the matter is absolutely settled by God, and that God will soon bring it about" (Gen. 41:25, 32). JP

Rabbinic Literature: A Spiritual Treasure

The sages were the creators of the Oral Torah. This literature, still unwritten in Jesus' day, is of great value in understanding Jesus' sayings. It is also a rich treasure of spiritual wisdom.

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by David Bivin

As used in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE, "rabbinic literature" refers to the various collections of Oral Torah. As the name implies, the Oral Torah was transmitted orally and, in the time of Jesus, was still unwritten. It was only after Jewish life in the land of Israel had been nearly extinguished that the weakened community felt the necessity of recording this literature in writing.

The first attempt to commit the Oral Torah to writing is called the Mishnah. This work was compiled by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi around 200 A.D.[1] The Mishnah records the sayings of sages who lived and taught during the previous several hundred years and, except for isolated words or sentences, it is written entirely in Hebrew.

Sayings of the Fathers

The best-known of the Mishnah's sixty-three tractates is titled "Avot" (Fathers) or "Pirke Avot" (Chapters of the Fathers), but often referred to in English as the "Sayings of the Fathers" or "Ethics of the Fathers."[2] Avot is a collection of the cherished sayings of more than sixty illustrious sages, beginning with sayings of the earliest known sages (third century B.C.). According to Avot, there had been an unbroken chain of transmitters of Oral Torah since Moses' time. In its first chapter, Avot traces the Oral Torah's transmission from its reception at Mount Sinai until the days of Hillel (beginning of first century A.D.):

> Moses received the [Oral] Torah at Sinai and handed it down to Joshua, Joshua to the elders, the elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue...Shim'on the Righteous [c. 300 B.C.] was one of the survivors of the Great Synagogue...Antigonus of Socho received [the Oral Torah] from Shim'on the Righteous...Yose ben Yoezer of Tseredah and Yose ben Yohanan of Jerusalem received [the Oral Torah] from him...Yehoshua ben Perahyah and Mattai[3] of Arbel received [the Oral Torah] from them...Yehudah ben Tabbai and Shim'on ben Shetah received [the Oral Torah] from them...Shemayah and Avtalyon received [the Oral Torah] from them...Hillel and Shammai received [the Oral Torah] from them....

Although the subject matter of the Mishnah is primarily halachic (legal), Avot is devotional in nature, dealing almost wholly with moral behavior. Only six chapters in length (the last of which is a later addition), this tractate has some of the closest parallels to the sayings of Jesus known from rabbinic literature. Avot is so popular that it has become a custom to study a chapter of it in the synagogue following the afternoon prayers each Saturday between Passover and the Jewish New Year (a five-month period). Consequently, the entire tractate is included in editions of the Prayer Book,[4] a distinction that not even the Book of Psalms can claim.

Apart from the Bible, the Prayer Book and the Passover Haggadah, Avot is probably better known to religious Jews that any other book, and more commentaries have been written on Avot than on any other rabbinic work. Even less religiously learned Jews are familiar with the maxims contained in Avot.

Jesus and the Fathers

The saying of Yose ben Yoezer (first half of the second century B.C.) found in Avot calls upon the people to show hospitality to sages, "Let your home be a meeting place

for the sages, and cover yourself with the dust of their feet, and drink in their words thirstily" (Avot 1:4). Mary and Martha heeded Yose ben Yoezer's injunction and opened their home to Jesus and his disciples (Luke 10:38-42).[5]

The saying of Rabbi Tarfon (born c. 50–55 A.D.), "The day is short and the work is great, but the workers are lazy; however the wages are high since the owner is in a hurry" (Avot 2:15), is very similar to Jesus' saying in Matthew 9:37–38, "The [work of] harvesting is great and the workers are few. Ask the owner of the harvest to bring [more] workers for his harvest."[6]

Jesus' teaching in Matthew 7:24–27 that good deeds are necessary along with knowledge ("Everyone who hears these words of mine *and does them* is like.... Everyone who hears these words of mine *and does not do them* is like....") finds two striking parallels in Avot—the saying of Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa (mid-first century A.D.): "He who has more deeds than knowledge, his knowledge endures, but he who has more knowledge than deeds, his knowledge does not endure" (Avot 3:10); and the parable of Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah (end of first century A.D.): "A person whose knowledge is greater than his deeds, what is he like? A tree whose branches are many but whose roots are few; the wind comes and uproots and overturns it. However, a person whose deeds are greater than his knowledge, what is he like? A tree whose branches are few but whose roots are many; even if all the winds were to come and blow against it, they could not move it" (Avot 3:18).[7]

Other sayings found in Avot that have their counterparts in Jesus' teaching are:

> Do his will as if it were your will that he may do your will as if it were his will. Conform your will to his will that he may conform the will of others to your will. (Avot 2:4)

There is a striking similarity between this saying and the sayings of Jesus in Matthew 6:10 ("Let your will be done in heaven and on earth")[8] and 7:21 ("Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' enters the Kingdom of Heaven, but only the person who does the will of my father who is in heaven").[9]

Note the similarity between the following saying and the Golden Rule (Mt. 7:12).

> Rabbi Eliezer said: "Let the honor of your fellowman be as dear to you as your own." (Avot 2:10)
>
> The saying of Rabbi Yose is similar: Let the possessions [mammon] of your fellowman be as dear to you as your own. (Avot 2:12)

Spiritual Depth

A number of sayings in Avot, although not directly parallel to sayings of Jesus, strongly remind us of the spiritual depth found in Jesus' teaching.

> Rabbi Ya'akov said, "This world is like an entry hall before the world to come. Prepare yourself in the entry hall that you may enter into the banqueting hall." (Avot 4:16)
>
> Yehudah ben Tema said, "Be as strong as the leopard, swift as the eagle, fleet as the gazelle and brave as the lion to do the will of your father in heaven." (Avot 5:20)
>
> Do not be like slaves that serve their master in order to receive a reward; rather, be like slaves that do not serve their master in order to receive a reward. (Avot 1:3)[10]
>
> Any love that depends on some passing thing, when the thing disappears, the love vanishes too; but a love that does not depend on some passing thing will last forever. Which love was it that depended on some passing thing?—the love of Amnon and Tamar [2 Sam. 13:1ff.]. And which love was it that did not depend on some passing thing?—the love of David and Jonathan [2 Sam. 1:26]. (Avot 5:16)

Many Christian scholars still read rabbinic literature only when searching for parallels to New Testament passages. This approach is sometimes referred to derisively as parallelomania. Surely, however, the sayings of the sages are a treasure that should be read first of all for their own sake.[11] **JP**

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1. Herbert Danby's *The Mishnah* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 876 pages, is still the only complete English translation of the Mishnah in one volume. Philip Blackman's seven-volume *Mishnayoth* (New York: The Judaica Press, 1964), 4050 pages, a commentary on the Mishnah, includes the Hebrew text of the Mishnah with English translation.

The standard edition of the Mishnah text in Hebrew is Hanoch Albeck's six-volume *Shishah Sidre Mishnah* [The Six Orders of the Mishnah] (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute and Tel Aviv: Dvir Co., 1957–1959).

2. Helpful translations of Avot with commentary are: Travers Herford, *Pirke Aboth, The Ethics of the Talmud: Sayings of the Fathers*, 3rd

ed. (1925; reprinted New York: Schocken Press, 1962); Philip Blackman, *Tractate Avoth: Ethics of the the Fathers* (Gateshead, U.K.: Judaica Press, 1979); Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Chapters of the Fathers*, 2nd ed. (New York: Philipp Feldheim, Inc., 1979).

A more extensive commentary on Avot is Charles Taylor's two-volume *Sayings of the Fathers* (1877; reprinted New York: Gordon Press, 1969).

3. Printed editions of the Mishnah, such as Albeck's *Shishah Sidre Mishnah* (see note 1 above), preserve the corruption, "Nittai." However, the best manuscripts of the Mishnah (Kaufmann, Cambridge, Parma and the Genizah fragments) read "Mattai" ("Matthew," in English). It is interesting that a century and a half before the time of Jesus and his disciples we come across a Galilean sage whose name was Mattai. The village of Arbel was only about eleven kilometers from Capernaum where, according to the Gospel of Matthew, the disciple Matthew had his tax collector's booth.

4. *Daily Prayer Book*, ed. Joseph H. Hertz (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1948), p. 611. In this edition of the Prayer Book, the late Chief Rabbi of the British Empire has also provided an excellent translation and commentary to Avot (pp. 612–721).

5. David Bivin, "At the Feet of a Rabbi," *Jerusalem Perspective* 11 (Aug. 1988), 1–2.

6. See idem, "The Harvest: Matthew 9:37–38," *Jerusalem Perspective* 1 (Oct. 1987), 1–2, where these two sayings are compared.

7. Idem, "Parables & Foundations," *Jerusalem Perspective* 28 (Sept./Oct. 1990), 14.

8. For a discussion of the rabbinic background to the entreaty, "Let your will be done in heaven and on earth," see Bradford Young, *The Jewish Background to the Lord's Prayer* (Dayton, OH: Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, 1984), pp. 18–22; idem, "Thy Will Be Done," *Jerusalem Perspective* 14 (Nov. 1988), 1–2.

9. Also compare the parallel to Avot 2:4 found in 1 Peter 5:6, "Humble yourselves under God's mighty hand, that in due time he may lift you up."

10. See "Readers' Perspective," *Jerusalem Perspective* 31 (Mar./Apr. 1991), 12.

11. For other treasures of rabbinic literature, see the following anthologies of rabbinic quotations: Abraham Cohen, *Everyman's Talmud*, 2nd ed. (1949; reprinted New York: Schocken Books, 1975); Claude Montefiore and Herbert Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology* (1938; reprinted New York: Schocken Books, 1974); Louis Newman and Samuel Spitz, ed., *The Talmudic Anthology* (New York: Behrman House, 1945).

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 – ḥ (voiceless guttural)
ט – t
י – y (or silent)
כ – k
כ ך* – k (like ch in the Scottish *loch*)
ל – l
מ ם* – m
נ ן* – n
ס – s
ע – ʿ (voiced guttural)
פ – p
פ ף* – f
צ ץ* – ts (like ts in nets)
ק – k
ר – r
ש – sh
ש – s
ת – t

*The form of the letter at the end of a word.

Vowels

(The א is used here as a point of reference.)

א – a (like a in father; rarely like o in bone)
א, אַ – a (like a in father)
א – e (like e in net, or e in hey, or somewhere in between)
אֵ, אֵי – e (like e in net)
אִ, אִי – i (like i in ski)
אֹ, אֹו, אוֹ – o (like o in bone)
אֻ, אוּ – u (like u in flu)
א – e (silent, or as short as e in happening, or as long as e in net)

Diphthongs

אַי – ai
אֹי – oi
אוּי – ui

Greek

Transliterations are based on the Society of Biblical Literature system.

Readers' Perspective

(continued from page 2)

have known.

Jerusalem Perspective *readers who rightly ask what value can be found in what may seem to them to be "fruitless argument over minor details" need to be assured that there are really good reasons for all this work. As David Flusser used to say to me as we worked, "Lindsey, you know what we are doing, don't you?" When I replied, "Maybe...," he would say vehemently, "What we want to know more about is* Jesus*!"*

This is indeed what I want. I encourage you to keep publishing these things we have talked about for so long.

*Robert L. Lindsey, Moore, Oklahoma***

*Such reconstructions could be called "contextual reconstructions," in contrast to "linguistic reconstructions," which are attempts to restore the wording of an earlier version of an ancient text. – **Ed.** (See page 6 for a list of suggested Synoptic Gospel contexts that include parables.)

**Today Robert ("Bob") Lindsey and his wife Margaret live in retirement near Dr. Lindsey's boyhood home of Norman, Oklahoma. Dr. Lindsey's father was for many years the Treasurer of the University of Oklahoma, and a street in Norman is named in his honor.

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International Synoptic Society

The 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 research carried out by the Jerusalem School (for example, the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*), facilitates informal discussion groups focusing on the Synoptic Gospels, and sponsors student research assistants and other volunteers who work with the Jerusalem School.

Annual membership in the Society is: Regular US$100 or £70; Fellow $300 or £210; Sponsor $500 or £350; Patron $1000 or £700; Lifetime member $5000 or £3500 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 a free subscription to JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE. They are also entitled to unique privileges such as pre-publication releases of *Commentary* materials, including preliminary reconstructions of stories in the conjectured biography of Jesus. Major publications of the Jerusalem School will be inscribed with Society members' names.

Checks should be made payable to the "Jerusalem School" and designated "ISS." Members in the United States can receive a tax-deductible receipt by sending their dues through the Jerusalem School's U.S. affiliates: Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, P.O. Box 293040, Dayton, OH 45429 (Tel. 513-434-4550; Fax 513-439-0230); Centre for the Study of Biblical Research, P.O. Box 2050, Redlands, CA 92373-0641 (Tel. 909-793-4669; Fax 909-793-1071).

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 happy to arrange a visit by one of the Jerusalem School's representatives.

Our representatives will answer questions and present a program that includes the showing of a video filmed in Israel. The video incorporates interviews with members of the Jerusalem School.

If a visit by our representative cannot be arranged, you may obtain a copy of the Jerusalem School's video for your own use. Please contact the Centre for the Study of Biblical Research at the above address.

The Jerusalem School

The Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research (מכון ירושלים לחקר האוונגליונים הסינופטיים) 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 that, 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 that 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. Weston W. Fields, Dr. R. Steven Notley, Dwight A. Pryor, Halvor Ronning, Mirja Ronning, Prof. Chana Safrai and Prof. Bradford H. Young.